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'DIRTY WATER'

**BELGIAN TRIATHLETE 'SICK' AFTER OLYMPIC RACE IN SEINE: OFFICIALS**

Belgian triathlete Claire Michel is "sick" after taking part in the women's individual Olympic triathlon including a swimming leg in the River Seine, the Belgian National Olympic Committee (COIB) said yesterday. "The COIB and Belgian Triathlon hope that the lessons will be learned for future triathlon competitions at the Olympics," the committee said in a statement. Michel finished 38th in the race. As a result of her illness, the Belgian team will not take part in the mixed triathlon event scheduled to take place today. Problems with the water quality of the Seine had marred the run-up to the competition. Organisers have been forced to cancel training sessions in the river and postponed the men's race for 24 hours after the Seine was found to be too dirty for athletes following rainstorms last week.

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**GULF TIMES SPORT**

PARIS 2024

ATHLETICS

# Lyles wins 100m gold in closest finish in modern history

Ukraine's Mahuchikh claims women's high jump gold, Katzberg wins men's hammer gold

AFP  
Paris

Rob Woollard Noah Lyles snatched a photo-finish victory in the closest 100m final in modern Olympic history yesterday to end the United States' 20-year wait to recapture the world's most prestigious sprinting crown.

In a nerve-shredding final at the Stade de France, Lyles, the charismatic 27-year-old from Florida, took gold by a fraction from Jamaica's Kishane Thompson.

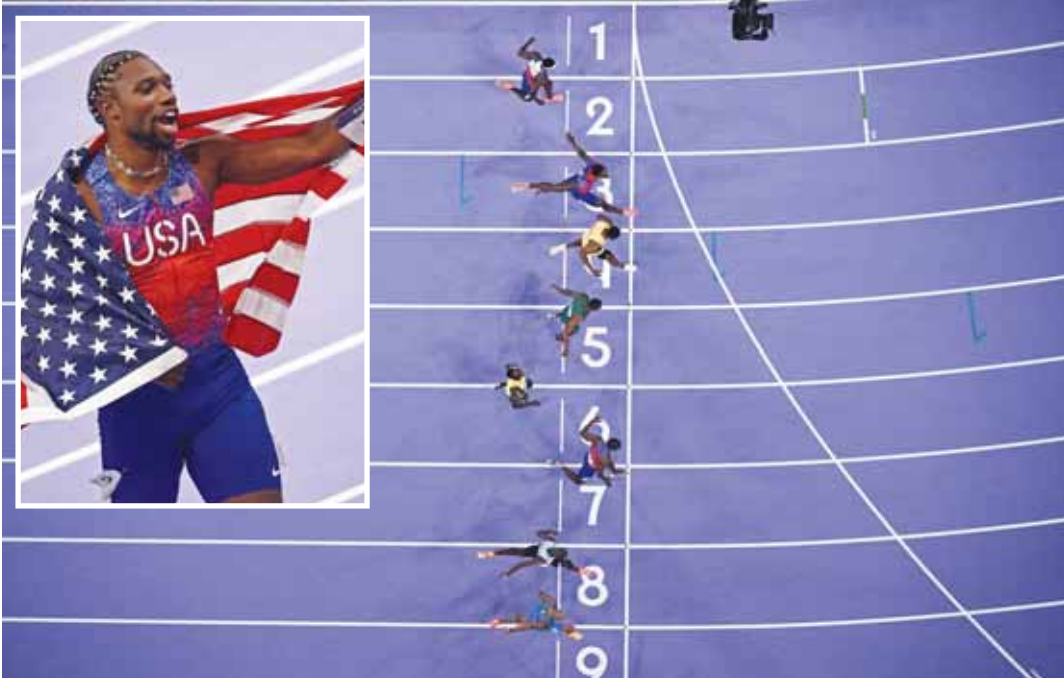
Lyles' winning margin boiled down to just five thousandths of a second, with the American clocked at 9.784sec to Thompson's 9.789sec, though both men's times will be listed as 9.79sec.

It was the narrowest margin of victory since electronic timing has been used at the Olympics.

Lyles' compatriot Fred Kerley took bronze in 9.81sec.

The race was so close that the electronic scoreboard in the arena simply read "photo" beside seven of the eight finalists. After an agonising wait of several seconds, Lyles' victory was confirmed, sparking wild celebrations from the reigning 100m and 200m world champion who is regarded as one of the global superstars as athletics. "It's the one I wanted," an elated Lyles told Eurosport moments after his win.

"It's the hard battle, it's the



An overview shows (from top to bottom) US' Kenneth Bednarek, US' Fred Kerley, Jamaica's Kishane Thompson, South Africa's Akani Simbine, Jamaica's Oblique Seville, US' Noah Lyles (also inset), Botswana's Letsile Tebogo and Italy's Lamont Marcell Jacobs competing in the men's 100m final at the Paris 2024 Olympic Games at Stade de France in Saint-Denis, north of Paris, yesterday. (AFP)

amazing opponents. Everybody's healthy, everybody came prepared for the fight and I wanted to prove that I'm the man amongst all of them. I'm the wolf amongst wolves." Lyles admitted though that even he had doubted whether he had clinched the gold. "I went up to Kishane and I was like, 'I'm gonna be honest, bro, I think you had that one,'" Lyles said. "And I

was fully prepared to see his name pop up and to see my name pop up, I'm like goodness gracious. I'm incredible."

