

Sports

Djokovic moves on at US Open as top-ranked Barty ousted

Zverev, Barrettini advance; Kvitova out

NEW YORK: Novak Djokovic moved within four matches of completing the first men's singles calendar-year Grand Slam in 52 years on Saturday while top-ranked Ashleigh Barty was eliminated from the US Open by a stunning fightback from American Shelby Rogers.

World number one Djokovic defeated Kei Nishikori 6-7 (4/7), 6-3, 6-3, 6-2, taking his 17th consecutive victory over the Japanese star and improving to 18-2 in their overall rivalry. "I was very pleased with the focus," Djokovic said. "Maybe at some points I wasn't my best, but I was determined and focused and that made the difference."

With a fourth career US Open trophy, Djokovic would complete the first men's singles sweep of major titles in the same year since Rod Laver in 1969.

Reigning Wimbledon champion Barty won 11 of 14 games after dropping the first set, only for Rogers to capture five of the last six games for a shocking 6-2, 1-6, 7-6 (7/5) triumph. "I didn't want to leave," Rogers said. "I just said make balls, try to stay in this match, it can't get any worse, you've lost to her every time."

Rogers had dropped all five prior meetings with Barty but would not be denied, breaking the Aussie as she served for the match in the eighth and 10th games as the crowd went wild at Arthur Ashe Stadium. "I was just trying to stay in the point longer than Ash," Rogers said. "I was happy with myself for sort of problem solving. I'm just so excited to be moving on to the next round."

Rogers will next face 150th-ranked British qualifier Emma Raducanu, an 18-year-old who routed Spain's Sara Sorribes Tormo 6-0, 6-1 in 70 minutes.



Djokovic marches toward 21st Grand Slam

Great fight from him."

Tokyo Olympic champion Alexander Zverev defeated 184th-ranked Jack Sock 3-6, 6-2, 6-3, 2-1 when the American retired with a right thigh injury. "I know I'm playing OK but a lot of other guys are playing well, too," Zverev said. "I'm hoping to keep my form and give myself my best chance."

Fourth seed Zverev, the 2020 US Open runner-up, joined qualifiers Oscar Otte and Peter Gojowczyk as the first German trio in the US Open fourth round since 1994 and any Slam last 16 since Wimbledon in 1997. Wimbledon runner-up Matteo Berrettini, the Italian sixth seed, eliminated Ilya Ivashka of Belarus 6-7 (5/7), 6-2, 6-4, 2-6, 6-3. Next up is 144th-ranked Otte,

Al-Sayer congratulates Kuwait's Al-Mutairi on Paralympic medal

KUWAIT: Mohamed Naser Al-Sayer and Sons and Toyota congratulated Kuwaiti Paralympic athlete, World record holder and Global Team Toyota Athlete Ahmad Al-Mutairi, who won the silver medal in class T33, 100-meter wheelchair racing in 2020 Tokyo Games.

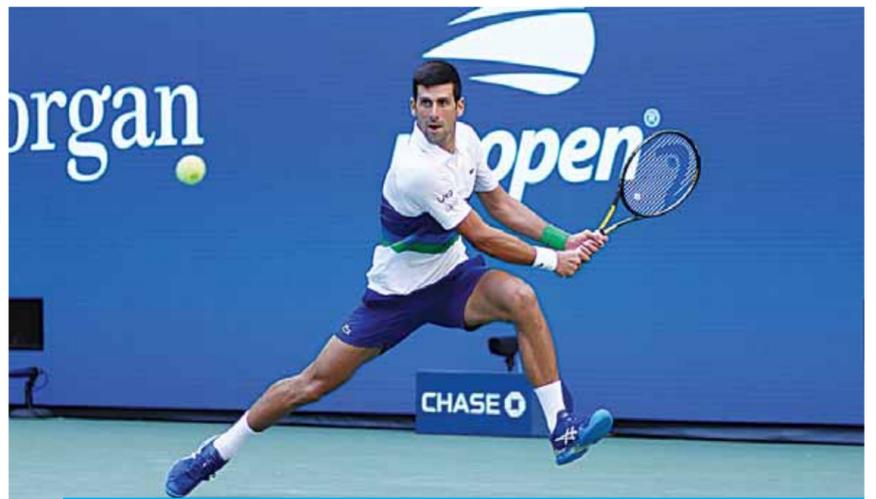
Mutairi is part of Global Team Toyota Athlete and is under a strategic sponsorship contract with Mohamed Naser Al-Sayer and Sons since April 2019. There are 233 athletes that Toyota supports around the world. Of them, 123 athletes competed in the Olympic Games Tokyo 2020, and 57 athletes in the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games.

