

PRIME TIME

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Sports

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Serena sweeps into semis; Federer out

Medvedev too good for Wawrinka; Svitolina downs Konta to reach US Open semifinals

NEW YORK, Sept 4, (RTRS): Serena Williams claimed her 100th win at the US Open in style, dismantling her quarter-final opponent Wang Qiang 6-1, 6-0 in a blistering 44-minute performance that ended any questions over a twisted ankle from the previous round.

"I never thought that I would get to 100," Williams said after the match, reflecting on the two decades she's spent playing at Flushing Meadows. "It's so special. I never want to let it go."

The eighth-seeded American joins Chris Evert as the only two players to log at least 100 victories at the tournament. Williams is now only one behind Evert's mark.

The 37-year-old Williams was dominant from the start, firing off 25 winners, compared to zero from 18th-seed Wang, and winning 90% of her first serve points.

During her fourth-round match on Sunday, Williams slipped and fell while running to the net and twisted her right ankle but said on Tuesday she was feeling "great".

"It feels good," Williams said of her performance. "This is how hard I've been working. It feels like ... hard work pays off when that happens."

Williams pumped her fist in celebration after firing off a forehand winner in front of a roaring crowd to end the contest.

"I am who I am. I've always been the person that goes out there and roars and screams and complains and cries and fights," Williams said.

"I'm extremely passionate about

TENNIS

what I do. Most people that love their jobs are passionate about what they do. That's just me."

She also praised the progress made in women's tennis over her career, calling it the "premier sport for women".

Wang, who had not faced Williams before, was unable to save any of the five break point opportunities against her and said she simply could not stand up to the power from the 23-times Grand Slam champion.

Williams faces fifth-seed Elina Svitolina, who she leads 4-1 in head-to-head, in the semifinals.

Meanwhile, Grigor Dimitrov stepped out of Roger Federer's shadow to claim a spot in the US Open semifinals with a shock 3-6, 6-4, 3-6, 6-4, 6-2 win over the wounded Swiss.

Coming into the US Open, the 78th ranked Dimitrov, dubbed "Baby Fed" because of the similarities between his game and Federer's, did not look much of a threat, posting just one win from his last eight matches.

But the Bulgarian, who had been ranked as high as number three, has found some form on the New York hard-courts and claimed his first win in eight meetings with the 20-times Grand Slam winner.

Dimitrov will now face Daniil Medvedev on Friday for a place in final, the Russian advancing to the last four with a 7-6(6), 6-3, 3-6, 6-1 win over another Swiss Stan Wawrinka.

While not as crushing as his five-set loss to Novak Djokovic in the Wimbledon final, it was another bitterly disappointing missed opportunity for Federer to add to his Grand Slam haul.

After a sputtering start to the US Open that saw him drop the first set in his opening two matches in astonishingly submissive style, Federer had looked more like the silky smooth Swiss maestro fans have come to expect.

He was virtually flawless in his next two contests, dropping just nine games total in straight sets wins setting the tennis world buzzing about a possible



Serena Williams, of the United States, reaches for a shot from Qiang Wang, of China, during the quarter-finals of the US Open tennis tournament in New York. (Inset): Roger Federer, of Switzerland, thanks the crowd after a loss to Grigor Dimitrov, of Bulgaria, during the quarter-finals of the US Open tennis championships on Sept 3 in New York. (AP)

Grand Slam Big Apple final showdown with old rival Rafa Nadal.

Federer looked razor sharp to start the match but was not able to maintain his usual high level against the gritty Bulgarian.

The turning point came in the fourth set, Dimitrov fighting off five break points to win the set and level match at 2-2.

And something unexpected did. Before the start of the fifth set Federer called for the trainer, who, after a brief conversation with the 38-year-old, escorted him off the court for a medical time out to deal with a back problem.

When play resumed Dimitrov seized his chance, breaking Federer to open the fifth and then a second time with the Swiss unable to mount any defence as the Bulgarian went on to claim the biggest win of his career.

Ukraine's Elina Svitolina continued her dominant run against Johanna Konta with a 6-4, 6-4 win on Tuesday to reach the US Open semifinals for the first time.

The fifth seed, who has won all of her meetings with the Briton, reached her second straight Grand Slam semi after also making the last four at Wimbledon in July.

Svitolina's sturdy baseline attack wore down the 16th-seeded Konta, who made 35 unforced errors, 22 more than her opponent, on a sun-soaked day at Arthur Ashe Stadium.

Svitolina rifled a backhand winner on break point for a 4-3 lead in the second set, celebrating with an emphatic fist pump in front of the crowd that included her French boyfriend Gael Monfils, who plays his quarter-final on Wednesday.

Konta continued to fight, however, saving two match points on her serve, but Svitolina ended the contest in the next game when the Briton fired long. Svitolina said Monfils, her frequent practice partner, has been a source of encouragement throughout the tournament.

Smith continues outstanding Ashes form

Australia end wet first day on 170-3

MANCHESTER, England, Sept 4, (RTRS): Steve Smith continued his outstanding Ashes form, striking an unbeaten 60 as Australia recovered from another failure by their openers to reach 170-3 at the close of the rain-affected first day of the fourth Test against England at Old Trafford on Wednesday.

Rain caused a delay of over two hours after lunch but plans to extend play to regain that lost time were abandoned after rain came in again during the break for tea.

