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Japan vows to cooperate
 Japan has vowed to help a French probe into securing of 2020 Olympics **PAGE 35**

Jason Day wins Championship
 Australian Jason Day dominates best field to claim Players Championship in Florida **PAGE 30**

THE BIG ONE
PREMIER LEAGUE
MAN UNITED VS BOURNEMOUTH

Lekhwiya looking for a repeat of Emir Cup win against Jaish



The El Jaish team (left) goes through the paces during their training session. (Right) Lekhwiya Sports Club practice ahead of the AFC Champions League match at the Lekhwiya Stadium on Monday. The game, on Tuesday, will be played at the same venue.

The two Qatar Stars League teams to meet in AFC Champions League Round of 16 clash in Doha tonight

TRIBUNE NEWS NETWORK
 DOHA

LEKHWIYA will be hoping for a repeat of last week's Emir's Cup win over El Jaish when the Qatar Stars League (QSL) duo meet in the first leg of the Round of 16 of the 2016 AFC Champions League on Tuesday.

Djamel Belmadi's side advanced to the final of the local cup competition on Friday with a 2-1 win over El Jaish

and the 2013 AFC Champions League quarter-finalists will welcome back Ahmed Magsood, who missed the club's final group stage match against Uzbekistan's Bunyodkor due to suspension.

Defender Khaled Mufah will also be available after recovering from a recent injury, but young Qatar international striker Mohammed Muntari is ruled out after picking up a knock against El Jaish last week.

"We have had a tight schedule recently as we played several important matches in a short period of time," said Belmadi.

"The match tomorrow won't be any different as it is important we get a good result, especially ahead of the final of the cup.

"We have to show our fighting spirit tomorrow because the match against El Jaish will not be easy. Our concentration will be on the match tomorrow

AFC CHAMPIONS LEAGUE MATCHES TODAY

| |
|---|
| Last 16 First Leg |
| Melbourne Victory (Australia) v Chonbuk (Korea) (9:45am) |
| FC Tokyo (Japan) v Shanghai SIPG (China) (10:30am) |
| Lekhwiya (Qatar) v Al Jaish (Qatar) (7:15pm) |
| Al-Nasr (UAE) v Teraktor-Sazi (Iran) (7:45pm) |
| Al Hilal (Saudi Arabia) v Lokomotiv Tashkent (Uzbekistan) 6:05pm) |

and hopefully we will get the result that we are looking for." El Jaish, who are making

their second appearance in the knockout stage of the AFC Champions League, will

welcome defender Yasir Isa and midfielder Khaled Abdulraoof back to the team after both were ruled out of the final match in the group stage due to suspension.

"This is the fifth match that we played against Lekhwiya this season and we recently met them in the Emir's Cup," said coach Sabri Lamouchi, who led El Jaish to a runners-up finish in the QSL this season.

"However, things will be different in the match tomorrow. We have a lot of motivation to avenge our defeat in the cup and we have prepared well."

"We had a good run in the group stage of the competition and our ambition is to continue with the same spirit and have a better result."

"The team that qualifies will only be known by the end of the second match and therefore we should get the best possible result tomorrow."

ACL experience a 'huge benefit' for World Cup 2022: Karim Boudiaf & Nam Tae-hee

SC.QA
 DOHA

LEKHWIYA SC teammates Karim Boudiaf and Nam Tae-hee believe that the continued positive performances of Qatar Stars League (QSL) clubs in the AFC Champions League will be important for the country's national team to emerge among Asia's elite in time for the 2022 FIFA World Cup.

The 2014-15 QSL champions are set for a double header this week with Friday's Emir Cup final against Al Sadd preceded by Tuesday's AFC Champions League round of 16 home game against fellow QSL side El Jaish.

And the midfield duo told www.sc.qa that QSL clubs can challenge the best of Asia regularly over the next few years to follow on from the last continental triumph by Al Sadd Sports Club in 2011.

"This year a Qatari club is definitely going to be in the quarter-final," said Boudiaf, who started in all but one of Qatar's 2018 second round qualifiers.

"If Qatar is represented in at least the quarter-final of the semi-final of the AFC Champions League every year from now till 2022, it would have a positive impact on the national team for the home World Cup."

Al Sadd are the only QSL team to have lifted the AFC Champions League trophy - and have done so on two occasions, in 1989 and again in



2011. Al Arabi were also runners-up in 1995 - and Boudiaf believes the nation's club sides are heading in the right direction as journey as 2022 draws ever nearer.

"Winning a few World Cup matches in 2022 will be unbelievable," he continued. "Focusing on the Champions League is one of the many ways we can make this hap-

pen. After the 2018 World Cup, the Asian Champions League will provide the main competitive test for our national team as we will not be playing the 2022 qualifiers."

