

Iranian Player Shines in Table Tennis Contests in Qatar



TEHRAN – An Iranian table tennis player, Navid Shams, notched up a shock win on the first day of the 2023 contests underway in Qatar.

After beating Darius Movileanu, a world-class table tennis player from Romania, Navid surprised everyone as he defeated another decorated athlete Lee Sangsu from South Korea 3-0.

Being included among top eight players, the genius Iranian table tennis player is planned to compete with a rival from France.

The WTT Feeder Doha 2023 has been underway in Qatar since January 23.

Iran has sent six representatives to the competitions.

Rublev Targets First Grand Slam Semifinal



Andrey Rublev of Russia plays a forehand return to Holger Rune of Denmark during their fourth round match at the Australian Open tennis championship in Melbourne, Australia, on Jan 23, 2023.

MELBOURNE (Reuters) - Novak Djokovic remains on track for his 10th Australian Open crown after returning to his imperious best and although Andrey Rublev is not looking forward to Wednesday's quarterfinal clash, he is still hoping to stop the Serbian's title charge.

In a moment of disarming honesty after his five-set win over Holger Rune, Rublev conceded he was not relishing the opportunity to face 21-times Grand Slam champion Djokovic on his favourite court.

"No one wants to face Novak," Rublev blurted out with a laugh on Rod Laver Arena, albeit prematurely as Djokovic had yet to play his own fourth-round match. "I prefer to be in any other part of the draw – but not Novak."

Rublev's alarm was probably justified later when Djokovic steamrolled home favourite Alex de Minaur 6-2 6-1 6-2 to earn his 38th straight win on Australian soil. He has not lost at Melbourne Park since the fourth round in 2018.

By contrast, fifth seed Rublev pipped Rune courtesy of a net cord on match point, having rallied from the brink before securing a 6-3 3-6 6-3 4-6 7-6 (11-9) win. He acknowledged that luck would not cut it against Djokovic.

"The only chance I have is if I play my best tennis, just fight for every ball, and that's it. That's the only chance," Rublev told reporters later.

Djokovic has been thriving on his return to Melbourne, a year after his shock deportation, and appears to have overcome the hamstring injury that looked the biggest hurdle in his quest for a record-equalling 22nd Grand Slam title.

"He's an established top-five, top-10 player already for a few years," Djokovic said of Rublev, who has now reached a Grand Slam quarterfinal seven times but never cracked the final four.

The other men's match on Wednesday features unseeded Americans Ben Shelton and Tommy Paul, with both reaching their first Grand Slam quarterfinal to continue the success of the U.S. men this year.

The surprise matchup between Shelton, 20, and Paul, 25, will be the first Slam quarterfinal between two American men since 2007, when Andy Roddick beat Mardy Fish in the Australian Open, and will assure the US of its first men's semifinalist in Melbourne since Roddick in 2009.

There is also a fresh face in the women's draw, with Poland's Magda Linette playing in her first major quarterfinal aged 30 and taking on former world number one Karolina Pliskova.

Fifth seed Aryna Sabalenka has yet to drop a set in 2023 and will aim to reach her first Australian Open semi-final when she faces unseeded Croatian Donna Vekic.

Milan Sink Further With 4-0 Loss to Lazio



Lazio's Italian midfielder Mattia Zaccagni (center, left) and Lazio's Spanish midfielder Luis Alberto acknowledge the public at the end of the Italian Serie A football match between Lazio and AC Milan on Jan 24, 2023 at the Olympic stadium in Rome.

with a low shot into the bottom-left corner after Zaccagni set him up with a cross into the middle of the box.

Anderson could have added a second goal for Lazio in the 36th minute but the pass he received from Pedro just in front of goal was slightly too powerful for the Brazilian to convert.

However, Zaccagni doubled Lazio's lead two minutes later, after midfielder Adam Marusic hit the post from the edge of the six-yard box for the Italian to follow up with a tap-in from close range.

Milan had a chance to pull one back four minutes into the second half, but midfielder Ismael Bennacer sent his powerful free kick inches wide of the right post.

Lazio, who were without injured striker Ciro Immobile, who has seven goals in Serie A this season, made it 3-0 from

the spot through Luis Alberto, after they were awarded a penalty for a foul by Pierre Kalulu on Spaniard Pedro.

Anderson wrapped up the scoring for Lazio in the 75th minute, calmly converting Luis Alberto's precise cross from the edge of the box for his sixth Serie A goal this season, and fourth

in consecutive games in all competitions.

