



TENNIS | Page 3

World No. 9 Fritz downs Vukic to win Atlanta Open



FOOTBALL | Page 4

Australia beat Canada 4-0 to reach World Cup last 16



Tuesday, August 1, 2023
Muharram 14, 1445 AH

GULF TIMES
SPORT



CRICKET

England spark Australia collapse to end Ashes all square

Page 2

HORSE RACING

Qatar Goodwood Festival 2023 set to kick off today

Patronised by Qatar and represented by QREC, the festival provides for a truly 'Glorious' race week





Agencies
Doha

The Qatar Goodwood Festival 2023 will kick off at the Goodwood Racecourse in UK today and enthral audiences till August 5.

Patronised by Qatar and represented by Qatar Racing and Equestrian Club (QREC) with the participation of various segments and large crowds, the festival provides for a truly 'Glorious' race week.

The Qatar Goodwood Festival is one of the undisputed highlights of the British flat-racing season.

The world famous five-day festival, affectionately known as 'Glorious Goodwood', presents spellbinding sport and an occasion like no other, unrivalled style, scintillating racing and hospitality – making for an exquisite week where some of the greatest stars in horse racing are crowned.

Providing a fitting curtain raiser in Group 1 will be the Al Shaqab Goodwood Cup. First run in 1812, the two-mile contest is worth £500,000 and has housed innumerable champion stayers over the years.

Spearheading day two will be the milers in the £1mn Qatar Sussex Stakes, before the fillies strut their stuff on Ladies Day with the Qatar Nassau Stakes providing the feature spectacle.

The finale on day five sees the fastest racehorses in the world contest the King George Qatar Stakes before arguably one of the most competitive handicaps in the Coral Stewards' Cup on Saturday.

The organising committee seeks to have a successful festival this year under the Qatari patronage that has been continuing since 2015 and gained a special reputation through the global presence. Ahead of the festival launch, QREC Chairman Issa bin Mohamed al-Mohannadi said that QREC seeks further successes in the festival this year as it has a robust partnership with the Goodwood Festival and which has generated a productive co-operation over the past years, pointing out that the Qatari presence at the festival has always been outstanding and has contributed to further progress of the grand event.


Qatar Goodwood Festival is one of the undisputed highlights of the British flat-racing season.

Al-Mohannadi praised the cooperation with partners in this event, including Qatar Airways and the embassy of the State of Qatar in UK which contributes to having a successful Qatar Goodwood Festival in expression of the status of Qatari equestrianism at the global level.

The festival also gained special fame through the large international presence of the horse racing enthusiasts as well as traditional festivities on all days of the event.

There will be Qatari participation, both at the level of officials of Qatar Racing and Equestrian Club, who pay great attention to the event and in participation of Qatari owners with their horses in some of the festival's runs – both purebred Arabian horses and purebred horses.

The focus will be on the Qatar International Stakes (the first category for purebred Arabian horses), in which Qatari owners are looking forward to continuing excellence with their horses.

On the first day, eight races will take place including the Al Shaqab Goodwood Stakes over a distance of 3,200m. On the second day, the Qatar International Stakes for horses over 4 years will be held over a distance of 1,600m. On the same day, Qatar Sussex Stakes Group 1 will be run over 1,600m.

The third day of the festival will also witness eight races including the Qatar Nassau Stakes Group 1 over 2,000m while on the fourth day of the festival, the Markle Magnolia Cup will be run over 1,100m, and the King George Qatar Group 2 will be held over 1,000m for horses three years old and over.

On the fifth and final day of the festival will see the Qatar Lillie Langtry Stakes Group 2 over a distance of 2,800m for horses three years old and over.

FOOTBALL

Premier League to clamp down on players harassing referees

AFP
London

Premier League players have been warned they face harsher punishments for harassing referees as part of a raft of measures aimed at stamping out bad behaviour on the pitch.

English football's authorities aim to "reset" the attitude from players and managers towards officials in the coming season.

A series of measures intended to tackle the issue were revealed yesterday ahead of the Premier League campaign kicking off on August 11.

The new 'Participant Charter' empowers referees to take tougher action against unacceptable behaviour, backed up by stronger disciplinary action from the Football Association.

Serious and repeat offenders can expect to face increased financial penalties, while referees will be encouraged to issue at least a yellow card if they are surrounded by two or more players.

Managers can also expect to be punished if they leave the technical area on the touchline to "enter the pitch to confront any match official at half-time or full-time".

"We want players, managers and fans to continue showing their passion, but these new measures have been introduced to ensure that the line is not crossed when it comes to on-field and technical area behaviour," said Premier League chief executive Richard Masters. FA chief executive Mark Bullingham added: "Football has the power to unite and inspire all those that play and watch the game. However, sometimes, this can be negatively impacted by a small minority of players, coaches and fans.

"Our collective approach is to reset this behaviour on the pitch and from the sidelines, whilst giving our referees the respect and protection that they deserve."

Off the field, clubs in the Premier League and the Football League will seek stronger sanctions against fans found to be involved in football tragedy abuse, such as chanting about the Hillsborough or Munich disasters.

"Incidents such as dangerous conduct, discrimination, and chanting about football-related tragedies have no place in our game - and can lead to football bans and potential criminal action," Bullingham said.