The 25-year-old midfielder added that there is a short-term relevance to the elite continental club competition can be replicated on the international stage.

"The level in the AFC Champions League is very high and Lekhwiya's good run



in September.

"Lekhwiya could well end up facing an Iranian club in the Champions League quarter-final in late August. Our club has many Qatar national team players and a potential match-up against Zob Ahan or Tractor Sazi would give us valuable experience ahead of the challenging first qualifier at the Azadi Stadium in Tehran on 1 September," said Boudiaf.

Boudiaf's midfield partner Nam Tae-hee, who joined Lekhwiya in 2012, also recognises that form in the elite continental club competition can be replicated on the international stage.

"The level in the AFC Champions League is very high and Lekhwiya's good run

will help Qatar in the World Cup qualifiers," said South Korea's 24-year-old attacking midfielder.

"Lekhwiya reached the quarter-final in 2013 after defeating Al Hilal in the round of 16 but lost to eventual champions Guangzhou Evergrande."

"Qatar had a few of our players then and they really tested us in Seoul in the 2014 World Cup Qualifier. We scored the winner deep into injury time. This year we will target a spot in the Champions League final."

Nam, who is admirably referred to by Boudiaf as one of the most technically gifted playmakers in Asian club football, said the Qatar national

side have improved from the time 'Al Annabi' lost both their 2014 qualifiers to the 'Taeguk Warriors'.

"I played in the game in Doha and there is no doubt that QSL clubs doing well in Asia is likely to continue. 'QSL clubs' focus on the Asian Champions League is a very positive sign for the Qatar national team looking to create a lasting impression in front of home fans at the 2022

World Cup, just as South Korea did in 2002."

That fairytale run to the semi-final by Guus Hiddink's side is still fresh in Nam's memory and he wishes to emulate it in 2022 in Qatar, which he calls his second home.

"I was just 10 then but I vividly remember Ahn Jung-hwan's golden goal against Italy in the round of 16. Also Park Ji-sung's winner in the group game against Portugal's golden generation. Those moments made me dream of wanting to play a World Cup at home. I will be very close to realising this if I play in Qatar in 2022."

However, there is the small matter of featuring in Russia before that. And both Boudiaf and Nam, who call each other brothers, have two special dates pencilled in their diaries - 6 October 2016 and 13 June 2017 when their countries face each other in the third round qualifiers.

"Those matches will be like a homecoming for me as there are many Lekhwiya players in Qatar including my friend Karim," smiled Nam.

Boudiaf echoed his teammate and friend's sentiments, but said that will go out the window the whistle blows in the qualifiers.

"I will enjoy marking Nam," he said.

"Though I know his moves well from the training ground, he is very quick and has great vision in his passing and it will be a great challenge. I will not be averse to giving him an odd kick if need be."

SPORTS
ROUNDUP

TENNIS

Berdych splits with coach days after Goffin mauling

Tomas Berdych has split with coach Daniel Vallverdu days after a humiliating 6-0 6-0 defeat at the Italian Open. The 30-year-old Czech world number eight has suffered a lean year so far.



SWIMMING

Deti sets meet record with 400m win at Euros

Gabriele Deti of Italy swims to the gold medal in the Men's 400m freestyle final during the European Aquatics Championships in London. Deti hit the wall in a time of 3:44.01, breaking the 3:45.10 set by Yuri Prilukov in 2008.



Day dominates best field to win Players Championship

The Aussie is the third No. 1 player to win The Players Championship, joining Norman and Woods

AP
PONTE VEDRA BEACH, FLORIDA

JASON Day had a crystal trophy at his side and a pacifier in his pocket.

Only after he completed a wire-to-wire victory in The Players Championship did Day reveal that his 3-year-old son, Dash, had kept him up the night before with a stomach ailment. Exactly how the pacifier wound up in his pocket remained a mystery, though it was an illustration of his week at the TPC Sawgrass.

Nothing unsettled him. Nothing was going to stop him. "I've got no stress in my life," Day said after his fourth shot victory, his seventh in the last 10 months. "Other than Dash waking up last night... Dash woke up and he threw up everywhere. How funny is that? I've got this pacifier here because it's in my pocket for some reason. But like that's one thing that I'm sitting here (because) I was enjoying myself. I prepped well, had great work. I felt good about my swing."

"Everything was coming along nicely."
For the rest of the PGA Tour, it must be frightening. Dating to the Canadian

He closed with a 1-under 71 to become the first wire-to-wire winner at The Players since Hal Sutton in 2000.

