The Peninsula
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SPORT

Queiroz wants Qatar's best in must-win game against Mexico

FAWAD HUSSAIN
THE PENINSULA

Qatar, comprising majority of young players, will face their toughest Group B opponents in Mexico desperately needing a victory against the eight-time champions to keep their hopes alive at the CONCACAF Gold Cup.

A shock 2-1 defeat to Haiti in their opening match and a 1-1 draw against Honduras left Qatar in a precarious situation as they look to qualify for the quarter-finals for the second time in as many appearances as a guest side in the tournament.

The Asian champions will face Mexico tomorrow (4:00am, Qatar time) at Levi's Stadium in Santa Clara, California while the other Group B opponents Haiti and Honduras will also square off at the same time at Bank of America Stadium in Charlotte.

Besides beating the World No.14 Mexico, Qatar – ranked 58th on FIFA computer – also require a favourable result in other group match. A draw in the Haiti-Honduras match or a Honduras win by fewer than three goals coupled with a win over Mexico will pave the way for Qatar to the knockout stage.

El Tricolor, coached by Jaime Lozano, have already entered the quarter-finals after beating Honduras 4-0 and Haiti 3-1. They are eyeing to top Gold Cup group for the fourth consecutive time.

Despite a tough challenge, Qatar coach Carlos Queiroz believes his young guns have the potential to beat Mexico provided they stay focused throughout the match as last-gasp goals from Haiti and Honduras cost them valuable points in their first two matches.

"We conceded late goals in both the matches. We must be ready to face such situations and play in a most effective manner especially against Mexico because we have no other option but to win and collect three points," said Queiroz.

The coach, who questioned refereeing in both the matches, said youngsters have performed well "collectively" against Haiti and Honduras.

"We lack experience in dealing with crucial situations but we are looking forward to avoiding that in our upcoming game. Mexico is a tough side that has good players in all positions. I am expecting a very exciting and strong match," said the veteran Portuguese coach.

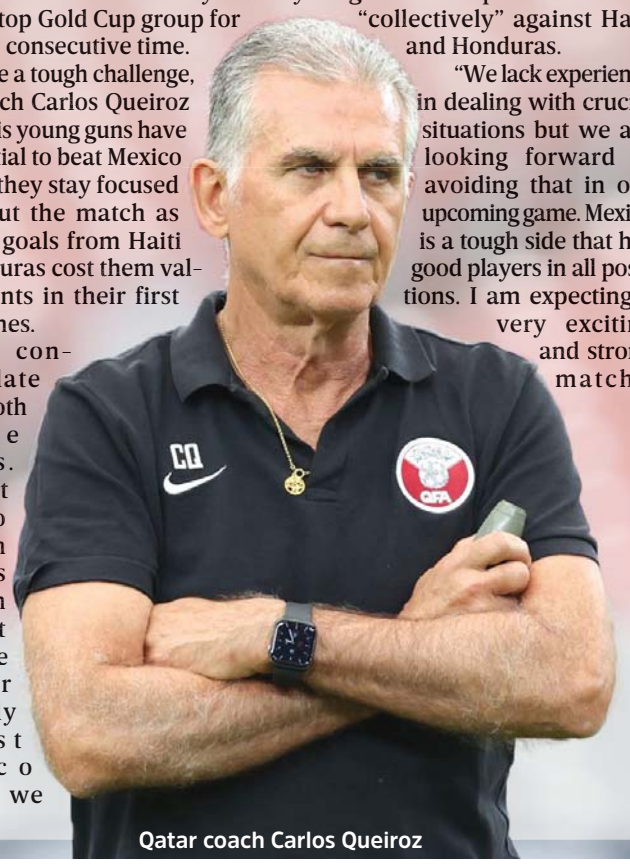
Speaking on the sidelines of Qatar's training session at San Jose Earthquakes Stadium, California yesterday, defender Tarek Salman said Qatar will give its best to pull off a victory against Mexico.

"We will play to win against Mexico and give our best to qualify for the quarter-finals. Our aim is to reach far in the tournament like we did in 2021 when we reached the semi-finals. But to keep our chances we must defeat Mexico and we are looking forward to it," the Al Sadd star said.

"All players are working hard but we are here with young players and we need time to make strong combinations to achieve our goals," Salman added.

Striker Almoez Ali, who missed both the matches due to muscle strain, didn't take part in yesterday's training session and is set to miss match against Mexico also.

Meanwhile, President Qatar Football Association (QFA) Jassim bin Rashid Al Buenain, QFA Vice President Mohammad Khalifa Al Suwaidi and QFA Secretary General Mansour Al Ansari were also present at the stadium during Qatar's training session.


Qatar coach Carlos Queiroz

Dahlan Al Hamad to run for third term as AAA President

QNA – BANGKOK

Dahlan Jumaan Al Hamad **(pictured)** yesterday announced his candidacy for a third term as President of the Asian Athletics Association (AAA), which extends until 2027, in order to continue achievements for Asian athletics at the Olympic and international levels and present new champions for the future.

AAA has set July 9 as the date for holding the meeting of the Board of Directors in Bangkok.

Al Hamad said the meeting of the board of directors will be the last one in the session that began in 2019 and ends on July 10, the date set for electing a new board of directors for the association.

