

# SPORTS

## sports

## Loman celebrates 23rd birthday after title defence

TDI | Manama

Stephen Loman celebrated his 23rd birthday after his successful championship title defence in Belfast at Brave Combat Federation.

The bantamweight champion from Baguio City is the youngest fighter to become a champion in the Bahrain based global Mixed Martial Arts promotion.

Loman was crowned champion by HH Shaikh Khalid bin Hamad Al Khalifa at Bahrain during Brave 9: The Kingdom of Champions hosted during 2017 Brave International Combat Week.

Loman went forth to defend his championship at Brave 13: Europe Evolution to become the first fighter from Philippines to defend a champion-



Stephen Loman

ship in the United Kingdom.

Loman is joined in his birthday celebrations by his twin brother, Rayne Loman. The champion was wished by celebrities, political leaders and businessmen in Philippines.

## Athletes appreciate Bahrain's commitment

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MA community in South Africa appreciated the commitment by the Kingdom of Bahrain towards the sports of Mixed Martial Arts.

Brave Combat Federation made major signings in South Africa in 2018 including Chad Hanekom and EFC bantamweight champion J P Buys.

Brave Combat Federation had featured multiple athletes from South Africa including

Jeremy Smith, Frans Mlambo apart from Hanekom and Buys.

Hanekom had taken part in Brave 13: Europe Evolution in Belfast where he made a dominating return with a first round Kimura submission.

Hanekom was awarded the performance bonus for his achievement.

The interest by Brave Combat Federation in South African fighters have given rise to speculations of an upcoming event in South Africa.

## Buttler's century helps England beat Australia

AFP | Manchester, United Kingdom

Jos Buttler's superb 110 not out saw England to a dramatic one-wicket win over Australia in the fifth and final one-day international at Old Trafford yesterday.

Victory saw England complete their first 5-0 series sweep of Australia in any format in more than 140 years of international men's matches between the arch-rivals.

Set just 206 to win, England

slumped to 50 for five and 114 for eight.

They were still 11 runs shy of victory at 195 for nine when Adil Rashid (20), who had helped Buttler add 81, was dismissed to leave England 195 for nine.

But Buttler responded by hitting part-time seamer Marcus Stoinis for six to complete a hundred off 117 balls -- the first time the usually rapid-scoring wicketkeeper-batsman had faced more than 100 balls at this level.

## Hamilton wins French GP

The four-time champion led from start to finish, claimed his first win in France

AFP | Le Castellet, France

Lewis Hamilton roared to victory with a polished lights-to-flag drive for Mercedes in yesterday's restored French Grand Prix to regain top spot in the world championship.

The four-time world champion led from start to finish, bar one lap following his pit stop, as he claimed his first win in France, his third this year and the 65th of his career.

Hamilton came home seven seconds clear of Dutchman Max Verstappen with Kimi Raikkonen taking third for Ferrari after passing his Red Bull team-mate Daniel Ricciardo with five laps remaining.

Hamilton's consummate performance came after fellow four-time champion and pre-race leader Sebastian Vettel of Ferrari crashed into his



Lewis Hamilton celebrates victory for Mercedes in the French Grand Prix at Circuit Paul Ricard

Mercedes team-mate Valtteri Bottas on the opening lap.

Both suffered damage and, under an early Safety Car, limped to the pits for repairs.

They rejoined from the back of the field to finish fifth and seventh respectively, either side of Kevin Magnussen of Haas, who was sixth.

Vettel had to serve a five seconds penalty, which he took at his second pit stop.

Carlos Sainz came home eighth for Renault, to the delight of the crowd, ahead of team-mate Nico Hulkenberg and Charles Leclerc, who secured a point for Sauber with another

impressive performance.

"Great work guys, great work everyone," said Hamilton, who had watched England defeat Panama 6-1 in the World Cup before the race.

"It's a good day for England." The race began in stifling heat with air temperatures soaring over 30 degrees Celsius and the track close to 46 degrees, to which a gusting mistral wind added further challenges.

There was immediate drama on the opening lap when, at Turn One, Vettel rammed into the rear of Bottas's Mercedes in an incident that immediately

required the deployment of the Safety Car.

Hamilton, from his record 75th pole position, made a clean departure, but in another incident at Turn Three two of the home French drivers were involved in another crash as Pierre Gasly of Toro Rosso collided with Esteban Ocon of Force India.

Both suffered comprehensive damage to their cars and had to retire, leaving Romain Grosjean to carry the French flag after surviving an incident when Vettel, minus a front wing on his Ferrari, made contact with his Haas car.

**65**  
Grands Prix have been won by Hamilton in his career and is the second highest of all behind Michael Schumacher (91)

## Federer loses No.1 spot as Coric stuns him

● Borna Coric snaps Roger Federer's 20-match winning streak on grass to lift Halle title

Reuters | Halle

Borna Coric ended Roger Federer's 20-match winning streak on grass, beating him 7-6(6) 3-6 6-2 in the Halle Open final yesterday while also bringing to a halt the Swiss maestro's reign as world number one.

Federer was denied a 10th title in the German grasscourt tournament as Croatian Coric handed the 36-year-old his first setback on an otherwise serene road towards defending his Wimbledon title.



Switzerland's Roger Federer in action during the final against Croatia's Borna Coric

The defeat meant that Rafa Nadal will return to the top of the world rankings today.

Many congratulations Borna for your first grass title. You played a wonderful match and deserved to win at the end

ROGER FEDERER

World number 34 Coric, playing in his first grasscourt final, showed great mental toughness and determination to fend off two set points before clinching the opening set after 57 minutes. Federer responded by apply-

ing further pressure on Coric's serve in the second set before converting a break point in the eighth game to force a decider.

The 21-year-old then broke Federer in the sixth game of the final set when the Swiss sliced a backhand long, before claiming only his second ATP title.

It was Federer's first defeat on grass since a second-round loss to German Tommy Haas at Stuttgart in June last year.

He also remains two matches away from matching Jimmy Connors' all-time record of 174 victories on the surface as he missed out on a 99th career title.

"Many congratulations Borna for your first grass title," Federer said in the post-match presentation. "You played a wonderful match and deserved to win at the end."

## Cilic saves match point to beat Djokovic for title



Croatia's Marin Cilic

AFP | London

Marin Cilic was crowned Queen's Club champion for the second time as the Croatian stunned Novak Djokovic with a dramatic fightback in his 5-7, 7-6 (7/4), 6-3 victory yesterday.

Cilic was on the verge of a third loss in the Queen's final when Djokovic held a match point in the second set.

But the world number six survived that threat and then stormed back from 4-1 down to take the second set tie-break.

Inspired by that escape act, Cilic powered through the deciding set to

leave Djokovic shell-shocked as he won the Wimbledon warm-up event for the first time since 2012.

"It was a special win for me because last year I had a match point and didn't convert it," Cilic said.

"It was a tough match but I have waited six years to get my hands on this trophy."

Djokovic tried to stay upbeat, saying: "I have to congratulate Marin on a fantastic week. He deserved to win and came up with some big shots."

"It's a tough loss for me. But I have to see the positive because I haven't played a final in almost a year."

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