

Zverev clinches Cologne title

Alexander Zverev dominates Felix Auger-Aliassime to win indoor title in Cologne

● Auger-Aliassime loses sixth straight final

AP | Cologne

Alexander Zverev ended his 17-month wait for a title by drawing on the pain of his US Open final defeat to beat Canada's Felix Auger-Aliassime 6-3, 6-3 and win the Cologne Indoors yesterday.

Zverev has had a breakthrough year in Grand Slam tournaments with his first semifinal at the Australian Open in January and first final at the U.S. Open last month, when he lost to Dominic Thiem. Zverev has said he thinks almost constantly about that final, and he credited it with raising his game in Cologne.

"I had a very tough final in New York and, the next final I played here, I wanted to come out and play my best tennis," he said.

The German hadn't played the final of any regular ATP Tour events in 2020 until yesterday. Zverev's previous title was at the clay-court Geneva Open in May 2019 and he is now 12-8 in career finals.

Zverev broke Auger-Aliassime's serve in the first game of the match to establish early control. Zverev broke in the sec-



Germany's Alexander Zverev returns the ball to Canada's Felix Auger-Aliassime

ond at 3-2 and saved two break points in his next service game to hold off a fightback from the Canadian.

Auger-Aliassime, of Montreal, is still waiting for his first career title after losing six finals in two seasons, all of them in straight sets. All three of the finals that the 20-year-old Canadian has played this year have been on indoor hard courts.

Zverev said he and Auger-Aliassime had bonded while practicing together in Monaco during the coronavirus pandemic, and he predicted a bright future

YOU KNOW WHAT

Victory gave Zverev his 12th ATP title and his third on home soil after he won the Munich Open in 2017 and 2018

for the Canadian. "You're going to be lifting a winner's trophy very, very soon," Zverev said.

The Cologne Indoors is the first of two new back-to-back tournaments the city is hosting after the ATP calendar was modified due to the pandemic.

The second Cologne tournament was already holding qualification matches before yesterday's final in the first tournament took place. It will feature Zverev, former top-ranked player Andy Murray and US Open quarterfinalist Denis Shapovalov.

Van der Poel wins Tour of Flanders as Alaphilippe crashes out



Dutch Mathieu van der Poel of Alpecin-Fenix (L) and Belgian Wout Van Aert of Team Jumbo-Visma cross the finish line

AFP | Paris

Mathieu van der Poel took the Tour of Flanders yesterday for his first win in one of cycling's Monuments after a race marked by world champion Julian Alaphilippe's heavy fall after colliding with a motorbike.

Van der Poel had slipped away from the peloton with his great rival Wout van Aert and Alaphilippe in a powerful three-man breakaway.

After the French rider's accident the duo were left to fight out the finish, with Dutch star van der Poel emerging the winner in Audenarde 34 years after his father Adrie's name was added to the celebrated race's roll of honour, although the traditional spring classic was held in an unfamiliar slot in the cycling calendar due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Alaphilippe continued his recent mercurial results which

34 years after his father Adrie's name was added to the celebrated race's roll of honour, van der Poel emerged as the winner in Audenarde

include victory in the world championship but also blowing a seemingly certain victory in the Liege-Bastogne-Liege.

When the French rider broke away from the pack 40kms from the finish only van der Poel went with him, van Aert missing the move and had to use vital energy catching the two leaders on the cobbles of Taaienbergh.

That effort coming after a fall 100km out may have taken its toll in the thrilling wheel to wheel sprint for the line.

Sassuolo up to second in Serie A after seven-goal Bologna thriller



Sassuolo's Francesco Caputo celebrates after scoring

AFP | Milan

Sassuolo moved to second place in Serie A yesterday behind leaders AC Milan after a thrilling 4-3 comeback win at Bologna.

Roberto de Zerbi's side had been trailing 3-1 after an hour, but three substitutions, including a first start for French midfielder Maxime Lopez, rescued three points for the visitors.

Francesco Caputo set up Filip Djuricic to make it 3-2 after 64 minutes and six minutes later Caputo nodded in the equaliser following a poor clearance from Bologna forward Rodrigo Palacio.

It was the fourth goal in as many league games for Caputo, 33, who scored on his Italy debut against Moldova earlier this month.

Japan defender Takehiro Tomiyasu handed Sassuolo their third win this season after accidentally turning into his own net with 20 minutes to go.

"It was a wonderful fightback from two goals down, and

It was a wonderful fightback from two goals down, and we scored some good goals too. But we haven't done anything yet. There are difficult matches ahead

ROBERTO DE ZERBI

we scored some good goals too," said De Zerbi.

"But we haven't done anything yet. There are difficult matches ahead."

Sassuolo have ten points from three games and move two points behind AC Milan, who beat city rivals Inter Milan 2-1 on Saturday thanks to a Zlatan Ibrahimovic double.

Atalanta drop to third after Saturday's 4-1 defeat to Napoli in fourth equal on points with champions Juventus, who playing without quarantined Cristiano Ronaldo, settled for a 1-1 draw at Crotone.

Lyon back on track after Depay triple assist

AFP | Paris

Captain Memphis Depay set-up three goals as Lyon beat Strasbourg 3-2 away in Ligue 1 yesterday to claim their first win since August.

Netherlands' attacker Depay was the provider for Tino Kadewere and twice for Karl Toko Ekambi in the first half before Habib Diallo and Jean-Eudes Aholou scored for the hosts.

Depay's side move up to eighth with their first three points since an August 28 win over Dijon. Strasbourg remain in 18th with just one victory this season.

Zimbabwe forward Kadewere opened the scoring after a quarter of an hour, firing home first time from Depay's long ball.

Depay, who also assisted Donny van de Beek on international duty on Wednesday, then combined on two occasions



Lyon's Dutch forward Memphis Depay (L) is challenged by Strasbourg's French midfielder Jean-Ricner Bellegarde

with Toko Ekambi before the 42-minute mark to make it 3-0.

The hosts fought back as Senegal's Diallo cut the deficit 79 seconds later.

Ivory Coast midfielder Aholou, on loan from Monaco then made it a one-goal game with his first effort since the opening day of last season with a

YOU KNOW WHAT

Lyon's Memphis Depay claimed his first club assists of the season in the win at Strasbourg

left-footed volley into the bottom corner 10 minutes into the second half.

Depay, who was linked with a move to Barcelona during the transfer window, almost claimed a fourth assist but Marcelo's header from a corner was blocked on the line by Kenny Lala.

Almeida retains pink jersey as Geoghegan Hart wins Giro stage 15

Reuters | Milan

Team Ineos' British rider Tao Geoghegan Hart soloed to victory in the 15th stage of the Giro d'Italia after a tough climb to the summit of Piancavallo. With a week left to race, Portugal's Joao Almeida holds the overall leader's pink jersey which had been under threat after Dutch rival Wilco Kelderman finished the stage in second position.

Kelderman closed to 15seconds behind Deceuninck-Quick Step's Almeida with the race finishing in

Milan on October 25. Former two-time winner Vincenzo Nibali and Dane Jakob Fuglsang, both among the race favourites struggled on the final climb before Monday's rest day.

The Giro returned to altitude, leaving the Rivotto Air Base in Udine, covering 185km before the final gruelling climb to the Piancavallo ski resort in the Friulian Dolomites.

Geoghegan Hart, 25, crossed the line alone 2sec ahead of Kelderman with Australian Jai Hindley, who had set the pace in the final kilometres, third at 4sec.

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