

DJOKOVIC JOINS ALCARAZ, SINNER IN SECOND ROUND

AFP, MELBOURNE: Novak Djokovic survived a scare in his quest for tennis history before following Carlos Alcaraz and defending champion Jannik Sinner into the second round of the Australian Open on Monday.

But Greek former finalist Stefanos Tsitsipas and home favourite Nick Kyrgios both fell at the first hurdle, with the



Jannik Sinner

combustible Australian going out swearing and in pain.

In the women's draw, Iga Swiatek and Coco Gauff powered through with minimum fuss as they launched their bids to dethrone two-time defending champion Aryna Sabalenka.

Another winner was two-time Australian Open champion Naomi Osaka, who defeated France's Caroline Garcia 6-3, 3-6, 6-3.

On a blockbuster second day in Melbourne, Djokovic lost

the first set to 107th-ranked American Nishesh Basavareddy in the prime-time evening match on Rod Laver Arena.

But the Serbian great, hoping to roll back the years and win an 11th Australian Open and record 25th Grand Slam singles title, recovered



to ease through 4-6, 6-3, 6-4, 6-2.

In front of new coach and former rival Andy Murray, Djokovic struggled to raise a smile in the immediate aftermath.

Italian world number one Sinner was warmly welcomed on Rod Laver Arena before defeating Chile's Nicolas Jarry 7-6 (7/2), 7-6 (7/5), 6-1.

Sinner is playing under a cloud after twice testing positive for traces of a steroid in March.

Alcaraz, a four-time Grand Slam champion but never a winner in Melbourne, had a couple of hairy moments before seeing off Kazakhstan's Alexander Shevchenko, 6-1, 7-5, 6-1.

There was disappointment for home fans as the colourful but temperamental Kyrgios, only recently back from 18 months out with injury, lost 7-6 (7/3), 6-3, 7-6 (7/2) to Britain's Jacob Fearnley.

The 11th-seeded Tsitsipas became the first major casualty when Alex Michelsen blasted past him 7-5, 6-3, 2-6, 6-4.

Two-time US Open semi-finalist Frances Tiafoe vomited twice on court before pulling through in five sets against Frenchman Arthur Rinderknech. Red-hot world number three Gauff laid down a marker as she swept aside former Melbourne champion and

fellow American Sofia Kenin.

Gauff is unbeaten this year after leading the US to United Cup glory and eased past the 2020 Australian Open winner 6-3, 6-3 in



Carlos Alcaraz

80 minutes.

US Open finalist Jessica Pegula blew away home player Maya Joint 6-3, 6-0.

Victoria Azarenka was a notable early loser as the Belarusian went down 6-2, 7-6 (7/2) to Italy's Lucia Bronzetti.

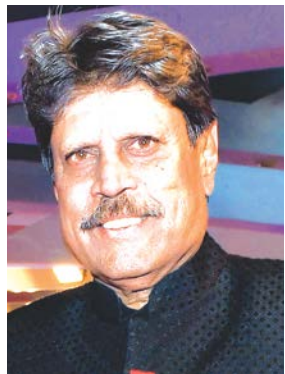
You cannot compare one generation of cricketers with another, says Kapil

PTI, NEW DELHI: It is needless to compare two generations of players and pass a judgement on who was better, legendary cricketer Kapil Dev said on Monday and refused to get into a debate if BCCI selectors were right in excluding Yashvi Jaiswal and Rishabh Pant from the T20I squad for the five-match series against England.

Kapil bowled nearly 300 overs during the 1991-92 Test series against Australia and in the same rubber he became the first Indian to take 400 wickets in the traditional format apart from contributing with the bat in the team's cause.

India pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah could not bowl in the second innings of the fifth Border-Gavaskar Test recently because of back spasms.

"Please don't compare. You cannot compare one generation with another. That is not required. Today, players are scoring 300 runs in a day. It didn't happen during our time. So don't compare the two (generations)," said Kapil



Please don't compare. You cannot compare one generation with another. That is not required. Today, players are scoring 300 runs in a day. It didn't happen during our time. So don't compare the two (generations) — Kapil Dev, legendary cricketer

during an event hosted by the Professional Golf Tour of India (PGTI) of which he is the president.

The 1983 World Cup-winning skipper also

added that one should not question the judgement of the selectors as they would have arrived at the decision to not play Jaiswal and Pant after giving it a thought.

The two cricketers played all five Tests during the gruelling Australia series, with Jaiswal (391) emerging the second-highest run-getter, second only to Travis Head (448).

Asked if it was the right decision to drop two for the home series, Kapil said, "How can I comment on the judgement of others? I think the selectors would have thought about it."

