

Medvedev snaps Alcaraz win streak, sets Indian Wells final with Sinner

Russian wins 6-3, 7-6 to end world number one's 16-0 start to 2026

● Medvedev avenges 2023, 2024 final losses

● Jannik Sinner beats Alexander Zverev 6-2, 6-4

AFP | Indian Wells

Daniil Medvedev ended Carlos Alcaraz's perfect start to 2026, stunning the world number one 6-3, 7-6 (7/3) Saturday to book an Indian Wells title clash with Jannik Sinner.

Medvedev avenged losses to Alcaraz in back-to-back Indian Wells finals in 2023 and 2024, using an impressive service display and aggressive play from the baseline to keep the Spanish star on the back foot throughout.

"Super happy to beat someone as strong as he (is)," Medvedev said. "It's a great feeling."

He'll have his work cut out for him again in Sunday's clash with four-time Grand Slam champion Sinner, who beat fourth-ranked Alexander Zverev 6-2, 6-4.

Alcaraz, 22, became the youngest man to complete a career Grand Slam with his Australian Open triumph this year. He followed with a title in Qatar and took a 16-0 2026 record into



Daniil Medvedev returns against Carlos Alcaraz of Spain

Saturday's contest.

But Medvedev was up to the challenge, last month's Dubai champion running Alcaraz ragged in the intense desert heat as he pushed his own ATP win streak to nine matches.

"I just felt like the long rallies, especially when you play against Daniil, that the rallies are long, that you have to increase all the

power in almost every shot," Alcaraz said.

"So it feels like you're wasting extra energy after every shot. And with the heat, sometimes it's really tricky to deal with all of that."

After Medvedev needed just one break of serve to pocket an opening set in which he didn't face a break point himself, Al-

caraz made some adjustments broke first in the second for a 3-1 lead.

But Medvedev broke back immediately, and his control in the rallies had Alcaraz gasping after one long point in the ninth game.

"The first set ... he just made it that I had to struggle a little bit," Alcaraz said. "In the second set, I started to feel much better.



Medvedev, who slumped as low as 18th in 2025, now rides a nine-match win streak into his third Indian Wells final

I realized what I have to do. I realized that I have to suffer, and I accept it."

Alcaraz hung on to hold serve for a 5-4 lead in the second set, but he was unable to convert a pair of set points in the next game and they went to a tiebreaker that was all Medvedev.

"He was playing aggressive, and he didn't even miss," Alcaraz said of Medvedev, who raced to a 6-1 lead in the tiebreaker to book his third shot at the title.

"He's an amazing player with amazing shots, defense, attack, serve, return, everything," Medvedev said. "So you need to be at your best -- and I was."

High level

Medvedev's form, after a dis-

appointing 2025 campaign in which he fell as low as 18th in the world, has caught Sinner's eye.

"He's back to very, very high level, very big serve. He's returning very well, very deep," Sinner said of the 2021 US Open champion.

The Italian was delighted to finally punch his ticket to the final after falling to Alcaraz in the semis to Alcaraz in 2023 and 2024.

And he was delighted with his play in his sixth straight win over Zverev, the world number four from Germany.

"It was a great performance - very solid from the back of the court," said Sinner, who saved the only break point he faced in a commanding display of precision and power.

Zverev delivered two impeccable service games before he began to falter.

Sinner broke him twice as the German's errors began to climb, and Zverev cut a dejected figure after Sinner pocketed the opening set.

Zverev found renewed energy after fending off three break points in the opening game of the second set, but Sinner saved a break point in the sixth game with an ace and broke Zverev in the next game to gain the only advantage he needed.

Title race not over, insists Man City boss Guardiola



West Ham United's Greek defender #15 Konstantinos Mavropanos (C) heads home their first goal

AFP | London

Pep Guardiola insisted the Premier League title race is not over despite a damaging 1-1 draw at West Ham that left Manchester City trailing nine points behind leaders Arsenal on Saturday.

City squandered the lead given to them by Bernardo Silva in the first half at the London Stadium as Konstantinos Mavropanos headed West Ham's equaliser before the interval.

Just hours after Arsenal scored twice in the final minutes of their 2-0 victory over Everton, Guardiola's side were unable to muster a response.

Second-placed City have a game in hand on Arsenal and

host the leaders in April, but with just eight matches left for the spluttering challengers many pundits have written them off.

However, Guardiola remains defiant, claiming City will not throw in the towel.

"It's not over. Who said that? We didn't lose. We will continue," he said.

"Nine points is a lot against Arsenal but it happened. We have the game at home so we have to try until the end.

"When it is not possible then we congratulate the champion but we have to try."

The only team to win a Premier League title having ended a match at least nine points behind the leaders having played 30 or more games was City in 2013-14.

Vingegaard wins Paris-Nice as Martinez claims final stage

AFP | Nice

Two-time Tour de France winner Jonas Vingegaard claimed his first Paris-Nice title as Frenchman Lenny Martinez pipped him in a sprint finish to win yesterday's final stage.

Vingegaard had already won two stages earlier in the eight-day race but left his charge for the line a fraction too late in the two-up sprint after the pair had broken away on the final climb of the hilly 145-kilometre eighth stage that started and finished in Nice on the French Riviera.

After the peloton reeled in the last of the day's breakaway riders, Frenchman Valentin Paret-Peintre, Vingegaard attacked 21km from the finish, with only Martinez able to hang onto his wheel.

The Dane crested the final climb, the Cote du Linguador, first to seal victory in the King-of-the-Mountains competition to go with his inevitable overall victory.

But when it came to the sprint finish, Martinez launched his bid for the line early and Vingegaard simply did not have the power to overhaul him.

Still, with three victories from his first eight days of racing this season, Vingegaard is in fine form ahead of his tilt at a Giro



Bahrain - Victorious' French rider Lenny Martinez celebrates as he crosses the finish ahead of Team Visma - Lease a Bike's Danish rider Jonas Vingegaard (R)

d'Italia-Tour de France double.

And having won two of the three Grand Tours -- adding the 2025 Vuelta a Espana to his 2022 and 2023 Tour victories -- he has also now won three of the sport's major one-week stage races -- claiming the Criterium du Dauphine in 2023 and Tirreno-Adriatico a year later.

Colombian Harold Tejada, who won Friday's sixth stage, took third on the day, coming home in a small group seven seconds after the winner.

Fellow Colombian Daniel Martinez, who crashed more than 50km from the finish and lost touch with the leading peloton, battled through pain

to limit his losses and came home 51sec back to preserve his second place overall, more than four minutes behind Vingegaard.

German Georg Steinhauser took the final spot on the podium some six minutes off the pace, holding off Frenchman Kevin Vauquelin.