

Canadian Teen Victoria Mboko Outlasts Naomi Osaka To Win WTA Montreal Crown

Canadian teenager Victoria Mboko conquered four-time Grand Slam champion Naomi Osaka 2-6, 6-4, 6-1 on Thursday, capping a fairytale run at the WTA Canadian Open with her first WTA title. Mboko, 18 and playing in her first WTA final, denied Osaka her first tour-level title since the 2021 Australian Open, wearing down the Japanese star, 27, who has struggled to find consistency since returning from maternity leave early in 2024. Mboko, who was ranked outside the top 300 to start the season and had climbed to 85th entering the week, is now projected to rise to 34th in the world.

Before an ecstatic center-court crowd of 11,000, she converted eight of her nine break points, seizing her fourth win of the week over a Grand Slam winner. She ousted former Australian Open champion Sofia Kenin in the second round and toppled reigning French Open champion Coco Gauff in the fourth before saving a match point en route to a semi-final victory over former Wimbledon winner Elena Rybakina.



"It feels unbelievable right now," Mboko said, adding that "words cannot really describe how the day went." It started with an MRI on the right wrist she injured in the semi-finals, and ended with a come-from-behind victory over one of her childhood heroes and a final ovation from delirious fans who have taken her to their hearts. "I think when I had that

winning moment and seeing so many people standing up and cheering for me, it was kind of a surreal experience," Mboko said. "I would never have thought that something like this would have come so suddenly." "I think it just proves that your dreams are closer than you think they are." Displaying vintage power and precision, Osaka gave her inexperienced

opponent little room to maneuver in the first set, gaining an early break on the way to a 3-0 lead and pocketing the set when Mboko, who had 22 unforced errors in the set, misfired on two forehands to drop her serve a second time. Mboko turned the tide in a second set that featured seven breaks of serve. Osaka looked bewildered as Mboko ramped up the pressure,

the Canadian breaking her at love for a 5-2 lead. Serving for the set, however, Mboko coughed up three double faults and was broken. Osaka capitalized on the reprieve with a hold at love, but Mboko took the set in the next game when Osaka sailed a forehand long on set point. Osaka appeared demoralized as she was broken at love to open the third set. Mboko, who had 13 double faults in the match, couldn't consolidate the break. But Osaka was on the ropes again in the third game, drawing a warning for batting a ball skyward in frustration after missing her first serve on break point -- which she surrendered with another errant forehand. That launched a run of five straight games for Mboko. Winners were proving hard to come by for both players, and when the Canadian saved four break points to hold for a 3-1 lead, Osaka had a mountain to climb that finally proved too steep. When Osaka smacked a backhand into the net on

match point, Mboko dropped to the court as the crowd -- who had backed her all the way with chants of "Allez Vicky" -- roared one more ovation. Osaka, who came into the tournament ranked 49th in the world, had appeared energized in Montreal after a coaching shakeup. But she couldn't maintain her positive attitude as Mboko pulled away for the win. "It's kind of funny. This morning I was very grateful. I don't know why my emotions flipped so quickly, but I'm happy to have played in the final," she said. "I think Victoria played really well," added Osaka, who was so dejected she neglected to offer her congratulations at the trophy presentation. While Mboko will skip the Cincinnati Open that started, Thursday, Osaka was looking forward to seeing how she responds in the final tuneup for the US Open. "I felt like I could have played better, but I'm not really sure which aspect... it's going to be interesting to see what my next match is and how I'm going to play."

