

Sports

Nadal's disaster hands Medvedev No 1 status

Coric crashes Nadal's Cincinnati welcome back party

CINCINNATI: Rafael Nadal's disaster comeback match on Wednesday at the Cincinnati Masters leaves the Spaniard lagging in the chase for the top ATP ranking. Nadal was ambushed 7-6 (11/9), 4-6, 6-3 in his second-round start by Croat Borna Coric, ending his hopes of overtaking Daniil Medvedev for the world number one rankings. Top seed Medvedev, who played on Thursday for a quarter-final spot against Denis Shapovalov as he tried to tighten his grip on his current top position heading into the US Open.

Third-ranked Nadal was rocked by his loss after six weeks away as he healed an abdominal muscle injury that forced his withdrawal from a Wimbledon semi-final against Nick Kyrgios. Now Nadal goes into the US Open, which begins on August 29 in New York, with only one summer hardcourt match. "In terms of New York, it's a Grand Slam, a different kind of tournament," Nadal said. "I was only able to play two sets before this match in the last 40 days. "I know that to gain condition. I will have to (be) on the tour practicing with the guys (other players)."

The 36-year-old Spaniard with 22 Grand Slam titles said he hopes to feed off fan energy at the US Open, where Nadal won titles in 2010, 2013, 2017 and 2019. "There is an energy the crowd gives me in New York. It's a very special place for me," Nadal said. "I've had unforgettable moments there and I'm going to try my very best every single

day to be ready for that."

Coric crashes

Coric spoiled the return of Nadal after a five-year absence from the ATP and WTA Cincinnati Masters on Wednesday with a 7-6 (11/9), 4-6, 6-3 upset victory in the second round. The 36-year-old Spaniard, who won the Cincinnati title in 2013, was playing his first match in well over a month after withdrawing with an abdominal injury from his Wimbledon semi-final against Nick Kyrgios. "When you come back from injury, if you win the first match things get better," Nadal said. "That was not the case today."

Nadal began the season with three titles and 20 consecutive wins but will head into the US Open after only one summer hardcourt match. "This tournament was difficult for me. He played better," Nadal said. "It's difficult to take a lot of positive things from this match. "I need to practice. I need to return better. That's the truth."

The night appearance by the 22-time Grand Slam champion was interrupted for an hour and a quarter by rain in the opening set. Once back, the pair struggled into a first-set tie-breaker which lasted for well over a quarter of an hour. Nadal missed on two set points of his own and had to save two set points for Coric. But on the Croat's third opportunity, Nadal handed over the set after an hour and a quarter on court with a costly double-fault. "I had chances in the

tiebreaker and I played terrible on two easy set points," Nadal said.

Nadal then took another 75 minutes to square the match thanks to a break in the seventh game of the second set. The Spaniard was broken to trail 2-4 on a forehand wide, opening the door for Coric, who finished off the victory in just under three hours. "It was very special," said Coric, who had shoulder surgery last year. "I've been out the last two years injured. I didn't play on the big stage. "I was looking forward to playing this match. It was all kind of crazy I would say."

Kyrgios, meanwhile, lost his way amid objections to on-court advertising lights, with the Wimbledon runner-up falling 6-3, 6-2 to American Taylor Fritz. The Australian was in complaint mode from the start, lamenting the distraction of flickering LED lights on an advertising board and demanding a fix. World number 28 Kyrgios, after a standout summer which included the Washington title this month, could not find his best game in crashing out to 11th seed Fritz after only 50 minutes.

Raducanu rolls on

Women's 10th seed Emma Raducanu dispatched her second Grand Slam champion in less than 24 hours, crushing Victoria Azarenka 6-0, 6-2. The teenaged US Open champion claimed the first 10 games before Azarenka, a two-time Australian Open champion, finally captured a game. But the young Briton, who ousted Serena Williams the night before with another love set,



OHIO: Rafael Nadal of Spain plays a backhand during his match against Borna Coric of Croatia during the Western & Southern Open at the Lindner Family Tennis Center on August 17, 2022. —AFP

denied Azarenka on two break points in the final game to win in 63 minutes.

"It was another really difficult match and a tough matchup to play Vika," Raducanu said. "I knew I had to be really on my game. I didn't have much time to turn around. "I'm obviously pleased with how I played today and how I stayed really focused." Andy Murray needed a post-match on-court visit from the trainer after losing 3-6, 6-3, 6-4 to Cameron Norrie in the second round. Three-time Grand Slam champion Murray, twice a Cincinnati

champion, needed massage on his right thigh before leaving the court after battling for nearly two and three-quarter hours.