Global Team Toyota athletes are comprised of not only athletes that are also Toyota employees, but include athletes that have been selected from each country because they share Toyota's philosophies and values, such as "challenge," "continuous improvement," "sincerity," "teamwork," "humility and gratitude," "accountability and honesty," etc. The athletes put "Start Your Impossible" into practice when they compete in their respective sports, and they demonstrate courage and invigorate all of Toyota's stakeholders,

Plane flies through tunnel at 245 km/h, sets World Record

ZANDVOORT: Just after dawn on Saturday, professional race and stunt pilot Dario Costa of Italy wrote a new chapter in aviation history as he flew a raceplane through the narrow confines of two enclosed auto tunnels just outside Istanbul. Closely surrounded by the concrete arc of the walls, Costa executed a tricky takeoff inside the first tunnel, flashed through an open-air gap and then continued his flight at 245 km/h through the second tunnel, flying no more than one meter from the asphalt. Here's everything you need to know about Tunnel Pass:

- Costa, 41, won the top category of the Italian Aerobatic Championship and became first Italian pilot to join, and earn a race win in, the Red Bull Air Race Challenger Class. With over two decades of flying experience, and numerous aviation feats to his credit, he has flown more than 60 airplane models and logged over 5,000 hours in the air - more than half in high-performance aerobatics.
- Tunnel Pass was by far Costa's most demanding and complex undertaking yet, requiring a team of 40 people, especially developed training technology and more than a year of preparation. Throughout, the project was shrouded in secrecy to limit variables and distractions, allowing complete focus for a successful flight that was no more than a simple idea on paper 12 months ago.
- Located outside Istanbul on Northern Marmara Highway and initially put into service in March 2020, the dual *atalca* tunnels are state-of-the-art; but were designed for automobile traffic, not an aircraft in full flight.
- At the controls of his specially modified Zivko Edge 540 raceplane, Costa took off inside the first tunnel at 6:43 am local time (TRT), with the early hour putting the sun at the pilot's back and offering optimal ambient conditions. Limited overhead clearance meant that he had to keep the aircraft on a flight path just above the asphalt, while also managing a tight distance of barely four meters between each wingtip and the unforgiving tunnel walls. Complicating the trajectory were changes in tunnel



NEW YORK: Serbia's Novak Djokovic hits a return to Japan's Kei Nishikori during their 2021 US Open Tennis tournament men's singles third round match at the USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Center in New York, on Saturday. —AFP

who beat Italy's Andreas Seppi 6-3, 6-4, 2-6, 7-5.

Sakkari beats Kvitova

Greek 17th seed Maria Sakkari, a French Open semi-finalist, ousted two-time Wimbledon champion Petra Kvitova 6-4, 6-3, booking a fourth-round match against 2019 US Open winner Bianca Andreescu. Czech 10th seed Kvitova double faulted on the final point to hand Sakkari the victory after 81 minutes.

Canadian sixth seed Andreescu improved to 10-0 at

the US Open, advancing over 104th-ranked Belgian lucky loser Greet Minnen 6-1, 6-2. Tokyo Olympic champion Belinda Bencic, a 2019 US Open semi-finalist, defeated US 23rd seed Jessica Pegula 6-2, 6-4.

The Swiss 11th seed will next face Polish seventh seed Iga Swiatek, last year's French Open champion, who beat Estonian Anett Kontveit 6-3, 4-6, 6-3. Czech fourth seed Karolina Pliskova, this year's Wimbledon runner-up and a 2016 US Open finalist, beat Australian Ajla Tomljanovic 6-3, 6-2. —AFP



NEW YORK: Emma Raducanu of the United Kingdom celebrates after defeating Sara Sorribes Tormo of Spain during her Women's Singles third round match of the 2021 US Open on Saturday. —AFP

Qualifiers, teens making their mark at US Open

NEW YORK: A record week for success by US Open qualifiers and teen wonders saw Britain's Emma Raducanu and German Oscar Otte advance to the fourth round on Saturday. Otte, who was throwing up during two qualifying matches, became the third qualifier into the last 16 on the New York hardcourts, joining countryman Peter Gojowczyk and Dutchman Botic Van de Zandschulp. "I'm just really happy to be first time in my life in the second week of a Slam," Otte said.

And while Raducanu is the only women's qualifier into the fourth round, she joined fellow 18-year-olds Carlos Alcaraz of Spain and Leylah Fernandez of Canada, who ousted French Open runner-up Stefanos Tsitsipas and four-time Grand Slam champion Naomi Osaka, respectively.

"To have so many young players coming through is just really great for the game, because it just shows how strong this next generation is," Raducanu said. "Having so many young players, I think we all inspire each other to play better. I wanted to join them in the second week as well, so that was an extra bit of motivation."

Raducanu won't get her chance at a big upset. She next faces American Shelby Rogers, who ousted top-ranked Wimbledon champion Ashleigh Barty of Australia on Saturday. On the men's side, it's the first time three qualifiers have reached the last 16 since qualifying records were first kept in 1982.

Three qualifiers hadn't reached the men's fourth round at any Grand Slam since the 1995 French Open. It didn't hurt their cause that the men's side lacked 20-time Grand Slam winners Rafael Nadal and Roger Federer and defending champion Dominic Thiem. No US Open qualifier has gone past the quarter-finals and only five in other Slams have made the semi-finals, the most recent being Russian Aslan Karatsev at this year's Australian Open. Otte takes pride in his journey from throwing up in qualifying to showing up in the last 16.