The win completes a roller-coaster three years for Lyles, who had left the pandemic-hit Tokyo Olympics in tears after a disappointing campaign, citing his mental health struggles and battles with depression. The Ameri-

can is now targeting an Olympic double with victory in the 200m next week. Lyles' win was the sensational final act of another thrilling day in the Olympic athletics arena that saw three gold medals handed out. In other action, Ukraine's Yaroslava Mahuchikh lived up to her pre-Paris Games billing to win the women's high jump. The world champion and

world record holder managed a best of 2.00 metres to win on countback from Australia's Nicola Olyslagers.

Another Australian, Eleanor Patterson, claimed joint bronze with another Ukrainian, Iryna Gerashchenko, both on 1.95m.

In the men's hammer, Canadian world champion Ethan Katzberg won after unleashing a mammoth heave with his first throw to clinch the gold medal. The 22-year-old from British Columbia registered 84.12m with his opening effort to leave his rivals trailing throughout the competition.

That was four metres further than his nearest rival, Hungary's Bence Halasz, who took silver with a throw of 79.97m. Ukraine's Mykhaylo Kokhan collected bronze with a throw of 79.39m.

Elsewhere yesterday, Sydney McLaughlin-Levrone and Femke Bol eased through the opening round of the women's 400m hurdles to remain on an Olympic collision course. US star McLaughlin-Levrone, the reigning Olympic champion and world record holder, cruised through her heat to win in 53.60sec. Bol meanwhile shrugged off the after-effects of her dazzling performance in Saturday's 4x400m mixed relay to coast through her heat in a leading 53.38sec.

Another mouthwatering duel is looming in the women's 800m, where Britain's Keely Hodgkinson, a silver medallist in Tokyo three years ago, is poised for an epic battle with Kenya's 2023 World Champion Mary Moraa today.

| TEAMS              | G  | S  | B  | T  |
|--------------------|----|----|----|----|
| 1. United States   | 19 | 26 | 26 | 71 |
| 2. China           | 19 | 15 | 11 | 45 |
| 3. France          | 12 | 14 | 18 | 44 |
| 4. Australia       | 12 | 11 | 8  | 31 |
| 5. Great Britain   | 10 | 11 | 15 | 37 |
| 6. South Korea     | 10 | 7  | 7  | 24 |
| 7. Japan           | 9  | 5  | 10 | 24 |
| 8. Italy           | 7  | 10 | 5  | 22 |
| 9. Netherlands     | 6  | 5  | 4  | 15 |
| 10. Germany        | 5  | 5  | 2  | 12 |
| 11. Canada         | 5  | 4  | 8  | 17 |
| 12. Hungary        | 3  | 3  | 2  | 8  |
| 13. Romania        | 3  | 3  | 1  | 7  |
| 14. Ireland        | 3  | 0  | 3  | 6  |
| 15. New Zealand    | 2  | 4  | 1  | 7  |
| 16. Sweden         | 2  | 3  | 2  | 7  |
| 17. Ukraine        | 2  | 1  | 2  | 6  |
| 18. Croatia        | 2  | 1  | 1  | 4  |
| 19. Belgium        | 2  | 0  | 3  | 5  |
| 20. Hong Kong      | 2  | 0  | 2  | 4  |
| 21. Azerbaijan     | 2  | 0  | 0  | 2  |
| 21. Philippines    | 2  | 0  | 0  | 2  |
| 21. Serbia         | 2  | 0  | 0  | 2  |
| 24. Brazil         | 1  | 4  | 5  | 10 |
| 25. Israel         | 1  | 4  | 1  | 6  |
| 26. Spain          | 1  | 2  | 5  | 8  |
| 26. Georgia        | 1  | 2  | 1  | 4  |
| 28. Switzerland    | 1  | 1  | 4  | 6  |
| 29. Kazakhstan     | 1  | 1  | 2  | 4  |
| 29. South Africa   | 1  | 1  | 2  | 4  |
| 31. Chinese Taipei | 1  | 0  | 2  | 3  |
| 31. Uzbekistan     | 1  | 0  | 2  | 3  |
| 31. Czechia        | 1  | 0  | 1  | 2  |
| 33. Guatemala      | 1  | 0  | 1  | 2  |
| 35. Algeria        | 1  | 0  | 0  | 1  |
| 35. Argentina      | 1  | 0  | 0  | 1  |
| 35. Chile          | 1  | 0  | 0  | 1  |
| 35. Dominica       | 1  | 0  | 0  | 1  |
| 35. Ecuador        | 1  | 0  | 0  | 1  |
| 35. Saint Lucia    | 1  | 0  | 0  | 1  |
| 35. Norway         | 1  | 0  | 0  | 1  |
| 35. Slovenia       | 1  | 0  | 0  | 1  |
| 35. Uganda         | 1  | 0  | 0  | 1  |
| 44. Jamaica        | 0  | 2  | 1  | 3  |
| 44. Mexico         | 0  | 2  | 1  | 3  |
| 44. North Korea    | 0  | 2  | 1  | 3  |
| 47. Greece         | 0  | 1  | 4  | 5  |
| 48. Poland         | 0  | 1  | 3  | 4  |
| 49. Kosovo         | 0  | 1  | 1  | 2  |
| 49. Turkiye        | 0  | 1  | 1  | 2  |
| 51. Armenia        | 0  | 1  | 0  | 1  |
| 51. Denmark        | 0  | 1  | 0  | 1  |
| 51. Ethiopia       | 0  | 1  | 0  | 1  |
| 51. Fiji           | 0  | 1  | 0  | 1  |
| 51. Mongolia       | 0  | 1  | 0  | 1  |
| 51. Tunisia        | 0  | 1  | 0  | 1  |
| 57. India          | 0  | 0  | 3  | 3  |
| 57. Tajikistan     | 0  | 0  | 3  | 3  |
| 59. Dominican Rep  | 0  | 0  | 2  | 2  |
| 59. Moldova        | 0  | 0  | 2  | 2  |
| 61. Austria        | 0  | 0  | 1  | 1  |
| 61. Cape Verde     | 0  | 0  | 1  | 1  |
| 61. Cuba           | 0  | 0  | 1  | 1  |
| 61. Egypt          | 0  | 0  | 0  | 1  |
| 61. Grenada        | 0  | 0  | 1  | 1  |
| 61. Indonesia      | 0  | 0  | 1  | 1  |
| 61. Lithuania      | 0  | 0  | 1  | 1  |
| 61. Malaysia       | 0  | 0  | 1  | 1  |
| 61. Portugal       | 0  | 0  | 1  | 1  |
| 61. Slovakia       | 0  | 0  | 1  | 1  |