Chelsea manager Mauricio Pochettino (left) interacts with CEO of Premier League after the Premier League Summer Series match between Chelsea FC and Fulham FC at FedExField in Landover, Maryland, on Saturday. *(AFP)*

SPORT

CRICKET

Broad provides late flourish as England clinch Oval Test

England pace ace Stuart Broad winds up stellar career with key wickets as Ashes series is drawn 2-2





Australia captain Pat Cummins and teammates pose with the urn and trophies after drawing the series and retaining the Ashes at the Oval yesterday. **Right:** England's captain Ben Stokes (left) and Australia's captain Pat Cummins hold the series trophy after the drawn Ashes series yesterday. *(Reuters)*

AFP
London

England beat Australia by 49 runs to win the fifth Test at The Oval yesterday and end the Ashes series all square at 2-2 after the tourists suffered a dramatic collapse.

Australia, chasing a mammoth 384 to win, collapsed from 264-3 to 334 all out, with England's retiring paceman Stuart Broad taking the final wicket.

England did the bulk of the damage when, after a rain break of more than two hours, they took four Australia wickets for 11 runs in 19 balls.

Off-spinner Moeen Ali (3-76) and all-rounder Chris Woakes (4-50) led the way before Broad, England's all-time leading Ashes bowler polished off the tail.

"It was absolutely wonderful," Broad told *Sky Sports*. "I thought Chris Woakes and Moeen Ali set the tone absolutely unbelievably.

"Woakesy picked up a couple of wickets, particularly Steve Smith, who has just been a wonderful player to play against all these years. Once we got a couple we really started to believe.

"The crowd were unbelievable. It was so loud and we just jumped on the back of that. To contribute to the team with two wickets is very special.

"When you make that decision you wonder what your last ball will be so to take a wicket to win an Ashes Test match is pretty cool."

Australia, as the holders, had already retained the Ashes but they remain without an Ashes series win in England since 2001.



England's Stuart Broad celebrates with Ben Stokes after taking the wicket of Australia's Todd Murphy during the fifth day of the final Ashes Test at the Oval yesterday. *(Reuters)*

When play resumed after the rain delay, the tourists were 238-3, needing 146 more runs for victory.

Steve Smith, dropped at leg gully by England captain Ben Stokes just before the interval, was 40 not out and left-hander Travis Head 31 not out.

The pair had extended their fourth-wicket stand to 95 when off-spinner Moeen, in what could be his last Test appearance, turned a ball out of the rough.

Head, on 43, tried to drive, with Joe Root holding a routine catch at first slip.

Australia then lost their star batsman when Smith fell for 54, edging an excellent full-length delivery from paceman Woakes to Zak Crawley at second slip.

The tourists slipped to 274-6 when Moeen had all-rounder Mitchell Marsh brilliantly caught by diving wicketkeeper Jonny Bairstow before Woakes and Crawley combined to dismiss Mitchell Starc for a duck.

Captain Pat Cummins was next to go, caught by Stokes off Moeen for nine.

But with Australia needing 55 to win, Broad, who on Saturday made a shock announcement that he would retire after the match, produced a brilliant delivery to take tailender Todd Murphy's outside edge, with Bairstow holding another fine diving catch to leave Australia on the brink of defeat at 329-9.

Broad then had Carey edging behind only for Crawley to drop a tough low chance at second slip before the 37-year-old ended his career in fairytale fashion by having the wicketkeeper caught behind.

Earlier, all-rounder Woakes, often one of England's unsung heroes, reduced Australia to 141-2 by removing openers David Warner (60) and Usman Khawaja (72) in a stunning burst of two wickets for one run in seven balls. Express quick Mark Wood then had Marnus Labuschagne caught in the slips for 13 to leave Australia 169-3.

SCOREBOARD

England 1st Innings	**283**
Australia 1st Innings	**295**
England 2nd Innings	**395**
Australia 2nd Innings	
D. Warner c Bairstow b Woakes	60
U. Khawaja lbw b Woakes	72
M. Labuschagne c Crawley b Wood	13
S. Smith c Crawley b Woakes	54
T. Head c Root b Ali	43
M. Marsh c Bairstow b Ali	6
A. Carey c Bairstow b Broad	28
M. Starc c Crawley b Woakes	0
P. Cummins c Stokes b Ali	9
T. Murphy c Bairstow b Broad	18
J. Hazlewood not out	4
Extras (b10, lb10, nb2, w5)	**27**
Total (all out, 94.4 overs, 425 mins)	**334**

Fall of wickets: 1-140 (Warner), 2-141 (Khawaja), 3-169 (Labuschagne), 4-264 (Head), 5-274 (Smith), 6-274 (Marsh), 7-275 (Starc), 8-294 (Cummins), 9-329 (Murphy), 10-334 (Carey)

Bowling: Broad 20.4-4-62-2; Anderson 14-4-53-0 (1nb); Woakes 19-4-50-4 (1nb); Ali 23-2-76-3; Root 9-0-39-0; Wood 9-0-34-1 (1w)

England: Ben Duckett, Zak Crawley, Moeen Ali, Joe Root, Harry Brook, Ben Stokes (capt), Jonny Bairstow (wkt), Chris Woakes, Mark Wood, Stuart Broad, James Anderson

Result: England won by 49 runs

Series: Five-match series ends level at 2-2

Player of the match: Chris Woakes (ENG)

Overall player of the series: Chris Woakes

England player of the series: Chris Woakes

Australia player of the series: Mitchell Starc

Previous Results

June 16-20: First Test, Edgbaston: Australia won by two wickets

June 28-July 2: Second Test, Lord's: Australia won by 43 runs

July 6-9: Third Test, Headingley: England won by three wickets

July 19-23: Fourth Test, Old Trafford: Match drawn

ARAB TABLE TENNIS CHAMPIONSHIPS

Qatar TT teams win three medals in Iraq



Qatar table tennis players seen with Qatar Table Tennis Association official (QTTA) after winning a medal at the Arab Championship in Iraq.

