



Roland Garros found a new queen as 19-year-old Iga Swiatek of Poland upset the applecart by beating favourite Sofia Kenin, but Rafael Nadal, the King of Clay, continued his awe-inspiring dominance with a record-extending 13th title in Paris following a straight-sets win over World No. 1 Novak Djokovic, thereby equalling Roger Federer's record of 20 Grand Slam titles.

PHOTO: TWITTER

Iga's coronation in Rafa's kingdom

WHO'S WINNING THE RACE?

Grand Slam Titles
Federer: 20
Nadal: 20
Djokovic: 17
Most Weeks as World Number One
Federer: 310
Djokovic: 290
Pete Sampras: 286
Ivan Lendl: 270
Jimmy Connors: 268
Nadal: 209
Most ATP Titles Won
Connors: 109
Federer: 103
Lendl: 94
Nadal: 86
Djokovic: 81
Most ATP Masters Titles Won
Djokovic: 36
Nadal: 35
Federer: 28

AGENCIES



Rafael Nadal tied Roger Federer for the men's all-time lead in Grand Slam titles on 20 -- not to mention collecting his 13th Roland-Garros crown and 100th victory in southwest Paris -- by downing Novak Djokovic in the men's final.

It was cooler than normal at Roland-Garros, he was playing with new balls and Court Philippe-Chatrier looked a little different, but it had little impact on Nadal -- judging by the final result.

Thirteen times he has made it past the quarter-finals and all 13 times the Spaniard has walked away with the Coupe des Mousquetaires.

Not only did he overcome the toughest rival of his career in the final but he downed the man who beat him at the Italian Open last month, Diego Schwartzman, in the semi-finals. "Rafa is Rafa," said Schwartzman. "I think he knows how to improve. He knows how to practice, how to do everything. After Rome, he goes straight to practice."

Beating Nadal at Roland-Garros, as Djokovic suggested on the eve of the final, continues to be the most daunting challenge in tennis.

"This is his house with all the titles he's won," the Serb said on court

Friday following his semi-final. No one can argue with that.

ALL HAIL QUEEN IGA

Iga Swiatek made history on Saturday as Poland's first-ever Grand Slam singles champion with victory over No.4 seed Sofia Kenin in the final.

The 19-year-old is the youngest Roland-Garros women's winner since Monica Seles triumphed in Paris as an 18-year-old in 1992 and is the first teenager to lift the women's singles trophy here since Iva Majoli in 1997.

Swiatek, ranked 54 in the world, is the lowest-ranked women's Roland-Garros champion since the rankings were introduced in 1975. She is the first woman since Justine Henin in 2007 to lift the Coupe Suzanne-Lenglen without dropping a set.

THE NEXT BATCH IS COMING

You've heard of the 'NextGen'? How about the 'BabyGen'? Okay that might be a stretch but a young quartet made their mark in Paris, led by 19-year-old Sinner. The calm, big-hitting Italian has been talked about for a while but it was still a remarkable achievement to become the first man to make the quarter-finals on his Roland-Garros debut since...Nadal in 2005.

He was also the youngest men's Grand Slam quarter-finalist since... Djokovic in Paris in 2006.

He was joined in the later stages by wild card Hugo Gaston and Sebastian Korda, both 20, and Daniel Altmaier.

Gaston was the last French man standing and pushed Thiem to five pulsating sets in the fourth round in only his second Slam main draw after topping Wawrinka in five.

Korda -- the son of Grand Slam champion Petr Korda -- qualified and ousted veterans John Isner and Andreas Seppi prior to exiting to his idol, Nadal, in the fourth round.

And Altmaier also reached the fourth round. At 22, he would normally be labelled 'NextGen' but the raw, flashy German has played far less than his contemporaries due to several significant injuries.

AN AUTUMNAL DROP SHOT HEAVEN

If you're a fan of the drop shot, this Roland-Garros was made for you.

Players seemingly used it more than ever before because of the lower bounces stemming from the chillier fall temperatures.

Gaston, a left-hander, and Djokovic may have been the duo who most frequently utilised the finesse shots.

Gaston hit a whopping 55 against Thiem, according to the New York Times, and Thiem subsequently offered up his fair share against Schwartzman.

STAGGERING NUMBERS RACKED UP BY NADAL

With a lifetime record of 100-2 in Paris, Nadal becomes the first player to achieve triple digit match victories at Roland-Garros.

Nadal joins Federer atop the all-time men's singles Grand Slam titles list with 20. Only Margaret Court (24), Serena Williams (23) and Steffi Graf (22) have won more major singles titles than Nadal.

With his 2020 title, Nadal clears Navratilova to become the only professional player -- male or female -- to win the same tour event 13 times.

Nadal is six titles clear of Evert (7) for the all-time lead in Roland-Garros singles titles won, and seven clear of the legendary Bjorn Borg (6) for the all-time lead in men's singles titles won in Paris.

At the Grand Slams, Nadal has now surpassed Margaret Court, who won 11 Australian Open titles, by two.

Nadal is now the only men's singles player in history to win a major without dropping a single set four different times.

By winning this title in Paris, Nadal now has won his sixth Grand Slam title since turning 30, which leaves him as the only man to have won more than five major singles titles beyond the age of 30.

Federer's praise, Nadal's reply

AGENCIES



Having seen the Spaniard draw level with his record 20 Grand Slam singles titles in Paris, Roger Federer chipped in with his own classy touch with this heartfelt post.

"I have always had the utmost respect for my friend Rafa as a person and as a champion," tweeted Federer. "As my greatest rival over many years, I believe we have pushed each other to become better players."

