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Press Release

Davis Cup Qualifiers 2020: Two-time champions Croatia lead 2:0 against India after day one

Ramkumar Ramanathan stretches world no 37 Marin Cilic in a valiant effort

At the end of day one, hosts Croatia won both the singles rubbers against team India at the 2020 Davis Cup by Rakuten Qualifiers being played at Dom Sportova in Zagreb, Croatia from 6-7 March.

India have an uphill task at their hands and have to win all the three remaining rubbers in their bid to earn one of the 12 elusive spots on offer, this weekend, for the Davis Cup Finals in November later this year.

Ramkumar Ramanathan, 25-year-old, faced world no. 37 Marin Cilic in the second rubber to make it all-square in the tie, after compatriot Prajnesh Gunneswaran went down to Borna Gojo in a three-setter.

Chennai born Ramanathan had played Cilic once at Pune in 2018 where he suffered a loss 3-6, 4-6 at the hands of former US Open champion.

Playing in India colours, however, brought out an inspired performance from world no. 182 Ramanathan as he stretched Cilic to tie-breaks in both the sets before going down 6-7, 6-7.

With a noisy crowd right behind the Croat, Ramanathan played his heart out and displayed a great exhibition of classic serve and volley game.

The fact that both the players held their serves throughout the match is a testimony of the quality tennis played by both players.

Earlier in the day, Borna Gojo, at 6 ft 5 in, stood tall in his third Davis Cup match in Croatian colours and got his maiden win for his country at the Davis Cup.

Gojo defeated India's Prajnesh Gunneswaran in the opening singles rubber in a come-from-behind win 3-6, 6-4, 6-2.

Chennai born Gunneswaran started off well in the first set as he broke Gojo in the seventh and ninth games to grab the set 6-3.

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However, in the second set, Gojo broke Gunneswaran in the very first game to take early advantage and held his serve throughout to make it 1-1.

With the match evenly poised after two sets, Gunneswaran was outplayed and managed to break Gojo only in the sixth game to make it 2-4. Gunneswaran eventually lost the set 2-6 and rued the chance of opening the account for India.

Seasoned doubles pro and Davis Cup veterans for India Rohan Bopanna and Leander Paes will be up against Mate Pavic and Franko Skugor in the doubles to keep the Indian hopes alive before the reverse singles take place.

The matches will be telecast live on D Sport from 7:30 pm onwards.

A handwritten signature in purple ink, appearing to read 'Akhouri Bishwadeep', with a stylized flourish at the end.

(Akhouri Bishwadeep)
CEO, AITA