

tuesday — (all times are kuwait local)

10:30 handball bein sports 10hd
 12:00 tennis bein sports 8hd
 12:00 tennis bein sports 9hd
 13:30 baseball bein sports 13hd
 19:00 portugal vs argentina/soccer ... bein sports 6hd
 19:00 panama vs france/soccer bein sports 7hd
 21:30 s. africa vs korea rep/soccer bein sports 6hd
 21:30 saudi arabia vs mali/soccer bein sports 13hd

Sports

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Villa return to EPL with win over Derby

\$215.51m richer

LONDON, May 27, (RTRS): Aston Villa returned to the Premier League, after a three-year absence, beating Derby County 2-1 in the Championship playoff final at Wembley on Monday. Goals from Anwar El Ghazi and John McGinn put Villa 2-0 up before Martyn Waghorn pulled one back for Derby in the 81st minute, but Dean Smith's side held on for the victory under intense pressure.

The playoff final is considered the most lucrative single game of football in the world, with promotion earning Villa an estimated 170 million pounds (\$215.51 million) in revenue.

Norwich City and Sheffield United

SOCCER

had already secured promotion to the top flight for next season after finishing in the top two positions in the second tier Championship.

Villa, European champions in 1982, were relegated in 2016 and lost to Fulham in last year's playoff final.

El Ghazi opened the scoring just before the break with a diving header from Ahmed Elmohamady's cross from the right.

McGinn doubled the advantage in the 59th minute when a deflected shot from El Ghazi looped into the area. Derby keeper Kelle Roos came out but was unable to capture the ball under a challenge from McGinn, who bundled it home.

Derby, managed by former Chelsea and England midfielder Frank Lampard, got back in the game when substitute Jack Marriott's low shot was turned in by Waghorn and they piled on the pressure in the final minutes, but were unable to break through.

Villa's local-born midfielder Jack Grealish, who was close to leaving the club before the start of the season, showed his class throughout and was delighted with promotion.

"I'm speechless. It was such a hard game... It means the world to go up, we know where this club belongs. I've stayed here and we're back there now. I've led my boyhood team to the Premier League," he said.



Derby County's Jayden Bogle, (left) and Aston Villa's Jack Grealish battle for the ball, during the English Championship Playoff Final soccer match between Derby and Aston Villa, at Wembley Stadium, London on May 27. A place in the Premier League is up for grabs when Derby and Aston Villa meet at Wembley Stadium in the League Championship playoff final. It is the richest single game in world soccer, with the winner guaranteed a windfall of around \$210 million in future income. (AP)



Britain's Prince William (second left), and former footballer John Carew (right), cheer in the stands during the English Championship Playoff soccer final between Aston Villa and Derby County at Wembley Stadium, London on May 27. (AP)



Aston Villa's Jack Grealish (center left), and James Chester (center right), celebrate with the trophy after winning the English Championship Playoff soccer final between Aston Villa and Derby County at Wembley Stadium, London on May 27. (AP)

A 10-match winning streak during the run-in propelled Smith's Villa side into the playoffs where they got past West Midlands rivals West Bromwich Albion in the semi-finals.

Smith, who began the season at Brentford and took over from Steve Bruce at Villa Park in October, said the club had an exciting future with the backing of owners Nassef Sawiris and Wes Edens.

"It feels very good. The lads are a terrific bunch. They take on different ideas, they deserve it. I believe pressure is what you put on yourself, we work hard every day, the only difference is expectation. We've got two owners have got a lot of money, and are in it for the long haul. The potential now is massive," he said.

Nadal, Djokovic win easily; Serena storms back after losing 1st set

Wozniacki another top casualty in Paris

PARIS, May 27, (AP): Caroline Wozniacki went from playing a perfect set to start the French Open to quickly fading away against an opponent who had never previously won a Grand Slam match.

In a performance emblematic of a difficult season, Wozniacki, a former No. 1 and last year's Australian Open champion, lost Monday in the first round at Roland Garros 0-6, 6-3, 6-3 to 68th-ranked Veronika Kudermetova of Russia.

"Definitely wasn't the best match I've ever played," said the 13th-seeded Wozniacki, who had only 15 winners to Kudermetova's 40.

