

SPORTS
sports

Zverev sets up Federer clash

Alexander Zverev



Alexander Zverev advances to last-four at ATP Finals after defeating John Isner

AFP | London

Alexander Zverev set up a last-four clash against Roger Federer in the ATP Finals after seeing off John Isner 7-6 (7/5), 6-3 yesterday while Novak Djokovic will take on Kevin Anderson.

Zverev played American giant John Isner at London's O2 Arena knowing a win by any scoreline would take him through to the semi-finals of the season-ending tournament.

The turning point in the round-robin match came at the end of the 12th game, when the 21-year-old German saved a set point on his own serve with an

ace, going on to force a tie-break.

The players swapped mini breaks but the giant Isner then



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faltered again on his own serve to hand the set to Zverev -- meaning he no longer had any chance to qualify for the last four.

In the second set a single break of serve in the eighth game proved decisive as Zverev served out the match.

"I am unbelievably happy to be through to the semi-finals," he told Sky Sports.

"John is such a tough opponent. The last two matches for him against (Marin) Cilic and me could have gone either way. The first set was unbelievably tight. I am just happy to be through. I will prepare myself the best for tomorrow."

Djokovic will play Cilic later yesterday but it is now a dead rubber as Cilic cannot mathematically reach the semi-finals.

Third seed Zverev has won three titles this year, including the Madrid Masters, but although he is often talked about as the leader of the next generation, his record in Grand Slams is poor and he will be desperate to make a statement in London.

Zverev is the youngest semi-finalist at the ATP Finals since Juan Martin del Potro in 2009.

Djokovic goes into his evening match against Australian Open finalist Cilic with the luxury of already knowing he has qualified top of the Guga Kuerten Group.

Roma to donate 150,000 euros in support of injured Liverpool fan

Reuters | Milan

As Roma will donate 150,000 euros (\$170,295) towards the medical and rehabilitation costs of a Liverpool fan, who was injured in an attack outside Anfield in April, the Italian club have announced.

Sean Cox, 53, from Ireland, suffered a brain injury in the incident, which took place before the Champions League semi-final first-leg match between Liverpool and Roma.

Roma said they will donate 100,000 euros through Roma Cares foundation, while their president Jim Pallotta will make a personal donation of 50,000 euros.

The Serie A club have also agreed to work with Cox's wife Martina on further fundraising initiatives to help cover the ongoing costs of his recovery.

"What happened to Sean Cox should never happen to anyone attending a football match," Pallotta told the club website.

"Our thoughts today, as they have been from day one, are with Sean, Martina and their whole family. We all hope Sean makes as full a recovery as possible."

Teams continue pursuit at AMA golf tournament

TDT | Manama

The second day of the 21st Annual AMH Island Classic Charity Golf Tournament commenced at 7:30 am yesterday on the Private Golf Course of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, Patron of the tournament.

The first day of golfing got off to a wonderful start and the teams playing yesterday are looking forward to the same favorable weather conditions. Competition is tough, the organisers said in a press release issued.

Dr George Cheriyan, CEO/CMO of American Mission Hospital said, "The excitement level is very high with all the teams trying their best to win this coveted title. There are two flights - the championship and the premier and we will have three winning teams from each flight. The logic of having two different flights is to ensure that every team has a chance at winning the titles irrespective of their handicaps."

Yesterday's Results:

Championship Flight (average handicap 6 or under):

Top team yesterday - DHL 2

Second place team yesterday - BAHRAIN CONFIDENTIAL

Third place team yesterday - AMH RIFA 2

Premier Flight (average handicaps 6.1 or over):

Top team yesterday - E.K. KANOO 2

Second place team yesterday - BH- USA 1

Third place team yesterday - US EMBASSY

Prizes for the Championship Flights and Premier Flights will be presented to the overall winning teams following the full three days of play at an event to be held at the Diplomat RadissonBlu Hotel and Spa. The overall winners will not be known until Saturday afternoon but the current leaders after two days are listed below:

After two days:

Championship Flight (average handicap 6 or under):

