

## SPORTS

# Zverev finds a way to win at French Open

By Howard Fendrich  
The Associated Press

PARIS — Talented and pegged-for-success as Alexander Zverev might be, there he was in the French Open's main stadium Friday on the precipice of a third-round defeat and yet another Grand Slam disappointment.

A loss would have left the No. 2-seeded Zverev with an 0-8 record at major tournaments against men ranked in the top 50. A loss also would have left his resume still with merely one trip as far as the round of 16 at any Slam — and zero such runs at Roland Garros.

In the fourth set, his opponent served for the victory. In the fifth, the circumstances were more dire: Zverev faced a match point. Both times, he proved steadier and sturdier than Damir Dzumhur, a Bosnian ranked 29th and seeded 26th, and Zverev eventually prevailed 6-2, 3-6, 4-6, 7-6 (3), 7-5 in 3 hours, 54 minutes.

It gave the 21-year-old



**Second-seeded Alexander Zverev returns a shot against Damir Dzumhur during their third round match Friday at Roland Garros. Zverev saved match point en route to a 6-2, 3-6, 4-6, 7-6 (3), 7-5 victory.** [THE ASSOCIATED PRESS]

German his second consecutive five-set win; he trailed two sets to one in each. It also showed — not just to others but, perhaps more importantly, to Zverev himself — that he can handle such occasions, that he is capable of doing what's necessary when the sets and hours add up, and that he is perhaps finally ready to stride into the very

last days at a major. He's the only active player outside of the "Big 4" of Roger Federer, Rafael Nadal, Novak Djokovic and Andy Murray with three Masters titles. But Grand Slam success has been elusive.

As for what sort of internal strife was happening in Zverev's head Friday?

"None," Zverev said. "Mainly, I was thinking

(about) what I was going to have for lunch."

Well, then.

He acknowledged drawing a dose of confidence from managing to win two five-setters in a row, "knowing that I'm fit enough to last as long as I want."

In contrast, No. 4 Grigor Dimitrov was unable to pull off back-to-back five-set wins. The two-time major semifinalist fell to 0-7 against top-50 foes at the French Open with a 7-6 (4), 6-2, 6-4 loss to 35th-ranked Fernando Verdasco.

"I lost my nerves early on," Dimitrov said. "He played an absolutely stunning match. What can I say?"

Verdasco's seventh career fourth-round match at Roland Garros — he's never won one — will come against 2016 champion Djokovic, who seemed to come alive after obliterating his racket in the second-set tiebreaker and wound up eliminating No. 13 Roberto Bautista-Agut 6-4, 6-7 (6), 7-6 (4), 6-2.

## French Open at a glance

### SATURDAY'S ACTION

Serena Williams and Maria Sharapova are both playing for a place in the fourth round — where they would face each other for the 22nd time. Williams, who gave birth to a daughter in September, is playing in a Grand Slam tournament for the first time in 16 months. She is unseeded at Roland Garros and plays 11th-seeded Julia Goerges. Williams has won their two previous matches. The 28th-seeded Sharapova is playing at Roland Garros for the first time since 2015. The five-time Grand Slam champion, who has twice won the French Open, takes on sixth-seeded Karolina Pliskova. In men's action, top-ranked Rafael Nadal meets a familiar rival in Richard Gasquet. He has beaten the 27th-seeded Frenchman in all 15 of their head-to-head matches.

### FRIDAY'S WINNERS

**Seeded winners in the men's third round:** No. 2 Alexander Zverev, No. 7 Dominic Thiem, No. 19 Kei Nishikori, No. 20 Novak Djokovic, No. 30 Fernando Verdasco.

**Seeded winners in the women's third round:** No. 2 Caroline Wozniacki, No. 13 Madison Keys, No. 14 Daria Kasatkina, No. 26 Barbora Strycova, No. 31 Mihaela Buzarnescu.

### FRIDAY'S LOSERS

**Seeded losers in the men's third round:** No. 4 Grigor Dimitrov, No. 10 Pablo Carreno Busta, No. 13 Roberto Bautista Agut, No. 26 Damir Dzumhur.

**Seeded losers in the women's third round:** No. 4 Elina Svitolina, No. 21 Naomi Osaka.

### STAT OF THE DAY

**377:** Buzarnescu's ranking a year ago.  
*The Associated Press*

# Hehir hoping Crystal Run Classic feels like home

## Syracuse All-American and Washingtonville grad a 10K favorite

By C Jackson Cowart  
Times Herald-Record

It took years of persistence, but Martin Hehir is finally coming home to race.

It's not the first trip back for the former Washingtonville track star and Varsity 845 runner of the year, who says he returns to his old stomping grounds every few weeks. But he'll headline Sunday's Crystal Run Classic 10K road race in Middletown — his first time running the prestigious race since his high school days.

He'll even be staying in his childhood room at his parents' house in Washingtonville. Nothing like a home advantage for one

of the state's top runners.

"I've always loved going back to New York to race," said Hehir, a 2011 Washingtonville graduate. "I'm really excited to come back to Orange County. It's going to be fun."

Last summer, Hehir moved with his wife to Philadelphia, where he's pursuing his medical degree at Thomas Jefferson University. But the 25-year-old Hehir hasn't retired from running — far from it.

"I'm really enjoying having some balance again, that student-athlete life," Hehir said of his medical school obligations. "I just like staying busy. I'm definitely the oddball, but it keeps me happy."

In February, he finished fifth in the USATF cross country championships in Tallahassee, Fla. A month



**Syracuse University's Martin Hehir (594) wins the silver in a men's 5,000-meter race in 2015. The former Washingtonville track star and Varsity 845 runner of the year will compete in Sunday's Crystal Run Classic 10K in Middletown.** [TIM COWIE/SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY]

later, he placed third in the USATF 15K championships in Jacksonville, Fla. He ran the Maraton de San Jose in Costa Rica two weeks ago

and placed second — if only to train for Sunday's race.

All this comes after Hehir's prolific career at Syracuse, where he earned

All-American honors in 2015 after helping lead the Orange to their first national championship since 1951.

"Martin's in great shape," said Frank Giannino, who helps organize the Orange Classic 10K. "And he's coming here to win."

After making his name with the Orange, Hehir is finally back in Orange County after years of Giannino recruiting him to run this race. Hehir says his collegiate seasons would always conflict with the event, and his recent involvement with NAZ (Northern Arizona) Elite in Flagstaff kept him too busy too far away.

This year, Hehir almost turned Giannino down again in favor of his daughter, whose due date is June 11. If the baby comes before the race, Hehir said he's out.

"Fortunately, baby's staying put," Hehir said. "Although my wife would not say that's fortunate."

Labor aside, Hehir has trained diligently for a race that's long been dominated by top runners from African nations. Hehir fought through a minor injury in April and has emulated the training regimen from his Syracuse days. He's sponsored by Reebok through 2020 and plans for a long summer racing season.

For now, he's looking to stake his claim in his own backyard.

"I'm trying to win. There's a lot of pride on the line," Hehir said. "I'd like to make myself the hometown hero and go for the win."

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