

Star SPORT

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Larissa makes nudity promise

Paraguayan fans will be keener than ever for their team to land the Copa America after model Larissa Riquelme on Sunday promised to pose nude should they triumph. The Paraguayans are in Group B with favourites and holders Brazil as well as Ecuador, and Venezuela. "If Paraguay win the Copa America then I shall pose nude on the pitch," Riquelme told AFP, gesturing in the direction of the Brigadier General Estanislao Lopez stadium before the Ecuador game. Her fans will doubtless hope she is right. -AFP



Former Australian fast bowler Geoff Lawson (R) helps GP-BCB National Cricket Academy paceman Mukhtar Ali (L) take part in a balancing exercise as Kamrul Islam looks on during a training session yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Lawson's mantra

Cricket

MOHAMMAD ISAM

You may have a daunting 18-yard run-up, a pivot that needs tightening and a booming follow-through but as far as Geoff Lawson is concerned, only one thing matters.

"I will be talking to them about how we get people out; how we make winning teams. All the things that are just common sense. Often people get caught up in the technical side of it. We teach fast bowlers to get people out. We want to impart the practical side of it," said the former Australian cricketer who arrived yesterday as the specialist fast bowling coach for the GP-BCB National Cricket Academy.

Listening to Lawson speak about fast bowling, hardly any conjecture thereafter can clutter your mind. His views on bowling in the sub-continent have been refined through years of experience as a coach. He was of course in charge of Pakistan and is also the current coach of Kochi Tuskers in the Indian Premier League.

"Growing up and bowling in these sorts of pitches makes you bowl in a certain way," said Lawson. "Sometimes the bowlers get negative when they are operating in batting conditions and it's a vicious cycle where the captain goes to spin, the bowlers don't get enough work and they don't learn, so it all

goes downhill."

"First of all, we reassure people that you can be successful and hopefully, they'll put some grass in the pitches," he said.

Lawson though isn't just about taking wickets. He will take the best part of the next three weeks to cater to every Academy and A team pace bowler's needs.

"Each individual will need something different. Someone needs more emphasis on fitness, footwear and some need to learn how to manage themselves through a day of cricket. Some have technical problems while for others, there's the tactical stuff. We'll do a lot of tactical stuff: how do you get people out. But each bowler will have different requirements," he explained.

He will focus the next few weeks on imparting his vast experience with the best fast bowlers in the country and Lawson is aware that he won't have to work from scratch.

"They are Academy players so they do have skill and ability. We're not starting from zero. A lot of the building blocks are already there. My job is to hopefully add strength to the building. The foundation is there. It is like giving them my experience as a player," he said.

Years ago, a visit from Andy Roberts changed Mashrafe Bin Mortaza's bowling so whenever a fast bowling coach comes to town, it brings hope among the aficionados.

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He cannot keep winning: Nadal

AFP, London

Rafael Nadal insists Novak Djokovic cannot keep winning and he will be first in the queue ready to pounce when the Serb finally cracks.

Djokovic, who dethroned Nadal as world number one on Monday, also took the Spaniard's Wimbledon title on Sunday with a 6-4, 6-1, 1-6, 6-3 win, ending his opponent's 20-match winning streak at the All England Club.

It also took his record since Serbia's maiden Davis Cup triumph last December to 50 wins in 51 matches, his only blemish being his recent French Open semifinal loss to Roger Federer.

But despite losing his fifth final of 2011 to Djokovic, Nadal, the 2008 and 2010 Wimbledon champion, believes that he can hit back.

"My experience says this level is not forever," said 10-time Grand Slam winner Nadal.

"Probably the level of Novak of today is not forever. I'm going to be here fighting all the time, waiting for my moment to beat him

another time."

Nadal said he will not torture himself over his loss on Sunday in what was his 13th Grand Slam final.

After already deciding to skip the Davis Cup quarter-final against the United States in Texas next weekend, he will work on what he believes are the minor adjustments he needs.

"The game is easy, so to think about a lot of things will be a mistake. Don't think about playing well, how you are not playing well," said Nadal, who still holds a 16-12 winning record over the Serb.

"It's true we can analyze that my game is not bothering him. We have to find how I can bother him another time. I did in the past. He's in the best moment of his career. That's true.

"I am in one of the best moments of my career. Still it wasn't enough to beat him. I have to play longer. I have to play more aggressive. I have to have less mistakes."

Nadal refuses to be too downcast about losing both his Wimbledon title and the number one spot, which he and Federer have monopolised since 2004.

He points to winning a sixth French Open,

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'Expert help always welcome'

SPORTS REPORTER

With specialist coaches flying in to the GP-BCB National Cricket Academy this month, the Tigers too could take advantage of the experts.

Mushfiqur Rahim, who believes that a practised coach in the field is important for his skill, had a talk with Alan Campbell and is set to take part in sessions very soon.

"I think a specialist is always necessary. Some teams have a separate wicketkeeping coach so it always comes in handy," said the Tigers' wicketkeeper-batsman.

"After talking to Nasu bhai, I went and talked to Alan and told him that we could work for some time," informed Mushfiqur.

It is the computer analyst Nasir Ahmed who is often

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Djokovic not to stop

AFP, London



Novak Djokovic insists he won't rest on his laurels after the Serb completed a dream double by winning his first Wimbledon crown just days after his coronation as the world's top player.

In the space of just three days, Djokovic has knocked Rafael Nadal from his position on top of the rankings thanks to his semifinal victory over Jo-Wilfried Tsonga and then taken the Spaniard's Wimbledon title with 6-4, 6-1, 1-6, 6-3 in Sunday's final.

