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Brit Kennaugh wins Australian road race

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India clinch thriller to complete sweep over Aussies



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MELBOURNE: This combo of file photos shows Serbia's Novak Djokovic kissing the Norman Brookes Trophy after his six victories — (top L to R) 2008, 2011, 2012 and (bottom L to R) 2013, 2015 and yesterday — in the men's singles finals at the Australian Open tennis tournament in Melbourne. Djokovic beat Andy Murray in straight sets to win his sixth Australian Open title yesterday. — AFP

DJOKOVIC THRASHES MURRAY FOR SIXTH AUSSIE OPEN TITLE

MELBOURNE: World number one Novak Djokovic hammered a misfiring Andy Murray in straight sets to win a record-equalling sixth Australian Open title and strengthen his grip on men's tennis yesterday.

The Serbian world number one swept to a 6-1, 7-5, 7-6 (7/3) victory in two hours, 53 minutes to hand Murray his fifth defeat in the Melbourne Park final.

Djokovic equalled the tally of Australia's Roy Emerson, who won the tournament six times between 1961 and 1967, an achievement that had gone unmatched in the 49 years since. It was also Djokovic's 11th Grand Slam title, putting him in equal fifth place on the all-time list alongside Rod Laver and Bjorn Borg, behind leader Roger Federer's 17.

"It's an incredible feeling, especially because of the fact that I managed to make history tonight and equal Roy Emerson's record of six Australian Opens," Djokovic said. "This trophy is even more unique for me tonight and when you have an opportunity to make history it adds to the motivation and incentive before you come out on the court."

Djokovic underlined his status as the dominant force in Melbourne, after downing Jo-Wilfried Tsonga to win his first major title in 2008 and beating Rafael Nadal in an epic final in 2012, along with his four wins over Murray in 2011, 2013, 2015 and now 2016.

Djokovic also extended his Grand Slam winning streak to 21 matches. He has not lost a match at the majors since he was defeated by Stan Wawrinka in last year's French Open final at Roland Garros.

While Djokovic was further enhancing his reputation, Murray has the unwanted statistic of becoming only the second man in the post-1968 Open era to lose five Grand Slam finals at any one major.

Ivan Lendl, Murray's former coach, lost five finals at the US Open in 1982-1984 and 1988-1989, before winning at Flushing Meadows in 1985-1987.

MAKING A STATEMENT

Murray had tears in his eyes at the presentation when he thanked his pregnant wife Kim Sears, who is due to give birth to their first child in the coming weeks.

"You've been a legend for the last two weeks. Thank you so much for all of your support and I'll be on the next plane home," he said in a faltering voice.

Djokovic won 24 more points than Murray, 123-99, in the final, while Murray made a total of 65 unforced errors-including 28 off his forehand and 29 off his backhand.

Djokovic faced a break point in his opening service game but then went on a blazing run, breaking Murray's serve twice to claim the opening set in 30 minutes.

Murray survived four break points to hold serve in a marathon 12-minute third game as he tried to stay in the second set against the pressing Serb.

But Djokovic gained another psychological breakthrough with a service break in the seventh game after Murray overhit a forehand to trail 4-3.

Fighting Murray broke back in the following game with his backhand clipping the baseline, which was confirmed by Djokovic's challenge.

Murray fought off two break points in a fiercely con-

tested ninth game in a war of the attrition between the two long-time rivals, who have known each other since their junior days.

But Djokovic fought back from 0-40 down to break Murray's serve for a fourth time, in a game featuring one exhausting 36-shot rally, to lead 6-5 and serve for the second set.

The Serb claimed a two sets to love lead after winning an 80-minute battle for the second set, leaving Murray with it all to do.

Djokovic tightened the noose with another service break in the first game of the final set, with Murray's task looking herculean to take the final to five sets.

Murray broke back in the sixth game but in the tiebreaker the Scot served two double-faults as Djokovic steamed to five match points, and belted an ace on the third match point to seal the championship.

It was yet another big statement from the peerless Serb against a major rival, after he swamped Rafael Nadal 6-1, 6-2 at Doha and convincingly beat Federer in the Melbourne semi-finals. — AFP

CHELSEA CRUISE IN FA CUP

MILTON KEYNES: A first-half Oscar hat-trick together with Eden Hazard's first goal of the season gave Chelsea a comfortable 5-1 victory at Milton Keynes Dons in the FA Cup yesterday. Chelsea remain undefeated in eight games under interim manager Guus Hiddink and this impressive fourth-round display confirmed the progress that they have made under the Dutchman.

The win ensures that Chelsea remain in contention to repeat the FA Cup success they enjoyed when Hiddink was last in interim charge of the club in 2009.

And the manager had every reason to be satisfied with the way his side eased their way to victory at Stadium MK, albeit against second-tier opposition. Oscar's goals grabbed the attention, but Hazard's penalty, his first goal in 30 appearances for his club, came as a huge relief. Burkina international Bertrand Traore was also on target with his first Chelsea goal. Hiddink signalled his intentions by fielding a strong side, although he did take the opportunity to hand rare starts to left-back Baba Rahman and young midfielder Ruben Loftus-Cheek.

