

What to WATCH

DAY'S EVENT

BTV & RTV

Bangabandhu Gold Cup FINAL

Palestine v Burundi

Live from 4:00 pm

SONY ESPN

South Africa v England Fourth Test, Day 2

Live from 2:00pm

Pakistan v Bangladesh Second T20I

Live from 3:00pm

STAR SPORTS 3

ICC U-19s World Cup

South Africa v UAE

Live from 2:00pm

SONY SIX & TEN 2

Australian Open

Live from 6:00 am & 2:30pm

TEN 2

Serie A

Torino v Atalanta

Live from 2:00am (Sunday)

STAR SPORTS SELECT 1

Bundesliga

Eintracht Frankfurt v Leipzig

Live from 8:15pm

STAR SPORTS SELECT 2

Bundesliga

Borussia M'gladbach v Mainz

Live from 8:15pm

Bayern Munich v Schalke

Live from 11:15pm

Bangabandhu Gold Cup FINAL

Palestine v Burundi

Time: 4:00 pm

Venue: Bangabandhu National Stadium, Dhaka



Former World Number One Caroline Wozniacki was reduced to tears after her final professional match ended in a defeat against Ons Jabeur at the Australian Open yesterday, a day when Serena Williams' (Bottom) bid for a record-equalling 24th Grand Slam title was dashed while defending champion Naomi Osaka was also ousted.

PHOTO: AFP

# Nadal's new friend, Coco's plea

AFP, Melbourne



World number one Rafael Nadal planted a kiss on the cheek of a ballgirl he accidentally hit in the face with a shot on Thursday -- and on Friday, he made it up to her all over again.

"Had the chance to meet her and her family today," the 33-year-old tweeted. "So happy she is well after the scariest moment I've had on a tennis court. Anita is a brave girl!"

Nadal also gave the 13-year-old a cap, according to local media, and signed it, "To my friend, Anita."

"He's very friendly and nice, he's very kind and shows really great sportsmanship," the Herald Sun quoted Anita as saying, adding that she spent about 20 minutes with the tennis ace.

## Coco's public plea

Coco Gauff made a very public plea for a selfie with Australian tennis legend Rod Laver -- so she can put it on Instagram.

After defeating reigning champion Naomi Osaka in the Melbourne arena named after Laver, the 15-year-old sensation said in an on-court interview: "I walked past him a couple of times in the hallways, I never really said 'hi' because I'm

a little bit nervous.

"If he sees this, tell him we can set up a meet-up some time. I need a selfie for Instagram."

The 81-year-old was quick to reply on Twitter: "Congratulations on your incredible victory tonight. I would love to meet you too."

It will be quite a comedown when Gauff's run comes to an end in Melbourne -- she has homework to do.

"My teachers are giving me some time considering the circumstances. They're letting me submit some assignments late," she said.

## 'What are they doing?'

Ons Jabeur was the toast of Tunisia after sending Caroline Wozniacki into retirement by defeating the former world number one -- but she would have preferred it if they'd just gone to bed.

Her match with the Dane was on in the early hours back home and someone showed her a picture of a cafe where fans had stayed up to see her in action on television.

"I was like, 'Wow, what they are doing now?'" she said.

"They should either be in the disco or sleeping."

# Federer survives scare as stars fall

AFP, Melbourne



Serena Williams crashed out, 15-year-old Coco Gauff stunned Naomi Osaka and Roger Federer survived a five-set thriller as the form book went flying out of the window at the Australian Open on Friday.

Men's title-holder Novak Djokovic eased into the last 16 but elsewhere there were surprises all over Melbourne Park with Williams the biggest victim and Federer fighting back from 4-8 down in a fifth-set tie-break with John Millman.

Williams' bid for a record-equalling 24th Grand Slam was shattered by the unlikely figure of China's Wang Qiang, who triumphed in three tough sets -- after winning just one game when they played at the US Open in September.

Gauff then stepped up her giant-killing Melbourne debut as she ousted Japanese defending champion Osaka, 22, in dismissive style, winning 6-3, 6-4 in just 67 minutes to reach round four.

"Oh my gosh. Two years ago I lost first round in the juniors and now I'm here -- this is crazy," said the teenager, who shocked Venus Williams in the first round.

Federer came within a whisker of repeating his 2018 US Open upset by Millman as he was taken to five punishing sets by the tough Australian.

