

SPORTS  
sports

# Halep pulls out of WTA Finals with back injury

AFP | Singapore

World number one Simona Halep withdrew from the WTA Finals in Singapore with a back injury yesterday, bringing her season to a premature end.

The French Open champion pulled out of last month's China Open after just 31 minutes, and withdrew from this week's Kremlin Cup because of the persistent problem.

Halep, 27, said she had hoped to compete at the season finale in Singapore, which starts on Sunday, but that she had taken the "tough" decision to put her health first.

"It's always difficult to withdraw from a big tournament," said the Romanian, who sus-



Simona Halep of Romania hits a return against Dominika Cibulkova of Slovakia during their women's singles third round match of the WTA Wuhan Open tennis tournament (file photo)

tained the injury in Wuhan last month.

"My back is not okay. I didn't

practise for the last four weeks. I'm not ready to compete at this level and I'm still sore."

Her withdrawal means that Kiki Bertens from the Netherlands moves into the eighth and final qualifying spot in the WTA Finals.

It has been a disappointing end to a spectacular season for Halep, which saw her secure the year-end number one ranking in the WTA standings for the second year running.

She spent 40 weeks at number one in 2018, and won three titles from a tour-leading six final appearances, amassing a 46-11 win-loss record.

This year Halep has won the Shenzhen Open, the Rogers Cup and her debut Grand Slam crown at Roland Garros.

In addition, she reached the title match at the Australian Open, in Rome and Cincinnati.

# Brave TV to broadcast Brave 17 in Philippines

TDT | Manama

Brave Combat Federation has announced that Brave TV will exclusively broadcast the 17th edition of the promotion in Philippines.

Brave Combat Federation has featured fighters from Philippines in multiple editions.

The fastest growing mixed martial arts organisation in the world has recently announced that the project is in place to host an upcoming edition of Brave Combat Federation in Philippines during 2019.

Brave 17 features Jeremy Pacatiw, competing in the co-main event against Uloomi Karim from Pakistan. The event marks the first time, Pacatiw is featured in the co-main event of Brave Combat Federation.

Arben Escayo and Ariel Oliveros are the other two fight-

ers featured in Brave 17. Arben Escayo will face Mehmosh Raza from Pakistan and Ariel Oliveros will face Haider Farman from Pakistan.

Pacatiw shocked the world with a split decision win over Keith Lee from Team Xtreme Couture who was also mentored by his brother and UFC superstar, Kevin Lee.

The initiative was brought forward due to the increasing demands by the fans to view the event from nations where the promotion is yet to secure broadcast partnerships.

Brave TV is the live digital broadcast platform introduced by Brave Combat Federation. The initiative which was initiated from the Kingdom of Bahrain provides live digital broadcast of events held around the world to nations which are yet to showcase the events with existing broadcast partners.

# Alonso puts Hamilton in top five of all time -- but not Vettel

AFP | Austin, United States

Fernando Alonso heaped praise on Lewis Hamilton and omitted Sebastian Vettel on Thursday when he was asked to name his five greatest Formula One drivers of all time.

Speaking at a news conference ahead of this weekend's United States Grand Prix, the two-time world champion Spaniard said that Hamilton had proved his talent by winning in cars that were not expected to be victorious.

"It is difficult to compare those different times and differ-

ent championships, but Lewis matching (Juan-Manuel) Fangio with five championships will be a great achievement," said Alonso.

"If one (driver) had to do that in our generation, I am happy it is Lewis as he has showed the talent and commitment. When the car is dominating, then he delivers -- and when it is not good enough to win a world championship, he still puts in the performance to show his talent. "That is difficult to see nowadays." Hamilton needs to outscore Vettel, a fellow-four-time champion, by eight points



Lewis Hamilton with Fernando Alonso at Austin yesterday

in Sunday's race to clinch his fifth title, but he avoided all talk of any glory that may ahead.

Alonso spoke twice in glowing terms of Hamilton's raw talent and speed, the pair having been McLaren team-mates in 2007

when the Briton entered Formula One.

"Thank you," said Hamilton, softly, after his first response.

The Spaniard went on to say his top five would include seven-time champion Michael Schumacher, five-time champion Fangio, three-time champion Ayrton Senna, four-time champion Alain Prost and Hamilton.

"This would probably be the top five for me," he said.

Asked by Australian Daniel Ricciardo of Red Bull, who was sitting close to him, if he would include himself, Alonso said: "No. Not really."

# Woods blames fatigue for flops

AFP | Los Angeles

Tiger Woods on Wednesday blamed his dismal Ryder Cup form on tiredness, citing a lack of physical preparation after a demanding comeback from injury.

Woods lost all four of his Ryder Cup matches in Paris last month as the United States were crushed 17.5 to 10.5 by a rampant Europe.

The 14-time major winner had forced his way back into the American playing ranks after a strong comeback season which included an emotional victory at the Tour Championship in Atlanta on Septem-

ber 23.

However the 42-year-old believes the physical toll of his first full season back on the PGA Tour after missing virtually all of the previous two years finally caught up with him.

"It was just a cumulative effect of the entire season," Woods said on the sidelines of the Tiger Woods Invitational in California, an amateur event that benefits his charitable foundation.

"I was tired because I hadn't trained for it. I hadn't trained this entire comeback to play this much golf, and on top of that, deal with the heat and the fatigue and the loss of weight."

# Pakistan's Kaneria admits fixing guilt at last

AFP | London

Pakistan's Danish Kaneria has finally admitted his role in a fixing scandal that led to the imprisonment of former Essex team-mate Mervyn Westfield after six years of denials.

Kaneria, who was given a life ban by English cricket chiefs that effectively applied worldwide, said in an interview for an Al Jazeera television documentary quoted by the Mail: "My name is Danish Kaneria

and I admit that I was guilty of the two charges brought against me by the England and Wales Cricket Board in 2012."

Leg-spinner Kaneria, who insisted he was repentant as he called for his life ban to be overturned, added: "I want to apologise to Mervyn Westfield, my Essex team-mates, my Essex cricket club, my Essex cricket fans. I say sorry to Pakistan."

Westfield spent two months at Belmarsh prison in south-east London after pleading

guilty to accepting £6,000 (\$7,862) from an illegal bookmaker, Anu Bhatt, to concede 12 runs in his first over of an English county 40-over game against Durham in 2009. He conceded only 10, but still took the money.

Kaneria was the "middle-man" in the scam, having introduced Westfield to Bhatt, but avoided criminal charges when English legal authorities decided they lacked the evidence for a conviction.

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Written representations regarding the aforementioned cessation must be submitted to the Acting Director of the Insurance Supervision Directorate at the Central Bank of Bahrain within 30 days from the date of publishing this notice to the following address:

Mr. Elham Ebrahim Taleb  
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Central Bank of Bahrain  
P.O. Box: 27  
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