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Ayub, Nawaz lead the charge as Pakistan beat UAE



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GULF TIMES
SPORT



TENNIS

Sinner fights back for gutsy victory over Shapovalov

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PREMIER LEAGUE

Man Utd secure first win thanks to late Fernandes penalty

CHELSEA BEAT FULHAM 2-0, SPURS SUNK BY BOURNEMOUTH

AFP
London

Bruno Fernandes eased the pressure on Manchester United boss Ruben Amorim as his last-gasp penalty sealed a 3-2 win over Burnley, while Thomas Frank suffered his first Premier League defeat as Tottenham manager to Bournemouth yesterday.

Just days after a humiliating League Cup second-round loss at fourth-tier Grimsby, United were on the brink of another damaging result after promoted Burnley twice came from behind at Old Trafford.

Amorim had admitted after the Grimsby debacle that he sometimes thinks about quitting and often "hates" his players.

His mood would have been even darker before United captain Fernandes came to the rescue seven minutes into stoppage time.

United's first win in three league games this season will give Amorim some much-needed respite heading into the international break, although questions will still be asked of the Portuguese coach after his side's latest erratic display.

Luck was on United's side when they took the lead in the 26th minute.

Casemiro's header thumped off the crossbar and hit Burnley captain Josh Cullen on the back, ricocheting over the line before Martin Dubravka could claw it away.

Lyle Foster hauled Burnley level with a 55th-minute finish from Jacob Bruun Larsen's cross.

Bryan Mbeumo put United back in the lead just 15 seconds later when he slammed in Diogo Dalot's cutback for his first league goal since his summer move from Brentford. United's frailties were punished again as Jaidon Anthony equalised in the 66th minute.

But in the final moments Anthony pulled Amad Diallo, with a lengthy VAR check concluding the foul continued inside the area, conceding a controversial penalty that Fernandes gratefully tucked away to Amorim's immense relief.

"I was frustrated like any Man United fan, we had chances to score more goals. But today we were the better team," Amorim said.

Tottenham were beaten 1-0 by Bournemouth to end Frank's strong start since he arrived from Brentford to replace the sacked Ange Postecoglou in the close-season. Spurs had won their first two league games under the Dane without conceding a goal, including a 2-0 win at Manchester City last weekend.

But Evanilson struck in the fifth minute with a deflected shot as Bournemouth left north London with their second win this term.



Manchester United's midfielder Bruno Fernandes celebrates scoring their third goal from the penalty spot during the Premier League match against Burnley at Old Trafford in Manchester yesterday. *(AFP)*

Chelsea benefit from VAR drama

Chelsea took advantage of VAR controversy to beat Fulham 2-0 and go top of the table as the visitors were left to rue a series of costly decisions awarded against them at Stamford Bridge.

Enzo Maresca's side, who have seven points from three games, were fortunate not to fall behind in the west London derby when Fulham were harshly denied a first-half opener. Josh King's strike was ruled out after VAR deemed Rodrigo Muniz's accidental collision with Trevoh Chalobah was worthy of a foul.

As if that wasn't infuriating enough for Fulham boss Marco Silva, Joao Pedro put Chelsea ahead beyond the scheduled eight minutes of stoppage time at the end of the first half.

Adding to Silva's anger, Chelsea's second goal was also VAR-influenced as Ryan Sessegnon was adjudged to have handled a cross, leading to Enzo Fernandez converting from the penalty spot.

Jack Grealish starred as Everton beat Wolves 3-2 at Molineux. Beto headed Everton in front from Grealish's flick after seven minutes before Wolves forward Hwang Hee-chan levelled in the 21st minute. Iliman Ndiaye restored Everton's advantage in the 33rd minute, applying the finishing touch to a flowing move involving on-loan Manchester City winger Grealish and Kiernan Dewsbury-Hall.

Dewsbury-Hall bagged Everton's third, blasting home from Grealish's pass in the 55th minute before Rodrigo Gomes reduced the deficit in the 79th minute.

Newcastle again badly missed the presence of a striker in their second 0-0 of the season away to Leeds. New club record signing Nick Woltemade watched on from the stands after joining from Stuttgart on Saturday, which could see the wantaway Alexander Isak get his wish of a move to Liverpool. Newcastle remain without a win this season. Sunderland staged an impressive fightback to beat Brentford 2-1 at the Stadium of Light thanks to Wilson Isidor's stoppage time header.

RESULTS

Chelsea 2 (Joao Pedro 45+9, Fernandez 56-pen) Fulham 0
Manchester United 3 (Cullen 27-og, Mbeumo 57, Fernandes 90+7-pen) Burnley 2 (Foster 55, Anthony 66)
Sunderland 2 (Le Fee 82-pen, Isidor 90+6) Brentford 1 (Thiago 77)
Tottenham 0 Bournemouth 1 (Evanilson 5)
Wolves 2 (Hwang 21, Gomes 79) Everton 3 (Beto 7, Ndiaye 33, Dewsbury-Hall 55)
Leeds 0 Newcastle 0

QATAR STARS LEAGUE

Qatar SC, Shamal keep winning streaks alive

By Sports Reporter
Doha

Al Shamal and Qatar SC maintained their winning streaks defeating Al Sailiya and Al Ahli in their respective third round matches of the Qatar Stars League (QSL) yesterday.