READ AS: G- Gold, S- Silver, B- Bronze, T- Total



USA's Gold medalists Regan Smith, Lilly King, Gretchen Walsh and Torri Huske react on the podium of the women's 4x100m medley relay swimming event during the Paris 2024 Olympic Games at the Paris La Defense Arena in Nanterre, west of Paris, yesterday. (AFP)

SPOTLIGHT

## Qatar's Ismail finishes fourth in heats, eligible for repechage round

By Sports Reporter  
Doha

Qatari sprinter Ammar Ismail yesterday impressed with a personal best in the men's 400m contest which got underway at the Stade de France in Paris yesterday.

Running alongside big guns Michael Norman of the USA and Jereem Richards of Trinidad and Tobago, the Qatari held his own on his Olympic debut with an impressive personal best time of 44.66 secs. Ismail's time was eighth best among all contenders as a total of eight heats took place yesterday. The 27-year-old still has a chance to advance as he will take part in the repechage round today.

Norman topped the heat in 44.10 while Richards was second (44.31) and Botswana's Busang Collen Kebinatshipi with his personal best was third in 44.45secs.

Qatar's Abderrahman Samba will be in action in the men's 400m hurdles at the Paris Olympics today. Along with Samba, two other Qatar athletes - debutant Bassem Hemeida and Ismail Dou-dai Abakar have also qualified for the event. Qatar thus becomes the first Asian nation to participate in the discipline with three athletes at the Olympics.

**Younousse-Tijan to take on Chile's Grimalt cousins**

Qatar's Cherif Younousse and



Qatar's Ammar Ismail reacts after competing in heat 2 of the 400m Round 1 at the Stade de France, Saint-Denis, yesterday. (Reuters)

Ahmed Tijan will take on Chile's Marco Grimalt and Esteban Grimalt today in the round of 16 of the beach volleyball competition at the Paris Games 2024. Younousse and Tijan started their Paris campaign with three wins out of three in the pool stage, the second last Monday when they came from a set down to beat top-ranked Swedes David Ahman and Jonatan Hellvig.

The Chile's cousins finished in third place in Group B after securing only one victory against Italy's Samuel Cottaafa and Paul Nicolai 2-0, while losing to Norway's D Ahman and J Hellvig 0-2 and Australian M Nicolaidis and I Car-racher with the same score.

The Chile pair advanced after Canada's Samuel Schachter and Daniel Dearing forfeited in the 'lucky losers' clash.

## World records tumble as US rule the Paris pool

Iron-man Bobby Finke and the US women's medley relay team shattered world records in golden performances as the Olympic swim meet ended in exhilarating fashion yesterday with the Americans on top again.

Floridian Finke took down Sun Yang's 12-year 1,500m world record as he retained the gold medal in the lung-busting event before the American women smashed their previous world mark for gold in the medley relay.

The golds saw the Americans finish with eight at the top of the swimming medal table, one more than second-placed Australia whose ambitions of ruling the Olympic pool for the first time since Melbourne 1956 were quashed. It was by no means an American shut-out, though, with the US men's medley relay team suffering their first defeat ever at Olympics meets dating back to the 1960 Rome Games in a febrile atmosphere at La Defense Arena.

China, anchored by the human missile Pan Zhanle, took the gold ahead of the US team, whose talisman Caleb Dressel took his first minor medal from a previously uniform set of nine golds.

"I feel like for a team USA, the expectation is gold," said Dressel who swam the third butterfly leg of the relay. "That's traditionally what we strive for and I don't think that changes any Olympic cycle."

"That was a close race, came down to the wire, and they had four great splits, we had four great splits, and they were faster, simple as that."

Sarah Sjostrom finished the Games on a huge high after claiming the women's 50m freestyle in 23.71 seconds, the evergreen Swede's two-gold haul surpassing all returns at her previous four Games.

"This was definitely my best (Olympics)," said the 30-year-old, who took the first of her three golds at Rio 2016. I'm definitely going to continue swimming for many years, but I mean, how can I top this ever?"

China, who finished fifth on the swimming medal table with two golds among their 12 medals, came to the Games under a cloud of suspicion after revelations in April that 23 of their swimmers tested positive for a banned heart medication but were allowed to compete at the Tokyo Games.

Britain missed out on a podium place in the men's medley won by China, and triple Olympic champion Adam Peaty was pointed in his comments afterwards.

"One of my favourite quotes I've seen lately is 'There's no point in winning if you don't win it fair',"

the breaststroker told reporters. "I don't want to paint a whole nation or a whole group of people with one brush. I think it's very unfair."

"But there has been two cases and I think it's very disappointing."

The prevailing mood at the pool was joy, though, as another huge crowd roared their appreciation of the sport from start to finish. Following Sjostrom's gold, Finke won the 1,500m in 14:30.67, shaving 0.35 seconds off Chinese swimmer Sun's previous mark.

