



## 2023 AUSTRALIAN OPEN

### Wheelchair Tournament Preview

In 2002, the first Grand Slam wheelchair tournament was held at the Australian Open, with Robin Ammerlaan and Esther Vergeer winning the inaugural men's and women's wheelchair singles events. Men's and women's wheelchair doubles tournaments were introduced here in 2004, while the first Australian Open quad wheelchair singles and doubles events were contested in 2008, with Peter Norfolk becoming the first Australian Open quad singles champion.

These are the 22nd editions of the Australian Open men's and women's wheelchair singles events and the 16th edition of the Australian Open quad wheelchair singles event. The 2023 Australian Open is the 111th edition of the event overall and is being played at Melbourne Park for the 36th time, having first been played here in 1988, when the venue was known as Flinders Park.

The men's and women's wheelchair singles draws have been expanded to 16 players for the first time in 2023, while 8 players will compete for the quad wheelchair singles title this year.

#### DE GROOT BIDS FOR NINTH STRAIGHT SLAM TITLE

Netherlands' Diede de Groot recorded 2 consecutive Grand Slam-winning seasons in 2021 and 2022, becoming the first tennis player, in any discipline, to win the Grand Slam in back-to-back years. She is the 2-time defending champion here – having defeated Yui Kamiji to win the title in 2021 and Aniek van Koot to win the title last year – and a 4-time Australian Open singles champion overall.

De Groot is bidding to win a 9th consecutive Grand Slam title here and close the gap on Shingo Kunieda and Vergeer at the top of the all-time list for longest Grand Slam wheelchair singles title-winning streak. Her last defeat at a Grand Slam came in the semifinals at 2020 Roland Garros, when she fell to Momoko Ohtani in straight sets.

Longest Grand Slam wheelchair singles title-winning streaks

Player	Length of streak	Years
Shingo Kunieda	12	2007-11
Esther Vergeer	11	2005-10
<b>Diede de Groot</b>	<b>9??</b>	<b>2021-23??</b>
Esther Vergeer	7	2010-12
Shingo Kunieda	6	2014-15
Dylan Alcott	5	2018-19
Dylan Alcott	5	2020-21
Peter Norfolk	5	2007-10

Note: 2017 was the first season when all four Grand Slam tournaments held men's and women's wheelchair singles events. The quad wheelchair singles events have been held at all four Grand Slam tournaments since 2019.

## THE POST-KUNIEDA ERA BEGINS

Kunieda, a 28-time Grand Slam wheelchair singles champion and 22-time Grand Slam wheelchair doubles champion, announced his retirement from the sport on Sunday, meaning the men's wheelchair singles draw has no defending champion here this year. Since making his debut here in 2007, Kunieda has missed the event due to injury on just 2 occasions (in 2012 and 2017) and retires as an 11-time Australian Open wheelchair singles champion.

Kunieda's retirement means that the man he beat in last year's final here, Alfie Hewett, is elevated to the No. 1 ranking – and Hewett will bid to win his first Australian Open title this week, having finished as runner-up in 2021 (when he fell to Joachim Gerard) and last year.

2021 champion Gerard competes here as No. 4 seed, with another former Australian Open winner in the men's draw is No. 2 seed Gustavo Fernandez (champion in 2017 and 2019). 2012 champion Maikel Scheffers is competing here for the first time since 2017, while 2016 champion Gordon Reid is also in the men's draw this year.

No. 3 seed Takumi Oda is bidding to become the 2nd Japanese man (after Kunieda) to win a Grand Slam wheelchair singles title, and the 4th Japanese player to do so – after Kunieda (28 Grand Slam singles titles), Kamiji (8) and Mie Yaosa (one).

## DUTCH DOMINANCE IN QUAD SINGLES

Sam Schroder defeated Dylan Alcott in the 2022 Australian Open quad wheelchair singles final to deny the Australian a Grand Slam title in his last event prior to retirement. It was Schroder's 2nd Grand Slam title, having won his first by defeating Alcott in the final at the 2020 US Open.

