

Djokovic claims 7th Wimbledon title

Fourth straight is his 21st overall Grand Slam

BY HOWARD FENDRICH
AP Tennis Writer

WIMBLEDON, England — Novak Djokovic waited. He waited for Nick Kyrgios to lose focus and lose his way. Waited to find the proper read on his foe's big serves. Waited until his own level rose to the occasion.

Djokovic is not bothered by a deficit — in a game, a set, a match. He does not mind problem-solving. And at Wimbledon, for quite some time now, he does not get defeated.

Djokovic used his steady brilliance to beat the ace-delivering, trick-shot-hitting, constantly chattering Kyrgios 4-6, 6-3, 6-4, 7-6 (3) on Sunday, July 10 for a fourth consecutive championship at the All England Club, seventh overall there, and 21st from all Grand Slam tournaments.

"It's weird. I felt like he didn't do anything amazing today," said the unseeded Kyrgios, offering an assessment with which some might not concur, given that Djokovic



Julian Finney/Getty Images-TNS

Novak Djokovic of Serbia celebrates winning match point against Nick Kyrgios of Australia during their Men's Singles Final match at Wimbledon on Sunday, July 10, 2022, in London, England.

accumulated 31 winners and merely eight unforced errors over the last two sets, while facing zero break points in that span.

"But he was just so composed. That's what I was just thinking to myself. In big moments, it just felt like he was never rattled. I feel like that's his greatest strength:

He just never looks rattled," said Kyrgios, about whom those words likely have not been uttered. "He just looks completely within himself the whole time. Didn't look like he was playing overaggressive, even though it felt like he was playing big."

Among men, only Roger Federer owns more Wimble-

don titles than Djokovic, with eight, and only Rafael Nadal owns more major trophies, with 22.

"The more you win, it's logical the more confident, the more comfortable you feel out there every next time you step out on the court," said the top-seeded Djokovic, who was pleased to hear some specta-

tors at Centre Court chanting his nickname, "No-le! No-le!" as he served out the final point of a tremendously well-played tiebreaker.

As of now, Djokovic will not be able to try to pull even with Nadal by winning the U.S. Open, which begins in late August: The 35-year-old Serbian can't enter the United States because he decided not to get any shots against COVID-19, the same reason Djokovic missed the Australian Open in January.

"I'm not vaccinated," Djokovic said Sunday, "and I'm not planning to get vaccinated."

Aside from his experience — 32 Grand Slam final appearances versus one for the unseeded Kyrgios — his skill and his clutch gene shined in the concluding tiebreaker, and all of those qualities were present for two particularly pivotal games that helped swing the match.

"Key moments," Djokovic called them.

They were games in which Djokovic steeled himself, and Kyrgios blinked. And games that Kyrgios would not let go as he began engaging in running monologues, shouting

at himself or his entourage (which does not include a full-time coach), earning a warning for cursing, finding reason to disagree with the chair umpire he fist-bumped before the match, and chucking a water bottle.

With Djokovic serving for the second set at 5-3, Kyrgios got to love-40 — a trio of break points. But Kyrgios played a couple of casual returns, and Djokovic eventually held. When that set ended, Kyrgios waved dismissively toward his box, sat down and dropped his racket to the turf, then groused to no one in particular: "It was love-40! Can it get any bigger or what?! Is that big enough for you?!"

Djokovic noticed. "He knew on this stage, when Nick starts to talk, he's going to be vulnerable," said Djokovic's coach, 2001 Wimbledon champion Goran Ivanisevic. "That happened."

In the third set, with Kyrgios serving at 4-all, 40-love, he again let a seemingly sealed game get away, with Djokovic breaking there.

"It was a huge momentum shift," Djokovic said, "because up to that point we were quite even."

Lillard signs extension, looks forward to re-tooled Blazers

Two-year deal worth \$225 million, according to sources

BY ANNE M. PETERSON
Associated Press

Damian Lillard's new contract with the Trail Blazers is a point of pride for the six-time All Star who has spent his entire career in Portland.

"I don't think that you earn something like this just by going out there and scoring a bunch of points," he said. "Something that's missing in our league is character, and the fight and the passion and pride about, you know, not just the name on the back, but the name on the front, and how you impact the people that you come in contact with."

Lillard agreed to a two-year extension through the 2026-27

season. A person with knowledge of the negotiations said the deal is worth \$225 million.

Lillard formally signed the extension with his son on his lap and his grandmother watching by phone from Oakland. He spoke at a news conference the evening of Saturday, July 9 at the NBA's summer league in Las Vegas.

Lillard will make about \$59 million in 2025-26, then about \$63 million the next year, said the person who spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity Friday, July 8 because the extension has not been announced.

He'll make about \$137 million over the next three seasons, before the extension begins.

"There are two kinds of teams: teams that are looking for superstars and teams that are looking for one. We're lucky

enough to have one," Blazers coach Chauncey Billups said. "One who wants to be here."

Lillard was limited to 29 games this past season because of a core injury that required surgery. The Blazers finished 27-55, their worst record since 2005-06.

While Lillard was sidelined, the team cleaned house, pulling off a number of trades before the February deadline — including sending backcourt teammate CJ McCollum to New Orleans — that got the Blazers under the luxury tax and freed up cap space.

The Blazers then made a series of offseason moves to build around Lillard. Portland acquired Jerami Grant from the Detroit Pistons and signed free agent Gary Payton II, who was key to Golden State's championship run.

Baker softball team wins tournament

12-under team 4-0 at Fruitland

Baker City Herald

A Baker City youth girls softball team went 4-0 to win the championship at the Mesa Duel in the Diamond tournament last weekend at Fruitland, Idaho.

The Baker Dawgs, a 12 and under squad, beat the Nampa Elite 10-3 in the championship game on Saturday afternoon, July 9.

Baker's Colbi Bachman was the winning pitcher, going seven innings. All three runs were unearned.

Bachman, Macey Morgan and Jaxyn Ramos each had two hits for Baker.

The Dawgs opened the tournament with

a pair of games on Friday, July 8. Baker beat Sawtooth/Hartley 16-1, then routed the Nampa Pride, 17-0.

Baker opened Saturday's play with a 6 a.m. PDT game against the Infield Diamonds, and the Dawgs, led by Bachman's 4-inning no-hitter, won 10-0.

"We played really well over the weekend," said Steve Bachman, who, along with Jake Collier, Nathan Rayl and Brandi Sangster, is an assistant coach to the Dawgs' manager, Jamey Bachman.

The team's roster is: Maley Martin, Jaxyn Ramos, Colbi Bachman, Macey Morgan, Kate Nilsen, Bailey Sangster, Claire Collier, Jocelyn Rayl, Hannah Sullivan and Lexi DelCurto.

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