RIDING MOMENTUM, BUBLIK AND RYBAKINA TO POSE SERIOUS QUESTIONS AT WIMBLEDON

When Daniil Medevdev said after the Halle Open title clash that he did not want Alexander Bublik on his side of draw at the Wimbledon Championships, he sort of summed up the threat the tall Kazakh poses at the Grass Court Major.

Iga Swiatek after managing to prevail against a powerful Elena Rybakina at the French Open, commented that she felt like she was playing against men's world number one Jannik Sinner in the first set.

Both Bublik and Rybakina, hailing from Kazakhstan, have taken their games up by several notches in the weeks leading up to the Wimbledon Championships, earning respect from the top players.

Well, those comments from Medvedev and Swiatek surely are warning for top players as the world gears up for the much-loved Grass Court major.

Add to that the inspiring run of China's Wang Xinyu, who shocked French Open champion Coco Gauff en route the Berlin Open final, and you get confidence that Asian players will not be pushovers at this year's Wimbledon, starting Monday.

These performances are not one-off or created overnight. It required perseverance, overcoming internal demons and keep going when quitting was an easy option.

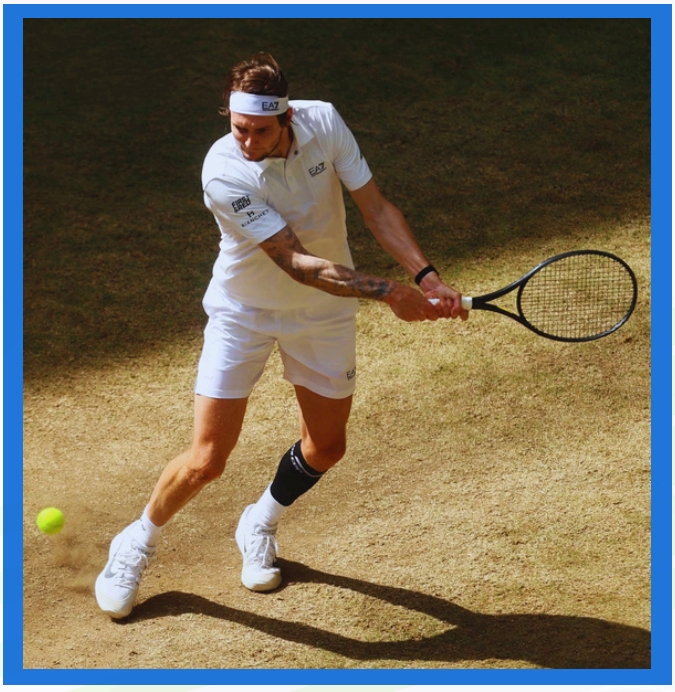
From someone who was considering hanging his racquet after the Wimbledon last year for lack of desired results, Bublik enters this year's championships as someone who is expected to cause some real damage and deep into the draw.

The 6 feet 4 inch tall player took the disappointing results in his stride, worked on his flaws and here he is: a real challenge for his rivals.

Bublik's big serve, and ever sharpening ground-strokes are not his only weapons. His unpredictability and the new found momentum certainly make him the player to watch this year.

Bublik is only the second player after Carlos Alcaraz to beat world number one Jannik Sinner this year, going into Wimbledon. This is a complete turnaround. He was not even ranked inside top-50 two months back. His confidence will be rocket high.

His compatriot Rybakina, who won Wimbledon back in 2022, is also in red hot form, though she would be ruing the chances she missed against Swiatek (at French Open) and Aryna Sabalenka (in Berlin).



The difference was between victory and defeat was marginal. The Kazakh player must be fired up to make up for lost chances and conjure up a magical show on the lush green courts where she stood unconquered three years back.

Much is expected from China's Qinwen Zheng, the Olympic champion.

She, though, has to find a way to go past top players like Sabalenka, and Gauff, who have often stalled her runs on the WTA Tour this year. She is someone who will fight till the last point.

Zheng and Naomi Osaka are drawn to clash in the second round. It will be a all-Asian blockbuster , in which the Chinese seems to have an edge going by the form she is in compared to the Japanese.

If there is one player who has the potential to make more impact is Yulia Putintseva. Adding to the Asian flavour are Aoi Ito, Yue Yuan, Moyuka Uchijima and Shuai Zhang, who qualified into the main draw.

On the men's side, Yoshihito Nishioka, Yunchaokete Bu, Alexander Shevchenko, Beibit Zhukayev, Chun-Hsin Tseng and Shintaro Mochizuki will also be watched keenly.