The rivalry between Schroder and fellow Dutchman Niels Vink dominated the quad division in 2022, with Vink winning his first Grand Slam title by defeating Schroder in the final at Roland Garros. The pair also contested the quad singles finals at both Wimbledon and the US Open, with Schroder triumphing in London and Vink victorious in New York.

Vink ended the year as the world No. 1 – but was just 9 points ahead of Schroder in the rankings. Vink, who has fallen to Alcott on both of his previous Australian Open appearances, plays here as No. 1 seed, while Schroder is No. 2 seed.

## DE GROOT CHASES DOWN ALL-TIME GREATS

De Groot is bidding to win her 5th Australian Open title and claim sole ownership of 4th place on the list for most Australian Open wheelchair singles titles, ahead of 4-time quad champion Norfolk.

Three-time Australian Open champion David Wagner is also aiming to win another title here and ascend the list, while the trio of Fernandez, Kamiji and Jiske Griffioen are all bidding to win their 3rd Australian Open singles titles this year.

Most Australian Open wheelchair singles titles (all categories)

Player	Roland Garros singles titles
Shingo Kunieda	11
Esther Vergeer	9
Dylan Alcott	7
<b>Diede de Groot</b>	<b>4</b>
Peter Norfolk	4
David Hall	3
<b>David Wagner</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Gustavo Fernandez</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Jiske Griffioen</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Yui Kamiji</b>	<b>2</b>

Players competing at the 2023 Australian Open in **bold**

## HEWETT AND FERNANDEZ LEAD ACTIVE PLAYERS

Kunieda enjoys a healthy lead at the top of the all-time list for most Grand Slam wheelchair singles titles (in any category), having retired with 28 Grand Slam titles to his name – including victories at the Australian Open, Roland Garros and Wimbledon in 2022.

Hewett claimed sole ownership of 2nd place on the list for most Grand Slam men's wheelchair singles titles by winning his 6th major title at the US Open last year. Fernandez will bid to draw level with him again by winning his 6th Grand Slam title here. Should 2-time Grand Slam champions Gerard or Reid win the title here this year, they will equal the Ammerlaan and David Hall in 5th place on the list.

**Most Grand Slam men's wheelchair singles titles**

Player	Grand Slam singles titles
Shingo Kunieda	28
<b>Alfie Hewett</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Gustavo Fernandez</b>	<b>5</b>
Stephane Houdet	4
Robin Ammerlaan	3
David Hall	3

Players competing at the 2023 Australian Open in **bold**

## DE GROOT BIDS TO CLOSE GAP ON VERGEER

De Groot's streak of 8 consecutive Grand Slam singles titles has seen her move well clear of Kamiji in 2nd place on the all-time list for most Grand Slam women's wheelchair singles titles – she is closing in on Vergeer at the top of the list, and aims for her 17th major singles title here this week.

Fellow Dutch players Griffioen and Van Koot – both former Australian Open singles champions – are also bidding to add to their tallies, while Kamiji, the only non-Dutch player in the Top 5 of the list, is aiming for her 9th Grand Slam title.

**Most Grand Slam women's wheelchair singles titles**

Player	Grand Slam singles titles
Esther Vergeer	21
<b>Diede de Groot</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Yui Kamiji</b>	<b>8</b>
Jiske Griffioen	4
Aniek van Koot	3

Players competing at the 2023 Australian Open in **bold**

## THE RACE TO CATCH ALCOTT

Alcott retired having won a total of 15 Grand Slam quad wheelchair singles titles – comfortably ahead of Peter Norfolk and Wagner's tallies of 6 major titles each.

Wagner will bid to win a 7th Grand Slam title and claim sole ownership of 2nd place on the list here. Schroder aims for his 4th Grand Slam title, while a title-victory for either Vink or Andy Lapthorne here would see them equal Schroder in 4th place on the list.

