


What to WATCH

STAR SPORTS SELECT 1
New Zealand v India
Third T20I
Live from 1:00pm
STAR SPORTS 3
ICC U-19s World Cup

Super League Quarterfinal-2
West Indies v New Zealand
Live from 2:00pm
SONY SIX & TEN 2
Australian Open
Live from 6:00am and 2:30pm

Tearful Djokovic pays tribute to Kobe

AFP, Melbourne

 Serbian tennis great Novak Djokovic teared up on Tuesday as he paid tribute to late basketball star Kobe Bryant, describing him as a “mentor” and a “friend” for the past 10 years.

Djokovic, speaking after his Australian Open quarterfinal win against Milos Raonic, said it was “heartbreaking” to hear about Bryant, who died in a helicopter crash along with his daughter and seven others.

“He was one of the greatest athletes of all time, he inspired myself and many other people around the world,” Djokovic said in an on-court interview at Rod Laver Arena, wearing a tracksuit with the initials KB.

“I had the fortune to have a personal relationship with him over the past 10 years. When I needed some advice and some support he was there for me.

“He was my mentor, my friend and it’s just heartbreaking to see and to hear what has happened to him and his daughter,” Djokovic said, before breaking off to compose himself.

Djokovic and many other legends of tennis, including Billie Jean King and Martina Navratilova, have voiced their grief over the death of the former LA Lakers shooting guard, regarded as one of the greatest basketball players in history.

On Monday, Australia’s Nick Kyrgios arrived for his quarterfinal wearing a Lakers shirt, and American doubles pair Coco Gauff and Caty McNally had tributes to Bryant scrawled on their trainers.




Roger Federer saved seven match points before getting a ‘miraculous’ win against 100th-ranked Tennys Sandgren 6-3, 2-6, 2-6, 7-6 (10/8), 6-3 at the Australian Open yesterday. (Inset) Novak Djokovic was moved to tears as he paid tribute to basketball legend Kobe Bryant, who perished in a tragic helicopter crash on Sunday night.

PHOTO: AFP



Sana gets a promotion

SPORTS REPORTER

 South Asian Games’ triple gold medallist archer Ruman Sana has been promoted to the lance naik post from soldier’s post during a reception yesterday hosted by the Bangladesh Ansar and VDP to its athletes who won medals at the regional multi-sports extravaganza in Nepal in December last year.

Bangladesh had a 464-athlete contingent who won a total of 142 medals -- 19 gold, 33 silver and 90 bronze. Out of those medals, eight gold, 13 silver and 47 bronze medals were won by 144 athletes from Bangladesh Ansar and VDP.

Ansar and VDP, one of the top services teams of the country, handed over Tk 33.25 lakh among the winners apart from promoting Sana, who last year directly qualified for the 2020

Tokyo Olympics.

“It is a big inspiration for me. I will now get more facilities from Ansar to take care of my family. I think this recognition and prizemoney will increase my responsibility to perform better at international level,” Sana told reporters at the headquarters of Bangladesh Ansar and VDP in Khilgaon.

“I think this promotion and cash-award will also encourage other Ansar athletes to produce better results at international level,” Sana said, urging Bangladesh Ansar to scout more talented athletes from outside the services team.

Bangladesh Ansar and VDP’s director general Major General Kazi Sharif Kaikobad informed that they have started the process of giving permanent jobs to athletes who produce good results even if they do not match criteria such as education, age, height, etc.




Ruman Sana and his Ansar mates pose for photographs during a reception afforded to them for their success at the South Asian Games at the Bangladesh Ansar and VDP Academy yesterday.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

Solskjaer seeks spirit of PSG

MU prepare to face Man City

AFP, London

 Ole Gunnar Solskjaer says Manchester United need to harness the spirit of Paris Saint-Germain and put in a “perfect performance” if they are to overcome Manchester City and reach the League Cup final.

United face an uphill battle after losing the first leg of their semifinal against 3-1 at Old Trafford. Marcus Rashford’s goal gives United a glimmer of hope heading to the Etihad Stadium on Wednesday and Solskjaer said the stunning comeback win against PSG in the Champions League last March can be an inspiration.

United were 2-0 down after the first leg and then 3-1 down on aggregate in Paris before storming back to win on away goals.

“Well, it looked like it was over at half-time,” he said, referring to the first leg of the City match. “I have to say the second part of that first half, they outplayed us for a while and it’s hard. “But then when we got the goal, of course you’re back in it, we hope for another one.

“But now we’ve got to go into the memory bank and think PSG because we’ve done it against good teams before and it gives us some hope, and the game in December (when United won 2-1 against City) of course gives us hope that we can do something there.”

