

## IBM Announces New Innovations and Insights using AI and Cloud technology for 2021 US Open, Enabling Fans to Be More Informed, Engaged During Tennis Grand Slam®

- IBM and the USTA bring the tournament to life with IBM Power Rankings with Watson and hyper-relevant Match Insights with Watson, underpinned by an open hybrid cloud architecture

- USTA announces first-ever US Open Fantasy Tennis game, with insights from IBM Watson



FLUSHING, N.Y., Aug. 27, 2021 /PRNewswire/ -- IBM (NYSE: [IBM](#)), the digital partner of the US Open, announced today new fan experiences leveraging artificial intelligence (AI) and hybrid cloud to empower millions of fans around the world with player and match insights so they can experience the iconic tennis Grand Slam in new ways.

Experience the interactive Multichannel News Release here: <https://www.multivu.com/players/English/8668658-ibm-usta-power-rankings-with-watson-2021-us-open/>

### Innovating the Fan Experience

IBM is helping to enhance the US Open digital experience by using AI to keep fans more informed about the players and matches with real-time rankings and insights on the US Open app and USOpen.org. The tournament's new **IBM Power Rankings with Watson** and **Match Insights with Watson** run on IBM Cloud with Red Hat OpenShift, and use AI and natural language processing (NLP) to analyze data and offer key insights ahead of each of the tournament's 254 singles matches. IBM Power Rankings with Watson and Match Insights with Watson will also be integrated into the tournament broadcast on ESPN, and in the United States Tennis Association's (USTA), daily show, "The Changeover."

- **IBM Power Rankings with Watson:** Launched at the [2021 Wimbledon Championship](#), **IBM Power Rankings with Watson** are AI-powered daily rankings of player momentum that will be used at the US Open for the first time this year. The typical tennis tour ranking systems use 52 weeks of historical data to quantify player performance. IBM Power Rankings takes this further by focusing on a player's most recent history. It combines advanced statistical analysis, [Watson Discovery](#)'s NLP capabilities and the secured and open IBM Cloud to analyze player performance data; mine media commentary; measure player momentum; and, highlight it's determination of the most compelling matchups. The IBM Power Rankings Leaderboard will be first posted on the Friday before the tournament, and then will be updated daily during the tournament.
- **Match Insights with Watson:** Match Insights with Watson uses [Watson Discovery](#) to create AI-generated fact sheets to help fans quickly get up to speed ahead of every singles match during the tournament. First launched in 2020, **Match Insights with Watson** is enhanced with updated features including "In the Media," to extract key insights about each player from news sources, and "By the Numbers," which uses natural language generation (NLG) to translate historical statistics into sentences and then uses [IBM Decision Optimization for Watson Studio](#) to help select which insights to display to fans.
- **New Features:** IBM Power Rankings and Match Insights can also help fans better understand what the data is saying about players ahead of upcoming matches with new features including "Likelihood to Win," "Ones to Watch," and "Upset Alerts":
  - **Likelihood to Win (L2W):** A confidence value, expressed in percentages, assigned to each singles match player toward the likelihood that they will win the match.
  - **Ones to Watch:** A pre-tournament perspective of players where the IBM Power Ranking is five or more positions higher than their respective tour rank.
    - Notably, Ones to Watch was tested earlier this year during Wimbledon. Using IBM Watson, the solution identified Matteo Berrettini as a One to Watch, and he made the tournament's final.
  - **Upset Alerts:** Matches identified as "Upset Alerts" are when the IBM Power Rankings favor an underdog, as defined by the tour ranks, to win based on a higher L2W.

The work that IBM does with the USTA for the US Open -- including digital fan experiences, cyber security, digital property support and more -- is built on a hybrid cloud infrastructure that includes IBM Cloud, Watson for Cyber Security, and IBM Watson's enterprise-grade AI capabilities. These are the same technologies IBM is using to digitally transform clients in a variety of industries around the world.