"So, if I say something it would be criticising them. I don't want to criticise them. They (selectors) are a group of people who must have planned and thought about that."

With batting stalwarts Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli dishing out below-par performances in Australia, and talks of whether it's time for them to retire swirling, Kapil said the decision should be left to them.

I've fire in me, much more to achieve, says Sindhu

Begins training under new coach Irwansyah

PTI, NEW DELHI: Two-time Olympic medallist PV Sindhu has begun a new chapter under renowned Indonesian coach Irwansyah Adi Pratama and said she still has the fire to achieve more in the last phase of her career.

The 29-year-old from Hyderabad, a former world champion, has worked with multiple coaches but still endured a challenging season which included a medal-less Olympic campaign.

Sindhu, who will be returning to action at the India Open Super 750 after missing the Malaysia Open last week following her wedding last month, has begun training under coach Irwansyah, who is credited with the rise of men's singles stars Jonatan Christie and Anthony Ginting.

"Right now I am training with coach Irwansyah in Bangalore, it has been just one and a half week. Basically he is women's singles coach and also he is training some young boys as well. I am really look-



ing forward to it. We have recently started," Sindhu told reporters on the eve of the tournament.

"The bonding is important between coach and athlete, it will take time. We will need a couple of training sessions to come together and understand what he's thinking."

"I've heard a lot about him and I thought he is the right coach for me. The way he's approaching against

opponents, I think it's really good."

The shift from personal coaches to group training under Irwansyah at the Prakash Padukone Badminton Academy marks a major change for Sindhu.

"Yes, it will be in a group. Basically when the camp list comes out, will come to know who are the women players there. So accordingly it will be decided."

we won't hide it, but it's soccer ... you have to try to learn from the losses. We have to look forward to what's ahead."

Mbappé had been contained when the rivals met in October but scored a superb goal five minutes into the match at King Abdullah Sports City stadium after picking up the ball just inside Madrid's half, running at the defense and then finding the net with a clever finish. But Yamal evened the match with a nice run in the 22nd and Lewandowski, who scored twice in the earlier clasico, put the Catalans ahead in the 36th.

Raphinha added goals in the 39th and 48th minutes, while Balde scored in first-half stoppage time.

Rodrygo scored from a free kick in the 60th after Szczesny was sent off for a foul outside the area to stop a breakaway.

Lewandowski has 26 goals in 27 appearances across all competitions for Barcelona, while Raphinha has scored 19 times and Yamal eight.

Barcelona was able to count on Spain midfielder Dani Olmo after the Spanish government stepped in to provisionally allow the club to register him with the league.

The final came after Mallorca fans said they were harassed by local men who support Madrid after Thursday's semifinal. Two wives of Mallorca players said they were groped.

Five-star Barca smash Real to win Spanish Super Cup

AP, MADRID: Real Madrid came out looking for some payback in the latest "clasico" against Barcelona but ended up being embarrassed again.

Madrid lost 5-2 to Barcelona in the Spanish Super Cup final at Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, on Sunday. That followed a 4-0 loss at home to Barcelona in the Spanish league in October.

Kylian Mbappé put Madrid ahead early in his second clasico, but Barcelona then ran away with goals by Lamine Yamal, Robert Lewandowski, Raphinha — who scored twice — and Alejandro Balde.

Rodrygo scored for Madrid on the hour mark after Barcelona goalkeeper Wojciech Szczesny was sent off



Barcelona's players celebrate with the trophy after winning the Spanish Super Cup final football match against Real Madrid, at the King Abdullah Sport City, in Jeddah

early in the second half.

It was the third straight win for Barcelona in 2025 after it lost two games in a row to end last year.

"The Christmas break

helped us reflect on what we had done wrong," Lewandowski said. "Now we can look forward to the run of games that we have until the end of the season."

Madrid lost for the first time after a run of five consecutive victories.

"It was a bad night," Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti said. "It's a disappointment,

sportspopup

India thrash Scotland by 119 runs in Women's U-19 T20 WC warm-up match

KUALA LUMPUR: Defending champions India thrashed Scotland by 119 runs in a warm-up match of the ICC Women's Under-19 T20 World Cup here on Monday. Invited to bat, India made 164 for 7 in their allotted 20 overs with Kamalini G top-scoring with 32 off 23 balls. Four Indian batters -- Trisha G (26), Sanika Chalke (17), captain Niki Prasad (25) and Kamalini -- were retired out to give chance to their colleagues to be in the middle in the practice match. For Scotland, Ammy Baldie was the most successful bowler with 2/13 from 3 overs. Later, the defending champions bowled Scotland out for a paltry 45 in 18.5 overs for a commanding win. Shabnam Shakil, Vaishnavi Sharma and Sonam Yadav took two wickets apiece. In other warm-up matches, Australia mauled hosts Malaysia by 140 runs, the West Indies won against Nepal by nine runs, USA edged New Zealand by 13 runs, Bangladesh defeated Sri Lanka by four wickets, England thrashed Samoa by nine wickets while Pakistan scrapped past Nigeria by 11 runs. The main tournament starts on Saturday, while India begin their campaign against the West Indies on Sunday. India had won the last edition -- also inaugural -- held in South Africa in 2023, beating England by seven wickets in the final.

