

Sharapova on form for Wimbledon grass

Wimbledon champion Maria Sharapova must be on top form to retain her title – with Belgium's resurgent Justine Henin-Hardenne in particular promising a strong challenge – but she will be hoping to continue her impressive winning run on grass, where she is unbeaten since June 2003

SHARAPOVA RECORD

	Win	Loss	Surface
2005	36	6	All
	5	0	Grass
Career	116	35	All
	28	2	Grass

Timing:
Excellent anticipation, good stance, quick grip change

Energy:
Early body "wind up" before return shot

Power: Maria's big weapon, despite her slim build. She uses body rotation for maximum effect – hits ball flat, with little spin

Serve, return of serve: Most important shots on grass

SURFACE BOUNCE

Ball-ground friction differs on each court surface, with varying bounce and speeds of play

Grass – low rebound angles, little height or distance.

Fast reactions required

GRIP: "Eastern" (handshake) grip best for low-bounce grass courts. **Flat stroke or underspin further reduces bounce – giving opponent less time to reach ball**

Tough rye grass – cut to 6mm – low friction surface. **Skidding, unpredictable bounce**

Palm behind handle – reduces pressure on wrist