"My consistency maybe was not where I'd want it," Murray said. "But there was some positive tennis in there at times. I definitely had enough opportunities to win." After cramping at other events in recent weeks, the 35-year-old Scotsman is worried about his physical situation. "It's a big concern for me. It's something I need to address and find a solution for," Murray said. —AFP

Mclroy, Tiger lead players meeting on LIV Golf threat

WASHINGTON: Tiger Woods led a US PGA Tour players-only meeting regarding the threat posed by Saudi-backed LIV Golf, and how to combat it, ahead of this week's BMW Championship. Four-time major winner Rory Mclroy and two-time PGA Championship winner Justin Thomas confirmed Tuesday's gathering on Wednesday, Mclroy saying players departed united on a plan of action moving forward. "The one thing that came out of it, which I think was the purpose, is all the top players on this tour are in agreement and alignment of where we should go going forward," Mclroy said. "And that was awesome."

Several big-name players have left the PGA for the record purses and shorter events of the LIV Golf Series, where hefty guarantees and \$25 million purses have attracted such stars as Dustin Johnson, Brooks Koepka, Phil Mickelson, Bubba Watson, Bryson DeChambeau, Henrik Stenson and Sergio Garcia. The PGA responded with indefinite bans

and raised the purses of several events in hopes of competing with the riches of the Saudi-backed circuit. Exact details of what players want were not revealed but Mclroy said one key issue from the meeting was having more opportunities for the world's best golfers to play against each other outside of the majors.

"We need to get the top guys together more often than we do," Mclroy said. "I'm talking about all in the same tournaments, all in the same weeks." Mclroy said for now the nature of the talks was a matter between the players and PGA Tour leaders. "I don't think that's for a public forum right now," Mclroy said. "I think that's between the players and between the executives at the tour to try to sort of manage a way forward."

Woods, a 15-time major champion who is recovering from leg injuries suffered in a February 2021 car crash, made the effort to appear in person at the meeting ahead of the FedEx Cup playoff event, which tees off Thursday in Wilmington, Delaware. "It was impactful and I think it shows how much he cares about the tour," Mclroy said. "It shows how much he cares about the players that are coming through and are going to be the next generation."

Mclroy made it clear that of all the players in the room, it was Woods who commanded the greatest attention. "He's the hero that we've all looked up to.



WILMINGTON: Rory Mclroy of Northern Ireland hits a shot on the 11th hole during the Pro-Am prior to the BMW Championship at Wilmington Country Club. —AFP

His voice carries further than anyone else's in the game of golf, Mclroy said. "His role is navigating us to a place where we all think we should be. "It's pretty apparent that whenever we all get in the room, there's an alpha in there, and it's not me. He cares a lot." —AFP

Kuwait gears for 25th Arabian Gulf CUP

KUWAIT: The inspection committee for the association of Arabian Gulf Cup has affirmed the readiness for Kuwait to host the competition which is expected to start January of next year in case the

competition excludes Iraq from hosting it. The competition is planned to be hosted in Basra City in Iraq, but the current political and security issues might affect Iraq's hosting of the competition.

The inspection committee, headed by secretary general, Jasem Al-Rumaihi, confirmed the readiness for Jaber Stadium and Ali Sabah Al-Salem Stadium, to host the two groups, while the stadiums of Kuwait Club, Al-Shabab, Al-Sadaqa Wa Al-Salam and Thamer will be used for training for all participating nations.

The inspection panel concluded its visit with a

meeting with representatives of Kuwait Football Association (KFA), at the attendance of secretary general Salah Al-Qenaqi, who welcomed the visitors to Kuwait and affirmed the readiness of Kuwait to host the competition. The committee will send a report to the Association of the Arabian Gulf Cup to take the final decision about choosing the hosting country. It is worth noting that Kuwait has hosted the 23rd edition of the Arabian Gulf Cup which was won by the Omani National Football Team after Iraq apologized to host the competition — KUNA

Blackburn lose perfect record in Championship

LONDON: Blackburn Rovers lost their 100 percent record in the English Championship on Wednesday when they were defeated 3-0 at Reading. League-leading Rovers went into the game having won all three of their opening matches as they look to return to the Premier League.

