

# Djokovic, Nadal head into quarters

Daniil Medvedev topples Stefanos Tsitsipas to continue Monte Carlo streak

● **Novak Djokovic** topples Taylor Fritz to reach quarters

● **Rafael Nadal** sinks Grigor Dimitrov

AFP | Monte Carlo

Top seed Novak Djokovic and 11-time champion Rafael Nadal showed no mercy in dominating wins to power into the Monte Carlo Masters quarter-finals yesterday.

Djokovic extended his winning streak against US players with a 6-3, 6-0 defeat of Taylor Fritz.

The two-time tournament champion has now won nine in a row over Americans since losing at Wimbledon in 2016 to Sam Querrey.

"It was very challenging to play in these (windy) conditions," Djokovic said. "Taylor just flattens the ball.

"We had five, six close games in the first set, I just managed to break his resistance midway through.

"After that, things went on my side and I felt more comfortable.

"This was one of these days where you just have to hang in there and try to put an extra ball back in the court - that was



Serbia's Novak Djokovic hits a return to US Taylor Fritz

enough."

Nadal repeated last year's semi-final win over Grigor Dimitrov, beating the Bulgarian for the 12th time, 6-4, 6-1.

"I'm very, very happy, this is an important victory for me," the second seed said after winning his 23rd consecutive set at the tournament.

"Grigor is a super talent and is

very dangerous. It was a positive match for me.

"I had a good day, I can be happy with what I did on court.

"When you don't play on clay for almost a year, every win is important for the confidence, especially as I'm coming back from injury."

Spain's 17-time Grand Slam champion started his clay season

this week after missing a month with another knee problem and has title-holder points to defend here plus Barcelona, Rome and Roland Garros.

The king of clay is bidding for a 12th trophy in the principality. His record at the event is a staggering 70-4.

Nadal spent almost an hour in securing the first set but picked



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RAFAEL NADAL

Tsitsipas was caught on the back foot facing three match points as he trailed 0-40 on his serve late in the second set.

After saving the first two, the Greek botched the third to seal his exit after an hour and three-quarters.

Medvedev increased his leading total of ATP season match wins to 20 as a result after he beat Tsitsipas for the fourth time in as many attempts.

"This was a great achievement for me," Medvedev said. "Everything was perfect today.

"Some wind came up in the second set and I could not get used to it. But in the third, I just worked to put every ball in the court.

"I was pleased to fight back after going a break down in the third set."

The player who stands a career-high 14th credits his rising form to a renewed dedication to the sport.

"I've been working hard for the past 18 months - since before the start of 2018. I've dedicated my life to tennis, which I did not do before," Medvedev said.

"I had my best season last year - hopefully this year will be better."

The Russian reached his first quarter-final at the Masters 1000 level after winning his second match against a Top 10 opponent.

up the pace in the second as he ran out the winner.

He next faces Guido Pella, who defeated Italy's Marco Cecchinato 6-4, 4-6, 6-4.

**Medvedev awaits Djokovic**

World number one Djokovic will be playing his ninth quarter-final here from 13 appearances at his home event.

Djokovic turned in a steady performance with a dozen winners and unforced errors, while his opponent committed nearly 30 unforced errors in 68 minutes.

Sixth seed Stefanos Tsitsipas earlier lost 6-2, 1-6, 6-4 as Daniil Medvedev continued his run of form.

The Russian will next line up against Djokovic after losing to him in January in the Australian Open fourth round.

## Bahrain excel in Jiu Jitsu championship

Bahrain bags five gold, one silver and one bronze at South Asian Championship



BOC secretary general Mohammed Al Nusuf and Bahrain Martial Arts Federation president Ahmed Al Khayyat with members of the Bahrain jiu jitsu team

● **Ali Monfaradi** and **Soghra Mubarak** captured two gold medals each

● **Nijad Algosaibi** gave Bahrain its fifth gold medal

TDT | Manama

Bahrain national jiu jitsu team had a remarkable run at the 2019 South Asian Championship held in Chennai, India, where the team bagged 7 medals

in total - 5 gold, 1 silver and 1 bronze.

The Bahrain Olympic Committee (BOC) honoured members of the team after their impressive results at the four-day regional competition in the capital of the Indian state of Tamil Nadu.

Ali Monfaradi (77kg) and Soghra Mubarak (70kg) captured two gold medals each, while Nijad Algosaibi (85kg), gave Bahrain its fifth gold medal. Other medals were won by Ali Ebrahimi (silver, 77kg) and Nijad Algosaibi (bronze, 85kg).

BOC secretary general Mohammed Al Nusuf, along

with Bahrain Martial Arts Federation president Ahmed Al Khayyat, presented the awards to the team at a special reception ceremony held at the committee premises in Seef.

Al Nusuf congratulated members of the Bahrain team on this honorable achievement, which is a continuation to various outstanding results accomplished by jiu jitsu on the regional and international levels.

He attributed the outcome to the significant support of Bahrain Mixed Martial Arts Association honorary president HH Shaikh Khalid bin Hamad

Al Khalifa, and to the efforts of BMAF and its president Al Khayyat in facilitating the athletes training ahead of the competition.

On his part, Al Khayyat said he was proud for the well-deserved results of the team, and for the hard work of the athletes before and during the championship.

He noted that the continued support of HH Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa and HH Shaikh Khalid bin Hamad Al Khalifa to the team has greatly helped the team in making great progress as they battled it out with some of the region's best jiu jitsu athletes.

## Liverpool march on in Champions League

AFP | Porto, Portugal

year ago.

Liverpool set up a mouthwatering Champions League semi-final against Barcelona on Wednesday after their superstar front three all scored in a 4-1 win away at FC Porto that saw them cruise into the last four 6-1 on aggregate.

On a wet night at the Estadio do Dragao, Liverpool had to weather an early storm before scoring from their first attempt just before the half-hour mark, Sadio Mane prodding home for a goal given after a lengthy VAR review.

Already in control of the tie after a 2-0 win at Anfield in the first leg last week, Liverpool had effectively killed off Porto there and then, but Mohamed Salah, substitute Roberto Firmino and Virgil van Dijk added further goals after the break.

Eder Militao scored a consolation for the hosts 21 minutes before the end, but this was another miserable night for them after they lost 5-0 to the same opponents on this ground a

Liverpool now march on to a clash with Lionel Messi's Barca, the first meeting of the clubs since a last-16 encounter in 2006/07 that Liverpool won on away goals.

The dream of a Champions League and Premier League double remains alive for Liverpool and their supporters, whose spirits were not dampened by the dreary weather by the banks of the River Douro.

This was their 17th game without defeat and their eighth straight victory, although Barcelona will offer a tougher test than that provided by Porto.

The first leg of that tie is in a fortnight, and in the meantime Liverpool will revert their focus to domestic matters, with games against Cardiff City and Huddersfield Town up next.

With the matches coming thick and fast, Klopp made three changes to his team here following Sunday's 2-0 win over Chelsea. Firmino and Naby Keita, who both scored in the first leg, dropped out along with Jordan Henderson.



Sadio Mane scores Liverpool's first goal against Porto