The AAA is to hold the meeting of the General Assembly in conjunction with the passage of 50 years since its founding. It is scheduled to witness the election of eight members from 19 members nominated for the Board of Directors. The General Assembly had approved three seats for women by acclamation.



Verstappen leads Red Bull 1-2 in Spielberg sprint

AFP – SPIELBERG BEI KNITTELFELD, AUSTRIA

Max Verstappen led team-mate Sergio Perez home with a dominant display as Red Bull stormed to a comfortable one-two in yesterday's wet-dry sprint race at the Austrian Grand Prix.

The defending double world champion and series leader added eight points to move into a 70-point lead in the drivers' title race as he won by 21.102 seconds.

Ferrari's Carlos Sainz finished third ahead of the two Aston Martins of Lance Stroll and two-time champion Fernando Alonso with Nico Hulkenberg finishing sixth for Haas ahead of Alpine's Esteban ocon.

Mercedes' George Russell took a bold eighth ahead of Lando Norris in his upgraded Mercedes and team-mate seven-time champion Lewis Hamilton who had started 18th.

The Red Bull drivers exchanged sharp words after an opening lap battle that saw Verstappen run wide on the grass at one point, but they recovered to triumph.

"Once I got back in the lead, it was a good race," said Verstappen. "I had to manage the tyres, 24 laps is a lot for 'inters' and we had a hairy moment out of Turn One." Perez said: "I had a good start and a bit of a fight with Max before I lost a position to Nico. I had to fight to get back past him.

"I think Max was angry at Turn Two, but I didn't see him there. Visibility was so bad. I gave him the place back." Heavy rain showers left the track in semi-wet conditions and everyone except Valtteri Bottas began the race on intermediate tyres, the Finn, starting 19th, gambling on dry mediums. He pitted for intermediates after the formation lap.

Charles Leclerc in the second Ferrari started ninth, after taking a three-place grid penalty for impeding Oscar Piastri, before the lights went out and Perez out-started Verstappen to prompt an opening lap scrap for positions.

Hamilton, from 18th, rose to 13th through the plumes of spray while the champion recovered to pull 1.5 seconds clear of Hulkenberg with Perez third. After four of the 24 laps, Perez was still grumbling about his tussling team-mate.

"What's wrong with Max, man?" said the Mexican, who had lost a place as a result of their duel.

The flying Dutchman soared five seconds clear by lap 10 and eight by 12 as Perez passed Hulkenberg for second at Turn Five while Hamilton finally overtook Kevin Magnussen after a wheel-to-wheel battle.

Lacking traction, the German driver struggled on the exit from slow corners, Sainz blasting by on lap 13 before Russell pitted for slicks on lap 17, rejoining last, as the track dried. By lap 20, he was 10th.

Hulkenberg and Hamilton led a group of others who followed for dry tyres with five laps remaining, but the Red Bulls had the luxury of track positions and remained out on intermediates to the flag.

Verstappen also heads the grid for Sunday's main race where he is hunting his seventh win from nine this year.


Red Bull Racing's Mexican driver Sergio Perez (left) and teammate, Dutch driver Max Verstappen take the lead at the start of the sprint race yesterday, ahead of the Formula One Austrian Grand Prix. AFP

AUSTRIAN GRAND PRIX SPRINT RACE RESULTS (TOP 10)

1. Max Verstappen (NED/Red Bull) 30min 26.730sec
2. Sergio Perez (MEX/Red Bull) 30:47.778
3. Carlos Sainz (ESP/Ferrari) 30:49.818
4. Lance Stroll (CAN/Aston Martin-Mercedes) 30:56.433
5. Fernando Alonso (ESP/Aston Martin-Mercedes) 30:56.839
6. Nico Hulkenberg (GER/Haas-Ferrari) 30:58.027
7. Esteban Ocon (FRA/Alpine-Renault) 31:03.332
8. George Russell (GBR/Mercedes) 31:03.341
9. Lando Norris (GBR/McLaren-Mercedes) 31:05.338
10. Lewis Hamilton (GBR/Mercedes) 31:13.105

Medvedev hails Djokovic as 'the greatest'

AFP – LONDON

Daniil Medvedev described Novak Djokovic as "the greatest" yesterday, defying the conventional wisdom to place Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal on the same pedestal as the Serb.

Djokovic racked up a men's record 23rd Grand Slam title with a third French Open triumph last month.

He is about to launch a bid to equal Federer's record of eight Wimbledon titles which will move him alongside Margaret Court as the all-time top major winner with 24 titles.

"I think if I saw it right, Novak is almost 50%. I think I saw he played 70 majors, and 35 times he was in the final. I don't know how is it possible. He doesn't have bad days?" said Medvedev.

Should Djokovic successfully defend his Wimbledon title, he will just need to pocket the US Open in September to become the first man since 1969 to claim a calendar Grand Slam.

"To be able to beat him when he was going for a Grand Slam, maybe he was a little bit tighter than usual, but I played an amazing match," recalled Medvedev.

Adam Yates wins Tour de France opener ahead of twin brother

AFP – BILBAO, SPAIN

Adam Yates of Team UAE won the opening stage of the Tour de France in Bilbao yesterday outsprinting his twin brother Simon Yates of Jayco.

The British twins had broken free at the top of the final climb and it soon became clear there was little will from those behind to chase over the final couple of kilometres.

Two-time Tour winner Tadej Pogacar, also of UAE came, in third, 12 seconds adrift at the end of 182km circuit starting and ending in the Basque city. Pogacar raised his arms in triumph crossing the line, after seeing his newly recruited teammate take the win.

