

Halep advances to quarters



Simona Halep

Cincinnati

Second-ranked Simona Halep charged closer to taking the world number one ranking yesterday, beating Latvia's 15th seed Anastasija Sevastova 6-4, 6-3 to reach the WTA and ATP Cincinnati Masters quarter-finals.

Romania's Halep, a French Open runner-up for the second time in June, can overtake top-ranked Czech defending champion Karolina Pliskova by winning the title in the final major tuneup for the US Open.

"To be number one in the world I think is a big thing," Halep said this week. "If I deserve the place, for sure I will win it."

Pliskova, who faces Italian qualifier Camila Giorgi in a later third-round match, must also fight off Ukraine's Elina

Svitolina, who won her fifth WTA title of the year last week in Toronto to reach a career-high fourth in the rankings. Svitolina faces Germany's Julia Goerges later.

"Of course to be number one is a goal of mine," Svitolina said. "The important thing is to play well at the big tournaments. Then the ranking will be there."

Spaniard Rafael Nadal, the 15-time Grand Slam champion assured of returning to world number one next week, faces countryman Albert Ramos-Vinolas in a night match. Nadal could meet Australian Nick Kyrgios in Friday's quarter-finals.

Nadal was assured of advancing past injured Andy Murray for the top spot when Roger Federer withdrew from

Cincinnati on Monday with a back injury.

After an early exchange of breaks, Halep double faulted to surrender another and give Sevastova a 3-2 edge.

She then had a visit from her Australian coach, Darren Cahill, who encouraged more backhands but closed with, "This is on you. Turn this around."

Halep did, breaking to 4-4 and again to claim the set when the Latvian swatted a backhand beyond the baseline.

Sevastova squandered two break points in the first game of the second set and netted a backhand to give Halep a 2-0 edge, but broke back in the fifth game. Halep responded with a drop volley winner to break the Latvian at love for a 4-2 lead. (AFP)

Poland set to defend it's title



During the Coaches' Press conference

DT News Network Manama

Poland are set to defend its title in a highly competitive field in the 2017 FIVB Volleyball Boys' U19 World Championship today with Brazil taking on France in Pool B and Russia play Turkey in Pool C with both matches starting at 1pm at Shaikh Isa Sports City in Riffa.

Head coach of Poland (who have a bye today) Maciej Zendel says that they face an uphill task in their quest to repeat the success of the 2015 championship hosted by Argentina.

"It will be very difficult for

us to win this tournament," Zendel said last night in the pre-tournament Press conference held at the Golden Tulip Hotel in Manama, where he was joined by a majority of the head coaches from the other participating nations.

Zendel identified Brazil, Italy and Iran as the teams to beat. But Iran head coach Reza Vakili Farjad suggested all teams have a chance of a medal.

The tournament has additional importance for Japan, whose current players may be the ones that will be flying their flag when Tokyo hosts the next Summer Olympics in three years' time

in Japan.

Meanwhile, several coaches praised Bahrain for the warm welcome they have received upon their arrival and the exceptional overall organisation.

After the preliminaries, the top four teams in each pool move on to the next phase.

Bahrain squad: Yousif Khalifa Alasbool (Head Coach), Abdulla Al Mahroos (Team Manager), Omar Al Majed (Al Najma), Hussain Mansoor (Nabih Saleh), Sayed Mohammed Al Abbar (Al Ahli), Jawher Rashed (Al Najma), Saif Yousif (Captain, Muharraq), Mohammed Jassim (Nabih Saleh), Mohammed Haroona

(Playmaker, Dar Kulaib), Hassan Haider (Muharraq), Hussain Thamer (Dar Kulaib), Hassan Mohammed (Muharraq), Mahmood Abdul Hussain (Al Ahli), Yousif Saif (Muharraq), Sayed Yousuf Ashoor (Muharraq), Hussain Abdulla (Liberio, Dar Kulaib).

Preliminary round schedule:

1pm: Pool B: Brazil vs France. Pool C: Russia vs Turkey.

3pm: Pool B: Cuba vs Japan. Pool C: Chile vs South Korea.

5pm: Pool A: Puerto Rico vs Tunisia. Pool D: Italy vs Czech Republic.

7pm: Pool A: Bahrain vs Egypt. Pool D: Mexico vs China.

Olympic Academy duo for Level 1 course



Nabeel Taha
DT News Network
Manama

Representatives from the Bahrain Olympic Committee's Olympic Academy will be travelling to Abha, in Saudi Arabia this weekend to conduct a five-day course. Academy director Nabeel Taha and executive coordinator Mahmood Yateem will be presenting the course from August 20 to 25.

This level 1 course is part of the National Coaching



Programme, being run and supervised by the Academy with 35 coaches from Saudi Arabia expected to take part.

It is also the sixth course that is organised in line with the agreement signed by the Bahrain Olympic Committee and the Saudi Institute for Leadership Development, recently national instructors Adel Al Asfoor and Ahmed Ali were in Saudi Arabia, where they managed another level 1 course in the City of Ha'il.

Bahrain lose to Argentina, conclude campaign

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Manama

Bahrain under coach Ebrahim Ali concluded its campaign after being narrowly defeated 25-24 against Argentina yesterday,

despite leading 14-12 at half-time in the 21st classification placement match in the 2017 Men's Youth World Handball Championships at the Tbilisi Sports Palace in the capital of Georgia.

The Bahrainis who finished bottom of Group A with one

win against Denmark and four losses to defending champions France, Egypt, Sweden and Norway, battled hard against the Argentines who finished bottom of Group 3 after losing all five matches in the preliminary rounds.

Top scoring for Bahrain

was Ahmed Fadul with 11 goals, the other scorers were Naser Naser, Mohammed Mohammed and Fadhel Al Maqabi (3) and Ahmed Al Ghazal, Yusuf Al Qasimi, Mohammed Eid and Abdulla Al Zaimoor (1).

For Argentina, its scorers

were Mateo Palacias (8) Ignacio Tomas Lopaz Perez (4), Juan Francisco Ceccardi and Nicolas Alejandro (3), Tomas Mariano Gallardo, Fererico Tomas Saud Sulak and Martin Arakaki (2) and Tomas Valentin Canete (1).

In the 23rd placement

match, Algeria edged out Mexico 27-25 after holding a slender 10-9 lead at half-time.

Other placement results (Finals): 17th: Norway bt Serbia 30-25 (17-12).

19th: Brazil bt Georgia 32-23 (16-14).