



Gulf News Archives

### Milestone victory

Nicolas Kiefer of Germany lifts the trophy after winning the Dubai Duty Free Tennis Championships in 2000.

## Kiefer win ended eight-year wait

German was the first top seed to lift Dubai tennis trophy

*Staff Report*

Dubai History was made when, at last and after eight years, the top seed won the Dubai Duty Free Tennis Championships. The one to do it was the player who had finished as runner-up the year before: Nicolas Kiefer.

The German, confusingly known as 'Kiwi', struggled through his early matches as he was taken to three sets by qualifier Lars Burgsmuller and then Alberto Martin. In the quarter-finals he drew revenge for his final

defeat the year before by beating Jerome Golmard, in the semi-finals he overcame Albert Costa and in the final he defeated former world number one Juan Carlos Ferrero 7-5 4-6 6-3.

The second seed was Magnus Norman but he failed to get beyond the first round as he was beaten in straight sets by Karim Alami. The Moroccan went on to beat Fernando Vicente and Jiri Novak before conceding his semi-final to Ferrero. His efforts in upsetting a top opponent, like Hicham Arazi's win two years before

over Yevgeny Kafelnikov, was well received by local tennis fans.

Ferrero won his first two rounds in straight sets before being tested in the quarter-finals by fellow Spaniard Felix Mantilla, edging through that challenge 7-6 in a final set tiebreak.

The doubles once again featured several of the best teams in the world, with third seeds Jiri Novak and David Rikl putting themselves on the champions board with a 6-2 7-5 win over the unseeded pairing of Robbie Koenig and Peter Tramacchi.