"It was as if I had won the stage myself or in fact even better. It's a dream to see the team developing like this," said Pogacar, the 2021 and 2022 champion.

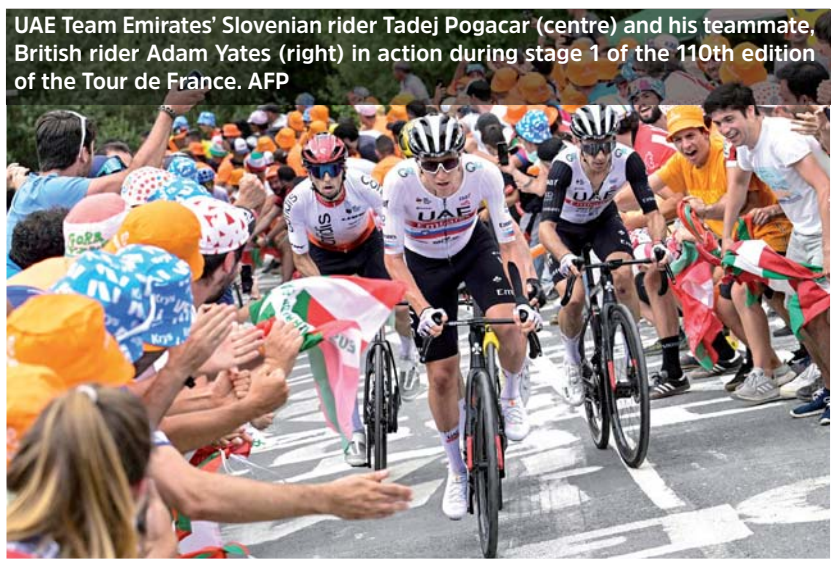
Yates took both the first yellow jersey for the overall lead, and the first green jersey for sprint points.

It was not the first 1-2 for cycling brothers as Andy Schleck beat his brother Frank on stage 18 of the 2011 Tour de France.

"Our parents are here too," Adam said after the stage. "I haven't seen them yet, they're somewhere along the coast in a campervan." The younger by a few minutes, Adam led an elite clique up the Sondika hill through a narrow passage formed by enthusiastic flag-waving fans before allowing Simon to do the work most of the way to the line.

"He understood. I'm sure he'll get his chance to be a pain in the ass along the road somewhere," said the winner. "He asked me this morning what our plans were but I couldn't tell him." Simon Yates, long considered the better of the identical twins, is second in the overall standings, at eight seconds, but appeared deflated after the finale.

After the bonuses, Slovenian Pogacar is third overall at 18 sec. Defending champion Jonas Vingegaard is another four seconds off the pace after tailing the Slovenian all the way to the line, as he did when he wore down his rival last year.


UAE Team Emirates' Slovenian rider Tadej Pogacar (centre) and his teammate, British rider Adam Yates (right) in action during stage 1 of the 110th edition of the Tour de France. AFP

Yesterday's race began under grey skies outside Athletic Bilbao's San Mames stadium before the riders were cheered round the countryside circuit by enthusiastic crowds.

Spaniard Enric Mas of the EF team had hopes of contending for the final podium in Paris, instead he was the first rider to abandon after falling heavily with Ecuadorian teammate Richard Carapaz 10km from home.

The streets along the route were decked out with the Basque white, green and red flags as the Tour de France yellow was for once eclipsed.

Dane Vingegaard of Jumbo Visma led the peloton past the landmark Guggenheim museum before a breakaway formed as the peloton swept into pine and fir forests on the rolling green hills that mark this Atlantic coast region.

American rider Neilson Powless took the polka dot jersey for best climber after winning the race to the top of the penultimate hill.

Stage two is another hilly run through the Basque region from Vitoria to San Sebastian.

TOUR DE FRANCE RESULTS: STAGE 1

1. Adam Yates (GBR/UAE) 4hr 22min 49sec
2. Simon Yates (GBR/JAY) at 4sec
3. Tadej Pogacar (SLO/UAE) 12
4. Thibaut Pinot (FRA/GFC) 12
5. Michael Woods (CAN/IPT) 12
6. Victor Lafay (FRA/COF) 12
7. Jai Hindley (AUS/BOH) 12
8. Mattias Skjelmose (DEN/TFS) 12
9. Jonas Vingegaard (DEN/TJV) 12
10. David Gaudu (FRA/GFC) 12

Al Sadd begin training camp in Austria

FAWAD HUSSAIN
THE PENINSULA

Al Sadd will enter the second phase of their pre-season preparations as the QNB Stars League (QSL) giants will begin their 19-day training camp in Austria today.

The Juan Manuel Lillo-coached side reached Seefeld in Tyrol yesterday after undergoing a 10-day training camp at the Jassim Bin Hamad Stadium in Doha. During their stay in Seefeld, the Wolves will also play four friendly matches against different opponents before returning home on July 19.

The Al Sadd team management has planned extensive preparation for the new season that will begin next month. The Wolves – the 18-time Amir Cup champions and 16-time QSL winners – ended the 2022-23 football season without winning a trophy.

The Qatar football heavyweights underwent several changes in the squad and will enter the next season with new signings including Brazilian players Paulo Otavio and Giovani Henrique, Iranian defender Amin Hazbavi and Colombian player Mateus Uribe.