Sporting midfielder Bruno Fernandes reportedly remains a target for the club, while a number of enquiries have been made as United look at possible attacking options.

“Of course it is a difficult window. It always has been. I can’t remember how many good ones we’ve brought in, good deals that we’ve brought in in January. Henrik (Larsson) was good, Nemanja (Vidic) and Patrice (Evra) were two good ones.”

Drogba, Park for bushfire charity match

AFP, Sydney

Football greats Didier Drogba, Emile Heskey and Park Ji-sung will headline a match in Sydney to raise money for bushfire relief, organisers said Tuesday.

Fires have ravaged large tracts of the country, leaving 33 people dead and thousands of homes destroyed, and sports stars around the world have been rallying to support recovery efforts.

Football Federation Australia said the match is set for May 23 and the funds raised will be used to restore soccer facilities damaged by the blazes.

The game will also “honour the brave men and women who have put their own lives at risk during this unprecedented natural disaster”, he added.

Joining Drogba, Heskey and Park will be a who’s who of football, including former Juventus star David Trezeguet, Manchester United icon Dwight Yorke and ex-Chelsea striker Tore Andre Flo.

Chelsea on course to face Liverpool

AFP, London

 Premier League leaders Liverpool will face Chelsea in the FA Cup fifth round if Jurgen Klopp’s underdogs win their replay against Shrewsbury.

Third-tier Shrewsbury fought back to draw 2-2 with Liverpool on Sunday, earning a replay at Anfield.

FA Cup holders Manchester City have been given a trip to second-tier Sheffield Wednesday.

Manchester United will visit the winners of the replay between Northampton and Derby, who feature former United star Wayne Rooney in their squad.

Oxford’s reward for a replay victory over top-flight Newcastle would be a trip to Championship leaders West Brom.

League One side Portsmouth will face Premier League opposition at Fratton Park after being drawn against Bournemouth or Arsenal.



Arsenal booked their place in the FA Cup fifth round with their youngsters securing a 2-1 win over Bournemouth on Tuesday.

PHOTO: TWITTER

Tunisia hails Jabeur



AFP, Melbourne

A phone call from her president wasn’t enough to help Tunisia’s Ons Jabeur as she bowed out of the Australian Open after her historic run to the quarterfinals on Tuesday.

Jabeur, the first Tunisian woman to reach the last eight of a Grand Slam, went down 6-4, 6-4 to the American Sofia Kenin.

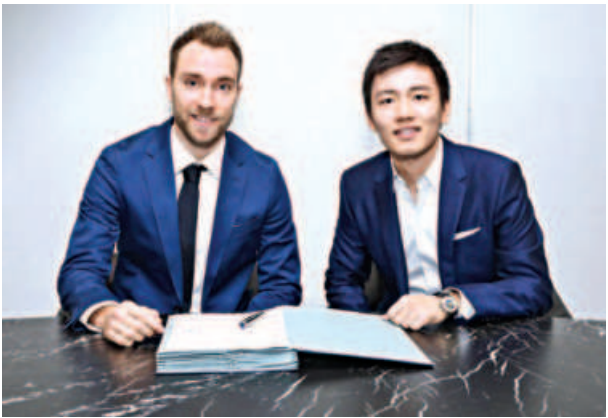
Jabeur, the first Tunisian woman to win a main-draw match at the Australian Open, said: “I heard a lot from Tunisia, my phone is still going crazy right now.

“I actually talked to the president of Tunisia. He called me and wished me good luck, that was really nice of him. I talked to a lot of politicians in Tunisia. They called me also.

“Everyone is crazy. A lot of people are calling and wishing me good luck.”

The 25-year-old said her phone was still red-hot even after defeat.

“Still actually receiving really good messages that they are proud,” she said.



Emphatic Eriksen moves to Inter

AFP, Milan

 Christian Eriksen said he was desperate to join Inter Milan this month after completing a protracted move from Tottenham on Tuesday.

Eriksen, 27, has signed a contract until 2024 with the Italian giants after the clubs reached an agreement for a reported transfer fee of 20 million euros (£17 million, \$22 million).

“I couldn’t wait to join,” Eriksen told Inter TV. “It’s wonderful to be here and I’m happy to be a new Inter player. I’m very excited and can’t wait to introduce myself to the fans. I’ve already experienced their warmth, it’s been a fantastic welcome. I feel great.”

Eriksen made 305 appearances for Spurs after joining from Ajax in 2013, scoring 69 goals.

“The numbers say that I did really well in England. It’s now time to start a new challenge, I’m really happy to have the opportunity to play in Serie A for a big team. Inter is a fantastic club.”