**Most Grand Slam quad wheelchair singles titles**

Player	Grand Slam singles titles
Dylan Alcott	15
Peter Norfolk	6
<b>David Wagner</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Sam Schroder</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Andy Lapthorne</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Niels Vink</b>	<b>2</b>

Players competing at the 2023 Australian Open in **bold**

## GRAND SLAM PREPARATION

Most of the field competing at the Australian Open this week have played at the Victorian Wheelchair Open and the Melbourne Wheelchair Open over the last 2 weeks, with both events having been contested at the Hume Tennis Centre in the north of Melbourne.

### Victorian Wheelchair Open (10-14 Jan) – final results

Event	Champion	Runner-up
Men's singles	Joachim Gerard	Ruben Spaargaren
Women's singles	Yui Kamiji	Jiske Griffioen
Quad singles	Heath Davidson	Andy Lapthorne

### Melbourne Wheelchair Open (16-20 Jan) – final results

Event	Champion	Runner-up
Men's singles	Alfie Hewett	Tokito Oda
Women's singles	Dieude de Groot	Yui Kamiji
Quad singles	Niels Vink	Sam Schroder

## 2022 LEADERS LOOK TO CONTINUE THE MOMENTUM

Ruben Spaargaren topped the list for most victories in 2022 – across men's, women's and quad categories – at ITF 2 Series-level and above. Hewett, the No. 1 seed here, won 38 matches and lost just 6 last season.

### 2022 men's wheelchair singles win-loss (ITF 2 Series and above)

Rank	Player	2022 win-loss
1.	Ruben Spaargaren	44-14
2.	Shingo Kunieda*	41-5
3.	Alfie Hewett	38-6
4=	Martin de la Puente Gustavo Fernandez	37-22 37-14

\*not competing at the Australian Open

Kamiji and Zhu Zhenzhen led the women's wheelchair singles tour for most match-wins last year – but De Groot won only one match fewer and did not lose a match during the 2022 season.

### 2022 women's wheelchair singles win-loss (ITF 2 Series and above)

Rank	Player	2022 win-loss
1=	Yui Kamiji Zhu Zhenzhen	39-8 39-18
3.	Dieude de Groot	38-0
4.	Jiske Griffioen	27-10
5=	Manami Tanaka Aniek van Koot	24-17 24-14

Schroder and Vink were the only players on the quad wheelchair singles tour to record 30 match-wins in 2022 – and most of their defeats last season came against one another, with 3 of Vink's 4 defeats coming against Schroder and 5 of Schroder's 6 defeats coming against Vink.

### 2022 quad wheelchair singles win-loss (ITF 2 Series and above)

Rank	Player	2022 win-loss
1.	Sam Schroder	39-6
2.	Niels Vink	36-4
3.	David Wagner	26-18
4.	Robert Shaw	25-11
5.	Ymanitu Silva	23-16

## YOUNGEST AND OLDEST

At just 16 years 265 days, Oda is the youngest player to compete in the wheelchair event here this year – he is more than 32 years younger than the oldest player, Wagner (48 years 330 days). At Roland Garros last year, Oda became the youngest wheelchair player to have ever contested a Grand Slam.

### Youngest and oldest players in Australian Open wheelchair events

Event	Youngest player (age)	Oldest player (age)
Men's singles	Tokito Oda (16 years 265 days)	Maikel Scheffers (40 years 143 days)
Women's singles	Shiori Funamizu (22 years 81 days)	Lucy Shuker (42 years 245 days)
Quad singles	Niels Vink (20 years 53 days)	David Wagner (48 years 330 days)

NB ages calculated on final day of the tournament

## HOME FAVOURITES

Two Australian players have won Australian Open wheelchair singles titles – Alcott won 7 consecutive quad wheelchair singles titles here in 2015-21, while Hall won 3 men's wheelchair singles titles here in 2003-05.

Among the 4 Grand Slam tournaments, the Australian Open has the most-recent home champion in a wheelchair singles event thanks to Alcott's 7 years of success in the quad division.

### Most-recent home wheelchair singles champions

Grand Slam	Most-recent home wheelchair' singles champion
Australian Open	Dylan Alcott (2021)
Roland Garros	Stephane Houdet (2013)
Wimbledon	Gordon Reid (2016)
US Open	David Wagner (2017)

There are just 2 Australian players competing in the wheelchair tournament here this year – Ben Weekes in the men's singles and Heath Davidson in the the quad singles.

