

# Djokovic into record 10th quarter

Former cricketer Berty in last eight

AFP, Paris

Novak Djokovic on Monday became the first man to reach the French Open quarterfinals for 10 successive seasons while Kei Nishikori set up the toughest challenge on a clay court -- facing Rafael Nadal.

Top seed and world number one Djokovic continued his bid to hold all four Grand Slam titles simultaneously for the second time by thrashing Germany's Jan-Lennard Struff 6-3, 6-2.

The 32-year-old will now face either ninth-seeded Italian Fabio Fognini or fifth seed Alexander Zverev in what will be his 13th appearance overall in the quarterfinals in Paris.

"It was tricky with the rain, but that's Paris," said the 2016 champion after playing in drizzly conditions.

"I'm really confident with my serve. I hope it continues like that."

Only Australian great Rod Laver has held all

four majors at the same time twice before, after his calendar Grand Slams in 1962 and 1969.

Japanese seventh seed Nishikori came back from 1-4 and 3-5 down in the final set to beat Benoit Paire of France and set up a Roland Garros quarterfinal clash against Nadal.

Nishikori won 6-2, 6-7 (8/10), 6-2, 6-7 (8/10), 7-5 in a shade under four hours to reach his third last-eight match at the French Open.

The 29-year-old Japanese could have wrapped it up in the fourth set when he had two match points but squandered both, the second on a double fault.

Paire, the world number 38 who was trying to make the quarterfinal of a Slam for the first time, was eventually undone by 15 double faults and 79 unforced errors.

Nishikori has only defeated 11-time French Open champion Nadal twice in 12 meetings with both of those wins coming on hard court.

The Spaniard has won all four of their meetings on clay.

"It's going to be a tough match, he's the greatest ever clay court player," said Nishikori.

In the women's event, the players who stunned top seed Naomi Osaka and 23-time major winner Serena Williams got a taste of their own medicine.

American 14th seed Madison Keys reached the quarterfinals for the second successive year with a 6-2, 6-4 win over Katerina Siniakova, the conqueror of US and Australian Open winner Osaka.

Keys next faces Australian eighth seed Ashleigh Barty.

Barty beat Sofia Kenin, who stunned Williams in the third round, 6-3, 3-6, 6-0, on Court Philippe Chatrier.

"It's my first time this week playing on this beautiful court and I just wanted to come out here and enjoy it," said the 23-year-old former cricketer.

"It (playing cricket) was incredible, it made me more hungry to come back and have success in tennis."



ROGER FEDERER



STAN WAWRINKA

## Federer out for revenge against Wawrinka

AFP, Paris

Four years after his defeat to Stan Wawrinka in the Roland Garros quarterfinals prompted him to call a temporary halt to his Paris aspirations, Roger Federer renews his rivalry with his oldest friend with a place in the semifinals at stake on Tuesday.

Federer, the 37-year-old 2009 champion in Paris, holds a 22-3 stranglehold over Wawrinka, 34.

But all three losses have come on clay, including in the last-eight at the 2015 French Open as Wawrinka went on to claim a second a second career Slam title.

"I have a bad memory of it. Stan beat me in three sets with his terrible shorts," said Federer in reference to his compatriot's gaudy, checked shorts, compared by some to a tablecloth pattern.

Federer, a 20-time major winner, is the oldest man to make the quarterfinals of a Slam since Jimmy Connors at the 1991 US Open.

Wawrinka, on the other hand, has needed 12.5 hours to get to his first Slam quarterfinal since the 2017 French Open when he lost to Rafael Nadal in the final.

Just over five of his hours on court at Roland Garros were spent disposing of sixth seed Stefanos Tsitsipas in the last-16 in the fourth longest match ever played at

the tournament.

Wawrinka's run to the quarterfinals would have looked unlikely this time last year when the legacy of two knee surgeries in 2017 saw him lose in the first round in Paris.

That saw him drop out of the top 250 in the world.

"I'm just happy for the guy that he's back after his knee problems," said Federer of his 2014 Davis Cup and 2008 Olympic gold medal winning teammate.

"They were severe, and that's why I think he's really happy he got sort of a second life on tour."

"It's nice to see him pain-free and playing well. I hope he's not at the level of '15, but we'll find out, because there he was crushing the ball. It was unbelievable."

Wawrinka, now back at 28 in the world, says it will be amazing to face Federer again despite having lost their last six meetings since his 2015 landmark moment.

"He didn't play here for so many years. He's still playing so well. He's the best player to ever play this sport. So it's going to be a big challenge," said Wawrinka, the holder of three Grand Slam titles.

"I didn't beat him many times in my career, but I did once here, so I still do remember that time and was a special day for me."

"I'm getting old and older and older. and he's better than me, also, so never forgot that."



Serbia's Novak Djokovic celebrates his victory against Germany's Jan-Lennard Struff in the fourth round of the French Open at the Roland Garros on Monday.

PHOTO: AFP

## City of Liverpool turns red

AFP, Liverpool

Liverpool's celebrations shifted to their home city on Sunday as tens of thousands of fans greeted the team who beat Tottenham to win the Champions League final in Madrid the night before.

Supporters turned Liverpool into a sea of red as the open-top bus carrying coach Jurgen Klopp and his victorious players edged through the city.

"You see in their eyes how much it means. It's unbelievable and it's so intense. Today, wow! It's crazy," Klopp told LFC TV.

