

STAR SPORTS 2
England v South Africa
1st Test, Day-3
Live from 4:00pm
STAR SPORTS SELECT 1
Wimbledon
Third Round
Live from 6:00pm



Victoria Azarenka of Belarus returns against Britain's Heather Watson during their women's singles third round match in Wimbledon yesterday. Azarenka won the match 3-6, 6-1, 6-4.

PHOTO: AFP

QUICK SINGLES

The following are a few samples of stories that did not make the print edition. However, if they pique your interest, you can always read them online on The Daily Star website by simply scanning the QR codes listed below:

Defoe breaks down over Lowery
England striker Jermain Defoe burst into tears at his unveiling



by Premier League side Bournemouth as he revealed his 'best friend' Bradley Lowery had only a matter of days to live.

Kerber moves into third round

Angelique Kerber made her case to be labelled the new favourite for the Wimbledon title as the German eased into the third round with a 7-5, 7-5 win over Kirsten Flipkens.



Messi donates wedding leftovers
Lionel Messi and Antonella Rocuzzo got married in Rosario and countless celebrities, friends and family were in attendance.



Wimbledon dismiss court concerns

Wimbledon officials dismissed growing concerns over the state of the All England Club courts despite baselines on some surfaces already stripped of grass after just four days of the Grand Slam event.



Alba steps into Gulf crisis

Barcelona star Jordi Alba has become the latest Spanish footballer to enter the Gulf diplomatic crisis after he was shown signing a T-shirt of Qatar's leader.



Leicester say Iborra deal complete after signing four-year deal

Leicester City said their signing of Vicente Iborra from Sevilla would be a four-year deal and they had agreed terms, with the fee reported to be in the region of 12 million euros (10.5 million pounds).



Nadal storms through Nishikori crashes out

AFP, London



Rafael Nadal slugged his way into the Wimbledon last 16 with a bruising dismissal of Karen Khachanov, while Kei Nishikori admitted he can't cut it on grass after the Japanese star crashed out on Friday.

Having won his 10th French Open crown without dropping a set last month, Nadal has made the switch from clay to grass with such ease that his title rivals might be getting a little worried.

His 6-1, 6-4, 7-6 (7/3) win against Russian 30th seed Khachanov equalled the Spaniard's personal record of 28 successive sets won at Grand Slams, a blistering streak dating back to this year's Australian Open final.

Nadal's second and most recent Wimbledon title came in 2010 and the 15-time major winner hasn't been past the fourth round for six years.

But world number two Nadal is in formidable form heading into only his second fourth round tie in his last five visits to Wimbledon.

His opponent is 16th seed Gilles Muller, who defeated Aljaz Bedene 7-6 (7/4), 7-5, 6-4 to reach the last 16 for the first time at the age of 34.

"I played fantastic for a set and a half but it got tougher after that. He started to hit stronger so I was happy to get through in three sets," Nadal said.

Former US Open finalist Nishikori had hoped to finally advance past the fourth round at Wimbledon after years of underachievement.

But the world number nine didn't even reach the last 16 as he was over-powered 6-4, 7-6 (7/3), 3-6, 6-3 by Spanish 18th seed Roberto Bautista Agut.

Nishikori's third round exit means Wimbledon remains the only Grand Slam he has failed to make the quarter-finals.

It was the 27-year-old's earliest departure from a major since his first round defeat against Benoit Paire at the 2015 US Open.

"It's not easy. I don't have good results on grass. I have got to work on it every year," Nishikori said.

Former US Open champion Marin Cilic advanced to face Bautista Agut with a 6-4, 7-6 (7/3), 6-4 win against American 26th seed Steve Johnson.

With former England captain David Beckham watching from the Royal Box, former world number one Victoria Azarenka defeated British wild card Heather Watson 3-6, 6-1, 6-4.

Competing in her first Grand Slam since taking a year off to have her first child -- son Leo -- in December, Azarenka was caught out as Watson made a fast start to her attempt to reach the last 16 for the first time.

But the two-time Australian Open champion stepped on the gas to keep alive her attempt to emulate Evonne Goolagong, who was the last Wimbledon mum to lift the Venus Rosewater Dish in 1980.

Only Goolagong, Margaret Court and Kim Clijsters have won a Grand Slam singles title after having a child.

"The whole match I was a little bit on the back foot. The second set I started to step in a little bit more," Azarenka said.

"I was very happy that I was able to find other ways to win."

Next up for Azarenka, who reached the Wimbledon semi-finals in 2011 and 2012, is world number two Simona Halep who eased through with a 6-4, 7-6 (9/7) win against China's Peng Shuai.

Van Niekerk storms to victory

AFP, Lausanne

World record holder Wayde van Niekerk stormed to victory in the 400m at the Diamond League meet at Lausanne on Thursday, as American veteran Justin Gatlin went sub-10sec for the 100m.

Van Niekerk is on fire this season, having run personal bests in the 100m (9.94sec) and 200m (19.84) last month, and setting a new world best time of 30.81sec in the rarely-run 300m in Ostrava last week.

That time beat a long-time record held by Michael Johnson, the legendary US athlete whose record in the one-lap race he also beat when winning gold in Rio.

The 24-year-old timed a world lead of 43.62sec in Lausanne, well ahead of second-placed Botswana's Baboloki Thebe. Van Niekerk has only run the 400m faster on two occasions: when he won his world title in Beijing in 2015; the other was a year later when he won Olympic gold.

