



## NOVENTI OPEN – ATP MEDIA NOTES DAY 4 – THURSDAY 17 JUNE 2021

OWL Arena | Halle, Germany | 14-20 June 2021

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### NOVENTI OPEN TALKING POINTS

- Two seeds remain after three days of play in Halle, including No. 3 seed and two-time finalist **Alexander Zverev**. The Hamburg native faces Frenchman **Ugo Humbert** on Thursday for a spot in the quarter-finals.
- If Humbert defeats Zverev, fewer than two seeds will reach the Halle quarter-finals for the first time in the tournament's 28-year history. No. 4 seed **Andrey Rublev** reached the quarter-finals with a win on Wednesday.
- There's no guarantee that two seeds will reach the Halle quarter-finals, but there is one that two qualifiers will. Qualifiers **Nikoloz Basilashvili** and **Arthur Rinderknech** will meet for the chance to join qualifier **Marcos Giron** in the quarter-finals. Another qualifier, **Lukas Lacko**, is also in action on Thursday against **Lloyd Harris**.
- Entering this week, only five qualifiers had ever reached the Halle quarter-finals. Multiple qualifiers advanced to the Halle quarter-finals just once when eventual champion **Nicklas Kulti** and **Magnus Larsson** did so in 1996.
- Play begins with the first meeting between unseeded players **Kei Nishikori** and **Sebastian Korda**. Nishikori is a two-time Halle semi-finalist, while Korda's father, **Petr**, reached the Halle final in 1997 and semi-finals in 1993.

#### Qualifiers in Halle Quarter-finals (with Finish)

2021	Marcos Giron	?
2018	Denis Kudla	SF
2009	Olivier Rochus	SF
1996	Nicklas Kulti	Champion
1996	Magnus Larsson	QF
1993	Karsten Braasch	QF

#### Two Seeds in Halle Quarter-finals

2018:	[1] Roger Federer, [4] Roberto Bautista Agut
2014:	[2] Roger Federer, [4] Kei Nishikori
2010:	[1] Roger Federer, [8] Lleyton Hewitt
2009:	[2] Novak Djokovic, [7] Jurgen Melzer
1996:	[2] Yevgeny Kafelnikov, [3] Jim Courier
1993:	[1] Andrei Medvedev, [2] Petr Korda

### ATP HEAD2HEAD: THURSDAY SECOND-ROUND SINGLES MATCHES

#### Kei Nishikori (JPN) vs Sebastian Korda (USA)

#### First Meeting

**Kei Nishikori** | Age: 31 | World No. 57 | Career-High No. 4 | 2021: 14-11 (2 QFs) | Halle: 9-5 (2014, 2015 SFs)  
> Top Asian player in FedEx ATP Rankings history, achieving career-high No. 4 in 2015.  
> Earned biggest of 400+ career wins over No. 1 Djokovic at 2014 US Open to become 1st Asian Grand Slam men's singles finalist.  
> Captured 1st of 12 ATP Tour titles at 2008 Delray Beach as 18-year-old Q ranked 244th and remains youngest champion on tour since Hewitt, 16, at 1998 Adelaide.  
> Six-time ATP 500 champion, four-time ATP Masters 1000 finalist, four-time Nitto ATP Finals qualifier and 2016 Rio Olympics bronze medallist.  
> Owns highest winning percentage among active players in 5th sets (26-7, .788) and 2nd-highest in deciding sets behind Djokovic (142-53, .728).

**NOTE:** Nishikori has been eliminated by a Top-10 player at his last 5 tournaments (No. 5 Tsitsipas in Miami 3R, No. 3 Nadal in Barcelona 3R, No. 6 Zverev in Madrid 2R, No. 6 Zverev in Rome 3R and No. 6 Zverev in Roland Garros 4R).

