

Wimbledon

# Mattek-Sands injury puts Djokovic, Federer in shadow



Serbia's Novak Djokovic

London

**C**olourful US star Bethanie Mattek-Sands suffered an horrific knee injury at Wimbledon yesterday which left her screaming in pain, pleading for help and officials accused of freezing in her desperate moment of need.

The distressing drama on Court 17, where the 32-year-old lay stricken for at least 20 minutes, pushed the title campaigns of Novak Djokovic and Roger Federer onto the sidelines.

"Please help me! Please! Please!" screamed Mattek-Sands as she clutched her right knee after collapsing running to the net in the first point of the deciding set of her second round match against Romania's Sorana Cirstea.

The women's tour said Mattek-Sands had suffered an "acute knee injury" and had been taken to hospital.

Cirstea questioned why it took so long for the medical team to arrive at Court 17 which is right next door to the tournament's famed Centre Court.

"She was in shock. Her knee was in a very weird position. I've never seen



US player Bethanie Mattek-Sands is carried on a stretcher to an ambulance after suffering an injury

anything like this except in the movies," said Cirstea.

"And, yeah, I panicked a little bit, as well. I called for help, but no one was coming.

"Everyone froze and I screamed something to the chair umpire. Bethanie was saying 'Sorana, please help me.' But I felt useless. I wished I could have done more.

"It felt forever for help to come. It was me, her husband Justin and my physio. I don't know for how long she was on the ground, but I would say 10,

15 minutes."

The All England Club defended their response, claiming: "The first response to Court 17 was within one minute, by a qualified ambulance technician.

In a statement, they added: "The player was kept on court while pain relief was given.

"The player was then transferred directly to an ambulance and taken under emergency conditions to a hospital."

Meanwhile, Djokovic shrugged off sweltering 30-degree heat to breeze past outclassed Adam Pavlasek 6-2, 6-2, 6-1 to reach the third round.

The three-time champion brushed

aside the 136rd-ranked Czech to make the last-32 for the ninth year in succession.

**Pliskova defeated**

Djokovic, the second seed whose shock third round loss to Sam Querrey at Wimbledon 12 months ago precipitated a worrying decline in form, will next face Ernests Gulbis.

"It was a very warm day, it wasn't easy to play point after point and some long rallies," said Djokovic.

Gulbis, a former top 10 player, sprang a surprise as the world number 589 defeated former US Open

champion Juan Martin del Potro 6-4, 6-4, 7-6 (7/3).

Third seed Federer continued his campaign for a record eighth Wimbledon title by seeing off world number 79 Dusan Lajovic 7-6 (7/0), 6-3, 6-2 to reach the third round for the 15th time.

"I struggled at the start and couldn't find my rhythm," said Federer, who dropped his first service game to trail 2-0 to his 79th-ranked opponent.

"But once I got rid of the nerves I played some inspired stuff."

The Swiss star next faces German serve-and-volleyer Mischa Zverev.

The women's event was thrown wide open when third seed Karolina Pliskova crashed to defeat against world number 108 Magdalena Rybarikova.

Rybarikova won 3-6, 7-5, 6-2 on Centre Court, earning the Slovakian a last 32 clash with Ukraine's Lesia Tsurenko.

Top seed Angelique Kerber eased into the third round with a 7-5, 7-5 win over Kirsten Flipkens, a former semi-finalist.

Kerber next faces Shelby Rogers who beat Lucie Safarova 6-7 (4/7), 6-4, 6-3 with the Czech possibly still

been knocked out but the Australian was still making waves on Thursday when he was fined \$15,000 after claiming he was "bored" during his lacklustre defeat to Mischa Zverev.

Tomic also lost his racket sponsor Head as a consequence.