QNA
Baghdad

Qatar U15 table tennis team claimed silver medal in the team competition of the ongoing Arab Table Tennis Championship in Iraq, which will continue until Aug. 4, after 1-3 loss to the Tunisian team in the final match.

The Qatari team included Sultan al-Kuwari, Rawad al-Nasser, Yousuf Abdullah, Ahmed Eid and Abbad al-Abdullah.

In other competitions, Qatar U-13 team won third place and bronze medal, after losing in the semi-finals to the Egyptian team 0-3. The team included Mohamed al-Sulaiti, Issa al-Haddad and Abdulaziz al-Abbad, and had started their participation with a 1-3 loss against Algeria, but they made up for in the group stage by defeating



Jordan 3-0, then Lebanon 3-1. In the U11 category, the Qatari team finished third, winning bronze medal, after losing in the semi-finals to the Egyptian team, the winner of the title.

Pooran's superb ton lifts MI New York to MLC title win

Dallas, Texas: Nicholas Pooran put up a superlative effort with the bat to help MI New York clinch the first-ever Major League Cricket title on Sunday. The wicketkeeper-batter scored 137 runs off 55 balls as MI New York took down Seattle Orcas by seven wickets at Grand Prairie Stadium, Dallas. MI New York restricted Seattle Orcas to 183/9 before chasing down their target in just 16 overs.

MI New York didn't get off to the best of starts as Imad Wasim dismissed Steven Taylor in their third delivery of the opening over. However, Pooran made his intentions quite clear for the night when he struck consecutive sixes off Wasim's bowling in the same over. The West Indian showcased tremendous form as he hit Dwaine Pretorius for three sixes and two boundaries in the third over.

Opening batter Shayan Jahangir fell to Wayne Parnell in the fifth over, but Pooran continued to find maximums at the other end. He struck three sixes off Andrew Tye's bowling to take MI New York's score to 80/2 in just 6 overs. Pooran kept finding the middle of his bat and smashed a total of 10 fours and 13 sixes during his innings. The Captain remained unbeaten on 137 runs off 55 balls and single-handedly took MI New York over the line with 4 overs to spare.

Earlier in the day, MI New York won the toss and put Seattle Orcas into bat. Quinton de Kock looked in prime touch as he struck Jessy Singh for consecutive boundaries in the second over. However, Rashid Khan sent De Kock's opening partner Nauman Anwar packing for 9 runs off 13 balls in the fifth over. Thereafter, Shehan Jayasuriya provided excellent support to De Kock as he hit David Wiese for a four and six in the seventh over. But Steven Taylor bowled him out for 16 runs off 15 balls in the tenth over. De Kock and Shubham Ranjane put up a fantastic partnership of 51 runs from 24 balls to take Orcas' score to 142/4 in 16.1 overs. Thereafter, the Orcas kept losing wickets at regular intervals, but Dwaine Pretorius' cameo of 21 runs from 7 balls helped his team post a formidable total on the board.



Team players of MI New York who won the first-ever Major League Cricket (MLC) title. MI New York beat Seattle Orcas by 7 wickets at Grand Prairie Stadium, Dallas. *(@MLCricket)*

BRIEF SCORES

MI New York 184/3 (Nicholas Pooran 137*, Dewald Brevis 20, Imad Wasim 1/14) **beat Seattle Orcas 183/9** (Quinton de Kock 87, Shubham Ranjane 29, Rashid Khan 3/9) **by 7 wickets**

TOURNAMENT AWARDS

- **Most Valuable Player of the Tournament:** Nicholas Pooran
- **Leading Run Scorer:** Nicholas Pooran
- **Leading Wicket Taker:** Trent Boult
- **Domestic Player of the Tournament:** Cameron Gannon

FOCUS

Bumrah to lead India squad for Ireland T20 series

AFP
New Delhi

Fast bowler Jasprit Bumrah has bounced back from his back injury and was selected to lead India's squad for the three-match T20I series against Ireland, India's cricket board said yesterday. Bumrah, 29, has been out of action since September and had surgery in New Zealand in March.

The three ODIs will start on August 18 at Malahide, Dublin, with the following matches on August 20 and 23 at the same ground. India will then be next in action at the Asia Cup, to be jointly hosted by Pakistan and Sri Lanka from Aug 30 to Sept 17.

India's ODI squad: Jasprit Bumrah (capt), Ruturaj Gaikwad, Yashasvi Jaiswal, Tilak Varma, Rinku Singh, Sanju Samson (wk), Jitesh Sharma (wk), Shivam Dube, Washington Sundar, Shahbaz Ahmed, Ravi Bishnoi, Prasidh Krishna, Arshdeep Singh, Mukesh Kumar, Avesh Khan.

Afghanistan-Pakistan to play 3 ODIs in SL

Afghanistan and Pakistan will play three one-day internationals at neutral venues in Sri Lanka next month, it was announced yesterday.