Al Shamal beat Al Sailiya 2-1 at the Al Bayt Stadium, and later Qatar SC blanked Al Ahli 2-0 at the Jassim Bin Hamad Stadium. Al Shamal took the top spot on the table with 9 points, ahead on the number of total goals scored (8-7) to Qatar SC, who finished second with 9 points.

Al Sailiya and Al Ahli, both suffered their third losses and are yet to open their account languishing, as 11th and 12th in the standings.

Alex Collado (26') and Baghdad Bounedjah (54') scored for Al Shamal while Diogo Fonseca Amaro (38') pulled one back for Sailiya. Al Shamal, however, had a player sent off to a red card (90+10') following a VAR check.

Al Shamal's opening goal came up in fine style as Collado slammed in superbly after receiving a good diagonal cross from the right from Mohamed Naceur Manai.

Al Sailiya made a comeback twelve minutes later as Amaro leapt high to connect a fine header off a corner kick taken by Mathias Antonsen Normann.

Al Shamal regained the lead early in the second half with Bounedjah flicking in a good Mohamed Omar pass, with the ball just going in after a deflection at the bottom of the right post. Al Sailiya tried hard to equalise again but fumbled in finishing well. In the 72nd minute substitute Youssef Snana was in front of the goal but his kick went straight into the hands of Al Shamal goalkeeper Babacar Seck.

Four minutes later, Snana was in great position, receiving a superb assist and this time he kicked the ball just wide to the right while trying to beat the lone goalkeeper.

The win for Qatar SC against Al Ahli was more fluent with Faiz Selemani (54') and Joao Pedro Pereira dos Santos (60') delivering the goods.

In the opening half though, there was not much difference between the two sides as they seemed to be sizing each other up with not much to show by way of clear chances created.

Qatar SC came out of the dugout after the interval more determined and Selemani made their unhidden intentions known with a sensational right-footed shot from the edge of the box to open the scoring for the Kings.

Six minutes later, Joao Pedro doubled the lead after a defensive blunder from Al Ahli as Qatar SC took the driver's seat of the entertaining half.

Erik Exposito thought he had pulled one back for Al Ahli in the 83rd minute, but his header was overturned after a VAR review to ensure a clean slate for goalkeeper Ali Nader Mahmoud and maximum points for Qatar SC.

The league will now resume action on September 13 after almost a two-week international break.



Al Shamal's Baghdad Bounedjah vying for the ball with Al Sailiya players during their QSL match yesterday.



Action from Qatar SC-Al Ahli match which was held at the Jassim Bin Hamad Stadium yesterday.

Gulf Youth Championship: Qatar to take on Yemen today

Qatar will take on Yemen today in Abha, Saudi Arabia, in their second Group A match of the Gulf Youth Championship (U-20), which runs until September 9.

The young Qatari side earned a point in their opening match after a 2-2 draw with Kuwait, showing promising form in the tournament's early stages. Meanwhile, group leaders Saudi Arabia – who have three points – will face Kuwait later today at Prince Sultan Sports City Stadium. Qatar's Spanish head coach Emmanuel Infante is targeting his first win of the tournament, which would raise the team's tally to four points and move them closer to a place in the semi-finals.

Speaking ahead of the match, Infante emphasised the importance of the tournament in giving players international exposure and valuable experience. He expressed confidence in the squad's potential to achieve strong results and continue developing technically through the competition.

Qatar's 23-player squad includes: Naim al-Mughni, Ali Boumediene, Christian Saric, Ahmed al-Sayed, Ahmed Nasser, Iran Kothuru, Emmanuel Francis, Bilal Mohammed, Jadon Joseph, Khaled al-Shuaibi, Khaled Hossam, Radhi Mohammed, Richard Sham, Asim Ahmed, Oloum Mohammed, Abdulaziz al-Mutawa, Omar Ali, Qais al-Rawi, Calvin Masangi, Mohammed Jihad, Mohammed Moatasem, Moamen Mohammed, and Youssef Hani.

Qatar will conclude their group stage campaign against hosts Saudi Arabia on September 3 at Prince Sultan Sports City Stadium.

Group A features Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and Yemen. Group B includes Oman, Bahrain, Iraq, and guest team Egypt, who joined after the UAE withdrew from the tournament.

SPORT

CRICKET

Ayub and Nawaz lead the charge as Pakistan beat UAE

PAKISTAN POST THEIR SECOND SUCCESSIVE WIN IN SHARJAH

AFP
Sharjah, United Arab Emirates

Saim Ayub and Hasan Nawaz struck half-centuries as Pakistan thumped the United Arab Emirates by 31 runs in Sharjah yesterday, making it two wins from two in their T20 tri-series also featuring Afghanistan.

Opener Ayub smashed a 38-ball 69, with four sixes and seven fours, while Nawaz's 26-ball 56 included six maximums, lifting Pakistan to 207 all out in exactly 20 overs.

Asif Khan threatened to snatch an unlikely win for UAE with a brilliant 35-ball 77 before falling in the last over. The UAE managed 176-8 from their 20 overs.

Skipper Muhammad Waseem also hit a breezy 18-ball 33 but was run out in the sixth over.

Ayub, the Man of the Match, said yesterday: "Actually, I don't like individual awards. They are pretty overrated. It's a team game and the team winning matters. It's about the execution, waiting for the bad balls and which lengths are easy to hit on according to the pitch. Working on my bowling with the coach and getting better at it. It's difficult (being consistent). It's challenging. But if you keep your thought process, it helps you."