With loan signing Alexandre Pato not eligible to play and both Loic Remy and Radamel Falcao injured, Diego Costa led the line and his work alongside Oscar quickly nixed any chance of an upset.

After a dominant start, Chelsea took a 15th-minute lead courtesy of a defensive mistake. An underhit back-pass by Kyle McFadzean allowed Costa to advance on goal and the striker unselfishly squared the ball for Oscar to finish into an empty net.

It was to MK Dons' credit that they responded positively and drew level six minutes later when Darren Potter's shot took a deflection off Nemanja Matic and looped over the leaping Thibaut Courtois.

However, the gulf in quality between the teams meant it was only a matter of time before Chelsea asserted their superiority, although



MILTON KEYNES: Milton Keynes Dons' Jordan Spence, left, competes for the ball with Chelsea's Pedro during the English FA Cup fourth round soccer match between Milton Keynes Dons and Chelsea at Stadium mk in Milton Keynes, England, yesterday. — AP

goalkeeper David Martin did his best to hold them at bay, saving well from Hazard before Costa nicked the ball off the toe of Oscar in front of goal. Another chance quickly came Oscar's way and this time the Brazilian made no mistake with a well-placed finish in the 32nd minute. The playmaker, operating on the right on this occasion with Loftus-Cheek filling the central role, completed his hat-trick when he cut in from the left and found the corner of the goal with a well-placed right-foot shot. The home side had offered little resistance and the pattern of the game was maintained after the break when Hazard was tripped by Potter in the 55th minute. Chelsea skipper John Terry intervened to ensure Hazard took the penalty and the Belgium rolled the ball home to his obvious relief. Substitute Traore then completed a routine victory for the visitors when he finished

with a first-time shot after Hazard had chased Cesc Fabregas's pass out to the byline before setting up the Burkina Faso youngster. In the day's other tie, Everton got over their mid-week League Cup elimination against Manchester City by winning 3-0 at fourth-tier Carlisle United courtesy of goals from Arouna Kone, Aaron Lennon and Ross Barkley. But the match was marred by racist abuse directed at Everton's players after Kone's second-minute opener, which prompted referee Lee Mason to ask for a warning message to be read out over the public address system. "I thought it was dealt with in a very good manner," Everton manager Roberto Martinez told BT Sport.

"We agreed to make an announcement. I thought the referee was very good in how he dealt with that. It was just a reaction, something that we don't want to see." —AFP

LEWANDOWSKI NETS TWICE AS BAYERN DOWN HOFFENHEIM

BERLIN: Robert Lewandowski netted both goals as leaders Bayern Munich earned a 2-0 win over Hoffenheim yesterday to stay eight points clear in the Bundesliga.

After the league's top scorer Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang had scored twice for Borussia Dortmund to reach 20 league goals on Saturday, Lewandowski is now just behind with 19.

The Poland striker gave Bayern the lead at Munich's Allianz Arena after blasting home Douglas Costa's low cross on 32 minutes.

He doubled his tally with some clinical finishing after a superb through ball from Bayern captain Philipp Lahm on 64 minutes. It could have been three as Chile midfielder Arturo Vidal hit the post. Hoffenheim remain second from bottom as they failed to secure their maiden win over Bayern at the 16th attempt.

There was bad news for Bayern coach Pep Guardiola before kick-off as Javi Martinez dropped out with a knee injury. It forced Guardiola into playing a three-man defence leaving Holger Badstuber as their only fit centre-back with Jerome Boateng and Medhi Benatia currently sidelined.

Their Champions League last 16, first-leg clash at Juventus is just three weeks away with the return leg in Munich on March 16.

Meanwhile, Wolfsburg remain winless in their four games since beating Manchester United in the Champions League after being held to a 1-1 draw at home to Cologne.

Wolfsburg face Belgian side Gent in the away leg of their last-16 tie in Europe on February 17. But Dieter Hecking's side have now lost two and drawn two in their last four games since knocking United out of the Champions League with a 3-2 win last December.

The hosts went ahead when right-winger Vieirinha fired in a cross, which found Julian Draxler unmarked for the Germany international to fire home on 67 minutes. Cologne equalised eight minutes later when Anthony Modeste curled his shot around Wolves' keeper Diego Benaglio. The result left Wolfsburg seventh-outside the European places for next season and Cologne ninth.

On Saturday, Dortmund enjoyed a 2-0 win over Ingolstadt to go ten points clear of third-placed Hertha Berlin. Dortmund could consider themselves fortunate though as captain Mats Hummels escaped a red card for a foul in the area.

He then scored a second-half own-goal, which the referee refused to award to Ingolstadt after a foul in the build-up, before Aubameyang struck twice.

Hertha threw away a 2-0 lead as hosts Werder Bremen roared back with three goals in ten second-half minutes to claim a point in a 3-3 draw.

Ivory Coast veteran Salomon Kalou struck Berlin's third goal to leave Hertha 3-1 up in Bremen with 20 minutes left. Then Bremen veteran Claudio Pizarro netted a penalty before defender Santiago Garcia fired in a shot which was later credited to Pizarro, who nudged the ball over the line to level the scores.

Bayer Leverkusen climbed to fourth with a 3-0 win at Hanover 96, who dropped to the bottom, with Javier Hernandez scoring twice in the romp. — AFP