

## Tsitsipas angers Greek government over vaccination views



Stefanos Tsitsipas

AFP | Cincinnati

The Greek government on Thursday criticised tennis star Stefanos Tsitsipas for insisting he would only get a coronavirus vaccination if it became mandatory.

"He has neither the knowledge, nor the studies, nor the research work, that would allow him to form an opinion about it," government spokesman Giannis Economou said during a press briefing.

Economou said that while world number three Tsitsipas "is a great athlete, what is at stake, however, is his ability to assess the need for vaccinations or whether the vaccine has been tested for a sufficient period of time."

Tsitsipas is competing in Cincinnati this week where he revealed he has yet to take the vaccination.

"No-one has made it a mandatory thing to be vaccinated. At some point I will have to, I'm pretty sure about it, but so far it hasn't been mandatory to compete, so I haven't done it, no," he said.

"I'm young, under 25 category, for me the vaccine has not been tested enough, it is new. It has some side effects."

"I personally know some people who have had them. I'm not against it, I just see no reason for someone in my age group to need to be vaccinated."

# Osaka falls to Teichmann in third-round Cincinnati shocker

Daniil Medvedev beats Grigor Dimitrov while Ashleigh Barty advances in Cincinnati Masters

## Stefanos Tsitsipas beats Sonogo to reach quarter-finals

AFP | Cincinnati

Naomi Osaka has no regrets over her stunning third-round loss Thursday at the ATP and WTA Cincinnati Masters to Swiss wild card Jil Teichmann.

The four-time Grand Slam champion went down 3-6, 6-3, 6-3 to the world number 76 and admitted after the upset that her Tokyo Olympic third-round loss was on her mind.

"I was doing all I was supposed to do," the Japanese world number two said. "In the second and third sets I was too defensive."

"I learned a lot from this match -- I can sleep at night."

Osaka lost to an opponent who has struggled with several injuries this season but is now back to health.

"I knew inside I had this level and I was able to show it on court," said Cincinnati quarter-finalist Teichmann. "This week things are working out. I needed to be patient and here I am."

Osaka stayed low-key throughout the post-match media sessions she says she dreads, answering questions and seeming to meekly accept her loss in her final tuneup for the US Open, which begins August 30.

"I have high expectations of myself but there was nothing more I could do to win this match," Osaka said.

"I'm almost glad I lost as it gives me so many things to work



Jil Teichmann of Switzerland serves to Naomi Osaka of Japan



Naomi Osaka of Japan serves to Jil Teichmann of Switzerland



Osaka wished she could have won more than \$24,200 in prize money to donate in aid of the earthquake recovery effort in Haiti, her father's homeland, but tournament officials said they would match her donation

on in my game. I just hope the results come in time for the US Open."

Osaka wished she could have won more than \$24,200 in prize money to donate in aid of the earthquake recovery effort in Haiti, her father's homeland, but tournament officials said they would match her donation.

"I'm happy, but sad that I

didn't go further," Osaka said. "But I think I raised awareness. I'm glad we were able to contribute something."

Teichmann took just over two hours to defeat Osaka, breaking the Japanese star six times, three in the final set.

"I felt a bit hesitant, and normally I don't feel that way," Osaka said. "I put myself in this position by choosing not to play that many tournaments."

Osaka has had a rough ride since withdrawing during Roland Garros over emotional issues and skipping Wimbledon. She has played only two hard-court preparation matches since the Olympics.

"I'm feeling more confident in myself," Osaka said. "There were times where I was doubting myself. It's important to remind myself what my strengths are. I think I did that well in the first set."

"In the second set, maybe I played a bit more to her rhythm, and also in the third set, as well."

Osaka made 41 unforced errors in the match while hitting

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NAOMI OSAKA

only 17 winners while Teichmann struck 21 winners against 29 unforced errors.

"I'm happy with how I played today," Osaka said. "I didn't give up on any ball. But my point construction could be a lot better."

