

Ashleigh Barty seals number-one spot by winning Birmingham Classic

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French Open champion Ashleigh Barty, currently ranked No. 2, will take over from Naomi Osaka after winning the Birmingham Classic by defeating Julia Goerges.

Ashleigh Barty celebrates winning the final against Germany's Julia Goerges with the trophy (Reuters)

Birmingham: Ashleigh Barty defeated Julia Goerges 6-3, 7-5 to win the Birmingham Classic title on Sunday, a victory that ensures the Australian will be No. 1 in the rankings on Monday.

The 23-year-old Barty, who lost the final to Petra Kvitova in 2017, did not drop a set all week at the grass-court tournament, and she fought back from being 4-5 down in the second set to beat the German in 1 hour, 28 minutes.

Goerges fought back tears as she congratulated her friend on taking top spot in the rankings ahead of Wimbledon, which starts July 1.

French Open champion Barty, currently ranked No. 2, will take over from Naomi Osaka, who lost 6-2, 6-3 loss to Yulia Putintseva in the second round on Thursday.

Barty is only the second Australian woman to hold the top spot after Evonne Goolagong Cawley in 1976.

Barty, who extended her winning streak to 11 matches, and Goerges reached the semifinals in doubles together before Barty withdrew from their semifinal with a right arm injury.

- AP