## LEFTHANDERS

There are 10 lefthanders in the wheelchair singles draws at the Australian Open this year – 6 in the women's event (Shiori Funamizu, Kamiji, Kgoothatso Montjane, Maria Florencia Moreno, Van Koot and Zhu) and 2 each in the men's (Oda and Reid) and quad (Laphorne and Schroder) events. Kamiji, Reid, Schroder and Van Koot are the only lefthanded players to have won an Australian Open singles title.

## COUNTRY COUNTDOWN

A total of 15 nations are represented in the wheelchair singles draws at 2022 Wimbledon, with Japan having the most players competing across the 3 events overall. Great Britain, Netherlands and USA are the only 3 nations with representatives in each of the men's, women's and quad wheelchair events here.

Nation	Men's singles	Women's singles	Quad singles	Total
Japan	4	5	0	9
Netherlands	3	3	2	8
Great Britain	3	1	1	5
USA	1	1	1	3
Argentina	1	1	0	2
Australia	1	0	1	2
Chile	1	1	0	2
South Africa	0	1	1	2
Belgium	1	0	0	1
Brazil	0	0	1	1
Canada	0	0	1	1
China, P.R.	0	1	0	1
Colombia	0	1	0	1
Germany	0	1	0	1
Spain	1	0	0	1

## AUSTRALIAN OPEN HONOUR ROLL

A total of 20 players have won an Australian Open wheelchair singles title – 8 in the men's category, 8 in the women's category and 4 in the quad category. Of the 20 champions, 10 have won the title here on multiple occasions.

### Australian Open wheelchair singles honour roll

Year	Men's singles champion	Women's singles champion	Quad singles champion
2002	Robin Ammerlaan (NED)	Esther Vergeer (NED)	no tournament
2003	David Hall (AUS)	Esther Vergeer (NED)	no tournament
2004	David Hall (AUS)	Esther Vergeer (NED)	no tournament
2005	David Hall (AUS)	Mie Yaosa (JPN)	no tournament
2006	Michael Jeremiasz (FRA)	Esther Vergeer (NED)	no tournament
2007	Shingo Kunieda (JPN)	Esther Vergeer (NED)	no tournament
2008	Shingo Kunieda (JPN)	Esther Vergeer (NED)	Peter Norfolk (GBR)
2009	Shingo Kunieda (JPN)	Esther Vergeer (NED)	Peter Norfolk (GBR)
2010	Shingo Kunieda (JPN)	Korie Homan (NED)	Peter Norfolk (GBR)
2011	Shingo Kunieda (JPN)	Esther Vergeer (NED)	David Wagner (USA)
2012	Maikel Scheffers (NED)	Esther Vergeer (NED)	Peter Norfolk (GBR)
2013	Shingo Kunieda (JPN)	Aniek van Koot (NED)	David Wagner (USA)
2014	Shingo Kunieda (JPN)	Sabine Ellerbrock (GER)	David Wagner (USA)
2015	Shingo Kunieda (JPN)	Jiske Griffioen (NED)	Dylan Alcott (AUS)
2016	Gordon Reid (GBR)	Jiske Griffioen (NED)	Dylan Alcott (AUS)
2017	Gustavo Fernandez (ARG)	Yui Kamiji (JPN)	Dylan Alcott (AUS)
2018	Shingo Kunieda (JPN)	Diede de Groot (NED)	Dylan Alcott (AUS)
2019	Gustavo Fernandez (ARG)	Diede de Groot (NED)	Dylan Alcott (AUS)
2020	Shingo Kunieda (JPN)	Yui Kamiji (JPN)	Dylan Alcott (AUS)
2021	Joachim Gerard (BEL)	Diede de Groot (NED)	Dylan Alcott (AUS)
2022	Shingo Kunieda (JPN)	Diede de Groot (NED)	Sam Schroder (NED)
2023	???	???	???