

Baby delays Day's bid

BEN EVERILL

JASON Day is looking forward to celebrating his major breakthrough with Australian golf fans, but it will have to wait as the impending birth of his second child has ruled him out of a return this summer.

The world No.3 captured the PGA Championship at Whistling Straits on the shores of Lake Michigan in record-scoring fashion to finally shake the major monkey off his back,

but rather than party hard all night the committed family man flew home to Columbus, Ohio so three-year-old son Dash could get back to his own bed and toys.

Staying true to his family-first motto and with baby number two due in mid-November, Day says he will forgo the events of the Australian summer to be with wife Ellie at the birth and for the early bonding weeks of the child's life.

"There is no one I would

want to share this with more than my Australian fans but as I have always said family comes first and golf is second," Day said.

"It is important for me to be there for the birth of my second child and share these special times with my family.

"I hope the fans can understand and I know the events this year back home will be great and with strong fields and I urge people to get out and see them because who

knows, our next major winner could be out there.

"And I can't wait to get down there in the future and really celebrate with everyone."

Day has yet to win one of Australia's big three events, having missed last season because of injury rehab.

But he makes no secret of his desire to eventually have his name on the Australian Open, Australian PGA and Australian Masters trophies.

"A win anywhere is great and obviously I am still coming to terms with the biggest one of my career but I know I want to have my name on the honour roll for all three of Australia's big events before my career is over," he said.

"It is a who's who in the game of golf and in recent times the Australian Open particularly has been a springboard for Rory McIlroy and Jordan Spieth to go on to big things."

Time out impacts on fitness for Green bout

MELISSA WOODS

VETERAN boxer Danny Green admits he lacks match fitness compared to his Argentine opponent Roberto Bolonti as he heads into his first fight in almost three years.

The 42-year-old four-time world champion is taking on "The Beast" Bolonti at Melbourne's Hisense Arena tonight. Green's last fight was at the same venue when he outpointed Kiwi Shane Cameron to regain his IBO cruiserweight world title.

While he never officially retired, he hasn't punched in anger since then. In contrast, Bolonti has been busy.

In the same period, the 36-year-old Argentine has fought eight times, only losing once to Juergen Braehmar for the WBA light heavyweight world title but going the distance with the powerful German.

"It's a big challenge because he's just come off a win," Green said. "He's been fighting regularly at a high level in the last two and half years so he's got an edge there because he's got match fitness."

Bolonti was called in last week to replace Green's original opponent Slovakian Tamas Kovacs, who injured his neck. Due to the short notice, Green's camp had to find someone ready to go.

Bolonti fought just over two weeks ago, barely raising a sweat in his two round TKO job on Venezuelan Williams Ocano. Despite the lack of fights, Green said he kept training the whole time and didn't feel he'd lost his touch.

He said he'd been studying Bolonti's fights against Braehmar and also top British light heavyweight Tony Bellew to see how he performed.

Green said he'd had previous success against Argentinians and knew what to expect after his 2004 fight against Omar Gonzalez and in 2009 when he flattened Julio Cesar Dominguez. Green suffered the first knockdown of his professional career against Gonzalez before the fight was stopped because of his opponent's cut eye.

Volleyball NT won't take punt on playing host



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DESPITE Darwin's endless stretches of empty, sandy beaches, it may be some time before elite international beach volleyball returns to our shores.

The recent announcement that Australia will host one of the key qualifying tournaments for next year's Rio Olympic Games has resulted in plenty of interest from major Australian beaches keen to hold the event, including Bondi, which famously hosted the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games.

But Darwin won't be putting it's hand up, despite the tournament being perfectly scheduled for the Dry Season in June.

Volleyball NT Chairman Stuart Smith says while he would love to bring such an event to Mindil or Casuarina beach, installing the appropriate infrastructure is too big a job, not to mention the tides.

"Oh, look we'd love to but I don't think we'll be able to come up to their requirements; seat 2000 people and all the rest of it," Smith said.

"It probably won't happen just because of the infrastructure we'd have to put in, that it's not existing unlike some of the other beaches.

"The problem with Mindil beach is you have to pretty

much play between the tides because they come up and can smash you, because they come up to the trees basically ... Running a comp like an international comp going over a few days you'd have to have games going all the time, and the tides would wash everything away.

Hosting it at a non-beach venue isn't an option either, given the chaos caused when the Australian Pro Beach Volleyball tour came to Darwin in 1999. Then, a beach volleyball court was built inside Ludmilla's Richardson Park, but torrential rain wreaked havoc on the venue and with a no field, the Darwin rugby league season was forced to start two months late.

"All the dozers mucked up Richardson Park and we ended up going just about broke trying to fix up Richardson Park," Smith said.

Instead, Volleyball NT have approached the NT Government about establishing an Arafura Volleyball Cup, which would see the best beach volleyballers play emerging teams from neighbouring nations like Indonesia and Papua New Guinea in an indoor competition.

"Since the Arafura Games are gone, we'll just create our own tournament and that's what we've approached the government about," Smith said.

Smith, along with 23 of Darwin's best beach volleyballers will battle it out this Sunday at the NT Championships at Mindil beach from 2-7pm.



Tawhai Mako shows his style at Darwin's beach volleyball complex at Winnellie

Picture: ELISE DERWIN

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Tongyik hoping for central Reds role in his Red Centre visit

NICK KOSSATCH

ADELAIDE United youngster Ruon Tongyik has always longed to visit Alice Springs, but what he is longing for more is getting some game time for the Reds in tonight's pre-season game against Alice Springs All Stars at Traeger Park.

The tall centre-back is in the midst of making the transi-

tion from United's youth team into the senior team as the Reds strive to improve on their third placing last year.

"I've been told about Alice Springs and I've always wanted to come here and it's my first time and I have really enjoyed it," Tongyik said.

The sunnier and warmer weather will make for a nice change for Tongyik and his

teammates as they press to continue their impressive pre-season campaign to date.

And Tongyik wants to be a part of the Reds' rise.

"Hopefully I can get a run with the boys and enjoy the game and it will be good to play with the senior players," Tongyik said.

"I'm hoping to bond more with the boys and get to know

the way that they play and to have a good understanding with each other."

After three hours on the plane from Adelaide, players enjoyed stretching out and doing a few school visits yesterday afternoon before an hour-long training session last night.

"Training was all about getting some touches and to focus on the game," Tongyik said.

OLSH teacher Clare Curnow said it was great for the students to talk with some elite athletes.

"It is great for soccer here for the school visits and was a fantastic opportunity for the students to have access to these players," Curnow said.

"For United to be accessible for us is a privilege and gives the students inspiration to look

for soccer and even other sports as a pathway."

Curnow added it was a challenge to select some 40 students who were fortunate enough to interact with Tongyik and Love.

"We tried to figure out which kids from a campus of about 200 and it was a tough decision to make," Curnow said.