

England great Anderson's one final flourish

- Anderson finished his Test career with 704 wickets in 188 matches at an average of 25.45. He completed 32 five-wicket hauls and picked up 10 wickets in a match on three occasions.
- The 41-year-old is the third-highest all-time wicket-taker in Tests after Muttiah Muralitharan (800) and Shane Warne (708).
- In terms of Tests played, Anderson is only second to Sachin Tendulkar, who played 200.
- Anderson has taken 123 wickets at Lord's. Only Muralitharan, with 166 at the Sinhalese Sports Club Cricket Ground in Colombo, registered more at a particular venue in Tests.
- Anderson holds the record for most caught behind by a wicketkeeper (198) and outfield catches (468) off a bowler in Test cricket.



AGENCIES

James Anderson signed off from international cricket with his 704th and final wicket on Friday, ending a glittering 21-year career during England's emphatic win over West Indies and prompting tributes from teammates and fellow greats.

The seamer, aged 41 years and 348 days, had Joshua Da Silva caught behind on his final day of Test cricket as England won the game by an innings and 114 runs inside three days. He spurned a golden opportunity to make it 705 wickets, shelling a simple catch from Gudakesh Motie, and smiled ruefully at the miss.

It was the only negative for Anderson on a day in which he demonstrated his

skill one final time for an appreciative Lord's crowd, repeatedly beating the outside edge with seam and swing.

Anderson, who finished with match figures of 4-58, said he would miss competing at the highest level, adding that there was "no better feeling" than winning a Test match.

Asked what he was going to do next, Anderson – who is joining the England coaching set-up – added: "I've not really thought that far ahead.

"I'm going to stick around with these guys for the rest of the summer, try and help the bowling group out as much as I can and we'll see where life takes us after that."

England captain Ben Stokes described Anderson as "an incredible inspiration

for so many people" while West Indies skipper Kraigg Brathwaite said he was a "legend of the game", but understandably would not miss facing him.

India great Sachin Tendulkar said on X: "It has been a joy to watch you bowl – with that action, speed, accuracy, swing and fitness. You've inspired generations with your game."

Anderson has certainly earned a rest, having sent down his 40,000th delivery in Test cricket late on day two, more than any other seam bowler and putting him fourth on the all-time list.

Anderson bowed out with a remarkable 704 wickets from 188 Tests. Only spinners Shane Warne (708 Test wickets) and Muttiah Muralitharan (800) have enjoyed more bowling

success at this level, with India batting hero Sachin Tendulkar (200 matches) the lone cricketer to have played more Tests than Anderson.

"It's been quite an amazing week," Anderson said. "I've been overwhelmed with the reaction of the crowd and everyone around the ground, and the lads as well. I'm just proud of what I've achieved.

"Obviously this morning was quite emotional with the two teams lined up, and the reaction from the crowd was pretty special. I'm still trying to hold them (tears) back now but I think I am just really proud," added Anderson after ending his Test career where it started – with a debut against Zimbabwe at Lord's in 2003.

Olmo focused on winning trophy, not Golden Boot

AFP, Donaueschingen

Spain playmaker Dani Olmo is vying for the Euro 2024 golden boot with England's Harry Kane, but said Friday he doesn't care about winning it as long as his team lifts the trophy.

Olmo and Kane are tied on three goals with four other players and if either score in the final on Sunday in Berlin they will likely claim the prize.

However, with Spain angling for a record fourth European Championship, Olmo said the team's target was far more important than his own individual glory.

"It's an extra motivation, if there's even room for that, but look, as long as we win, I don't care if I score or if (Spain goalkeeper) Unai Simon does," Olmo told reporters. "I don't care at all, the important thing is winning the game, but I always have the objective of helping to chip in."

Olmo has also created two goals for his teammates but unlike in the past when that was used as a tie-breaker, the award will be shared by any players joint-top of the charts.

The RB Leipzig midfielder did not start the tournament as part of Spain coach Luis de la Fuente's first choice side but made a strong impact off the bench.

Olmo replaced the injured Pedri in the quarterfinal win over hosts Germany, scoring and setting up the winner for Mikel Merino.

The midfielder also struck against France in the semifinal and has scored in all three knock-out rounds Spain have played.

"In this tournament I feel very good, in a great moment of form, so I have to keep taking advantage of it," continued the 26-year-old.

"It's true (Kane and I) are tied, but there are other players too who have helped us get here, with goals and good play.

"Speaking of goals, Fabian (Ruiz) has two goals, Alvaro (Morata) has one – if he scores a hat-trick then he will win it, and we'd be just as happy – it doesn't matter who scores, the main thing is the team." Olmo scored a hat-trick for Leipzig as they beat Bayern Munich 3-0 in the German Supercup final on Kane's debut for the Bavarian giants last August.

The England captain has still not won a trophy in his career at club or international level, finishing a runner-up with England in the Euro 2020 final.

Kane, 30, has struggled for form and peak fitness at the Euros despite managing three goals.

"Of course it would be a dream to score a hat-trick (again) and win it," added Olmo.

"But I repeat, the goal is just to win it."



