

## Sports

Many Clouds  
dies after  
Thistlecrack upsetDouble-chasing  
Chelsea down  
Brentford in FA Cup

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PARNELL, TAHIR SHINE IN SOUTH AFRICA ODI WIN

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MELBOURNE: United States' Serena Williams (right) and her sister Venus pose for a photo after Serena won the women's singles final at the Australian Open tennis championships yesterday. — AP

## SERENA SINKS VENUS TO WIN MAGIC 23RD SLAM

MELBOURNE: Serena Williams reigned supreme in tennis's great sibling rivalry, edging an emotion-charged clash with sister Venus to claim her seventh Australian Open yesterday and a record 23rd grand slam title in the professional era.

Beset by nerves early in the tense family affair, the American needed all her firepower and famed mental strength to fend off Venus, who scrapped hard to the end before going down 6-4 6-4 at Rod Laver Arena.

Fourteen years after beating Venus for her maiden title at Melbourne Park, Serena's seventh crown was sealed with a heady charge to the net that forced a desperate backhand from Venus to float wide.

Eyes ablaze in joyous disbelief, Serena slumped to the court and threw her hands in the air, the world number one ranking also re-captured from Angelique Kerber. She paid tribute to Venus, her long-time doubles partner and enduring inspiration.

"She's an amazing person, there's no way I would be

at 23 without her," said Serena, cradling the Daphne Akhurst Memorial Cup.

"There's no way I would have anything without her. My first grand slam started here, and getting to 23 here, but playing Venus, it's stuff that legends are made of. I couldn't have written a better story." The win moved Serena past Steffi Graf on the list of all-time grand slam champions. Only Margaret Court, who watched the match from the terraces, is ahead of her on 24.

Serena arrived in Melbourne with only two matches under her belt, having cut short her season to recover from injury after the US Open.

But she roared through the tournament without losing a set and, at the age of 35, the relentless pursuit of grand slam silverware will go on, and with sister in tow.

"We're both, like I say, 30-fun," said Serena of their longevity. "Now I just feel like I'm satisfied with where I am, although I always want to win." Venus, 36, had already proved an inspiration by reaching her first final

since her loss to Serena at Wimbledon in 2009. It made her the oldest woman to do so at Melbourne Park since tennis went professional in 1968.

## BATTLING HARD

She lost her seventh of nine grand slam title deciders to her younger sister but won over the Rod Laver Arena crowd by battling hard to the finish.

"Congratulations Serena on number 23, I've been right there with you, some of them I've lost right there with you," said the seven-times grand slam champion, raising a laugh from the crowd.

"Your win has always been my win, you know that."

The sisters' combined ages added up to the 'oldest' grand slam final in the professional era but they ran like the teenagers they were in 1998, when they played each other for the first time in a tour match at the same tournament. Nerves weighed heavier, however, and in a tense start, both dropped serve twice in the opening

four games. Serena was the worst afflicted, and she smashed her racket in a rage in the third game, having slipped behind the baseline when chasing down a ball.

The game's greatest server double-faulted three times to be broken a second time, causing a gasp from the crowd.

But she soon settled to forge a 5-3 lead before sealing the set with a thumping pair of aces. Venus was quickly under siege, with Serena feasting readily on her modest second serve. Serena pounced in the seventh game, breaking her in the seventh game with a searing backhand return and she served out to love to come within a game of the title.

Venus pushed hard to break back at 5-4 but flung her racket away in despair after hammering a forehand into the net to give up match point.

It was all Serena needed and after a furious exchange of shots, she charged in to the net swinging to claim yet another major title. —Reuters

## LIVERPOOL OUT OF FA CUP AS SPURS SURVIVE WYCOMBE SCARE

LONDON: Liverpool were knocked out of the FA Cup by Championship club Wolves as Tottenham Hotspur survived a potential giant-killing of their own by twice coming from behind in a 4-3 win over fourth-tier Wycombe Wanderers at White Hart Lane.

