



Dustin Brown of Germany celebrates after winning his match against Rafael Nadal of Spain at the Wimbledon Tennis Championships in London. (Photo: Stefan Wermuth)

Nadal upset by Brown

By MITCH PHILLIPS
Reuters

LONDON — The untroubled advance of the heavy hitters at Wimbledon was spectacularly halted on Thursday when two-time champion Rafa Nadal was bundled out by German qualifier Dustin Brown who played the match of his life.

Roger Federer, Andy Murray and Petra Kvitova all cruised into the third round with straight-sets victories as the tournament meandered serenely through its fourth balmy day.

But the calm was shattered by the final match on Centre Court when Brown, a man until now best known for his unconventional approach and dread-locks, brought back memories of the golden summer Wimbledon evenings of wooden rackets as he combined relentless power with brave and ambitious creativity.

Brown came out swinging and even when Nadal dug deep to level the match at one set all he did not hold back, going for his shots and harrying his illustrious opponent at every opportunity.

Along with the power there was finesse which had the Centre Court crowd roaring their approval and Brown rattled through the final set to secure a fully deserved victory.

"You have to play your A game against him," said Brown, who also beat Nadal in their only previous meeting in Halle last year.

"I'm fortunate I played him twice on grass, which is my favorite surface — I wouldn't want to play him anywhere else. My game makes him not play his game. He doesn't get in a rhythm."

Defeat continued Nadal's wretched run at Wimbledon since he lost the 2011 final to Novak Djokovic.

In successive years he has lost to players ranked 100, 135, 144 and now 102-



Rafael Nadal of Spain hits a shot during his match against Dustin Brown of Germany at the Wimbledon Tennis Championships in London. (Photo: Suzanne Plunkett)

out getting past the fourth round — a stunning decline for the 14-time grand slam winner who triumphed at Wimbledon in 2008 and 2010 and has been runner-up three times.

"My motivation is to be back to that level but I don't know if I can," 10th seed Nadal said.

"But I've played on the last day here five days and had the trophy back home twice, so it's not bad."

Explosive finale

The day's explosive finale was in marked contrast to the early matches which went exactly to form.

Murray led the way by polishing off Dutchman Robin Haase 6-1, 6-1, 6-4 in 87 minutes with barely a misplaced shot.

"In grand slams you have to try to conserve energy when you can really because the two weeks can be quite draining physically and mentally," Murray told reporters.

Federer was equally untroubled in a 6-4, 6-2, 6-2 mauling of American Sam Querrey.

Seeking a record eighth Wimbledon singles title, the Swiss was on cruise control from the off.

On one rare occasion when he did find himself out of position he managed to manufacture a lob from between his legs that

climbed over his 6-foot-6 opponent.

"So far so good," Federer said. "Sometimes the feeling is good out there and today was definitely a good day."

"I guess there's also a little bit of relief that I'm also playing well at Wimbledon."

Possibly even more impressive was Kvitova, whose 6-2, 6-0 demolition of Kurumi Nara meant the defending champion has dropped only three games in two matches.

After four days of action the top four men's seeds have yet to drop a set between them, with only two going as far as a tiebreak.

It is a similar story on the women's side. Although third seed Simona Halep went out in the first round, the remaining top four players have also not dropped a set.

There are still threats floating in the draw, however, and Germany's 18th seed Sabine Lisicki, runner-up two years ago and with a great Wimbledon record, is one of them.

Lisicki lost the first set American Christina McHale and was broken in the opening game of the second but regrouped impressively and by the end was pounding down a succession of powerful winners en route to a 2-6, 7-5, 6-1 victory.

Woods fires a 66 at Greenbrier

By ANDREW BOTH
Reuters

Tiger Woods shot his lowest score in 16 months, a four-under-par 66 that left him four strokes behind leader Scott Langley's 62 after the opening round of the Greenbrier Classic on Thursday.

Though conditions were relatively easy on Greenbrier's rain-softened Old White Course, the round was a welcome reprieve for Woods, whose shocking slump over the past year raised questions of whether he ever again would be competitive.

