

Tennis-Swiatek, Sinner cruise as expanded US Open serves up tennis feast

NEW YORK - Iga Swiatek and Jannik Sinner showed their championship pedigree at the U.S. Open on Tuesday with commanding displays at the Arthur Ashe Stadium, walloping their first-round opponents on the third day of first-round action at the newly expanded major.

Wimbledon champion Swiatek arrived in pristine form after capturing the Cincinnati title and made quick work of Emiliana Arango 6-1 6-2 in just an hour, never facing a break point.

The 2022 winner acknowledged the unique challenge of New York's atmosphere afterwards.

"Every year is tough, because New York is just so loud, and it's hard to find that balance off the court," she said.

"But I've got to say I'm probably good at it compared to other players, so I'm really trying to be in my bubble."

She next plays the Netherlands' Suzan Lamens.

Top-ranked defending men's champion Sinner followed suit with an



equally dominant performance, swatting aside Czech Vit Koprivá 6-1 6-1 6-2.

The Italian, who had entered last year's tournament under the dark cloud of a doping controversy after escaping a ban despite failing two drug tests, enjoyed strong crowd support as he set up a second-round meeting with Australian Alexei Popyrin.

With both day matches wrapping up in well

under three hours, organisers moved 21st seed Linda Noskova's clash with Hungary's Dalma Galfi to the main stadium, where the Czech prevailed 6-4 7-5.

RED 'NIGHT OUTFIT'

Coco Gauff had a tougher time, needing three sets to overcome Australia's Ajla Tomljanovic 6-4 6-7 7-5 in the evening session on Ashe after dropping her opening service game and hitting consecutive double faults while

serving at 5-4 in the decider.

The American, who recently split with mentor Matt Daly and hired biomechanics specialist Gavin MacMillan to address service issues, remained philosophical about her ongoing struggles.

"Honestly, it's been really tough," she said. "One of the days was mentally exhausting, but I'm trying. I mean, wasn't the best today, but ... it came in when it mattered."

"It's an improvement from last week. I'm just trying to improve with each match."

Next up for Gauff is Paris Olympics silver medalist Donna Vekic.

Twice former champion Naomi Osaka dismantled Belgium's Greet Minnen 6-3 6-4 while sporting a crystal-encrusted red Nike outfit.

"I just thought it would be really fun to do a New York under the lights,"

Osaka explained of her custom ensemble. "This is my night outfit, so hopefully I'll wear my day outfit next time."

Elsewhere, 10th seed Lorenzo Musetti outlasted big-serving Frenchman Giovanni Mpetshi Perricard 6-7 6-3 6-4 6-4 at the Louis Armstrong Stadium and will face Belgian David Goffin, while American eighth seed Amanda Anisimova rolled past Australian Kimberly Birrell 6-3 6-2.

After Daniil Medvedev's chaotic exit on Sunday, Marin Cilic became the latest former champion to be knocked out as 23rd seed Alexander Bublik beat the Croat 6-4 6-1 6-4 on Grandstand, while U.S. 14th seed Tommy Paul made short work of Denmark's Elmer Moller 6-3 6-3 6-1 to book a second-round clash with Portugal's Nuno Borges.

Third seed Alexander Zverev closed out the evening's action on the main showcourt by beating Chile's Alejandro Tabilo 6-2 7-6 6-4 to set up a meeting with Briton Jacob Fearnley.

Ryan Clark reveals why Terry McLaurin is a big boost for Commanders



The Washington Commanders' long-drawn ordeal with wide receiver Terry McLaurin came to a conclusive halt by officially extending his contract for three years, worth up to \$96 million, as reported by Newsweek.

Former NFL star Ryan Clark spoke about McLaurin's importance to the Commanders. The official handle of the team announced the same via a social media post.

"For me, it's about common-sense prevailing," Clark explains in the video, underscoring Terry McLaurin importance to Washington.

"About understanding what Terry McLaurin means to this team, not only with this production and what we see on the field but what he means to this team in the locker room, how he helped a young Jaden Daniels become the offensive rookie of the year and one thing you don't want is to have this team set back by not signing one of their best football players, but also one of their best people."

"And if you're the Washington Commanders, you're trying to figure out how to make back-to-back playoffs since the last time I won a 12-year-old Little League championship as a quarterback at the Terry Town."

The wide receiver now has a short two-week period to prep himself for the regular season after alienating himself during the offseason and training camp.

Terry McLaurin Commanders Deal

ESPN reported Monday that Washington Commanders wideout Terry McLaurin has agreed to a three-year contract extension worth as much as \$96 million. Agents Buddy Baker and Tony Bonagura told Adam Schefter the deal resolves the contract standoff, ensuring McLaurin will suit up when the team opens the regular season against the New York Giants.