**Sebastian Korda** | Age: 20 | World No. 52 | Career-High No. 50 | 2021: 17-8 (Parma Title) | Halle: 1-0 (2021 2R)  
> Did not drop a set en route to 2021 Parma championship, breaking into Top 50 and joining Petr Korda as 3rd father-son duo to win tour-level titles in Open Era (also Phil & Taylor Dent, Ramanathan & Ramesh Krishnan).  
> Also in 2021, upset No. 1 American Isner en route to 1st ATP Tour final at Delray Beach and earned biggest win of career over No. 9 Schwartzman to reach ATP Masters 1000 Miami QF.  
> Qualified, defeated No. 1 American Isner and earned 1st 3 tour-level wins at 2020 Roland Garros as 20-year-old, becoming youngest American to reach Roland Garros 4R since Chang, 19, in 1991.  
> Became World No. 1 junior after winning 2018 Australian Open boys' singles title.  
> Father, Petr, peaked at No. 2 on ATP Tour; mother, Regina, peaked at No. 26 in WTA; older sisters, Nelly and Jessica, are pro golfers on LPGA Tour.

**NOTE:** Korda defeated No. 10 Bautista Agut in his grass-court debut on Monday for 2nd Top-10 win of his career.

### **Lloyd Harris (RSA) vs [Q] Lukas Lacko (SVK)**

### **First Tour-Level Meeting**

#### **Other Meetings**

16 Bangkok-3 CH (Thailand)	Hard	R32	Lukas Lacko	7-5 4-6 6-3
19 Eckental CH (Germany)	Carpet	QF	Lloyd Harris	6-7(5) 6-3 6-3
21 Doha Q (Qatar)	Hard	Q2	Lloyd Harris	6-4 6-3

**Lloyd Harris** | Age: 24 | World No. 51 | Career-High No. 50 | 2021: 13-10 (Dubai Final) | Halle: 1-0 (2021 2R)  
> Became No. 1 African in January 2020 before breaking into Top 50 in April 2021.  
> Earned 7 wins in as many days – including biggest of career over No. 4 Thiem – en route to 2nd ATP Tour final at 2021 Dubai, becoming 1st qualifier to advance past QFs in 29-year tournament history.  
> Also qualified at 5 tour-level events in 2020, highlighted by run to 1st ATP Tour final at Adelaide.  
> Advanced to Grand Slam 3R for 1st time at 2021 Australian Open.  
> Regularly played Futures events in Egypt, Mozambique, Nigeria, South Africa and Zimbabwe before making ATP Tour debut in 2017, earning 1st ATP Tour win in 2018 and breaking into Top 100 in 2019.

**NOTE:** After improving to 2-0 vs. Monfils, Harris is seeking 6th ATP Tour QF of his career and 1st on grass.

**Lukas Lacko** | Age: 33 | World No. 214 | Career-High No. 44 | 2021: 1-0 (Halle 2R) | Halle: 5-6 (2010 QF)  
> Former World No. 3 junior broke into Top 100 in 2009 and achieved career-high No. 44 in 2013.  
> Advanced to ATP Tour singles finals at 2012 Zagreb and 2018 Eastbourne, where he defeated No. 11 Schwartzman in 2R for biggest win of career (0-20 vs. Top 10).  
> Advanced to Grand Slam 3R on 4 occasions: 2012 Australian Open as Q, 2012 Wimbledon, 2016 Wimbledon as Q and 2017 Australian Open as Q.  
> Owns 292-197 Challenger record with 13 titles and wins over past or present Top-10 players Berrettini, Goffin, Khachanov, J. Melzer, Pouille and Rublev.  
> Reached 2005 Roland Garros boys' singles SF and was last junior opponent of Djokovic, falling to future World No. 1 at 2004 European Summer Cup.

**NOTE:** Lacko's win over Pella in Halle 1R marked his 1st tour-level match since 2019 Miami (l. to Haase in 1R) and 1st win since 2019 Delray Beach (d. Watanuki in 1R). He seeks his 1st ATP Tour QF since run to 2018 Eastbourne final.