Pakistan captain, Salman Agha said yesterday: "It was a perfect batting game. First 15 overs with the bowling we were good, but the last five overs we need to work on. It's something we have been working on but yeah we need to get better."

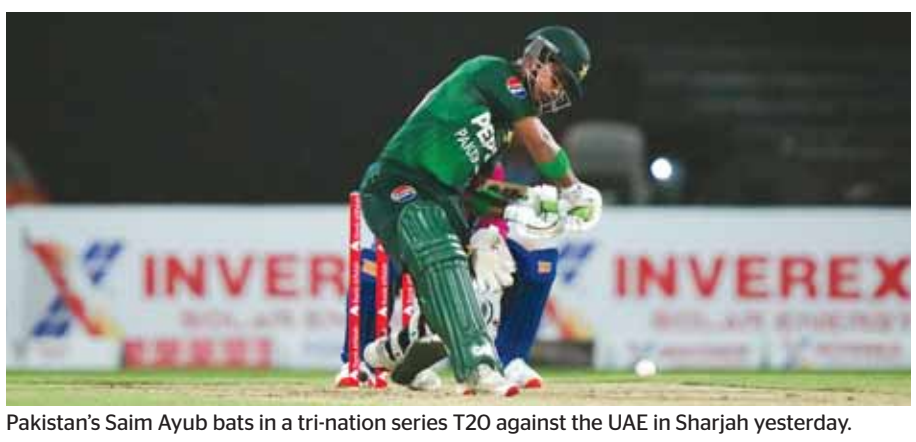
When asked about the middle order contributions, Salman said: "I have been saying that Hasan Nawaz is a generational talent and has a great future. He has to keep working on his game and keep improving. I think our death bowling is something we are working on and it's concerning. We need to be better in the next game, but overall we have been playing really well and this is how we want to continue playing."

Earlier, Pakistan's innings was built around the excellence of Ayub and Nawaz after they won the toss and batted first. Once Pakistan lost Sahibzada Farhan, Fakhar Zaman and skipper Salman cheaply, it was left to Ayub and Hasan to provide the rescue acts.

Ayub's fourth T20I half-century came off just 25 balls while Nawaz's fifty was reached in 24 deliveries with a hat-trick of sixes off spinner Haider Ali.

Nawaz added 57 for the fifth wicket off just 25 balls with Mohammad Nawaz, who added a 15-ball 25. Faheem Ashraf chipped in with 16 as Pakistan clubbed 64 in the last five overs. Junaid Siddique and Saghir Khan grabbed three wickets apiece, but were both expensive. Afghanistan, who lost to Pakistan by 39 runs on Friday, face the UAE in the next match tomorrow.


Pakistan's Hasan Nawaz flicks one to the leg side in a tri-nation series T20 against the UAE in Sharjah yesterday.


Pakistan's Saim Ayub bats in a tri-nation series T20 against the UAE in Sharjah yesterday.

BRIEF SCORES
Pakistan 207 all out (Ayub 69, Hasan Nawaz 56, Saghir 3-44) **beat UAE 176 for 8** (Asif 77, Waseem 33, Hasan Ali 3-47) **by 31 runs**
Man of the Match: Saim Ayub
Next match: Afghanistan vs UAE (Monday)

SPOTLIGHT

Taskin sparkles as Bangladesh thrash Netherlands in T20


Taskin Ahmed (right) of Bangladesh is seen with his teammates in the first of the three T20 internationals against the Netherlands in Sylhet yesterday.

AFP
Sylhet, Bangladesh

Taskin Ahmed starred as Bangladesh hammered the Netherlands by eight wickets in the first of the three T20 internationals in Sylhet yesterday.

Fast bowler Taskin returned figures of 4-28 as Bangladesh kept the Netherlands to 136-8, a total their batters overhauled in just 13.3 overs.

Skipper Litton Das, 54 not out, and Saif Hassan, unbeaten on 36, helped the hosts race to victory.

Bangladesh, who recently won a home T20 series against Pakistan, maintained their momentum ahead of the T20 Asia Cup starting September 9 in the United Arab Emirates.

The Netherlands, who have already qualified for next year's T20 World Cup in India and Sri Lanka, are without several key players including all-rounders Bas de Leede and Roelof van der Merwe.

De Leede is injured while Van der Merwe and Logan van Beek are also missing.

Max O'Dowd struck 23 and fellow opener Teja Nidamanuru top-scored with 26 but the Dutch lost regular wickets after being put in to bat.

Taskin took a wicket in each of his first two overs before off-spinner Saif struck twice in one over including the scalp of Scott Edwards for 12.

In reply, Bangladesh lost an early wicket but Litton put on 66 runs with Tanzid Hasan, who made 29.

The second T20 is tomorrow at the same venue.

BRIEF SCORES
Bangladesh 138 for 2 (Litton 54*, Saif 36*) **beat Netherland**s 136 for 8 (Nidamanuru 28, Taskin 4-28, Saif 2-18) **by eight wickets**

CYCLING

Philipsen claims Vuelta stage 8 with sprint finish

AFP
Zaragoza, Spain

Jasper Philipsen sprinted to victory at the Vuelta a Espana yesterday to secure a second triumph in this year's race after he claimed an opening day win.

The Belgian Alpecin-Deceuninck rider edged out Elia Viviani on the line on this eighth stage, with Ethan Vernon completing the podium.

