

# Nadal tastes defeat on injury return

Borna Coric crashes Rafael Nadal's Cincinnati welcome back party

## ● Fritz overpowers Kyrgios

Reuters | Cincinnati

Rafa Nadal lost 7-6(9) 4-6 6-3 to Borna Coric at the Cincinnati Open on Wednesday in the Spaniard's first match since pulling out of the Wimbledon semi-finals due to injury, dealing a big blow to his preparations for the US Open.

The 22-times Grand Slam winner had been hoping to get as many matches under his belt as possible after returning from an abdominal injury but losing to the Croat means he heads to Flushing Meadows well short of competitive action.

Taylor Fritz blasted his way to a 6-3 6-2 win over Australian Nick Kyrgios while Cameron Norrie fought back to beat former world number one Andy Murray 3-6 6-3 6-4 in an all-British clash.

After an hour-long rain delay, Coric, who returned to the Tour in March after a lengthy absence



Borna Coric is congratulated by Rafael Nadal

due to a shoulder surgery, edged a nail-biting tiebreaker to take the opener after each player had saved two set points.

With the crowd firmly behind Nadal, the 36-year-old roared back into the contest by breaking former world number 12 Coric's serve midway through the second set to force a decider.

But Coric, now ranked 152nd, got his only break of the left-hander's serve for a 4-2 lead and then sealed his spot in the third round with an inside-out

forehand winner on his first match point after two hours and 51 minutes.

"It has been very, very special," Coric said after his victory over world number three Nadal, who won the Australian and French Open titles in an injury-plagued season.

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Coric will next play another

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Spaniard in Roberto Bautista Agut, who defeated home hope Marcos Giron 6-3 6-3.

The upset of the day went to American wild card Ben Shelton after the 19-year-old continued his dream ATP Masters debut with a 6-3 6-3 win over world number five Casper Ruud.

A day after taking down Lorenzo Sonego, the 229th ranked Shelton needed just 68 minutes to beat Ruud and advance to a third-round match against fellow left-hander Norrie.

American number one Fritz sent down 16 aces to come out on top against Kyrgios, with the Australian firing just seven of his own and offsetting most of those

**YOU KNOW WHAT**  
Nadal began the season with three titles and 20 consecutive wins but will head into the US Open after only one summer hard-court match

with six double faults.

The 11th-seeded Fritz needed just 51 minutes to hand Kyrgios his second defeat since losing to Novak Djokovic in the Wimbledon final.

Such was Fritz's domination on serve that Kyrgios could not muster a single break opportunity, while the 24-year-old American converted three of his seven chances.

"It feels great to have my game come together today," said Fritz.

"That's the kind of match I really needed to give me a lot of confidence going into the next match, going to the U.S. Open, a lot of things are clicking for sure."

Fritz will next meet sixth seed Andrey Rublev after the Russian scored a 6-7(7) 7-6(3) 6-2 win over Italy's Fabio Fognini.

Fourth seed Stefanos Tsitsipas of Greece sailed into the third round with a 6-3 6-4 victory over Serbian Filip Krajinovic while Pole Hubert Hurkacz, runner-up in Montreal on Sunday, lost to his doubles partner this week, American John Isner, 7-6(5) 6-7(5) 6-2.

It was a good day for Canada with both seventh seed Felix Auger-Aliassime and Denis Shapovalov picking up victories.

Auger-Aliassime cruised past Australian Alex de Minaur 6-3 6-2 while Shapovalov rallied for 3-6 6-4 6-3 win over in-form American Tommy Paul to register back-to-back victories for the first time since May.

Shapovalov will take on world number one Daniil Medvedev next while Auger-Aliassime meets Italian Jannik Sinner.

## Ruthless Raducanu storms into third round, Swiatek also through

Reuters | Cincinnati

Emma Raducanu stormed into the third round of the Cincinnati Open with a 6-0 6-2 thrashing of Victoria Azarenka on Wednesday, signalling she will be well prepared for her US Open title defence.

World number one Iga Swiatek beat former US Open winner Sloane Stephens 6-4 7-5 to start her campaign at the WTA 1000 tournament, the last big tune-up event before the hard-court major kicks off in New York.

