



FANLETTER JANUARY 2004

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Introduction

Dear friends,

A year full of exciting moments has come to an end and a new one has just started. I want to take this opportunity to wish all of you all the best and plenty of happiness and success with all your projects and activities.

I am at a high point of my career right now. I have had the privilege of celebrating many triumphs and experiencing many thrilling moments. I would like to address a special thanks to my friends, family and supporters; without their help certain achievements would have never been possible. I am also very proud to have been selected as the European Player of the Year, the Swiss Sportsman of the Year among many other awards. I owe most of these to you, my fans. I thank you all for the constant support and am already looking forward to many more meetings and contacts with you, in whatever way they may come. I also wish to thank you for all the interesting comments and for the greetings for my birthday, Christmas and the New Year. I enjoy going online and reading your messages addressed to me as well as the discussions amongst yourselves. The website is here for you and I invite you to post any suggestions you might have under 'your comments' in the forum section. All the best to reach new heights in 2004!

Best regards,

Roger

Quote of the moment

'The absolute breakthrough with the Wimbledon victory and the confirmation at the Masters Cup'

2003 Review

2003 was a year which had a difficult start. At the Australian Open I had to face a tough defeat by David Nalbandian. Fortunately the Davis Cup match vs. the Netherlands brought my confidence back and was a terrific experience. The atmosphere in this competition is usually unique and gives great motivation to all the players.

My performances at the following indoor matches was much to my liking and I managed quite a good run in Marseille, where I won my first title of the year. I was then able to quickly adapt my game to the outdoor courts and conquer my second title of the season in Dubai.

After another strong performance in Davis Cup vs. France, I could hardly have dreamt of a better start of the clay court season than by winning Munich (My third title of 2003) and I confirmed such result by reaching the final in Rome.

Shortly afterwards came the disappointment of the year: Losing in the first round at the French Open. It was a tough moment as I would have loved to show my fans a lot more. But fortunately I was able to soar into unexpected heights right after that: Halle was next on my schedule and once again I had the privilege of leaving a tournament as a winner.

And then the dream of my life came true: I was able to achieve my greatest victory so far on the 'holy' lawns at Wimbledon. That certainly was an overwhelming moment and I could hardly believe it at first. Now I have the great honour to see my name underneath the ones of all the greatest players ever!

I was glad to please my Swiss fans by reaching the final in Gstaad and it was very important for me not to lay back and rest after my victory in Wimbledon. That means a lot to me. But I also came across opponents against whom I had no answer at the time. Andy Roddick was beyond reach in Montreal. And at the US Open I had to face another disappointing defeat. David Nalbandian has developed to be a challenging rival.

After successfully defending my title in Vienna, Ivan Ljubicic took my hopes in Basel, my home tournament. Again I felt that 'my' audience had expected and deserved more.

Another great achievement in 2003 was the performance in the doubles. The victories with Max Mirnyi in Miami and with Yves Allegro in Vienna certainly were extraordinary experiences.

But winning the Masters Cup in Houston brought my name back to the headlines as I was able to beat all my opponents (including Agassi and Nalbandian whom I had never beaten before) and finish the year at number two in the rankings.

Going on holiday just after having won against all the top players probably is the best thing a tennis player could ask for. After the relaxing vacation I needed to focus again as training in Biel (Switzerland) was on my schedule and I was able to follow an intense training plan with my friend and training partner Max Mirnyi. Apart from that the month of December was a very busy one as I attended many promotional events and award ceremonies - which I am very grateful for!

A year full of positive experiences and changes has come to an end. My mother is taking care of my management since last autumn and my cosmetics line has had a successful start in the market.

But 2003 certainly belongs to Peter Lundgren and myself. Once again I would like to thank Peter for all the work, the close friendship and the very successful time together.

As a reminder, here is a list of my titles in 2003:

Singles: Marseille, Dubai, Munich, Halle, Wimbledon, Vienna, Tennis Masters Cup Houston

Doubles: Miami, Vienna

The Roger Federer Foundation

We founded the Roger Federer Foundation on Christmas Day 2003. We will decide on the direction to be taken within the next six months. The thought of founding an organisation like this has been on my mind for quite some time already. It is important to me to help people in sports and also in general. It is a great pleasure that my idea has now become a reality.

One of the aims of the foundation is to support sports for the youth. On my way to becoming a top athlete I have been able to benefit from various forms of support. Now I would like to make my own contribution towards helping young sportsmen and –women: the focused promotion of sports for youth is of great importance to me. The second aim of the foundation is the financial aid of projects helping children in need. The Roger Federer Foundation will support projects that will be carefully selected.

Preview for 2004

2004 will be filled with many challenges and taking part in the Olympics will again be an impressive experience and a great privilege. I am very glad that my sport is an Olympic discipline. My personal list of priorities includes of the Olympic Games in Athens, the four Grand Slams, the Davis Cup ties and the two Swiss tournaments (Gstaad and Basel). I will also continue my climb to the top of the ATP rankings and in an attempt to achieve this goal I will give each up-coming event the attention it deserves.

I would like this year to be another successful one, in order to feel satisfied with my performances. I know there is hard work ahead but I am looking forward to the challenge!