By contrast, Reading had lost two of their opening three games, including a 4-0 rout at Rotherham at the weekend. But they were deservedly in front on Wednesday with Tom McIntyre heading them ahead on the quarter-hour mark. Junior Hoilett added a second on the hour with substitute Lucas Joao tucking away the third. Despite the defeat, Blackburn stay top of the table with a one-point lead over Hull and Watford.

Sheffield United climbed to fourth after a 2-1 home victory against 10-man Sunderland. Goals from Anel Ahmedhodzic and Max Lowe put the Blades in command. After being forced to play with only 10 men for around an hour after Dan Neil was

sent off, Sunderland reduced the arrears with a goal from Lynden Gooch. D'Margio Wright-Phillips scored an added-time equalizer for Stoke as they snatched a 2-2 draw at home to Middlesbrough.

Former England centre-half Phil Jagielka's own goal - on his 40th birthday - looked set to hand Boro all three points. But with Chris Wilder's side ready to celebrate their first victory of the season, 20-year-old sub Wright-Phillips - grandson of former Arsenal striker Ian Wright - snatched a point. Jacob Brown's second goal of the season had put Stoke in front before Duncan Watmore made it 1-1. West Brom and Cardiff drew 0-0 in the night's other game. — AFP

LeBron agrees Lakers extension for \$97m

LOS ANGELES: LeBron James has agreed to terms on a two-year NBA contract extension with the Los Angeles Lakers worth \$97.1 million, according to multiple reports on Wednesday. The deal, according to ESPN and The Athletic, includes a player option for the 2024-25 season, in which James could see his 17-year-old son Bronny become an NBA rookie.

The contract could be worth \$111 million to the superstar forward if the NBA salary cap makes a major jump for the 2023-24 campaign. Terms would give James a career guaranteed total earnings number of \$532 million, edging the four-time NBA champion and four-time NBA Most Valuable Player ahead of Kevin Durant for the record guaranteed career earnings total. James, 37, has said he wants to play through the 2024-25 season for the chance to play alongside his eldest son, a top high school prospect in Los Angeles.

James, who would have been entering the final season of his Lakers' contract in October, will now be able to negotiate a new deal or become a free agent in two seasons, the same options available to star teammate Anthony Davis. The Lakers won their most recent NBA title in 2020 but missed the playoffs last season, going 33-49, and James was limited to 56 games by injuries although he averaged 30.3 points, 8.2 rebounds and 6.2 assists a game. —AFP



LeBron James of the Los Angeles Lakers

Classifieds

Hospitals & Clinics

Sabah Hospital	24812000
Amiri Hospital	22450005
Maternity Hospital	24843100
Mubarak Al-Kabir Hospital	25312700
Chest Hospital	24849400
Farwaniya Hospital	24892010
Adan Hospital	23940620
Ibn Sina Hospital	24840300
Al-Razi Hospital	24846000
Physiotherapy Hospital	24874330/9

Clinics

Kaizen center	25716707
Rawda	22517733
Adaliya	22517144
Khakdiya	24848075
Kaifan	24849807
Shamiya	24848913
Shuwaikh	24814507
Abdullah Salem	22549134

Nuzha	22526804
Industrial Shuwaikh	24814764
Qadsiya	22515088
Dasmah	22532265
Bneid Al-Gar	22531908
Shaab	22518752
Qibla	22459381
Ayoun Al-Qibla	22451082
Mirqab	22456536
Sharq	22465401
Salmiya	25746401

CHANGE OF NAME

I, **Ranjit Khiva**, holder of Passport No. L1435090 do hereby change my father's name from Nachhatar Khiva to Nachhatar Singh. He will henceforth be known in the name of Nachhatar Singh. And I also undertake to carry out this

name change in all my documents. (C# 2037)

I, **TOSIF MOHAMMED RAIS MOHAMMAD** holder of passport No. V6052629 do hereby change my name to TOSIF MOHAMMAD RAISE MOHAMMAD for all purposes. I will henceforth be known in the name TOSIF MOHAMMAD RAISE MOHAMMAD

and I also undertake to carry out this name change in all my documents. (C# 2038) — 18-08-2022

My Old Name: DIVY VIVEK DABARE, Passport No. T8762544 changed to New Name: MIRAJ VIVEK DABARE for all purposes and documents. Objections please call: 60681599. (C# 2039) 19-08-2022