Open last summer, Day's seven victories include a major, The Players, a World Golf Championship and two FedEx Cup playoff events. He already had won twice this year. And yet when he arrived at the TPC Sawgrass, all he heard was that he has not played this golf course very well. His most recent round was an 81 last year to miss the cut.

That now seems like a long time ago. Day started this tournament by tying the course record with a 9-under 63 and breaking the 36-hole tournament record at 15-under par. He survived the scariest day at Sawgrass when the greens were as slick as ice. He overcame some errant shots and a few doubts on the front nine on Sunday. And then he finished with yet another flawless performance on the back nine where he played bogey-free all four rounds.

One year after Rickie Fowler turned in the most dynamic finish in Players Championship history, Day made Sunday look inevitable.

"I'm very motivated to win as much as I can right now," he said.

Day never let anyone closer than two shots the entire final round, though there were a few anxious moments, especially when he rattled three chips from just 40 feet right of the green on the par-5 ninth. A potential birdie turned into



Jason Day holds the championship trophy after winning the 2016 Players Championship golf tournament at TPC Sawgrass - Stadium Course Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida on Sunday. (USA TODAY SPORTS)

an unsettling bogey, and he had to make a 6-foot putt to avoid the score being worse.

And then, it was over. Day rolled in a 15-foot birdie putt on No. 10, another 15-foot birdie putt on No. 12, and the 28-year-old Australian never came close to bogey the rest of the way. He closed with a 1-under 71 to become the first wire-to-wire winner at The Players since Hal Sutton in 2000.

That was the year Sutton finished off Tiger Woods by saying, "Be the right club today," with a 6-iron into the 18th to sew up the victory. Day need-

ed nothing that dramatic. Kevin Chappell was 5 under over his last 10 holes to finish second, though he never was a serious threat to win. No one was.

"It's no coincidence he's No. 1 in the world," Justin Thomas said after closing with a Sunday-best 65 to tie for third. "He drives it extremely far, extremely straight. He hits it to the moon, so he can access pins that most people can't. His short game is ridiculous. I think I've pretty much covered it all there when it comes to the golf."

Day finished at 15-under

273 for his 10th career victory on the PGA Tour. Only Rory McIlroy with 11 has more victories among players still in their 20s.

Day is the third No. 1 player to win The Players Championship, joining Greg Norman (1994) and Tiger Woods (2001 and 2003).

Perhaps even more telling about the state of his game is that he joined Woods, Tom Watson and Johnny Miller as the only players since 1970 to go wire-to-wire twice in the same season. Day led from start to finish at the Arnold Palmer

Invitational at Bay Hill.

Day also won the Dell Match Play, winning six of his seven matches before they reached the 18th green.

Adam Scott referred to this run as "Tigeresque."

"That's one of the hardest things to do when you are hot like that, to keep pushing," Scott said. "But he has a very strong desire to achieve so much, and I think probably his goals are changing throughout this period, and he's expecting more and more of himself. He's got that ability to push himself and accomplish."

AP
RIO DE JANEIRO

SEBASTIAN Coe, the head of the world governing body of athletics, visited the track for the Rio de Janeiro Olympics on Sunday but declined to speculate if Russia will be allowed to compete there.

A powerhouse in the sport, Russia was suspended by the IAAF in November following a WADA panel report that found state-sponsored cheating.

An Olympics without Russia in track and field would be an embarrassing blow, raising more doubts about doping in a wide range of sports. Coe has appointed a task force to examine the charges against Russia. He said the task force would report back on June 17, just weeks before the Olympics open on August 5.

"I'm going to wait for the task force to come and report back to us," Coe said, speaking at the Olympic Stadium in northern Rio. "I think it would be inappropriate for me at this moment - given that I've asked them to go away and do that work - for me to start making judgments before I've heard what they have to say."

Russian sports minister Vitaly Mutko, writing in Britain's *Sunday Times*, acknowledged Russia has a "problem" with doping and he said "we are ashamed."

Coe, a two-time Olympic



International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) president, Sebastian Coe.

gold medalist at 1,500 meters, is trying to restore credibility to a sport that has lost much of it.

"My responsibility is to make sure that the clean athletes understand that they have in me, somebody who was a competitor, a clean competitor," Coe said.

The three-day test event for track and field ended on Monday, and is the last Olympic warmup for Rio. Coe called the new track at Rio's Olympic stadium "very good" and said his staff had been "complimentary" about the set up.

"A great thing about a test event is that it gives you the opportunity to absorb all the things that we need to think about over the next 80 days," Coe added.

Sagan opens Tour of California defence with win

AFP
LOS ANGELES

REIGNING champion Peter Sagan extended his Tour of California stage victories record on Sunday as he opened the defence of his crown with a win.