Canadian sixth seed Milos Raonic, the runner-up to Andy Murray in 2016, beat Russia's Mikhail Youzhny 3-6, 7-6 (9/7), 6-4, 7-5. (AFP)

Wimbledon results

Men

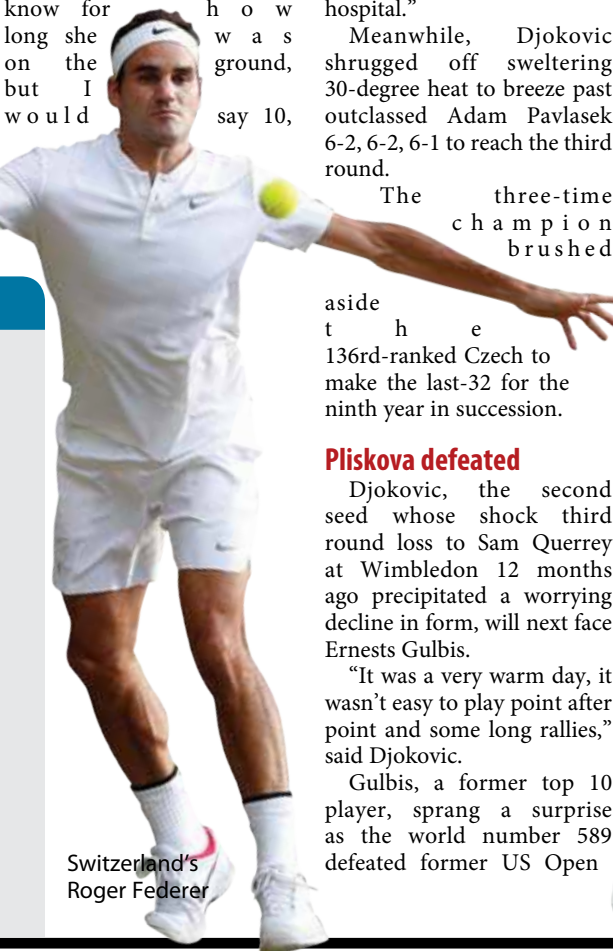
2nd rd

- Milos Raonic (CAN x6) bt Mikhail Youzhny (RUS) 3-6, 7-6 (9/7), 6-4, 7-5
- Grigor Dimitrov (BUL x13) bt Marcos Baghdatis (CYP) 6-3, 6-2, 6-1
- Roger Federer (SUI x3) bt Dusan Lajovic (SRB) 7-6 (7/0), 6-3, 6-2
- Dominic Thiem (AUT x8) bt Gilles Simon (FRA) 5-7, 6-4, 6-2, 6-4
- David Ferrer (ESP) bt Steve Darcis (BEL) 3-0 -- retired
- Tomas Berdych (CZE x11) bt Ryan Harrison (USA) 6-4, 6-3, 6-7 (8/10), 6-3
- Gael Monfils (FRA x15) bt Kyle Edmund (GBR) 7-6 (7/1), 6-4, 6-4
- Ernests Gulbis (LAT) bt Juan Martin Del Potro (ARG x29) 6-4, 6-4, 7-6 (7/3)
- Novak Djokovic (SRB x2) bt Adam Pavlasek (CZE) 6-2, 6-2, 6-1

Women

2nd rd

- Angelique Kerber (GER x1) bt Kirsten Flipkens (BEL) 7-5, 7-5
- Shelby Rogers (USA) bt Lucie Safarova (CZE x32) 6-7 (4/7), 6-4, 6-3
- Sorana Cirstea (ROM) bt Bethanie Mattek-Sands (USA) 4-6, 7-6 (7/4) -- retired
- Garbiñe Muguruza (ESP x14) bt Yanina Wickmayer (BEL) 6-2, 6-4
- Agnieszka Radwanska (POL x9) bt Christina McHale (USA) 5-7, 7-6 (9/7), 6-3
- Svetlana Kuznetsova (RUS x7) bt Ekaterina Makarova (RUS) 6-0, 7-5
- Zarina Diyas (KAZ) bt Arina Rodionova (AUS) 6-4, 7-6 (7/4)



Switzerland's Roger Federer



Russia's Svetlana Kuznetsova returns against Russia's Ekaterina Makarova