This will be the first bilateral series between Pakistan and Afghanistan as the two countries have only played four ODIs in the past.

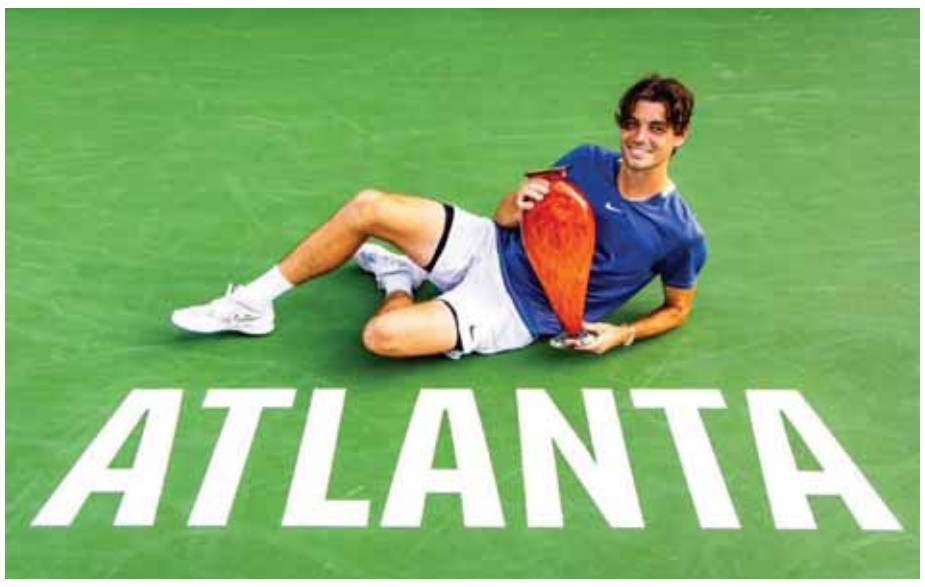
"The three ODI matches are scheduled for August 22nd (Hambantota), 24th (Hambantota), and 26th (Colombo), and will take place in two separate venues in Sri Lanka," said an ACB release.

TENNIS

Fritz triumphs in Atlanta with win over Vukic

'IT FEELS REALLY GOOD TO GET THE JOB DONE. I AM HAPPY'

www.atptour.com
Atlanta



Taylor Fritz of the US celebrates winning the Atlanta Open title. Fritz beat Australian Aleksandar Vukic 7-5, 6-7(5), 6-4 in the final to lift the ATP 250 trophy. *(@ATLOpenTennis)*

Taylor Fritz of the US capped a perfect return to North American hard courts on Sunday by winning the Atlanta Open for his second tour-level title of the season.

In his first tournament on home soil since March, the top seed Fritz downed Australian Aleksandar Vukic 7-5, 6-7(5), 6-4 in the final to lift the ATP 250 trophy.

Despite letting slip two championship points on return at 6-5 in the second set, Fritz held his nerve to close the two-hour, 16-minute clash in a deciding set.

"I've played this tournament five times before and (made) the semis (in 2021) and final (in 2019). I feel like I've always been close so it's nice, I don't think I could've handled another loss in the final," Fritz said. "It feels really good to get the job done."

World No 9 Fritz relied on his hefty serve and first-strike to tennis to be crowned champion at the hard-court event, where he was broken just once all tournament.

The 25-year-old won 84 per cent of his first-serve points on Sunday and struck his groundstrokes with conviction and consistency to seal victory.

A pivotal moment came when Fritz earned triple break point at 3-3 in the decider by showing great defence to win a 27-shot rally.

"I felt like today it was like, 'I'm here to win it and I'd be absolutely devastated with a final result'. Even though a lot of times, being in the final, I'm happy with that," Fritz said.

Fritz, who also triumphed in Delray Beach earlier this year, has won six tour-level titles, three of which have came in his home country.

"I just felt so at home and welcomed in Atlanta this week," Fritz said.

"I've been coming back here for so many years, so I'm happy to finally get the title. All week, the support was amazing. I'm not from Atlanta, but it felt like I was because the support was just crazy all week long and it felt great."

Fritz rose to ninth in the Pepperstone ATP Live Race To Turin as a result of his standout week in Atlanta.

The American No. 1 is aiming to return to the Nitto ATP Finals, where he was a semi-finalist last year as an alternate.

Vukic, 27, was competing in his maiden tour-level final. The former University of Illinois standout ousted three seeded players in Atlanta and will rise 20 spots to a new career-high No 62 in the Pepperstone ATP Rankings.

"Overall, if someone would have told me that I would make the final here, I would have signed it 1,000 times," Vukic said.

"It's always bittersweet losing, but you have to take the positives from it, learn from it and keep going."