### Tsitsipas rallies to win

Men's second seed Stefanos Tsitsipas needed a fightback to tame Italian Lorenzo Sonogo 5-7, 6-3, 6-4. The Greek improved to 47-13, increasing his ATP season match-win lead.

Tsitsipas said saving three break points in the first game of the second set changed the match trajectory.

"I'm glad I overcame that obstacle," he said. "I stayed in and waited for opportunities to present themselves. A fighting spirit was very crucial."

Russian top seed Daniil Medvedev reached the quarter-finals with a 6-3, 6-3 victory over fellow former champion Grigor Dimitrov.

Medvedev, the champion in Toronto last weekend, will next face Spaniard Pablo Carreno Busta, who defeated ninth seed Hubert Hurkacz of Poland 7-6 (8/6), 7-6 (7/3).

Third-seeded Olympic gold medalist Alexander Zverev defeated Argentine Guido Pella 6-2, 6-3 in 73 minutes while never facing a break point.

Women's top seed Ashleigh Barty of Australia powered into the quarter-finals 6-0, 6-2 over Victoria Azarenka.

Barty improved to 13-1 over top-20 opponents this season and will next face off against fellow French Open champion Barbora Krejckova, who beat Garbine Muguruza 6-1, 6-7 (5/7), 6-2.

## Nadal to miss US Open with season-ending foot injury

### Rafael Nadal will miss the rest of the 2021 season after failing to recover from an injured left foot

AFP | New York



Rafael Nadal in action during a match (file photo)

Rafael Nadal will miss the US Open after announcing yesterday that he is ending his season because of an injury to his left foot that has troubled him since his defeat in the semi-finals at the French Open in June.

"Hello everyone, I wanted to inform you that unfortunately I have to end the 2021 season," the Spaniard wrote on Twitter.

"Honestly, I've been suffering a lot more than I should with my foot for a year and I need to take some time to resolve this problem or at least improve the situation (if I want to be able to play) the next few years."

Following his defeat to Novak Djokovic at Roland Garros, Nadal skipped Wimbledon and the Olympics before making a return to the courts in Washington earlier this month.

He beat Jack Sock but then slipped to a three-set defeat at the hands of South Africa's Lloyd Harris, after which the 35-year-old declared that "the foot was better".

However, that proved to be premature as he then pulled out of the event in Toronto saying it was "not a happy situation" and is missing from the current tournament in Cincinnati, the traditional curtain-raiser for the US Open which starts on August 30.

Nadal said that he wanted to give his foot time to heal so that

he could come back fully competitive in 2022.

"It is with the greatest enthusiasm that I will do everything I can to find the best possible form and return to competition with the objectives that are most important to me," he continued yesterday.

"I am convinced that I can achieve this if my foot heals and, of course, with great daily effort. I will work as much as I can to make it so."

"I promise to work hard to try and continue to benefit from this sport for a while longer."

**"Honestly, I've been suffering a lot more than I should with my foot for a year and I need to take some time to resolve this problem or at least improve the situation (if I want to be able to play) the next few years"**

RAFAEL NADAL

The world number four, who has 20 major titles to his name including four in New York, is just the latest big name to miss out on the US Open.

On Sunday, another former champion Roger Federer also pulled out of Flushing Meadows.

The 40-year-old, who has five US Open titles to his name, said he needed further knee surgery and admitted he "will be out for many months".

Defending champion Dominic Thiem also announced his withdrawal this week after failing to recover from a wrist injury.

## Chelsea's Pulisic out of Arsenal match after positive Covid test

AFP | London

Christian Pulisic will miss Chelsea's Premier League trip to Arsenal after testing positive for the coronavirus, Blues manager Thomas Tuchel said yesterday.

The United States forward missed Chelsea's open train-

ing session on Wednesday, and is not available for Sunday's game at the Emirates Stadium as he self-isolates.

But Hakim Ziyech and N'Golo Kante are both back in training, and could yet prove their fitness in time to feature in the clash between the London clubs.

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