



## FANLETTER FEBRUARY 2004

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### Introduction

Dear friends,

Number one of the world and winning the first Grand Slam of the year – what a feeling! I feel very strong at the moment and my motivation to stay on top is enormous. It is now important to win many titles during this season. I am especially looking forward to the Swiss tournaments as well as the Olympics. Right now I am trying to concentrate a little more as I am on the tour without a coach. My own expectations are high and of course it was another dream come true the way this season has started for me. It is a terrific feeling to be able to see the efforts of the hard training last year pay off already.

I would like to thank all of you for the huge amount of greetings, letters and presents which you sent me for becoming number one as well as for my Australian Open victory. It is a great honour to be at the centre of so much attention and I am enjoying every moment. I feel privileged that you believe in me. I also want to thank my sponsors (Nike, Wilson, EMMI, AAM and Rolex) for their generous support as well as all the congratulations. I will give my best to be able to celebrate many more unforgettable moments with everyone.

Kind regards

Roger

### Quote of the moment

'It could not be any better at the moment. Being number one in the world and having started the season in the best possible way. I must say that life has changed. I want to enjoy everything as intensely as possible.'

## **Most recently...**

### Hong Kong

It was great fun being able to play in Asia again after Shanghai. I liked the tournament in Hong Kong very much and I was very pleased by the organisation.

Playing with Martina Navratilova, a living legend, was an absolute highlight, of course!

### Kooyong

This year I arrived in Australia very early in order to prepare in the best possible way. The tournament in Kooyong had a very sympathetic touch. Unfortunately I did not manage to find my best performance during the matches. I did feel very well in the training sessions, though. This fact made me feel confident and I realised I was still able to perform in the way that I had expected. Lodging in the same hotel as for the Australian Open afterwards was another advantage and helped me acclimatize and feel well.

### Australian Open

I had hoped for a good start for the Australian Open. I was thus very relieved as I managed to hit the balls very precisely right from the first round. And I was able to continue that way: I hardly ever encountered any technical difficulties during the whole tournament.

The key moments during the Open were definitely the matches against Hewitt and Nalbandian. Thanks to my brilliant shape I also didn't hesitate one moment to climb the throne and become number one thanks to the victory against Ferrero. I had been hoping for that overwhelming moment for a long time and it was certainly just as fabulous as winning the Australian Open.

The two weeks in Australia rest in my memory as a very focused time. Tennis was clearly in the centre of my activities and I hardly did anything aside from it. After my great victory in Melbourne, a long press conference in the stadium and another at the hotel, I was already on my way back to Europe. I very much enjoyed the spirited reception from fans, my sponsors and the press when I landed in Basel. EMMI organised a thunderous welcome with cowbells and distributed products to everyone present. Nike had laid out a large, red carpet in the shape of a one. Rolex and AAM placed adverts in many big newspapers. Arriving there was like in my best dreams! Shortly after the festivities I spent a few hours at home and did some shopping with Mirka. In the evening I was already on the plane for the Davis Cup in Bucharest.

### Davis Cup

I only arrived in Bucharest late and the other members of the team were already in bed. But they sure surprised me the next morning: They handed over to me a huge, signed photo of the whole team with their congratulations for becoming number one! I was very touched by this personal present.

Shortly thereafter we started our preparations on sand. I did not expect the change from hard court to sand to work as smoothly as it did. Thanks to the great team and the many loyal Swiss fans we showed great performances and exciting battles. The tight victory in the doubles was enormously important and a terrific success for us all. Once again I thoroughly enjoyed the excellent team spirit.

## **How was it ten years ago?**

1994 Roger became Swiss Champion in the category R4/R6 and beat Pascal Fuchs, 4 years older than he was, in the city championships. In July Roger lost the final of the Swiss Championships, category III, against Jun Kato, with whom he won the doubles title. In the same year Roger already had the opportunity of taking part in the "Les Petits Princes Coca-Coca", an international junior tournament in Annecy, France.

This is a brief letter about Roger, written in 1994:

'At the age of 6 Roger played soccer with the Concordia F-juniors. But you could also meet him on the courts of the tennis club 'Ciba Klybeck' in Allschwil. At 8 years he became a member in the tennis club 'Old Boys', where he managed to rise among the best national players of his age under the guidance of Seppli Kacovsky.

On a regional level Roger won the Basler Championships 1994 in the men's category R4-R6 as well as various junior titles. He celebrated his first title as Swiss Champion in the singles at the age of 12 in Lucerne and Bellinzona, also winning the doubles with Dänni Schnyder and Jun Kato. 1994 Roger made it to the doubles final with Jun Kato in the U-14 category at an international tournament in Genoa and they won the three-countries tournament in Mulhouse as well as the Consolation in Paris.

Roger has now been under the supervision of Peter Carter since a year in the new training concept of the 'Old Boys' tennis school. Thanks to Peter's good coaching, Roger managed to qualify for the Swiss performance centre in Ecublens where he will take up training at the end of summer in 1995. Roger will stay loyal to the 'Old Boys' tennis club and still play the interclub matches there.'

## **My cow Juliette**

Juliette is the name of the cow I received as a present in Gstaad last year. She is highly pregnant and should calf next week! According to the Gstaad-dairy she is in a fabulous state. Roger and Mirka visited Juliette in Gstaad last Tuesday. They also indulged in some Juliette cheese during their stay in the beautiful mountain region.

## **Poll regarding victories**

Up until February 15 an amazing 6,142 votes had been registered on the website regarding the poll about how many tournaments Roger would win this year! The fact that 44.4% of the fans see him capable of winning over eight titles this year pleases Roger very much (Note: the percentage is the average of both the English and German site). Roger said: ' That's a lot! I already had the feeling of winning a large number of titles last year. But I am not surprised that my fans have high expectations. I also expect a lot of myself and will certainly try to go all the way. The big tournaments as well as the Olympics are my main focus. And of course the aim of every tournament I play at is to win.'