

## MI Emirates sign Pollard and Boulton for UAE T20 league

Reuters | Dubai



Kieron Pollard

West Indian Kieron Pollard and New Zealand's Trent Boult will represent MI Emirates in the inaugural International League T20 tournament in the United Arab Emirates, the Abu Dhabi-based franchise owned by Reliance Industries said yesterday.

The Indian conglomerate also owns Pollard's Indian Premier League (IPL) team Mumbai Indians and the Cape Town-based franchise in an upcoming Twenty20 league in South Africa.

Pollard is one of the four West Indies players, including white-ball captain Nicholas Pooran and veteran Dwayne Bravo, to join MI Emirates for the six-team tournament beginning in January next year.

Bravo and Pooran have played for Mumbai Indians in the past.

Former Mumbai Indians player Boulton is among the 14 overseas players directly signed by the franchise.

The left-arm seamer gave up his central contract with New Zealand Cricket on Wednesday to spend more time with his family and focus on playing Twenty20 leagues.

# Bahrain punch semi-finals tickets in Asian volleyball

Kingdom's senior men's national team oust Pakistan in straight sets to take second place in Pool F and earn berth in final four of 2022 AVC Cup for Men in Nakhon Pathom, Thailand

● **Mohamed Abdulla top scores for Bahrain against Pakistan with 14 points, all in attack**

● **Bahrainis next set to take on Pool E winners Japan in final four, South Korea to face China**

TDT | Manama

Bahrain barged through to the semi-finals of the 2022 Asian Volleyball Confederation (AVC) Cup for Men yesterday after sweeping past Pakistan 3-0 (25-18, 27-25, 25-20) in their concluding game of the main round at Nakhon Pathom Provincial Gymnasium in Thailand.

The result put them in second place to end their campaign in Pool F and earn their spot in the final four along with fellow group members China.

There, the Bahrainis are set to take on Pool E winners Japan, while the Chinese will be facing off with Pool E runners-up South Korea.

The nationals, who are making their debut in the competi-



Bahrain players celebrate after securing their win against Pakistan

tion, showed their class against their Pakistani counterparts yesterday in their straight-sets victory.

Fresh from stunning Asian giants Iran in their previous fixture on Thursday, the Bahrainis continued to show their impressive form and went right to work against Pakistan.

Naser Anan and Mohamed Abdulla came up with hard attacks from both wings to help lift the team's 25-18 victory in the first set. In a see-saw second, both teams matched each other point for point until 25-all, but then the Bahrainis managed to claim the next two points to take

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ISSANAYE RAMIRES

the 2-0 match advantage. They then sealed the win in a dominant third set, going five points clear midway through and holding on to that gap until the end. Abdulla top scored for Bah-



Bahrain's Abbas Al Khabbaz attacks the net during their game against Pakistan

rain with 14 points, all from his powerful attacks. Fahad Raza led Pakistan with 12 points.

"It was a difficult match for us as some players in my team are tired," said Bahrain head coach Issanaye Ramires from Brazil. "Regarding our teamworks, I think we can do better than this in sideouts and attacks."

Bahrain head into their semi-final clash against Japan as the underdogs, but will give their maximum effort. The game is scheduled for an 11am start, Bahrain time.

The South Koreans and Chinese clash in the next final four contest at 2pm, Bahrain time.

Bahrain are playing for the first time in the AVC Cup for Men, which is in its seventh edition.

Along with Abdulla, who has been one of their best players in the tournament, and Naser Anan, the rest of the team competing in Nakhon Pathom includes setters Mahmood Hasan and Mahmood Alafyah; wing spikers Mahmood Ahmed and Yusuf Ali; opposites Mohamed Anan and Ali Khamis; middle blockers Abbas Al Khabbaz, Husain Aljeshi, Mohamed Al-dawiri and Mohamed Abdulla; and liberos Ayman Haroona and Husain Sultan.

## Swiatek ambushed by Brazil's Haddad Maia in Toronto

AFP | Toronto

Brazilian outsider Beatriz Haddad Maia toppled world number one Iga Swiatek 6-4, 3-6, 7-5 on Thursday to reach the quarter-finals of the WTA Toronto Masters.

The South American ranked 24th in the world beat her third top-10 opponent this season, but notched her first career win over a world number one as she clawed out the victory in three hours.

Haddad Maia, who won titles at Nottingham and Birmingham in June, became the first Brazilian to reach the quarters at a WTA 1000 tournament.

She was the first from her country to face a number one since Telian Pereira lost to Serena Williams at Roland Garros in 2016.

Swiatek, whose six titles this season include the French Open, missed her chance at a 50th match win this year.

Her run of 23 straight wins at the Masters 1000 level was snapped in difficult playing conditions.

"At the beginning I struggled to find my rhythm, probably because she's lefty and I had a hard time adjusting to her serve," Swiatek said.

"Without the wind I would manage. But it was pretty crazy out there.

"In the third set I knew (the mistakes) I'd made. So I know what I want to work on and what I want to improve before



Iga Swiatek reacts during her loss to Beatriz Haddad Maia

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IGA SWIATEK

the next tournament, for sure." Swiatek added: "She just used the conditions better than me. When she was playing with the wind she was playing really strong balls.

"I made more mistakes than her. She was a little bit more solid."

Haddad Maia put Swiatek on the defensive, forcing her to save 15 of 19 break points while committing nine double-faults. She limited her own unforced errors to a dozen, backed up by 23 winners while Swiatek ended with 33 winners and 28 unforced errors.

"I'm happy and proud of myself and my team, it's a special moment," she said. "It's not always easy to beat the number one on a huge stage and against all the crowd."

"I think I passed through very tough moments in my career to live this moment. I just want to enjoy a little bit.

"I don't want to think about my next match. But, yeah, I feel happy. I believe in myself.

**Gauff perseveres**

In other third-round action, Coco Gauff survived 15 dou-

ble-faults to squeeze out a 7-5, 4-6, 7-6 (7/4) win over Aryna Sabalenka.

The American teenager contributed just under half of the miscues in the error-strewn affair, with her opponent accounting for 18 additional doubles.

Tenth seed Gauff, who fell to Swiatek at Roland Garros in her first Grand Slam final this year, battled for three and a quarter hours against sixth-seeded Sabalenka.

Gauff finished with nine aces and saved 10 of 14 break points that she faced.

"The conditions weren't easy today, a lot of wind," Gauff said. "I think I hung in there mentally and that's what I'm most proud of."

Victory for the 18-year-old came a day after she beat Wimbledon champion Elena Rybakina in the third round in a match that took two and three-quarter hours.

## Kyrgios schools de Minaur to reach Montreal quarters

AFP | Montreal

Nick Kyrgios crushed fellow Australian Alex de Minaur 6-2, 6-3 on Thursday to reach the quarter-finals of the ATP Montreal Masters.

Kyrgios carried on constant backchat with his player box, giving almost a running commentary of his state of mind on court in a display that seems second nature to him.

Nevertheless, the Wimbledon runner-up dominated in the all-Aussie match, winning the opening set at a clip of three minutes per game in a contest which took just 64



Nick Kyrgios in action

minutes.

The second-set pace was just as torrid, with Kyrgios breaking in the opening game.

He failed to serve out the win leading 5-2, missing on a drop shot and sending a forehand into the net.



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