He finished four seconds clear of Italy's Gregorio Paltrinieri, who took silver eight years on from his 2016 gold at Rio. Wiffen took bronze days after stripping Finke of his 800m crown to become Ireland's first male Olympic swimming champion.

France celebrated another medal with bronze in the men's relay medley, finishing third on the table thanks to Leon Marchand's four individual golds. "This medal has the same flavour as the others. Except that it's shared," said Marchand.

"It's the cherry on the cake and I will remember it because we had a super team."

In the end it was the Americans on top again, though, as they have been at every Olympic swimming meet since the 1992 Barcelona Games.

Regan Smith, Lilly King, Gretchen Walsh and Torri Huske made sure of it with a world record swim of 3:49.63 in the women's medley relay, with Australia taking silver and China bronze. "It's awesome to see everybody improving and just an awesome way to cap off the meet," said King.



Gold medalist US' Bobby Finke poses after the men's 1,500m freestyle event yesterday. (AFP)

MINISTER OF SPORTS AND YOUTH ATTENDS ELITE REFEREES TRAINING CAMP IN DOHA



Minister of Sports and Youth, HE Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa bin Ahmed al-Thani, yesterday attended the Qatar Football Association (QFA)-sanctioned Elite Referees Training Camp that started on July 27. The Elite Referees Training Camp will end on August 7. The Minister expressed his support for the Qatari referees, calling on them to exert their utmost effort during the new football season set to start later next week.



FOCUS

# China's Fan seals table tennis gold after hard slog

'I knew I had to realise my dream at this Olympics after Tokyo'

AFP  
Paris

Fan Zhendong clinched Olympic gold in the men's singles table tennis yesterday, maintaining the Chinese stranglehold on the sport and ending a fairytale run for shock finalist Truls Moregard.

Roared on by a partisan crowd waving Chinese flags, world champion Fan outclassed the lower-ranked Swede 4-1 in a pulsating Paris final featuring some sensational rallies.

Moregard, world-ranked 26, was seeking to become the first man outside Asia to win Olympic gold since his compatriot Jan-Ove Waldner, who struck gold in Barcelona in 1992.

The 19th seed had already produced the shock of the tournament, beating Chinese top seed Wang Chuqin in the last 32, a day after a photographer broke Wang's bat during celebrations for China's mixed doubles gold.

Moregard started brilliantly against Fan, taking the first game 11-7, counter-attacking effectively on his backhand and seemingly causing the Chinese ace difficulty with his heavy top-spin.

But Fan, the second seed, hit back in the second game, levelling up the match with a fierce backhand top-spin drive up the line to take the game 11-9.

The third game also went the way of the Chinese player 11-9, Fan seizing game point with a forehand smash that brought the whole stadium to its feet.

Fan now seized control, taking the fourth game 11-8 to bring him within one game of gold.

The Chinese superstar dominated the fifth game, despite a last-ditch fight-back from More-



Fan Zhendong of China in action during his gold medal match against Truls Moregard of Sweden in the men's singles final at the Paris 2024 Olympics in South Paris Arena 4 in Paris, yesterday. (Reuters)



Silver medalist Sweden's Truls Moregard (left), gold winner China's Fan Zhendong (centre) and bronze medalist France's Felix Lebrun pose on the podium yesterday. (AFP)

gard, taking it 11-8. He turned to his coach, who threw him in the air in triumph, the pair then grabbing a Chinese flag and acknowledging the baying crowd.

The gold brought redemption for Fan, who agonisingly lost out in the final of the Tokyo singles final, taking home silver.

"I knew I had to realise my dream at this Olympics after Tokyo," Fan told reporters after the match.

"I just had to do my best." He said he found the match against Moregard "very challenging."

"The first two games he was excellent in defence and quick in attack. It took me time to break his rhythm. I needed to be calm and keep my mind straight," said Fan.

With 3.3 million followers on the Twitter-like Weibo, Fan is a celebrity at home and once had to ask his fans to restrain themselves after someone broke into his hotel room and stole his underwear.

In the bronze medal match,

home hope Felix Lebrun comfortably beat Brazil's Hugo Calderano 4-0 for France's first-ever table-tennis medal.

China is the undisputed powerhouse of the sport and has again dominated in Paris. Chen Meng took gold in the women's singles in an all-China affair against Sun Yingsha.

Wang and Sun also took home mixed doubles gold.

Moregard said he could look back with pride at his Olympic performance.

"The way that I played, I can't be mad about that result. I really played 100 percent today and he was just the better player, so I'm standing here proudly with a silver," he said.

"With my draw and my seeding, a silver shouldn't be possible, so I'm super proud."

BOXING

## Cuba's Cardona ends with bronze, France claim another win



Oleksandr Khyzhniak of Ukraine celebrates after winning his fight against Arlen Lopez Cardona of Cuba in the men's 80kg boxing semi-final at the Paris 2024 Olympics in North Paris Arena, Villepinte, France, yesterday. (Reuters)

Reuters  
Paris

Ukraine's Oleksandr Khyzhniak sent twice Olympic champion Arlen Lopez Cardona out of the Paris Games yesterday, while home fans at North Paris Arena had much to cheer for as French duo Sofiane Oumiha and Billal Bennama claimed wins in their semi-finals.

Lopez Cardona, middleweight champion at the 2016 Rio Games and light heavyweight champion in Tokyo, struggled to keep up with Tokyo silver medalist Khyzhniak's pace and power in their light heavyweight bout.

Earlier yesterday, European Games champion Bennama beat Junior Alcantara of the Dominican Republic by unanimous decision, before Rio Olympics silver medalist Oumiha clinched a hard-fought 4-1 win over Canada's Wyatt Sanford in the very next bout.

