WTA STORYLINES
DOHA & DUBAI / FEBRUARY 2026

Setting The Scene

Tournament	Champion	Runner-Up
Adelaide International	Mirra Andreeva	Victoria Mboko (CAN)
Hobart International	Elisabetta Cocciaretto (ITA)	Iva Jovic (USA)
Australian Open	Elena Rybakina (KAZ)	Aryna Sabalenka
Ostrava Open	Katie Boulter (GBR)	Tamara Korpatsch (GER)
Mubadala Abu Dhabi Open	Sara Bejlek (CZE)	Ekaterina Alexandrova
Transylvania Open	Sorana Cirstea (ROU)	Emma Raducanu (GBR)
Qatar TotalEnergies Open	???	???

WTA Legends

- 25 years since **Martina Hingis** won the first staging of the Qatar TotalEnergies Open in Doha. She defeated Sandrine Testud in the 2001 final
- 25 years since **Hingis** won first staging of the Dubai Duty Free Tennis Championships, overcoming Natalie Tauziat in the title match in 2001
- Former PIF WTA World No.1 and 10-time WTA title winner **Garbiñe Muguruza** and husband Arthur Borges announced the birth of their son Marcos earlier this month

On-Court Storylines (*for statistical queries, please contact WTAstats@wtatennis.com*)

- On Monday 2 February **Belinda Bencic** and **Elina Svitolina** made history by marking the first time **two mothers** have been ranked inside the **WTA Top 10**. Switzerland's Bencic returned to the elite ranking bracket in mid-January for the first time since stepping away from the court in September 2023 to give birth to daughter Bella. She was then joined by Svitolina, mom to Skai, following the Ukrainian's incredible semifinal run at the Australian Open which created this landmark moment which saw two mothers simultaneously ranked inside the Top 10 for the first time in WTA history
- **Elise Mertens** reclaimed the PIF WTA World No.1 Doubles Ranking on February 2, with that week marking her 40th in the top spot. She overtook Katerina Siniakova who had held the No.1 ranking since September of last year
- **Elena Rybakina** returns to action at Doha for the first time since lifting her second Grand Slam title at the Australian Open. The Kazakh has an impressive **14-1** record across her last three tournaments and finished runner-up in Doha in 2024 (losing to Swiatek in the final)
- **Aryna Sabalenka** (who withdrew from Doha) will extend her stay atop the PIF WTA Rankings spending her **77th** (Feb 9) and **78th** (Feb 16) weeks at No.1 across Doha and Dubai
- **Iga Swiatek** returns to the Middle East where she has previously reached the **final four times** - winning the title in Doha from 2022-24 and reaching the final once in Dubai (2023, R-Up). Only three players have reached more singles finals at the two events - Svetlana Kuznetsova, Petra Kvitova and Justine Henin

Partnerships / Commercial

- **Mercedes-Benz** made its WTA Tour debut as Premier Partner at the Mubadala Abu Dhabi Open and the Ostrava Open, marking the first time the **iconic star** has appeared on net post signage at WTA events
- The collaboration reinforces **Mercedes-Benz's** commitment to elite women's sport, global growth and the empowerment of female athletes. As Premier Partner and Exclusive Automobile Partner, Mercedes-Benz will be present at more than 30 WTA tournaments worldwide in 2026, delivering premium experiences for players, fans and guests under the banner **WTA Tour – Driven by Mercedes-Benz**

Coaches

- The **WTA's Coaches Inclusion Progra**m, which provides on-site tournament experience, mentorship and shadowing opportunities **for women looking to become coaches**, continues to expand. The USTA spotlighted former player Vivian Segnini's experience in growing the game forward.

WTA 125 Snapshot

- The **Nordea Open in Bastad** (Sweden) has been voted as the **WTA 125 Tournament of the Year** for an incredible fourth year in a row. It was recognized by the WTA athlete body following another outstanding edition held in July of last year which highlighted the event's flagship hospitality, hard-working event team and overall high standards visible across the tournament. The **Makarska Open (Croatia)** finished in a close second place with the **Open Angers Loire Trélazé (France)** being voted into third place
- **Camila Osorio** won the second WTA 125 title on offer of the 2026 season as she triumphed at the Philippine Women's Open (Manilla), describing her first title on hard court as a "**fairytale**"

PIF Race to the WTA Finals

- The WTA provided the first official PIF Race to the WTA Finals **Leaderboard update** following the conclusions of the Australian Open, with WTA Finals reigning champion **Elena Rybakina** sitting in the top spot courtesy of a quarterfinal run at Brisbane then triumphing in Melbourne
- Rybakina **dramatically qualified** at the last possible moment during 2025's PIF Race to the WTA Finals and went on to win a **record-breaking $5.235m** as the champion
- In doubles, the team of **Anna Danilina** & **Aleksandra Krunic** are in pole position with over 1600 points following semifinal runs at Brisbane and Adelaide and then a runner-up finish at the Australian Open

Up Next

- March sees the iconic ***Sunshine Double*** get underway with back-to-back WTA 1000 tournaments happening at **Indian Wells** and **Miami**
- Only **four** players have won these events consecutively - Stefanie Graf (1994, 1996), Kim Clijsters (2005), Victoria Azarenka (2016) and most recently Iga Swiatek (2022)