

To subscribe  
**GULF TIMES**  
Newspaper  
Please call  
**444 666 35**



**CYCLING | Page 3**

Roglic holds on to win second Criterium du Dauphine



**MOTORSPORT | Page 4**

Verstappen claims rain-hit Canadian Grand Prix

To advertise here,  
PLEASE CALL  
**444 666 21**

Monday, June 10, 2024  
Dhul-Hijjah 4, 1445 AH

**GULF TIMES**

**SPORT**

**CRICKET**

Bumrah delivers as India beat Pakistan in low-scoring thriller in New York

Page 2

**Patron al-Attiyah celebrates Al Sadd's success in Amir Cup and Expo Stars League**

HE Abdullah bin Hamad al-Attiyah, patron of Al Sadd Sports Club, received the Amir Cup and the Expo Stars League trophies in the presence Turki al-Ali, executive director of Al Sadd. Al Sadd won the Expo Stars League and the Amir Cup titles in the recently concluded football season to complete the double success. HE Abdullah bin Hamad al-Attiyah posted pictures with trophies on his personal accounts on social media platforms.

**TENNIS**

# Alcaraz beats Zverev to win first French Open title

Spaniard wins 6-3, 2-6, 5-7, 6-1, 6-2 in 4hr 19min; Alcaraz the youngest man to win majors on all surfaces

**AFP**  
Paris

Carlos Alcaraz fought back to defeat Alexander Zverev in a five-set French Open final yesterday and become the youngest man to win Grand Slam titles on all three surfaces.

The 21-year-old battled cramps to recover from 2-1 down in sets and win a gripping contest 6-3, 2-6, 5-7, 6-1, 6-2 after four hours and 19 minutes on Court Philippe Chatrier.

"I was running when I finished school to put the TV on just to watch this tournament and now I'm lifting the trophy in front of all of you, so thank you very much for everything," an emotional Alcaraz said to his family watching on.

Alcaraz adds the Roland Garros crown to the Wimbledon title he won against Novak Djokovic last year and the 2022 US Open.

He will head to the Australian Open next year with the chance to become the youngest man to complete the career Grand Slam.

Fourth seed Zverev, who settled a court case in Germany two days ago over domestic abuse allegations, is still waiting for a maiden major title.

He had also lost his only previous Slam final in five sets, when he blew a two-set lead against Dominic Thiem at the 2020 US Open.

Zverev had high hopes of finally getting over the line - he has also lost six Slam semi-finals - but Alcaraz was too strong in the key moments as he levelled their head-to-head record at 5-5.

"It's been amazing. The atmosphere, the support has been amazing," said the 27-year-old.

Alcaraz said before the final he wanted to join the list of men's players from his country, including his idol Rafael Nadal, to win the Roland Garros title, and he celebrated becoming the eighth Spanish champion by falling to the clay with his head in his hands in disbelief.

Carlos Alcaraz celebrates with his grandfather after winning the French Open yesterday. (Reuters)

Germany's Alexander Zverev with the runner-up trophy after losing the French Open final against Spain's Carlos Alcaraz yesterday. (Reuters)

having been largely on the back foot.

Serving into an increasingly strong breeze, Zverev was caught out by an Alcaraz return that crept over the net and the Spaniard went on to grab a break to love.

But he could not serve out the set as a rasping Zverev passing shot secured a break back.

That failure to take control of the match seemed to temporarily break Alcaraz's spirit, as he ended up losing five games on the spin to concede the set.

Alcaraz would not go down without a fight, though, breaking for a 2-0 advantage in the fourth with a magnificent curling winner on the run.

Just seconds before, Zverev had been angrily disputing a line call which was clearly correct, drawing jeers from the crowd.

The German was rattled and his serve started to desert him, with Alcaraz racing through the fourth set to force a decider despite having to take a medical timeout to have treatment for apparent cramp at 4-1.

Zverev had won 10 of his previous 11 five-setters at Roland Garros but handed Alcaraz a break on a platter in the third game of the fifth. Alcaraz stuttered himself, falling 0-40 down in the next game. He appeared to have double-faulted on the second break point, but the chair umpire overruled the line judge's call of out, despite Zverev's angry protests, before HawkEye replays showed it was out. Alcaraz went on to hold and it proved to be a pivotal moment in the match.