SA include Ngidi, Nortje in CT squad after pacers' recovery from injuries

JOHANNESBURG: South Africa on Monday included Lungi Ngidi and Anrich Nortje in the Temba Bavuma-led squad for next month's Champions Trophy after the pacers recovered sufficiently from their respective injuries. Nortje sustained an injury on his big toe last month which ruled him out of the series against Pakistan while a groin strain in November forced Ngidi to miss the series against Sri Lanka and Pakistan. South Africa, the semifinalists of the 2023 ODI World Cup, are placed in group B of the Champions Trophy. They will start their campaign against Afghanistan in Karachi on February 21 before meeting Australia in Rawalpindi on February 25 and their final group game is against England on March 1. However, frontline pacer Gerald Coetzee was not picked because of the groin injury that he suffered during the first Test against Sri Lanka in Durban last year. Subsequently, he missed the second Test at Gqeberha and the entire home rubber against Pakistan. **SQUAD:** Temba Bavuma (captain), Tony de Zorzi, Marco Jansen, Heinrich Klaasen, Keshav Maharaj, Aiden Markram, David Miller, Wiaan Mulder, Lungi Ngidi, Anrich Nortje, Kagiso Rabada, Ryan Rickelton, Tabraiz Shamsi, Tristan Stubbs, Rassie van der Dussen.

Cummins, Hazlewood in Australia CT squad despite injury concerns; Marsh also included

SYDNEY: Pat Cummins was on Monday named captain of Australia for next month's Champions Trophy while fellow pacer Josh Hazlewood too was included in the squad despite lingering injury concerns surrounding both players. Cummins was managing an ankle injury throughout the recent Border-Gavaskar Trophy against India, which played a part in him missing the upcoming tour to Sri Lanka along with the pacer wanting to stay back at home to welcome his second baby. Hazlewood, side lined from the Melbourne and Sydney Tests due to a calf niggle, was similarly not picked for the Sri Lanka series but has been named in the preliminary 15-player Champions Trophy squad. **SQUAD:** Pat Cummins (c), Alex Carey, Nathan Ellis, Aaron Hardie, Josh Hazlewood, Travis Head, Josh Inglis, Marnus Labuschagne, Mitchell Marsh, Glenn Maxwell, Matthew Short, Steve Smith, Mitchell Starc, Marcus Stoinis, Adam Zampa.

Former world heavyweight champion Fury retires from boxing again

LONDON: Former world heavyweight champion Tyson Fury said Monday he had retired from boxing just weeks after suffering a second straight defeat at the hands of Oleksandr Usyk. "I'm going to make this short and sweet," the British fighter said in a social media post. "I'd like to announce my retirement from boxing. 'It's been a blast, I've loved every single minute of it," added Fury, who has, however, previously performed a number of U-turns over his future in the ring. The "Gypsy King", 36, last fought on December 21 when he lost his rematch against Usyk in Riyadh. Asked after the fight whether the public would see him fight again, Fury said: "You might do, you might not do. Who knows?"

Fury enjoyed two stints as heavyweight champion and retires with a record of 34 wins, two defeats and one draw.

FOOTBALL RESULTS

LIGUE 1: Le Havre 1 (Ayew 8) Lens 2 (Koyaliopou 28, Machado 77); Montpellier 1 (Savanier 61-pen) Angers 3 (Lepaul 30, 69, Ferhat 90+9); Toulouse 1 (Doukoure 35-og) Strasbourg 2 (Emegha 14, 26); Paris Saint-Germain 2 (Dembele 13, 23-pen) Saint-Etienne (Davitashvili 64)

SERIE A: Bologna 2 (Dallinga 61, Ferguson 65-pen) Roma 2 (Saelemaekers 58, Dovbyk 90+8-pen); Genoa 1 (Frendrup 65) Parma 0; Napoli 2 (Montipio 5-og, Anguissa 62) Verona 0; Venezia 0 Inter Milan 1 (Darmian 16)

BUNDESLIGA: Augsburg 0 Stuttgart 1 (Undav 65); RB Leipzig 4 (Simons 23, 35, Sesko 47, Baumgartner 90) Werder Bremen 2 (Weiser 26, Burke 90+3)

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