

Williams looking forward to ‘different Serena’

AFP, New York

Serena Williams said she is looking forward to a life beyond tennis after her dreams of a fairytale 24th Grand Slam victory at the US Open ended in defeat on Friday.

Williams, who turns 41 later this month, plans to “evolve” away from tennis following a US Open campaign that ended in the third round on Friday with a 7-5, 6-7 (4/7) 6-1 loss to Australia’s Ajla Tomljanovic.

The 23-time Grand Slam singles champion said afterwards that while she was satisfied with her performances in New York, she was already eyeing her post-tennis life.

“It takes a lot of work to get here. Clearly I’m still capable,” Williams said. “It takes a lot more than that.

“I’m ready to, like, be a mom, explore a different version of Serena.

“Technically in the world I’m still super young, so I want to have a little bit of a life while I’m still walking.”

While Williams said she hopes to remain involved in tennis in some capacity, in the near-term she plans to spend more time with daughter Olympia, 5.



“It’s been really hard on her, my career,” she said. “So it will be nice just to do that and spend some time with her, do things that I never really have done or had an opportunity to do.”

Williams admitted however she was uncertain about what role tennis would play in her life.

“I’ve had so many amazing moments, that I don’t see a future without it,” she said. “What’s my involvement? I have no idea.”

Williams has stopped just short of definitely announcing her retirement, and once again deflected a question about whether there was any “wiggle room” in her apparent desire to hang up her racquet.

“I’m not thinking about that. I always did love Australia, though,” she quipped in a reference to next January’s Australian Open, a tournament she has won seven times.

Earlier, Williams had poured everything into one last stand in front of a ferociously partisan crowd at the Arthur Ashe Stadium during her three-hour battle with Tomljanovic.

After levelling the match in a marathon 1hr 23min second set, the veteran’s resistance was finally broken in the third set as Tomljanovic raced into a 5-1 lead.

Even then, Williams summoned every last drop of her fighting spirit in an attempt to stave off defeat, saving five match points in the seventh game before finally succumbing.



Historic win infers Zimbabwe on right track

AGENCIES

Zimbabwe have pulled off one of the biggest ODI upsets in recent memory, shocking Australia with a three-wicket win after Ryan Burl’s maiden five-wicket haul yesterday.

After being outclassed in the opening two matches, losing by five wickets and by eight wickets, Zimbabwe’s response in the third ODI was emphatic with the ball.

Skipper Regis Chakabva guided the Chevrons to a three-wicket triumph in Townsville with an unbeaten 37 after leg spinner Ryan Burl registered a career-best 5-10 as Australia were dismissed for just 141.

Zimbabwe cricket coach Dave Houghton is hopeful his team’s first victory over Australia away from home will help provide more clashes with top-tier teams.

Houghton said the victory on a difficult and spicy Riverway Stadium wicket should help secure greater opportunities against cricketing powerhouses.

“I hope it goes a long way to providing that,” he told reporters after the historic win. The more wins we can get on in tours like this, the more that our chances are we might get some bigger opponents on a regular basis.”

Houghton said the gulf between his side and major cricketing nations was still wide but Saturday’s result would give belief to his players.

“If we’d lost the toss today, we would have seen a game similar to the second

game. The gulf is huge - make no error - we would struggle to beat your state sides on a good day,” he said.

“We are growing and hopefully we grow quite quickly and with the amount of cricket we’re starting to play and the fact that we are



getting a few results like this...it’s nice to get these little reward top ups to show the guys what they’re doing is right.”

Leg spinner Ryan Burl (5-10) played a starring role in dismissing the hosts for a lowly 141. Part-time leg-spinner Burl was the sixth bowler used by Zimbabwe captain Regis Chakabva

Houghton said that he delivered a stern chat that reaped rewards when part-time leg-spinner Burl.

“I had a chat with our spinners today because I wasn’t happy with the way we’d bowled in the first two games,” Houghton told the reporters.

“I didn’t want our spinners to be bits and pieces’ cricketers. I want them to bowl like spinners, which means you have to be on the spot from ball one.

“And I thought both Sean (Williams) and ‘Burly’ did that today.”

Burl admitted that the conditions and the pitch, which had been used for the opening two matches, were offering plenty of assistance for the spinners.

“I was bowling quite a lot into the wind (so) it came out a bit slower,” Burl told Foxtel after his stunning haul.

“I found today there was quite a bit of drift, which helped, and also a bit of turn, which helped a lot.

“I wouldn’t have believed it, but here we are.”

Following the scalp of Maxwell, which broke a crucial 57-run stand, the wickets of Ashton Agar, David Warner, Mitch Starc and Josh Hazlewood followed in his next 14 balls.

His five wickets for 10 runs are the second-best figures ever taken by a visiting spinner in Australia in men’s ODIs, behind only India’s Yuzvendra Chahal, who took 6-42 in 2019.