Team currently in the lead - AL HAWAJ 1

Team currently in second place - DHL 2

Team currently in third place - BAHRAIN CONFIDENTIAL

Premier Flight (average handicaps 6.1 or over):

Team currently in the lead - AMH RIFA 1

Team currently in second place - E.K. KANOO 2

Team currently in third place - BH - USA 1

Side Contests

Flight C (morning) Side Contest winners were:

Closest to the Pin (Hole 2): - DAVID AXTELL (GULF WEEKLY)

Most Accurate Drive (Hole 8): - DAVID AXTELL (GULF WEEKLY)

Longest Putt (Hole 4): - NASSER EID (Y.K. ALMOAYYED 2)

Flight D (afternoon) Side Contest winners were:

Closest to the Pin (Hole 2): - NAWAF AL NOAIMI (AMH AMWAJ 2)

Most Accurate Drive (Hole 8): - RASHID SAEID (AMH RIFFA 2)

Longest Putt (Hole 4): - WALEED AL MANASEER (AMH RIFFA 2)

Pressure on De Gea as Kepa waits in the wings

Reuters | Madrid

Pressure is mounting on Spain goalkeeper David de Gea with fans and media calling for him to be dropped following a surprise 3-2 loss to Croatia

in Thursday night's Nations League meeting.

De Gea has been Spain's number one since Euro 2016 but he has struggled to consistently replicate his impressive Manchester United club form and was criticised for not closing down Croatia forward Andrej Kramaric, who scored the opener in Zagreb.

"The Croat did what most people who have taken a shot at De Gea have done in the past year: found the back of the net," Spanish soccer journalist Diego Torres wrote in El Pais.

Tomas Roncero of sports daily



Spain's David De Gea during a warm up before the match against Croatia

AS has been critical of De Gea since Spain's disappointing last 16 exit at the World Cup in July and said it was time for a change.

"We all saw what happened at the World Cup and nothing's changed," Roncero wrote.

"He just stands there, he doesn't come out of his goal for their first two - this is a guy who is two metres tall! He could have even pushed the ball away for a corner for the third instead of straight to their player."



Switzerland's Roger Federer returns against South Africa's Kevin Anderson

Federer cruises past Anderson at ATP Finals

AFP | London

Roger Federer gained sweet revenge over Kevin Anderson at the ATP Finals on Thursday but is putting thoughts of his 100th title to the back of his mind after both players reached the last four.

The Swiss broke the giant South African's serve four times in a comprehensive 6-4, 6-3 victory at London's O2 Arena even though Anderson had not faced a single break point in his two earlier round-robin victories.

Second seed Federer suffered a painful loss at the hands of Anderson in the Wimbledon quarter-finals this year after leading by two sets, his only defeat against him in five meetings before Thursday's clash.

The six-time champion started the week with an uncharacteristically ragged display in a straight-sets defeat by Kei Nishikori but has beaten Dominic Thiem and Anderson in straight sets and is looking more like his old self as the tournament progresses.

The victory over fourth-seed Anderson in the Lleyton Hewitt Group takes Federer through to the semi-finals for the 15th time in 16 attempts at the season-ending finale and means he will likely avoid a meeting in the last four against in-form Novak Djokovic.

"I'm happy that this is another week like this," said Federer. "Didn't look like it maybe 72 hours ago. But I was

Federer has been rooted on 99 titles since his success at the Swiss Indoors last month, when he beat Marius Copil in straight sets in Basel

able to come back and play good tennis.

"Personally I'm still not thinking of the number 100. I won't let that get in my head, make me go crazy because it should be something I'm excited about and not something I should feel extra pressure.

"As long as I think Novak is in the draw anyhow, he's playing so good again, it's never going to be easy."

The first set was a topsy-turvy affair, with both players quickly into their groove on serve before a succession of breaks.

Federer, buoyed by his customary vocal support, broke to lead 4-3, only to lose his momentum immediately as Anderson levelled.

The Swiss broke the South African in the next game, sealing the break with a crisp backhand volley at the net but was immediately in trouble at 0-40 on his own serve before winning five successive points to take the set.



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