



Gigantic John Isner punches the air in joy after winning a point against fellow American Andy Roddick in the 2nd round of the US Open at the Flushing Meadows in New York on Saturday.

Top seed MSC

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Meanwhile, the organisers this time have changed the format of the tournament to keep the quarterfinals and dropped the qualifying round, which last year saw five teams join eleven automatic qualifiers in the 16-team final round.

Before finalising the groupings, last season's activities of the Bangladesh Football Federation was presented by power-point illustration that could hardly attract the guests.

BBF vice-president Kazi Nabil Ahmed sought help from all football stakeholders to make this season a success too.

Another vice-president Manzur Hossain Malu, general secretary Al Musabir Sadi, members Anwarul Haq Helal, Golam Rabbani Helal, Fazlur Rahman Babul, technical director Shahidur Rahman Shantu, national coach Edson Silva Dido and some former national players and the representatives of all participating clubs were among others present.

Mexico see

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The victory gave Mexico 12 points, the same as Costa Rica but ahead on goal difference. They trail Honduras and the United States, both on 13 points.

In San Pedro Sula, Honduras pummeled Trinidad and Tobago 4-1, while the United States rallied to beat El Salvador 2-1 in Salt Lake City, Utah.

Carlos Pavon' in the 19th and 27th minutes, Amado Guevara in the 61st and David Sauzo in the 82nd scored for Honduras, while Kerry Baptiste scored in the 85th for Trinidad and Tobago.

In Utah, Clint Dempsey and Jozy Altidore scored first-half goals to lift the United States to a 2-1 victory over El Salvador in Salt Lake City.

Christian Castillo had given El Salvador a 1-0 lead in the 32nd minute with a header over US keeper Tim Howard.

But Dempsey equalized in the 41st when he headed in a free kick from Landon Donovan.

Donovan's cross in first-half injury time also supplied Altidore, while Howard's save of William Reyes's point-blank shot in the 87th preserved the victory.

French press

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he did lead the French to the 2006 World Cup final, insisted overnight that "top spot is still up for grabs. I repeat it would have been better to win but we just have to regroup and focus on Wednesday. We have to show character."

The Journal du Dimanche worried, however, that the current team will not get the chance to emulate its 2006 counterpart.

"(The team) has not found a style, cohesion... It has no soul either. Things are getting serious," the Journal du Dimanche wrote.

And Ouest-France pointed an unequivocal finger at Domenech.

"He bears heavy responsibility for this fiasco," the paper wrote.



Did U Know?

The Scottish Cup soccer tie between Falkirk and Inverness Thistle in 1979 was postponed no fewer than 29 times because of bad weather.

A giant warning

AFP, New York



satisfied just yet."

The six-foot-nine (2.03m) tower belted down 38 aces against the highly-fancied fifth seed, but more importantly he showed a deftness of touch and an agility about the court that few knew he had.

It was by far the biggest win of his career and the 24-year-old ex-college star has suddenly emerged as a potential contender with Spain's Fernando Verdasco next up in the last 16.

"It's obviously, hands down, the biggest win of my career. Nothing even compares," he said.

"To do it at the stage I did it on is pretty spectacular. Maybe it will sink in a little bit more tomorrow.

"But I know I can really do some damage here."

It's all a long way from earlier in the year, when Isner was laid low for three months with a bout of mononucleosis, the same illness that troubled Roger Federer at the start of last year.

Ironically it was the example of good friend Roddick that inspired Isner to redouble his efforts at getting fully fit both physically and mentally, the better to compete at the highest level.

"I think Andy, in general, pushes every American player because he's the guy that we all look up to," he said. "I'll still continue to look up to him."

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"He sets the bar real high. He's five in the world. Nobody's even close to him in America.

"He's really the guy that all of us kind of aspire to be and try to be better than him, if that's possible."

"I knew I had to work on the conditioning a little bit harder. It was definitely a process."

Isner started to reap the benefits with some improved performances in the buildup tournaments to Flushing Meadows with notably a run into the semifinals in Washington in early August, defeating both Jo-Wilfried Tsonga and Thomas Berdych before losing a close three-setter to Roddick in the semis.

That upped his ranking to 55 and gave him the platform and confidence he needed to make a push in New York.

A five-set first round win over Victor Hanescu was followed by a straight sets win over Turkey's Marel Ilhan, neither result foretelling what was to happen against Roddick.

Verdasco in the fourth round is a completely different prospect.

