

Even heroes require good health



A sports injury specialist from the University of Sunderland has spoken of the “mental and physical pain” that may force Andy Murray off the tennis court.

Dr Saeed Fayaz is an academic in the area of sports injury with over 25 years of experience of teaching physiotherapy, medical science and sports medicine.

He was speaking as former world number one Murray said he planned to retire after this year's Wimbledon, while expressing fears next week's Australian Open could be the final tournament of his career due to an ongoing hip injury.

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Dr Fayaz said: “In this major turning point of Andy’s life, everyone in Britain appreciates the extent of pain both physically and mentally.

“There is no record of what his hip injury involves, but for example, if it was a severe cartilage damage of his hip joint or a similar deep and serious pathology, he will have tolerated enormous amounts of pain, physical and emotional stress.

“It is really unfortunate for British Tennis and, in particular Andy Murray that his injury looks likely to cause his early retirement.

“Even heroes require good health and a great time with family and personal or social life. Let’s convey our empathy and best wishes for our Andy. We should all be really grateful that we were all able to witness of him playing at his best.”

The three-time Grand Slam winner, who is struggling to recover from hip surgery, was in tears at a news conference in Melbourne on Friday.

“I’m not sure I’m able to play through the pain for another four or five months,” said the 31-year-old Scot.

“I want to get to Wimbledon and stop but I’m not certain I can do that.”

However, Murray says he still intends to play his Australian Open first-round match against Spanish 22nd seed Roberto Bautista Agut next week.

The former world number one had surgery on his right hip last January and has played 14 matches since returning to the sport last June.

Murray ended his 2018 season in September to spend time working with rehabilitation expert Bill Knowles but still looked short of the required level when he played world number one Novak Djokovic in an open practice match at Melbourne Park on Thursday.