

Napoli's Osimhen hospitalised with head trauma after Atalanta defeat



Victor Osimhen of Napoli is stretchered off during the match

AFP | Milan

Napoli forward Victor Osimhen was hospitalised on Sunday after losing consciousness following a knock to the head in Sunday's 4-2 defeat to Atalanta in Serie A.

The Nigeria striker was stretchered off the pitch in Bergamo after 90 minutes after hitting his head on the ground after a Cristian Romero challenge.

The 22-year-old came around as he was transported to hospital in northern Italy where tests revealed head trauma, but were reassuring, Napoli said.

"The player will remain in Bergamo until tomorrow (Monday) under clinical observation," the team said in a statement.

Neither coach Gennaro Gattuso nor his players spoke to the media after the match which was a clash for fourth place and the Champions League berths.

The forward, who joined the club from Lille last summer, had only returned to action last month after being sidelined for

2 goals were only scored by Victor Osimhen for Napoli despite a promising start to the season

over two months with a shoulder injury and coronavirus.

Despite a promising start to the season he has scored just two goals for the club.

Napoli fell to their third defeat in five league games as Atalanta warmed-up for next week's Champions League clash with Real Madrid to move fourth in Serie A.

After a first half marked only by the red card given to Atalanta coach Gian Piero Gasperini, for arguing with the referee for a penalty after Matteo Pessina went down, the hosts dominated after the break.

Colombian striker Luis Muriel set up compatriot Duvan Zapata to head in seven minutes after the break.

Conway's 99 leads New Zealand to T20 win over Australia

New Zealand beat Australia by 53 runs in first T20 international

● New Zealand's Devon Conway smashed an unbeaten 99 off 59 balls as the Black Caps finished their 20 overs on 184

AFP | Christchurch

Devon Conway batting masterclass inspired New Zealand to a 53-run win over Australia in the opening Twenty20 international in Christchurch yesterday.

Conway smashed an unbeaten 99 off 59 balls as the Black Caps overcame a shaky start to finish on 184 for five after losing the toss and being put in to bat.

In reply, the tourists were all out for 131 after 17.3 overs, with Black Caps spinner Ish Sodhi taking four wickets for 28 to give the hosts an early edge in the five-match series.

Australia captain Aaron Finch refused to blame the loss on his team's two-week Covid-19 quarantine upon arrival in New Zealand.

"It feels like a long time since we played but we were treated brilliantly (in quarantine)," he said.

"They just ran harder and we didn't get it right."

Jhye Richardson, fresh from signing a multi-million dollar



New Zealand's Devon Conway plays a shot

Indian Premier League contract, was the pick of the Australian bowlers, taking two for 31.

But the tourists could not dislodge Conway, whose 59-ball knock included 10 fours and three sixes, helping the Black Caps bounce back from 19 for three.

Conway said he was "pretty chuffed" with his career-best effort, even though he was stranded just short of a century after failing to take two runs off the final ball.

The South African-born batsman came to the crease with New Zealand teetering at 11 for two and was still settling in when captain Kane Williamson

departed for 12.

"The key was to try to stay positive, that's when I'm at my best," Conway said.

"I was trying not to think too far ahead and just build good partnerships."

The frustrated Australians then suffered a horror show early in their innings, as seamers Tim Southee and Trent Boult tore through the top order.

Luckless debutant Josh Philippe departed for two after sending a top-edge skyward.

But old campaigners such as skipper Aaron Finch and Glenn Maxwell also failed to deal with the swinging ball and the tourists were soon four for 19.

Mitch Marsh top-scored with

BETTER YOU KNOW

Established Australian stars such as Steve Smith, David Warner and Mitchell Starc are being rested as selectors look to unearth new talent

45 and Ashton Agar contributed 23 a string of batting failures gave New Zealand a comfortable win.

While trans-Tasman bragging rights are up for grabs, both teams also enter the series with one eye on the T20 World Cup in India later this year.

Established Australian stars such as Steve Smith, David Warner and Mitchell Starc are being rested as selectors look to unearth new talent.

New Zealand have a more settled line-up, though veteran opening batsman Martin Guptill will be under pressure after his poor run of form continued with a duck in the opening over.

The Black Caps may turn to uncapped Finn Allen for the next match in Dunedin on Thursday.

World number one Barty uncertain of schedule as Osaka closes in

AFP | Melbourne

Australian Ashleigh Barty has provided no certainty if she will play regularly on the women's tour amid the COVID-19 pandemic despite Naomi Osaka closing in on her world number one ranking with a fourth Grand Slam title in Melbourne.