Pakistan Cricketer Arrested In UK Over Rape Allegations, Later Released On Bail: Report



Pakistan cricket slumped to a new low with a young player, Haider Ali, who was on a tour of the United Kingdom with the country's 'A' team -- Pakistan Shaheen, was arrested by the Greater Manchester Police with sources confirming it was over a complaint by a girl, alleging rape. Haider Ali has been provisionally suspended by Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB), said a report. Haider was arrested by Greater Manchester Police at the Beckenham ground where Pakistan Shaheens was playing against MCSAC on August 3, reports Telecom Asia Sports. "It's apparently a rape case against a girl of Pakistani origin," a source was quoted as saying in the report. The sources confirmed that the Greater Manchester Police had seized Haider's passport but released him on bail. The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) said it will cooperate with the investigations and will give support to Haider to fight the case. In the meantime, the PCB has suspended Haider Ali till his name is cleared. "We were told about this case and investigation. We have suspended Haider until the investigation is completed and will conduct our own inquiry in the UK," a PCB spokesman told www.telecomasia.net. "Haider was in tears after he was arrested from the ground and pleaded not guilty during the investigation," said sources. Pakistan Shaheens were on a tour of the UK from July 17 to August 6 and played two three-day games, which were both drawn, a three-match One-day series that they won 2-1. Most of the players, except captain Saud Shakeel and Haider, returned from the UK on Wednesday. Shakeel stayed back in Dubai for personal reasons.

NFL preseason injury report: CJ Gardner-Johnson, Anthony Richardson, Bilhal Kone and Rashawn Slater spark concerns



The NFL pre-season has been peppered with injuries, and they have understandably sparked concerns. If players get injured even before the season begins, this leaves teams scrambling to replace them, and those who don't have good squad depth could find themselves struggling before the season ends. Among recent players to pick up injuries are CJ Gardner-Johnson, Anthony Richardson, Bilhal Kone and Rashawn Slater. CJ Gardner-Johnson plays for Houston Texans, while Bilhal Kone plays for Ravens. Anthony Richardson plays for Colts

and Rashawn Slater is with the Los Angeles Chargers. CJ Gardner-Johnson Houston Texans safety C.J. Gardner-Johnson was believed to have injured his ACL in the Thursday scrimmage, but reports have now emerged that his ACL is fine, and the injury is not season-ending. However, the knee injury has come as a blow for the team, and Gardner-Johnson will now undergo more tests to check the extent of knee damage he's suffered, and to understand how much time he is likely to miss. Anthony Richardson Anthony Richardson Sr. suffered a finger injury

during the game, and made a quick exit, not returning to the field. During half-time, an injury update was shared, with Colts coach Shane Steichen telling Fox59 "I don't know the extent of it. It was just a dislocation, popped it and popped back in. I don't know how long he'll be out." Bilhal Kone Baltimore Ravens rookie DB Bilhal Kone went down vs the Indianapolis Colts in the team's first preseason game on Thursday. He suffered a knee injury, the extent of which is not known, but the visuals seemed gruesome. Rashawn Slater The Chargers player Slater was in for bad news after suffering a non-contact knee injury. He has a patellar tendon tear and will have to undergo surgery for the same. Slater has already been ruled out for the 2025 season, and suffered this blow weeks after he'd signed a contract extension. SportsSmith, an athlete development platform noted "Preseason is one of the most physically taxing blocks of the year."

"Brisbane Win Bigger For India Than Oval": Ex-Selector Saba Karim Makes Big Remark



Team India's English summer was nothing short of magical. A young team that was not expected to do wonders in the absence of some of the greats of Test cricket excelled, squaring the series. But this certainly isn't the first time a young Indian team has risen on a grand stage. It happened in Brisbane too in 2021. Saba Karim, former India international and a commentator, now pins down to Brisbane as the greatest moment still. When the wicket of Gus Atkinson fell on the final day of the Oval test, it was joy and celebrations for the Men in Blue. This, a young India team, underwent rapid transformation. Few had experienced the joy of Brisbane like they had in Oval. Experts like Saba Karim, who was

behind the microphone in both series, pins down Brisbane as a moment of biggest achievement for Team India than Oval. He tells NDTV's Tea Toast and Sports podcast, "Brisbane was bigger. It had never ever happened before in Australia and that also with a very young side, with most of the regulars injured on the sidelines. For India to script that kind of a win was unbelievable. And generally, I think that's how you see a growth of a side when you're able to do well and win matches, even when one or two of your regular players are not available." "Even in this Test match, for that matter, we didn't have Jasprit Bumrah, we didn't have Rishabh Pant, still we went out and won the last Test match."