Zverev fell a double-break down in game seven as Alcaraz delighted the fans with an outrageous flicked winner before crushing a forehand onto the line.

He wrapped up a historic victory with a booming forehand that Zverev could not get back.

Spain's Carlos Alcaraz celebrates with the trophy after winning the French Open final against Germany's Alexander Zverev in Paris yesterday. (Reuters)



MATCH REPORT

# Courageous India defend low total to beat Pakistan

INDIA WIN THE HISTORIC MATCH BY 6 RUNS IN NEW YORK



India's Arshdeep Singh celebrates with teammates a wicket during their ICC T20 World Cup match against Pakistan at Nassau County International Cricket Stadium in New York yesterday. (AFP)

AFP  
New York

Jasprit Bumrah was the hero as India beat Pakistan by six runs in a low-scoring T20 World Cup thriller in New York yesterday.

India were bowled out by Pakistan for 119 in 19 overs but while Mohamed Rizwan made 31 for Pakistan, in a well-paced innings, Bumrah delivered crucial wickets and his 3-14 in four overs proved decisive as Pakistan fell just short ending on 113-7.

Despite a tricky batting surface that made batting difficult, a crowd of 34,028, a record attendance for an international cricket match in the USA, were given a tight contest that ebbed and flowed.

Bumrah picked up the vital wicket of Pakistan captain Babar Azam (13) and then the breakthrough dismissal of Rizwan (31) in the 15th over when Pakistan were 80-4.

Then, handed the ball for the penultimate over, with Pakistan needing 21 to win, Bumrah conceded just three runs and removed Iftikhar Ahmed with his final ball.

That left Pakistan needing 18 from the final over, a steep task on a difficult batting surface and it got more tricky when Arshdeep Singh trapped Imad Wasim lbw with the first ball.

Naseem Shah made a valiant effort, hitting the fourth and fifth balls of the over for fours but India avoided any late drama to secure their second win of the tournament.

For Pakistan, their loss, coming after the shock defeat to the USA, leaves them without a point and with a lot of work to do against Canada and Ireland if they are to fight their way into the Super Eight stage.

Earlier, Pakistan's bowlers had given their team a fighting chance with Naseem and Haris Rauf claiming three wickets each as India were dismissed with a full over remaining of their



India's Jasprit Bumrah (right) celebrates with teammates after taking the wicket of Pakistan's Babar Azam in New York yesterday. (Reuters)

allotted 20. But Rishabh Pant's 42 from 31 balls gave the Indians something to work with after they lost openers Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli cheaply.

Rain delayed the start of the game, played in front of a packed 34,000 fans, the majority of whom were backing tournament favourites India. Pakistan captain Babar won the toss and opted to bowl and their was a huge roar when Rohit clipped Shaheen Shah Afridi's third ball of the day over mid-wicket for six.

But after just one over, the rain returned forcing a 36-minute delay and when play resumed Pakistan's attack got the start they had dreamt of.

Naseem Shah removed Kohli with the third ball back, the Indian opener reaching at

a wide delivery and finding Usman Khan at point.,

Rohit tried to put Afridi off the midwicket boundary again but this time he was caught by Haris Rauf in the deep to leave India at 19-2 with both star openers gone.

But only 24 runs were added for the last five wickets and India lost their final wicket to a run out with six balls remaining.

That could have proved costly but Bumrah delivered when it mattered for a big win for the tournament favourites.

**BRIEF SCORES**  
**India 119** (Pant 42, Naseem 3-21, Rauf 3-21) **beat Pakistan 113 for 7** (Rizwan 31, Bumrah 3-14, Hardik 2-24) **by 6 runs**

FOCUS

## Five-wicket Hosein sparkles as West Indies beat Uganda by 134 runs

AFP  
Providence, Guyana

Left-arm spinner **Akeal Hosein's** career-best figures of five for 11 decimated an inept Ugandan batting line-up as the West Indies romped to a 134-run victory in a Group C match of the T20 World Cup at the Guyana National Stadium yesterday.

Set a daunting target after the tournament co-hosts posted 173 for five batting first, the World Cup debutants looked completely out of their depth in being routed for 39 off 12 overs.

The score equalled the record of the Netherlands against Sri Lanka at the 2014 tournament for the lowest innings total in the T20 World Cup.

West Indies' second win in as many matches pulls them level at the top of the table on points with Afghanistan although the Afghans remain in first position by virtue of a better net run-rate.

