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**US Open 2018: Cyberbullying is real, and it happened to John Millman**

"There's a fair few idiots out there that something possesses them to get online."

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With fame, comes expectation. With expectation, comes pressure. John Millman knows that.

The unheralded Australian sent tennis into meltdown when [he cleaned up Roger Federer in the fourth round of the US Open](https://www.sportingnews.com/au/tennis/news/us-open-2018-john-millman-roger-federer-novak-djokovic/6xeseobfrtgd1cdsbiceqv2f8) to book a quarter-final berth with Novak Djokovic.

While [Djokovic won the encounter in straight sets](https://www.sportingnews.com/au/tennis/news/john-millman-novak-djokovic-us-open-2018-tennis/pqcj111unrq31pl0uk28j3joc), Millman was by no means disgraced as [he was finally getting the attention he deserved](https://www.sportingnews.com/au/tennis/news/john-millman-us-open-2018-roger-federer-novak-djokovic/bm6j09ya2buq1tq9uj958fpg2), and was rewarded for his patience in a professional career that has spanned 12 years for little return.

However, with expectation, comes pressure. Millman had set an extraordinary benchmark with the win over Federer, and despite the overwhelming favourtism in Djokovic's corner, you couldn't help but shake the thought that the tenacious Aussie could pull off another upset.

**MORE:**[**Millman targets grand slam seeding**](https://www.sportingnews.com/au/tennis/news/us-open-2018-john-millman-grand-slam-seeding-novak-djokovic/hbv64tlp59hd1xtapmhooi3we)**|**[**Who is John Millman?**](https://www.sportingnews.com/au/tennis/news/us-open-2018-who-is-john-millman-aussie-roger-federer-fourth/bdj4vhvjklnd124ose4t31pqj)**|**[**Millman's rise from injured battler to centre court against Federer**](https://www.sportingnews.com/au/tennis/news/us-open-2018-john-millman-roger-federer-tennis-nick-kyrgios/y3dzkms25svs1azvvclcij2yl)

Millman went down swinging, and departed Flushing Meadows with a career-best result. But living in the afterglow of attacks by online trolls, Millman couldn't rest as easy as we all hoped.

As he prepared to leave New York, Millman opened up on his anxiety following the loss to Djokovic, admitting he expected the bullying to rear its ugly head.

"It's a bit of a headache and a bit of a blight at the moment that a lot of players have to deal with," [Millman told *AAP*'s Darren Walton](https://www.theage.com.au/sport/tennis/i-ll-be-bullied-now-millman-s-stunning-claim-after-us-open-loss-20180907-p5029x.html).

"I don't know the answer... you try to ignore it, but there's a fair few idiots out there that something possesses them to get online.

"You get that always whenever you have a loss."

While Millman called for the bullies to be named and shamed, and criticised their 'lack of character', there's no doubt the bullying left a lasting effect.

Most kids in the schoolyard wouldn't admit to you they'd been bullied, but the feeling is the same. The insecurity will always remain. Words hurt. John Millman knows that.

Back in January, then-world No.128 Millman had a golden chance to oust then-world No.3 Grigor Dimitrov at the Brisbane International.

Up two match points against Dimitrov, Millman missed the chance to claim a big scalp ahead of the Australian Open - and copped heat from abusers online.

That match went past midnight, and the 4-6 7-6 (10-8) 6-3 loss to Dimitrov left Millman with a few open wounds that trolls were more than willing to exploit.

Dimitrov was the Brisbane defending champion at the time, and pulled off two great shots to cling onto the match in the second set when Millman had one foot in the next round.

It was a gritty performance, and while it was a loss, Millman had - like he did in New York - ensured Aussie fans went home feeling proud.

Sadly, people online, masked by their screens and fuelled by their hatred, still got pleasure out of sticking the boot into a sorry Millman.

"The guys sending me messages on Instagram think I could have done more... I got called some pretty nasty names for losing that point," Millman said after the loss to Dimitrov.

"I saw the video of the first match point on my phone as I scrolled through all the abuse, from all those great punters who then troll your account.

"(Dimitrov) nearly cleaned both lines with two volleys and did what a No.3 player in the world does. Great point. Too good.

"I can be proud of giving everything. That's tennis."