

Swiatek reaches Wimbledon semis

Polish star enters first Wimbledon semi-final after beating Samsonova in straight sets

- Swiatek beats Samsonova 6-2, 7-5
- Previously never past Wimbledon quarters

AFP | London

Iga Swiatek said she had “goosebumps” after reaching the Wimbledon semi-finals for the first time in her illustrious career with a 6-2, 7-5 win against Russia’s Liudmila Samsonova yesterday. The Polish eighth seed will face former Olympic champion Belinda Bencic for a place in Saturday’s final. Swiatek has won four titles on the clay at the French Open, as well as the US Open in 2022, but has struggled on the lawns of the All England Club. Her previous best result at Wimbledon was a run to the quarter-finals in 2023. Swiatek dominated the first set against 19th seed Samsonova on Court One but was made to battle in the second set before wrapping up victory in one hour



Poland’s Iga Swiatek plays a forehand return to Russia’s Liudmila Samsonova

and 49 minutes. “It feels great. Even though I’m in the middle of the tournament I’ve already got goosebumps after this win. I’m super happy and super proud of myself and I’ll keep going,” she said. “Honestly, I’ve really enjoyed playing this year and hopefully it’s going to last as long as possible. “For sure I feel like I really

worked hard to progress here on this surface.” Swiatek broke twice in the opening set to take a firm grip on the match, benefiting from a flurry of unforced errors from

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her opponent and winning 100 percent of her points on first serve. Two double faults from the Russian 19th seed handed Swiatek an early break in the second set and she snuffed out a clutch of break points in the following game to go 3-0 up. The 24-year-old was pegged back as her level dipped and Samsonova pulled level at 4-4. But Swiatek regrouped and broke again to seal the win, finishing off her opponent with a fierce forehand winner. The former world number one has gone under the radar at this year’s Wimbledon as most of the

Despite being a four-time French Open champion, this is Swiatek’s first-ever Wimbledon semi-final—on a surface she once struggled with—making it a true milestone in her career evolution

other top women’s seeds have tumbled, though world number one Aryna Sabalenka is still standing. After slipping down the rankings, she is now back in the world’s top four having reaching the Bad Homburg final on grass last month. Swiatek, a former Wimbledon junior champion, lost in the semi-finals of both the Australian Open and the French Open this year.

Bencic beats Andreeva to reach first Wimbledon semi-final

AFP | London

Switzerland’s Belinda Bencic said her dream had come true after she reached a first Wimbledon semi-final with a 7-6 (7/3), 7-6 (7/2) win against Russian seventh seed Mirra An-

dreeva yesterday. The former Olympic champion is enjoying her best run at the All England Club just over a year after giving birth. The 28-year-old had her daughter Bella in April 2024, but has already risen to 35 in

the world since returning from maternity leave. Wimbledon appears to be child’s play for Bencic this year and she dispatched Andreeva in just over two hours of enthralling quarter-final action on Centre Court.



Belinda Bencic

Pogacar into yellow as Evenepoel wins Tour de France time trial



Soudal Quick-Step team’s Belgian rider Remco Evenepoel cycles during the 5th stage

AFP | Caen

Belgian rider Remco Evenepoel won the fifth stage of the Tour de France yesterday, a 33km time trial around Caen that saw Slovenian rider Tadej Pogacar take the yellow jersey from Mathieu van der Poel. World and Olympic champion Evenepoel completed the course in 36min 42sec at a blistering average speed of 54 km/h. He finished 16 seconds quicker than Pogacar with the Italian Edoardo Affini 33sec off the stage lead in third. Pogacar now leads the general classification with a 42sec advantage over Evenepoel who collected his second stage win on the Tour de France, having triumphed in the time trial in Gevrey-Chambertin last year on his debut in the Grande Boucle. “I knew I had a good chance but, of course, the legs still have

to be there and everything has to go to plan,” said Evenepoel whose Soudal Quick-Step team-mate Tim Merlier won stage 3 two days ago. “In the end I think it was pretty good. I didn’t really feel like I could go any faster, so I think in general I’m happy with the result. “It’s a second stage win for our team, it’s super nice.” Two-time winner Jonas Vingegaard, who began the day just 8sec behind the yellow jersey Van der Poel, had a poor day as the Dane could only finish 13th in the stage -- 1min 21sec behind Evenepoel -- to slip to 1min 13sec behind Pogacar in the new standings. He drops to fourth overall with local rider Kevin Vauquelin moving up to third after a hugely-impressive ride that saw him finish fifth on the day. “I’m over the moon, really,” said an emotional Vauquelin.

Bahrain names final 12 for William Jones Cup

- Bahrain wins twice vs UAE
- Squad named for Jones Cup
- Vovoras makes Bahrain debut

TDT | Manama

The Bahrain Basketball Association has confirmed the national team squad for the 44th William Jones Cup, set to take place from July 12 to 20 in Taiwan. The tournament marks Bahrain’s return to the competition after a 47-year absence. Greek head coach Georgios Vovoras leads the team into its first appearance at the event since 1978. Legacy of the Cup Organised by the Chinese Taipei Basketball Association, the William Jones Cup is one of the longest-running international basketball tournaments outside FIBA sanction. Launched in 1977 and named after FIBA founding member Renato William Jones, the event features national teams, university squads, and



Mustafa Hussain in action against UAE

professional clubs from across the world. UAE Friendlies End in Style Bahrain concluded a joint training camp with the UAE

with two strong wins — a 101-71 result in the first game and 94-76 in the second — both held at Khalifa Sports Hall. All players saw court time

BETTER YOU KNOW
Bahrain’s last William Jones Cup appearance was in 1978. They now face eight games in nine days

- Final Squad
- Wayne Chism
 - Jakarr Sampson
 - Mustafa Hussain
 - Mohamed Buallay
 - Ahmed Salman
 - Muzamil Ameer
 - Mohamed Alameer
 - Ali Jassim
 - Mohamed Yousef
 - Ahmed bin Jinnah
 - Abdulaziz Abdulla
 - Sayed Hashim Habib

across both games, giving Vovoras a final chance to assess combinations and build team rhythm before flying out to Taiwan. Bahrain is set to face eight opponents in nine days during the tournament.