Al Sadd, who flew to Austria with 23 players, are missing their stars busy with Qatar national team in the ongoing CONCACAF Gold Cup in the United States.

Players attending the training camp include Hassan Al Haydos, goalkeeper Saad Al Sheeb, Guilherme Torres, Pedro Miguel, Baghdad Bounedjah and Akram Afif while Al Sadd Sports Director Mohamed Ghulam Al Balushi is leading the Al Sadd delegation in Austria.

Apart from Al Sadd, reigning QSL champions Al Duhail (July 23 to August 11), Al Rayyan (July 17 to August 7) and Al Shamal (July 15 to August 2) will also hold their overseas training camps in Austria.

Al Arabi to train in Spain

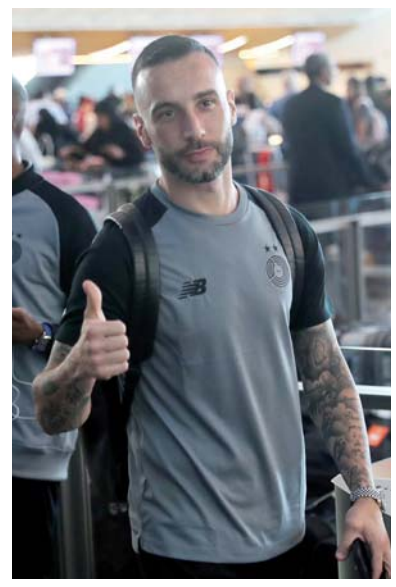
Meanwhile, Amir Cup winners Al Arabi yesterday announced to hold their training camp in Girona, Spain from July 22 to August 9.

Al Arabi will be under coach Younes Ali, who recently renewed his contract with the club for two more seasons.

The Dream Team enjoyed an outstanding 2022-23 season, securing second position in the top flight QSL besides lifting the Amir Cup after 30 years.

The new QSL season will begin on August 17, according to the organisers.







Al Sadd's coach Juan Manuel Lillo (right), prior to the team's departure for Austria, yesterday. RIGHT/DOWN: Al Sadd's Guilherme Torres and team-mates gesture as they prepare for departure.

Mbappe, Les Bleus call for end to violence in France

AFP – PARIS

France captain Kylian Mbappe and Les Bleus urged an end to violence and called for "dialogue and reconstruction" on Friday as France was hit by a fourth night of protests after the fatal police shooting of a teenager.

"The time of violence must give way to that of mourning, dialogue and reconstruction," the team said in a statement posted on social media by the Paris Saint-Germain superstar.

Les Bleus said they were "shocked by the brutal death of young Nahel" but asked that violence give way to "other peaceful and constructive ways of expressing oneself".

Clashes with police have shaken many cities and neighbourhoods across France since the death of 17-year-old Nahel, who was shot dead on Tuesday by a police officer during a traffic stop in a Paris suburb.

"Since this tragic event, we have witnessed the expression of popular anger, the substance of which we understand, but the form of which we cannot endorse," the French football team said in the message shared on their personal social media accounts.

The players said they share "these feelings of pain and sadness" but "it is your property that you are destroying, your neighborhoods, your cities, your places of fulfilment".

"In this context of extreme tension, we cannot remain silent and our civic conscience encourages us to call for appeasement, awareness and accountability," they said.

"There are other peaceful and constructive ways of expressing ourselves. This is where our energies and our thoughts must be focused".

In a separate message sent to followers of the France team, coach Didier Deschamps "welcomed" the initiative of the players.

"My staff and I are associated with it," he said.

"We also have a thought for Nahel's family. However, without wanting to give lessons to anyone, I have the deep conviction that violence has never solved anything. I hope with all my heart that the situation will improve," he said.

Olympic champion Dressel fails to qualify for Worlds

AP – INDIANAPOLIS

Two years after winning five gold medals at the Tokyo Olympics, Caeleb Dressel has failed to qualify for the world championships.

Dressel's final attempt to make the US team ended yesterday morning when he tied for 22nd in the preliminaries for the 50-meter freestyle at the national championships in Indianapolis.

He clocked a time of 22.72 seconds in the frantic sprint from one end of the pool to the other, leaving him 1.07 behind top qualifier Ryan Held and 0.59 outside the top eight that advanced to the "A" final in the evening.

Dressel did earn one more swim in the "C" final at the IU Natatorium, which will cap a week that showed just how far he has to go after taking a long break from swimming following last year's worlds in Budapest, Hungary.

The 26-year-old Floridian competed in four events at Indianapolis, with a best showing of third place in the 50-meter butterfly, a non-Olympic event. He tied for fifth in the 100 fly and failed to advance to the main final in either the 50 or 100 free.