Nihal Sarin breaks silence on rejecting Magnus Carlsen's viral draw offer: 'I saw the opportunity, but in that moment..'

It was a dream for Nihal Sarin to face Magnus Carlsen in a chess match, and it came true at the recently held Esports World Cup chess tournament. The 21-year-old, considered to be one of the best in faster formats, faced Carlsen in the quarter-finals in a highly anticipated showdown. If the match had taken place a few years ago, one would have predicted an easy win for the Norwegian. But in 2025, fans have seen a new rivalry emerge for the 34-year-old, against the new generation of Indian Grandmasters. He has been beaten twice by Gukesh this year, once in classical at Norway Chess, then in the rapid format in Zagreb. He lost to R Praggnanandhaa in the Las Vegas Freestyle Chess Grand Slam. Against Nihal, the quarter-final started on a nervy note for Carlsen. The first game saw both players edge out a draw, and then it was Carlsen who struck first. In the second game, he managed to clinch a win, taking a lead. Despite losing the second game, it looked like the Indian GM could still stage a comeback, considering his strengths. But then the third



game was a complete whitewash as Carlsen eased past his opponent to qualify for the semi-finals. Nihal Sarin reflects on his match against Magnus Carlsen Speaking to Hindustan Times, Sarin, who is also a chess prodigy, gave some insight into his quarter-final match in Riyadh. "In the first game, I tried my best to stay cool and play normally. He put a lot of pressure on me towards the end, but I managed to defend and hold the draw," he said. In the first game, it looked like both players were playing on an equal level. But then the tide shifted midway through the second game, and the third was a perfect example of why Carlsen is considered by many to be the greatest chess player of all time. "In the second game, I actually felt I started quite

well and maybe even slightly outplayed him at one point. The turning point came when I made a couple of mistakes, first playing Bishop to B3 instead of taking the pawn on E5, and then following it up with another error. Against someone like Magnus, you rarely get a second chance once you're off track. He is incredibly precise when it comes to converting even the smallest advantages," he further added. A moment from the second game also went viral on social media, where Nihal could have taken a draw. But he rejected a draw by repetition offer from his opponent, who simply smiled in response. "I saw the opportunity, but in that moment, I felt the position was still worth playing on. I wasn't looking to settle and wanted to take my chances to try and create something.

Ben Shelton rallies to beat Karen Khachanov in Toronto final



TORONTO — Ben Shelton won the National Bank Open on Thursday night for the third and biggest title of his young career Thursday night, rallying to beat 11th-seeded Karen Khachanov of Russia 6-7, 6-4, 7-6. The 22-year-old Shelton, seeded fourth, became the first American winner in the Masters 1000 hard-court event since Andy Roddick in 2003. Shelton also won on hard courts in Tokyo in 2023 and on clay in Houston last year. "It's a surreal feeling," Shelton said. "It's been a long week, not an easy path to the final. My best tennis came out when it mattered most. I was clutch, I persevered, I was resilient. All the qualities I like to see in myself." Shelton will move up a spot to a career-high sixth in the world. He beat Khachanov a night after topping second-seeded

Taylor Fritz 6-4, 6-3 in an all-American semifinal match. The winner had seven of his 16 aces in the third set, and ended the match by winning 14 consecutive points on serve. The 29-year-old Khachanov has seven career victories — all on hard courts. In the semifinals, he survived a match point in another third-set tiebreaker against top-seeded Alexander Zverev. Top-ranked Jannik Sinner — the 2023 winner in Toronto — and No. 2 Carlos Alcaraz skipped the expanded event as they prepare the U.S. Open. Julian Cash and Lloyd Glasspool won the all-English doubles final, saving four match points in a 6-3, 6-7, 13-11 victory over Joe Salisbury and Neal Skupski. The second-seeded Wimbledon champions have won 19 straight matches.