Lara named head coach of Sunrisers Hyderabad

REUTERS



Sunrisers Hyderabad have appointed former West Indies captain Brian Lara as their new head coach to take over from Australia’s Tom Moody, the Indian Premier League team said on Saturday.

Lara was Hyderabad’s batting coach and strategic advisor for the 2022 season, during which they finished eighth out of the 10 teams after losing eight games.

“The cricketing legend Brian Lara will be our head coach for the upcoming #IPL seasons,” Sunrisers tweeted. Moody leaves the team after his second stint as head coach following a spell as their director of cricket.

The former all-rounder was recently named director of cricket for the Desert Vipers in the United Arab Emirates’ International League Twenty20 competition.

Starc upstages Saqlain Mushtaq

AGENCIES

Australia pacer Mitchell Starc claimed his 200th ODI wicket late in the third match against Zimbabwe to break a 23-year-old record.

In his 102nd ODI, Starc had man-of-the-match Ryan Burl caught for 11 to become the fastest player to 200 wickets, eclipsing a 23-year benchmark set by off-spinner Saqlain Mushtaq (104 matches).

The 32-year-old’s latest feat only adds to the case for him to be considered the greatest white-ball bowler Australia has ever had, reaching the double-century in fewer matches than Brett Lee (who took 112 ODIs), Shane Warne (125), Mitchell Johnson (129) and Glenn McGrath (133).

Of those Australians, only McGrath (22.02) has a better ODI bowling average than Starc (22.30 after the wicket of Burl) while none have a better strike-rate than his 26.20.

Back in 2016, Starc was also the quickest ever to 100 ODI wickets (after 52 matches), although that mark was bettered in 2018 when Afghanistan spinner Rashid incredibly got there in eight fewer matches. Back in 2016, Starc was also the quickest ever to 100 ODI wickets (after 52 matches), although that mark was bettered in 2018 when Afghanistan spinner Rashid incredibly got there in eight fewer matches.

The left-arm quick has spent over 12 months stuck in the 190s such is the lack of ODI cricket he has played of late.

After putting himself within five wickets of 200 with a dominant 11-wicket ODI campaign against the West Indies in July 2021, he looked set to steam past the figure against Sri Lanka in June this year.

However a freak injury, in which Starc sliced the tip of his left index finger on his bowling spikes in the preceding T20 campaign, meant he did not play a single match of the five-game series.



Medvedev’s title defence meets Kyrgios hurdle

REUTERS, New York

Defending champion Daniil Medvedev cruised into the fourth round of the U.S. Open with a straightforward 6-4, 6-2, 6-2 victory over Chinese qualifier Wu Yibing on Friday to set up a blockbuster clash with Australia’s Nick Kyrgios.

The Russian blazed past Stefan Kozlov and Arthur Rinderknech in the last two rounds and looked every bit the champion again, as he fired 12 aces and converted six of 12 break points to comfortably dispatch his 22-year-old opponent.

“If you ask me what I could improve, I don’t see many things,” Medvedev said of his title defence. “Maybe a little bit less double-faults, but that’s if we’re trying to dig somewhere. If not, high-level match.

“If I continue this way, have good opportunities to do something big. But the next match is not easy. Going to try to recover well and be 100% for the next one.”

Medvedev’s win in front of an emotional Arthur Ashe Stadium crowd following Serena Williams’ loss to Ajla Tomljanovic meant he has reached the round of 16 at



Flushing Meadows for the fourth straight year.

Wu, who became the first Chinese man in U.S. Open history to reach the third round, was plagued by several unforced errors in the clash as Medvedev prevailed in an hour and 55 minutes.

Medvedev is staying on course to become the first player to win consecutive U.S. Open titles since Roger Federer’s run of five between 2004 and 2008.

But a defeat to Kyrgios in the next round would see Medvedev lose his number one ranking to Rafa Nadal after the tournament.

“We’ve played great matches. All have been quite tight on the scoreboard,” said Medvedev, who has lost three of his four previous meetings with Kyrgios, including the last one in Montreal less than a month ago.

“It’s 3-1 to him but I’ll try to do better this time and it’ll be a great match for people to watch.”

“Nick is a little bit different from other tennis players sometimes on the court. That’s his choice. That’s his life. I’m not the one to judge.”



VAR was centre of attention once more as Everton were denied a second-half winner in a feisty 0-0 draw with Merseyside rivals Liverpool in the Premier League on Saturday. Both sides hit the woodwork in the first half at Goodison Park and then came the moment Everton fans had been waiting for after Conor Coady tapped home at the far post, with pandemonium ensuing at Goodison, only for the goal to be ruled out for offside after a lengthy VAR review.

PHOTO: REUTERS