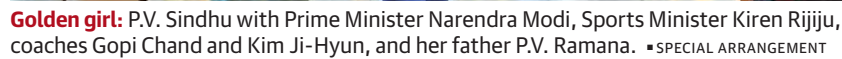


The World champion calls triumph a collective effort, says she will start preparing for Tokyo 2020



V.V. SUBRAHMANYAM
HYDERABAD

"Yes, many talked about the final phobia, but now that is a thing of the past and I will start preparing for the Olympics in right earnest," she said.

"I believed in myself before the final, came back stronger, took it like any other match and learnt from my mistakes. I am glad I played really well, didn't think of the losses in the past, and felt no pressure at all," she said.

"I will be acquiring new skills and be much better

"I must say we badly need-

"Very inspirational performances from them indeed," he said.

Bonding has helped get good results, reveals the Korean

V. V. SUBRAHMANYAM
HYDERABAD

"We worked on a lot of things for sure and the emphasis was on all-round improvement of Sindhu's game because we all know that she is a big player with the Olympics around next year," Kim said.



"Before the final, I just reminded Sindhu that she had beaten Okuhara in the recent past and all that she needed was to stay focussed and not think too what is going to happen in the final," the Korean coach recalled.

"There will be pressure on me too as coach because of the expectations but like the players themselves, I have to be ready for any task," she concluded.

V.V. SUBRHAMANYAM
HYDERABAD

B. Sai Praneeth, who won the men's singles bronze medal in the recent World championship in Basel, says it could be the beginning of a new chapter in his career.

“There was no extra pressure and I entered this event like any other championship. But, I am happy with the end

result," he said on Tuesday. "Definitely the Arjuna Award gave me that extra motivation in the Worlds but again it is never easy to compete at that level. But beating Christie was something special which I cherish," he said.

On P.V. Sindhu winning gold, Praneeth felt that once she beat Tai Tzu the confidence was up not only for her but for the entire contingent that she could just pull it off.

"It was a fantastic finally

"From India in men's singles only two will be selected from India for Olympics if you are in the top 16 and so the competition is really tough among ourselves," he

"This time I got enough time to prepare for the Super Series events and also for this World championship and so the training sessions have really helped me," he said.

"Now, the focus is on im-

"There are so many tournaments and you just can't

focus only one event for you have to keep an eye on the World rankings to stay in the race. You have to be consistent to be in the race for an Olympic medal which is the biggest goal I am chasing now," he concluded.

NEW YORK
Serena Williams is trying hard to move past last year's US Open final meltdown, preferring to forget the umpire Carlos Ramos she called a "liar" and "thief" and fans booing a controversial ending. When asked about Ramos, who will not officiate any Serena or Venus Williams match this year, Serena replied, "I don't know who that is." AFP

Sixteen-year-old Zachary Svajda cherished an "awesome" professional debut in the US Open first round Monday as he became the youngest player to feature in the men's draw since Donald Young in 2005. Svajda looked on course to become the youngest winner of a singles match in New York since Michael Chang reached the fourth round of the 1988 tournament at age 16. However he struggled with cramp after claiming the first two sets against 37-year-old Paolo Lorenzi of Italy.

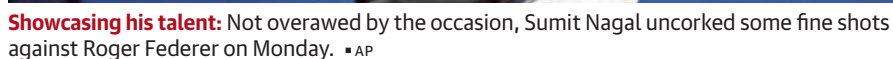


NEW YORK
A granite statue honouring African American tennis trailblazer Althea Gibson was unveiled outside Arthur Ashe Stadium on the opening day of the U.S. Open on Monday. In 1950, at 23 years old, she was the first African American allowed to compete at the U.S. Nationals, the precursor to the U.S. Open. In 1956, she became the first black player to win the French Open and the following year the first to win Wimbledon and the U.S. Nationals. REUTERS

Takes a set before succumbing in four; Serena routs Sharapova; Djokovic cruises

PTI, REUTERS
NEW YORK

The Indian stunned the



While many would not have expected such a sight, Nagal further shocked the

to Nagal's first-set exploits even as the Swiss struggled to contain his unforced errors. Federer had 19 un-

"It was my first time in such a big stadium and playing one of the best tennis players. I enjoyed every mo-



Thinking too much

"After I won the first set, instead of focusing on what I

"Challengers is not the place you want to be for the rest of your life," he said. "You just want to do your job and get out as soon as you can. But it's just going to be Challengers until I break into the top-100. I want to do it this year. I have a few clay challengers lined up. That's what I am chasing."

It was satisfying as I had to grind a lot, says Rahane on his century

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NORTH SOUND

NORTH SOUND
Ajinkya Rahane, who withstood intense pressure to score match-winning knocks in the first Test against the West Indies, said he made conscious effort to ignore criticism directed at him for not reaching three figures in the last two years.

"I try not to get affected by criticism as it is unwanted and I can't control it. You are always happy when you make a hundred," Rahman

In another highly anticipated match, eighth-seeded Serena Williams trounced old foe Maria Sharapova 6-1, 6-1 in the first New York meeting between two of the sport's biggest names to get her quest for a record-tying 24th Grand Slam title off to a flying start.

SPORTS BUREAU
NEW YORK

The on-court interview following the match witnessed a funny moment when Brad Gilbert asked Federer if he had imagined Rafael Nadal instead of Sumit Nagal.

"No," said a smiling Federer. "But may be for you guys and the social media it is," he added with a laugh.