SWIATEK EXTENDS LEAD AT NO.1 WITH TITLE GLORY IN WARSAW

Warsaw, Poland: Iga Swiatek captured her fourth title of the 2023 season and extended her lead atop the Hologic WTA Tour Rankings. She now holds a 645-point advantage over No 2 Aryna Sabalenka. This week marks the 70th week at No 1 for Swiatek, who has held the top ranking since April 4, 2022.
One week after making her Top 60 breakthrough, Aranxta Rus becomes the oldest player in tour history - at 32 years old - to win her first WTA singles title. With the title run in Hamburg, Rus reaches a career-high ranking of No 42, up 18 spots from last week. She becomes the first Dutchwoman to move into the Top 50 since Kiki Bertens held the No 25 spot the week of Aug 9, 2021. Elisabetta Cocciaretto won her first career singles title, in Lausanne, paving the way for the Italian to make her Top 30 debut this week. She moves ups 12 spots, from No 42 to No 30. At 22 years, 187 days old, she becomes the youngest Italian to make her Top 30 debut in 22 years when a 21-year-old Francesca Schiavone reached the Top 30 on Nov 5, 2001.
Other notable ranking movement this week: Yanina Wickmayer +16 (from No 109 to No 93): A semifinalist in Warsaw, Wickmayer, a former World No 12, returns to the Top 100 this week, at No 93, her best ranking since the week of July 17, 2017.
Clara Burel +23 (from No.84 to No.61): For the second time in her career, Burel advanced to the final in Lausanne - her only two finals appearances on tour. As runner-up, she collected 180 ranking points as she jumps 23 spots to No.61. She is now the No.3 ranked Frenchwoman behind only No.6 Caroline Garcia and No.43 Varvara Gracheva.
Diana Shnaider +15 (from No.101 to No.86): Shnaider returns to the Top 100 this week moving to a career-high No.86 after advancing to the semi-finals at Hamburg.

UNSTOPPABLE VERSTAPPEN IS IN A FORMULA ONE LEAGUE OF HIS OWN


Red Bull Racing's Dutch driver Max Verstappen celebrates with his trophy on the podium after the Belgian Grand Prix at the Spa-Francorchamps Circuit in Spa on Sunday. *(AFP)*

Spa-Francorchamps, Belgium: Another masterful display and triumph from Max Verstappen ensured Red Bull finished the first half of the season, before the European 'summer' break, unbeaten after Sunday's Belgian Grand Prix.
The defending double world champion's victory was his eighth consecutive success, his 10th in 12 races this year, and completed not only a hat-trick of Belgian wins, but also meant he has won every race in the last three months since team-mate Sergio Perez's victory in Azerbaijan on April 30.
Here are three things we learned from Sunday's race:
Playful Verstappen toying with rivals: The 25-year-old Dutchman is so dominant that he can still win from sixth on the grid after taking a five-place penalty. He is on a different plane to his rivals to such an extent seven-time champion Lewis Hamilton resorted to humour to highlight it.
Referring to the 2002 Austin Powers film Goldmember, Hamilton accepted it all seemed too easy for Verstappen when he said that "he is having a smoke and a pancake. You know the film?"
During the race, Verstappen playfully bickered with his race engineer about tyre degradation and making a pit-stop to give the team extra practice.
Hamilton's Mercedes team-chief Toto Wolff said: "He has all reason to be a bit cheeky.... Just driving around. On merit. Nothing else to say - as much as it's annoying."
Red Bull team boss Christian Horner said he was in awe of his star. "What we are witnessing with Max is something you see once in a generation," said Horner.
Red Bull and Verstappen go next to his home Dutch Grand Prix at Zandvoort. Another win on August 27 will draw him level with four-time champion Sebastian Vettel's record of nine straight wins for Red Bull in 2013 and extend the team's record to 13 consecutive season-opening wins and 14 overall.
Rival teams battle for scraps
Ferrari, Aston Martin, Mercedes and McLaren have taken turns in mounting a brief challenge to Red Bull in the opening 12 races, but none have been successful - on Sunday it was McLaren's turn to find mounting optimism dashed after two podium finishes.
Australian rookie Oscar Piastri, who led Saturday's sprint race in the rain before being passed by Verstappen, was eliminated on the opening lap after tangling with Ferrari's Carlos Sainz.
It was left to Lando Norris, who had been impressive in finishing second in both Britain and Hungary, to bemoan their lost pace as he battled to finish seventh.
"We got it wrong," said Norris. "We were way too high on downforce and it didn't help us in any way.... I was barely making eighth gear - we were so slow on the straights. I couldn't defend and I couldn't attack. It was impossible to overtake."
Alpine focus despite Renault management chaos: The Alpine garage team remained united with Esteban Ocon finishing eighth 24 hours after Pierre Gasly's podium in the sprint - this despite shock announcements over management changes in the Renault-owned outfit.
The departures on Sunday evening of Otmar Szafnauer, the team chief, and sporting director Alan Permane, after 34 years, were announced on Friday.
Permane, nick-named 'bat' because of the long hours he worked, was part of the championship-winning years with Michael Schumacher and Fernando Alonso and was hugely-respected by the paddock at large.
His exit was greeted with widespread disbelief.
Red Bull team boss Christian Horner said he expected to see Permane back.
"It won't be the last you'll see of him in the pit lane," he said in comments that added to the impression Renault had created a crisis of their own making.

GOLF

Gutsy Hodges wins wire to wire at 3M Open for first PGA Tour title

AFP
Los Angeles

Lee Hodges fired two eagles in a four-under-par 67 on Sunday to claim his first US PGA Tour title with a wire-to-wire, seven-stroke triumph in the 3M Open in Blaine, Minnesota.

Hodges finished with a 24-under par total of 260 at TPC Twin Cities, where he'd pushed his lead to as many as seven and seen it shrink to three over playing partner J.T. Poston before Poston's disastrous triple-bogey at the final hole.