Intensity of training broke me down to tears: Samiul

Samiul Islam Rafi is the ninth male swimmer from Bangladesh to receive a wild card entry to the Olympic Games and is among the five athletes who will represent the country in the forthcoming Paris Games, starting on July 26. The Bangladesh Navy athlete, who holds three national records in backstroke events, has been training in Thailand under a World Aquatics Federation scholarship ahead of the Games. The 19-year-old recently spoke to The Daily Star's Anisur Rahman about his preparation, expectations and many other related matters. Here are the excerpts:

DS: Bangladesh swimmers have always just made up the numbers in the Olympics. Will the Paris Olympics be the same?

SI: The swimmers from China, the USA, Australia and other countries who win Olympic medals start swimming at the age of six. Swimmers, aged 20 or above in Bangladesh, can't match the timings of 12-year-old swimmers from those countries. I have been given an opportunity to compete in the Olympics and I want to use this platform to improve myself and deliver something good in the South Asian Games.

DS: Backstroke events are your favourite but you will have to compete in the 100m freestyle event in Paris...

SI: I have become what I am now through backstroke events. But I also compete in the 100m freestyle event. From last February, I have been training under a Russian coach in Thailand and have improved my timing by three seconds. I produced my best timing of 53.12 seconds in the Thailand open in April last.

DS: What are you hoping to achieve in the Olympics?

SI: I know it is quite tough for me to qualify for the semifinals. Usually you need a timing of 47 seconds or better to progress but right now I am far off. I think one day I can achieve a timing of 49 seconds if I continue receiving high quality training. I am hoping to bring my timing down to 52 seconds in Paris. I have been working really hard in Thailand, sometimes I have even broken down in tears from the intensity of training. If I can clock less than 52 seconds, all the pain will be worth it.

DS: What is the difference between training in Thailand and Bangladesh?

SI: There is a gulf of difference. The training environment, facilities, schedule and diet are different. For instance, in Bangladesh our training schedule is – training, breakfast, rest period, then more training, lunch and then rest in the afternoon. But in Thailand, it's breakfast first, then stretching, warm-up in pool, training, gym, lunch, sleep, stretching and training. In Bangladesh, we swim nearly 10km per day but over there I swam nearly 20km every day.



Lautaro Martinez, who leads the race for Golden Boot in Copa America 2024 with four goals in five matches, looked sharp and focused during Argentina's training session ahead of Monday's final against Colombia at Hard Rock Stadium in Miami, Florida.

PHOTO: INSTAGRAM

Paolini's first or Krejcikova's second?

AFP, London

Italy's Jasmine Paolini has set her sights on capping a "crazy" run to Saturday's Wimbledon final against Barbora Krejcikova by winning a maiden Grand Slam title. Meanwhile, Krejcikova will be hoping to win a second Grand Slam final of her career after winning the French Open in 2021.

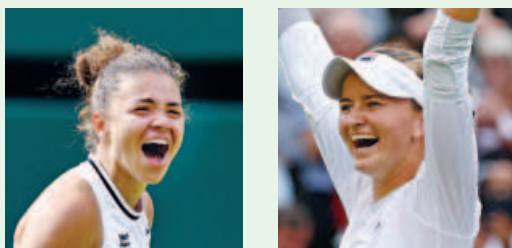
Paolini survived the longest women's singles semifinal in Wimbledon history to beat Donna Vekic 2-6, 6-4, 7-6 (10/8) after two hours and 51 minutes of Centre Court drama on Thursday.

The 28-year-old is the first Italian woman to reach the final of the grass-court Grand Slam.

She will face Czech 31st seed Krejcikova, who enjoyed a shock 3-6, 6-3, 6-4 win over 2022 champion Elena Rybakina in the other semifinal.

It is an astonishing achievement for Paolini, who had not won a Tour-level match on grass until 15 days ago in Eastbourne, and lost in the first round on her previous three visits to Wimbledon.

But 2024 has been a breakthrough campaign for Paolini, who reached her



- Jasmine Paolini is a win away from delivering Italy its first Wimbledon champion.
- Paolini is the first Italian woman in the Open Era to reach the final at two different Grand Slam events, having finished as runner-up to Iga Swiatek on the red day at Roland Garros last month.
- Either Paolini or Krejcikova will become the sixth woman in the Open Era to win Wimbledon after turning 28, joining Ann Jones (1969), Virginia Wade (1977), Jana Novotna (1998), Marion Bartoli (2013) and Angelique Kerber 2018.
- Barbora Krejcikova will be eying to become the sixth Czech woman to win Wimbledon.
- Krejcikova will be playing in the second Grand Slam final of her career after winning the French Open in 2021.

maiden Grand Slam final at the French Open before losing to world number one Iga Swiatek.

"Two Grand Slam finals in a row was crazy to believe, no?" said Paolini.

Paolini is also the first woman to reach back-to-back Roland Garros and Wimbledon finals since Serena Williams in 2016.

The final is just the second time Krejcikova and Paolini have met and their showdown will be a world away from their first encounter.

The pair squared off in the first round of qualifying for the Australian Open in 2018, with Krejcikova claiming a straight sets victory.

"It was a very long time ago, it's been a great journey for both of us to reach the Wimbledon final," said Krejcikova, who will be playing her second Grand Slam final.

Krejcikova had struggled with a back injury and illness this year, winning just three singles matches in the five months before finding her form in remarkable style at Wimbledon.

The 28-year-old shocked 11th seed Danielle Collins in the fourth round, former French Open champion Jelena Ostapenko in the quarterfinals and Rybakina in the last four.

A friend gone too soon

Scan the QR Code to read Amirul Islam's tribute to Grandmaster Ziaur Rahman