Now regularly entrusted with the responsibility of opening the bowling for the Caribbean team, Hosein felt the spectacular success on the night was just reward for continuous hard work and improvement.

"I needed this. In the nets and in the previous series we've played I felt the ball was coming out nicely but I just wasn't getting the rewards," he said after collecting the "Man of the Match" award.

"It's a lot of hard work, especially when you start getting success," he said. "The way the game is moving, guys are going to study and come up with different plans, so you have to keep working to stay one step ahead of them every time," he added.

Just four days after an historic victory over Papua New Guinea, the Africans were made acutely aware of the yawning gap in class in the batting department, even if their bowlers still emerged from the match with considerable credit. Opener Johnson Charles



led the West Indies batting effort with a top score of 44 off 42 balls (four fours, two sixes), yet none in the celebrated power-hitting middle-order were able to cut loose. Captain Brian Masaba earned the two important wickets of Nicholas Pooran and opposite number Rovman Powell with his wrist-spinners, while seamers Cosmas Kyewuta and Juma Miyagi impressed with their pace and accuracy.

It was left to Andre Russell with a 17-ball unbeaten 30 (six fours) to the West Indies innings late acceleration.

"It's a very steep learning curve for us, especially in the batting department and we have to learn from this experience and understand what we need to do to keep ourselves in the game," said Masaba in assessing the overall effort of his team. It's a huge challenge (this World Cup debut) but it's something we're enjoying and we understand if we are going to get better we need to be playing against opposition like this a bit more and over time we will be able to narrow the gap."

**BRIEF SCORES**  
**West Indies 173-5 off 20 overs** (Johnson Charles 44, Andre Russell 30 not out; Brian Masaba 2-31, Alpesh Ramjani 1-16) **vs Uganda 39 all out off 12 overs** (Juma Miyagi 12; Akeal Hosein 5-11, Alzarri Joseph 2-6)  
**Toss:** West Indies **Result:** West Indies won by 134 runs

## Scotland cruise to seven-wicket victory over Oman

**North Sound, Antigua and Barbuda:** Scotland boosted their chances of qualifying for the second round of the T20 Cricket World Cup yesterday after thrashing Oman by seven wickets in Antigua to move to the top of Group B.

Brandon McMullen's unbeaten 61 off just 31 balls steered Scotland to victory with nearly seven overs to spare as the Scots finished on 153-3 off 13.1 overs to reel in Oman's total of 150-7.

"Very chuffed to get the win for the team," said McMullen, who clinched the win with a four - one of nine boundaries in his swash-buckling batting display that also included two sixes.

"The priority was to win and get the points but at drinks we said we should get this done."

McMullen and Scotland face Australia in their final group game but are brimming with confidence after an impressive start to the tournament.

"We are confident going into the Australia game, always trying to raise the bar. That's the plan going forward," McMullen said.

Scotland's run chase had got off to a smooth start, with George Munsey making 41 before being caught by Shakeel Ahmed off Mehran Khan, and Michael Jones adding 16.

McMullen then took charge of the game, finishing alongside Matthew Cross, who was 15 not out from an eight-ball knock that included two monstrous sixes.

Oman captain Aqib Ilyas meanwhile lamented his team's failure to build a more competitive total, and missed chances in the Scotland innings, after winning the toss and opting to bat at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium in North Sound. "175 could have been a good score, but we had too many dot balls on a flat track," Aqib said. "In the batting we have to improve. 150 was par but we dropped too many chances."

BOTTOMLINE

## North American fans thrill for dream India-Pakistan showdown in New York

Reuters  
East Meadow, New York

A sold-out crowd descended on Eisenhower Park yesterday for a clash of cricketing arch-rivals India and Pakistan, facing each other in a T20 World Cup match that fans called a dream come true.

The cricketing titans share one of the most intense rivalries in all of sport, and yesterday's affair in Nassau County had an historic feel as the two sides rarely meet.

For Rubal Sikka, who moved to the United States from India 25 years ago and played cricket with friends at Eisenhower Park in high school, watching the match was beyond his wildest imagination.

"Saturday, Sunday morning without fail everybody was there, seven in the morning, you know, setting up the field, getting ready for cricket," the restaurateur and banquet hall owner on Long Island said. "Never ever did we imagine that, you know, our dream players, people, sportsmen that we look up

to are going to end up playing at the same exact spot that we were playing on."