"Therefore, it is a true honour for me to congratulate him on his 20th Grand Slam victory. It is especially amazing that he has now won Roland-Garros an incredible 13 times, which is one of the greatest achievements in sport."

"I also congratulate his team, because nobody can do this alone. I hope 20 is just another step on the continuing journey for both of us. Well done, Rafa. You deserve it."

Nadal sounded flattered in his press conference, having not been able to check his social media notifications or Federer's note.



"I was not able, of course, to watch anything. But thanks to Roger for the words, no? I think, as everybody knows, we have a very, very good relationship. We respect each other a lot. At the same time in some way I think he's happy when I'm winning and I'm happy when he's doing the things well," the Spaniard said.

"We have been going through a great rivalry for a very, very long time. Yeah, just can say thanks to him."

"For me, it means a lot to share 20, this number with @rogerfederer....We keep playing so I don't know what can happen in the future."

Young guns in focus in second game

SPORTS REPORTER



Following a four-wicket defeat in the opening game against Najmul XI, Mahmudullah XI will look to make a comeback in the BCB President's Cup when they take on Tamim XI in the second match at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur today.

There was a bit of rust among the cricketers when they played their first competitive match after seven months as the Mahmudullah Riyad-led side was bundled out for just 196 runs, despite having a solid top order. The likes of Naim Sheikh, Liton Das and Mominul Haque failed to provide a good start.

However, skipper Mahmudullah struck a fifty alongside Imrul Kayes, who scored 42, but it was not enough for the side to post a fighting total.

Tamim XI will be led by ODI skipper Tamim Iqbal, and they will have to contend with rust of their own when they play their first game. The side is made up mostly of young players from the 2019 ICC Under-19 World Cup winning side.

Much like young Towhid Hridoy -- who was instrumental with the bat for Najmul XI while scoring a match-winning fifty -- and Irfan Shukkur during the first match, there will be an onus to perform on under-19 champions like Akbar Ali, Tanzim Ahmed Tamim, Minhajul Abedin Afridi, Shoriful Islam.

Apart from the youngsters, relatively experienced cricketers like Mustafizur Rahman, Mohammad Saifuddin, Anamul Haque and Khaled Ahmed will also feature for Tamim XI.

The pitch at the home of cricket in Mirpur on the opening day seemed to be a sporting one and the batsmen today need to step forward and be counted to make the game an interesting one.

For skipper Tamim this will be his first experience leading the side after being appointed as the long-term Tigers ODI skipper and the cricketer will surely look to make an impact both as a leader and also as a batsman.



Kylian Mbappe has always claimed Cristiano Ronaldo to be his idol. The young Frenchman, who used to sleep with posters of the Portuguese star stuck on his bedroom wall, had the chance to face off as Portugal met France in a UEFA Nations League fixture in Paris on Sunday. The match ended goalless and both players later took to social media to acknowledge their mutual admiration. Meanwhile, Erling Braut Haaland scored a hatrick on the night to power Norway to a 4-0 win over Romania in Oslo.

PHOTO: TWITTER



Novak leads, Iga in top 20

AFP, Paris

Rafael Nadal remains 1,890 points behind Novak Djokovic in ATP rankings released Monday despite having beaten him for a 13th French Open title at the weekend.

In the WTA rankings, Poland's Iga Swiatek has shot up 37 places to 17th following her stunning French Open win over the weekend.

The 19-year-old Pole ensured her place in history when she became her country's first major singles champion. The top three remains unchanged, Australian Ashleigh Barty still leading the rankings.

Hamilton's glowing tribute to Schumacher

AFP, Nurburgring

Lewis Hamilton heaped praise on Michael Schumacher for leading the way in Formula One and thanked Mercedes for gambling on a "young black boy" following his record-equalling 91st Grand Prix win on Sunday.

Speaking at length in the virtual news conference after claiming the Eifel GP, his seventh win of the season, the runaway series leader talked of his admiration and respect for the seven-time champion German whose records he is chasing.

"That number 91 is so big and, when it's so far away, it's hard for people to perhaps fully understand how hard it was for him to get those 91 wins," six-time F1 champion Hamilton said.

"To deliver, weekend in and weekend out, year on year, and to stay so in shape and be so precise... I understand that now, more than ever." "What he achieved in so many areas, pushing the limit in terms of the physical side, he really was a pioneer in



being the fittest driver."

Hamilton became a Mercedes-supported driver when he was 13 and embarking on his international karting career.

"I'm just unbelievably grateful to Mercedes

for giving a young black boy a chance when I was 13 years old and supporting me all the way," he said.

By the time he succeeded Schumacher in the Mercedes F1 team in 2013 Hamilton was

already a world champion after winning his first title with McLaren in 2008.

On Sunday, Schumacher's 21-year-old son Mick presented Hamilton with one of his father's racing helmets. Hamilton was briefly speechless, but later explained it was not the first in his personal collection.

"I actually already have one of Michael's helmets," he said. "One of the really, really special moments for me was in Abu Dhabi in 2012 when I went over to the Mercedes hospitality and met with Michael."

"We exchanged helmets and that was, for me, a moment that I'll never forget. To stand with someone that I grew up watching on TV and have the honour of exchanging jerseys, or helmets... It's what us sportsmen do and it's the highest sign of respect."

"To have his family honour me today, I'm just incredibly humbled. His son is such a great, bright talent, a really genuine human being."

"I'm going to have two special helmets from Michael in my small living room."