# Berrettini prevails over Monfils in a thrilling five-setter

To meet Nadal, who grinds out a win over Schwartzman; teenager Andreescu makes women's semifinals

#### **US OPEN**

REUTERS

Big-serving Italian Matteo Berrettini took another step in his breakthrough season as he beat Frenchman Gael Monfils 3-6, 6-3, 6-2, 3-6, 7-6 (5) at the U.S. Open on Wednesday to reach his first career Grand Slam semifinal.

In the other men's quarterfinals, Diego Schwartzman, the smallest player in 25 years to reach the last eight, gave Rafa Nadal a big fight and forced the second-seeded Spaniard to grind out a 6-4, 7-5, 6-2.

Putting away the 13th-seeded Frenchman took everything that Berrettini had as who struggled mightily with his serve late in the match, managed to see off four pressure-packed match points until the Italian finally prevailed.

"Right now I don't remember any points. Just the match point," Berrettini said on

court. "While I was playing I thought, this is one of the best matches I ever saw. I was playing, but I was watching

#### **Big serves**

Berrettini used booming serves and stinging forehands to overwhelm Monfils, who struggled with humid conditions in Arthur Ashe Stadium until shortly after the roof closed during the third set and brought in cooler temperatures.

In the decider, Berrettini broke twice for a 4-2 lead but a rejuvenated Monfils, who despite being bent over in exhaustion after many points, dug deep and raced around the court to fight off three match points to force a finalset tiebreak.

But Monfils ran out of tricks and it was Berrettini who leaned on his powerful serve to prevail and become the fourth Italian man to reach a Grand Slam semifinal in the Open Era.

Monfils was very efficient



Yesss! Matteo Berrettini gives vent to his feelings after thwarting Gael Monfils' comeback on Wednesday. • AP

in the first set and had an early 2-0 lead in the second but Berrettini took over and broke the fatigued Frenchman twice before ultimately firing down an ace to seal a

hold to love that levelled the match at 1-1.

Berrettini, the 24th seed, broke twice for a 5-2 lead and served out the third set, which was interrupted for

about five minutes when rain forced the closure of the roof.

Monfils, with his back firmly against the wall to start the fourth, suddenly looked full of energy and was bouncing on his feet between points as he got a crucial break and won 88% of his first-serve points to force the decider.

For Berrettini, it marked the latest triumph in a season in which the 23-year-old Italian won titles in Budapest and Stuttgart en route to a career-high ranking of 20th in

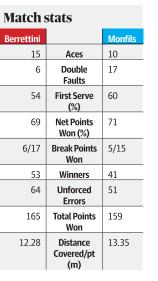
#### Staying on course

With Roger Federer and 2018 champion Novak Djokovic having already exited, Nadal's path to a fourth Open trophy has been cleared of familiar hurdles.

But Schwartzman reminded Nadal that danger can lurk everywhere, even from an opponent he had beaten in all seven previous meetings and only lost two sets.

That caution was well placed as Schwartzman made the 18-time Grand Slam winner work for every point, with the Argentine fighting back from two breaks down in the opening two sets.

In the women's section, Canadian teenager Bianca Andreescu came from behind to overpower Elise Mertens 3-6, 6-2, 6-3 and reach her first Grand Slam semifinal. against Belinda Bencic.



#### THE RESULTS

#### Quarterfinals:

Men: 24-Matteo Berrettini (Ita) bt 13-Gael Monfils (Fra) 3-6, 6-3, 6-2, 3-6, 7-6(5); 2-Rafael Nadal (Esp) bt 20-Diego Schwartzman (Arg) 6-4, 7-5,

Women: 15-Bianca Andreescu (Can) bt 25-Elise Mertens (Bel) 3-6, 6-2, 6-3,

# Magnificent Smith seizes the day



England's nemesis: It was business as usual for Steve Smith on Thursday as the top-ranked Test batsman notched up his third career double ton. •RYAN PIERSE/GETTY IMAGES

### THE ASHES

REUTERS

Steve Smith's domination of England's bowling attack in the Ashes series reached new heights on Thursday as his magnificent 211 (319b, 24x4, 2x6) led Australia to 497 for eight declared on the second day of the fourth l'est at Old Trafford.

