

## 2010 Wimbledon – Performance and Results

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**W**hen should you bring your A-game to the table? When the stakes are high? When you have everything to lose? Or, perhaps when you have nothing to lose? The answer to this interesting question will depend on a person's degree of self-respect—believe it or not. How so—you wonder? As a tennis player and enthusiast, it is easy for me to derive a tennis analogy that sheds perfect light on this question in light of ongoing events at Wimbledon.

**O**n Thursday, June 24, 2010, the marathon tennis match between American John Isner and Frenchman Nicolas Mahut finally ended after more than eleven hours of play over three days. How can a tennis match last so long? Wimbledon, the world's oldest tennis tournament and the most prestigious, maintains a tradition that requires a final set victory by a two-game margin—in other words, no tie breakers in the final set of a match.

**W**hen 25-year-old Isner and 29-year-old Mahut met to begin their match, one could argue that they both came with their A-games. After all, they were preparing to play in the grandest and most prestigious tennis tournament in the world. But, they both were competing in only the first round of the tournament—with six more rounds ahead of them, should either make it to the finals. So, one could argue that they may have arrived with other than A-games—saving their best performance for later.

**H**owever, when the match was suspended on Tuesday (June 22) after four sets, due to darkness, both players must have known that they had to bring their best—if they already had not—to the court the following day. By this time the stakes were clearly high. A first round fifth set in a grand slam tournament always commands attention.

**W**hen the match was again suspended on Wednesday (June 23) after an undecided fifth (and final) set that seemed to go on forever, both players must have realized that they were in the process of making history and that they were probably the focus of the whole world. They certainly had gained the attention of all of Wimbledon and of all tennis enthusiasts around the world. On the second day alone the two men had played a total of over 110 games—more games than most five-set matches typically produce. Would you dispute that the two men left the court on Wednesday knowing that they had to dig deeper than ever and return the next day with their respective A-games—or whatever was left of it!

**T**he two warriors would return on Thursday (June 24) to play twenty more games before Isner pulled out the most memorable victory of his tennis career winning the fifth set 70-68. The most amazing aspect of the match was the high level of play well into the third day. Both players were clearly in top physical shape, well conditioned, and absolutely

### Wimbledon Tradition

**Wimbledon, the oldest tennis tournament in the world, maintains a tradition of excellence and high standards.**

**One of its many traditions is the tournament rule that forbids a final set tie breaker. Final sets are determined by a two-game margin victory.**

prepared. Without a doubt, Isner and Mahut came to Wimbledon with their respective A-games.

Although someone had to lose and another had to advance, both players emerged as winners. Each man had solidified his place in the history books to forever echo the bravery and the stellar performance that was put forth. Decades from now, few will remember a first-round victory by Isner, but far more will remember the historic battle between the young American and the veteran Frenchman.

This event at Wimbledon demonstrates an important lesson. In any situation in life involving any measure of performance—particularly in a work environment—it is best always to come prepared with your A-game. Coming to the table with your A-game means doing your homework and bringing your best effort. It means knowing what is at stake at the present and in the future. It means knowing who else is counting on you. It means coming prepared to work smart and, if necessary, work hard. You don't save your A-game until the semi-finals or the finals; rather, you bring it to the first round and every round thereafter. This enhances your chances of making it to the finals—where you command the most attention and produce your best result. The tenth law of [The Top Ten Laws of Respect in the Workplace](#) states that "Performance and results always command respect."

## The 10<sup>th</sup> Law of The Top Ten Laws of Respect in the Workplace

**Performance and results always command respect.**

So, when should you bring your A-game to the table? The answer: always. Good players bring their A-games to the table when the stakes are high, whereas the great players bring their A-games to the table all the time. Sometimes great players lose, but far more often, they win. And, occasionally they make history or create a legacy.

When you bring your A-game with you all the time, you establish a high standard for yourself. A high standard is a measure of self-respect. People with a high degree of self-respect exhibit high standards in many aspects of their lives. In so doing, they command more respect from people around them. What game are you bringing to the table today?

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## About the Author



Niyi Taiwo is the founder of EKTIMIS and the lead editor for the EKTIMIS eLibrary articles. He is a speaker and the author of several books, including the EKTIMIS Top Ten Laws series. He is a continuous improvement expert with over 21 years of industry experience – operational, management and consulting. He has been studying the topic of respect since 2004. He holds an undergraduate degree from WPI and a master's degree from RPI. He is a diversity consultant, a certified Lean Expert and an ASQ-certified Six Sigma Black Belt.