Hernaiz draws walk-off walk, Athletics beat Tigers 7-6 in 10 innings



WEST SACRAMENTO, CALIF. — Darel Hernaiz walked with the bases loaded in the bottom of the 10th inning, and the Athletics beat the American League-leading Detroit Tigers 7-6 on Tuesday night.

Jacob Wilson homered and had a career-high four RBIs, Tyler Soderstrom had two hits and two RBIs, and Shea Langeliers doubled among his three hits and scored two runs.

and three walks, his sixth blown save in 25 opportunities this season. Soderstrom's RBI single tied the score 6-6 before Vest walked three of the next four hitters.

Wilson hit a three-run home run with two out in the first.

Riley Greene hit a grand slam to center field in the third. Keith hit a solo shot in the fifth that made it 5-5.

Soderstrom singled and drove in automatic runner Brent Rooker to lead off the 10th, moved to second when Wilson walked and both runners advanced on a sacrifice bunt by Colby Thomas. Lawrence Butler walked with two out to load the bases before Hernaiz drew the walk-off walk.

Greene's 471-foot shot is tied for the second-longest grand slam by an MLB player, and the longest home run by a Tigers player, in the Statcast Era. Kyle Schwarber hit a grand slam 473 feet for the Chicago Cubs in 2019.

Tigers RHP Casey Mize is set to pitch Wednesday against Athletics RHP Luis Morales.

First Openly Bisexual Player In Australian Football League Calls For Cultural Change



Mitch Brown finally had enough as he watched unfolding coverage of yet another case of homophobic abuse in the Australian Football League, and decided it was time to change the narrative. Brown contacted the Daily Aus with a message that the online news site published Wednesday: "I played in the AFL for 10 years for the West Coast Eagles, and I'm a bisexual man." In almost 130 years of top-flight competition in Australia's homegrown football code, no past or active male player had publicly identified as bisexual or gay.

Aussie Rules was a long way behind other high-profile kinds of football, including NFL, rugby league, rugby union and soccer.

Brown, who was drafted to the Eagles as a teenager and played for the Perth,

Coco Gauff Recovers From Rocky Start To Win US Open Opener In 3 Sets

Coco Gauff's first match since enlisting someone to help with her shaky serving got off to a rocky start at the U.S. Open on Tuesday night. She double-faulted in the very first game — and a total of 10 times. She got broken in that game, too — and a total of six times. The only numbers that truly counted in the end, of course, were the ones on the Arthur Ashe Stadium scoreboard, and those showed that the No. 3-seeded Gauff held on for a 6-4, 6-7 (2), 7-5 victory over Ajla Tomljanovic to reach the second round at Flushing Meadows.

"It wasn't the best," Gauff said, "but I'm happy to get through."

Nothing came easily. Gauff twice led by a break in the second set but couldn't end things. She went up 5-3 in the third and served for the victory at 5-4, but double-faulted twice in a row and missed a pair of forehands to make it 5-all.

That could have been too much to take. Instead, Gauff steadied herself, broke right back, then was able to serve it out on her second chance to do so, nearly three full hours after the contest began.



"I had so many chances. ... I was just like, 'Eventually, one of these is going to go my way,'" she said. Gauff, who won the first of her two Grand Slam titles at the 2023 U.S. Open as a teenager, added Gavin MacMillan to her coaching team shortly before the start of this tournament.

MacMillan is a biomechanics expert who helped current No. 1 Aryna Sabalenka retool her serve a few years ago, and he was in the first row of Gauff's guest box, seated right in front of her mother. After beating Tomljanovic, Gauff called her practices with MacMillan "really tough" and "mentally exhausting."

"I'm trying to improve with each match," she said. The problem for Gauff, in a nutshell, has been a propensity to accumulate double-faults. Her 320 entering the U.S. Open were the most on the women's tour this season — and more than 100 more than anyone else. That included 23 in one match earlier this month, then 14 the next time out.

On Tuesday, as she dealt with the work-in-progress of a tweaked service motion, Gauff began with much slower offerings than she's capable of striking. As the match progressed, and the tension rose, the 21-year-old from Florida reverted to her customary pace, going from averaging just 88 mph on first serves in the first set, to 97 mph in the second and 101 in the third, when Ash's retractable roof was closed. She cranked one in at 117 mph and even produced one second-serve ace.

New Zealand Rugby Player Shane Christie, Who Suffered Multiple Concussions, Dies Aged 39



A New Zealand rugby player who had wanted his brain to be studied after suffering from the effects of multiple concussions has died aged 39, police said Wednesday. Shane Christie, a former Maori All Blacks player, had campaigned for greater awareness in rugby of the impact of repeated blows to the head. After retiring from the game in 2017 Christie reportedly suffered from headaches, memory lapses, speech problems, depression and mood swings consistent with chronic traumatic encephalopathy (CTE).