Two weeks before the British Open at St. Andrews, where he has won twice, the 39-year-old former world number one declared he was "very

close" to hitting top form. "People think I'm crazy when I say I'm close but I felt like I was close," Woods told PGATour.com after a round that included seven birdies, one bogey and a double-bogey in White Sulphur Springs, W. Va.

"This past week was a good week (of practice) and today I hit the ball well all day until a couple of tee shots at the end, tugged a couple."

Woods described his double-bogey as "stupid," at the par-four sixth, his 15th hole, where he left his approach in the bunker, but he roared back like his old self to finish with three consecutive birdies.

"I was hitting the ball too well to end up one-under," said Woods, who went on

to card his best score since a five-under 65 in the third round of last year's Honda Classic.

It might be dangerous to read too much into one good round, as it has been less than four weeks since Woods shot the worst score of his career, an 85 at the Memorial tournament in Ohio, and then missed the cut at the U.S. Open.

But he sounded positively giddy as he spoke to the media on Thursday, saying that the "overall pattern shift" that he started working on at the Memorial was starting to bear fruit.

"I just had to make a couple of tweaks and I felt like I pulled that off," he said after hitting 10 of 14 fairways and needing only 25 putts. "It's finally starting to click in now."



Collins Hill's Justin Macauley makes a catch during Friday's Corky Kell Classic 7-on-7 Tournament at Roswell Area Park in Roswell. (Staff Photo: David Welker)

Eagles

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at times."

Those youngsters have grown up a year, leaving high hopes for the season and a positive energy through spring and early summer sessions.

One reason for optimism is the return of Monty Horn, a rising junior, as the starting quarterback.

"Another year of experience with (Horn) will help," Reach said. "He came out and did a great job for us as a sophomore. Now having a year under his belt, he'll be that much better. He brings that leadership. He's kind of a perfectionist. He wants to do well."

Running back Jeremy Lewis also returns, along with fellow playmakers like Canyon Slade and Des Howard, and offensive tackle Michael Faulkner. Reach also added a new quarterbacks coach in Jason Conner, Duluth's head coach the past two seasons.

"It's a great hire," Reach said. "We run the spread

SUMMER GLANCE

Team: Collins Hill Eagles
Head coach: Kevin Reach
2014 record: 5-5
Key returning players: Tomon Fox, Sr.; DB Jordan Bertrand, Sr.; LB Emmanuel Belmar, Sr.; LB Robert Snyder, Sr.; WR/DB Des Howard, Jr.; WR Canyon Slade, Sr.; QB Monty Horn, Jr.; RB Jeremy Lewis, Sr.; OT Michael Faulkner, Sr.

2015 schedule:
Aug. 21 Dacula
Aug. 28 at Central Gwinnett
Sept. 4 South Gwinnett
Sept. 18 North Gwinnett
Sept. 25 at Meadowcreek
Oct. 2 Mountain View
Oct. 9 at Duluth
Oct. 23 Mill Creek
Oct. 30 at Peachtree Ridge
Nov. 6 at Norcross

and he's a spread guy. He's a good football coach."

The main defensive area of concern, in terms of replacing losses, is the defensive line. But rebuilding alongside North Carolina commit Tomon Fox, a defensive end with 50-plus offers, is a good place to start. Steven Harwell also is an experienced player on the defensive line.

"(Fox) is the biggest (recruit) we've ever had (with the current coaching staff), probably the biggest Collins Hill's ever had," Reach said. "He's 240 (pounds)

now and just as fast as he's ever been."

The defense also includes other top recruits like linebackers Robert Snyder and Emmanuel Belmar, and defensive back Jordan Bertrand.

All of the experience of those players showed quickly during the Eagles' early practices, a major boost from the inexperience of a year ago.

"I think we had a real good spring," Reach said. "It might be as physical a spring as we've had since I've been here."

Camp

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allowed them to play and excel on both the college and professional levels.

