

Sinner closes in on top five after Toronto triumph



● FRANK GUNN/AP

AFP – Italy's Jannik Sinner moved up to a career-high ATP ranking of sixth on Monday after capturing his first Masters trophy in Toronto.

Sinner, 21, won the Toronto title 6-4, 6-1 in the final against Australian Alex de Minaur, who moves up six places to 12th.

Spain's Carlos Alcaraz, 20, the reigning Wimbledon and US Open champion, holds the number one ranking ahead of Serb Novak Djokovic and Russian Daniil Medvedev.

Denmark's Holger Rune moves up to fifth with Norway's Casper Ruud slipping two places to seventh.

Iranian prodigy Khateri sets sights on 2028 Olympic glory



← Ahoura Khateri celebrates with the Iranian flag after winning the freestyle 45kg gold at the Wrestling U17 World Championships in Istanbul, Turkey, on August 6, 2023.
● UWW

Mbappe back in training, likely to stay at PSG



● GETTY IMAGES

BBC – Paris St-Germain forward Kylian Mbappe has returned to first-team training and is likely to stay at the French champions this summer.

The France forward, 24, had not been training with the first-team squad and was left out of PSG's 0-0 season opener with Lorient on Saturday.

He has been in a contract stand-off amid a desire to join Real Madrid but could now extend his contract at PSG.

PSG said Mbappe was reinstated after "very constructive and positive" talks. The France captain watched the game on Saturday from the stands.

Mbappe has one year left on his current deal and has so far refused to sign a new contract.

PSG chairman Nasser Al-Khelaifi has been adamant he would not let the striker leave for nothing and it is thought some kind of agreement is likely that will see Mbappe sign the one-year extension to his present deal as originally envisaged.

That would run to 2025 and allow PSG to sell Mbappe to Real next summer.

"Following very constructive and positive discussions between Paris St-Germain and Kylian Mbappe before the PSG - Lorient game, the player has been reinstated into the first team training squad this morning," PSG said on Sunday.

Sport Desk

Newly-crowned world under-17 champion Ahoura Khateri says he is already aiming at a glorious Olympic campaign in five-years' time.

Khateri was part of the Iranian squad that bagged six medals, including double golds, to claim the freestyle crown at the Wrestling U17 World Championships in Istanbul last week.

Having missed out on a podium finish in the previous two editions of the freestyle event, Iran topped the table with 156 points – 30

clear of last year's champion USA – and Khateri played an integral part in the country's title-winning run.

The 16-year old powered past wrestlers from Moldova, Russia – representing the Individual Neutral Athletes team – and the United States before storming to a 11-0 victory over Armenia's Gor Buniatyan with 41 seconds left on the clock in the final showdown of the 45kg contests. Khateri believes his toughest challenge came in the last-four bout against American Ignacio Villaseñor,

which the Iranian won 5-2. "The bout against the American wrestler was the hardest one for me and I had to give it my all to beat him. He kept attacking and I really had a tough time breathing in the closing stages. Thank God the coaches' tactics helped me come out victorious at the end," the Iranian prodigy told ISNA.

The gold medal in Istanbul was a second major medal in 2023 for Khateri after he cruised to the Asian under-17 triumph in June without conceding a single point.

However, sky is the limit for the young gun, who considers American wrestling legend Johan Smith and fellow Iranian Hassan Rahimi – a five-time Olympic and world medalist – as his role models in the sport.

"I'll be eligible to take part in the cadets' competitions next year and I will be looking forward to repeating the success in the World Championships. I will then go all out for the world juniors and seniors golds, though my ultimate goal will be to walk away with the gold medal at the 2028 Olympic Games,"

Khateri said, who lives in the northern Iranian city of Sari in Mazandaran Province – the wrestling hub in the country.

"My father, who was also my first coach, and my mother have supported me all the way throughout my life and career and I hope I can repay them with an Olympic gold," added the Iranian.

Khateri was joined by Sina Khalili (65kg) – also a reigning Asian champion – in winning the top prize in Istanbul, while Sajjad Pirdayeh (60kg), and Abolfazl Hosseini (70kg) had to

settle for the silver medals of their respective weight classes.

Tohid Nouri (92kg) and Sam Sayyar (48kg), meanwhile, left the event with two consolation bronzes. "Iran had finished fourth last year [in Rome] but all the efforts made by the wrestlers and coaches paid off this year. We trained so hard for six months and I have to thank [head coach] Behnam Ehsanpour and other members of the coaching staff for helping us reach our physical and mental peak for the tournament," said Khateri.

Mancini resignation ends 'significant chapter' in Italy's history

REUTERS – Italy coach Roberto Mancini has resigned, ending a five-year spell in which they became European champions but missed out on the World Cup, the football federation (FIGC) said on Sunday. Mancini took charge of the four-time World Cup winners in 2018 after they failed to qualify for that year's global tournament in Russia, having previously not missed the finals of football's showpiece event since 1958.

The 58-year-old coach said resigning was a "personal choice".

"I thank all my players and fans who have accompanied me in these five years," Mancini wrote on Instagram.

"I will always carry the extraordinary victory of the 2020 European Championship in my heart. It has been an honour."

Following the retirements of veterans Andrea Barzagli, Daniele De Rossi

and captain Gianluigi Buffon, Mancini guided an Italy side in transition to success at the European Championship in 2021.

His team also went on a run of 37 games without defeat between October 2018 and October 2021 – a record in men's international soccer.

Italy performed well at the Nations League under Mancini, finishing third in the 2020-21 and 2022-23 editions.

Significant page

"A significant chapter in the history of the Azzurri, which began in May 2018 and ended with the 2023 Nations League Finals, comes to an end," the FIGC said in a statement.

"In between, the victory at Euro 2020, a triumph conquered by a group in which all the individuals were able to become a team."

However, Mancini was unable to take Italy back to the World Cup, with the

team again failing to qualify for last year's tournament in Qatar following a stunning 1-0 loss at home to North Macedonia in a playoff tie.

Following that failed World Cup qualifying campaign, Mancini came under intense pressure in the Italian media to resign but received backing from the national federation president to continue in the role.

"I thank President Gabriele Gravina for the trust, along with all the members of the FIGC," Mancini added.

His resignation comes just days after the former international forward was given responsibility for Italy's Under-21 and Under-20 teams in a bid to integrate the same styles and systems of play across age groups.

Italy are next in action in September, when they take on North Macedonia and Ukraine in Euro 2024 qualifying matches.

The Italians are third in Group C with three points from two games behind England on 12 from four and Ukraine with six from three. North Macedonia have three points from three matches.

"Taking into account the important and upcoming commitments for the UEFA Euro 2024 qualifiers... the FIGC will announce the name of the new national coach in the next few days," the federation said. Italian media reported that Antonio Conte and Napoli's Serie A winning manager Luciano Spalletti, who left the club in the close season, are potential candidates to take over.

Conte previously managed Italy from 2014 to 2016, guiding them to the Euro 2016 quarter-finals where they were beaten by Germany on penalties.



AFP