



# CELEBRATING SERBIAN TENNIS 2012

## Cocktail Reception

River Room 3, Crown Casino 15<sup>th</sup> January 6.30pm – 8.30pm

Exhibition "Celebrating Serbian Tennis" 23<sup>rd</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> January  
Atrium, Federation Square, Melbourne



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# A Word from the Ambassador of the Republic of Serbia, HE Ms Neda Maletić



On behalf of the Embassy of the Republic of Serbia, I welcome you to the ***Celebrating Serbian Tennis*** Cocktail Reception in Melbourne.

We are proud to host this event today to honour Serbian athletes and their contribution to the world of tennis. We wish to celebrate these great tennis players, not just for their ability to win matches and tournaments, but also for being such wonderful people off court.

Although this evening's theme may be ***Celebrating Serbian Tennis***, it is about much more: it is about sportsmanship, commitment, fair play, perseverance.

These are universal human attributes which deserve to be celebrated. They may be the very reason why sport and its values connect people across the world and defy cultural and national boundaries.

For the next two weeks, we will bear witness to efforts of many hardworking sportspeople, from all over the world, competing for the prestige of becoming an Australian Open champion. This is a tournament that ***Tennis Australia*** has been organising for over a century, making it a truly global event in which it is an honour to compete.

This cocktail reception is complemented by a poster exhibition which will take place in the Atrium, Federation Square, from 23<sup>rd</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> of January. The exhibition, titled ***Celebrating Serbian Tennis***, aims to share with a wider audience the achievements of Serbian tennis players, as well as some interesting facts about other sports in Serbia. We hope that you will find the time to visit the exhibition and to join us for its opening on Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> January at 7pm.

The Serbian-Australian community has called for events like these for some time now. I am pleased that we have worked together to make them happen. We are grateful to all our guests and sponsors for their generous contribution to this endeavour. The funds raised through ***Celebrating Serbian Tennis*** will serve an additional function: they will be used toward assisting student exchange between the University of Belgrade and two universities in Melbourne: Monash and RMIT. It is fitting that these two initiatives are linked, as both aim to acknowledge and support the values of hard work and discipline that academia and sports inspire in young people.

Thank you for sharing this evening with us.

THE SERBIAN WEEKLY NEWSPAPER PRINTED IN SERBIAN SCRIPT CYRILLIC

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# CELEBRATING SERBIAN TENNIS 2012

Cocktail Reception 6.30 – 8.30 pm

## Evening Program

6.30 Guests arrive

6.50 Traditional Serbian Music – OPA Bato Brass Band

7.00 Start of the formal proceedings announced

7.05 National Anthems of The Republic of Serbia and The Commonwealth of Australia  
Performed by Ms Ursula Jović

7.10 Address by the Honourable Nicholas Kotsiras MP, Minister for Multicultural Affairs  
and Citizenship in Victoria State Government

Address by His Grace The Right Reverend Irinej, Bishop of Australia and New Zealand

Address by HE Ms Neda Maletić, Ambassador of The Republic of Serbia

7.25 Traditional Serbian Music – OPA Bato Brass Band

8.30 Guests depart

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It is a privilege to have Ms Ursula Jović with us tonight, singing the national anthems of Serbia and Australia. Ursula, a unique Serbian - Australian artist, is an actress and a singer. She has appeared in many acclaimed theatre, musical and TV productions in all parts of Australia, as well as in the movie "Jindabyne" and the epic "Australia". She has performed to international audiences in Europe and America. For more information please visit [www.ursulayovich.com](http://www.ursulayovich.com)

# History of Serbian Tennis - Early Years

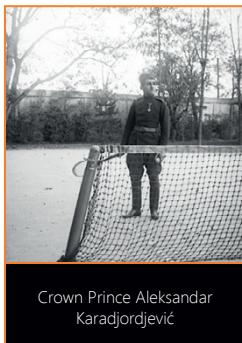


Kalemegdan 1929

In Serbia, tennis was played as early as the turn of the 20th century. The first organised tennis club in the Kingdom of Serbia was founded in 1903, as a section of the First Serbian Cycling Society. A decade and a half later, this club was renamed to "Šumadija" and another entered the Belgrade scene— The Diplomatic Tennis Club.

