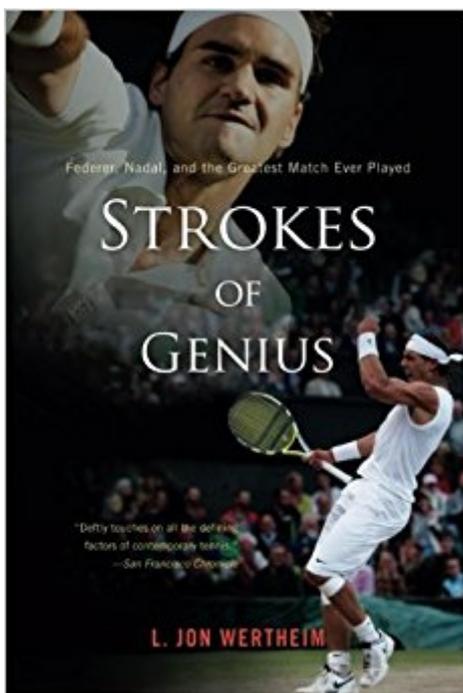


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# Strokes Of Genius: Federer, Nadal, And The Greatest Match Ever Played



## Synopsis

In the 2008 Wimbledon men's final, Centre Court was a stage set worthy of Shakespearean drama. Five-time champion Roger Federer was on track to take his rightful place as the most dominant player in the history of the game. He just needed to cling to his trajectory. So in the last few moments of daylight, Centre Court witnessed a coronation. Only it wasn't a crowning for the Swiss heir apparent but for a swashbuckling Spaniard. Twenty-two-year-old Rafael Nadal prevailed, in five sets, in what was, according to the author, "essentially a four-hour, forty-eight-minute infomercial for everything that is right about tennis—a festival of skill, accuracy, grace, strength, speed, endurance, determination, and sportsmanship." It was also the encapsulation of a fascinating rivalry, hard fought and of historic proportions. In the tradition of John McPhee's classic *Levels of the Game*, *Strokes of Genius* deconstructs this defining moment in sport, using that match as the backbone of a provocative, thoughtful, and entertaining look at the science, art, psychology, technology, strategy, and personality that go into a single tennis match. With vivid, intimate detail, Wertheim re-creates this epic battle in a book that is both a study of the mechanics and art of the game and the portrait of a rivalry as dramatic as that of Ali—Frazier, Palmer—Nicklaus, and McEnroe—Borg.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Tennis is great. At the time of this writing, it is Middle Sunday, the traditional Sunday without action during Wimbledon. The non-appearance of Nadal at this tournament due to injury, combined with Federer's historic win at the French Open and the reading of a book (more on this in a few) has

made me reflect on the significance of last year's Wimbledon Mens Final. In the last several years Roger Federer has become my favorite player to watch, due to his grace, fluidity and ease of play. Some of the other players I enjoyed watching before him include Andre Agassi, Stefan Edberg, and Mats Wilander. All these players had rivals, and that made them raise their games to the next level. For Andre Agassi, of course it was the greatness of Pete Sampras, for Edberg it was Becker and in the case of Wilander one of his main rivals was Ivan Lendl. Still many people talk about the rivalry between McEnroe and Borg as the greatest, which I was too young at the time to fully experience and enjoy. What led me to think about this on a Middle Sunday during Wimbledon 2009? The answer to that question is L. Jon Wertheim's book, *Strokes of Genius*. This book is about Federer, Nadal, the rivalry, Pascal Maria (the match umpire), the game of tennis and most importantly about the greatest game played, Wimbledon 2008 Mens Final. The author does a great job of weaving the story of the game together, from the pre-match ongoings, the sights and sounds of Wimbledon and the historical background of the game of tennis. The author delicately crafts historical information about the game of tennis at the right junctures as the match is being described, like flashbacks in a movie. This book has been an easy, fast, and an enjoyable read. It makes me want to pick up a racket again and play tennis.

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