# IBM Power Rankings

|    |    |    |               |                          |
|----|----|----|---------------|--------------------------|
| 18 | +9 | 16 | Elise Mertens | Belgium                  |
| 19 | -3 | 27 | Madison Keys  | United States of America |

**19** IBM POWER RANKING

**DETERMINING FACTORS**

Recent Performance

Media Volume

Sentiment

NEG  POS

NEUTRAL

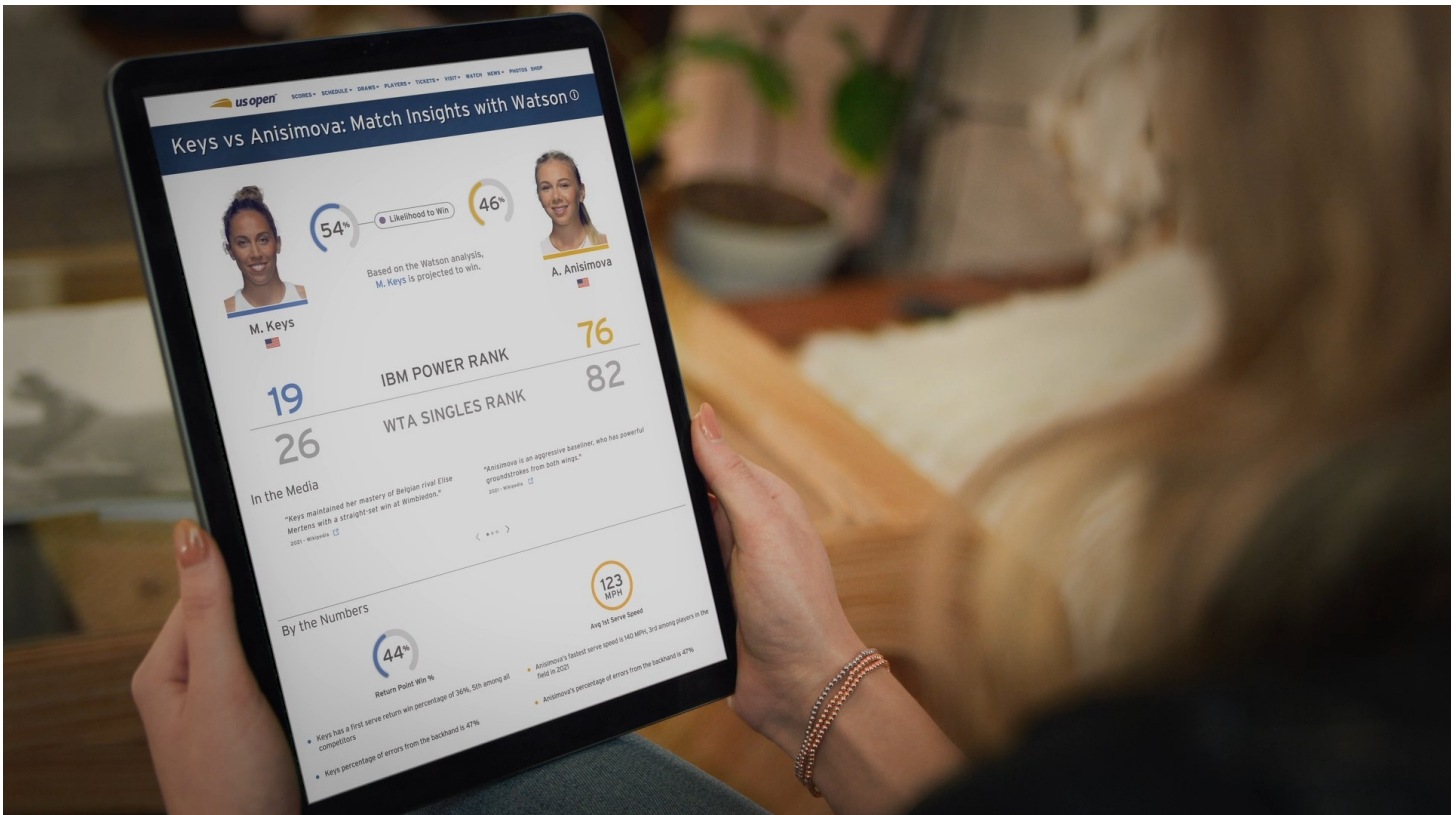
IN PROGRESS vs A. Anisimova

MATCH DETAILS BY IBM SLAMTRACKER

**RANKING OVER TIME**

Legend: IBM Power Ranking (solid blue line), WTA Tour Ranking (dotted line), Match Won (blue circle), Match Lost (dark blue circle)