France were looking for a hat-trick of wins with women's middleweight Davina Michel in action, but Cindy Ngamba won the quarter-final match by a unanimous decision to dash those hopes and ensure a first-ever medal for the refugee Olympic team.

China's Asian Games and world champion Li Qian triumphed in a middleweight quarter-final against Tokyo Olympics bronze medalist Lovlina Borgohain of India, taking a 4-1 win to become the

fifth woman from the country to ensure a medal at this Games.

Li's compatriot and former Asian Games champion Chang Yuan was also victorious, beating North Korea's Pang Chol-mi on a 3-2 split decision to progress to the final of the bantamweight category. "She is a great rival, we have faced each other many times and I have learned a lot from facing her. I wanted to take those learnings and be better today. A lot of times when you lose, it's usually down to yourself," Chang said.

Rio gold medalist Hasanboy Dumatov of Uzbekistan won his flyweight semi-final against Cape Verde boxer David de Pina, whose bronze was his country's first Olympic medal.

Australia, who arrived at the Games with the largest contingent of boxers (12) but have just two representatives left standing, scored a win in the women's middleweight quarter-finals when Caitlin Parker beat Moroccan Khadija Mardi 4-1.

Parker's win saw her move into the semi-finals and become the first Australian woman to win a boxing medal at the Olympics.

In a clash between two Cuban boxers who are now representing different nations, Azerbaijan's Loren Alfonso beat Spaniard Enmanuel Reyes 4-1 in a heavyweight semi-final. In yesterday's first bout, Taiwan's Lin Yu-ting, one of two boxers caught up in a row over eligibility at the Paris Olympics, beat Svetlana Kamenova Staneva of Bulgaria.



## Vandersay bags 6 wickets as Sri Lanka beat India



Sri Lanka's Jeffrey Vandersay (second left) celebrates after taking the wicket of India's Virat Kohli during the second ODI at the R Premadasa International Cricket Stadium in Colombo yesterday. Sri Lanka, who scored 240 for 9 wickets, won the match by 32 runs after restricting India to 208 all out. Vandersay took six wickets. (AFP)

## Bastianini wins the British Grand Prix



Ducati Lenovo Team's Italian MotoGP rider and winner Enea Bastianini (Centre) is seen celebrating on the podium next to Prima Pramac Racing's second-placed Spanish rider Jorge Martin (left) and Ducati Lenovo Team's third-placed Italian rider Francesco Bagnaia after the British Grand Prix held at the iconic Silverstone circuit in Northamptonshire, central England, yesterday. (AFP)

SPOTLIGHT

# Scheffler pips Fleetwood to thrilling golf gold on debut

‘IT’S BEEN A LONG WEEK. IT’S BEEN A CHALLENGING WEEK. I PLAYED SOME GREAT GOLF TODAY’

AFP  
Paris

Scottie Scheffler won men’s golf gold on his Olympic debut with a thrilling one-stroke victory ahead of Britain’s Tommy Fleetwood yesterday.

The American world number one secured his seventh win of the year with a course record-equaling 62 at Le Golf National to edge out silver medallist Fleetwood on 19-under-par for the tournament.

“It’s emotional sitting there on the podium and hearing your national anthem, it really is,” said Scheffler.

“It’s been a long week. It’s been a challenging week. I played some great golf today.”

Japan’s Hideki Matsuyama had to settle for bronze on 17-under after a dramatic final round that saw several players challenge for the medals.

Jon Rahm sat four shots ahead after 10 holes but fell away badly to finish tied fifth with Rory McIlroy, whose hopes were dashed by a double-bogey on the 15th.

“I did it myself. What it represents and what it could have been for Spain is what makes it more painful,” said Rahm.

Reigning champion Xander Schauffele, who was tied for the overnight lead with Rahm, dropped out of contention with a



Gold medalist Scottie Scheffler of the US celebrates with wife Meredith Scudder and their child during the podium ceremony after round four of the golf individual stroke play of the Paris 2024 Olympic Games at Le Golf National in Guyancourt, south-west of Paris, yesterday. **Right:** Gold medalist Scheffler celebrates on the podium with silver medallist Tommy Fleetwood of Britain and bronze medallist Hideki Matsuyama of Japan. (Reuters/AFP)

three-over back nine. “It sucks. Not very happy with it to be honest,” said the PGA Championship and British Open champion. “Not a whole lot of positives, obviously, from it.”

Frenchman Victor Perez delighted the home fans with a stunning surge through the field but finished in fourth place despite his 63, which included a run of four

birdies and an eagle in the space of five holes.

Scheffler continued his magnificent season, which has also delivered his second Masters and Players Championship titles, with a majestic fourth round.

He was six strokes off the pace at one point during the back nine, but carded a six-under 29 for the inward half as those behind him on

the course, especially Rahm, faltered.

#### Rahm blows lead with bogeys

Rahm had eased into a four-shot lead with six birdies in his first 10 holes and appeared to be cruising to the title. But back-to-back bogeys, coupled with successive birdies from Fleetwood, saw the Spaniard’s advantage evaporate.

Scheffler, McIlroy, Matsuyama and Perez all seized the opportunity to charge into contention, leaving the top six players on the leaderboard separated by just two shots as the final group headed into the last five holes.

Ireland’s McIlroy was the first to blink, dumping his approach shot on the 15th hole into the water to all but end his title tilt.

Rahm then suffered another serious dent to his bid when he contrived to make a double-bogey on the easy par-five 14th.

Perez narrowly missed long birdie putts on the final two greens but set the clubhouse target at 16-under overall after a sparkling back-nine 29 which sent roars echoing across the Albatros course.

