

Federer's Serve Would Result in a Swiss Miss

By Lisa Dillman, Times Staff Writer
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Just call it "Ben's Excellent European Vacation."

Quarterback Ben Roethlisberger of the Super Bowl-winning Pittsburgh Steelers has been pictured with his family in recent days doing the tourist thing in Switzerland. But it's more than that.

Roethlisberger has been exploring his heritage, visiting the farming village of Lauperswil, which was once the home of his great-great grandfather.

Behind his visit is Swiss Roots, an organization geared to helping Americans of Swiss descent explore their ancestral roots.

In Roethlisberger's case, it seems to be working. He told reporters that he is starting to feel "more Swiss."

In a pre-trip interview with the website swissroots.org, he was asked about playing tennis against top-ranked Roger Federer of Switzerland.

"I'd have to brush up on my tennis skills if I'm going to play Roger," Roethlisberger said. "I'd like to try and just see one of his serves!"

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Game for anything: During his trip, Roethlisberger tried his hand at hornussen — a Swiss sport somewhere between golf and baseball.

And Sunday afternoon, he watched a football game between the Bern Grizzlies and the Bienne Jets.

"It wasn't quite the NFL," Roethlisberger said. "But hopefully American football will continue to grow over here."