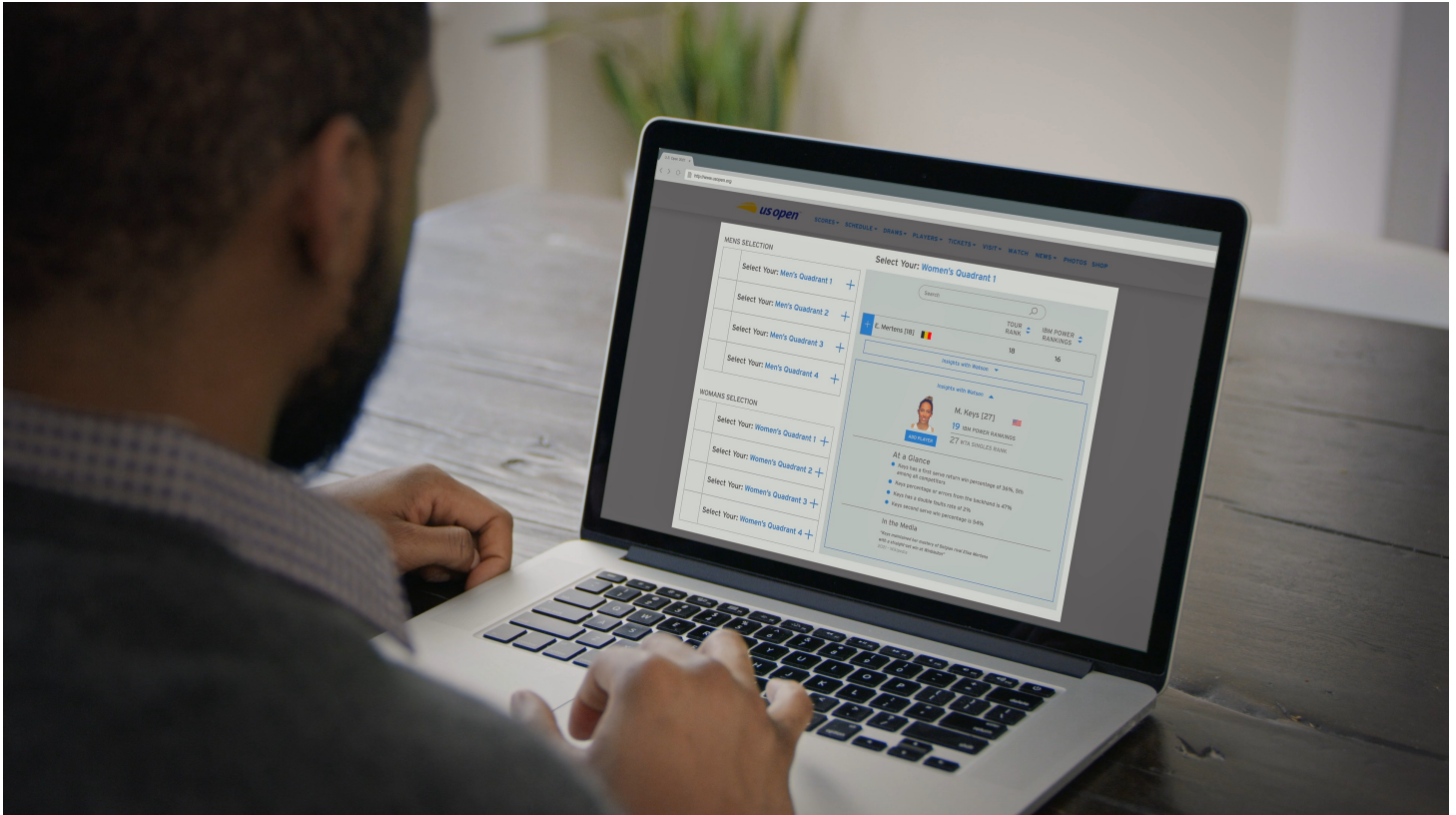
|    |    |    |                   |             |
|----|----|----|-------------------|-------------|
| 20 | +4 | 14 | Victoria Azarenka | Belarus     |
| 21 | +9 | 11 | Belinda Bencic    | Switzerland |