Local media said the death of Christie, who also played for Otago Highlanders, Canterbury Crusaders and the All Blacks sevens team, may have been suicide.

"The death will be referred to the coroner and we have no further information or comment we can provide," said police.

New Zealand Rugby said Christie was deeply passionate about the sport and would be "remembered always".

Christie reportedly wanted to donate his brain to the New Zealand sports human brain bank for its studies into CTE, a degenerative disease caused by repetitive head trauma that cannot be detected in living people.

Hundreds of American football (NFL) players have been affected by the condition, which is linked to an array of behavioural symptoms including depression.

CTE has been cited in a number of violent deaths involving former NFL players. A 2023 study by the Boston University CTE Center said that of 376 brains of former NFL players, 345 of them were found to have CTE.

Fairways and Greens: Golf's Mr. Congeniality proves that good guys don't always finish last

I have no qualms in admitting that I am a huge Tommy Fleetwood fan. And no. I did not suddenly decide to jump on the bandwagon after his brilliant win on Sunday at the Tour Championship.

It happened on a magnificent Saturday afternoon during the 2017 Abu Dhabi HSBC Championship. Tommy was yet to win his second DP World Tour title, but playing alongside Martin Kaymer, the uncrowned 'King of Abu Dhabi' and Spaniard Rafa Cabrera-Bello, he was in contention at the Abu Dhabi Golf Club course.

Then just 25, he had opened with two successive rounds of 67s, but Saturday wasn't going as per his plans. Others were catching up as he walked to the par-3 15th hole, just one under for the round and now a couple behind a surging Dustin Johnson.

In those days, the tournament used to have one of the finest partnerships with a junior development programme — the Abu Dhabi HSBC Future Falcons. That year, the Future Falcons



managed a dream opportunity for the youngsters — it chose 15 of them, through a separate competition, to hit a tee shot on the 15th hole alongside the professionals. This was during the championship round itself and live on the international TV feed.

The round was getting frustrating for Tommy, but you'd never know from his calm exterior. However, he visibly perked up seeing the young man waiting for his group to reach the tee. The kid then managed to hit a good shot on to the green as well. Now, most professional golfers are lovely human beings, and they do enjoy interacting with kids and motivating them. So, all of them would shake

down the hole," said Fleetwood.

"I felt good about it and I felt kind of relaxed. Me and Ian (Finnis, his caddie and long-time friend) make little goals, and one of them this week was to smile. So, it worked. I'm going to use this in future tournaments."

When he won at East Lake — his first PGA Tour win after 164 starts and 30 top-5 finishes — one could feel the kind of support pouring out for him from all over the world. It led to congratulatory tweets from Tiger Woods, LeBron James, Caitlin Clark, Carlos Alcaraz, among others. But more than anything, else, what stood out was the warmth with which the social media, which can be vitriolic even to saints, and the spectators (majority of them being American, with the highly-divisive Ryder Cup coming up next month) embraced the Englishman.

After the win, Tommy was asked if he knew why he was loved so much.

"I've always been very lucky that I make a great connection with people."

CSK's Ultimate Tribute As R Ashwin Announces Decision To Quit IPL



As veteran Indian off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin announced his retirement from the Indian Premier League, Chennai Super Kings-franchise he started and finished his career with — a glorious tribute. CSK, who remain one of the most successful franchises in the T20 league, is the franchise Ashwin played the majority of his career with. It was in 2009 that Ashwin was first signed by the Super Kings, before enjoying spells with the Punjab Kings, the Delhi Capitals, the Rajasthan Royals, and the now-defunct Rising Pune Supergiants.

Ashwin returned to CSK in the IPL 2025 mega auction in a big-money deal of INR 9.75 crore. But, little did anyone know that his first season upon a return home would be his last in the T20 league. On the occasion,

CSK wrote on X (formerly Twitter): "Chepauk's own. The carrom-ball thiruppurasundaran! From your first run-ups in Yellohu on the dusty tracks of Anbuden to absolute spin domination in the world's grandest arenas, you've given us everything. You've pillared our legacy and made Fortress Chepauk roar like no other! You truly have the streets, Ashwin!"

Ashwin made the announcement through a social media post, hinting at his willingness to explore overseas T20 leagues after IPL retirement. "They say every ending will have a new start, my time as an IPL cricketer comes to a close today, but my time as an explorer of the game around various leagues begins today," Ashwin posted on X. "Would like to thank all the franchisees for all the wonderful memories."