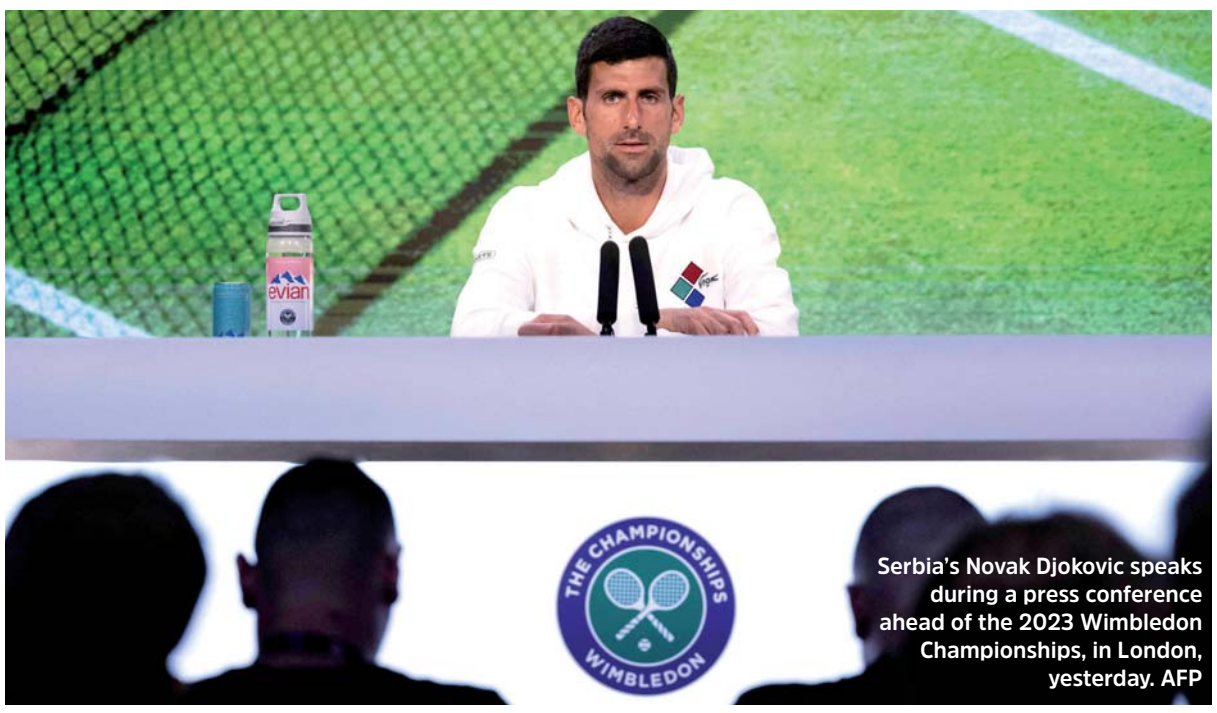
Dressel won the 100 fly and both the 50 and 100 free at the last Summer Games, along with two relay gold medals.

His failure to qualify for next month's worlds in Fukuoka, Japan, deprives the second-most important event after the Olympics of one of its most successful athletes.

Dressel became the first swimmer since Michael Phelps to win seven gold medals at the 2017 worlds in Budapest. He followed up with six golds and two relay silvers at the 2019 championships in Gwangju, South Korea.

At last summer's world's in Budapest, Dressel earned two gold medals but mysteriously dropped out of the meet, citing health reasons, after posting the second-fastest time in the 100 free preliminaries.

He largely disappeared from public view and didn't resume training at the University of Florida until early this year. Dressel returned to competition at a minor meet in Atlanta in May. The national championships are his first top-level competition since the 2022 worlds.



Serbia's Novak Djokovic speaks during a press conference ahead of the 2023 Wimbledon Championships, in London, yesterday. AFP

Djokovic eyes 8th Wimbledon title and 24th Slam crown

AFP – LONDON

Novak Djokovic has Roger Federer's record of eight Wimbledon titles and a 24th major in his sights as he closes in on a first calendar Grand Slam in 54 years.

Fresh from breaking out of a tie with Rafael Nadal for 23 Slams at the French Open, the 36-year-old Djokovic will comfortably be the overwhelming favourite at the All England Club when he starts his title defence tomorrow.

With a 10th Australian Open and third Roland Garros already wrapped up this season, an eighth Wimbledon triumph would leave Djokovic needing just the US Open in September to emulate Rod Laver's sweep of all four majors in 1969.

"He takes your legs, then he takes your soul, then he digs your grave and you have a funeral and you're dead. Bye-bye. Thank you for coming," said coach Goran Ivanisevic when asked to caption the Serb's Grand Slam mindset.

Djokovic has won the title on his last four visits to Wimbledon and has not lost on Centre Court since the 2013 final.

His 86 match wins are only bettered by the now retired Federer and are more than the rest of the current top 20 put together.

Of those players, only two -- Cameron Norrie and Hubert Hurkacz -- have made the semi-finals of Wimbledon.

Amongst his top five rivals, not one has got beyond the last 16 while two-time champion Nadal is sitting out the rest of the year through injury.

A 24th major for Djokovic would take him level with Margaret Court for the most Grand Slam titles won by one player.

World number one Carlos Alcaraz will be Djokovic's biggest threat, especially as the young Spaniard now has a maiden grass-court title in his collection thanks to his win at Queen's last weekend.

However, Alcaraz conceded key ground by admitting that the stress and tension of facing Djokovic in the semi-final at the French Open caused the cramping that sparked his defeat.

Ivanisevic described Djokovic as "unbelievable".

"He's still moving like a cat on the court. He's there. Like a Ninja, he's everywhere. He's going to find some kind of motivation to win 24, maybe 25, who knows where is the end." Not surprisingly, Alcaraz has attempted to shift all the focus onto Djokovic.

"I saw that Djokovic has never lost a match on Centre Court since 2013 when he lost against Andy Murray -- so it's 10 years, it's crazy," said Alcaraz who made the last 16 in 2022 before falling to Jannik Sinner.

