



WIMBLEDON: Serbia's Novak Djokovic returns the ball to Australia's Thanasi Kokkinakis during their men's singles tennis match on the third day of the 2022 Wimbledon Championships on June 29, 2022. —AFP

Sweet 16 for Djokovic as Wimbledon seeds crash

Second seed Kontaveit knocked out of Wimbledon

LONDON: Defending champion Novak Djokovic reached the Wimbledon third round for the 16th time on Wednesday as potential semi-final opponent Casper Ruud crashed out. Top seed Djokovic brushed aside 79th-ranked Thanasi Kokkinakis of Australia 6-1, 6-4, 6-2 and will face Serbian compatriot Miomir Kecmanovic for a last-16 place.

Third seed and French Open runner-up Ruud was knocked out by 112th-ranked Ugo Humbert, 3-6, 6-2, 7-5, 6-4. "I'm very happy with my performance. I started very well, solid from the back of the court," said Djokovic, who is looking to join Pete Sampras as a seven-time Wimbledon champion. "I made him work for every point and worked him around the court," added the 20-time major winner.

Kokkinakis had likened Djokovic to a "brick wall" before the match. "It was one-way traffic. I got chopped today," said the 26-year-old Australian after his Centre Court torment. In the women's event, second seed Anett Kontaveit lost 6-4, 6-0 to Germany's Julie Niemeier as the Estonian endured another Grand Slam to forget. Kontaveit has made the quarter-finals of a major just once in 29 attempts. Ninth seed and 2017 champion Garbine Muguruza also exited in her delayed first-round clash, losing 6-4, 6-0 to Belgium's Greet Minnen.

'Amazing support'

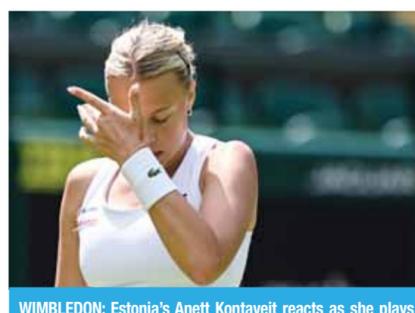
Lesia Tsurenko came out on top in three sets over

Ukrainian compatriot Anhelina Kalinina to make the third round for the second time. Tsurenko, ranked at 101, proudly wore a ribbon in the colors of Ukraine on her shirt. "It was a big court. Two Ukrainian players but a lot of people were watching us. We felt amazing support," said Tsurenko after her 3-6, 6-4, 6-3 win.

"Today on the way from hotel to the club, we got a driver," she added. "She has taken two people from Ukraine into her house. 'I think it's amazing when people help Ukrainians so much.'" Later Wednesday, two-time champion Andy Murray puts his 8-0 record against John Isner on the line in their second-round clash. Former number one Murray, now down at 52 in the world, needed four sets to defeat Australia's James Duckworth on Monday.

At one point, the British star dropped in an underarm serve to carve out a winning point, much to the delight of the Centre Court crowd. "I don't know why some people find it disrespectful," said Murray. Despite his losing record against Murray, 37-year-old Isner has never played the Briton on grass. He is confident he has the weapons at his disposal, having fired 54 aces to knock out qualifier Enzo Couacaud on Monday. "I'm older than Andy, I'm no spring chicken, but I work hard," said the American, who stands 6 feet 10 inches tall.

Isner has now served 13,688 aces in Tour-level matches during his career—just 40 behind the record of



WIMBLEDON: Estonia's Anett Kontaveit reacts as she plays against Julie Niemeier during their women's singles tennis match on the third day of the 2022 Wimbledon Championships on June 29, 2022. —AFP

13,728 held by Ivo Karlovic. Isner was one of 13 American men to reach the second round, the most since 1995. Spanish teen sensation and fifth seed Carlos Alcaraz aims for a place in the last 32 for the first time when he meets Tallon Griekspoor of the Netherlands. Britain's US Open champion Emma Raducanu tackles France's Caroline Garcia, who collected her third grass-court title at Bad Homburg last week. —AFP



VIENNA: In this file photo, Brazilian former Formula One pilot Nelson Piquet (right), French former Formula One pilot Jean Alesi (center) and British Formula One pilot Lewis Hamilton (left) escort the coffin of late Austrian three-time Formula One world champion Niki Lauda as it's being carried out of the Stephansdom (St Stephen's Cathedral). —AFP

Piquet apologizes for 'racist insult'

PARIS: Three-time Formula One world champion Nelson Piquet on Wednesday apologized "wholeheartedly" to Lewis Hamilton after using a racially offensive term to describe the Mercedes star. Hamilton said the "time has come for action" following Piquet's remarks, while Formula One and motorsport's governing body the FIA condemned the 69-year-old Brazilian. "I apologize wholeheartedly to anyone that was affected, including Lewis, who is an incredible driver, but the translation in some media that is now circulating on social media is not correct," Piquet said in a statement. Piquet, who won the world title in 1981, 1983 and 1987, was discussing an accident between Hamilton and Red Bull's Max Verstappen on the first lap of last year's British Grand Prix when he used the term.

His daughter, Kelly, is Verstappen's partner. "What I said was ill thought out, and I make no defense for it, but I will clarify that the term used is one that has widely and historically been used colloquially in Brazilian Portuguese as a synonym for 'guy' or 'person' and was never intended to offend," said Piquet. "I would never use the word I have been accused of in some translations. I strongly condemn any suggestion that the word was used by me with the aim of belittling a driver because of his skin colour." Piquet is a supporter of Brazil's far-right President Jair Bolsonaro, and was a chauffeur to him on the country's Independence Day last year. Hamilton, the only black driver on the grid, has been an outspoken campaigner for greater diversity in the sport. The seven-time world champion regularly displayed "Black Lives Matter" on his apparel and took the knee before races in the 2020 season following the murder of George Floyd in the US. Hamilton has also campaigned for LGBTQ+ rights and on environmental issues. —AFP



DOHA: A picture shows a view of the Al-Egla training facility in the capital Doha. —AFP

WHO: Qatar can manage World Cup pandemic risk

GENEVA: The WHO voiced confidence Tuesday that hosts Qatar would successfully manage the COVID-19 risks at the 2022 football World Cup. There was no reason to think the pandemic risks would be higher at the November-December tournament than at other major events which

have passed off safely, the World Health Organization's emergencies director Michael Ryan said. "Properly managed mass gatherings that have the proper planning can be run very safely," he told a live interaction on the WHO's Facebook page.

"We've been working very closely with the authorities in Qatar on that as WHO, and providing advice as needed to them on how to run a safe World Cup. 'The public health authorities in Qatar have been very engaged... on the public health risk management of the World Cup. 'Overall, the risks are being very carefully managed.'" —AFP

Kuwait's boxer wins silver medal

By Abdellatif Sharaa

KUWAIT: Asia Boxing Champion Kuwait's Noura Qushaia Al-Mutairi won second place and the silver medal in 64kg Category of the International Women's Boxing Cup held in France and concluded on Tuesday. Al-Mutairi lost on points to her French opponent. Noura Al-Mutairi said she was happy with her third international medal - adding that she qualified for the final match with determination and hard work. "I was able to prove that Kuwait women can able showcase their best in various games," she said, adding that she will participate in the Portuguese International Women Boxing Championship which starts July 10th.



Noura Qushaia Al-Mutairi