That left Poston, who carded a two-under 69, tied for second with Kevin Streelman and Scotland's Martin Laird. Streelman carded a 66 while Laird produced a seven-under-par 64 that featured five birdies and a 20-foot eagle at 18.

None of them ever really looked like catching Hodges, who started the day with a five-shot lead.

He pushed that to seven after a birdie at the second and an eagle at the sixth, where his 255-yard approach with a three-wood left him an 11-foot putt.

After a bogey at the ninth he eagled the par-five 12th in spectacular style, again using a three-wood and landing his 257-yard second shot within three feet.

'Two of the greatest shots'

"Those were two of the greatest shots I ever hit," said Hodges, who has secured his berth in the FedEx Cup playoffs as well as an invitation to next year's Masters.

"Anytime you win, you really set yourself up for some special stuff," he said.

"My caddie was telling me on 18, I honestly didn't even think about it, we get to play Augusta next year. That's something else. That was probably the coolest thing I heard all day."

Hodges responded to a three-putt bogey at 15 with another birdie at 16, and answered a bogey at 17 - that saw his lead reduced to three shots - with a final birdie at the 72nd hole.

He could enjoy the congratulations of the crowd as he walked to the 18th green having stuck his third shot from the fairway a foot from the cup. "It's just a dream week, the whole thing," said the 28-year-old ranked 110th in the world, who won for the first time in his 65th tour start. "Honestly, From Monday to Sunday I played really good golf, even in practice rounds."

Not playing for second

Poston had looked a sure bet for solo second, arriving at the tough par-five 18th three strokes behind Hodges but three clear of Laird and Streelman.

His tee shot landed in the right rough, narrowly avoiding the water hazard. From an awkward stance on the bank he opted to go for the green rather than laying up but his ball ended up in the lake.

"I had to try and give it a shot and see if there was some way I could make three there at the end and put some pressure on Lee," Poston said. "It was a shot that was going to be hard to pull off, but we weren't playing for second place."

Dylan Wu and Keith Mitchell shared fifth on 268. Defending champion Tony Finau was a further shot back alongside Sam Ryder and Aaron Baddeley.

Beau Hossler matched the TPC Twin Cities course record with a career-low 62 that featured eight straight birdies from the ninth through the 16th.

That had put Hossler in a tie for fourth as Hodges and Poston teed off.

"Usually, you shoot that kind of number on Sunday and you ideally have a chance to win," said Hossler, who ended up tied for 13th.


Lee Hodges of the United States celebrates with the trophy alongside wife Savannah Hodges after winning the 3M Open at TPC Twin Cities in Blaine, Minnesota. *(AFP)*

BOTTOMLINE



Cejka survives conditions, playoff to clinch Senior Open

Reuters
Bridgend, Wales

Alex Cejka of Germany probably didn't go to bed on Saturday night thinking he could shoot a 76 on Sunday and win The Senior Open Championship. But Cejka, the 54-hole leader, playing with rain falling and the winds gusting up to 40 mph, did just that to win the championship at Royal Porthcawl Golf Club in Bridgend, Wales - his third career major title on the Champions Tour. As if five bogeys and a double bogey mixed among two birdies weren't enough drama for Cejka, he had to survive a two-hole, sudden death playoff against Padraig Harrington of Ireland to win.

Cejka's tournament total of 5-over par 289 matched the highest of any PGA Tour Champions winner since Arnold Palmer at the 1981 US Senior Open.

Despite the dreadful conditions that deteriorated as the day wore on, two-time Open champion Harrington missed a putt for eagle and birdied the par-5 18th hole to finish with a 75 and force the playoff.

Cejka birdied the second playoff hole while Harrington had to settle for par after leaving his chip shot from off the green well short of the hole.

"I still can't believe it," Cejka said. "It's been a really tough week. It's been a really tough two days. I can't believe I'm standing with the trophy here. Seeing all those great names on the trophy, coming in here with all the pictures and everything, all the guys who won it before me, and now holding it myself, it's surreal." This is the second Champions major Harrington has lost in a playoff this season, with Steve Stricker beating him to win the Senior PGA Championship in May in Frisco, Texas.

But Royal Porthcawl was even more unforgiving on Sunday than it was on Saturday, and nobody broke par for the second straight day.

That marked the first time since the 1999 Open Championship that a PGA Tour or Champions Tour event saw multiple rounds where the lowest score was par.

SWIMMING

Marchand can handle Paris Olympics pressure, says Bowman

AFP
Fukuoka, Japan

Legendary swimming coach Bob Bowman said that he believes **Leon Marchand** can handle the pressure at next year's Paris Olympics after "a very good rehearsal" at the world championships.

French sensation Marchand has been one of the stars of the competition this week in Fukuoka, claiming three gold medals and breaking Michael Phelps's long-standing 400m individual medley world record.

Marchand said he was "super-happy" with what he achieved in Japan, where he was named the competition's top men's swimmer.

"It's not perfect, there are always things to improve," he said.

"But I'm super-satisfied with what I've done this year."

Bowman mentored Phelps to unprecedented Olympic success and he now coaches Marchand at Arizona State in the US.

Marchand will face huge expectations at the Paris Games but Bowman said the 21-year-old "got better when the pressure was highest" this week in Japan. "That's something Michael always did – that's what the great ones do," said Bowman, who is serving as head coach of the US team in Fukuoka.

"When the pressure is on, they rise to meet it."