Seven-times FA Cup winners Liverpool lost 2-1 at home to second-tier Wolves as the Merseysiders' season went from bad to worse.

Defeat meant Liverpool, 10 points behind Premier League leaders Chelsea—their next opponents at Anfield on Tuesday—had been knocked out of two cup competitions in four days following their 2-0 aggregate loss to Southampton in Wednesday's League Cup semi-final return. Wolves needed less than a minute to go ahead, Richard Stearman opening the scoring for the Midlands side when he headed in a free-kick.

And four minutes before half-time, they doubled their lead when Andreas Weimann finished an excellent counter-attack. But, having rarely threatened, a much-changed Liverpool pulled a goal back when Divock Origi scored from close range with four minutes left following a corner. That, however, was good as it got for Liverpool, who have now won just one of their last eight matches in all competition.

"We were very bad," Klopp told BT Sport. "We started badly and it didn't really get better...There are not a lot of good things to say about this game."

For Wolves, victory gave them a second Premier League scalp in this season's FA Cup after they knocked Stoke City out in the third round and manager Paul Lambert said: "We'll enjoy the ride. We might get dismantled in the next game but the last two (FA Cup) games have been unbelievable."

Wycombe threatened an even bigger upset as they

surged into a 2-0 lead away to eight-times FA Cup winners Spurs thanks to two first-half goals from captain Paul Hayes only for Son Heung-Min, who scored twice, to grab the winning goal seven minutes into stoppage-time. Hayes fired Wycombe into a 23rd-minute lead against a Spurs side showing nine changes with a fine volley. And in the 36th minute, Hayes made it 2-0 from the penalty spot after Spurs' Cameron Carter-Vickers brought down Sam Wood.

But Son pulled a goal back for the north London side on the hour. And four minutes later Spurs were level when Vincent Janssen scored from the penalty spot after being brought down in the box.

Yet there was still time for Wycombe to regain the lead courtesy of Gary Thompson's 83rd-minute header.

But with two minutes of normal time left, England midfielder Alli made it 3-3 after weaving his way through the box. Wycombe were then cruelly denied even a replay when South Korea forward Son scored with a deflected shot seconds before the final whistle.

Elsewhere, Chelsea kept their double hopes alive with a comfortable 4-0 fourth-round win at home to fellow west London club Brentford.

Willian gave Chelsea a 14th-minute lead with when he lifted a free-kick over the wall and into the top corner. Minutes later, Antonio Conte's men were 2-0 up when Pedro scored at the far post following Michy Batshuayi's defence-splitting pass at the far post.

Branislav Ivanovic made it 3-0 before Batshuayi's penalty nine minutes from time completed the scoring.

Manchester City won an all-Premier League tie against Crystal Palace, last season's losing FA Cup finalists, 3-0 courtesy of goals from Raheem Sterling, Leroy Sane and Yaya Toure.



ANFIELD: Wolverhampton Wanderers' Nouha Dicko jumps as he vies for the ball with Liverpool's Joe Gomez during the English FA Cup, fourth round soccer match between Liverpool and Wolverhampton Wanderers, at Anfield, in Liverpool, England, yesterday. — AP

Saturday's late kick-off Cup tie sees top-flight duo Southampton and Arsenal meet at St Mary's.

In other Cup ties, Premier League Burnley beat second-tier Bristol City 2-0, non-league Lincoln stunned Championship leaders Brighton 3-1 and third-tier Oxford upset Championship club Newcastle 3-0.

Blackburn defeated local rivals Blackpool 2-0, Middlesbrough edged out Accrington 1-0 and

Huddersfield thrashed Rochdale 4-0 FA Cup holders Manchester United travel to Wigan for a fourth-round tie on Sunday when top-flight sides Watford and Hull are away to Millwall and Fulham respectively.

Non-league Sutton are away to Championship club Leeds in a round of FA Cup matches that started with Premier League Leicester's 2-2 draw away to second-tier Derby on Friday. — AFP