Scheffler, who had earlier started the day with three straight birdies, moved into the solo lead for the first time with a fourth successive birdie on the 17th, despite having found the rough off the tee.

He safely parred the last to set a mark of 19-under, which Fleetwood reached with a brilliant birdie on the 16th.

But the Englishman handed a shot back on the 17th after a clumsy chip from just off the green, leaving himself needing birdie at the last to force a play-off.

Fleetwood could not produce any more late heroics to suffer yet another near-miss in his career, while Scheffler celebrated on the practice range.

“There’s part of me that’s disappointed, of course, but at the same time, I never dreamt that I would be an Olympic medallist,” said Fleetwood.

“I’m still unbelievably proud and happy.”



ARCHERY

## Kim completes South Korean titles sweep with individual gold

Reuters  
Paris

Kim Woo-jin completed a South Korean sweep of the Paris Olympic archery titles when he won the individual men’s gold yesterday in a shoot-off against American Brady Ellison.

South Korea cemented their status as archery supremos with their fifth Paris gold medal, adding to the women’s individual title and the three team golds – in men’s, women’s and mixed.

Ellison had to settle for the silver in the individual men’s event and South Korea’s Lee Woo-seok won the bronze.

Kim and Ellison took turns winning the first four sets. With the fifth set at 4-4 the crowd were on the edge of their seats as the pair got perfect scores to force a shoot-off. Both men fired their arrows into the middle of the target but Kim’s was closer to the centre and won the gold. The two archers, who have a long history of competing against each other, expressed their deep mutual respect. “If (Lionel Messi and (Cristiano) Ronaldo are



Gold medalist from South Korea Kim Woo-jin poses on the podium during medal ceremony for the archery men’s individual round at the Paris 2024 Olympic Games at the Esplanade des Invalides in Paris yesterday. (AFP)

the best in football, then maybe we are the duo in archery,” Kim said.

The Korean archer had also knocked out defending champion Mete Gazoz 6-4 in the quarter-finals and the Turk looked devastated as his coach tried to console him.

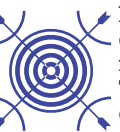
Losing gold did not upset Ellison, a five-times Olympian, who said he valued the skills gained by competing against the

world’s best, calling the process “steel sharpening steel.”

“When I go to a tournament, I know who I’m going to be shooting against,” he said. “Those are the guys I compare myself to.”

But Ellison and Kim acknowledged that Paris may not be the last time they meet.

“I think we’re going to do a rematch in LA,” Ellison said, referencing the 2028 Games.



FOCUS

## Unseeded Taiwanese players retain badminton doubles title

AFP  
Paris

Lee Yang and Wang Chi-lin clinched Taiwan’s first gold of the Paris Olympics yesterday when they beat their top-seeded Chinese opponents to retain their men’s badminton doubles title.

The unseeded Taiwanese pair beat Liang Weikeng and Wang Chang 21-17, 18-21, 21-19 in an epic encounter at La Chapelle Arena, becoming the first men’s doubles pair to retain the Olympic title.

But Wang admitted that the pair had “a lot of doubts” heading into the competition after a run of indifferent results.

“In the past three years we didn’t play that well,” said Lee, who announced his retirement after the match.

“Before we came to Paris we heard some people saying they didn’t want us to represent Taiwan. “I’m happy that in such a tough competition we managed to win the gold.”

Lee and Wang won all their games in Paris and outplayed



Taiwan’s gold medalists (right) Lee Yang and Wang Chi-lin and China’s silver medalists Liang Weikeng and Wang Chang pose with their medals on the podium at the men’s doubles badminton medal ceremony during the Paris 2024 Olympic Games at Porte de la Chapelle Arena in Paris yesterday. (AFP)

Liang and Wang in the final. They also prevented China from winning their third badminton gold of the Paris Games, after the country’s success in mixed and women’s doubles this week.

The tension ratcheted up in a tight third game as the Taiwanese team edged ahead late on.

They fluffed their first match point but made no mistake with the second, crumpling to the ground and screaming with joy. “They gave us a lot of pres-

sure and it was quite challenging,” said Taiwan’s Wang. Malaysia’s Aaron Chia and Soh Wooi Yik took bronze, just like they did in Tokyo three years ago.

The badminton competition concludes today with the women’s and men’s singles finals.

South Korea’s top seed An Se-young takes on China’s He Bingjiao in the women’s final while Denmark’s defending champion Viktor Axelsen plays Thailand’s Kunlavut Vitidsarn in the men’s.



HOCKEY

## Spain upset defending champs Belgium, India crush Great Britain 4-2

Reuters  
Paris

Eighth-ranked Spain upset reigning champions Belgium 3-2 in the men’s hockey quarter-finals at the Paris Olympics yesterday as skipper Marc Miralles netted a crucial third goal with three minutes to go before the defence stifled an attempted comeback.

The Netherlands also topped Australia 2-0 in a physical contest, India beat Britain 4-2 on penalties following a 1-1 draw and Germany edged Argentina 3-2.

Germany will play India in the semis, while the Netherlands face Spain. Spain had not made it past the last eight since Beijing 2008, while Belgium reached the last two Olympic finals, with several of their players holding gold and silver medals from the Tokyo and Rio Games respectively.

Forward Jose Maria Basterra opened the scoring in the 40th minute by converting a goalkeeper deflection off a blistering pass



Germany’s Jean-Paul Danneberg and Johannes Grosse celebrate with teammates after winning the hockey quarter-final against Argentina at Yves-du-Manoir Stadium, Colombes, France, yesterday. (Reuters)

from defender Jordi Bonastre but the lead did not last long as Belgium’s Arthur de Sloover equalised a minute later.