India last hosted Pakistan in a bilateral series in 2013, and the teams now meet only in international tournaments. Their 2019 ICC Cricket World Cup clash drew 229 million television viewers in India alone.

Fans paid top-dollar on the secondary market for a seat inside the 34,000-capacity temporary stadium, and local officials held an outdoor watch party at nearby Cedar Creek Park to accommodate those who could not snag a seat.

"While we're having a watch party here, there's going to be a watch party around the world," said Nassau County Executive Bruce Blakeman.

Rain delayed the start of the match and officials were forced to suspend play minutes into the action due to another sudden downpour.

But the inclement weather did not dampen the enthusiasm of fans, who crowded around merchandise kiosks and lined up at

food stalls offering chicken tikka masala alongside classic American ballpark hot dogs.

Attendees wended their way through layers of tight security largely without issue as helicopters circled overhead and a row of mounted police stood between cheering fans and the arriving athletes.

Cricket officials hope the tournament co-hosted by the United States and the West Indies will help the sport to capture a bigger piece of the lucrative North American market, where football, baseball, basketball and ice hockey have a choke-hold.

Yesterday's blockbuster showdown assured all eyes would be on New York, as West Indies hero Chris Gayle stood in the grounds seeking autographs from players from both countries.

"The atmosphere at an India-Pakistan game is something very, very different," International Cricket Council (ICC) CEO Geoff Allardice told Reuters. "When you get fans of those two countries together, it's generally a celebration."



A general view of the stadium during play in the ICC T20 World Cup match between India and Pakistan at Nassau County International Cricket Stadium in New York yesterday. (AFP)



CYCLING

# Roglic holds on to win Criterium du Dauphine

'It's crazy to be able to win the Dauphine after everything that happened'

AFP  
Plateau des Glières, France

Slovenia's Primoz Roglic held off a late surge by American Matteo Jorgenson to win his second Criterium du Dauphine by just eight seconds yesterday in an eventful 160-kilometre mountainous run from Thones to Plateau des Glières.

Roglic, who rides for Bora-Hansgrohe, went into the last day of the pre-Tour de France race with a 1 minute 2 second lead on Jorgenson but the American put in a fine performance to come second in the eighth and final stage, just behind stage winner Carlos Rodriguez of Spain.

"It's crazy to be able to win the Dauphine after everything that happened, the crash (on Thursday) and everything that came in between. It's incredible," said Roglic.

"I was hearing all the gaps all the time. It was close but finally I'm satisfied for the team. It's definitely something we needed with the team to be able to win the Dauphine.

"I first want to be happy because you don't win a race like this every day," he added.

The 34-year-old Slovenian came in sixth on the day after forcing his way up the final ascent just in time to ensure he added a second Dauphine victory to his win in 2022.

**Comfortable Slovenian star**  
After being caught up in the mass fall in Thursday's stage, Roglic showed no signs of pain as he won back-to-back stages on Friday and Saturday to stake his



First-placed Team Bora's Slovenian rider Primoz Roglic wearing the overall leader's yellow jersey (centre) celebrates his victory on the podium flanked by second-placed Team Visma's US rider Matteo Jorgenson (left) and third-placed Team Israel Premier Tech's Canadian rider Derek Gee after the eighth and last stage of the 76th edition of the Criterium du Dauphine cycling race, 160.6km between Thones and Plateau des Glières, near Thorens-Glières, French Alps, yesterday. (AFP)

claim on the race lead going into the final stage.

After having previously lost the race on the last day in 2020, Roglic looked comfortable as the riders set off from Thones but began to falter in the final climb before recovering to fight hard in the last 500 metres to maintain his grip on the yellow jersey.

Jorgenson, 24, of Visma just failed to add a Criterium win to his Paris-Nice title this year as he ended up second in the overall classification.

Derek Gee was dropped by the leading group of Jorgenson and Rodriguez shortly before the finish line but rolled through in third place for the stage to finish 36sec behind Roglic and become the first Canadian to ever to make the overall podium in the Criterium.

Ineos' Rodriguez claimed a career-first Criterium stage win yesterday to jump to fourth in the overall ranking.

