

# SPORTS

## sports

# Andreescu wins in Toronto after Serena withdraws

Serena Williams' US Open plans upended as she leaves Toronto final with back spasms

AFP | Toronto

A tearful Serena Williams saw her US Open preparation thrown into disarray Sunday as back spasms forced her out of the WTA Toronto final after just four games, handing Canadian teenager Bianca Andreescu the title.

Andreescu, 19, was up 3-1 with a break of serve when 23-time Grand Slam champion Williams decided she couldn't continue.

She called for a medical timeout, but within a minute, the umpire announced she was retiring.

"I just knew," said Williams, adding she'd undergone hours of treatment before the match to combat the back spasms she'd first felt in a semi-final win on Saturday night. "I knew I wasn't going to be able to continue."

Andreescu approached her chair, offering words of encouragement and a consolatory hug as Williams tried to fight back tears.



Serena Williams of the United States speaks with Bianca Andreescu of Canada following her withdrawal from the final match

"I'm sorry I couldn't do it today," Williams told the crowd, her voice cracking. "I tried but I just couldn't do it."

Williams said the spasms started during her come-from-behind win over Czech qualifier Marie Bouzkova on Saturday "and it just got worse."

"Just my whole back just completely spasmed, and to a point where I couldn't sleep and I couldn't really move," she said.

Nevertheless, she wanted to give it a go in the final.

"I don't want to get this far and not at least try," said the 37-year-old, who was eyeing her 73rd WTA title -- and her first since the birth of her daughter, Olympia, in September 2017.

Beaten by Simona Halep in the Wimbledon final in July, Williams was playing just her 24th match of a year already disrupted by nagging knee trouble.

Williams hasn't won a title since 2017 Australian Open.

## Barcelona keeper Neto suffers wrist injury in training

AFP | Madrid

Barcelona's back-up goalkeeper Neto is a doubt for the start of the season after the club announced on Sunday he has injured his left wrist.

The required recovery time will be known yesterday but Neto is unlikely to be fit for Barca's opening La Liga game away to Athletic Bilbao on Friday.

"In the last training session, first team player Neto suffered a bruise on his left wrist," a statement read.

"The tests have diagnosed a scaphoid bone fracture. The treatment is to follow and the time the player is out for will be determined on Monday."

Neto joined Barcelona this summer from Valencia, with fellow goalkeeper Jasper Cillessen leaving Camp Nou and going the other way.

Coach Ernesto Valverde is already likely to be without Lionel Messi against Bilbao. Messi missed the friendly win over Napoli on Saturday after sustaining a calf tear in training last week.



## Bale returns as Zidane stays tight-lipped on Neymar

AFP | Madrid

Real Madrid's Gareth Bale played for the first time in four pre-season matches on Sunday to suggest he could yet regain his place under coach Zinedine Zidane.

Bale came off the bench as Madrid drew 2-2 against Roma in the Stadio Olimpico, before losing the friendly on penalties.

After the game, Zidane was also asked about a possible move for Paris Saint-Germain striker Neymar but he refused to address the issue.

It was Madrid's seventh and final warm-up fixture ahead of the start of La Liga next weekend but Bale has only played three of those, and each time as a substitute.

James Rodriguez, who has also been expected to leave Madrid this summer, was not even named on the bench against



Real Madrid's Brazilian midfielder Casemiro (L) and FC Red Bull Salzburg's Norwegian forward Erling Braut Haland

Roma.

"Bale and James are players of Real Madrid," Zidane said afterwards. "Anything can happen until August 31 but we are counting on all the players."

On a potential move for Neymar, who is reportedly keen to

leave PSG and could rejoin Barcelona, Zidane said: "We are here with the squad that we have and we are only thinking about that."

Zidane had made it clear Bale was not part of his plans for a reinvented Real Madrid this

term and the Welshman was left out completely for their previous three friendlies against RB Salzburg, Fenerbahce and Tottenham.

But after a move to China last month fell through and the closure of the Premier League transfer window, Bale was back in the squad against Roma and came on for the last half an hour.

With the score level, he could have won it for Madrid, firing into the side-netting and then just wide in the 92nd minute after two impressive breaks forward.

It remains to be seen if Bale is now included in Zidane's squad to face Celta Vigo in Madrid's season opener on Saturday.

Their display against Roma was one of their better showings of a patchy pre-season, which has seen them register two wins, two draws and three defeats after normal time.

## Atlanta's Martinez sets MLS record with goal in 10th straight match

AFP | Washington

Venezuela's Josef Martinez set a Major League Soccer record Sunday, scoring in his 10th straight match as his two goals lifted Atlanta United to a 2-1 victory over New York City FC.

Martinez, who set MLS's single-season scoring mark last year with 31 goals -- four more than the previous record of 27 shared by Roy Lassiter, Chris Wondolowski, and Bradley Wright-Phillips -- shook off an adductor muscle injury to take his season total to 20.

That's just two behind current

league scoring leader Carlos Vela.

Martinez, 26, put Atlanta up 1-0 in the 42nd minute, leaping to head in a cross from Julian Gressel.

He doubled the lead from the penalty spot in the 63rd minute. Heber pulled one back for New York with a right-footed shot past Brad Guzan in the 81st.

With 15 goals in his last 10 matches, Martinez has helped Atlanta keep pace in the MLS Eastern Conference with Philadelphia, who remained in first place after defeating Houston 2-1 on Sunday.

## 'It wasn't a 4-0 game': Lampard frustrated by defeat

AFP | Manchester

Frank Lampard insisted Chelsea didn't deserve to lose 4-0 at Manchester United as his reign got off to a woeful start on Sunday.

It was a chastening result for new Chelsea manager Lampard after the club's record goalscorer took over from Maurizio Sarri in the close-season.

Lampard suffered the heaviest defeat by a Chelsea boss in

their first game since Danny Blanchflower lost 7-2 at Middlesbrough in December 1978.

Marcus Rashford put United ahead with a penalty after Chelsea had hit the post through Tammy Abraham.

Emerson also struck the woodwork before the interval, but Rashford, Anthony Martial and Daniel James netted after half-time to leave Lampard frustrated.

The manner of Chelsea's sec-

ond half surrender will raise questions about former England midfielder Lampard, who has just one season of managerial experience at second tier Derby.

But he insisted the result was harsh on Chelsea because they controlled the game for long periods.

"Four mistakes for the goals, let's get that out straight away because we have to be self-critical about that," Lampard said.

"But other than that, for 60

minutes we controlled the game. It wasn't a 4-0 game for long periods but we need to accept it.

"At half-time we should be in the lead. Then all of a sudden the second and third goals, two mistakes, and it's much easier for them."

Chelsea were without injured stars Callum Hudson-Odoi and Antonio Rudiger, while France midfielder N'Golo Kante was only fit enough to come off the bench.

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