Moscow-born Elena Rybakina was the shock women's champion in 2022.

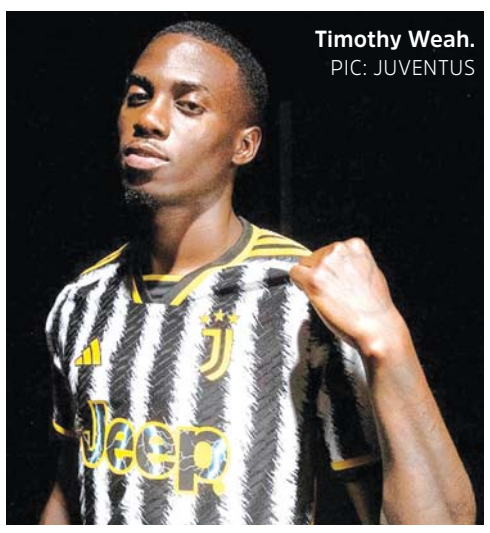
Her decision to switch allegiance to Kazakhstan in 2018 proved to be a wise move when all Russian players were banned last year.

However, her chances of successfully defending her title have suffered a setback by her failure to shake off a virus which forced an early withdrawal from the French Open.

World number one and four-time major winner Iga Swiatek, who is looking for a maiden Wimbledon title to add to her US and French Open crowns, has yet to progress beyond the last 16.

The 22-year-old Pole made the semi-finals of a grass-court tournament for the first time this week at Bad Homburg in Germany before suspected food poisoning forced her to withdraw.

World number two Aryna Sabalenka of Belarus, banned last year because of her country's support for Russia in the war in Ukraine, made the semi-finals in 2021.



Timothy Weah. PIC: JUVENTUS

USA winger Weah signs for Juventus

AFP – MILAN

Timothy Weah signed for Juventus from Lille yesterday, the USA international following in his father's footsteps to Serie A.

"Timothy Weah has officially become a Juventus player. The American arrives on a permanent deal from Lille," the Italian club said in a statement.

The son of 1995 Ballon d'Or winner and current president of Liberia George Weah, the 23-year-old will replace Colombia winger Juan Cuadrado who is set to leave as a free agent.

Weah senior starred for Monaco, Paris Saint-Germain and then AC Milan, where he won league titles in 1996 and 1999 and was Africa's top scorer in Serie A until Victor Osimhen overtook him last season.

His son, who has played 29 times and scored four goals for the USA, is Juve's first new signing of the summer after a troubled season.

Juve are hoping to hire as their new sporting director Cristiano Giuntoli, the man who built a series of strong Napoli teams including last season's Scudetto winners while balancing the books.

Keys clinches Eastbourne title for second time

AFP – EASTBOURNE

Madison Keys claimed the Eastbourne International for the second time on Saturday after holding off a fightback by Daria Kasatkina to win 6-2, 7-6 (15/13).

The American appeared to be cruising towards her third grass court title as she raced through the first set and led 4-1 in the second.

Kasatkina was battling the blustery conditions and a series of net cords that went in Keys' favour but found her stride to take five of the next six games.

However, the Russian, who will enter the world's top 10 next week, was broken when serving to take the second set.

Instead a marathon tie-break ensued as Kasatkina again battled back from 5-2 down to have four set points.

Keys' booming forehands though dug the world number 25 out of trouble and she eventually took the title on her fifth match point.

"It feels like home," said Keys of backing up her first ever WTA title at Eastbourne in 2014.

"Being able to win the title here twice now makes me have very fond memories of Eastbourne."

Keys will now turn her attention to Wimbledon, where she faces British wildcard Sonay Kartal in the first round on Tuesday.

Kasatkina is in action at the All England Club tomorrow against American Caroline Dolehide.



US player Madison Keys celebrates with the trophy after winning the Rothesay Eastbourne International singles title, yesterday. AFP

West Indies miss out on World Cup for first time in history

AFP – HARARE

The West Indies failed to qualify for the Cricket World Cup for the first time as the two-time champions slumped to a seven-wicket thumping by Scotland at the qualifying event yesterday.

The Caribbean side, needing a win to keep their slim qualification hopes alive, were bowled out for 181 in their 50 overs before Scotland chased down the target with 6.3 overs to spare in Harare.

Shai Hope's men have zero points with only two matches remaining in the Super Six stage in Zimbabwe after previous defeats by the hosts and the Netherlands.

The global one-day showpiece, which will be held in India from October 5 until November 19, will be notable for the absence of one of the sport's traditional powerhouses.

Scotland exacted revenge for an agonising and controversial loss by the West Indies at the previous World Cup Qualifier in 2018 which saw them miss out on the main tournament with a first one-day international win over their opponents. They now sit just two points behind Zimbabwe and Sri Lanka, with the top two to qualify for the 10-team event, ahead of their final two games against Zimbabwe on Tuesday and the Dutch two days later.

The damage was done early on by the Scottish seam bowlers as they reduced the Windies to 81-6 after winning the toss and electing to field first.

Young all-rounder Brandon McMullen dismissed the West Indies top three of Brandon King, Johnson Charles and Shamarh Brooks and finished with 3-32 from nine overs.

Scotland's spinners kept the squeeze on despite a brief fightback from Jason Holder and Romario Shepherd.

