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TENNIS LEGENDS GATHER AT 'NO. 1 CELEBRATION' TO COMMEMORATE 40 YEARS OF EMIRATES ATP RANKINGS

NEW YORK — ATP World Tour No. 1s past and present gathered to mark the 40th anniversary of the Emirates ATP Rankings at the 'No. 1 Celebration', Friday night at the Waldorf Astoria in New York City.



Ilie Nastase, who became the first ATP World No. 1 on 23 August 1973, was present to be honoured on the night, along with successors John Newcombe, Jimmy Connors, Bjorn Borg, John McEnroe, Ivan Lendl, Mats Wilander, Stefan Edberg, Jim Courier, Marcelo Rios, Carlos Moya, Yevgeny Kafelnikov, Gustavo Kuerten, Lleyton Hewitt, Juan Carlos Ferrero, Andy Roddick,

Roger Federer, Rafael Nadal and Novak Djokovic.

The legends each took part in an on-stage Q&A with Justin Gimelstob and Guy Forget, sharing their experiences of reaching the summit of world tennis, before posing for a group photo with the ATP World Tour No. 1 trophy. Each year-end No. 1 received an engraved replica of the trophy.

"It's definitely an ultimate goal for any athlete, not just tennis players," said current World No. 1 Djokovic. "Growing up, in early childhood, you are inspired to show that love and appreciation and passion towards the sport, and of course there is this big drive - waking up every morning, working so hard, developing skills to be No. 1 in the world. Not many players have achieved that and to sit with fellow champions, it's an incredible feeling... I'm really honoured to be here."

Federer, who held the No. 1 ranking for a record 302 weeks, spoke about sharing the stage with the players who inspired him. "It was very important for me to have someone to look up to. Stefan was one of them, so it's nice to see you here tonight and all the others players... We've put such huge effort in the game, and that's a platform we can enjoy today. So it's unbelievable. Thanks for being an inspiration Stefan, all of you here today."

On a lighter note, a self-deprecating Roddick said, "It is an honour to be the worst player in the room." Fellow American Courier added, "It's a great honour to be here among friends. I dreamed of being in this arena, and to be part of this group is mind-blowing."

The evening, part of the broader ATP Heritage programme, also included a tribute to former ATP Executive Chairman and President Brad Drewett, who passed away in May following a battle with Motor Neurone Disease. Drewett founded the ATP Heritage programme earlier this year.

"Brad cherished the history of the ATP and men's professional tennis in general," said Mark Young, CEO ATP Americas. "Tonight's celebration is a reflection of that. It was his vision to see all the No. 1 players gathered together as we honoured their achievements."

The ATP Heritage programme, with the support of its founding partner Rolex, will continue to serve as a platform to celebrate the rich history of the ATP and the remarkable achievements of the world's greatest players throughout history.



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About the ATP

The ATP is the governing body of the men's professional tennis circuits - the ATP World Tour, the ATP Challenger Tour and the ATP Champions Tour. With 61 tournaments in 31 countries, the ATP World Tour showcases the finest male athletes competing in the world's most exciting venues. From Australia to Europe and the Americas to Asia, the stars of the 2013 ATP World Tour will battle for prestigious titles and Emirates ATP Rankings points at ATP World Tour Masters 1000, 500 and 250 events, as well as Grand Slams (non ATP events). At the end of the season only the world's top 8 qualified singles players and doubles teams, based on their performance throughout the year, will compete for the last title of the season at the Barclays ATP World Tour Finals. Held at The O2 in London, the event will officially crown the 2013 ATP World Tour No.1 presented by Emirates. For more information, please visit www.ATPWorldTour.com.



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