Italian Lorenzo Fortunato clinched the polka dot jersey from Roglic on the final day as the race's

best climber with 40 points overall. Belgian Remco Evenepoel, who also crashed on Thursday in his first race back after breaking his collarbone in the Tour of the Basque Country in March, suffered a disappointing last three days in the Dauphine and finished seventh overall.

But he will have his eye on the Tour de France, which starts on June 29, where he will again be among the favourites alongside his rivals Tadej Pogacar and Roglic.

BADMINTON

## China's Shi clinches first Indonesia Open title



China's Shi Yuqi poses with his medal and trophy after his victory over Denmark's Anders Antonsen in their singles final at the Indonesia Open badminton tournament in Jakarta yesterday. (AFP)

AFP  
Jakarta

Badminton world number two Shi Yuqi clinched his first Indonesia Open title yesterday after triumphing over Danish shuttler Anders Antonsen in three games.

The Chinese ace eventually overcame the world number five on the courts of capital Jakarta's Istora Senayan arena, winning 21-9, 12-21, 21-14 in a 71-minute final to secure the prestigious Super 1000 event.

Shi won the first game with relative ease before the Danish shuttler fought back to take the match to a third game.

The 28-year-old was delighted to be the first Chinese men's singles player to win the tournament since the 1980s before setting his sights on Olympic gold in Paris next month.

"I am very happy to have won today. This proves that the efforts of the Chinese men's singles team are very strong right now," he said

after his victory. "This tournament is seen as a practice before the Olympics. I still don't know how far I will go, but I will do my best to become a champion there."

In the women's singles final, Olympic women's badminton champion and Chinese star Chen Yufei beat South Korea's An Se-young in a three-game thriller.

World number two Chen topped world number one An 21-14, 14-21, 21-18 in 82 minutes.

"In this match, I didn't focus too much on the outcome but prioritised the process.

"That was the key to my victory this time," Chen said via an interpreter after her win.

Olympic men's badminton champion Viktor Axelsen this week pulled out of the tournament due to an ankle injury.

The Dane rolled his right ankle during last week's Singapore Open, which forced him to withdraw from his semi-final, weeks before he defends his title at the Paris Olympics.

The Olympic badminton tournament begins on July 27 in Paris.



China's Chen Yufei celebrates winning against South Korea's An Se-young in their women's singles final at the Indonesia Open in Jakarta yesterday. (AFP)

FOCUS

## Al Rayyan Futsal Championship in full swing

By Sports Reporter  
Doha

The Al Rayyan Futsal Championship, organised by the club's youth division, is currently in full swing. The tournament, organised to celebrate Gulf Youth Day, commenced last week and is being held at the Qatar Football Association Hall and will continue until next Wednesday.

This year's championship features 8 teams competing under four groups. The tournament promises significant rewards for the top finishers, with QR7,000 up for grabs for the champions. The runners-up will take home QR4,000, while QR1,000 will be on offer for the best goals, the best individual performances, biggest

wins, and the best audience participation.

Faisal al-Hammadi, head of the youth division at Al Rayyan Club, highlighted the importance of the tournament, particularly as it coincides with Gulf Youth Day. He emphasized the tournament's contribution to increasing interest and awareness of the importance of youth work and the advancement of youth in the Gulf Cooperation Council countries.

"We are very pleased with the good levels witnessed in the tournament and the strong competition among the teams. This reflects the great work of the teams present in the tournament and their great desire to achieve first places. We expect an increase in competition in the coming days until the final, which will be on Wednesday," al-Hammadi said.



ATHLETICS

## Crippa extends Italian delight with European half-marathon victory

AFP  
Rome

Yemaneberhan Crippa bagged Italy's sixth gold medal of the European championships when he won the half-marathon around the streets of Rome yesterday in a home 1-2.

The Ethiopian-born runner, who was adopted by an Italian couple at the age of five, timed 1hr 01min 03sec over the 21.1km (13-mile) course for victory.

It was Crippa's second European gold, the 27-year-old having already won the 10,000m at the 2022 Munich championships.

Teammate Pietro Riva took silver, just a second behind, as three other Italians - Pasquale Selvarolo, Eyob Faniel and Yohanes Chiappinelli - finished in the top 10 to continue the team's electric form over the opening three days in Rome.

That combined showing also ensured that Italy won the team

gold. The host nation now stands top of the medals table with seven golds, five silvers and a bronze in a haul of 13 medals.