"I cannot really describe it because I cried a little bit as well because it's so overwhelming what the people are doing."

"When you have a direct eye contact and you see how much it means to them that's touching to be

honest. It's brilliant."

"I'm ecstatic and hungover at the same time -- the best type of hangover," said Peter Broad, 37, a social housing worker and Liverpool native who was lining the route.

Liverpool became champions of Europe for a sixth time when Mohamed Salah's second-minute penalty and Divock Origi's late strike secured a 2-0 win in the sweltering Metropolitano Stadium in Madrid.

It was a first trophy of any sort in seven years for the club and banished the memories of last year's bitter defeat to Real Madrid in the final in Kiev.

The win also represented a personal triumph for Klopp, who finally snapped his run of six straight losses in cup finals.

"We were all pretty much crying on the pitch, because it was so emotional, it was so big, it means so much to us," Klopp said.

Celebrations ran late into Saturday night in the Spanish capital and in Liverpool, as ecstatic supporters danced drunkenly in the streets and the club anthem "You'll Never Walk Alone" rang out.

By lunchtime fans began streaming back onto the streets for the parade. "We wanted to get tickets for Madrid, but obviously this is the next best thing," said Mark Hodgetts as he waited for his heroes.

"We just wanted to feel the atmosphere. We've been waiting so long -- my daughter was only two when we last won it," he added.

The team returned to tabloid headlines declaring the "Joy of Six", in the Mail on Sunday, and "Six Machines", in the Sunday Mirror.

Liverpool's sixth success in Europe's top club trophy came after wins in 1977, 1978, 1981, 2005 and the memorable come-from-behind victory against AC Milan in Istanbul in 2005.

## Beckenbauer wants Klopp at Bayern

AFP, Berlin

German football legend Franz Beckenbauer said Monday that he wants to see Liverpool coach Juergen Klopp in the Bayern Munich dugout.

As Germany celebrated Klopp's success in last Saturday's Champions League final, Beckenbauer told Bild newspaper that he was desperate to see the former Dortmund coach join Bundesliga champions Bayern.

"I want nothing more than to see Klopp come to Bayern one day, it would be a good fit," said the 73-year-old, who won five German titles with Bayern as a player and a coach.

Klopp's first Champions League title was met with widespread celebration in the German sports media.

On Monday, Kicker magazine carried the headline "King Klopp" on its front

page, and described the Liverpool manager as "the face of German football".

Beckenbauer echoed those sentiments in an interview with Bild, calling Klopp "one of the best coaches in the world".

"Juergen brought a new type of football to Germany... what he began in Dortmund, he has refined in Liverpool."

Liverpool are reportedly looking to extend Klopp's contract, which currently runs until 2022.

Yet Beckenbauer questioned whether 51-year-old would stay on Merseyside in the long term.

"I think that a job in England robs you of energy. As a manager in the Premier League, you have more responsibility than as a coach in the Bundesliga," he told Bild.

"With the two cup competitions and the slightly larger league, the amount of games is considerably higher than it is in Germany."

## 'James to leave Bayern'

AFP, Berlin

Colombian midfielder James Rodriguez will leave Bayern Munich ahead of next season after the club decided not to sign him permanently from Real Madrid, Kicker magazine reported on Monday.

Rodriguez, 27, joined Bayern on loan in 2017, and the German club have the option to sign him permanently for 42 million euros (\$46.9m) when the two-year deal expires on June 30.

Yet according to Kicker, the recently crowned Bundesliga champions have decided against triggering the option-to-buy in Rodriguez' contract.

## WHAT TO WATCH

### Booters in Laos

First leg of qualifiers against hosts on Thursday

SPORTS REPORTER



When all the attention of the sporting fraternity of Bangladesh is firmly focused on the performance of the national cricket team at the ICC World Cup in England, the national football team will embark on a massively important fixture in Laos on June 6.

The booters will take on the hosts at the New Laos Stadium in Vientiane on the first leg of their double-legged first round for the joint qualifier for the 2022 World Cup and the 2023 Asian Cup. Five days later, the men in red and green will host the Southeast Asian nation in Dhaka in the second leg, with the aggregate result of the two legs deciding which team would go through to the group stages of the qualifiers and which one would be out of reckoning for those two competitions.

The charges of Jamie Day have had an encouraging build-up to the two matches as they spent ten days in a conditioning

camp in Thailand where they played two practice matches against two Thai second-tier clubs -- drawing the first one and winning the latter quite emphatically.

The team reached Vientiane from Bangkok yesterday evening and will train the next two days for the crucial encounter against Laos, who are ranked 184th against Bangladesh's 188th in latest FIFA ranking.

Statistics would also be in favour of Bangladesh as they beat Laos at home late last year after having held them to a draw in a FIFA friendly in March last year.

While the Bangladesh team has been hamstrung by injuries to two crucial players -- centre-back Tapu Barman and defensive midfielder Atiqur Rahman Fahad -- the recent results and performances suggest coach Day has enough options to choose from. Striker Nabib Newaj Jibon's form and two goals in the last practice match from veteran Tawhidul Alam Sabuj and one from young Arifur Rahman will surely allay fears regarding potency in the attacking third.



Bangladesh national football team wrapped up their 10-day conditioning camp in Thailand and reached Laos last night, where they will face the hosts in the first leg of the joint qualifiers for the 2022 World Cup and 2023 Asian Cup on June 6.