From the moment he first watched Wimbledon at home in Belgrade and then from the German tennis academy he was sent to aged just 12, Djokovic has yearned to win at the All England Club.

Now the 24-year-old has reached the summit of those ambitions, but he has no intention of stopping to enjoy the view for long.

Djokovic currently has three Grand Slam titles to his name and he is desperate to get closer to the likes of Nadal, who has won 10 majors.

"I will definitely come for some more Wimbledon, more Grand Slam trophies. This is what I'm born for. I want to be a tennis

champion. I want to win more Grand Slams," he said.

"I will not definitely stop here, even though I have achieved two of the biggest things in my life.

"I managed to make my dreams come true, all in three days. It's just an incredible feeling that I'm never going to forget. This is the best day of my tennis career.

"I was just chatting with my family and my team in the locker room and remembering those days of the hard work that we put into in Germany and back in Serbia and the dreams that I had. It's really beautiful."

Until the start of this year it seemed Nadal and Roger Federer's hold on the top prizes in men's tennis was almost unbreakable, but Djokovic has shaken the old guard with an astonishing run of 48 wins from his last 49 matches since the turn of the year.

Djokovic has won two of this year's three Grand Slams, with his only defeat of the entire year coming in the French Open semifinals against Federer.

He is also the first man other than Nadal or Federer to be ranked number one since February 2004, and the first Wimbledon champion other than those two since Lleyton Hewitt in 2002.

Yet it was only when he led Serbia to

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SCB brings the Reds to Asia

SPORTS REPORTER

Liverpool Football Club embark on a pre-season tour of Asia with a game in China against Guangdong Sunray Cave on July 13. The Tianhe Stadium in Guangzhou will host the match.

It will be the Reds' first ever game in mainland China. The other match on the tour will be played in Kuala Lumpur on July 17 against a Malaysian XI at the Bukit Jalil Stadium. The team will then move to Singapore for the final fixture the day after.

The Reds enjoy fantastic support in Asia and this summer's visit, sponsored by the Standard Chartered Bank, follows the hugely successful 10-day pre-season tour of Thailand and Singapore two years ago.

"Whenever we go to Asia, the fans are always amazing," said Liverpool captain Steven Gerrard. "The supporters over there are fanatical about

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BLC seeks more time

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh League Committee sought more time to prepare the investigation report on the match-fixing allegation between Sheikh Jamal Dhanomdi Club and Rahmatganj MFS.

According to the Bangladesh League Committee headed by Abdus Salam Murshedy, the report was supposed to be submitted to the BFF president yesterday but the league committee chairman said that they could not prepare the report in time as the final meeting was going on yesterday night.

"We will now submit the report to the BFF president on Saturday next as it will take some time to prepare the report, which is very sensitive.

Besides, we will be busy tomorrow (Tuesday) and no one can manage time on Wednesday and Thursday amid strikes," said Murshedy.

Before the meeting, BFF president Kazi Salahuddin said that everything related to the investigation would have to be justified and the executive committee would revise the recommendations if they find anything unjustified in the investigation report.

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Euphoric Serb press

AFP, Belgrade



Serbian papers were in ecstasy on Monday after Novak Djokovic defeated Raphael Nadal to win his first Wimbledon crown and reach the world number one spot for the first time in his career.

"Kingly!" screamed the cover of the popular daily Blic, adding that "by winning Wimbledon, Djokovic had confirmed he deserved the top ranking that had been shared by Nadal and Roger Federer over the last seven years.

Serbian President Boris Tadic, who attended the final in London, said he "almost died while watching the game."

"I would immediately hand over my duties to Novak," Blic quoted Tadic as saying.

Naming Djokovic a "Duke of Wimbledon," sports daily Sportski zurnal said that such a "scenario was more than deserved."

"From his early days, he has invested every moment of his life in tennis and he therefore deserved the unprecedented success he had achieved.

Djokovic, who led Serbia to a first Davis Cup win over France in Belgrade last December, snatched the men's crown from Rafael Nadal with a 6-4, 6-1, 1-6, 6-3 victory.

Politika daily published a montage of Serbian national currency dinar banknote valued at 2011 dinars, with Djokovic's face on the front.

"Hail to the king and his crown," vowed daily Vecernje novosti, widely reporting on the spontaneous celebrations on the streets of the capital Belgrade and other Serbian towns.



TOAST OF SERBIA: Serbian newspapers yesterday featured front page pictures of Serbian tennis world No.1 Novak Djokovic hoisting the Wimbledon trophy, which he won by defeating Spain's Rafael Nadal on Sunday.

PHOTO: AFP

Novak number 1

AFP, Paris

Wimbledon champion Novak Djokovic was confirmed as the new world number one when the ATP rankings were released on Monday.

Djokovic, who beat Rafael Nadal in Sunday's final, was already guaranteed to move ahead of the Spaniard following the Serb's semifinal defeat of Jo-Wilfried Tsonga. It ends Nadal's 56-week rein since he took over from Roger Federer on June 7, 2010.

Not since Andy Roddick in the week of January 26, 2004 has anyone other than Nadal or Federer been ranked number one.

It is the natural culmination of an extraordinary first half of the year for Djokovic who has now won 48 of 49 matches in 2011 and claimed eight titles, including the Australian Open and Wimbledon.

At 24 years, 1 month, 12 days, Djokovic is the 25th player since the rankings began in 1973 to hold the number one position and the first Serb to do so.