Serbian tennis was absorbed into the Tennis Federation of Yugoslavia, which was founded in 1922 and became a member of the International Tennis Federation the following year.

The first tennis courts were built in Belgrade at the foot of Kalemegdan, a vast medieval fortress turned into a beautiful public park.



Crown Prince Aleksandar  
Karadjordjević



Queen Maria at the tennis courts



Yugoslavia - Czechoslovakia  
Davis Cup 1936



Kalemegdan 1929

Kalemegdan Tennis Courts are still used today.

The Serbian Royal Family Karadjordjević were amongst the first Serbs to play the sport, and were often seen at the Kalemegdan Tennis Courts.

The first international competitions in which Serbian tennis players took part were Paris Olympic Games in 1924 and Davis Cup in 1927.

Following the World War Two, and the formation of socialist Yugoslavia, tennis was no longer a sport of choice. Even though the country produced a few players who competed in major tournaments, it was not until the success of Serbian Slobodan Živojinović in mid-1980s, and Monika Seleš in early 1990s, that tennis became popular again in Serbia.

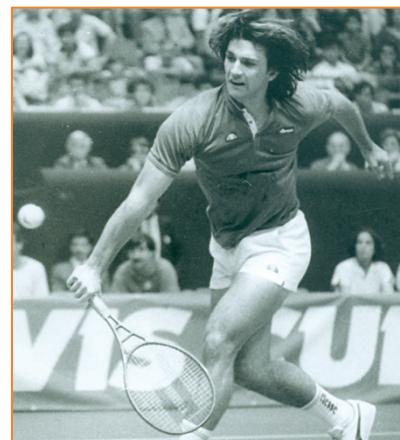
# Tennis in Modern-day Serbia

Since the mid 1980's, a number of Serbian tennis players have achieved notable success. In the 25 years from 1986 to 2011, Serbia produced no less than 6 No. 1 players - 4 in singles, and 2 in doubles: Slobodan Živojinović, Monika Seleš, Ana Ivanović, Jelena Janković, Nenad Zimonjić and Novak Djoković.

## Slobodan 'Boba' Živojinović

The first player to popularise tennis in modern-day Serbia, Boba achieved his greatest success in men's doubles. Following his victory at the US Open in 1986, he rose to World No. 1 in men's doubles. A year later, Boba also broke into the Top 20 singles players – the same year that Novak Djoković and Ana Ivanović were born.

- » Born in 1963, Belgrade, Serbia
- » Career High – men's doubles World No. 1 in 1986
- » Most memorable win – 1985 Australian Open against John McEnroe in a gruelling 5 set quarterfinal



## Monika Seleš

A member of the International Tennis Hall of Fame, Monika won a record 9 Grand Slam titles in her career, and changed the women's tennis.

She is the first female player to hit both backhand and forehand with overwhelming force. Moreover, Monika added incredible angles to the pace of her shots.

- » Born in 1973, Novi Sad, Serbia
- » Youngest ever winner of the French Open, at the age of 16
- » Career high – World No. 1 in 1991, and retained her position for 113 weeks

Grand Slam titles

Australian Open – 1991, 1992, 1993, 1996

French Open – 1990, 1991, 1992

US Open – 1991, 1992

# 'Celebrating Serbian Tennis' Cocktail Party

## Supporting student exchange between the University of Belgrade and two Melbourne Universities – Monash and RMIT

### University of Belgrade

[www.bg.ac.rs](http://www.bg.ac.rs)



The University of Belgrade (BU) was founded in 1808. It is the oldest and the largest university in Serbia.

Today, BU has 90,000 students enrolled in 31 faculties and 11 research institutes. The University of Belgrade has established cooperation with numerous educational institutions around the world, amongst them two in Australia: Memorandums of Understanding were signed with Monash University in 2006, and RMIT University in 2004. Further financial support is needed to continue the collaborative efforts and staff & student exchange between these universities.

### RMIT University

[www.rmit.edu.au](http://www.rmit.edu.au)

Founded in 1887, it was previously known as the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology.

The University was awarded royal patronage in 1954, and is the only Australian university to have received the honour.

Today, RMIT has a student population of 84,000 enrolled in 24 schools and four research institutes.



