

# Messi at the double as Argentina overrun Bolivia 4-1

Lionel Messi breaks Argentina's record for caps at Copa America win

● Uruguay beat Paraguay 1-0 to set up Colombia Copa America date

TDT | Manama

Lionel Messi celebrated his record 148th international cap with two goals as Argentina trounced Bolivia 4-1 to clinch top spot in Copa America Group A on Monday. Messi -- who had equalled Javier Mascherano's Argentinian caps record of 147 last week -- marked his 148th appearance in style, setting up the opening goal before bagging a brace of his own.

The victory at Cuiaba's Arena Pantanal stadium sees Argentina advance to a quarter-final on Saturday against Ecuador, the fourth placed finishers from Group B.

Bolivia, who had already been eliminated after three defeats in their opening three games, were outclassed from the outset by a rampant Argentina.

The Argentines almost took the lead after three minutes, only for Bolivia goalkeeper Carlos Lampe to pull off a remarkable double save from Sergio Aguero and Angel Correa in quick succession.

But Argentina did not have to wait long for the breakthrough,



Argentina's Lionel Messi in action during the match

when Messi's delightful chipped pass released Papu Gomez who volleyed past Lampe to make it 1-0 after six minutes.

Argentina doubled their lead on 33 minutes when Gomez was brought down in the area by Bolivia's Diego Bejarano.

Messi duly stepped up to convert the penalty to put Argentina firmly in control.

Bolivia got their first shot on goal shortly afterwards, Jeyson Chura's ferocious long-range effort forcing Argentina goalkeeper Franco Armani into a diving save at full stretch.

But Argentina reasserted their dominance and it was Messi who made it 3-0, latching on to a clever lofted pass from new Barcelona team-mate Aguero and lobbing a cheeky finish over the advancing Lampe.

Bolivia pulled a goal back in the 60th minute with a cleverly worked move, Chura's deft back heel releasing Leonel Justiniano down the right flank who crossed for Erwin Saavedra to score.

Argentina responded swiftly though, substitute Lautaro Martinez tapping in from close range in the 65th minute just two minutes after coming on for Aguero.

## Uruguay ease past Paraguay

An Edinson Cavani penalty sealed an easy 1-0 win for Uruguay against neighbours Paraguay Monday's other Group A game, setting up a quarter-final tie against Colombia.

Despite the narrow scoreline it was a dominant performance from Uruguay, who had the vast

**148**  
appearances have been made by Lionel Messi for Argentina to beat the mark previously held by retired defender Javier Mascherano

majority of chances but struggled to break down Paraguay's stubborn defence.

Uruguay were also lacking a bit of quality in front of goal and had to rely on Cavani's 21st minute spot kick for the win.

The best early chances fell to Giorgian de Arrascaeta, before Nahitan Nández was bundled over in the box for an 18th minute penalty, dispatched by Cavani.

The Manchester United striker made way for Luis Suarez in the 68th minute, but the Atlético Madrid forward was also frustrated in front of goal.

With a narrow lead, Uruguay conceded a late free kick near their goal that gave Paraguay hope of a late draw but the effort came to nothing.

Group A winners Argentina, who beat Bolivia 4-1, will face Ecuador in the last eight, while host nation Brazil will take on Chile in Rio de Janeiro on Friday. Paraguay play Peru the same day.

## Barty, Kyrgios lead Australia's Olympic tennis team



Ashleigh Barty in action during a match

AFP | Sydney

World number one Ashleigh Barty confirmed she will compete at the Tokyo Olympics yesterday, headlining an 11-strong Australian tennis team for the Games that includes firebrand Nick Kyrgios.

Barty's announcement comes just a day after four-time gold medallist Serena Williams revealed she would be skipping the Games, which will also be without Spanish great Rafael Nadal.

The 2019 French Open champion Barty, 25, said she intended to compete in both singles and doubles at the Games, adding "I can't wait to be a part of it".

"Competing in an Olympic Games is always a dream as young kids you aspire to," she said.

The Australia team comprises six men and five women, including former US Open champion Sam Stosur who will be going to her fifth Olympic Games at the age of 37.

