

## Mokaev challenges fellow undefeated Flyweight Maksum for BRAVE CF fight



Muhammad Mokaev  
TDT | Manama

Muhammad Mokaev is arguably the most talented young star in the Mixed Martial Arts world nowadays and the MMA phenom is eager to develop his potential as soon as possible. After a disappointing outcome in his last bout, which ended in a No Contest due to an accidental low blow, Mokaev already has his next target in mind.

Through his social media profiles, "The Punisher" asked for a clash of undefeated against Kazakhstan's Azat Maksum who impressed in his first and only outing for BRAVE Combat Federation.

"This is the fight for the #1 Flyweight in the division. BRAVE CF, let's make this undefeated vs undefeated fight, please", "The Punisher" wrote.

Holding a professional record of 5 wins, no losses, and one No Contest, Muhammad Mokaev is also undefeated in his amateur career. In his IMMAF days, Mokaev won two world championships and built an amateur record of 23

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Mokaev is also regarded as the number one pound-for-pound junior amateur fighter in the world, having never experienced defeat in MMA.

The 26-year-old Azat Maksum won it all in his home country of Kazakhstan before making his transition to the big leagues. "Kazakh", as he's also known as, made his BRAVE CF debut at BRAVE CF 48, in March, with a third-round knockout over Michael Aljarouj, showcasing his own credentials to the wider audience after coming up in an increasingly competitive Kazakh mixed martial arts scene.

# Germany bounce back with statement win over Portugal

Gosens inspires resurgent Germany to thrilling 4-2 victory over Portugal

● **The win moves Germany into second place in the group on three points**

AFP | Munich

Three-times European champions Germany shrugged off their opening game loss and announced their arrival as serious contenders at Euro 2020 with an emphatic 4-2 win over highly-rated Portugal in their Group F match yesterday.

Cristiano Ronaldo had given the defending champions a 15th minute lead but Germany went in at the break 2-1 up thanks to own goals from Ruben Dias and Raphael Guerreiro.

The Germans turned on the style in the second half with goals from Kai Havertz and the impressive Robin Gosens making it 4-1 before Diogo Jota pulled a goal back for Portugal.

The win moves Germany, who face Hungary in their final game, into second place in the group on three points, a point behind leaders France and level on points with the Portuguese.

Germany, smarting from their opening defeat to the French, started with purpose and confidence and thought they had grabbed the lead in the fifth minute through Gosens but VAR



Germany's Robin Gosens heads home their fourth goal

ruled that Serge Gnabry had been in an offside position.

Against the run of play, Portugal grabbed the early lead, hitting the Germans on the break with Bernardo Silva picking out Jota on the left of the box and his low cross was tapped in from close range by Ronaldo.

It was the Portugal skipper's third goal in two games and his first ever against Germany but Joachim Loew's side kept their cool and continued to play positive football before eventually getting their reward.

The Germans drew level in the 35th minute when Joshua Kimmich's cross from the right was volleyed at the back post by Gosens and flew into the net off the outstretched foot of Portu-

gal defender Dias as he looked to stop Havertz converting.

It was another own goal that gave Germany the lead -- Kimmich drove in a low ball from the right and Guerreiro's attempted clearance flew past his goalkeeper Rui Patricio.

Portugal replaced Bernardo Silva with Renato Sanches at the break but Germany took a firm grip on the game with a third goal six minutes after the restart -- a well-worked passing move ending with Havertz turning in a low ball from the left delivered by the influential Gosens.

Germany were buzzing now and it was no surprise when they made it 4-1 on the hour with Gosens finishing off another well constructed attack,



**Cristiano Ronaldo scored his third goal in two games and his first ever against Germany**

heading home a Kimmich cross at the far post.

Portugal struck back quickly though when a deep free-kick from Guerreiro looked to be heading out but Ronaldo acrobatically hooked the ball inside to Jota who slotted home.

Sanches fired a warning of a potential comeback when he thundered a long distance drive against the woodwork but Germany's victory was never really in doubt.



Kai Havertz (R) of Germany reacts after Portugal's Ruben Dias scored an own goal

## Griezmann rescues draw for France against Hungary

AFP | Budapest

Antoine Griezmann salvaged a 1-1 draw for France against Hungary in Budapest as the world champions missed the chance to clinch a place in the Euro 2020 last 16 yesterday.