### Monash University

[www.monash.edu.au](http://www.monash.edu.au)



It was founded in 1958, and since then it has grown into a network of campuses, education centres and partnerships spanning the globe.

Monash is one of Australia's most prestigious research-intensive universities, making an impact across more than 150 fields of study. In recent years it has especially gained prominence in cancer research, stem cells and regenerative medicine.

Monash has 60,000 students from over 170 countries enrolled in 10 faculties.

# Novak Djoković

- » Born on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 1987, Belgrade, Serbia
- » Turned professional - 2003, aged 16
- » Career titles – 4 Grand Slams, 10 Masters Titles and 28 ATP Tournaments
- » World No.1 since July 2011

Novak started playing tennis when he was just 4 years old. He was coached by a renowned Yugoslav tennis instructor Jelena Genčić, who claimed that Novak was the greatest talent she has seen since Monika Seleš.

In 2002, he became the best under-16 player of Europe, having won the prestigious 'La Boule' and 'La Poet' tournaments in France.

At the age of 18, in 2006, Novak was the youngest player inside the Top 20 after winning his first two ATP tournaments.

Two years later, he became the youngest player to reach the semi-finals of all four Grand Slams. In the same year, Novak won his first Grand Slam – 2008 Australian Open.

After spend spending 91 weeks at No. 3, Novak went on to become No. 2 for the first time in 2010.

Then, in 2011, he recorded one of the best seasons in tennis history. Novak won 10 titles including the Australian Open, Wimbledon, the US Open, as well as the record breaking five Master tournaments. His amazing 2011 season started with 41 straight victories. This is the second best start of season in the Open Era, only one victory short of John McEnroe's record.

Novak ended the 2011 season as World No. 1 with more than 4,000 points ahead of the runner up.



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# Ana Ivanović



- » Born on 6<sup>th</sup> November 1987, Belgrade, Serbia
- » Turned professional in 2003
- » Career titles – 11 WTA and 5 ATI tournaments
- » Career High – World No. 1 in 2008

As a five year old, Ana was inspired to pick up the racquet after watching her countrywoman Monika Seleš play.

Ana has been on the pro tennis tour since she was 16 years old. Her serve has been clocked at 201 km per hour, the fifth fastest of all time.

One of her proudest achievements was winning 16 matches in 15 days, as she captured back-to-back titles on the ITF Women's Circuit when she was only 16.

Ana is three-time Grand Slam finalist: 2007 and 2008 French Open, and 2008 Australian Open. After winning 2008 French Open, Ana became World No. 1.

Some of the WTA titles that Ana won are: Indian Wells, Los Angeles, Montreal, Linz and Bali.



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# Nenad Zimonjić



- » Born on 4<sup>th</sup> June 1976, Belgrade, Serbia
- » Turned professional – 1995
- » Career titles – 7 Grand Slams, 12 Masters and 42 ATP doubles titles
- » Career High – World No. 1 in 2008 in men's doubles

Nenad started playing tennis at the age of 9. He was Under 16 and Under 18 singles champion of former Yugoslavia, before he specialised in playing doubles.

Nenad is the winner of seven Grand Slam Titles:

3 men's doubles, all partnered with Daniel Nestor, Serbian born Canadian tennis player:  
2008 Wimbledon  
2009 Wimbledon  
2010 French Open

and 4 mixed doubles:  
2004 Australian Open, with Elena Bovina  
2006 French Open, with Katarina Srebotnik  
2008 Australian Open, with Sun Tiantian  
2010 French Open, with Katarina Srebotnik

The most memorable win in Nenad's singles career was in 2004, when he defeated Andre Agassi 6–2, 7–6 in St Pölten.

Nenad's Davis Cup doubles score is 22-6, which makes him a solid contributor to the Serbian Davis Cup team.

# Janko Tipsarević

- » Born on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 1984, Belgrade, Serbia
- » Turned professional – 2002
- » Career titles – 2
- » Career High – World No. 9

2001 was the breakthrough year for Janko. He won the Australian Open title in boys' singles, and finished as No.2 in the 2001 world Junior rankings.

Four years later Janko played at the Australian Open as a professional for the first time. However, Janko's most memorable match at the Australian Open occurred in 2008 against Roger Federer. Federer finally prevailed 6-7, 7-6, 5-7, 6-1, 10-8, after a 4 hour 27 minute battle.