Eritrean-born German Amanuel Petros, who left his country of birth as a toddler for Ethiopia before arriving in his adopted country as a refugee at the age of 17, took bronze, just 4sec off the pace in a race run in hot, steamy conditions.

Crippa said he had "wanted to confirm the victory in Munich 2022 at all costs, but it wasn't easy, perhaps due to the weather, perhaps due to the tension, I didn't feel in my best condition".

"Before entering the stadium I wasn't sure I could make it, which is why I tried to stay ahead of everyone. Then, in the stadium, I realised that I could win, even though Pietro Riva came really close," he said.

Italy atop the medal tables had been an added pressure, Crippa admitted.

"They are definitely a stimulus, but they give you a responsibility, too, because they force you to win,"

he said, ruling out a bid at a double over the 10,000m in Rome.

"Now I have two months to prepare for the marathon at the Olympics"

**Grovdal hits gold**  
The women's half-marathon was won by Norway's Karoline Bjerkeli Grovdal, the versatile 33-year-old runner who won silver in Friday's 5,000m, having already won European bronze medals at the 10,000m in 2016 and the 3000m steeplechase in 2018.

Grovdal, who has also won a female record of nine individual medals at the European Cross Country Championships, clocked 1:08.09 for victory, 14 years after making her European debut.

"My main focus was the 5,000m," the Norwegian said. "This half marathon was like my second chance but I felt good and I really was going for that gold.

"My plan was just to stay behind and to stay in the pack and maybe to do it inside of the track," Grovdal added.



Silver medallist Italy's athlete Pietro Riva, gold medallist Italy's Yemaneberhan Crippa and bronze winner Germany's athlete Amanuel Petros celebrate during the medal ceremony for the men's half marathon during the European Athletics Championships at the Olympic stadium in Rome yesterday. (AFP)

"But with 3km to go, I saw that the girls were getting tired so it was good and I could go to the front.

"My shape is good, I saw that

already on the 5,000m and I have had very good training too. So now, I have a lot of good training in my body and just have to rest a bit and

then prepare for Paris." Kenyan-born Romanian Joan Chelimo Melly, just eight days after becoming eligible for the east European country, claimed silver in 1:08.55, with Australia-based Briton Calli Hauger-Thackery taking bronze, just 3sec behind.

The British women took the team gold.

In the Stadio Olimpico, Portugal's Olympic champion Pedro Pichardo qualified for the final of the men's triple jump tomorrow.

He went out to 17.48 metres, 4cm short of the lead by Spain's Jordan Alejandro Diaz Fortun.

They were the only two jumpers to go past the 17m mark. The championship record belongs to Britain's world record holder Jonathan Edwards, who won the 1988 Euros in Budapest with 17.99m.

And Italy team skipper Gianmarco Tamberi, the current defending European champion and world and Olympic gold medallist, sailed through qualifiers in the high jump, a sole clearance at 2.21m sufficing.



## Qatar getting ready for India match



Qatar players during a training session yesterday, ahead of their last Group A match against India at the Asian Cup 2027 and FIFA World Cup 2026 joint qualifiers in Doha. The game will be played at Jassim Bin Hamad Stadium tomorrow. The two-time Asian champions, who are leading the group with 13 points, have already advanced but India (5 points), Afghanistan (5) and Kuwait (4) all stand a chance to finish runners-up to reach the third round of the World Cup qualifiers as well as book their berth in the Asian Cup. Kuwait will host Afghanistan at Sabah Al Salem Stadium in their last group match, also to be played tomorrow.



## Qatar win Asian Volleyball Challenge Cup



Qatar secured a decisive 3-0 (25-22, 25-20, 25-19) victory over Pakistan to clinch the 2024 Asian Men's Volleyball Challenge Cup title in Isa Town, Bahrain, yesterday. The triumph also earned Qatar a spot in the upcoming FIVB Volleyball Men's Challenger Cup to be held in China from July 4 to 7.

### MOTORSPORT

# Verstappen wins 'crazy' rain-hit Canadian GP

'Not easy, but we did it! A great job by everyone. We made all the right calls'

AFP  
Montreal

Max Verstappen returned to form and completed a hat-trick of Canadian Grand Prix wins yesterday when he triumphed for Red Bull in a thrilling, tactical and incident-filled race at the Circuit Gilles Villeneuve.

"Pretty crazy race," said the Dutchman at the finish. "A lot happening. We stayed calm."

