

U.S. Open Tennis Champ Cilic Wins Kremlin Cup

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Russia's Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova kisses her trophy as she poses for a picture after defeating Romania's Irina-Camelia Begu in the women's singles final at the Kremlin cup tennis tournament in Moscow Oct. 19.

U.S. Open champion Marin Cilic won the Kremlin Cup on Sunday, beating Roberto Bautista Agut 6-4, 6-4 in the final.

The big-serving Croat, seeded second, broke his Spanish opponent once in each set at Moscow's Olimpiyskiy arena to take his 13th career title and fourth of the season.

Earlier Sunday, sixth-seeded Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova of Russia defeated Romania's Irina-Camelia Begu 6-4, 5-7, 6-1 to win the women's event.

The eighth-ranked Cilic said his serve, usually his main weapon, was not at its best.

"I wasn't able to hit big bombs. I was today playing more in combinations, and I was playing a bit better from the baseline," he said. "It was many difficult physical rallies."

Cilic becomes the first Croatian man to win the Moscow ATP 250 tournament since his coach Goran Ivanisevic beat Yevgeny Kafelnikov in 1996.

In the women's final, Pavlyuchenkova seized her chance when Begu tired after two evenly matched sets.

Playing in her home city, Pavlyuchenkova skipped across the court with joy after converting her second match point to become the first Russian woman to win the Kremlin Cup since Elena Dementieva in 2007.

"It's just the best possible way to end the season," Pavlyuchenkova said. "It was a really tough match. I just couldn't have lost at home."

The Russian is now 7-3 in career WTA finals. The Kremlin Cup is her season's second title after the Open GDF Suez in Paris.

Pavlyuchenkova dropped just one set in the five matches she played on the way to the title, none of them against a seeded opponent.

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