

Gauff beaten by Sevastova in Eastbourne



Coco Gauff hits a return

AFP | Eastbourne

American teenager Coco Gauff's Wimbledon preparations suffered a blip as she bowed out of the Eastbourne tournament yesterday, losing to Latvian Anastasija Sevastova 4-6 7-5 6-2.

The 17-year-old Gauff came back after losing the opening eight games the previous evening against seventh seed Elise Mertens, but this time she succumbed after leading.

Sevastova, a lucky loser from qualifying, cruised through the deciding set as Gauff's game went off the boil.

She will face Kazakhstan's Elena Rybakina next after she knocked out Ukraine's Elina Svitolina in straight sets.

World number 23 Gauff reached her first Grand Slam quarter-final at the French Open this month and will head to Wimbledon where she took the tournament by storm in 2019, beating former champion Venus Williams en route to the fourth round.



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Former French Open champion Jelena Ostapenko showed signs of coming back to her best form as she knocked out Tunisia's Ons Jabeur, winner of last week's WTA event in Birmingham.

Ostapenko, who is playing doubles at Eastbourne with Gauff, won 5-7 6-4 6-3. Qualifier Camila Giorgi reached the third round after beating American Shelby Rogers.

Top seed Aryana Sabalenka was in action later against American Alison Riske.

New Zealand beat India in World Test final

New Zealand prevail in gripping final against India to claim WTC title

● New Zealand romped home in the final session of the reserve day, which was activated to make up for lost time in the first five days

AFP | London

New Zealand enjoyed the greatest triumph in their cricket history as they beat India by eight wickets in the inaugural World Test Championship final at Southampton yesterday.

Two years on from their agonising Super Over loss to England in the 50-over World Cup final at Lord's, the Blackcaps claimed their first major global title.

Set a modest target of 139 in 53 overs, New Zealand finished on 140-2 with plenty of time to spare in a match extended into a reserve sixth day following two days lost to rain.

Off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin reduced New Zealand to 44-2 by removing openers Tom Latham and Devon Conway to the delight of India fans.

But New Zealand captain Kane Williamson and Ross Taylor, the team's most-experienced batsmen, settled any lingering nerves in an unbroken



New Zealand's Ross Taylor reacts after getting hit on the helmet by a ball alongside Kane Williamson

and of 96.

Williamson, who won plaudits for the sporting way he dealt with defeat in the 2019 World Cup final, was 52 not out following his first-innings on 47.

India's last hope of turning the tide evaporated when, with New Zealand 55 runs shy of victory at 84-2, Cheteshwar Pujara dropped a regulation slip catch off the luckless Jasprit Bumrah to reprieve Taylor on 26.

Bumrah dropped Williamson shortly before one of the most outstanding batsmen of his era completed an 86-ball fifty, including eight fours.

Taylor ended the match in the 46th over when he whipped Mohammed Shami off his pads for four.

Southee strikes

In a match in which bowlers held sway it was New Zealand's all-pace attack that did most damage yesterday by dismissing India for just 170 in their second innings despite blue skies providing the best batting conditions of the game.

Tim Southee took wickets at both ends of the innings in a return of 4-48 in 19 overs, with longtime new-ball partner Trent Boult striking twice in an over during his 3-39.

And the towering Kyle Jamie-

“Big congratulations to Kane and his team for winning in what was really three days. Big credit to them for sticking to their processes long enough to put us under pressure. The Kiwi bowlers executed their plans to perfection today and we were 30 or 40 short

VIRAT KOHLI

son followed his first-innings 5-31, by snaring India captain Virat Kohli for the second time in the match during a miserly 2-30 in 24 overs.

New Zealand, whose only previous men's title in an International Cricket Council tournament was their 2000 Champions Trophy one-day final win over India, would have confronted an even smaller target had Rishabh Pant not been dropped on five during his innings of 41.

Few cricket lovers would begrudge New Zealand, a country with a population of around five million compared with cricket powerhouse's India's 1.3 billion, their success.

Djokovic, Barty are Wimbledon top seeds, Federer, Serena seventh

AFP | London

Defending champion Novak Djokovic was named as the top seed at Wimbledon yesterday as he seeks a 20th Grand Slam title while Roger Federer and Serena Williams will begin the grass-court tournament next week seeded seventh.

Top-ranked Ashleigh Barty is seeded first on the women's side. The Australian hasn't played since retiring from her second-round match at the



Serbia's Novak Djokovic kisses the cup after defeating Stefanos Tsitsipas of Greece during their final match of the French Open

French Open due to the flareup of an upper-leg injury.

The draw is Friday and the tournament begins Monday.

Eighth-ranked Federer has the seventh seed because third-ranked Rafael Nadal is sitting out Wimbledon to rest and recover after his loss to Djokovic in the French Open semifinal.

Daniil Medvedev is the second seed, followed by Stefanos Tsitsipas and Dominic Thiem, although the Austrian retired from a match in Mallorca on Tuesday because of wrist pain.

Defending champion Simona Halep is seeded second, ahead of Aryna Sabalenka and Elina Svitolina. Sec-

ond-ranked Naomi Osaka is not playing.

At Roland Garros, Djokovic earned his 19th Grand Slam title to leave him one short of the record co-held by Federer and Nadal.

Federer, a record eight-time champion at the All England Club, said earlier this year that he would build up to Wimbledon as he returned from two surgeries on his knee.

But the 39-year-old Swiss great hasn't been in top form, pulling out of the French Open after a grueling third-round match and failing last week to reach the Halle Open quarter-finals for the first time.

Conway, De Kock sign for Southern Brave in cricket's Hundred

AFP | Sydney

New Zealand's Devon Conway and South Africa's Quinton de Kock have been signed as overseas replacements by the Southern Brave for English cricket's inaugural edition of the Hundred, it was announced yesterday.

The Hampshire-based franchise were in the market for top-order batsmen after Australia's David Warner and Marcus Stoinis withdrew citing Covid-19 travel complications.

Opening batsman Conway hit a double century on Test debut against England earlier this month and top-scored in



Devon Conway plays a shot

the first innings of the ongoing World Test Championship final in Southampton.

The South Africa-born left-hander averages 75 in one-day internationals and 59 in Twenty20 internationals.

"I'm really excited to have joined Southern Brave," Conway said. "I have really enjoyed my time playing in the UK so far, and I'm looking forward to getting stuck in with the team and taking part in the first season of the Hundred."

De Kock, a dynamic wicketkeeper-batsman, has long been a multi-format star of the

world game and will be reunited with coach Mahela Jayawardene, having worked with the Sri Lanka great at Mumbai Indians in the Indian Premier League.

"I'm also really excited to be working with Mahela again," he said. "Hopefully we can have plenty of fans in to support us and we can give them something to cheer about."

The Hundred is a pioneering 100 balls-per-side tournament, which is even shorter than a T20 match, featuring eight franchises, all fielding men's and women's teams.

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DEVON CONWAY



Federer was tantalizingly close to a ninth Wimbledon title in the 2019 final, holding two championship points before eventually losing to Djokovic in a fifth-set tiebreaker. It was Djokovic's fifth Wimbledon title