

## NEWS & FEATURES

### *Tournament Feature*

### **Oudin Earns Fifth Major ITF title, Buchanan Gets His First at Easter Bowl Sock and Tsay Claim 16s Titles; Rinaldi and Vickery Capture 14s Crowns**

by [Colette Lewis](#), 17 April 2008

### **ITF B1 Closed**

[Melanie Oudin](#) and [Chase Buchanan](#) joined forty years of [Easter Bowl](#) champions last week in the desert heat of Rancho Mirage, Calif., earning titles in the second of two April ITF Grade 1 events held in the Golden State.



[Oudin](#) (right) takes a plunge with [A. Anghelescu](#) © [ZooTennis.com](#)

Oudin, a 16-year-old from Marietta, Ga. is a veteran of the often grueling back-to-back ITF scheduling, winning last December's [Eddie Herr title](#), then reaching the final of the [Orange Bowl](#) the following week. With a 6-7(1), 6-1, 6-3 victory over unseeded [Lauren Embree](#) in Saturday's final, Oudin exceeded that run of excellence, adding the Easter Bowl crown to the [International Spring Championship](#) title she earned the previous Sunday in Carson, Calif.

[Chase Buchanan](#), also 16, had reached the semifinals in Carson, and when No. 2 seed [Jarmere Jenkins](#), who had beaten him there, was unable to take the court for his second round Easter Bowl match following a rotator cuff injury, Buchanan, the No. 4 seed, became a favorite. His cause was also helped by [Frank Carleton](#)'s upset of No. 1 seed and ISC champion [Bradley Klahn](#) in the third round.

In the final, Buchanan was heavily favored over No. 13 seed [Alex Llompart](#) of Puerto Rico, who had upset No. 3 seed [Tennys Sandgren](#) in the semifinals. Buchanan came out firing; he hit four winners on the first four points and never let up, taking the 6-1, 6-0 decision in just under an hour.

"I wanted to attack the whole time," said Buchanan, who is from New Albany, Ohio, and trains at the USTA's High Performance Academy in Boca Raton. "He likes to get in long points, and I'm fit enough to play that way when I need to, but there's no need to when he can feel the pressure of me coming in."

Llompart served well, but Buchanan missed very few returns, and even when Llompart hit a good approach and tried to close, he was either passed or lobbed. The lobs were especially demoralizing to Llompart, who became more reluctant to finish as the match went on.



Boys' 18s Champion [Chase Buchanan](#) © [ZooTennis.com](#)

"He played very good," said Llompart, who is now training at Newcombe's Tennis Academy in Texas. "He missed like four balls in the whole match. I came into the match a little anxious, a little tight, but he just played very good, and I didn't play my best." The top-seeded Oudin certainly didn't play her best in the final, but her usual level is so high that even when she doesn't, she can still find a way to win.

Embree, a 17-year-old from Marco Island, Fla., was determined to avoid a repeat of their last meeting, in the finals of the Spring Nationals in Mobile last year, when she failed to win a game from Oudin.

Her strategy - to keep Oudin from getting a comfortable rhythm in groundstroke rallies - worked perfectly in the first set.

"I had a game plan coming into it," said Embree. "Last time I didn't really know what to do. She likes pace, so I mixed it up. I tried not to give her too many out wide because she's really good on the run."

Embree hit many a high looping shot up the middle, and Oudin admitted that she knew she was in for a long day from the outset.

"From the beginning I knew it was going to be different," Oudin said. "I knew I played really, really well last time, and when we started off today, I was making some errors,

and I could tell it wasn't going to be that perfect day like it was last time. She was playing well and not missing, so I knew it was going to be tough."

Calling her performance in the first set tiebreaker "horrible," Oudin regrouped in the second, when temperatures in the 90s began to sap the energy of Embree, who doesn't shy away from long points that are often extended due to her defense. Both players welcomed the ten-minute extreme-heat break after the split, but it was Oudin who continued to dominate after they returned to court. Embree fought back from 1-5 down in the third, but Oudin stopped her surge with an excellent service game at 5-3. Two aces and a volley winner later and Oudin had her fifth Grade 1 ITF title since last September. She joins Sam Querrey as the only other player to win both Carson and the Easter Bowl titles since the former tournament was established in 2005.

After a celebratory plunge in a resort pool that adjoins the resort's tennis complex, Oudin had another celebration in mind.

"I really want to have an ice cream or some kind of dessert," said Oudin, who is scheduled to compete in the \$75,000 Pro Circuit event in Dothan, Ala. next week. "I've been extremely good about not eating anything bad, so I'm definitely going to have dessert."

The 18s girls doubles championship went to the top-seeded team of [Mallory Burdette](#) and [Sloane Stephens](#), who defeated [Shinann Featherston](#) and [Lauren McHale](#), the No. 2 seeds, 6-4, 6-3. Unseeded [Denis Lin](#) and [Kyle McMorrow](#) took the boys 18s doubles trophy, outlasting the eighth seeded team of Llompart and [Jose Sierra-Short](#) 7-6(1), 2-6, 10-7. As at Carson, the 18s doubles were played using the no-ad, match-tiebreaker scoring format.