The series leader and three-time champion rode his luck through changing wet and dry conditions and two safety car interventions to win by 3.879 seconds ahead of McLaren's Lando Norris and Mercedes' George Russell.

Seven-time champion Lewis Hamilton came home fourth, after being passed by Russell in the closing laps. Oscar Piastri was fourth in the second McLaren ahead of two-time champion Fernando Alonso of Aston Martin.

It was a 60th career victory for Verstappen and his 50th from the last 75 races.

Local hope Lance Stroll was seventh in the second Aston Martin ahead of RB's Daniel Ricciardo and the two Alpines of Pierre Gasly and Esteban Ocon.

"What a race guys," Verstappen told his team on the radio. "Not easy, but we did it! A great job by everyone. We made all the right calls. I enjoyed that one."

"A lot of fun," said Norris, whose result together with Piastri, brought McLaren their first points in Canada since 2014 on the 56th anniversary of the team's first win, with Bruce McLaren, at the 1968 Belgian Grand Prix.

"An ugly race on my behalf and I am sorry for that," Russell said, conceding he was disappointed not to convert his pole position into victory.

Five cars, including both Fer-



Red Bull's Max Verstappen celebrates on the podium with the trophy after winning the Canadian Grand Prix in Montreal yesterday. (Reuters)

raris and both Williams, failed to finish.

On a day of showers, only the two Haas cars chose full wet tyres to start as Russell, on intermediates, pulled clear of Verstappen. The entire field slithered through the opening laps. Hamilton passed Ricciardo to sixth. When the sun returned, a dry line emerged and lap times tumbled, Russell and Verstappen swapping fastest laps at the front, nearly eight seconds clear of Norris.

Russell resisted Verstappen before the champion ran wide at turn two and fell within Norris's reach, the McLaren man passing on lap 20, using Drag Reduction System (DRS) to sweep by. He then passed Russell on lap 21.

Behind the top four, Alonso in fifth resisted Hamilton before Sargeant crashed his Williams,

prompting a safety car intervention. Norris stayed out, but Verstappen, Russell and Piastri pitted for inters, as did Alonso and Hamilton.

As the marshals struggled to remove Sargeant's car, Norris pitted from the lead and re-joined third behind Verstappen and Russell, a harsh setback for the McLaren man.

"The safety car helped me in Miami but now it held me. It happens that's racing," Norris who enjoyed good fortune on the way to his maiden win in May, said after the race.

The race resumed on lap 30 with Leclerc gambling on hard tyres, but as rain arrived again he dropped to 19th. Alonso then ran off and Hamilton surged to fifth, just behind Piastri.

As the track dried, Leclerc pit-

ted again, before retiring. As the other leaders pitted, Norris staying out to pad his lead and build an 'over-cut' before pitting on lap 47. He took mediums, but as he re-joined, Verstappen speared through.

"The ride is bad, like a locked suspension," grumbled the Dutchman with 20 laps to go in dry conditions. "I can't touch any kerbs, it almost knocks me out."

Another crash on lap 54 brought out a second safety car, Albon and a spinning Carlos Sainz tangling after Perez had smashed into the barriers and broken his rear wing.

Mercedes promptly pitted both cars, Russell for mediums and Hamilton for hards. They were fourth and fifth behind Verstappen and the two McLarens when racing resumed and the late drama unfolded.

### FOOTBALL

## Pedri helps Spain thrash Northern Ireland before Euros

AFP  
Palma, Spain

Pedri Gonzalez struck twice for Spain as they thumped Northern Ireland 5-1 in their final friendly ahead of Euro 2024 on Saturday.

Alvaro Morata, Fabian Ruiz and Mikel Oyarzabal also netted for Luis de la Fuente's side in Mallorca, with wingers Nico Williams and Lamine Yamal oozing menace on the flanks.

Spain, in a Euros 'group of death' with Italy, Croatia and Albania, are aiming to win the competition for the fourth time.

"I've worked hard to be in good shape at the end of the season," Pedri told Radio Marca.

The playmaker was out injured for a large part of the season but has hit top form in the final weeks of the campaign.

"Injuries are the worst thing about football, now I am doing a lot better," continued Pedri.

"We'll go for (the Euros), with the idea of winning."

