

SPORTS

Naomi Osaka blazes into Tokyo quarters

AFP | Tokyo

Japan's Naomi Osaka pulverised Slovak Dominika Cibulkova 6-2, 6-1 to reach the Pan Pacific Open quarter-finals yesterday in her first match since her historic US Open triumph.

The 20-year-old, who earlier this month stunned Serena Williams to become Japan's first grand slam singles champion, fired down 10 aces in a fearsome display of wham-bam tennis in Tokyo.

Third seed Osaka came out with guns blazing and ripped a fizzing forehand down the line on the first point, racing away to close out the first set with a pair of thundering aces.

A dazed Cibulkova, the 2014 Australian Open runner-up, had no answer to Osaka's firepower as the world number seven wrapped up a comfortable victory with a ferocious cross-court backhand after just 59 minutes.

"I didn't really feel any pressure -- I felt it was more fun," said Osaka, who reached the Tokyo final in 2016.

"I'm not really thinking about winning the US Open," added Japan's latest sporting celebrity, who has a Japanese



Osaka hits a return against Cibulkova

mother and a Haitian father and was raised in the United States.

"I'm not sure what will happen when things calm down. But (today) as a whole I played at maybe 80 percent -- I never know the limit of what level I can go to."

Earlier, sixth seed Garbine Muguruza was upset by Amer-

ican qualifier Alison Riske 6-1, 6-2 in an abject performance from the Spanish former world number one, who looked a shadow of the player who captured the 2016 French Open and 2017 Wimbledon titles.

Riske advances to face fourth seed Karolina Pliskova, another player to have previously held the women's top ranking.

The Czech recovered from a set down to beat Australia's Daria Gavrilova 4-6, 6-4, 6-4 and avenge her opponent's defeat of twin sister Kristyna earlier this week.

But she made hard work of it, trashing a racquet in frustration as she slipped behind 4-1 in the deciding set before clawing her way back.

Bahrain set to host top skydiving event

TDT | Manama

Bahrain has stepped up its preparations to host the 3rd FAI World Cup of Indoor Skydiving for the first time next month. The event is organized by the Bahrain Air Sport Federation (BASF) in co-operation with Gravity Indoor Skydiving.

It will feature the best flyers from around the world, with five different disciplines in bodyflight that brings a remarkable airborne experience in one of the tallest glass wind tunnels in the world.

As a build up to the upcoming event, Supreme Council for Youth and Sports assistant secretary general and Bahrain Olympic Committee (BOC) sec-

retary general Abdulrahman Askar received at the committee offices in Seef president of the BASF Shaikh Salman bin Abdulla Al Khalifa and his general secretary Meshari Al Hanafi and executive director Mohammed Al Balooshi.

Askar asserted the committee's willingness to harness all its capabilities to support the federation in bringing one of the world's most prestigious skydiving championships next month.

On his part, Shaikh Salman presented a report on the federation's latest arrangements in preparations for the championship, and thanked BOC for its continues support to in an attempt to make this event a great success.

Azaitar stripped off title

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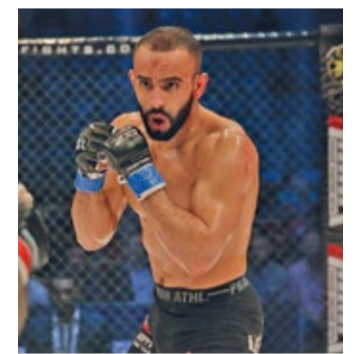
Mohammed Shahid, President of Brave Combat Federation announced that Ottman Azaitar is no longer the champion of the lightweight division of Brave Combat Federation.

The lightweight champion who has an undefeated career record have not defended the championship since November 2017, after winning the title during Brave 9: The Kingdom of Champions.

Azaitar returned at Brave 14 hosted in Morocco, however the champion faced Danijel Kokora in a non-title bout at the welterweight division scoring a 31 second knockout.

"Ottman Azaitar had a great career with the Brave Combat Federation he fought a really good fight in Morocco which is not for the title. If you look at the lightweight division today keeping the Ottman's fight at Morocco apart, we did not had a title defence almost for an year at this point. Which is something that is very unfair for the division as a whole. And we have to make a decision on that", said Mohammed Shahid.

Lightweight division witnessed growth over the year with multiple global athletes signing in to the division. With the welterweight title being contested during Brave 16 by



Ottman Azaitar

the champion Carlston Harris against Jarrah Al Selawe, the lightweight championship remains the only title to be defended.

The athlete relations of Brave Combat Federation was informed that Azaitar will not be competing again in 2018 which had led to take the step.

"We are confirming in November in Bahrain, we will have the 70 Kg title fight and we are trying to make that fight happen for a while now. If we don't have that caliber of fighters willing to fight against the best in the world that fighter doesn't have a place in the Brave Combat Federation. Officially we will be in a position to say that if he is not accepting the fight so will have to make sure that we don't make it unfair for rest of the athletes at 70 kg", added the President of Brave Combat Federation.

Athletes visit embassy of Philippines ahead of Brave 16

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Athletes from Philippines competing in Brave Combat Federation were welcomed to the Embassy of Philippines in the United Arab Emirates. Vaughn Donayre from Cebu will be up against Brazil's Flavio Serafin in a catchweight bout.

Crisanto Pitpitunge from Benguet will be fighting Bahrain's Hamza Kooheji in a bantamweight bout and Jonathan Corton from Benguet will fight Bahrain's Hussain Ayyad in the Flyweight bout.

The three fighters, together with their coaches were invited to the Embassy and met the Ambassador of Philippines to



Athletes visit Philippines Embassy in UAE

the UAE, Hjayceelyn Quintana. "This is part of our people to people diplomacy to make sure that our Emirati friends know

that we are one with them in terms of promoting solidarity through sports. We are very proud that they are represent-

ing the Philippines here and hopefully we can also mobilise our people to see the event on Friday," said Quintana.

Brave Combat Federation announces weigh-ins for Abu Dhabi event

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Brave Combat Federation has announced to host the public weigh-ins on 20th September at the Hudayriat Beach, Al Hudayriat Island, Abu Dhabi, UAE.

Brave 16 marks the second time the event is hosted in Abu Dhabi. The event which is open for the public will feature fighters representing 16 nations clearing the weigh-ins to compete in the biggest fight night in

the history of mixed martial arts in Abu Dhabi.

The fight night features two championship title fights in the welterweight and featherweight division. In the main event, the first and only champion who is crowned out of Guyana, Carlston Harris will defend the championship against Jarrah Al Selawe from Jordan.

In the co-main event, Elias Boudegzame from Algeria will face Bubba Jenkins from the United States. Also

featured in the fight card are fan favourites including Team Lakay fighters Crisanto Pitpitunge and Jonathan Corton, Bruno Malfacine, Mounir Lazzez, Chad Hanekom, Mohammad Fakhreddine. Bahrain's professional fighters Hamza Kooheji and Hussain Ayyad will fight representing KHK MMA Fight team.

The weigh-ins will be followed by face-offs and athlete interviews. The athletes will also interact with fans and public after the public weigh-ins.

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