World number 15 Alex de

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ASHLEIGH BARTY

Minaur is the top-ranked Australian man, with the volatile Kyrgios likely to be one of the highest profile male players in the draw, despite his modest ranking of 60.

Both will play singles with De Minaur also featuring in the doubles.

In contrast to veteran Stosur, Barty De Minaur and Kyrgios will all be making their Olympic debuts in Tokyo.

"It's super special being able to represent your country in one Olympics let alone five," said Stosur, who also competed at Athens 2004, Beijing 2008, London 2012 and Rio 2016.

## Murray wins first Wimbledon singles match since 2017

AFP | London

Two-time champion Andy Murray won his first Wimbledon singles match since 2017 on Monday with a four-set triumph over Nikoloz Basilashvili of Georgia.

Murray, the champion in 2013 and 2016 but who has fought a long battle with hip and groin injuries in recent years, triumphed 6-4, 6-3, 5-7, 6-3 over the 24th seeded Basilashvili.

"It has been extremely tough, even in the last few months," said 34-year-old Murray.

"It was not the most serious of injuries but it was frustrating not to be able to get on the court.

"I have had so little momentum over the last few years but kept on going to the gym and trying to get back to do it again."

Now ranked a lowly 118 in the world, former number one Murray will face either Oscar Otte of Germany or France's Arthur Rinderknech for a place in the last 32.

His last appearance in the singles tournament at Wimbledon four years ago ended in a five-set loss to Sam Querrey in the quarter-finals.

A long-standing hip problem, which required surgery, then pushed him tearfully to the brink of retirement.

But three-time major win-



Andy Murray celebrates his win

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ANDY MURRAY

ner and back-to-back Olympic gold medallist Murray said he

intends to keep playing.

"I keep on being asked will it be my last match or my last Wimbledon," he said.

"I don't know why I keep on being asked. I want to keep on playing. I enjoy it and I can still play at the highest level.

"Basilashvili is ranked 28 in the world and I beat him."

It was a roller-coaster evening for Murray who let slip a 5-0 lead in the third set.

That led to a delay in proceedings to allow for the Centre Court roof to close.

But Murray broke in the first game of the fourth set to send him on his way to victory.

"It's amazing to be back out here playing again on Centre Court," he added.

## Fakhreddine takes on arch-rival Maalem for vacant Light Heavyweight title at BRAVE CF 52

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Mohammad Fakhreddine and Mohamed Said Maalem will finally have the opportunity to settle their differences with gold on the line. They are set to be the main event of BRAVE CF 52: Bad Blood, which takes place in association with The Golden Cage, in Milan, Italy on August 1st.

BRAVE Combat Federation has announced that its Middleweight world champion Fakhreddine will attempt to become a two-division titleholder, as he takes on arch-rival Mohamed Said Maalem with the vacant Light Heavyweight belt on the line.

Their fight was supposed to take place at BRAVE CF 50, but Fakhreddine fell ill during the day of the event, and wasn't able to walk out on fight time.

After the cancellation was announced, Said Maalem went on a tirade, accusing "The Latest" of being disrespectful, and then used his social media profiles to poke fun at Fakhreddine's stomach issues, which ignited a huge feud between both fighters.

"I came today for the belt. I'm here and my opponent isn't here even though he disrespected me and said I don't have any wrestling and any boxing even though I was a respectful person. I wanted to reply to his trash talk and teach some man-



ners in the cage", said "L'Am-biance".

Now he will have another opportunity to rise up to the occasion and become the new Light Heavyweight champion of the world, while making sure his hated counterpart doesn't make history.

For Fakhreddine, it will be a chance to definitively write his name in MMA folklore by becoming the first-ever BRAVE CF simultaneous two-division world champion, something that can define the storied ca-

reer of Middle East's most famous fighter.

With BRAVE CF 52: Bad Blood, Italy becomes the eighth different European country visited by BRAVE Combat Federation, after Northern Ireland, England, Romania, Slovenia, Sweden, Russia, and Belarus. The show and partnership with The Golden Cage aims to solidify the organization's stance as having the most active MMA market share in Europe, and dedication towards fostering the European mixed martial arts scene.