Torstein Traen held onto the overall leader's red jersey for a third stage, two-and-a-half minutes ahead of race favourite Jonas Vingegaard.

The flat 163 kilometre run from Monzon Templario to Zaragoza was ideal for the sprinters after two days in the mountains.

John Bou, Jose Luis Faura and local favourite Sergio Samitier made an early move and were allowed up the road by the peloton on a warm day in north-east Spain.

Fighting against a headwind on exposed roads the race moved slowly, playing against the chances of the early breakers.

The peloton caught the break with 17 kilometres remaining and it left the fastest riders to duke it out, with Philipsen triumphing and Lotto's Italian veteran Viviani a fraction behind.

"We lost my teammate, I think he did an incredible lead-out again but he was not there, and I tried to communicate, but it's difficult in the last kilometre," said Philipsen.

"I had to find my way, take a bit of extra wind, and really come late because my legs were concrete. But I just managed to win, so I'm really happy, and the effort of the team has not been for nothing," he said.

Today a hilly stage nine takes riders 195.5 kilometres from Alfaro to the Valdezcaray ski resort.


Team Alpecin's Belgian rider Jasper Philipsen (right) competes to cross first the finish line during the 8th stage of the Vuelta a Espana, a 163km race between Monzon Templario and Zaragoza, yesterday. *(AFP)*

FOCUS

Asian Shooting Championship: Qatar campaign ends with handsome tally of seven medals

By Sports Reporter
Shymkent, Kazakhstan

Qatar's shooting team concluded their campaign at the 16th Asian Shooting Championship on a high note, winning the silver medal in the men's double trap team event and raising their overall tally to seven medals.

The trio of Mohammed al-Rumaihi, Saeed Abu Shareb, and Rashid al-Athba delivered a strong performance, hitting 266 targets across four rounds to secure second place behind hosts Kazakhstan.

India claimed the bronze.

Al-Rumaihi also finished sixth in the individual double trap event.

Qatar's medal haul also included a silver from Raya Basil in the women's trap, and five bronze medals across various team and mixed events in trap, skeet, and rifle competitions.

The championship, held over two weeks in Shymkent, featured wide participation across Asia in pistol, rifle, skeet, and trap disciplines.

Secretary-General of the Qatar Shooting and Archery Federation, Jassim Shaheen al-Sulaiti, hailed the achievement as a result of dedicated preparation and support from the Qatar Olympic Committee, calling it "a launchpad toward broader ambitions".





BOTTOMLINE

Bradman's 'baggy green' cap won during 1946-47 Ashes sells for $287,000



AFP
Sydney

A "baggy green" Test cap worn by Australian cricketing legend Don Bradman has been bought for Aus$438,550 ($287,000) by the country's National Museum, which called it an iconic slice of history.

Skipper Bradman, who famously averaged 99.94 in Test matches, sported the cap during England's 1946-47 Ashes tour of Australia, the first to be played between the two sides after World War II.

National Museum director Katherine McMahon said that with cricket far from people's minds during the war, the Test series represented a sign of hope and optimism.

"Sir Donald's baggy green marks the life of Australia's most celebrated batsman and reflects a time when sporting heroes gave Australians hope, following the heartbreak and hardship of World War II," she said late on Friday.

"We are delighted this national treasure has found a home here at the National Museum of Australia for all Australians to enjoy."

The cap, bought from a private owner, is one of 11 worn by Bradman known to exist. One that he used during India's 1947-48 tour of Australia, his final Test series on home soil, fetched $250,000 last year.

Australia's cricketers are awarded the dark green woollen caps before Test debuts and they are revered by players and fans alike.

Arts Minister Tony Burke said the purchase safeguarded an important piece of national history.

"You'd be hard-pressed to meet an Australian that hasn't heard of the great Donald Bradman, arguably the greatest cricketer of all time," he said.

"Now to have one of his iconic baggy greens in the National Museum of Australia means visitors will have the opportunity to get up close and connect with our sporting and cultural history."

The cap will go into the National Historical Collection in Canberra alongside other Bradman memorabilia, including an autographed bat from the first Test at Trent Bridge in Nottingham during the 1934 Ashes series.

Bradman, described by cricket authority Wisden as the greatest to "have ever graced the gentleman's game", died in 2001 aged 92.

FORMULA ONE

Piastri posts lap record to win Dutch pole

Reuters
Zandvoort, Netherlands

Oscar Piastri seized pole position for the Dutch Grand Prix with a record lap yesterday and gave himself a perfect opportunity to stretch his Formula One lead over McLaren teammate Lando Norris.

Norris had been top in all three practice sessions and led the way into the final shootout but Piastri struck just when it mattered most and unleashed the quickest lap ever around Zandvoort.

The Australian's time of one minute 08.662 seconds with his first effort out of the garages was 0.012 quicker than anything his British rival, last year's winner from pole, could put together.

Red Bull's four-times world champion Max Verstappen, winner from the top slot in 2021, 2022 and 2023, was third fastest but 0.263 off the pole pace.

"That was the definition of peaking at the right time," said Piastri, who declared himself "pretty stoked" with his afternoon.

"The whole weekend I felt pretty good but there have been a couple of corners that I've not been able to go any faster.

"I didn't really go any faster in those corners but I found some more elsewhere so I'm super happy to come away with the result."

Norris, nine points behind Piastri after winning three of the last four races, said he was a "little disappointed" to be second and suggested the wind had played a part but added it was not the end of the world.