Barty accepted a wildcard to defend her Adelaide International title this week after making an exit at the quarter-final stage of her home Grand Slam with a defeat to Czech Karolina Muchova.

The Queenslander skipped last year's U.S. Open and did not defend her 2019 French Open title, opting not to travel due to health concerns amid the pandemic.

Barty, who is expected to head to the Middle East next month to play WTA events in Doha and Dubai, said she faced no fitness issues during the Melbourne Park swing despite returning to the circuit after 11 months.

"We plan as best as we can," the 24-year-old told reporters in Adelaide yesterday. "Obviously in the current situation nothing's certain. It's difficult to plan, without a doubt, but we just go with the advice that we have been given."

"Of course I would love to be back on tour full-time, and all those decisions will come as close as we can to the events, but also as far out to try and



Naomi Osaka (R) and Ashleigh Barty with their trophies after the final

” Obviously in the current situation nothing's certain. It's difficult to plan, without a doubt, but we just go with the advice that we have been given

ASHLEIGH BARTY

plan a schedule and plan a tour." Barty did not play for 11 months but has still held on to her top spot as the women's governing body adjusted the WTA rankings due to the pandemic, allowing players the ability to skip tournaments without the fear of losing points.

In contrast, second-ranked Osaka won last year's U.S. Open and the Australian Open on Saturday but still finds herself more than 1,300 points behind the Australian.

"There's no extra pressure. The extra pressure is non-existent for me," Barty said about Osaka's ascent.

"I can't control what anyone else does. For the tournaments or with the rankings, that's out of my control. As for defending points, I think that's a very negative way to look at it."

The rivalry between Barty and 23-year-old Osaka could be the highlight feature of the tour for the next few years.

"I've only played her a couple times. We haven't played a lot," Barty said, adding she had not watched Saturday's final between Osaka and American Jennifer Brady.

"So hopefully it's an opportunity for me to play against her in some big moments in big tournaments. That's what we dream of ... trying to put yourself in position to win big titles."

"So maybe it will happen one day but for the time being that's not what I'm stressed about."

Manuel stays with Alaska Aces

TDT | Manila

All's well that ends well, so Vic Manuel is not going anywhere.

A month after the 6-foot-4 banger demanded a trade, he has decided to stay with Alaska Aces in the 46th season of the Philippine Basketball Association (PBA).

Veteran player agent Danny Espiritu, who stands as the business manager of the defense-minded power forward, has confirmed that his prized ward had already reached an agreement with the Aces management to end the contract drama and open a new chapter in their rollercoaster relationship.

"The team management talked directly to Vic, and they reached out to me to finalize the papers," said Espiritu. "The secretary of Dickie Bachmann called me to say that the management is finally giving all of Vic's demands."

Espiritu did not expound on the deal on the Alaska big man's fresh contract, but sources claimed that it would run for two years with a monthly salary of 420,000 pesos, excluding bonuses and other perks.

Manuel and the Aces were at odds over his new contract.

Reports have it that the 33-year-old Manuel wanted a three-year pact, but the Aces could only offer two years with a team option on the second year.

Manuel refused to accept the contract and publicly demand-



A change of heart for Manuel

” Vic said he thinks that no team is really interested in him so he decided to stay with Alaska ... and there's no bad blood between Alaska and Vic. They understand that it was just part of the negotiation process

VIC MANUEL

ed a trade despite Alaska coach Jeffrey Cariaso's effort to talk to him, promising him that their rebuilding effort would be built around him.

Manuel said he wanted to be traded to three teams, NLEX, San Miguel Beer and Phoenix Super LPG, but the Aces failed to find any taker reportedly due to their "high demands."

"Vic said he thinks that no team is really interested in him so he decided to stay with Alaska," Espiritu said.

"And there's no bad blood between Alaska and Vic. They understand that it was just part of the negotiation process."

Espiritu said Alaska made the right move and Manuel was very happy with the offer.

"So now, it's a guaranteed contract without any clause and that was what Vic demanded before," Espiritu said.

"I know that there were few teams interested in him, but I don't want to force Vic into signing with one of them because I want him to decide on his own."

Alaska coach Cariaso acknowledged that the PSBA product is an important piece in their team.

"You are the June Mar (Fajardo) of our team, you are the (Christian) Standhardinger, you are our (Stanley) Pringle," said Cariaso.

Prior the new contract, Alaska did try to fulfill Manuel's wish to be traded. However, negotiations with other teams did not work out.