

Novak Djokovic crashes out

Melbourne

Six-times champion Novak Djokovic bowed out of the Australian Open in the fourth round as relentless South Korean Chung Hyeon ground him down to claim a stunning 7-6(4) 7-5 7-6(3) victory yesterday.

The 21-year-old Chung, ranked 58th in the world, proved an immovable object, absorbing everything the former world number one could throw at him and returning it with interest.

Two years after losing in straight sets to Djokovic on the same Rod Laver Arena, the bespectacled Chung turned the tables to claim the biggest victory of his career.

He is also the first South Korean to reach a grand slam quarter-final and will be favourite to reach the semis with

unseeded American Tenny Sandgren up next.

"I didn't know how I'd win tonight. I was just honoured to play against Novak and happy to see him back on the Tour," Chung said on court as his compatriots cheered in the stands.

"I try to copy Novak in the way I play, he is my idol."

Djokovic wore a compression sleeve on his serving arm, a legacy of the elbow injury that sidelined him last year.

The Serb grimaced occasionally and needed treatment on his feet after losing the first set.

"Congratulations to Chung on an amazing performance," the 12-times grand slam champion said.

"He deserved to win. Whenever he

was in trouble he came out with some great passing shots and at the back of the court he was like a wall."

Djokovic made a dreadful start as a spate of double-faults cost him his first two service games and he trailed 4-0.

He clawed back the deficit but Chung took the opening set on the tiebreak.

Chung moved 4-1 ahead in the second set but again Djokovic recovered, only to falter when serving at 5-6, netting a forehand on set point after Chung had shown incredible defensive skills to stay alive in the rally. (Reuters)

Halep sweeps Osaka aside

Melbourne

World number one Simona Halep proved too experienced for Japan's rising star Naomi Osaka as she eased into the Australian Open quarter-finals with a 6-3 6-2 victory.

The scoreline did not tell the whole story, however, as the Romanian was given a real fight early on by the 20-year-old, who is tipped to become the next big thing in women's tennis.

Halep, still looking for her first grand slam title, was under the cosh in the opening stages of the match as 72nd-ranked Osaka

blazed away to set up numerous break points.

Halep displayed her usual resilience to save four break points in an intense game at 2-3

that featured six deuces and it proved to be a turning point in the match.

She began to feed off Osaka's errors and broke twice on her way to taking the opener as the storm on the other side of the net blew itself out.

Osaka's spirit ebbed away in the second set and after establishing a 5-2 lead Halep crunched a forehand return winner to seal victory and reach the last eight for the third time. (Eurosport)

Pliskova enters q-finals

Melbourne

Sixth seed Karolina Pliskova reached her second Australian Open quarter-final by outlasting Barbora Strycova 6-7(5) 6-3 6-2 in an all-Czech battle that stretched into the early hours of Tuesday.

Taking to the court just before 11 p.m. local time, the pair slugged it out for two hours and 41 minutes in the late match at Rod Laver Arena before former U.S. Open finalist Pliskova finally put down her compatriot.

Strycova saved one match point with an audacious serve-volley and a second with an overhead smash before the 20th seed surrendered by clubbing a backhand over the baseline.

Pliskova will meet top seed Simona Halep for a place in the semi-finals. (Reuters)

Sandgren topples Thiem to keep dream alive

Melbourne

American Tenny Sandgren's dream debut at the Australian Open continued yesterday as the rank outsider upset fifth seed Dominic Thiem 6-2 4-6 7-6(4) 6-7(7) 6-3 to reach an improbable quarter-final.

The 97th-ranked Tennessee native captured the decisive break against the Austrian in the sixth game of the final set and sealed the match in style with a thumping forehand winner from the baseline at a raucous Hisense Arena. (Reuters)

Tenny Sandgren reacts (Picture courtesy: Xinhua)



Novak Djokovic reacts

Chung Hyeon celebrates (Picture courtesy: Xinhua)



Kerber digs deep to outlast Hsieh

Melbourne

Former champion Angelique Kerber was driven to distraction by the unorthodox game of world number 88 Hsieh Su-wei but overhauled the Taiwanese battler 4-6 7-5 6-2 to reach the quarter-finals of the Australian Open.

The 21st seed was being tied up in knots by double-sided Hsieh's angles and slices in a match of clashing styles at Rod Laver Arena before the slender Taiwanese fatigued and the German's power game prevailed.

Hsieh saved two match points to hold serve in a late burst of resistance but 2016 champion Kerber closed it out in the next game when she whipped an easy passing shot. Kerber, 30, will meet American Madison Keys for a place in the semi-finals. (Eurosport)



Angelique Kerber hits a return (Picture courtesy: Xinhua)

Simona Halep celebrates (Picture courtesy: Xinhua)