"With the wind like this, a lot of it's down to luck as well; even with all the luck I've been having," said the Briton.

"It's tough. I had a good lap in Q3, run one, but just a small headwind down the straight and I lost like 1/100th (of a second), so you could easily say it's there."

Dominant McLaren could take a record-equalling fifth successive one-two in today's race, emulating Ferrari and Mercedes.

French rookie Isack Hadjar qualified alongside Verstappen on the second row for Racing Bulls with George Russell fifth for Mercedes and Charles Leclerc, who was startled by a fox crossing the track in the second phase, sixth for Ferrari.

Seven-times world champion Lewis Hamilton, who had a hard time on Friday and in final practice, will start seventh for Ferrari.

Racing Bulls' Liam Lawson, Williams's Carlos Sainz and Aston Martin's Fernando Alonso completed a top 10 with seven teams represented.

Mercedes's Kimi Antonelli missed out on the top-10 shootout, as did Verstappen's teammate Yuki Tsunoda (12th fastest), who set the same time as Sauber's Gabriel Bortoleto (13th) in the second phase.

Aston Martin's Lance Stroll failed to set a time in the first phase after spinning into the barriers and smashing his car's front wing. The Canadian got the car back to the pits but took no further part in the session.

Haas drivers Esteban Ocon and Oliver Bearman were unable to reach the second phase, along with Sauber's Nico Hulkenberg and Alpine's increasingly under-pressure Argentine rookie Franco Colapinto.



McLaren's Oscar Piastri celebrates after qualifying in pole position with second placed McLaren's Lando Norris at the Dutch Grand Prix yesterday. *(Reuters)*

TENNIS

Sinner fights back for gutsy victory over Shapovalov

NOVAK DJOKOVIC BEATS CAMERON NORRIE IN 4 SETS

Reuters/AFP
New York

Defending champion Jannik Sinner overcame stiff resistance to power into the US Open fourth round with a 5-7 6-4 6-3 6-3 win over 27th seed Denis Shapovalov yesterday that extended his unbeaten run at hardcourt Grand Slams to 24 matches.

The 24-year-old Italian has not lost on his dominant surface at the majors since 2023, capturing two Australian Open titles as well as last year's trophy at Flushing Meadows

There was a hint of concern from Sinner's team when he made a double fault to go 0-30 down at 2-5 in the first set, but the world number one held serve and raised his fist to loud roars after hitting a spectacular lob en route to breaking back.

A rattled Shapovalov remonstrated with the chair umpire during the changeover, protesting an automated foot fault, but composed himself and snatched the set after a fourth double fault from Sinner drew gasps at Arthur Ashe Stadium.

As shadows engulfed the main showcourt, the ice-cool Sinner breezed through the next set with minimum fuss to go level, and dug himself out of a hole from 0-3 in the next to claim six straight games and lead the match for the first time.

Sinner broke again in the following set and a frustrated Shapovalov sarcastically pumped his fists and glared at his team before the world number one put him out of his misery to set up a clash with Tommy Paul or Alexander Bublik.


Italy's Jannik Sinner in action during his third round match against Canada's Denis Shapovalov at the US Open in Flushing Meadows, New York yesterday. *(Reuters)*

DJOKOVIC OVERCOMES BAD BACK TO MAKE LAST 16

Novak Djokovic shook off a back problem to beat Britain's Cam Norrie in four sets on Friday to became the oldest man to reach the US Open last 16 since Jimmy Connors in 1991.

The 38-year-old Djokovic defeated Norrie 6-4, 6-7 (4/7), 6-2, 6-3, staying in the hunt for an unprecedented 25th major title.

But the Serbian star admitted whether his body can still withstand the grind of a two-week long Grand Slam is potentially beyond his control.

"In terms of how I'm feeling, it really goes up and down, to be honest," said Djokovic, who was compromised by injury at the Australian Open and Wimbledon earlier this year.

"It's frustrating for me, honestly, that I'm not able to feel 100% always like I have for 20-plus years.

"I guess the circumstances are quite different and I have to get used to the fact that every match there's something that might happen as it has been the case this year pretty much every Slam."

Djokovic earned a record 192nd Grand Slam match win on hard courts and also tied Roger Federer's mark of last-16 appearances at the majors with 69. The four-time US Open champion has designs on going much further though, health permitting.

"If the body doesn't listen to me when I go deep in the Grand Slam tournaments, as it was kind of the case last few Slams, then that's a hard one to swallow for me," said Djokovic.

"I know the amount of hours I'm putting in daily to care for my body, but at the same time, you know, biological age is not something that I guess you can reverse."

Djokovic has now defeated Norrie in all seven of their meetings and is through to the fourth round in New York for the 16th time.

In the next round, he will play German veteran Jan-Lennard Struff, who has already knocked out two seeds in Holger Rune and Frances Tiafoe.

Djokovic headed off court for a medical timeout and returned to serve out the first set.

GAUFF HITS HER STRIDE IN US OPEN THIRD ROUND

Coco Gauff shook off the nerves that had rattled her during her opening two matches at the US Open as she cruised into the fourth round yesterday.

Gauff struggled with errors and double faults in her first two rounds at Flushing Meadows but the American third seed hit her stride in the early match on Arthur Ashe Stadium yesterday, where she subdued the Polish 28th seed Magdalena Frech 6-3 6-1.

"It's been an emotional week," said Gauff, who showed solid improvement in her serve with four double faults compared to 18 across her first two matches.