Forward Marc Reyne put Spain back in front after 55 minutes with

a strike from the field and Miralles stretched the lead before Alexander Hendrickx pulled a goal back.

“I think today is the best day of my life,” Basterra said. “We had pointed to this day in our calendar,



Raj Kumar Pal of India scores the winning goal during the penalty shootout in the men’s hockey quarter-final at the Paris 2024 Olympics in Yves-du-Manoir Stadium, Colombes, France, yesterday. (Reuters)

and now we are so happy. We have to enjoy today and tomorrow we will see (face) our opponents and we will see how to beat them.”

India, who captured the last of their eight Olympic hockey gold

medals in 1980, beat Britain after playing with 10 men for most of the match following a red card for a reckless high stick by defender Amit Rohidas in the 17th minute.

The final penalty score by sub-

stitute Raj Kumar Pal put the once dominant side in the semi-finals for the second Olympics in a row, after they won bronze in Tokyo.

The Netherlands had several players limp off the field as the match against Australia got physical, with some shoving between players. The Dutch came out on top, however, as Thijs van Dam widened the lead by slicing through two defenders with the ball in the 41st minute and angling a shot across his body to beat keeper Pirmin Blake for the Netherlands’ second score of the match.

Scoring opened in the evening game as forward Teo Hinrichs picked Augustin Bugallo’s pocket in the ninth minute and launched one in from the field, but it was answered two minutes later with a penalty corner goal by Macio Casella Schuth. Justus Weigand sealed the game with a deflection past keeper Tomas Santiago after Niklas Weiland dribbled through three defenders to set up the assist.



TENNIS

# Djokovic wins gold to complete career Golden Slam

Serb gets better of two tie-breaks to beat Spain's Alcaraz 7-6, 7-6

AFP  
Paris

Novak Djokovic defeated Carlos Alcaraz yesterday to claim a maiden Olympic title and become just the fifth player to complete a career Golden Slam.

The 37-year-old Serb, competing in his fifth Games, came through 7-6 (7/3), 7-6 (7/2) in an enthralling final at Roland Garros to add Olympic gold to his 24 Grand Slam triumphs.

Victory allowed him to join Andre Agassi, Rafael Nadal, Steffi Graf and the watching Serena Williams as the only players to win all four Grand Slam tournaments and Olympic singles gold.

He also became the oldest singles champion since tennis returned to the Olympics in 1988 and shattered Alcaraz's bid to add gold to the French Open and Wimbledon titles he has already pocketed this summer.

An emotional Djokovic celebrated by holding aloft the Serbian flag on court before clambering into the players' box to embrace his wife and children.

"We almost played three hours, the final shot was the only moment when I was sure I could win the match," said Djokovic, who had lost heavily to Alcaraz in the Wimbledon final last month.

"I put my body, my family on the line to win gold and finally I did it."

Alcaraz was distraught and wept as he attempted to conduct a TV interview. "Three hours, a big battle with tough moments," said the 21-year-old after a final in which neither player dropped serve. "It's very painful to lose."

Djokovic carved out a break point in the second game of the opener and three more in the fourth, all saved by the Spaniard.

Then it was the Serb's turn to demonstrate his famed powers of resilience, fighting off three break points in the fifth game and



Gold medallist Serbia's Novak Djokovic celebrates on Court Philippe-Chatrier at the Roland Garros Stadium during the Paris 2024 Olympic Games in Paris yesterday. (AFP)

## DJOKOVIC FACTFILE

**Name:** Novak Djokovic (SRB)  
**Date of birth:** May 22, 1987 (age 37)  
**Place of birth:** Belgrade  
**Weight:** 170 lbs (77kg)  
**Height:** 6ft 2in (1.88m)  
**Turned pro:** 2003  
**World ranking:** 2 (Highest 1; July 4, 2011)  
**Career:**  
**Total titles:** 99  
**Grand Slam titles:** 24 - Austral-

ian Open (2008, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2015, 2016, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2023); French Open (2016, 2021, 2023); Wimbledon (2011, 2014, 2015, 2018, 2019, 2021, 2022); US Open (2011, 2015, 2018, 2023)  
**Masters titles:** 40  
**ATP Finals:** 7 (2008, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2022, 2023)  
**Davis Cup:** 1 (2010)  
**Olympic Games:** 1 (2024)  
**Career earnings:** \$184,265,269

another five in a marathon ninth game. In a rollercoaster duel, Alcaraz saved a set point in the 12th game but his veteran opponent dominated the tiebreak to claim the opener after a breathless 93 minutes on Court Philippe Chatrier.

There was no let-up in the second set, scintillating shot-making

alongside rousing defence with Alcaraz fighting off the final's 14th break point in the third game.

Again the set was decided by a tie-break and it was Djokovic with history on the line again sweeping through to take victory after two hours and 50 minutes.

Lorenzo Musetti defeated Felix Auger-Aliassime in three sets

on Saturday to claim the bronze medal, giving Italy its first men's tennis medal in 100 years.

Later in the day, Mirra Andreeva and Diana Shnaider became the first Russians to win a medal at the Paris Olympics when they took silver in the women's doubles.

Playing as neutrals, they were beaten in three sets in the final by Italy's Sara Errani and Jasmine Paolini. Andreeva, 17, and 20-year-old Shnaider, playing their first event as a team, went down to a 2-6, 6-1, 10-7 defeat to the experienced Italians in the final.

They had knocked out defending Olympic champions and second seeds Barbora Krejickova and Katerina Siniakova in the quarter-finals. Andreeva and Shnaider are both top 25 players in singles.

At this year's French Open, the 17-year-old was the youngest player to reach the semi-finals since 1997.