Straight out of the crusty Spanish mould, he is a tried and trusted baseliner with a big serve and a hammer of a forehand.

Still Isner says he has no intention of changing anything in his game.

"It will be a little bit different against Verdasco," he said.

"With me, I just try to do what I want to do. I don't really worry about he has a good forehand, and I'm still going to try to hit my backhand cross court to his forehand because that's my game."

"I don't want to change my game too much."

Oudin aims long run

AFP, New York



stroke or a shot or anything like that. If you're mentally tough out there, then you can beat anyone. I'm so focused and I fight super hard. So it's not going to be easy to beat me or I'm not going to back down at all."

At the US Open, Oudin dropped fourth seed Elena Dementieva in the second round and "Oudini" continued her magical run by making a believer of former number one Sharapova, her third Russian victim in a row.

"She has a great amount of potential," Sharapova said. "Considering she's really young, I certainly think she has a great future ahead of her."

"She's off to a really good start. To be able to do it in great fashion like that, really step it up when she had it, I certainly think she can go further."

Even win a Slam title?

"Yeah, why not?" Sharapova said. "With experience and playing many tournaments, playing those types of matches in big arenas and big crowds, they're going to give her the confidence."

Oudin faces Russian 13th seed Nadia Petrova next and could meet two more Russians, French Open winner Svetlana Kuznetsova and world number one Diana Safina, if she keeps working her way through the draw.

"If I keep playing like this, hopefully I can do well," she said. "I still think I can improve so hopefully I can just get better."

"I guess it's kind of surprising, but it's like I've worked so hard for this. Finally everything is just coming together."

Oudin is the third-ranked American behind Serena and Venus Williams and could meet one of them in the final. But first things first.

"We'll see how I do in the next round," she said. "Hopefully I can keep it up."

Oudin served notice at Wimbledon by ousting former world number one Jelena Jankovic, although the Serbian star said she had few weapons in her game.

"Shocking that she said that," Sharapova said.

"I thought she played really well. I thought she has many weapons. She certainly held her ground. She played solid. She made me hit a lot of balls. She moved really well around the court."

Tenacity has been a trademark for Oudin, who has the word believe written on her pink and yellow shoes.

"I think the biggest weapon can be mental toughness," she said. "It doesn't have to be a

stroke or a shot or anything like that. If you're mentally tough out there, then you can beat anyone. I'm so focused and I fight super hard. So it's not going to be easy to beat me or I'm not going to back down at all."

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Mohammedan name cricket committee

SPORTS REPORTER

Mohammedan Sporting Club on Saturday announced its 29-member cricket committee for the upcoming season with prominent businessman and industrialist Mohammad Lutfur Rahman Badal named as chairman.

Hamid Bhuiyan was re-appointed as the secretary of the committee while Mahbub-ul-Anam, Alhaj Zahid Ali Chowdhury, Enayet Hossain Siraz, Golam M Alamgir and Aminul Haq Moni were named as advisors.

Five vice presidents of the committee are: Mahbub-ur-Rahman Shahin, Mizanur Rahman, Khondokar Asadul Islam Ripon and Richard B Rosario. Members of the committee are: Saiful Islam, professor Mobassher Monaim, Rafiqul Islam, Shakil Rizvi, Mohammad Nadim, Mohammad Younis, Sufi Azhar Hossain Santu, Mahmudul Hasan Sajju, Nasir Uddin, Chowdhury Nafis Sharafat, Ahsan Imam, Mokhlesur Rahman, Dr Abu Saeed Titu, Dr Zahidul Islam, Ahmed Imon Iqbal, Rajesh Puri, Bhoomik and Rakesh Puri Bhoomik.

However, with victory on Sunday his lead is 30 points - 237 to 207 -- while another Spaniard Dani Pedrosa, who was third here, moves into third place overall on 157 points ahead of Australian Casey Stoner, who is absent because of a mystery virus which has plagued him all season.

Rossi extends lead

AFP, Misano

Italian motorcycling maestro Valentino Rossi extended his lead in the MotoGP standings on Sunday as he easily beat teammate and championship rival Jorge Lorenzo to take the San Marino race.

The 30-year-old eight-times world champion -- who had admitted this weekend to holding talks with Ferrari about driving for them in next weekend's Formula One Italian Grand Prix before deciding against taking up the offer -- had been pinned back by Lorenzo when the Spaniard won last weekend's US MotoGP.

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