She will next play Australian 15th seed Daria Kasatkina or twice former champion Naomi Osaka of Japan. Poland's second seed Iga Swiatek headlines the night session on Ashe, where the 29th-ranked Anna Kalinskaya will hope to disrupt the Wimbledon champion's terrific season.

GOLF

Miranda Wang leads in weather-delayed FM Championships

Reuters
Newton, Massachusetts

China's Miranda Wang followed up her first round of 6-under par 65 with a 66 on Friday and has a two-stroke lead in the weather-delayed FM Championship in Newton, Mass.

Dangerous weather conditions caused three delays in play and half of field still must finish their second rounds. Play was suspended due to darkness at 7:15pm and will resume for the remaining 24 groups at 7:00am in the third round.

Wang, 26, in her first full year on tour, has missed four of the last seven cuts, but did finish in eighth place at the Blue Bay LPGA in early March.

The Duke University graduate started her round with two birdies and finished it with three in a row.

My first time in this position, but I'm not unfamiliar with the leaderboard," said Wang. "I will do my best in the weekend and this year we have really strong rookies coming in. It's really competitive. I just want to keep up with the best."

Sweden's Madelene Sagstrom posted a round of 66 and moved to 9 under after 36 holes.

Sagstrom, 32, played a bogey-free round and birdied four consecutive holes (Nos. 13-16) on the inward nine. The former LSU golfer only needed 26 putts during the stops and starts of the day.

"I've been in this position before so it's nothing new," said Sagstrom. "That's what happens when you're a veteran on Tour, you're hoping you've been in enough and trying to win and give yourself chances. I'm just happy to be back here. I've been fighting with my head and my game a little bit over the last few months, so it's really nice to be back and up in the mix."

Three players who completed their rounds were at 8 under. Norway's Celine Borge (66), Spain's Azahara Munoz, who has back-to-back rounds of 68, and Australia's Hannah Green (68) were three strokes off the pace.

Sei Young Kim of Korea, who held a share of the first round lead at 7 under, was 1 under through four holes and is tied for third place.

The other first round leaders finished their rounds. England's Jodi Ewart Shadoff carded an even-par score of 72 and is tied for seventh at 7 under. Allisen Corpuz struggled to a 2 over score and is tied for 17th place at 5 under.

A humorous scene happened when the threesome of Green, Lauren Coughlin and Thailand's Jeeno Thitikul raced up the ninth fairway to finish before another delay.

"I don't know who kind of said let's do it. I think it was probably Jeeno, and all of us completely agreed," said Green. "We were all slowly jogging and Jeeno was going quicker and we're all catching up and all the caddies ran as well. I think if we didn't run on that hole we would still be putting on the 9th green.

"I am just glad it was a team effort and that everyone wanted to finish after already two delays."

Nelly Korda birdied the second and third holes and was at 7 under after four holes when play was suspended.


Miranda Wang of China plays a shot from a fairway on the 15th hole during the second round of the FM Championship 2025 at TPC Boston in Norton, Massachusetts. *(AFP)*

BOTTOMLINE

Shi sets up badminton world final with Kunlavut, women's champion An falls


China's Shi Yuqi shakes hands with compatriot Weng Hong Yang after winning their match at the BWF World Championships at the Adidas Arena in Paris yesterday. *(AFP)*

AFP
Paris

World number one Shi Yuqi survived two match points yesterday to book a world championship final meeting with Thai titleholder Kunlavut Vitidsarn, as top seed An Se-young was upset on the women's side of the draw.

Chinese star Shi battled back from 18-20 down in the second game to beat Canadian youngster Victor Lai 13-21, 22-20, 21-16 and keep his bid for a first world title alive.

"I felt an emotional release when this one ended," a breathless Shi said after 80 gruelling minutes on court.

"(Lai) played exceptionally well indeed. Although I trailed and faced sustained pressure throughout, I remained in a remarkably composed state."

Lai, a 20-year-old student at York University in Toronto, told reporters his "unbelievable" run to a bronze medal in Paris might just convince him his future lies away from kinesiology.

"The past couple of years has been school but I think after now and this year I will focus more on badminton and put school to the side," he added yesterday.

Shi will face third seed Kunlavut in today's final after the 2023 winner overcame Danish second seed Anders Antonsen 21-17, 21-15.

"Shi is the world number one and I have a lot to learn from him," said Kunlavut, who will be seeking gold after losing last year's Olympic Games final in the same venue.

"(It's a) very good arena and very nice place. Tomorrow (Sunday) I go to the final again and I hope to try my best.

"For me, I think I (have to) step up because my performance is not good enough. Sometimes it's very high and very low."

SIXTH TIME LUCKY

South Korean An, the defending women's champion and world number one, suffered a "bitter" upset against Chinese fourth seed Chen Yufei 21-15, 21-17.

"I couldn't manage to get used to the conditions of the hall today, so it was a bit of a bitter match for me," An told reporters through an interpreter.

Chen will face Japanese fifth seed Akane Yamaguchi in the final. Yamaguchi saw off Indonesia's Putri Kusuma Wardani 21-17, 14-21, 21-6.

BUNDESLIGA

Bayern Munich survive late Augsburg scare

TEN HAG'S LEVERKUSEN COLLAPSE TO DRAW AT 10-MAN BREMEN



Bayern Munich's midfielder Michael Olise celebrates (second from right) with his teammates after scoring a goal during the Bundesliga match against Augsburg yesterday. *(AFP)*

AFP
Berlin

Bayern Munich survived a late Augsburg rally yesterday, holding on for a 3-2 away win in Harry Kane's 100th match for the club.