## US Open Fantasy Tennis

New this year, the US Open is also launching US Open Fantasy Tennis on USOpen.org, which will include IBM Power Rankings and insights using [IBM Watson Discovery](#). US Open Fantasy Tennis, the first-ever fantasy experience for this tennis Grand Slam, gives sports fans the opportunity to create a fantasy team of tennis pros that they can follow throughout the two-

week tournament. US Open Fantasy Tennis will be enriched with Match Insights to help users make the most informed fantasy selections for their teams. Match Insights will be available within the US Open Fantasy Tennis interface to help users select a fantasy roster of four men and four women. The data from IBM Power Rankings and Match Insights will change throughout the tournament, giving users a chance to reevaluate their roster during the pre-determined redemption period, before the fourth round of the tournament. In the game, US Open Fantasy players will receive points every time their selected tennis players win a match (100 pts), serve an ace (two pts each), and break a serve (five pts each).



*US Open Fantasy Tennis with IBM Match Insights*

## Engaging Fans Around the World

"Our partnership with IBM enables us to offer advanced data-driven insights to millions of fans worldwide watching or attending the tournament," said Kirsten Corio, Managing Director, Ticketing, Hospitality and Digital Strategy, USTA. "Behind the scenes, IBM Cloud allows us to have the flexibility and security to power our remote operations, innovate new features year over year, and ensure that the US Open Digital Properties run flawlessly to deliver the tournament to the world."

A recent IBM Institute for Business Value survey<sup>1</sup> of over 2,600 US adults highlighted how the COVID-19 pandemic has significantly changed consumer preferences of the fan experience during sports. Two times more US adults surveyed report watching traditional sports on digital platforms during the pandemic (84%) compared to pre-pandemic (41%), and 60% of US adults surveyed reported technologies like AI and cloud computing make sports more engaging to watch for fans.

"Since last year's entirely virtual tournament we've learned even more about what fans are looking for and how technology can help execute a tournament of this scale," said Noah Syken, Vice President of Sports & Entertainment Partnerships, IBM. "We're excited to bring that insight into our continued partnership with the USTA, and to help leverage our AI and cloud expertise to make the tournament more engaging for fans via the digital platforms and their new fan experiences, and the behind-the-

scenes technology that helps enable the tournament."



*Arthur Ashe Stadium*

## **Driven by the Hybrid Cloud**

For 30 years, IBM has been the Official Technology Partner of the US Open. IBM designs and develops the US Open app and website, including fan experiences that help engage with fans globally throughout the tournament. Similar to previous years, the US Open's digital properties run on a combination of on-premises, public, and private clouds, and pull from a variety of data sources and APIs. IBM uses this hybrid cloud approach to collect, integrate, and distribute data and applications across multiple clouds while seamlessly handling a variety of different workloads. This year's innovative solutions were built on IBM Cloud, and containerized using Red Hat OpenShift. The flexibility of the cloud allows for rapid innovation each year, as the IBM developers building these solutions are able to write code for new features once, and deploy them in the many USTA environments.

As experiences have increasingly shifted online during the pandemic, a hybrid cloud architecture gave the US Open's digital operation the flexibility it needed for ongoing remote work while maintaining productivity and certified to the highest commercial level of data security<sup>2</sup>. Due to the ongoing pandemic and lessons learned from the 2020 US Open, the tournament's digital and content teams are operating with a combination of on and off-site team members. A hybrid cloud architecture enables remote operations to function with resiliency, scalability and speed.

The 2021 US Open runs from August 30 through September 12. To see the technology in action, including the daily updated IBM Power Rankings, visit [USOpen.org](https://USOpen.org), or on your mobile device via the US Open app, available in the [Apple](#) and [Android](#) app

stores.

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1 IBM Institute of Business Value Sports and Tech Survey: Survey responses from 2,600 US Adults. August 202.

2 The Federal Information Processing Standard (FIPS) Publication 140-2 is a U.S. government computer security standard used to approve cryptographic modules. It is issued by the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST). Level 4 is the highest level of commercial security.

SOURCE IBM

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Additional assets available online:  [Photos \(5\)](#)  
 [Video \(1\)](#)



<https://stage.mediaroom.com/ibmnewsroom/2021-08-27-IBM-Announces-New-Innovations-and-Insights-using-AI-and-Cloud-technology-for-2021-US-Open,-Enabling-Fans-to-Be-More-Informed,-Engaged-During-Tennis-Grand-Slam-R>