

# Bahrain's hope dashed

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**B**ahrain ranked 107 in the world saw its hopes of promotion dashed yesterday when they went down 3-0 to Cambodia despite a spirited response yesterday with a third successive defeat on the third day of action in the International Tennis Federation (ITF) Davis Cup matches in Pool A of the Asia/Oceania Group IV on the hard courts of the Bahrain Tennis Federation Courts at the Bahrain Polytechnic in Isa Town.

For Cambodia ranked 101, this was its third win on the trot as Samneang Long defeated Hassan Abdunabi in the opening singles rubber 6-4, 6-7(4), 6-2 in an epic match lasting two hours and 27 minutes.

The second singles rubber saw Cambodia seal the tie as Kenny Bun easily outplayed Yousif Qaed in straight sets 6-0, 6-2.

In doubles action, the pairing of Cambodia's Phalkun Mam and Sarith Our had to play hard to beat Bahrain's Abdulkarim Abdunabi and Elyas Abdunabi 6-3, 4-6, 6-4.

In the other match Pool A match, Saudi Arabia (111) enjoyed a 3-0 victory against Kyrgyzstan (124) with Faisal Rebbi winning the first rubber 6-1, 6-3 against Denis Surotin, then followed up with a second win after Ammar Al Haqbani fought hard to beat Evgeniy Babak 6-2, 4-4, 6-4 in the second rubber.

The doubles rubber saw Fahad Al Saad and Saud Al Haqbani comfortably win 6-3, 6-1 against Denis Surotin and Farhad Urumbaev for a cleansweep victory for the Saudi Arabians.

In Pool B action, Oman (122) maintained a perfect with a 3-0 win over Iraq (106), while Mongolia (126) was a 2-1 winner over Tajikistan (123) to maintain its three-win no loss record and Singapore was a 3-0

winner over Bangladesh.

11 teams are playing round-robin in their respective groups with the promotion places decided by the winners of a play-off match between the Pool A winners and Pool B runners-up and the Pool B winners against Pool A runners-up to Group III for the 2018 edition of the Davis Cup on Saturday.

Bahrain's team are coached by its non-playing captain and 64-match

Davis Cup veteran Essam Abdul A'al and comprises Yousif Qaed, Hassan Abdunabi, Abdulkarim Abdunabi and Elyas Abdunabi.

Bahrain first entered the Davis Cup in 1989 and have four times been in Group II of the regional zones.

**Standings (win-loss):**

- Pool A:**  
1 Cambodia (3-0),  
2 Saudi Arabia (2-0),  
3 Myanmar (1-1),  
4 Kyrgyzstan (0-2),  
5 Bahrain (0-3).  
**Pool B:**  
1 Oman (3-0),  
2 Mongolia (3-0),  
Singapore (2-1),  
4 Iraq (1-2),  
5 Tajikistan (0-3),  
6 Bangladesh (0-3).

**Today's schedule (10am):**

Pool A:		
Bahrain	vs	Kyrgyzstan,
Saudi Arabia	vs	Myanmar.
Pool B:		
Iraq	vs	Bangladesh,
Singapore	vs	Mongolia,
Oman	v	Tajikistan.



A match in progress



In pictures, umpires, referees and line judges during photocall



## De la Cruz wins Basque overall lead

### Tour of the Basque Country

**San Sebastian, Spain**

**S**panish rider David de la Cruz won the third stage and moved into the overall lead of the Tour of the Basque Country with a brave solo break yesterday.

De la Cruz attacked towards the end of the fifth and final climb of the day, 15 kilometres from the end of the 160.5km ride from Vitoria to San Sebastian.

And he just had enough to hold off former world champion Michal Kwiatkowski and Australia's Jay McCarthy in second and third respectively by three seconds in a

winning time of 3hrs 54mins 25secs.

"When I saw I was alone at the front I thought it was an ambitious move because there was still a long way to go to the finish line," said De la Cruz.

"But I tried my luck and it came off."

De la Cruz leads from McCarthy and Kwiatkowski in the overall standings by three seconds.

Pre-race favourites Alejandro Valverde and Alberto Contador are also three seconds back overall as

**Results**

- Stage**
1. David de la Cruz (ESP/QST) 3hr 54min 25sec,
  2. Michal Kwiatkowski (POL/SKY) at 0:03,
  3. Jay McCarthy (AUS/BOR) s.t.,
  4. Alejandro Valverde (ESP/MOV) s.t.,
  5. Giovanni Visconti (ITA/TBM) s.t.,

**Overall standings**

1. David de la Cruz (ESP/QST) 3hr 54min 25sec,
2. Jay McCarthy (AUS/BOR) at 0:03,
3. Michal Kwiatkowski (POL/SKY) s.t.,
4. Alejandro Valverde (ESP/MOV) s.t.,
5. Patrick Konrad (AUT/BOH) s.t.

Valverde was fourth on the day with Contador a lowly 33rd.

De la Cruz will be confident of defending his lead in today's 174.1km fourth stage from San Sebastian to Bilbao before Friday's

queen stage with two category one climbs from Bilbao to Eibar.

"This is a very tough tour with a lot of high-quality riders, but it is true we are in a good position," added De la Cruz.