Shepherd was brilliantly caught by Safyaan Sharif off the bowling of Mark Watt for 36 and Holder was trapped lbw by Chris Greaves three balls later, as the Windies lost their last four wickets for 23 runs.

Holder sent back Scotland opener Christopher McBride from the very first delivery of the Scots' innings to give his team hope. But a 125-run partnership for the second wicket between McMullen and Matthew Cross put Scotland firmly on course for victory.

McMullen holed out off Shepherd for 69 but the game was already all but won.

Left-arm spinner Akeal Hosein removed George Munsey with 20 required, leaving it up to Cross to guide Scotland home with an unbeaten 74 from 107 balls.

The West Indies had previously played at every World Cup, winning the first two editions in 1975 and 1979.

Starc strikes before reprieved Duckett gives England hope

AFP – LONDON


Australia's Mitchell Starc (centre) celebrates after bowling England's Ollie Pope (left) out, yesterday. AFP

Mitchell Starc sparked an England collapse at Lord's yesterday before Ben Duckett was given a controversial reprieve as the hosts maintained their bid for a remarkable win in the second Ashes Test.

England were 114-4 at stumps on the fourth day, still needing a further 257 runs to reach a target of 371.

Left-handed opener Duckett, who made 98 in the first innings, was 50 not out and captain Ben Stokes unbeaten on 29, with England looking to level the five-match series at 1-1.

Starc, recalled following Australia's thrilling two-wicket win in last week's first Test at Edgbaston, reduced England to 13-2.

And they were in dire straits at 45-4 when Australia captain Pat Cummins struck twice in an over.

Duckett then appeared to fall for exactly 50 when he miscued Cameron Green to fine leg, where a sliding Starc held a fine catch only for the ball to touch the turf.

Third umpire Marais Erasmus, to Australia's visible despair, disallowed the dismissal because Starc had grounded the before he was in control of his body and so had not completed a fair catch.

At the close, England could still think of a win that would be almost as improbable as their one-wicket victory over Australia at Headingley in 2019, when Stokes hit a stunning unbeaten hundred.

Starc had Zak Crawley 'strangled' down the legside, wicketkeeper Alex Carey holding a fine diving catch.

But there was no denying the left-arm fast bowler's skill when he cleaned up Ollie Pope with a 90 mph inswinger that started outside off and smashed into middle stump.

And Starc would have had Duckett lbw for five but for a review that fell narrowly in the opener's favour.

But Cummins had Joe Root fending to David Warner at first slip for 18 as the England star became the latest batsman this match to fall to the short ball.

Three balls later Cummins bowled Harry Brook with a superb delivery that straightened off the seam to hit the top of off stump.

World Test champions Australia ripped through England's top-order despite being without Nathan Lyon.

The off-spinner, appearing in his 100th consecutive Test, was not on the field having surprisingly limped out to bat at No 11 despite suffering a severe calf injury while fielding on Thursday. Yet for all the 35-year-old's bravery, Lyon was struggling to run. And with runners no longer allowed in Tests, Starc repeatedly refused singles to a deep-set field in order to protect Lyon.

The courageous Lyon's defiant four off 13 balls ended when he holed out off Stuart Broad, the veteran paceman taking 4-65 as Australia were dismissed for 279 in their second innings. Lyon departed to a pat on the back from Stokes, who bowled 12 overs straight through, and a standing ovation from the crowd. His gutsy effort was also a testament to Australia's regard for England's run-chasing ability.

In the past year, Stokes's men have achieved three of England's highest fourth-innings run chases, including a national record 378 against India at Edgbaston in 2022.

The most any side have made to win in the fourth innings of a Test at Lord's, however, is West Indies' 344-1 in 1984.

Australia resumed on Saturday morning on 130-2 but then lost three wickets for 10 runs in slumping to 197-5 as a trio of batsmen were bounced out.

Usman Khawaja, who made 141 and 65 at Edgbaston, started the slump when out for 77 after spooning a Broad bouncer straight to fine leg.

It was an out-of-character shot by the left-handed opener, who had repeatedly ducked the bouncer earlier in a 187-ball innings featuring 12 fours.

BRIEF SCORES

England 325 and 114 for 4 **need another 257 runs to beat Australia** 416 and 279 (Khawaja 77, Broad 4-65)

Dutch teenager Dilano dies after crash at race in Belgium

AP – SPA-FRANCORCHAMPS

Dutch teenage driver Dilano van 't Hoff died after a crash at the Formula Regional European Championship in Belgium, organizers said yesterday.

The 18-year-old MP Motorsport driver was competing in a morning race at the Spa-Francorchamps circuit. It was held prior to the 24 Hours of Spa race later yesterday.

"Everyone associated with the CrowdStrike 24 Hours of Spa is devastated by the news that Formula Regional EU by Alpine driver Dilano van 't Hoff lost his life in an accident during this morning's race," the race organizers said in a statement.

"We express our deepest condolences to his family, friends and MP Motorsport." The FREC expressed its " sincere condolences to the family, team and friends."

A minute's silence was held before the start of the main 24 Hours of Spa race. Motorsport's governing body FIA also expressed its sorrow. The Spa-Francorchamps circuit is where French driver Anthoine Hubert was killed following a multi-car crash during a Formula Two race at the Belgium Grand Prix in 2019.

