

Cilic, Muller, Dimitrov into Queen's semis



Luxembourg's Gilles Muller



Bulgaria's Grigor Dimitrov

London

Marin Cilic set up a semi-final clash with Gilles Muller at Queen's Club as the Croatian powered to a 6-4, 7-5 victory over Donald Young yesterday.

Having lifted the Queen's trophy in 2012, Cilic fancies his chances of adding a second title as the highest ranked player left in the draw following the shock exits of Andy Murray, Stan Wawrinka and Milos Raonic.

The world number seven has yet to drop a set in three matches en route to his

fourth semi-final appearance at the Wimbledon warm-up event in west London.

Cilic, who also finished as Queen's runner-up in 2013, was pushed hard by Young, but the former US Open champion fired 11 aces to see off the American world number 55 in one hour and 26 minutes.

"I'm

playing really well this week. I'm feeling great on the court," said Cilic, who is chasing his second ATP title this year.

"It is another match without losing serve, so that's extremely pleasing."

Luxembourg's Muller is through to his first Queen's semi-final after defeating 2010 champion Sam Querrey 6-4, 7-6 (7/5).

Muller has won the first two ATP Tour titles of his career this year, helping him climb to a career-high ranking of 26, and he now has a seven-match winning streak on grass.

The 34-year-old's huge serve was on full display when he won the 's-Hertogenbosch title on grass last week and once again he used it to devastating effect against Querrey.

The 2010 Queen's champion, Querrey is no slouch on grass either, but Muller held his nerve in two tight sets.

"I was never top 30 before

in my life, and now this year for the first time I have a "2" in front of my ranking. That means a lot," he said.

"Those are things you dream of as a kid, so when it happens it feels good."

Grigor Dimitrov is another former Queen's champion hoping to get his hands on the silverware again and the Bulgarian moved into the last four with a 6-3, 3-6, 6-3 win against Russia's Daniil Medvedev.

With Medvedev suffering a shoulder injury during the pre-match warm-up and needing lengthy treatment before he could start playing, it was no surprise Dimitrov won the first set after sprinting into a 5-0 lead.

Medvedev, ranked 60th, gamely levelled the match at one set all, but Dimitrov was too strong in the decider as the world number 11 booked a semi-final clash with Tomas Berdych or Feliciano Lopez.

Dimitrov, who won Queen's in 2014, will be looking to reach his third ATP Tour final in 2017. (AFP)



Croatia's Marin Cilic celebrates

Kvitova hammers out warning

Birmingham

Petra Kvitova, the two-time Wimbledon champion whose career was almost ended by a knife attack, reached her first semi-final since the incident seven months ago by winning her third straight-set match at Birmingham on Friday.

The popular, grasscourt loving Czech did that with a 6-4, 7-6 (7/5) win over Kristina Mladenovic, the fifth-seeded French player, achieved her last-four spot in what is only her second tournament since her comeback.

Last month Kvitova slipped away from Paris with an empty feeling after losing in the second round of the French Open, while Mladenovic became the home star of Roland Garros by ending the title defence of Garbine Muguruza.

But on Friday was Kvitova's turn to receive the applause, as she revealed that many parts of her incisive grass court game are in working order and that many things may still be possible despite enduring problems with the injured hand.

Federer eases into semi-finals at Halle

Berlin

Roger Federer eased closer to a ninth title at the Halle grass court tournament when he demolished defending champion Florian Mayer of Germany 6-3, 6-4 in the quarter-finals. The world number five, building up to an assault on an eighth Wimbledon title in July, will next face Karen Khachanov, who defeated fellow Russian Andrey Rublev 7-6 (10/8), 4-6, 6-3 in his last-eight clash.

Evans tested positive for cocaine

Britain's Dan Evans

London **British world number 50** Dan Evans has been provisionally suspended after testing positive for cocaine.

Evans, 27, provided a positive sample when he was tested during the Barcelona Open in April and the International Tennis Federation announced on Friday he will be banned with effect from June 26 "pending determination of the case".

"This is a very difficult day for me and I wanted to come here in person to tell you guys face to face," Evans said at a London Hotel on Friday where he took no questions but made a statement.

"I was notified a few days ago that I failed a drugs test in April where I tested positive for cocaine.

"It's really important you know this was taken out of competition and the context was completely unrelated to tennis.

"I made a mistake and I must face up to it. I do not condone for one second to anyone that this was acceptable behaviour.

"I've let a lot of people down - my family, my coach, my team, sponsors, British tennis and my fans.

"I can only deeply apologise from the bottom of my heart. This has been an extremely sad and humbling experience."

Martina Hingis tested positive for cocaine at Wimbledon in 2007 and was subsequently suspended for two years.

Richard Gasquet had been issued with the same suspension in 2009, but it was reduced to a little more than two months when the ITF's tribunal panel ruled he had taken the substance inadvertently.

"On 24 April 2017, Mr Evans, a 27-year-old player from Great Britain, provided an anti-doping sample to the TADP in association with his participation in the Barcelona Open, an ATP World Tour event, held in Barcelona, Spain," an ITF statement read.

"That sample was analysed by a World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) accredited laboratory in Montreal, Canada, and was found to contain cocaine and its metabolite.

"In accordance with Article 2.1 of the TADP, Mr Evans was charged on 16 June with an Anti-Doping Rule Violation."