The 20-time Grand Slam champion was facing defeat in the

super tie-breaker but he clawed back from 4-8 down to clinch his 100th win at the Australian Open.

"Oh God, it was tough," said Federer. "Thank God it was a super tie-breaker (10 points), otherwise I would have lost this one."

"It came down to the wire in the end."

With Williams now 38, 23 years

Margaret Court's 47-year-old record for Grand Slam titles.

"I definitely do believe (I can equal it) or I wouldn't be on tour," said Williams.

Williams was the bookies' favourite to lift the trophy for the eighth time but she came unstuck against a determined Wang, who won 6-4, 6/7 (2/7), 7-5.



older than Gauff, the two players are at opposite ends of their careers.

And with Williams' close friend Caroline Wozniacki retiring on Friday, after defeat to Ons Jabeur, it looked like a changing of the guard in women's tennis.

But Williams, who has now had eight winless Grand Slams since returning from childbirth, said she hadn't given up hope of matching

Her defeat came just minutes after Denmark's Wozniacki was knocked out by Tunisia's Jabeur, bringing a tearful end to the former world number one's final tournament before retiring.

"I had a dream when I was a kid. I wanted to win a Grand Slam. I wanted to be number one in the world," said Wozniacki, the Melbourne winner in 2018.

"People thought that I was crazy being from a small country. But I made it happen."

Williams' exit removes a major hurdle for Australia's world number one Ashleigh Barty, 23, who had been on course to meet her in the semi-finals.

Barty, bidding to become the first Australian champion since 1978, hit form in a 6-3, 6-2 demolition of Elena Rybakina, saying she had played her best tennis so far this year.

Gauff, who trained with Serena Williams in the off-season, had promised she would be less nervous than in her last meeting with Osaka, when she was thrashed in round three of last year's US Open.

And so it proved as the teenager broke once in the first set and twice in the second to floor a rattled Osaka and ramp up a rivalry that could run and run.

In the men's draw, reigning champion Djokovic thrashed Japan's Yoshihito Nishioka 6-3, 6-2, 6-2 to reach the round of 16 at a canter.

But Greek sixth seed Stefanos Tsitsipas was also on the receiving end of an upset as he went down in straight sets to Canada's Milos Raonic, the world number 35.

Former US Open champion Marin Cilic, 31, outlasted Robert Bautista Agut in five tough sets and Tennys Sandgren, under fire during his last deep run in Melbourne over links to right-wing activists, beat fellow American Sam Querrey in straight sets.

# Niguez vents frustration after Cup exit

REUTERS, Madrid



Atletico Madrid midfielder Saul Niguez said his team need to take a long hard look at themselves and work out what they are doing wrong after Thursday's humiliating 2-1 loss at third division Cultural Leonesa in the last 32 of the Copa del Rey.

"I hope and want the team to see this loss as a very painful defeat and that it can spur us into action because we cannot allow something like this to happen again," Saul told reporters.

"I won't tire of saying it, this is not what Atletico Madrid should be about, this defeat doesn't represent the team. The fans don't deserve this, the club doesn't deserve this."

Despite fielding a strong side containing Spain international Saul and club-record signing Joao Felix, Atleti could not see off the minnows in 90 minutes as Julien Castaneda cancelled out Angel Correa's opener to force extra time.

The lowly hosts overpowered the Champions League side in the extra period and a strike from Sergio Benito condemned Atletico to their earliest exit from the Copa since losing to Albacete in 2011, before Diego Simeone took charge of the club.

Atletico, who are third in La Liga and into the last 16 of the Champions League, beat Barcelona 3-2 in the Spanish Super Cup earlier this month and held Real Madrid to a draw in the competition's final before losing on penalties.

But Saul expressed concern about his side's recent performances against smaller teams, less than a week after they slumped to a 2-0 defeat at struggling Eibar.

"I've been here for seven years and never seen anything like this," he added.

## Real face Zaragoza in last 16

AFP, Madrid

Real Madrid were on Friday drawn away to six-time winners Zaragoza while Barcelona take on La Liga rivals Leganes in the last 16 of the Copa del Rey.

Looking to win the Cup for the first time since 2014, Madrid will travel to La Romareda next week to face Zaragoza, who were relegated from the top flight in 2013 and have not been back but did beat Mallorca in the last 32.

Zinedine Zidane's side beat third-tier side Unionistas de Salamanca on Wednesday, while Barcelona needed a late Antoine Griezmann goal to win 2-1 away to Ibiza.