England lost opener Joe Denly for four, brilliantly caught by Matthew Wade at short leg after he fended off a rising delivery from Pat Cummins, to leave it struggling on 23 for one at the close.

But the day, in which Australia smelt again the chance of retaining the Ashes, was all about Smith and the the 30-year-old's fine demonstration of the art of Test batting even as he enjoyed good

#### Reprieves

Having made his third century of the series. Smith was on 118 when he was caught by Ben Stokes off left-arm spinner Jack Leach. Unfortunately for the host, joy turned to despair when video officials deemed Leach had delivered a no-ball.

Earlier, Smith had had a lucky escape when Jofra Archer dropped a caught and bowled chance.

England had come into this match in buoyant mood but minute by minute, over by over and run by run, Smith drained away its selfbeliet. His 145-run sixthwicket stand with captain Tim Paine (58) and Mitchell Starc's blistering unbeaten 54 put Australia firmly in

None of England's seamers nor Leach were able to seriously trouble Smith and in the end, with the third double century of his Test career - the previous two also came against England in the bag, he fell to the occasional spin of captain Joe

As Smith headed back to the pavilion, there were still a smattering of now tiresome boos from England fans, recalling his 12-month ban for his role in a ball-tampering affair, but most at Old Trafford stood in apprecia-

#### **SCOREBOARD**

**Australia — 1st innings:** Marcus Harris lbw b Broad 13, David Warner c Bairstow b Broad O, Marnus Labuschagne b Overton 67, Steve Smith c Denly b Root 211, Travis Head lbw b Broad 19, Matthew Wade c Root b Leach 16, Tim Paine c Bairstow b Overton 58, Pat Cummins c Stokes b Leach 4, Mitchell Starc (not out) 54, Nathan Lyon (not out) 26; Extras (b-8, lb-14, w-3, nb-4): 29: Total (for eight wkts. decl. in 126 overs) 497.

Fall of wickets: 1-1, 2-28, 3-144, 4-183, 5-224, 6-369, 7387, 8-438.

England bowling: Broad 25-2-97-3, Archer 27-3-97-0, Stokes 10.5-0-66-0, Leach 26.1-3-83-2, Overton 28-3-85-2, Denly 3-1-8-0, Root 6-0-39-1. England - 1st innings: Rory Burns (batting) 15, Joe Denly c Wade b Cummins 4, Craig Overton (batting) 3; Extras (nb-1): 1; Total (for one wkt. in 10 overs):

Fall of wicket: 1-10.

Australia bowling: Starc 2-2-0-0. Hazlewood 4-1-3-0. Cummins 3-0-10-1, Lyon 1-0-10-0.

# Abhimanyu puts Red in command

His unbeaten hundred takes the team close to Green's total

#### **DULEEP TROPHY**

ASHWIN ACHAL

Abhimanyu Easwaran (102 batting, 173b, 11x4, 2x6) pushed India Red close to India Green's first-innings total on the second day of their Duleep Trophy final at the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium here on Thursday.

Abhimanyu displayed a wide array of shots, dispatching the ball to all parts of the ground. The Bengal opener, who has struggled since making an exceptional 233 against Sri Lanka-A in May, came good in great

#### Comfortable

Abhimanyu was comfortable against the pacers and spinners alike. He was especially strong off the backfoot, punching the quicks through the cover and point regions. When the slow bowlers came on, the 23-year-old either danced down the track or went deep into the

After reaching his 13th First Class century, Abhimanyu reached into his pocket and took out a 'Rakhi' thread. "That was dedicated to my sister, Pallavi," Easwaran said.

Abhimanyu explained that he once suffered from throwing away good starts, until he sought help. "I had a chat with (India-A coach) Rahul Dravid sir and my coach Apurva Desai. We decided that I needed to focus on the present.