Spain thrashed Andorra 5-0 in a friendly earlier in the week before dismantling Northern Ireland. The visitors surprised Spain by taking the lead through

Dan Ballard, who headed home a Caolan Boyd-Munce free-kick after just two minutes. Isaac Price came close to a second before Spain recovered their poise and took complete control.

Pedri pulled Spain level with a low drive from the edge of the box, before Alvaro Morata nodded La Roja ahead from Jesus Navas' cross. Barcelona midfielder Pedri struck again after a neat move and Fabian Ruiz headed home Lamine Yamal's cross for the fourth. The second half was a calmer affair although Mikel Oyarzabal did net Spain's fifth after electric 16-year-old Barcelona winger Yamal set him up.

"We came out a bit too relaxed with their goal, we can't make those type of mistakes, above all in the Euros, it will teach us a lesson," said Paris Saint-Germain midfielder Ruiz.

"We have to note the attitude of the team, we turned the score around and we were brave."

Spain won the Euros in 2008 and 2012 but largely struggled since then until lifting the Nations League trophy last year.

De la Fuente's side face Croatia in their opening Group B fixture in Berlin on June 15, a day after the tournament in Germany begins.



Spain's midfielder Pedri celebrates after scoring his team's third goal during the international friendly match against North Ireland at Son Moix stadium in Palma de Mallorca. (AFP)

## 'No miracle solutions' to sparse French Open crowds - Mauresmo

Tournament director Amelie Mauresmo said she had no "miracle solutions" to combat sparse French Open crowds but lamented the poor attendance for Friday's men's semi-final between Alexander Zverev and Casper Ruud. Mauresmo and Gilles Moretton, the head of the French tennis federation, said they were working on resolving the issue which has plagued this year's tournament.

After Carlos Alcaraz beat Jannik Sinner in five in the first of the men's semi-finals, the clash between Zverev and Ruud began with swathes of empty seats on the main Philippe Chatrier court. Although tickets for the tournament were officially sold out, the recurrent images of stands that are far from packed has left a sour taste.

"I'm starting to have perhaps more advanced ideas to avoid that," Mauresmo said yesterday without getting into further details. A tournament debrief is set to take place later this

month. "I'm not going to give you miracle solutions today, but it's something we must discuss. We're not satisfied with what we saw for the semi-finals." Moretton was on the same page as Mauresmo. "We can't accept seeing the stands empty like that for the second semi-final, it was already a bit like that the previous year," said Moretton, while underlining their hands were somewhat tied.

"We sold 670,000 tickets, but we can't force people to return to the court," he said. Organisers were all the more surprised by the low turnout for the Zverev-Ruud contest given only 10 percent of spectators had bought tickets for both of Friday's semi-finals.

"It's still difficult to say to yourself that these people aren't going to come. I'm not in their head," said Mauresmo.

"More generally speaking, people aren't going to stay seated five, six or seven hours like before. It's a challenge that's not easy to sort out."

### FOCUS

## Endrick grabs winner as Brazil sink Mexico 3-2

AFP  
College Station, United States

Teenage striker Endrick headed home an injury-time winner as Brazil defeated Mexico 3-2 in a warm-up friendly ahead of this month's Copa America on Saturday.

The Brazilians looked to be cruising to victory after goals from Fulham's Andreas Pereira and Arsenal's Gabriel Martinelli fired the South American giants into a 2-0 lead at Kyle Field in College Sta-

tion, Texas. But Mexico staged an unlikely late fightback after Julian Quinones pulled a goal back in the 73rd minute.

Guillermo Martinez looked to have secured a draw for Mexico in the third minute of time added on, lashing in a rebound from his own header after a corner to make it 2-2.

Yet Mexico barely had time to regroup before Brazil took the lead again.

Vinicius Jr lofted an inviting cross into the penalty area from wide on the left and his new Real

Madrid team-mate Endrick timed his jump to perfection to glance in a header past Mexico goalkeeper Julio Gonzalez for 3-2.

The victory extended Brazil's unbeaten record under new coach Dorival Junior, who oversaw 1-0 win over England at Wembley in March followed by a 3-3 draw with Spain.

Brazil face the United States in a friendly in Orlando on Wednesday in what will be their final game before they open their Copa America campaign against Costa Rica on June 24.



Endrick Sousa of Brazil celebrates after scoring a goal in extra-time against the Mexico during their friendly in College Station, Texas. (AFP)