The way-up-then-way-down showing by Wozniacki stretched her losing streak to four matches and dropped her 2019 record to 9-8.

Another past Grand Slam champion dropped out of the field Monday when two-time Wimbledon winner Petra Kvitova withdrew because of an injured left forearm.

The left-hander said the arm had been bothering her for some time and during practice Sunday, "suddenly I felt the pain."

"I went to have an MRI, and, yeah, unfortunately I have a tear in my forearm, which is not great," said Kvitova, who hopes to be ready for the start of Wimbledon on July 1.

In other action, Serena Williams overcame a slow start for a 2-6, 6-1, 6-0 win over 83rd-ranked Vitalia Diatchenko of Russia in her opener.

Williams had completed only three matches since her Australian Open ended four months ago, and she cited a bothersome left knee when pulling out of her past two tournaments.

During an error-filled first set, Williams was constantly shaking her head and yelling at herself.

But the 23-time Grand Slam champion quickly changed the momentum by winning the opening three games of the second set.

After committing 14 unforced errors in the first set, Williams had a total of 10 in the second and third sets.

Afterward, Williams seemed more relieved than pleased at avoiding what would have been only the second loss of her career in the first round of a Grand Slam tournament — after her defeat to Virginie Razzano at Roland Garros in 2012.

Meanwhile, Rafael Nadal began

his bid for a record 12th championship in Paris and Novak Djokovic got started on his quest for a fourth consecutive major trophy with easy wins.

Nadal was a bit shaky in the very first game against 184th-ranked German qualifier Yannick Hanfmann, facing four break points, but he saved them all — and didn't face another the rest of the way for a 6-2, 6-1, 6-3 victory.

Nadal's feared forearm was not at its dangerous best, accounting for more unforced errors (11) than winners (nine).

"I had my match plan and, yeah, some of the things, they didn't work out well," said Hanfmann, who played college tennis at Southern California. "But, I mean, that's why he's as good as he is."

Djokovic also needed under two hours to reach the second round, running his Grand Slam winning streak to 22 matches by getting past 44th-ranked Hubert Hurkacz of Poland 6-4, 6-2, 6-2.

But No. 32 seed Frances Tiafoe of the US, a quarter-finalist at the Australian Open in January, threw up a couple of times and his game came

apart late in a 6-2, 4-6, 6-3, 3-6, 6-0 loss to Filip Krajinovic of Serbia.

"Obviously very depleted and had nothing really in me," said Tiafoe, now 0-4 at Roland Garros.

Other seeded players on the way home included No. 12 Daniil Medvedev, who was eliminated 4-6, 4-6, 6-3, 6-2, 7-5 by Pierre-Hugues Herbert and No. 15 Nikoloz Basilashvili

TENNIS

on the men's side, along with No. 18 Julia Goerges on the women's.

Wozniacki's preparation for Paris had been hampered by an injured left calf, which was heavily wrapped Monday, but she said that was not an issue against her 22-year-old opponent. The Danish player also said she was not bothered by her rheumatoid arthritis, an autoimmune condition that can cause pain and swelling in the wrist and other joints.

"I played really well in the first set. I played aggressive. I played the way I wanted to play. And then I think she got very lucky at the start of the second set and took advantage

of the opportunities she got," Wozniacki said, her chin resting on her left hand. "And then I think I just lost a little steam in the end."

She made only three unforced errors in that opening set, but 18 over the last two.

Wozniacki's results have not been the sort she is accustomed to. She made it to the quarter-finals and the fourth round in Paris in the last two years.

"You want to win, you're competitive, you work hard and you want to see results. So, it hasn't been a great year for me so far. And I'm just going to try and work hard and try to turn that around. Right now, there's not much I can do about the first six months of the season. I had some good weeks where I felt great, and then I've had some weeks where I've been sick and some weeks where I've been injured," Wozniacki said.

"I just have to try and stay positive, and obviously it's not as easy to stay positive when things aren't going your way," she added. "But I think that's when you really need to — and you need to just keep grinding."



Serbia's Novak Djokovic plays a shot against Poland's Hubert Hurkacz during their first round match of the French Open tennis tournament at the Roland Garros Stadium in Paris on May 27. (AP)