Two-time F1 champion Max Verstappen, also a Dutchman, expressed his condolences and said the wet driving conditions should have been looked at beforehand.

"Incredibly sad. I didn't know him personally. Of course he was a Dutch racing driver, up-and-coming racing driver as well, who had the same dreams we had," said Verstappen, who was speaking at the Austrian Grand Prix.

"We have to look into these kinds of situations. It's easy to blame the track, but I think also looking at how wet it was. ... (There are) definitely things that we have to look at for the future, what we can do better to protect drivers."

Two years ago, six drivers from the all-female W Series needed medical checks following a heavy crash during a qualifying session on the same track.

DeChambeau eagles final hole to take LIV Golf lead in Spain


A file photo of Bryson DeChambeau in action. AFP

AP – SOTOGRANDE, SPAIN

Bryson DeChambeau made eagle on his final hole at the par-5 17th for an 8-under 63 and a one-shot lead over Talor Gooch yesterday in LIV Golf-Valderrama.

DeChambeau has yet to win against the 48-man fields on the Saudi-backed LIV Golf League, and this might be his best chance.

He played bogey-free for the day, and his eagle allowed him to move into the lead going into the third and final round. Gooch, who won back-to-back LIV Golf events in Australia and Singapore earlier this year, had the lead for much of the second round at Valderrama, with eight birdies against one bogey.

But then he took a second bogey on the 18th hole and finished with a par for a 65.

PGA champion Brooks Koepka, who already has two LIV Golf wins along with Gooch and Dustin Johnson, got his lone mistake out of the way early and shot 65.

He was three shots behind DeChambeau. Johnson shared the opening-round lead but could only manage a 71, leaving him five back.

Jason Kokrak was a late arrival due to travel from Ohio and was tied for the 18-hole lead with Johnson. He shot 74 and fell eight shots behind.

DeChambeau was at 9-under 133.

Among those at 1-under 141 was Sergio Garcia, who knows Valderrama as well as anyone. He had to settle for a 71 and was well back in his bid for a first LIV victory.

Ingebrigtsen, Aregawi shine at Lausanne Diamond League

AFP – LAUSANNE


India's Neeraj Chopra competes in the Men's Javelin Throw event. Chopra, the Olympic champion, clinched his second straight podium finish of the Diamond League season with a 87.66-metre mark. AFP



Ethiopia's Berihu Aregawi poses after winning the Men's 5000m event during the IAAF Diamond League 'Athletissima' meeting at the Stade Olympique de la Pontaise in Lausanne. AFP

Norwegian Jakob Ingebrigtsen stormed to an impressive victory in the men's 1500m over Ethiopian challenger Lamecha Girma at the Lausanne Diamond League meet on Friday.

Ingebrigtsen clocked 3min 28.72sec for a new meet record at the Stade de la Pontaise in unseasonally chilly conditions at the sixth of the season's 14 meets in track and field's elite circuit.

Girma had set a new world record in the 3,000m steeplechase in Paris earlier this month, on the same night that Ingebrigtsen broke the rarely-run 2 miles record.

But the Norwegian made no mistake in Lausanne with a masterful display, Girma having to content himself with second place in an Ethiopian record of 3:29.51.

"I have had to make some adjustments with my strategy, I have been putting in extra miles in the last couple of weeks," said Ingebrigtsen.

"It's all to get myself in the best shape possible for the worlds" in Budapest in August, said the Norwegian, who was left bitterly disappointed in Eugene last year after being outsprinted by Briton Jack Wightman for world 1500m gold.

Girma's teammate Berihu Aregawi, 22, became the fifth fastest runner ever over the 5,000m when he soared to a win in 12:40.45, another meet record -- and also a personal best and the world's fastest time this season.

With temperatures hovering around 17 degrees Celsius (64F), Aregawi, who was fourth in the 10,000m at the Tokyo Olympics, launched into an impressive solo assault that saw Uganda's world record holder Joshua Cheptegei finish second (12:41.61).

"I am delighted to be here and to win against Joshua," beamed Aregawi.

Cheptegei added: "My goal is to get back to the form I was before, getting faster race by race and tonight is the proof of that.

"I still have a lot to improve on, a lot to work on, but if I believe in myself, I will reach my objectives."

Dutchwoman Femke Bol continued her winning ways in the 400m hurdles, clocking a dominant 52.76sec for a new meet record.

Ivorian Marie-Josee Ta Lou sprinted to the win in the women's 100m in 10.88sec, shorn of her principal Jamaican rivals and the sole runner to dip below the 11-sec mark.

"I was happy with my race, but not really with my time," she said.

"I will have to work as usual with my coach. The conditions weren't ideal, it was cold for me. But I'm happy, at least I ran under the 11 seconds barrier." Kenya's Commonwealth champion Mary Moraa claimed victory in the women's 800m in 1:57.43, with in-form Briton Keely Hodgkinson almost a second behind in second.

"I wasn't very happy about this race, I was in great shape, but I guess today was not my day. Mary was better," Hodgkinson conceded.

World U20 100m champion Letsile Tebogo of Botswana, the fastest this year with a 19.87 lifetime best, won the men's 200m in ease in 20.01sec into a 1.4m/s headwind.

Olympic champion Andre de Grasse, making a comeback from injury, finished sixth in 20.57sec.

"It felt great tonight," said Tebogo. "You have to trust the process and then everything will fall into place just as it's supposed to be."