Hungary threatened to blow Group F wide open when Attila Fiola gave the hosts a shock lead in first-half stoppage time after catching out the France defence.

But Griezmann, the Golden Boot winner at Euro 2016, equalised on 66 minutes as an unconvincing France avoided a first competitive defeat since June 2019.

Didier Deschamps' side top the section with four points, one above Germany who beat reigning champions Portugal in Munich. Hungary earned their first point and the Germans are bottom after losing to France in their opener.

France stay in Budapest for their final game against Portugal, while Hungary travel to Munich to take on Germany, still hoping to qualify for the knockout phase for a second straight tournament.

Contending with stifling temperatures in excess of 30 degrees Celsius (86 degrees Fahrenheit) and a crowd approaching 60,000 at the Puskas Arena, the only Euro 2020 venue without capacity restrictions due to Covid-19, France controlled much of the first half.

Having lived up to their bill-



France's forward Antoine Griezmann (C) and Hungary's forward Roland Sallai (L) vie during the match

ing as tournament favourites in a 1-0 win over Germany, France dominated Hungary early on, creating numerous chances against a side that held out for 84 minutes before losing 3-0 to Portugal.

Peter Gulacsi clawed away Karim Benzema's low drive, reacting sharply to keep out Griezmann's follow-up, despite the Barcelona star being flagged for offside.

Lucas Digne, brought into the side for Lucas Hernandez as the only change made by France coach Deschamps, then picked out an unmarked Kylian Mbappe whose glancing header flashed narrowly wide.

Hungary lost captain Adam Szalai to injury midway through

the first half, and the hosts were living dangerously as Benzema sliced badly from a superb flick by Mbappe before the Paris Saint-Germain forward dragged wide himself.

France captain Hugo Lloris had warned of over confidence against a team expected to finish bottom of the group, and Les Bleus were punished for a brief lapse just before half-time.

Fiola collected Adam Nagy's crossfield ball and played a one-two with Roland Sallai, outpacing Benjamin Pavard and holding off Raphael Varane to side-foot beyond Lloris at his near post.

Deschamps had waited until the 89th minute before making a substitute in the opener



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against Germany, but the introduction of Ousmane Dembele for Adrien Rabiot on the hour nearly brought an immediate equaliser as the Barcelona forward rattled the post.

France pulled level when a long kick upfield by Lloris sailed over the head of Nagy, with Mbappe latching onto it ahead of Hungary's Paris-born Loic Nego.

His ball across goal was deflected into Griezmann's path by Willi Orban, allowing the forward to slam in his seventh European Championship goal.

Gulacsi produced a fine save to turn away a fierce shot from Mbappe as France pressed for a victory that would have sent them through to the knockout phase. Instead, they must wait until Wednesday's clash with Portugal.

## Rublev through to Halle final, will face Umbert



Andrey Rublev hits a return

Reuters | Halle

Fourth seed Andrey Rublev churned out another win as he overcame qualifier Nikoloz Basilashvili 6-1 3-6 6-3 to reach the final on the Halle grasscourts yesterday.

Rublev will face fellow youngster Ugo Umbert after the 22-year-old Frenchman beat Felix Auger-Aliassime 6-4 3-6 7-6(5).

The fourth-seeded Russian dropped his first set this week on the grass but responded to ease through a deciding set.

Rublev claimed his 33rd match win of the year - second only to Greek Stefanos Tsitsipas (39) on the ATP standings.

He also took his match record in ATP 500 events to 29-2 since the Tour resumed last

year after the coronavirus shutdown - a period in which he has won four titles at that level.

"It's my first final on grass and in Halle," world number seven Rublev said. "I think I can play on every surface and I will try my best again tomorrow."

Auger-Aliassime beat Umbert in Stuttgart last week but this time the tables were turned as the Frenchman prevailed.

It perhaps should have been easier as he led by a set and a break and had points for a 4-1 lead before his Canadian opponent began to find his range.

Umbert also failed to convert a match point at 5-4 in the third set but got the job done in the tiebreak.