CYCLING

# Faulkner claims road race gold

AFP  
Paris

Kristen Faulkner of the United States won Olympic gold in the women's cycling road race in Paris yesterday, outwitting three rivals late in the 158km run around the city.

Veteran Marianne Vos of the Netherlands took silver ahead of Belgium's pre-race favourite Lotte Kopecky in a photo finish.

The 22-year-old Hungarian rider Blanka Vas just missed out.

"I feel like it's a dream come true," said Faulkner. "It's the best feeling in the world and I don't know how to describe it."

Vas and Vos had led over the entire closing circuit of the French capital until Kopecky and Faulkner caught them with the finish line 2km away.

The American then launched an attack to break free of the lead group and surged to the finish, the other three riders left lagging well behind.

Faulkner, a former rower from

Alaska, said her tactics were born of necessity.

"Kopecky wanted to catch the front two, so I knew she'd ride with me. I also knew that if we caught them, then I had to attack because I couldn't beat any of them at the line," she said.

The 31-year-old said the fact she had won took time to sink in even after she crossed the line where she grabbed an American flag and lapped up the support of huge crowds.

"I had to double and triple check that I won gold. I knew it but I didn't know it," said Faulkner.

Behind her the other three slugged it out for the two remaining medals, with Vas the odd one out.

Ninety-three riders from 58 nations set off in bright sunshine with Burkina Faso's Awa Bamogo the first to attack as the peloton departed Paris for the countryside.

A second sustained attack included the Hashimi sisters from Afghanistan, but the group was swallowed up as soon as the real action got going on the first of three climbs to Montmartre.



Silver medallist Netherlands' Marianne Vos (left), gold medallist US' Kristen Faulkner and bronze medallist Belgium's Lotte Kopecky (right) celebrate on the women's cycling road race podium during the Paris 2024 Olympic Games in Paris yesterday. (AFP)

GYMNASTICS

# Algeria's Nemour makes history with gold

Reuters  
Paris

Algeria's Kaylia Nemour became the first African gymnast to win an Olympic medal when she secured the gold with a breathtaking routine on the asymmetric bars at the Paris Games yesterday that wowed the crowd in Bercy Arena.

The 17-year-old's fast-paced routine featuring a number of complex release-and-catch manoeuvres delighted the crowd who came to support a gymnast who had previously represented France.

China's Qiu Qiyuan, the 2023 world champion, took the silver, while American Sunisa Lee captured her second consecutive Olympic bronze on the apparatus with 14.800 points.

In men's competitions yesterday, Carlos Edriel Yulo of the Philippines won the vault title - his second Olympic gold in as many days after he triumphed in the floor exercise on Saturday.

Artur Davtyan of Armenia claimed the silver, while Britain's Harry Hepworth took the bronze.

On the rings, Liu Yang successfully defended his Olympic title to earn China their first gymnastics gold in Paris. His compatriot Zou Jingyuan had to make do with the silver and Eleftherios Petrounias of Greece took the bronze.

Fans roared and jumped to their feet as soon as Nemour completed her dismount from the asymmetric bars. She immediately broke down in tears as she handed Algeria their first medal of the Paris Olympics, with her



Algeria's Kaylia Nemour celebrates winning the uneven bars gold medal during the Paris 2024 Olympic Games at the Bercy Arena in Paris yesterday. (AFP)

performance scoring a staggering 15.700 points.

Nemour, who had been favourite to claim gold, was still in complete disbelief after the competition. "I can't believe this is happening," Nemour said after winning her first gold medal at a major global competition. "This is too much. I have no words."

Nemour was up after Chinese teenager Qiu Qiyuan, who had also executed a spectacular routine to briefly top the standings with 15.500 points.

"When I saw her result of 15.500

points, I told myself that I would really need to fight," Nemour said. "I re-focused quickly and got the best mark of my life, and it was the right time to get it."

The Algerian Olympic Committee issued a statement calling Nemour a legend. "You showed the world the strength and determination of Algeria with your wonderful victory," the statement said.

American Lee could be seen cheering for Nemour throughout her routine.

"I was really aiming for the third

place because I actually really wanted Kaylia to win, just because she's so incredible," Tokyo Games all around champion Lee said after winning her sixth Olympic medal. Nina Derwael of Belgium, the winner on the apparatus at the last Games, finished 0.034 of a point off the podium.

British gymnast Rebecca Downie's hopes of finishing on the podium were shattered after she fell off the apparatus while attempting her signature release-and-catch move. She finished seventh out of eight finalists.

She returned to complete her



LEFT TO RIGHT: Armenia's Artur Davtyan (silver), Philippines' Carlos Edriel Yulo (gold) and Britain's Harry Hepworth (bronze) pose for a selfie during the podium ceremony for the men's vault event yesterday. (AFP)

routine, nailing her dismount and broke into a smile as she saluted the crowd, ending her Olympic efforts in Paris. Another gymnast who like Nemour emerged as a national hero was Yulo, whose second gold medal of the Games made him the first Filipino to win two Olympic golds.

"Winning yesterday took away all of my stress," Yulo said. "Today I was more chilled and relaxed. It helped me give it all because there was nothing to lose anymore."

On Saturday, the 24-year-old became the first Filipino to capture an Olympic gymnastics title

with his victory on the floor exercise, a feat that also earned him a new home. Asked if he will now get two houses, one for each gold medal, he said: "I think so but I should really check if that's true."

The final artistic gymnastics events of the Paris Games take place today. The men's parallel and horizontal bar finals, as well as the women's balance beam and floor exercise, will be contested. American Simone Biles, the most decorated gymnast of all-time, will be chasing two more golds to add to the three she has already won in Paris.