The Catalans, who have won the Copa del Rey more times than any other club and reached the last six finals, will entertain a Leganes side sitting in the relegation zone in La Liga.

Meanwhile, third-tier Cultural Leonesa's reward for eliminating Atletico Madrid on Thursday is a home tie against the holders, Valencia.

Real Sociedad and Osasuna will meet in the only other tie between two top-flight teams.

# 'Title race not over yet'

REUTERS, Wolverhampton



Pundits have already handed the Premier League title to Liverpool. Their own fans are singing: "Now they're going to believe us!". And the Reds' latest win, 2-1 at Wolverhampton Wanderers on Thursday, put them a massive 16 points clear.

But manager Juergen Klopp is having none of it.

"I don't think about it (winning the title). I just think about winning the next matches ... let's carry on," he said after Liverpool's 22nd victory in 23 league games this season.

"It's over when it's over, not before," added Klopp, saying he had forgotten during the week how many points Liverpool were on and was now purely

focused in their next games at Shrewsbury Town in the FA Cup and West Ham United in the Premier League.

Klopp praised Wolves' fight and spoke of the need for his charges to keep improving, despite their lofty status.

"Wolves are doing so unbelievably well, so different to everything else you face. How (manager) Nuno (Espirito Santo) sets it up, it's really good," he said in admiration of a team who have been taking big scalps at their Molineux fortress.

Klopp was frustrated at Liverpool's fluffed chances, as Mohamed Salah had a rare off day with his finishing.

"The chances we had were incredible. We were at least four or five times in a one-on-one with the goalkeeper, so if we score then it is game over," he said of missed opportunities.



Liverpool midfielder Roberto Firmino (R) celebrates with defender Virgil van Dijk after scoring the second goal in their 2-1 win against Wolverhampton Wanderers at the Molineux Stadium on Thursday.

PHOTO: AFP

# Burundi out to spoil Palestine's party

SPORTS REPORTER



Since the introduction of the Bangabandhu Gold Cup international football tournament in 1996, only Malaysia had the unique record of winning the trophy twice. Today Palestine can stake a claim to that record when the defending champions take on Burundi in the final of the sixth edition, with the match scheduled to kick off at 4:00pm at the Bangabandhu National Stadium.

Apart from Malaysia Red and Malaysia under-23 sides, Japan Football League XI, Nepal and Palestine have won the title of this invitational tournament, which was revived in 2015 following a gap of 15 years. The only time hosts Bangladesh reached the final was in 2015 and since then they have been eliminated from the semifinals each time. They will be mere spectators again when Palestine and Burundi, the two top-ranked sides of the tournament, square off in today's final.

While 106th-ranked Palestine had to battle hard for a 1-0 win over Seychelles in the first semifinal, 151st-ranked Burundi had little trouble dispatching Bangladesh 3-0 in the other semifinal.

Palestine have scored five goals and are yet to concede any while Burundi have scored 10 goals despite conceding lead in both group matches. Hence the final is expected to be a battle between Palestine's defence and Burundi's attackers.

"We know the final match will be difficult, but we are ready for it because we have come to Bangladesh to defend the title," Palestine coach Makram Daboub told reporters at the pre-match conference yesterday.

"Burundi are a good and strong team and they have some skilful players. They also have the tournament's best attacking line-up, but they



The coaches and key players of Palestine and Burundi unveil the Bangabandhu Gold Cup trophy, which they would be vying for in today's final, at a pre-final event at the BFF house yesterday.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

play individually," Makram said. "But Palestine play as a group. We have also kept clean sheet in last three matches. I believe in my players, who are focused on winning the match."

The Tunisian believes the final will be an even affair and there is no clear favourite. However, Burundi coach Bipfubusa Joslin is keeping Palestine ahead even though he believes the best team will come out triumphant.

Joslin's big strength is his attacking pair of Nshimirimana Jospin and Tambwe Amissi, who have together scored nine goals, with the former

bagging seven. However, the coach does not want to dwell in the past.

"You should not count scoring of the previous games. Scoring in the final match depends on how both sides play but we will definitely want to score more like we did in this tournament," said Joslin.

"We want to congratulate Palestine for winning the title last time, but it is another day and another final for them. We have come here to win the tournament and our dream to clinch our maiden international trophy will realise after winning the final," Joslin added.