

SARASOTA OPEN

It's become the tennis social event of the year in the Sarasota area . . . The annual **Sarasota Open** at the **Longboat Key Club & Resort**.

The amount of details to make the event flow smoothly by delegating jobs to qualified volunteers is a daunting task. Under the leadership of Director **Tony Driscoll**, this year's event was bigger and better than ever. Players are now competing for \$100,000. All seats are now shaded with awnings, except for courts 8 and 9. Radar times the speed of the serves which are displayed at each end of the court along with the players' names and scores. And for the first time this year, some of the best women players in the world also competed in their own draw.

The field gets stronger every year. **Jesse Levine** won the Title in 2008. This year he lost in the first round.



Finalist Paolo Lorenzi

PHOTO BY JOHN KELLEY



Singles Champion Sam Querrey

PHOTO BY JOHN KELLEY

WELL PLAYED!



Champion Alexandra Stevenson and Finalist Gabriella Dabrowski



Finalist Paolo Lorenzi and Champion Sam Querrey

PHOTOS BY CARMEN



Doubles Champions Izak Van der Merwe (net) and Johan Brunstrom (back)

PHOTOS BY CARMEN



Doubles Finalists Martin Emmrich (back) and Andreas Siljestrom (net)

Players rave about the event. This year's winner **Sam Querrey** was quoted as saying, **"I have played a lot of Challenger events in America, and this is probably the best one I have ever played."**

2,000 fans watched the exciting three-set final. Querrey beat Italian retriever **Paolo Lorenzi**, who ousted defending champ **James Blake** in the quarter-finals. Querrey's first set against Lorenzi (6-1) was near-perfect, but Lorenzi held fast in set 2 winning 7-6. In the 3rd set, Querrey delivered serves that were out of reach even for the unshakable Italian.

This year's event was not without its challenges. If last year's finals were bedeviled by love-bugs, this year's enemy was the wind. Players were amazingly stoic as Mother Nature got the ultimate say on where the shots would land.

Club staff also scrambled when the lights went out during the night

match between Blake and **Denis Kudla** from the Ukraine. By the time the lights came back on, Kudla lost his momentum and the 32-year old Blake caught his breath and came back to win the 3rd set, 7-5.

Alexandra Stevenson (basketball legend Julius "Dr. J" Erving's daughter) beat 16-year-old **Dasha Sharapova** (cousin of Maria Sharapova) in straight sets. She went on to win the tournament over **Gabriella Dabrowski**.

Way to go Sam Querrey! Way to go Longboat Key Club & Resort! Excellent job volunteers, ball kids, umpires, and staff! Way to go Sarasota!



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