HT Kick Off: The challenges Jamil could face

The appointment of Khalid Jamil as head coach has come at a time when uncertainty is the only certainty in football in India. The inability of All India Football Federation (AIFF) to announce the duration of Jamil's contract, or when he will be released by current employers Jamshedpur FC, while naming him the men's team head coach fits into a narrative where a court verdict is pending and the future of the Indian Super League (ISL) in animated suspension. Since Jamil has not spoken — how can he, given that he is busy with Durand Cup — we do not know how he has planned his first international assignment in the short, medium and long term. Jamil has asked, and is likely to get, a three-year contract. But one week after being named Manolo Marquez's replacement, India does not know how he proposes to lift the team from the bottom of the 2027 Asian Cup qualification group. Or, what he would want to achieve in the CAFANations Cup beginning later this month.



This was not how Stephen Constantine and Igor Stimac, head coaches from 2015 to 2024, were appointed. Albert Roca was said to be a shoo-in because of his success at Bengaluru FC but Stimac got the job in 2019 because he had aced the interview. Even though he had never worked in India, Stimac impressed AIFF with his knowledge of players in ISL and I-League, it was said at the time. Neither the executive committee nor the technical committee got to hear what the final shortlist of Constantine, Jamil or Stefan Tarkovic would offer a men's national team in urgent need of repairs. But that bridge has been crossed, the appointment made. Can AIFF now give Jamil the best possible chance to deliver?

Assuming Jamshedpur FC release Jamil in national interest, his first assignment does not start in a FIFA window which means teams in the Durand Cup are unlikely to release players before they exit the tournament. If FC Goa qualify for the Asian Champions League 2 — they play Al-Seeb in a winners-take-all one-off qualifier on Wednesday — will they release players for national duty? Will Mohun Bagan Super Giant who have started training for ACL2 main round in September? Add to that a number of clubs not having started pre-season because, well, they do not know when the season will start. Calling players from Chennaiyin FC, Bengaluru FC, or Odisha FC, could be risky, especial-

ly if there is no scope for at least a two-week preparatory camp. A squad without the regulars from Bengaluru FC would be severely depleted. One where a number of players join after the Durand Cup final on August 23 could be under-prepared against Tajikistan, Iran and Afghanistan. Or will Jamil go for the left-field choice of players whose club careers he has helped revive but who have not been in the national team in the recent past? Whatever it is, suddenly, what seemed like a good move to get players game time could devolve into a situation marginally better than the 2023 Asian Games fiasco. Jamil is a football obsessive who has consistently got teams to punch above their weight. For the Asian Cup qualifiers, where India is the top ranked team, can he continue to be the underdogs' coach who took Aizawl FC, NorthEast United and Jamshedpur FC to glory? The low block and long balls that bypass the midfield will not work against teams that could adopt the same tactics.

"R Ashwin Asks CSK To Release Him": Social Media Post Stirs Internet Amid Sanju Samson Rumours



There are a few months to go before the Indian Premier League (IPL) franchise finalises their plans for the 2026 season but rumours of potential trades and exits are already doing rounds on social media. For a couple of days, the exit of Rajasthan Royals skipper Sanju Samson has been buzzing the world of cricket, with Chennai Super Kings being rumoured as the ideal destination for the wicket-keeper batter. A social media post has now claimed that Ravichandran Ashwin, who returned to CSK last year, has asked the franchise bosses to release him. Ashwin's homecoming to the Chennai franchise last year created plenty of buzz, considering it was the same franchise with whom the off-spinner started his career. But Ashwin's return home seems to be lasting for just one year, with the veteran spinner, now retired from international cricket,

seeking a new challenge. Ashwin didn't have the most consistent IPL 2025 season, making just 9 appearances for CSK, in which he claimed just 7 wickets. The underwhelming season also saw Ashwin being benched for several games, with the franchise trying younger alternatives. At 38 years of age, Ashwin isn't the most ideal player on the roster for the Super Kings, a franchise already loaded with players aged 30 and above. Samson could be a serious option for CSK if the rumours of his potential exit from Rajasthan Royals are true. Being a wicket-keeper batter and a captain, Samson is arguably the finest candidate to fill the shoes that will be vacated by MS Dhoni, probably before the 2026 season. Incidentally, Ashwin is a player who enjoyed plenty of success with the Rajasthan franchise.