Van Niekerk said he was constantly inspired by his performances.

Messi prison term reduced to fine

AFP, Barcelona



A Spanish court said Friday it had replaced with fines the prison sentences handed down for tax fraud to FC Barcelona's star striker Lionel Messi and his father.

Messi, the best paid footballer in the world according to the club, and his father had been convicted of hiding image rights royalties in offshore accounts and had been given jail terms of 21 and 15 months respectively.

Following Friday's ruling by Barcelona provincial court, Messi will instead pay 252,000 euros (\$287,000) and his father 180,000 euros in fines.

Under the original sentence, neither Messi nor his father would ever have had to actually serve time behind bars, because in Spain first offenders for non-violent crimes are spared jail time for sentence of less than two years.

The two were in July 2016 found guilty of using companies in Belize, Britain, Switzerland and Uruguay to avoid paying 4.1 million euros in taxes on income Messi earned from his image rights from 2007-09.

The income relates to Messi's endorse-



—AGENCIES

ment deals including with Danone, Adidas, Pepsi-Cola, Procter & Gamble and the Kuwait Food Company.

The player and his father made a voluntary payment of five million euros -- equal to the amount of the alleged unpaid taxes plus interest -- in August 2013 after being formally investigated. They were also fined around 3.5 million euro for that fraud.

The Barcelona court said it took these payments into account when deciding to exchange their prison sentence for new fines.

"This made them both deserving of having the prison sentence substituted by a fine," the court said in a ruling released on Friday.

The ruling caps off a golden week for Messi, who on Wednesday extended his contract with FC Barcelona until June 2021, just days after he married his childhood sweetheart in Argentina.

The club did not give financial details but club president Josep Maria Bartomeu said Messi was the best paid player in the world.

Prior to his contract extension, Messi was the third highest paid sportsman in the world with an income of \$80 million of which 53 million was in salary and bonuses, according the ranking published by Forbes magazine in June.

ASIAN ATHLETICS

Relay team's poor effort

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladeshi athletes continued to display their dismal performance in the 22nd Asian Athletics Championship as the relay team finished fourth among six teams in Heat-2 of 4x100m relay event in Bhubaneswar, India yesterday.

Bangladesh male team, comprised of Mezbah Ahmed, Abdur Rouf, Kazi Shah Emran and Masud Rana, took 42.64 seconds to finish their race.

FIFA suspends Sudan

AFP, Lausanne

FIFA said Friday it had suspended Sudan with immediate effect due to government interference in the Sudan Football Association (SFA).

The decision bans the Sudanese national team from playing international matches and bars the country's clubs from all continental competitions.

Al-Hilal, Al Merreikh and Al-Hilal Obeid won't be able to participate in Africa's two top club competitions, the Champions League and the Confederation Cup.

Ikeme diagnosed with leukaemia

AFP, London



Nigerian international goalkeeper Carl Ikeme who plays for second tier English side Wolverhampton Wanderers has been diagnosed with acute leukaemia, the club announced.

The 31-year-old England-born goalkeeper -- capped 10 times -- returned "abnormal blood tests" during pre-season testing and further checks confirmed the diagnosis.

"It would be an understatement to say that everyone at Wolves has been shocked and saddened to hear the news of Carl's diagnosis," said Wolves managing director Laurie Dalrymple.

"That relates to both players and staff as Carl has been at the club for a very long time and remains such an integral personality within the group."

"At the same time, we all know what a fighter and a competitor Carl is, and I have no doubt that he will take all of those attributes into this battle."

Ikeme -- who has been with Wolves for his entire career, making more than 200 appearances since 2003 although he has spent spells out on loan -- has received plenty of support both in England in Nigeria.

Nigeria Football Federation (NFF) president Amaju Pinnick has backed the Wolves goalkeeper to beat the ailment.

"The Nigerian football fraternity and indeed the world, pray for @Carl_Ikeme as he faces this tough but not impossible journey. We believe," Pinnick said via Twitter.

"We believe this strength will see @Carl_Ikeme through. Stay strong @Carl_Ikeme and have faith. You will beat this like a champion."

Ronaldinho to play in Pakistan

AFP, Karachi

Eight of football's biggest stars, including Brazilian hero Ronaldinho, will play two exhibition matches in Pakistan this weekend in hopes of attracting more players from the cricket-mad country.

Recently retired Ronaldinho, famous for his stints with Spanish club Barcelona, is the lead attraction among the group dubbed "Ronaldinho and friends" set to play in Karachi on Saturday and in Lahore on Sunday.

Former Manchester United stalwart Ryan Giggs, Brazilian Roberto Carlos, former England goalkeeper David James, Dutch star George Boateng, former French players Robert Pires and Nicolas Anelka, and Portuguese player Luis Boa Morte complete the line-up.

Ronaldinho, 37, who won the World Player of the Year twice said he is on a goodwill mission aimed at inducing youngsters to play the game.

BRADLEY LOWERY (2011-2017)



Bradley Lowery, who became one of the iconic images of last season's Premier League through his friendship with then Sunderland striker Jermain Defoe, has died aged six his family revealed on his Facebook page. The devoted Sunderland supporter suffered from a rare form of cancer -- neuroblastoma -- and had of late been receiving palliative care at his home.

PHOTO: COLLECTED