In addition to Curran and Greene coming out of the Gwinnett Football League and Gwinnett high schools and beyond, a plethora of Gwinnett athletes have been able to do the same. Because of that fact, Curran is even more eager to build a camp rooted in the Gwinnett community.

"I saw that the opportunity was there with me coming from Brookwood High School and with David Greene coming from South Gwinnett," Curran said. "I wanted to just kind of start the tradition of former GFL players and former Gwinnett County players, who made their way at the University of Georgia or at a top college level or professional level, to do a camp in our hometown."

Because of their platform as professional athletes, both Greene and Curran have worked numerous camps in the past. However, none have taken place

where they were bred into exceptional athletes. Curran came up with the idea of hosting a camp in Snellville, reached out to Greene and connected with Everrett Sports Marketing. ESM was excited at the idea of the two coming together for a hometown camp and connected with the local Bethesda and Briscoe parks.

After the camp was set in stone, Curran made it his obligation to look for sponsors.

"I wanted to be able to help those kids who may not be able to afford it," Curran said. "I was a kid who had to get scholarships through when I was playing in the Brookwood Football Association for my registration, so I wanted to make that a part of it as well."

Michael Kipness of Atlanta Piedmont Group and Mass Mutual will be sponsoring spots, as well as Moxie Sports through the Brookwood Football Association. Both the Brookwood Football League and South Gwinnett Football

League will be responsible for distributing the sponsorships to kids, and each league will receive the same amount of spots to offer kids for free. In addition to the sponsorships, KIND Bars is a sponsor as well. KIND will be there during the camp distributing free products like their snack bars, bags, etc.

Curran was excited over the opportunity to receive sponsorships and give back to the Brookwood community because of the enormous role it had in helping him become a professional athlete and man of character, building on the foundation set by his parents. He specifically attributed his success at UGA to Brookwood's expectations of excellence because it was a challenge for him as an athlete, but it prepared him for what he went up against as a true freshman at Georgia.

From GFL to high school football, Curran built strong relationships with coaches and players in Brookwood that he has remained in contact with to this present

day.

"I would describe it as one of the major times in my life," Curran said of his younger days. "I still remain even now a part of the community and try to help them out as much as I can. I had so many people who helped me get to where I'm at, specifically my little league coach Ronnie Benton. He was the guy who took me to my first Georgia game. I knew how many people helped me get there, so coming out of Snellville, I knew I represented Brookwood, I represented the community and I represented my family."

Because of Curran's dedication to his community and the amount of adversity he has overcome within his lifetime, he pushed the importance of becoming a fundamentally strong athlete through his camp, as well as the importance of learning how to become an even better man off the field.

"That's what's going to set them apart," Curran said. "There's going to be

players that are going to be bigger and stronger than you, but if you have the right fundamentals and the right techniques, you're going to beat them eventually. They're going to take you from being a good player to a great player. That's what helped me get to where I'm at, so I'm excited to teach them that. It's also the discipline that it takes to help them understand it takes a lot of time, a lot of effort if they want to make it to the top. It's even your character."

The main goal Curran and Greene had for the camp this year was to provide athletes an opportunity to develop their speed and agility, as well as taking away the idea that "they can accomplish anything through hard work, through discipline and character."

Curran hopes the camp becomes an annual event that will grow and include more Gwinnett-bred pro athletes over time.

"I definitely want to try to do it again and work even more closely with the high schools and even try to

get some former Gwinnett players out," Curran said. "You know, even get guys who played back in the day together and maybe even do an alumni game. We've got a special group of guys in Gwinnett County. A lot of talent comes through Gwinnett, so I think it'd be cool to really expand on it and help the young kids become not only better athletes, but better men."

While Greene is retired, Curran's pro football career is still going. The 26-year-old has played in the Canadian Football League the past two seasons after initially playing in the NFL.

"I'm looking forward to hopefully getting to an NFL team and taking off," Curran said. "It's been a long journey of ups and downs being in the NFL and then going to Canada. I'm looking forward to getting on a team, getting established and being able to do more things in the community when I do get back to the NFL. At this point in my career, I realized that it's bigger than just football now."