

## David gunning for fourth straight S'pore Masters

**Glass court to be set up in shopping mall for better viewing**

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SINGAPORE — The glass court is back after a 12-year absence, and the world's top woman squash player Nicol David has given it the thumbs up.

Said the 26-year-old Malaysian: "It's the best thing to showcase squash, especially a Gold-50 event such as the CIMB Singapore Women's Squash Masters.

"The feel of the court is great and players enjoy the true bounce and that makes for good squash."

It is necessity that has forced the Singapore Squash Rackets Association (SSRA) to invest some \$300,000 in a lease-to-buy arrangement for the equipment.

The Kallang Squash Centre is part of the venue for the Youth Olympic Games' tennis tournament next month, forcing the SSRA to make the bold investment to keep Singapore on the world squash calendar.

The glass court will be set up at Leisure Park at Kallang for the July 26-31 competition,

giving the event more visibility as spectators can watch the action from all angles.

After three editions, the women's masters has quickly established itself as the Republic's premier squash event, and will feature eight of the world's top 10 players.

And David, the No 1-ranked player, will be defending the masters title for a third straight time. She has bounced back to form this year after closing last season with three uncharacteristic defeats, and will be the one to beat despite the expected challenge from world No 3 Rachael Grinham of Australia, Englishwoman Alison Waters (No 5) and Egypt's Omneya Abdel Kawy (No 6).

Overcrowding at the Kallang Squash Centre has been a problem for the first three editions and the organisers are already warning that seating capacity will not improve at Leisure Park as there will only be capacity for 100.

But spectators can catch the matches from the upper floors of shopping mall.

The SSRA are also on the verge of securing a television deal which will see the tournament's semi-finals and final broadcasted live.

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World No 1 Nicol David (picture), on the glass court



TODAY FILE PHOTO

### ■ EAGLES DITCH TOKIJAN OVER PLAYER FLAP

Geylang United's S-League assistant coach Tokijan Darimosuvito has parted ways with the club after the Eagles' Prime League side had four results overturned for fielding an ineligible player.

Former Singapore winger Tokijan was the club's Prime League head coach.

"Tokijan has taken responsibility for the situation, decided that he is answerable for it and has left the club," Geylang's general manager Lim Tong Hai told MediaCorp.

Midfielder Ang Zhi Wei, the player in question, did not start any of the four games but came on as a substitute, clocking a total of 93 minutes.

"It is stated in Prime League rules that a player doing his National Service cannot turn out for a club until written permission has been obtained,"

explained Lim.

"We had already spoken to the relevant authorities, but still had not got approval," added the former Singapore defender.

Geylang won three of the four matches in question: 1-0 over Tampines Rovers (March 6), 2-0 against Sengkang Punggol (April 3) and 3-0 against Balestier Khalsa (April 25). The Eagles drew the April 11 tie 2-2 with Woodlands Wellington.

The Football Association of Singapore overturned the results and awarded Geylang's opponents a 3-0 win each. The Eagles also had 10 points deducted from their tally.

Geylang have only nine fixtures left to play in the Prime League, starting with Gombak United tonight, and will not be looking for a replacement for Tokijan, said Lim.

SHAMIR OSMAN

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