"Earlier, if I was on 60, I would try to dominate and "It is important to stay fo-

cused on the present and



Back with a bang: Abhimanyu Easwaran found his touch to come up with a long innings. • SUDHAKARA JAIN

the match situation," he said.

### Failing to convert starts

His teammates Priyank Panchal (33, 78b) and Karun Nair (20, 24b), however, failed to convert their good starts. Panchal paid the price for playing away from his body, edging one from Ankit Rajpoot.

Karun – who has scores of himself too early to pull legand lost his stumps.

from Markande (76 n.o.), Tanveer Ul-Haq (18) and Rajpoot (30) rescued India Green. Resuming on 147 for eight, India Green was in serious danger of being bowled out cheaply, but the trio took the total to 231. Markande and Tanveer

ly reached his highest First Class score.

99, 166 n.o. and 90 in his last three innings - committed spinner Mayank Markande Earlier, fighting knocks

added 60 for the ninth wicket before Tanveer was cleaned up by a perfect inswinging yorker from Sandeep Warrier. Rajpoot used the long handle to great effect, while Markande fluent-

#### The scores: India Green — 1st innings: Faiz

Fazal lbw b Unadkat 12, Akshath Reddy run out 16, Dhruv Shorey c Kishan b Warrier 23, Siddhesh Lad c Panchal b Unadkat O, Akshdeep Nath c Panchal b Sarvate 29, Akshay Wadkar b Unadkat 6, Dharmendrasinh Jadeia c&b Avesh 15. Mavank Markande (not out) 76, Rajesh Mohanty c Kishan b Unadkat O, Tanveer Ul-Hag b Warrier 18, Ankit Raipoot c Sarvate b Avesh 39; Extras (nb-1, b-4, lb-1): 6; Total (in 72.1 overs): 231.

Fall of wickets: 1-19, 2-53, 3-54, 4-65, 5-92, 6-99, 7-107, 8-112. 9-172.

India Red bowling: Unadkat 24-2-83-4, Warrier 17-3-39-2, Avesh 16.1-1-56-2, Sarvate 11-1-30-1, Wakhare 4-0-18-0.

India Red - 2nd innings: Priyank Panchal c Wadkar b Rajpoot 33, Abhimanyu Easwaran (batting) 102, Karun Nair b Markande 20, Ankit Kalsi (batting) 11; Extras (nb-7, w-2): 9; Total (for two wkts. in 52 overs): 175. Fall of wickets: 1-87, 2-126.

India Red bowling: Tanveer 12-2-35-0, Raipoot 12-1-38-1, Mohanty 9-0-43-0. Jadeia 9-0-35-0. Markande 10-1-24-1.

# Linde replaces Smuts for India T20Is

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA JOHANNESBURG

Uncapped left-arm spinner George Linde was on Thursday named as replacement for all-rounder Jon-Jon Trevor Smuts in South Africa's squad for the three-match T20 International series against India, starting September 15.

Linde was drafted in after Smuts was pulled out of the squad for "failing to meet the required fitness stan-

dards", a CSA release said. Linde has played 75 T20 matches so far, scoring 611 runs at a strike rate of 139.81. He also snapped up 77 wickets at a strike rate of 19.3.

The squad: Quinton de Kock (Capt.), Rassie van der Dussen (Vice-Capt.), Temba Bavuma, Junior Dala, Bjorn Fortuin, Beuran Hendricks, Reeza Hendricks, David Miller, Anrich Nortje, Andile Phehlukwayo, Dwaine Pretorius, Kagiso Rabada, Tabraiz Shamsi and Ge-

### Mithali to lead in ODIs, Harmanpreet in T20s

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Mithali Raj will lead the India women's team in the ODI series at home against South Africa, the BCCI announced. Harmanpreet Kaur will lead Indian T20 squad for the first three matches in the six-match

The team was named by the All-India Women's Selection Committee, after a meeting at the Cricket Centre.

Harmanpreet will be Mithali's deputy in the ODIs, while Srmiti Mandana is the vice-captain for the T20s.