The afternoon delay did little to disrupt Smith, though, who returned

CRICKET

ing from missing the last Test due to concussion, made his eighth straight Ashes half-century.

The series is tied at 1-1 with two Tests remaining and victory for the Australians would ensure they retain the urn.

Smith and Marnus Labuschagne put on 116 for the third wicket before the latter was bowled by a beautiful delivery from Craig Overton for 67.

It was a much-needed stand after England, on a high after their remarkable comeback win at Headingley, made a great start, bringing their supporters to their feet with just the fourth ball of the day.

Stuart Broad claimed the wicket of David Warner for the fifth time in this series with the left-hander caught behind as he made a belated decision to leave the ball but gave a thin outside edge to Jonny Bairstow.

Australia found themselves at 28-2 when Broad rapped the pads of Marcus Harris and, after some consideration, umpire Kumar Dharmasena raised his finger and his verdict was upheld by video review.

Australia's openers have averaged 15.14 — not since 1888 have their top two contributed less during an Ashes series.

The departure of Harris brought the returning Smith to the crease after 38 minutes of play, the world's number one-ranked batsman having missed the previous Test due to concussion as a result of a bouncer from Jofra Archer.

To the delight of the crowd, Archer had the ball in hand and it took him three deliveries to attempt another bouncer.

But with England sensing a chance to eat into the Aussie middle order before lunch, Smith and Labuschagne quickly settled and set about upping the run-rate.



Australia's Steve Smith avoids a rising delivery during day one of the fourth Ashes Test cricket match between England and Australia at Old Trafford in Manchester, England on Sept 4. (AP)

Swiss panel recommends not 'reappointing' Lauber

ZURICH, Sept 4, (RTRS): A Swiss parliamentary panel recommended not re-electing Attorney General Michael Lauber after he held undocumented meetings with FIFA President Gianni Infantino even as his office investigated world soccer's governing body on suspicion of corruption.

The panel said Lauber's actions had damaged the reputation of the office of Switzerland's top prosecutor.

"A global assessment of the situation: loss of trust and damaged image

of the attorney general," a parliamentary spokesman said in a statement to Reuters on why the panel voted against another term for Lauber.

"The ability of the entire attorney general's office to act is at risk."

Lauber held at least three confidential meetings in 2016 and 2017 with Infantino while his office was carrying out an investigation of several cases of suspected corruption involving Zurich-based FIFA. The prosecutor has defended his office's handling of the case.

England vs Australia Scoreboard

MANCHESTER, England, Sept 4, (RTRS): Scoreboard at stumps on the first day of the 4th Test between England and Australia on Wednesday.

AUSTRALIA 1st innings
 M. Harris lbw Broad..... 13
 D. Warner c Bairstow b Broad... 0
 M. Labuschagne b Overton 67
 S. Smith not out..... 60
 T. Head not out..... 18
 Extras: (4b, 8lb)..... 12
 Total: (44 overs, 3 wkts)..... 170
 Fall of Wickets: 1-1 (War-

er), 2-28 (Harris), 3-144 (Labuschagne)
 Still To Bat: Wade, Paine, Cummins, Starc, Hazlewood, Lyon
 Bowling: Broad 10-2-35-2, Archer 10-0-28-0, Stokes 8-0-36-0, Leach 6-2-18-0, Overton 10-0-41-1
 Match Situation: Australia have 170 runs with 7 wickets in hand
 Umpires: Handunnetteghe Dharmasena, Marais Erasmus
 TV Umpire: Ruchira Palliyaguru
 Match Referee: Javagal Srinath

Lloyd scores twice

US women top Portugal again

ST PAUL, Minnesota, Sept 4, (AP): Carli Lloyd scored twice and the US national team extended their winning streak to 16 games with a 3-0 exhibition victory over Portugal.

It was Jill Ellis' 105th victory as the US coach, tying her with Tony DiCicco's record from 1994-1999. Ellis, now 105-7-18, plans to step down in October following the team's final two victory tour matches.

The match at Allianz Field was the third of a five-city tour celebrating the US team's World Cup victory this summer in France. It was the team's second straight World Cup title and fourth overall.

The Americans also defeated Portugal 4-0 last Thursday at Philadelphia's Lincoln Financial Field before 49,504 fans, the largest ever for a stand-alone friendly game for the US women.

The Americans have won all nine of their meetings with Portugal and have

SOCCER

never allowed a goal.

Lloyd scored in the 22nd minute and converted a penalty kick some 10 minutes later. The 37-year-old has 117 career goals and leads the team with 12 this year alone.

Lloyd, a two-time FIFA World Player of the Year, grabbed headlines recently when she kicked a 55-yard field goal at the Philadelphia Eagles' training camp.

Lindsey Horan scored in the 93rd minute on a header off a corner kick from Christen Press, who has a team-best 11 assists this year.

Alex Morgan and Rose Lavelle were both out because of concussion protocol. Lloyd started up top for the United States for the second straight game while Jessica McDonald took the place of Megan Rapinoe, who has an Achilles injury. Kelley O'Hara was sidelined by an ankle injury.

Defender Ali Krieger and her fiancée, goalkeeper Ashlyn Harris, were not with the team because of a family emergency.



Grigor Dimitrov, of Bulgaria, stretches on a return to Roger Federer, of Switzerland, during the quarter-finals of the US Open tennis tournament on Sept 3 in New York. (AP)