

Wozniacki advances to semis

Melbourne

Former world number one Caroline Wozniacki marched into her second Australian Open semi-final by beating Spain's Carla Suarez Navarro 6-0 6-7(3) 6-2 in the early hours of Wednesday morning.

After a one-sided start in a midnight match at Rod Laver Arena, Wozniacki met stiff resistance from the 39th-ranked Spaniard who dug deep to save a match point in the second set before outclassing the Dane in the tiebreak.

Second seed Wozniacki steadied herself, however, raising her game to bully Suarez Navarro from the baseline and grab another three match points on serve. Wozniacki secured victory when Suarez Navarro hit long and she will meet Belgian Elise Mertens for a place in the final.

"I knew it wasn't going to be that easy ... In the second set I had the chance to close it out so I was disappointed I didn't do that," Wozniacki, who made the semi-finals in 2011, said on-court.

"I'm just proud that I managed to stay cool and finish it off in the third set," she added. "(Mertens) has had an amazing start to the year. It's going to be a tough one but I'm excited for it." (Reuters)

Caroline Wozniacki celebrates (Picture courtesy: Xinhua)

Elise Mertens of Belgium (Picture courtesy: Xinhua)

Kyle Edmund beats Grigor Dimitrov

Melbourne

Kyle Edmund continued his remarkable run at the Australian Open by beating third seed Grigor Dimitrov to reach his first grand slam semi-final.

With Andy Murray sidelined, it was beyond all wild hopes at the start of the tournament that Britain would have a man through to the last four but Edmund has come of age at Melbourne Park and this was his finest moment yet.

Making his debut on Rod Laver Arena, the 23-year-old did not allow the occasion to get to him and took advantage of an opponent not at the top of his game to win 6-4 3-6 6-3 6-4.

Edmund, who will face Marin Cilic in the last four, is first British man other than Murray to make the last four here since John Lloyd in 1977 and only the fourth in the Open era. There was an agonising wait for Edmund as Dimitrov challenged on the final point but his forehand was shown to be marginally long and the Yorkshireman could celebrate a superb achievement.

Dimitrov was excellent in his fourth-round victory over Nick Kyrgios but has otherwise struggled this tournament. He was taken to five sets by qualifier Mackenzie McDonald in round two and then served 15 double faults against Andrey Rublev in the following round. (PA Sport)

Kyle Edmund celebrates (Picture courtesy: Xinhua)

Mertens crushes Svitolina in massive shock

Melbourne

Unseeded Elise Mertens produced a spellbinding display to beat fourth seed Elina Svitolina 6-4 6-0 and reach the Australian Open semi-finals.

Ukrainian Svitolina was riding a nine-match winning streak this year but was outplayed by the 37th ranked Belgian in 73 minutes on Rod Laver Arena.

The aggressive Mertens smashed 16 winners to win the opening set and held her nerve to keep up the pressure on the world number four in a one-sided second set.

After barely putting a foot wrong in the contest, the 22-year-old fired down a 26th winner to seal a date with Caroline Wozniacki in her first grand slam semi-final. (Eurosport)

It's all about me, says Pliskova

Melbourne

Karolina Pliskova may have been somewhat confused by being compared to a cucumber after reaching the quarter-finals of the Australian Open but she was crystal clear about what she needed to do to go a step further.

The sixth seed burnt the midnight oil in her all-Czech fourth round grudge match against Barbara Strycova, finally clinching a 6-7 6-3 6-2

victory at 1.35 a.m. local time on Tuesday morning.

The pair fell out last year when coach Tomas Krupa switched from Strycova to Pliskova, with David Kotyza later moving the other way.

Pliskova was clearly a little nonplussed when the on-court presenter described her as "cool as a cucumber", later explaining she had never heard the expression before.

"I don't know if this is something from Australia?" Pliskova said with a smile, before agreeing that she had not been particularly bothered about going a set down.

"I was fine. Obviously the first set took me some energy, some power. I had some chances. I didn't play well on them," the 25-year-old added.

"She didn't play anything, like, any perfect shot. Everything was my mistake. Next time I knew I had to play everything better." (Reuters)

Karolina Pliskova (Picture courtesy: thenational.ae)