### **[3] Alexander Zverev (GER) vs Ugo Humbert (FRA)**

### **First Meeting**

**Alexander Zverev** | Age: 24 | World No. 6 | Career-High No. 3 | 2021: 24-9 (2 Titles) | Halle: 12-5 (2016, 2017 Finals)  
> Former World No. 1 junior achieved career-high No. 3 as 20-year-old in 2017, becoming youngest Top-3 player since Djokovic, 20, in 2007.  
> Defeated No. 3 Federer and No. 1 Djokovic for biggest of 15 career titles at 2018 Nitto ATP Finals, then upset No. 1 Nadal en route to 2019 Nitto ATP Finals SF.  
> Reached 1st Grand Slam final at 2020 US Open, rallying from 2-set deficit for 1st time to defeat Carreno Busta in SF before squandering 2-set lead for 1st time against Thiem in final.  
> Upset Djokovic for 2017 Rome title only 31 days after his 20th birthday, becoming youngest ATP Masters 1000 champion since Djokovic, 19, at 2007 Miami.  
> By beating Nadal en route to 4th ATP Masters 1000 title at 2021 Madrid, joined Murray and Thiem as 3rd player to defeat Nadal on clay, Djokovic on hard and Federer on grass (2016 Halle SF).

**NOTE:** Zverev is 38-13 against left-handers (.745), including his Halle 1R win over countryman Koepfer.

**Ugo Humbert** | Age: 22 | World No. 31 | Career-High No. 29 | 2021: 10-13 (Marseille SF) | Halle: 1-0 (2021 2R)  
> Ended 2020 in Top 30 after defeating No. 5 Medvedev en route to 1st ATP 500 QF at Hamburg and No. 6 Tsitsipas en route to 1st ATP Masters 1000 QF at Paris.  
> Defeated countryman Paire in 3rd-set TB for 1st ATP Tour title at 2020 Auckland as 21-year-old.  
> Youngest Frenchman to win an ATP Tour title since Gasquet, 21, at 2007 Mumbai and 1st Frenchman to win Auckland title in tournament history (since 1956).  
> Saved 4 MPs vs. Evans en route to 2nd ATP Tour title at 2020 Antwerp.  
> Rallied from 2 sets down to defeat countryman Monfils en route to 2019 Wimbledon 4R.

**NOTE:** Humbert seeks 14th ATP Tour QF of his career and 3rd on grass (also 2019 Newport, 2021 Stuttgart).

## **[Q] Nikoloz Basilashvili (GEO) vs [Q] Arthur Rinderknech (FRA) First Meeting**

**Nikoloz Basilashvili** | Age: 29 | World No. 30 | Career-High No. 16 | 2021: 17-15 (2 Titles) | Halle: 2-2 (2018, 2021 2R)  
> Former World No. 16 is 15-2 on German clay with titles at 2018 Hamburg, 2019 Hamburg and 2021 Munich.  
> Saved 1 MP vs. 3-time champion Federer en route to 2021 Doha title.  
> Defeated No. 4 Del Potro for biggest win of career in 2018 Beijing final.  
> Posted career-high 29 wins in 2018, including 3 victories en route to US Open 4R.  
> Father, Nodar, was a dancer in Georgian national ballet.

**NOTE:** Basilashvili seeks 22nd ATP Tour QF of his career and 2nd on grass (also 2018 Antalya).

**Arthur Rinderknech** | Age: 25 | World No. 119 | Career-High No. 117 | 2021: 6-5 (2 QFs) | Halle: 1-0 (2021 2R)  
> Broke into Top 200 in 2020 and achieved career-high No. 117 in 2021 after reaching 1st ATP Tour QFs on home soil at Marseille as Q and Lyon as LL.  
> Captured Challenger titles at 2020 Rennes, 2020 Calgary and 2021 Istanbul as Q.  
> Five-time All-American at Texas A&M University (3 singles, 2 doubles), where he graduated from Mays Business School in 2018.  
> Since graduating from college, played professionally in 24 different countries on 5 continents and won 5 ITF titles.  
> Mother, Virginie Paquet, peaked at No. 208 in WTA; cousin, Benjamin Balleret, reached career-high No. 204 on ATP Tour.

**NOTE:** Rinderknech, who defeated [LL] Hanfmann in his grass-court debut on Tuesday, seeks his 3rd QF of 2021.