

## Bahrain kick off September camp with Qatar, UAE friendlies

Talajic names 29-man squad for international FIFA window



Bahrain players in training ahead of their upcoming friendlies

● **September camp runs from August 30 to September 9**

● **Friendlies vs Qatar (Doha) and UAE (Dubai) on schedule**

● **29-player squad named for preparations under Talajic**

● **Focus on November's Arab Cup playoff**

TDT | Manama

The Bahrain national football team will begin their September training camp on August 30 with a closed session, as part of their preparations for upcoming challenges during the international FIFA window. A day later, on August 31, the squad will hold a training session open to the media for 15 minutes.

On September 1, the team will travel to Doha to face Qatar in a friendly behind closed doors at Al Thumama Stadium on September 3. The following day, they will depart for Dubai to continue

their preparations and take on the UAE on September 8 at Zabeel Stadium, before returning home on September 9.

Head coach Dragan Talajic has called up a 29-player squad for the camp, featuring: Ibrahim Lutfallah, Abdulkarim Fardan, Yousif Habib, Mohammed Al Ghurabli, Waleed Al Hayam, Amine Benaddi, Abdulla Al Khulasi, Ahmed Dia, Sayed Mahmood Al Mousawi, Ahmed Bughamar, Hamad Shamsan, Sayed Mahdi Baqer, Sayed Dhiya Saeed, Hussain Al Aakhar, Vinicius Emanuel, Mohammed Marhoon, Haz-

za Ali, Hassan Jameel, Mahdi Humaidan, Ali Madan, Ahmed Al Shurooqi, Omar Saber, Jassim Al Shaikh, Komail Al Aswad, Ibrahim Al Khattal, Mahdi Abduljabbar, Hussain Abdulkarim, Mohammed Al Romaihi, and Abdulla Al Subaie.

The camp aims to assess player readiness and build team cohesion ahead of crucial fixtures later this year. Chief among them is Bahrain's Arab Cup qualifying playoff against Djibouti on November 25 in Qatar, where the winner will advance to Group D alongside defending champions Algeria, Iraq, and either Lebanon or Sudan.

# Sinner, Swiatek cruise at US Open

Defending champion Sinner and women's favourite Swiatek win in straight sets as Gauff battles through three-hour marathon

● **Sinner beats Vit Kopriva 6-1, 6-1, 6-2**

● **Swiatek wins 65th straight WTA first-round match**

● **Gauff survives three-set battle against Tomljanovic**

● **Osaka returns strong with straight-sets victory**

AFP | New York

World number one Jannik Sinner began his bid for back-to-back US Open titles with an emphatic victory on Tuesday as women's draw favourite Iga Swiatek swept into the second round.

Italian star Sinner waltzed to a 6-1, 6-1, 6-2 win over Czech world number 89 Vit Kopriva, needing just 1hr 38min to advance to the next round.

"It feels great to be back here. Obviously it's a very special tournament," said Sinner, who is attempting to become the first man to repeat as US Open champion since Roger Federer won five in a row from 2004-2008.

Sinner, 24, faces Alexei Popyrin in the third round.

"I'm very happy that I'm healthy again," said Sinner, who was forced to retire from last week's Cincinnati Open final against Carlos Alcaraz.

"I have amazing memories (from last year). Every year is different. You come here starting this tournament hopefully in the best possible way, which I did," he added.

Sinner's blistering start on the Arthur Ashe Stadium court was matched by Poland's Swiatek, who was similarly emphatic in a 6-1, 6-2 rout of Colombia's Emiliana Arango.

The 24-year-old from Poland was always in control against 84th-ranked Arango, overwhelming the Colombian with some powerful groundstrokes



Poland's Iga Swiatek plays a backhand return to Colombia's Emiliana Arango

mixed with some deft work at the net.

The win makes Swiatek the first woman in history to win 65 consecutive WTA-level first round matches, surpassing Monica Seles' previous record of 64.

Yet Swiatek's performance was relegated to a footnote in her post-match press conference, where news of pop star Taylor Swift's engagement to NFL player Travis Kelce dominated the questions.

### 'Swiftie' Swiatek

Swiatek is a fully paid-up "Swiftie" -- the nickname given to Swift's millions of fanatical followers -- and could not hide her delight at learning of the singer's looming nuptials.

"I'm just happy for her, because she deserves the best," Swiatek said.

The six-time Grand Slam singles champion -- a winner in New York in 2022 -- will face the Netherlands' Suzan Lamens in the second round.

Yet while Sinner and Swiatek strolled into the second round, 2023 women's singles cham-



Champion Coco Gauff was forced to claw her way past Australia's Ajla Tomljanovic in a gruelling late night battle that lasted just under three hours.

Gauff racked up 59 unforced errors, 10 double faults and suffered six breaks of serve before finally prevailing 6-4, 6-7 (2/7), 7-5 against Tomljanovic, ranked 79th in the world.

"It wasn't the best but I'm happy to get through to the

next round," said Gauff, who admitted she had been drained by an unsettled build-up to the tournament.

Gauff, who won her second career Grand Slam at the French Open earlier this season, overhauled her coaching team on the eve of the US Open in an effort to revamp her service game.

"Honestly it's been really tough, mentally exhausting," Gauff said. "But I'm trying. It wasn't the best today, but it was an improvement on last week."

While Gauff laboured to victory, two-time former champion Naomi Osaka had no such difficulty in dispatching Belgium's Green Minnen 6-3, 6-4, but

The Japanese former world number one revelled in returning to a venue that she regards as a home from home.

"Whenever I play here the atmosphere feels like home, and it is home for me," said Osaka, who is seeded 23rd and will next face American Hailey Baptiste.

In other women's draw results on Tuesday, Ukrainian 27th

seed Marta Kostyuk took down Britain's Katie Boulter 6-4, 6-4. Eighth seed Amanda Anisimova of the United States ousted Australia's Kimberly Birrell 6-3, 6-2.

Brazil's 18th seed Beatriz Haddad Maia advanced with a 6-3, 1-6, 6-1 win over Britain's Sonay Kartal.

But there was disappointment for rising French star Lois Boisson. Boisson, who captivated her homeland with a run to the semi-finals of the French Open in June, exited in three sets to Switzerland's Viktorija Golubic, losing 3-6, 7-6 (7/3), 6-2.

Russian 13th seed Ekaterina Alexandrova brushed aside Latvia's Anastasija Sevastova 6-4, 6-1,

6-1,

6-1,

6-1,

6-1,

6-1,

6-1,

6-1,



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Diana Shnaider and Sofia Kenin were the rare seeds to fall.