It was a Tour-leading 50th win of the season for two-time French Open champion Swiatek, who will meet Madison Keys in the third round after the American beat Jelena Ostapenko 6-4 7-5.

"I'm trying to really focus on the future and kind of not coming back to expectations and everything that happened on last tournaments on hard court," said the Pole, who lost in the third round in Toronto last week.

"I'm really proud of my season, but I want to kind of really be fearless again."

After thumping Serena Williams 6-4 6-0 in the first round, Raducanu delivered another dominating display, the 10th seed needing just 62 minutes on centre court to dismiss twice Australian Open winner Azarenka.

"I was playing a great match for sure and to play Vika I had to stay focused throughout," said



Emma Raducanu in action during a match

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EMMA RADUCANU

Raducanu.

"In the second set I could feel the important moments and a couple of turning points that could have made the second set really difficult.

"I am really pleased with how I dug in and serving it out in that last game was really difficult."

Raducanu, who has not won a

tournament since capturing last year's title at Flushing Meadows as a 150th-ranked qualifier, appears to be hitting her stride with the season's final Grand Slam coming up from Aug. 29 to Sept. 11.

After committing just one unforced error in her match against Williams, the 19-year-old Briton was again firing on all cylinders as she raced out to 6-0 4-0 lead before Belarusian Azarenka was able to hold serve and avoid an embarrassing double-bagel.

Looking every bit the player who stunned the tennis world a year ago with her magical run at Flushing Meadows, Raducanu had all parts of her game working, laying down five aces and unleashing a barrage of returns and a flurry of winners.

She next takes on American seventh seed Jessica Pegula, who rallied to beat Ukraine's

Marta Kostyuk 6-7(5) 6-1 6-2.

Wimbledon champion Elena Rybakina barely broke sweat in a 6-3 6-1 win over Garbine Muguruza while Ons Jabeur, her opponent in the grasscourt major final, was pushed hard by hometown favourite Caty McNally.

World number five Jabeur saved three match points to edge the 20-year-old, ranked 179th in the world, 6-3 4-6 7-6(7) and set up a third-round match against twice former Wimbledon champion Petra Kvitova.

"Honestly, I'm not playing my best tennis right now," the Tunisian told the WTA Tour. "But it's good to win ugly."

Two-time major winner Simona Halep, who won last week's Canadian Open in Toronto, pulled out due of a right thigh injury before her match against Veronica Kudermetova, who advanced to a third round meeting with Ajla Tomljanovic.

## Brooks powers West Indies to five-wicket win over New Zealand



Shamarh Brooks raises his bat after scoring fifty runs

AFP | Barbados

Shamarh Brooks played the sheet anchor role to perfection in guiding the West Indies to a five-wicket victory over top-ranked New Zealand in a low-scoring opening day-night One-Day International of a three-match series at Kensington Oval in Barbados on Wednesday.

After the home side's bowling combination pace and spin dismissed the visitors for 190 off 45.2 overs batting first, Brooks' 91-ball 79 with nine fours and one six provided the much-needed solidity to take

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SHAMARH BROOKS

his team to 193 for five off 39 overs in reply.

His 72-run fourth-wicket partnership with captain Nicholas Pooran (28) steadied the chase and ensured there would be no repeat of the collapses which have become an all-too-common feature of their game in recent years.

"It was important just to get a start because this was not the easiest pitch to bat on," said Brooks after receiving the "Man of the Match" award.

"It was especially gratifying to be in a good partnership with the captain and to see the way he really buckled down, which is not his nature."

Not only did the result mark New Zealand's first ODI loss of the year but it also ended the Caribbean team's abysmal run of nine consecutive losses in the 50 overs-per-side format.

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## Man Utd supporters call for 'real investment' from any new owner

Reuters | Manchester

The Manchester United Supporters Trust (MUST) said on Thursday any new owner of the Premier League club must be willing to invest heavily to restore its former glory amid speculation of a sale by the Glaz-



Manchester United crest on a corner flag

er family.

British billionaire Jim Ratcliffe has expressed an interest in buying United after Tesla founder Elon Musk said a Twitter post in which he said he planned to buy the club was part of "a long-running joke".

The club's owners, the American Glazer family, are under pressure with United sitting bottom of league after two games of the new season. Bloomberg reported they would consider selling a minority stake, opening the door for Ratcliffe.