The five T20Is in the Paytm series against the tourists will be played under lights in Surat, while the 50over format will be day games in Vadodara. The home series will start with T20 games in Surat, starting September 24. The ODI games in Vadodara, will start from October 9.

The Indian women's squads: ODIs: Mithali Raj (Capt.), Jemi-



Mithali Rai. • AF

mah Rodrigues, Harmanpreet Kaur, Punam Raut, Smriti Mandhana, Deepti Sharma, Taniya Bhatia (wk), Jhulan Goswami, Shikha Pandey, Mansi Joshi, Ekta Bisht, Poonam Yadav, D. Hemalatha, Rajeshwari Gayakwad and Priya Punia

T20 squad (first three games): Harmanpreet Kaur (Capt.), Smriti Mandhana, Jemimah Rodrigues, Deepti Sharma, Taniya Bhatia (wk), Poonam Yadav, Shikha Pandey, Arundhati Reddy, Pooja Vastrakar, Radha Yaday, Veda Krishnamurthy, Harleen Deol. Anuia Patil. Shafali Verma and Mansi Joshi.

# Oman cashes in on India's defensive lapses

### WC QUALIFIER

ANIRUDH VELMURI GUWAHATI

Two late goals, aided by defensive errors, saw Oman come from behind to take all three points against India in the first Group-E FIFA World Cup qualifying match at the Indira Gandhi Athletic Stadium on Thursday.

At home and in front of a boisterous crowd, India upped the ante and stayed in control for most of the first

### **Good midfield pivot**

The midfield pivot of Anirudh Thapa and Rowllin Borges was at the centre of everything good India did. They stayed in continuous communication with the defence when India was on the backfoot and in telepathic understanding with the forwards when on the ball.

Five minutes into the

game, a hopeful long ball found Ashique Kuruniyan, who ran down the left-wing and crossed into the box. With Sunil Chhetri nowhere close, the Oman defence cleared with little pressure. A minute later, Ali Al Busaidi's chip found Abdulaziz

Al Maqbali in the box but his left-foot shot on the turn was

palmed away by Gurpreet Singh Sandhu. At the quarter-hour mark, the ball fell to Chhetri after the Oman goalkeeper made an error from his goal kick. With the keeper off his line, Chhetri found Udanta on the right but, after skipping a challenge, he saw his shot bounce off the bar and away

from any waiting teammate. Minutes later, Ashique ran behind the Oman defence once again. With the 'keeper running to the edge of the box, he chipped in a cross but found no takers.

Twenty-four minutes in, Ashique attacked the visi-



tor's right-back Abdulaziz Al Gheilani once again, was promptly brought down and a yellow card followed.

with full points. • RITU RAJ KONWAR

From the freekick, Chhetri ran out of the crowd in the box, latched onto Brandon's pass and smacked a left-foot shot into the goal. There was nothing the keeper could've done to save that.

In the second half, India was happy to defend and hold onto the lead, which is always a wrong move with more than a half left. And when the equaliser came, it wasn't a surprise.

The defensive mistakes that hounded India during

We're very sad, deserved more from this game. We could have scored many in the first half and finished the game before the break

IGOR STIMAC

the King's Cup and Intercontinental Cup were back again.

Moshin Al Khalid's pass found the Indian defence stranded. Al-Mandhar Al Alawi brought down the ball, saw Gurpreet come off his line and chipped it into an empty net.

On the 90th minute mark, Al Alawi ran down the leftwing and danced his way past Rahul Bheke to fire in a curler into the top corner. India has little time to re-

on September 10. The result: India 1 (Sunil Chhetri 24) lost to Oman 2 (Al-Mandhar Al Alawi 82, 90).

group before taking on Qatar

### Even-Steven



Coming good: Puneri Paltan's Manjeet, second from left, who scored 10 points, in action during the 33-33 tie against U Mumba in the Pro Kabaddi League in Bengaluru on Thursday. K. MURALI KUMAR