Bowman said Marchand shares the same "mindset" as Phelps, the most decorated Olympian of all time with a staggering 28 medals. "That's something that Leon had to improve on to get to this level, so it's very good to see him develop into that kind of character," said Bowman.

Marchand broke Phelps's 400m IM record by more than a second on the competition's opening night, coming home in a time of 4min, 02.50sec. Phelps's benchmark of 4:03.84 had stood since the 2008 Beijing Olympics and was swimming's oldest world record.

Marchand followed that up by winning the 200m butterfly and 200m IM titles. Bowman said it "remains to be seen" what the Frenchman can achieve at the Paris Olympics.

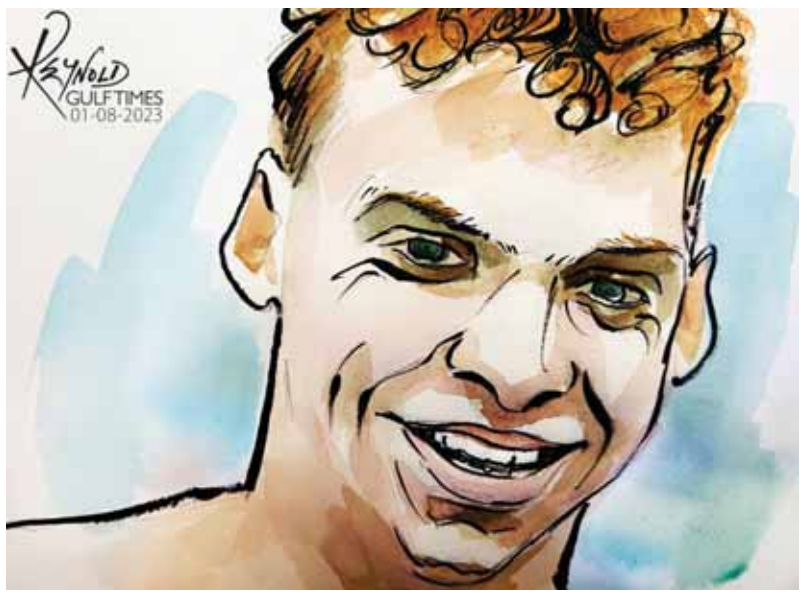
"There is going to be a lot of expectations, but I feel like he's done a very good rehearsal this year and last year," he said. "It's been good preparation for what will happen next year, and we'll try to carry that over into Paris."

The US have endured a disappointing world championships in Fukuoka under Bowman, and went into the final day with no hope of catching Australia in the medals table.

The Americans have won only four gold medals, compared to 13 for Australia and five for China. Bowman said his team had made "a great effort".

"Obviously we like to win more gold medals and I think we will," he said.

"There are a number of reasons for that, both bigger-picture ones and smaller ones, but overall I'm pleased with how we raced."



FIFA WOMEN'S WORLD CUP

Australia destroy Canada 4-0 to surge into last 16

Draw with Ireland puts Nigeria through to World Cup pre-quarter-finals

AFP
Melbourne

Co-hosts Australia surged into the Women's World Cup last 16 yesterday with Hayley Raso scoring twice in a 4-0 battering of Canada as Nigeria joined them in the knockout phase.

Olympic champions Canada were dumped out at the hands of a fired-up Australian team who knew they had to win in Melbourne to progress.

They did it in style, their big victory putting them through as Group B winners, meaning they will probably avoid European champions England in the next round. That is likely to fall on Nigeria, who were held 0-0 by already eliminated Ireland in Brisbane and finished second.

Tony Gustavsson's Australian team came into the clash with Canada under huge pressure following a stunning 3-2 loss to Nigeria that left their tournament hopes on a knife-edge.

But rather than wilt, the Matildas thrived, to the delight of a raucous 27,706 fans who were kicking every ball. "In the press conference yesterday someone asked if this was legacy-defining, a crossroads moment for this team, and yes it was," said their coach Tony Gustavsson.

"But we didn't shy away from it."

Star striker Sam Kerr, who missed Australia's first two games with a calf injury, declared herself fit but remained on the bench as her teammates more than compensated for her. Real Madrid's Raso put them ahead in the ninth minute, then made it two half an hour later with a close-range tap-in.

A shellshocked Canada made four changes at half-time as coach Bev Priestman attempted to salvage their World Cup. But the comeback never materialised and Mary Fowler bagged Australia's third from a counter-attack before Steph Catley sealed victory with an injury-time penalty.


Australia's forward Hayley Raso (second left) celebrates scoring during the FIFA Women's World Cup Group 'B' match against Canada at Melbourne Rectangular Stadium in Melbourne yesterday. *(AFP)*

JAPAN THRASH SPAIN

Japan sent a World Cup warning with a clinical 4-0 thrashing of Spain. The 2011 champions were 3-0 up by half-time in Wellington as they romped to a victory that allowed them to finish top of Group C and set up a last-16 tie against Norway. Hinata Miyazawa scored twice either side of a Riko Ueki goal, with Mina Tanaka wrapping up a stunning win late on.

Their first victory in five attempts over Spain was so comprehensive it suggests 11th-ranked Japan may be contenders to win the tournament.

They finish the group stage with 11 goals, more than any other team, while they are yet to concede. Miyazawa, who was substituted at half-time, is also now the tournament's leading scorer with four goals. "I never imagined it. All of the goals are because of the other players giving me the right passes. So it's everybody's goal, not just me," she said.