Fresh from scoring his eighth league hat-trick last week, Kane created the opener after 28 minutes, floating in a lovely chip for Serge Gnabry to head home.

Luis Diaz, who missed a sitter just two minutes in, made up for his mistake by adding Bayern's second by slamming the ball through a crowded penalty box in first-half stoppage time.

Having put six goals past RB Leipzig a week ago, Bayern looked on track for another thumping win when Michael Olise wrong-footed the Augsburg defence to coolly score his side's third in the 48th minute.

The home side pulled one back after 53 minutes however, Kristijan Jakic cutting the deficit with a controlled strike. With minutes left, Mert Komur threaded the ball into the corner to give the hosts belief of an unlikely comeback.

The match continued into a 10th minute of stoppage time as Bayern held off their Bavarian rivals.

Bayer Leverkusen let a two-goal lead slip to draw 3-3 at 10-man Werder Bremen, denying new coach Ten Hag his first league win in charge. Leverkusen were 3-1 ahead and a man up after Patrik Schick's Panenka penalty midway through the second-half, his second of the game.

Bremen were reduced to 10 men after Niklas Stark was shown a second yellow for the foul which led to the spot-kick. But Leverkusen let Bremen back into the match when goalkeeper Mark Flekken advanced out of his area and misjudged a long ball, allowing Isaac Schmidt the easiest of finishes.

Bremen continued to attack and snatched a point in the fourth minute of stoppage time, Karim Coulibaly volleying in after the ball bounced off the crossbar. Coulibaly, 18, is Bremen's youngest ever goalscorer in the Bundesliga. The result puts some early pressure on Ten Hag who is trying to weave together a team full of new recruits, while reviving his own reputation after a poor end to his Manchester United stint.

"There were too many simple mistakes from us... we did dumb things and gave the game away," Tillman told DAZN.

Despite the disappointment, the draw kept Leverkusen's remarkable away run alive, with the club unbeaten on the road in the league since May 2023. "(It is) hard to accept. We have to improve very quickly. Obviously, this is not a good situation," Schick said.

Elsewhere, new Eintracht Frankfurt winger Ritsu Doan scored a brace and added an assist as his side cruised to a 3-1 win at Hoffenheim. Japan winger Doan, who arrived from Freiburg in the summer, netted Frankfurt's opener on 17 minutes with a superb curling effort from well outside the box. Doan doubled up 10 minutes later, tapping in a Jean-Matteo Bahoya pass on the break, before laying on an excellent pass for Can Uzun to score Frankfurt's third.

Stuttgart beat Borussia Moenchengladbach 1-0 at home thanks to a late header from Chema Andres, just hours after striker Nick Woltemade's departure to Newcastle was made official. The German Cup holders were sluggish but grabbed the three points when Andres headed in with 79 minutes played after some poor marking by the Gladbach defence.

RB Leipzig bounced back from last week's drubbing at the hands of Bayern, winning 2-0 at home against Heidenheim thanks to goals from Christoph Baumgartner and new striker Romulo Cardoso.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Man City to host De Bruyne's Napoli in first Champions League fixture

AFP
Paris

Manchester City are set for a quick reunion with Kevin De Bruyne as the English side were handed a home fixture with the Belgian's new club Napoli to kick off their Champions League campaign.

City will welcome Italian champions Napoli to the Etihad Stadium on Thursday, September 18, as the first matchday of this season's league phase stretches over three days.

De Bruyne joined Napoli in June after a highly successful decade in Manchester, which included winning the Champions League with Pep Guardiola's side in 2023.

The draw for the 36-team league phase of the competition took place on Thursday, but European football's governing body UEFA only released the full fixture list on Saturday. Club World Cup winners Chelsea start on Wednesday, September 17, with a meeting with Bayern Munich at the Allianz Arena, the stadium where they defeated the German side in the 2012 Champions League final.

Premier League champions Liverpool will begin their campaign at home to Atletico Madrid the same night, while Newcastle United will mark their return to Europe's elite club competition by welcoming Spanish champions Barcelona to St James' Park the following day.

Arsenal, semi-finalists last season, will be on the road for their first fixture away to Athletic Bilbao on Tuesday, September 16. Tottenham Hotspur, who qualified for the Champions League after beating Manchester United in last season's Europa League final in Bilbao, start with a home game against Villarreal. Reigning champions Paris Saint-Germain begin with a home game against Atalanta in the French capital, with other notable opening fixtures including Juventus against Borussia Dortmund, Real Madrid at home to Marseille, and Ajax against last season's beaten finalists Inter Milan.

