

Rafael nadal ties with  
bjorn borg by winning  
french open essay



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

Bjorn Borg's missed the opportunity of handing the Coupe des Mousquetaires over to his successor by not making it to Roland Garros on Sunday. Borg holds the record by winning six French Open singles titles thirty years ago.

During that time, fans have believed the impossibility of any other baseliner to prop up that can match his domination at the greatest tennis tournament on clay courts in the world. Spain's Rafael Nadal had not yet been born during that sixth win, but he has just won his own sixth title by winning the match against the Swiss Roger Federer. After the 7-5, 7-6 (7-3), 5-7, 6-1 win, Nadal admitted it was an honor to have won French Opens to the same number as Borg. "The real satisfaction comes from all the work you do before you get there," he said, pointing out that there were tough moments as well as good ones. This year, difficult moments seemed to be more common, as Nadal, who was already top-ranked, had to play for five sets, a first for him at the French Open. That was during the first round played against John Isner of the United States.

Nadal also had issues with his depth, confidence, and timing going into his second week. Toni Nadal, his uncle and coach, said that this was the toughest of all. He described Rafael as "more nervous," not managing to hit the ball really well. "That gives you a real sense of insecurity," he said. Federer, who was ranked third, held the record for men at 16 major singles titles. He had reportedly been a bit of a security blanket for Nadal as far as the French Open went.

The rivalry between them had been among the greatest in all of tennis history, although the suspense was a bit short-lived in Paris. At Roland

Garros, Nadal started off 5-0 versus Federer, with four of those wins having come during finals. The match, though slightly more thrilling compared to Nadal's win of 6-1, 6-3, 6-0 back in 2008, also ended with Nadal using his trademark topspin forehand. Having the Spanish-speaking Federer in Paris roused the affection of fans, but even the chants of "Ro-ger, Ro-ger" were not enough to push the 29-year-old to a victory over the 25-year-old who had a relatively weaker but solid chanting of "Ra-fa," too.

One of the more significant chances that Federer lost was the set point that he did not manage to convert, following Nadal's service at 2-5 during the first set. His backhand drop shot, which at other times in the match were used effectively, landed wide this particular time. "Rafa is tough," admitted Federer, whose play quality varied greatly throughout the match. Some times he would enjoy a surge, such as during the third set rally from a deficit of 2-4. Eventually, a forehand error cost Federer the match, and Nadal, 10-time major winner, fell to his knees, cradling his head in his hands, just before jogging over to shake Federer's hand yet another time.