In 2010 Davis Cup, Janko made a crucial contribution in the semi-finals against the Czech Republic. He defeated both Tomáš Berdych and Radek Štěpánek, placing Serbia into the final, to overcome France and become the champion.

The 2011 Kremlin Cup in Moscow was the first tournament on the ATP Tour to feature two Serbs in the final. Janko Tipsarević came out a winner and moved into the Top 10 for the first time in his career.



# Jelena Janković



- » Born on 28<sup>th</sup> February 1985, Belgrade, Serbia
- » Turned professional – 2000
- » Career titles – 12
- » Career high – World No. 1 in 2008

Jelena began playing tennis at the age of nine. Within a year she was the national champion in her age group.

She is one of only three players in history who were World No. 1 as both a junior and a professional.

Jelena entered the top 100 in 2003, after winning her first title in Dubai.

In 2006 she became the only player to win against both Williams sisters in the same year.

In 2007 Jelena became the first Serbian female tennis player to win a mixed doubles Grand Slam title – she won Wimbledon, partnered with UK's Jamie Murray.

2008 was a breakthrough year for Jelena. During that season she won four tournaments, more than any other female player that year, finishing the tour as World No. 1.

# Viktor Troicki

- » Born on 10<sup>th</sup> February 1986, Belgrade, Serbia
- » Started playing tennis at the age of 5
- » Turned professional – 2006
- » Career titles – 2
- » Career High – 12

In 2009 he won the World Team Cup for Serbia in Düsseldorf, Germany

Viktor took his first ATP World singles title in Moscow in 2010, beating Jo-Wilfried Tsonga in the second round, and Marcos Baghdatis in the final: 3–6, 6–4, 6–3.

He was part of the winning Serbian Davis Cup team in 2010. With Serbia and France tied at 2-2, Viktor carried the weight of the nation's hopes, going on to win the deciding match: 6-2, 6-2, 6-3 and making Serbia the winners of the Davis cup.



# Bojana Jovanovski



- » Born on 31<sup>st</sup> December 1991, Belgrade, Serbia
- » Turned professional – 2007
- » Career titles – 4 ITF
- » Career High – 50

Bojana is leading the newest wave of Serbian tennis hopefuls. She began playing tennis aged seven, and in 2008 was ranked World Junior No. 5.

Bojana ended the 2010 season as the youngest player in the Top 100 on the WTA Tour.

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A new generation of tennis players from Serbia is gradually emerging.

Serbia currently has five players ranked in the Top 100 ITF Junior Rankings.

The Serbian girls' team are the current Under 14 World Junior champions. They won the World Junior Championship in 2011 in the Czech Republic – a competition contested by 202 teams from 113 countries.

Each year, a growing number of junior Serbian players fight for a chance to kick-start their career at the Australian Open and other Grand Slams.



Bonnyrigg Sport's Club is proud to be a Gold Sponsor for this special event which will raise the profile of the Serbian community in Australia as well as honour the success of Serbian tennis players who promote a positive image of Serbia, its culture and values



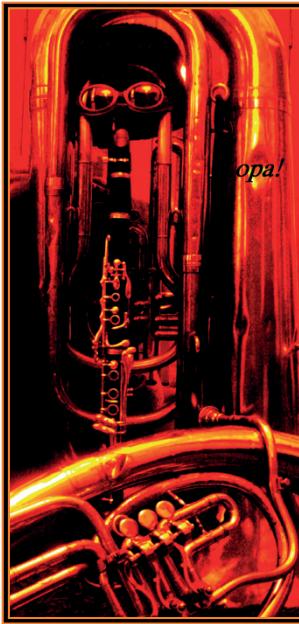



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“Opal Bato” is a Melbourne based Balkan brass orchestra committed to playing music native to the Balkans in general and particularly the regions of southern and central Serbia. The music played is an early fusion of European and Oriental forms which has developed over time to acquire its own magical sound.

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*Celebrating Serbian Tennis 2012* was helped and supported by a number of individuals and organisations. We gratefully acknowledge the contribution by:

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A big THANK YOU to everyone who has helped *Celebrating Serbian Tennis 2012*!

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