OPENING FIXTURES

(1900 GMT unless stated)
Tuesday, September 16
Athletic Bilbao (ESP) v Arsenal (ENG) (1645 GMT)
PSV Eindhoven (NED) v Union Saint-Gilloise (BEL) (1645 GMT)
Juventus (ITA) v Borussia Dortmund (GER)
Real Madrid (ESP) v Marseille (FRA)
Benfica (POR) v Qarabag (AZE)
Tottenham Hotspur (ENG) v Villarreal (ESP)
Wednesday, September 17
Olympiacos (GRE) v Pafos (CYP) (1645 GMT)
Slavia Prague (CZE) v Bodo/Glimt (NOR) (1645 GMT)
Ajax (NED) v Inter Milan (ITA)
Bayern Munich (GER) v Chelsea (ENG)
Liverpool (ENG) v Atletico Madrid (ESP)
Paris Saint-Germain (FRA) v Atalanta (ITA)
Thursday, September 18
Club Brugge (BEL) v Monaco (FRA) (1645 GMT)
FC Copenhagen (DEN) v Bayer Leverkusen (GER) (1645 GMT)
Eintracht Frankfurt (GER) v Galatasaray (TUR)
Manchester City (ENG) v Napoli (ITA)
Newcastle United (ENG) v Barcelona (ESP)
Sporting (POR) v Kairat Almaty (KAZ)

Chelsea sign Garnacho from Man Utd

Chelsea completed the signing of Manchester United outcast Alejandro Garnacho yesterday for a reported £40mn fee ($54mn). The Argentine international, 21, has signed a seven-year deal with the world champions.
Garnacho was in attendance at Stamford Bridge to watch the Blues go top of the Premier League with a 2-0 win over Fulham yesterday. "It's an incredible moment for my family and I to join this great club. I can't wait to get started," said Garnacho.
"I watched the Club World Cup and to join the world champions is special - we're the best team in the world! It's amazing to be here and I'm very happy."
Garnacho scored 26 times in 144 appearances for United, including in the Red Devils 2-1 FA Cup final win over Manchester City in 2024. However, he fell out of favour under Ruben Amorim at Old Trafford and had been part of a small group, also including Antony and Jadon Sancho, excluded from first team training with the rest of the squad this season. Garnacho's arrival takes Chelsea's spending in this window beyond £250mn.
Joao Pedro, Liam Delap, Estevao and Jamie Gittens have also added to Enzo Maresca's attacking options. However, a hamstring injury suffered by Delap against Fulham could scupper Nicolas Jackson's departure on loan to Bayern Munich.

LA LIGA

Atletico Madrid held at Alaves as winless start goes on

AFP
Vitoria, Spain

Atletico Madrid were held to a 1-1 draw at Alaves yesterday, leaving them without a win in their first three La Liga matches.

For the third consecutive game Diego Simeone's side spurned a lead after his son Giuliano Simeone sent the team ahead early on. Carlos Vicente levelled from the spot. Atletico overhauled their squad in the summer and the coach said he thinks it will take his team some time to click, with results reflecting that.

"We have to keep working, to trust in my players, we have a team that will do better than what we have been doing," Simeone told Movistar.

Atletico have struggled on the road in 2025 but took the lead after seven minutes through Giuliano Simeone. The winger picked up a loose ball after a scramble in the box, showed grit to force his way past a defender and powered home at the near post.

Atletico threw away leads in their first two games and striker Alexander Sorloth gave Alaves a way back when he clumsily fouled Nahuel Tenaglia in the box.



Atletico Madrid's defender Clement Lenglet vying for the ball with Alaves' defender Jonny Castro during the La Liga match at the Mendizorroza stadium in Vitoria yesterday. *(AFP)*

Carlos Vicente sent Jan Oblak the wrong way from the spot to level the score at Mendizorroza.

Antonio Sivera made a fine save to deny Sorloth in the second half as Atletico sought a winner. Rojiblancos substitute Antoine Griezmann struck the post from close range. Sivera made another fine save from a Sorloth header as Alaves dug in to secure their point.

After a supporter needed medical attention in the stands earlier in the half, 15 minutes were added on, but Atletico were unable to find a winner.

LIGUE 1

Igamane hits debut double for seven-goal Lille against Lorient

AFP
Paris

Moroccan striker Hamza Igamane scored twice on his debut as Lille shrugged off the absence of the injured Olivier Giroud to humiliate Lorient 7-1 away in Ligue 1 yesterday.

Igamane, 22, signed for Lille yesterday from Rangers for a reported 10mn euros ($11.7mn) and wasted no time making an impact for his new club.

Scorer of 16 goals for Rangers last season, Igamane came off the bench at half-time in Brittany and saw Romain Perraud and Matias Fernandez-Pardo score to put his new side in control at 2-0.

Aiyegun Tosin pulled one back for newly-promoted Lorient just after Sambou Soumano had missed a penalty for the hosts, but Lille ran away with the game in remarkable fashion in the closing stages. Fernandez-Pardo's second of the day made it 3-1 on 77 minutes, before Igamane got his first and Hakon Haraldsson scored the team's fifth.

Igamane's second of the day came in stoppage time and there was still time for Osame Sahraoui to make it 7-1, completing a stunning victory.



Lille's forward Hamza Igmane celebrates after he scored his team's fourth goal during the Ligue 1 match against Lorient at Yves-Allainmat stadium in Lorient, western France, yesterday. *(AFP)*

Veteran former France striker Giroud had scored Lille's winner last weekend against Monaco but did not make the trip to Lorient due to a fitness issue.

The result leaves Lille with seven points from a possible nine after three games and top of the fledgling French table, although Toulouse and champions Paris Saint-Germain both have the opportunity to go above them when they meet in Saturday's late game.

Nantes beat Auxerre 1-0 in Saturday's other match thanks to an early goal by Egyptian striker Mostafa Mohamed.

Today's action will include Marseille travelling to Lyon, who are set to sell key Georgian striker Georges Mikautadze to Villarreal amid ongoing financial difficulties.