Spain, who like Japan had already qualified for the last 16 before this game, finish as runners-up in their group and now play Switzerland in Auckland on Saturday.

In the other Group C game, Zambia won a Women's World Cup match for the first time with a 3-1 victory over Costa Rica as they ended their tournament on a high.

US, ENGLAND NEXT

Today the United States and England will look to seal their last-16 spots. The Americans are pursuing a third World Cup title in a row but have been far from their best and were held 1-1 by the Netherlands last time out.

The USA may need a big win to finish on top of Group E ahead of the Netherlands, but a shock defeat would almost certainly end their tournament. "The most important thing obviously is getting in the knockout stage first and foremost and that is our main focus right now," said their coach, Vlatko Andonovski.

"We don't want to look two, three or four steps forward. If we start thinking too far ahead, our chance may never come."

The Dutch face already eliminated Vietnam in the other match in the group.

Also on Tuesday, England only need a draw against China to be sure of going through but will be without key midfielder Keira Walsh due to a knee injury.

Denmark, who are in pole position to get out of Group D with England, face Haiti.

If England top the group they will face Nigeria while the team that comes second in Group D meets Australia.

FOCUS

Dortmund down sloppy Man United in Vegas friendly

AFP
Las Vegas

Borussia Dortmund punished Manchester United's defensive lapses on Sunday as the English Premier League giants wrapped up their North American tour with a 3-2 defeat to the Bundesliga side in Las Vegas.

A second-half strike by Dortmund substitute Youssoufa Moukoko proved the difference in an entertaining clash at the Allegiant Stadium, home of the NFL's Las Vegas Raiders.

United manager Erik ten Hag named a virtual reserve team to start, leaving the likes of Marcus Rashford, Bruno Fernandes and new signing Mason Mount on the bench.

Yet United's makeshift starting XI were more than a match for Dortmund in the first half, dominating for long periods before Diogo Dalot handed the Red Devils the lead on 24 minutes with a long-range strike.

But Dortmund turned the game on its head in the closing minutes of the first half, with two goals in a minute from Netherlands international forward Donyell Malen.

The first came when United's defence failed to close down Karim Adeyemi's burst down the right.

Despite the attention of a cluster of United defenders, Adeyemi was able to square for Malen, who hooked in from close range.

Malen grabbed his second a minute later, this time seizing on a United howler when Victor Lindelof lost possession inside the area trying to pass out from the back.

United were lucky not to go 3-1 down in the opening minutes of the second half, when another defensive slip, this time by Harry Maguire, allowed Sebastien Haller a shot on goal.

United goalkeeper Andre Onana saved and then watched in relief as Adeyemi blasted the follow-up wide with the goal gaping. United did get back on level terms in the 52nd minute, when Brazilian forward Antony swept home a low shot from inside the area after a botched clearance by Dortmund veteran Mats Hummels.

Ten Hag rang in the changes with 30 minutes remaining, with Rashford instantly providing more of an attacking threat.

But it was Dortmund who scored the decisive goal, with veteran Marco Reus working a clever opening to set up Moukoko for the winner.


Dortmund's German forward Youssoufa Moukoko (right) celebrates after scoring a goal during a friendly against Manchester United at the Allegiant Stadium in Las Vegas, Nevada. *(AFP)*

Van Dijk to captain Liverpool, Alexander-Arnold named deputy

Liverpool have appointed Virgil van Dijk as the club's new skipper, with fellow defender Trent Alexander-Arnold taking on the vice-captain's role, the Premier League club announced yesterday. The 32-year-old Virgil, who also captains the Netherlands national team, will replace Jordan Henderson after the England midfielder joined Saudi Pro League club Al-Ettifaq last week, ending a 12-year stay at Anfield. Van Dijk has made 222 appearances for the Merseyside giants since moving from Championship side Southampton in 2018.

"It's a really proud day for me, for my wife, for my kids, my family. It's been a special feeling and I can't really describe it at this point. But it's something that I'm really, really proud of," Van Dijk said in a statement.

"I will do everything in my power and what I can do to make everyone proud and happy with me and the football club."

After narrowly missing out on an unprecedented quadruple in the 2021-22 season, winning two domestic cups, Liverpool will not feature in the Champions League for the first time under Juergen Klopp since the German manager's first full season in 2016-17.

"We also have to be a bit patient but we want to be there and we want to show what we're capable of because we have a fantastic group of players, staff, fans, stadium...," Van Dijk added.

"It's all about doing it together with the consistency and hopefully we can show it."

ATHLETICS

Canada's De Grasse reclaims 200m title

AFP
Langley, Canada

Canada's Olympic 200m champion **Andre De Grasse** finally ran the World Athletics qualifying standard on the last day possible.

The 28-year-old won the 200m at the Canadian championships and world trials on Sunday in a season's best 20.01 seconds, dipping under the standard of 20.16.

The six-times Olympic medallist has had a rough season with a nagging foot injury and a change in coaches, leaving American Rana Reider to work with Irishman John Coghlan.

His previous season's best was 20.33.

He failed to qualify for the 100 final at the Canadian championships on Saturday. De Grasse has five world medals including gold in the 4x100 relay from the 2022 championships and silver in the 200m in 2019 in Doha.

He clocked 19.62 to win Olympic gold in Tokyo.

The World Athletics Championships are August 19-27 in Budapest.