"Qualifiers are always tough, especially the first two rounds. I wasn't in very good physical shape. I puked on the court in both deciding tie-breaks," Otte said. "I was just thinking, 'OK, doesn't matter what the score, how the match is going to end.' I just wanted to be off court out of the sun because it was so humid and hot. Yeah, it's a crazy ride. Just unbelievable. I didn't expect that I could come so far."

Suddenly Otte, who next plays Italian sixth seed and Wimbledon runner-up Matteo Berrettini, has faith in going even farther. "I have more trust in my game, and it's working really well. Let's see when this ends," he said. "I know if I play well and my game works really good, I can make a lot of damage to no matter who is my opponent. It was a long way, but I think it's still not the end." —AFP

starting with our employees. Aside from the support Toyota provides for athletes as an employer, the company also offers support in equipment development, as a sponsor, and in a variety of other ways.

Akio Toyoda, CEO of Toyota, had delivered a video message to those who had arrived in Tokyo after going through various hardships and are finally heading to make their dreams come true in Tokyo 2020. "All the employees of Toyota and all our friends in the Japanese automotive industry are supporting you. That's over five and a half million people! Your journey may have begun as Start Your Impossible, but now it's time to Achieve Your Impossible! Then fight with all your spirit... and make your dreams come true!"

According to Mubarak Naser Al-Sayer CEO at Mohamed Naser Al-Sayer and Sons "We are proud of Ahmad's achievement for Kuwait in the most prestigious international competition. His hard work and dedication during such challenging and uncertain circumstances is remarkable. I also thank valuable contribution of Toyota Motor Corporation towards our long terms partnership with Ahmad as well as members at National Paralympic Committee Kuwait for their cooperation."

Mutairi expressed his happiness and appreciation towards Toyota and Al-Sayer, pointing that this long-term sponsorship will prepare him to accomplish the achievements in the coming competitions. He also thanked his coach, support team, the Kuwaiti Paralympic Committee and the Kuwaiti Sport Club for the Disabled for their constant support.



TOKYO: Ahmad Al-Mutairi poses with his silver medal at the Tokyo 2020 Paralympics.

Naser Al-Ajmi, the Chairman of Board of Directors at National Paralympic Committee Kuwait praised Al-Sayer's effort to support interpreting the global partnership between Toyota and the International Paralympic Committee, providing a unique and distinctive model for the contribution of the private sector in supporting Kuwaiti disabled sport.

Al-Sayer Board of Directors stressed that the company would spare no effort in providing all aspects of support through the sponsorship agreement to enable the Kuwaiti champion to continue the march of brilliance towards more achievements and raise the name of Kuwait high in future Para Athletics competitions.



incline and shape.

- From take-off to exiting the second tunnel, the flight lasted 43.44 seconds, covering a distance of 2,260 m / 2.26 km and reaching an average speed of 245 km/h in the second tunnel.
- Changes to airflow, combined with the highly sensitive steering of the aircraft, required pilot reaction times of less than 250 milliseconds and fine hand movements of mere millimeters throughout the flight. One of most critical moments came at the 360 m gap between tunnels, which exposed the raceplane to cross winds as Costa prepared to thread it into the low, narrow opening of the second tunnel.
- Costa said: "Everything seemed to be happening so fast, but when I got out of the first tunnel, the plane started to move to the right because of the cross winds, and in my head, everything slowed down in that moment. I reacted and just focused on getting the plane back on the right path to enter the other tunnel. Then in my mind everything sped up all over again."
- When the raceplane shot out of the other side, Costa pulled it into a celebratory loop before landing. The ecstatic pilot said: "I'd never flown in a tunnel in my life - nobody had ever done it - so there was a big question mark in my head whether everything would go as we expected or if there would be

something to improvise. It was a big relief, of course, but big, big happiness was the main emotion. For me it's another dream come true."

- The achievement set a new Guinness World Record: Longest Tunnel Flown through with an Airplane (1,610 m). Four other notable records were: first airplane flight through a tunnel, longest flight under a solid obstacle (1,610 m), first airplane flight through two tunnels, first airplane takeoff from a tunnel.
- Costa was mentored by Hungarian aerobatic and racing pilot Peter Besenyei, 65, an aviation legend renowned for his role in developing and competing in the Red Bull Air Race. Besenyei is also well known for feats such as flying upside down under the Chain Bridge in Budapest.
- Besenyei said: "To fly in a tunnel is not a normal situation. The main point is the mindset. Because to fly straight at one meter off the ground and follow a center line is not really so difficult technically if you are over a runway. But in the tunnel, especially a dark tunnel, and to come out of the tunnel into the light and then back into another dark tunnel, it's different. And also there are air waves that can affect the flight, and you should expect some bumps. It's difficult in your mind because you know that if you make a mistake, the wall is hard."