

Federer struggles past fighting Ferrer

Roger Federer has squeezed past fighting Spaniard David Ferrer 6-3,7-6 (16-14), and booked a semi-final berth in the Davidoff Swiss Indoors.

In his toughest test of the week at the tournament Friday, the Swiss needed to draw upon his tennis arsenal to hold off the fifth seed.

The second-set decider was a battle of nerves as Ferrer refused to roll over in his opponent's hometown.

He next faces Thai Paradorn Srichaphan, who defeated Jose Acasuro of Argentina 7-6 (7-2), 6-3.

The Thai has now reached his third semi-final in seven weeks after Beijing and Bangkok.

Federer is keen to give his hometown fans the title they have been yearning for ever since he lost the 2000 final to Thomas Enqvist and went down a year later in the title match to Tim Henman.

Federer was joined by another successful Swiss as Stanislas Wawrinka got past second seed David Nalbandian 7-6 (9-7), 6-2.

Nalbandian, sixth in the race for the Masters Cup in Shanghai, admitted he was beaten on the day. 'He played better than me, I was always on the defensive,' said the Argentine.

Chile's Masters Cup contender Fernando Gonzalez strengthened his hand in a bid for the season-ending event, winning a war of attrition to knock off a teenaged challenger.

The defending champion spent more than two hours in taming volatile 18-year-old Argentine Juan Del Potro, 5-7, 6-4, 6-4.

Del Potro went up a break in the final set but lost it, then erupted in a burst of temper after the experienced Gonzalez earned another break to move into winning position.

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