The mood was buoyant in the Lazio camp, with opening scorer Milinkovic-Savic not ruling out a title charge.

Lazio host 11th-placed Fiorentina on Sunday when Milan host Sassuolo, who are one spot above the relegation zone.

Kimmich Rescues Bayern With Last-Gasp Equalizer vs Cologne

MUNICH, Germany (Reuters) – Bayern Munich's Joshua Kimmich thundered in a 90th minute equalizer to rescue a 1-1 draw against Cologne on Tuesday, staying four points clear at the top.

The German champions, chasing a record-extending 11th league crown, had possession but were far less effective than their opponents who looked to be snatching the three points courtesy of Ellyes Skhiri's fourth minute volley at the far post.

But Kimmich scored with a long-range effort to lift leaders Bayern, who have now drawn their last two league matches, to 36 points.

"We had to change things after the second half and we dominated after the break. Two points from the last two matches is too little for us," said Bayern coach Julian Nagelsmann.

The Bavarians had also drawn 1-1 against RB Leipzig last week.

"We had chances but we had to use at least one of them. Cologne defended with many players in the last 25 minutes," Nagelsmann said. "It is good to have 15 shots towards goal but we are happy when we start scoring



Bayern Munich's German midfielder Joshua Kimmich scores the equalizing goal during the German first division Bundesliga football match between Bayern Munich and FC Cologne in Munich, southern Germany, on Jan 24, 2023.

more than just one."

Leipzig, 6-1 winners against Schalke 04, are in second place on 32. Eintracht Frankfurt, third on 30, take on Freiburg on Wednesday.

Buoyed by last week's 7-1 demolition of Werder Bremen, Cologne were sharper throughout the first half and a step faster to the ball, keeping Bayern, who face Paris St Germain in the Champions League last 16 next month, well away from their box.

The Bavarians, who sacked

goalkeeping coach Toni Tapalovic on Monday, a close friend of injured goalkeeper Manuel Neuer, completely dominated after the break.

Despite the one-sided traffic could not find a way to score for much of the second half.

Substitute Thomas Mueller had their best chance but Marvin Schwaabe tipped his 80th-minute header over the bar. The keeper was beaten, however, when Kimmich's missile went in off the bar in the last minute.

LeBron Scores 46 Points With 19 3s, But Clippers Rout Lakers

LOS ANGELES (AP) — LeBron James hit a career-high nine 3-pointers while scoring 46 points, but the Los Angeles Clippers hit 19 3-pointers of their own on the way to a comfortable 133-115 victory over the Los Angeles Lakers on Tuesday night.

James scored at least 40 points against the Clippers for the first time in his 20-year career, giving him a 40-point game against all 30 teams in the NBA. James hit his record ninth 3-pointer with 6:45 to play, setting a career high from distance in his 1,404th game.

"I was able to make a few shots tonight and try to help us stay in the game," James said. "But the Clippers, they are really good. Exceptionally good when they're shooting the 3-ball, and tonight they did that."

Indeed, James' brilliance wasn't nearly enough: The Lakers never caught up after falling behind by 23 points, and James spent the final minutes on the bench after the Clippers pulled away for their 10th consecutive victory over their arena co-tenants in downtown Los Angeles since former Lakers guard Tyronn Lue became the Clippers' coach.



Los Angeles Lakers forward LeBron James (6) shoots as Los Angeles Clippers forward Kawhi Leonard (2) defends and guard Terance Mann (14), center Ivica Zubac (40) and center Thomas Bryant watch during the first half of an NBA basketball game Tuesday, Jan. 24, 2023, in Los Angeles.

coach.

James also ramped up his chase of Kareem Abdul-Jabbar's career scoring record with his 101st 40-point game, including the postseason. He trails Abdul-Jabbar (38,387 points) by just 177 points, putting him in position to potentially break the record at the end of the Lakers' upcoming five-game road swing instead of back home in Los Angeles.

Paul George had 27 points and

nine rebounds, and Kawhi Leonard added 25 points in the Clippers' third straight win overall. The Clippers never trailed largely because they hit a season-high 15 3-pointers in the first half while scoring a season-high 77 points in the first half.

Russell Westbrook scored 17 points and Thomas Bryant added 15 for the Lakers, who could get Anthony Davis back Wednesday from his 20-game absence with a right foot injury.