The Slovak Tinkoff rider sprinted to victory in the 106-mile (170.5km) first stage held in and around San Diego, finishing clear of Dutch duo Wouter Wippert and Dylan Groenewegen.

Sagan, who won the Gent Wevelgem at the end of March before claiming the prestigious Tour of Flanders in early April, bided his time to weave through a strong field to cross just ahead of Wippert.

It was a record 14th career stage victory in the Tour of California for Sagan, a surprise winner of the race last year. The Slovak star was the ultimate beneficiary of co-operation between teams in the peloton who worked to reel in a long breakaway of seven riders.

Britain's Daniel Patten (Wiggins), Americans Daniel Eaton (UnitedHealthcare), Jacob Rathe and Michael Sheehan (Jelly Belly), Danny Pate (Katusha) and Oscar Clark (Hollowsko) along with Finland's Joonas Henttala (Novo Nordisk) built up an early six-



Peter Sagan wins stage one of the 2016 Amgen Tour of California.

minute lead. However, Katusha led the chase and eventually closed the gap.

But Katusha and Dimension Data were not rewarded for their efforts in hunting down the breakaway, with both their respective sprinters - Norway's Alexander Kristoff and Briton's Mark Cavendish - failing to challenge in the sprint finish.

That opened the door for Sagan, who powered home to reclaim the yellow jersey he had lost last year at the conclusion of the 2015 race.

Sagan leads the general classification by four seconds from Wippert after crossing in 4hr 20min 31sec.

Mercedes in turmoil after worst F1 finish in five years

AFP
BARCELONA

FOR the first time in more than five years, the Mercedes team on Monday flew home without a finisher, and pointless, following Lewis Hamilton and Nico Rosberg's opening-lap collision in Sunday's Spanish Grand Prix.

The team also had to cope with an unwanted collective headache, one that felt familiar after the acrimony of 2014, and had to face a new challenge as Formula One hailed a new youngest race winner in Dutch teenager Max Verstappen.

The crash ended championship leader Rosberg's winning streak - four races this year

and seven in all - and delivered Mercedes' first non-finish since the 2011 Australian Grand Prix, but, worse than that, it reopened a divide between the drivers.

The tension and emotion was palpable on Sunday night when they spoke to reporters after being cleared of blame for what the race stewards described as a "racing incident".

Each driver seemed to blame the other, without clear articulation of those feelings, during a clumsy staged news briefing that barely papered over the cracks in a team likely to face more pressure ahead from the improving Ferrari and Red Bull outfits.



Nico Rosberg and Lewis Hamilton failed to progress beyond the fourth turn of the Spanish GP on Sunday.

Hamilton said he had apologised to the team, but he did not accept blame for attempting to pass Rosberg on the inside at Turn Four.

Rosberg, who conceded that his engine was not in the correct mode, said he moved to defend his position and was surprised by Hamilton.

Team chief Toto Wolff, following the line of the stewards' decision, attempted to provide some diplomatic objectivity. Each driver feels he is not entirely faultless, he said.

The stewards had explained that Hamilton "had a portion of his front wing inside Rosberg's car fractions of a second prior to having to leave the track to

avoid a collision...Rosberg had the right to make the manoeuvre that he did and Hamilton's attempt to overtake was reasonable."

"The convergence of events led neither driver to be wholly or predominantly at fault."

Like Wolff, Hamilton was upset at seeing the team lose 43 points.

"These things happen, but it is the right thing to apologise, just like when the engine fails they say sorry to me."

The crash ended Hamilton's hopes of a first win in eight races since clinching his third world title in Texas last October, but also confirmed that the new 'battle-toughened' Rosberg

of 2016 has no intention of giving his team-mate any favours.

It also left the defending champion 43 points adrift of Rosberg in the title race as they prepare to regain control of their emotions ahead of the unique and taxing demands of the Monaco Grand Prix.

"It was an incident that could have been avoided," said Wolff, who declared also that Mercedes would continue to allow free racing between them. "I am going away angry and upset, but isn't that what racing should be all about?"

He did not answer his own question, but will be disappointed if he has the same experience again in Monte Carlo.

Raina becomes father of a baby girl

PTI
AMSTERDAM

INDIA cricketer Suresh Raina on Sunday became a father after his wife Priyanka Chaudhary gave birth to a baby girl at a private hospital here.

The 29-year-old Gujarat Lions skipper became a first time father after his daughter, who has been named Gracia, was born here at 2 pm local time. Raina flew out to the Netherlands on May 10 to be with his pregnant wife, missing an IPL match in nine years.

He missed the match against Royal Challengers Bangalore. Raina had tied the nuptial knot with Priyanka last year in April.



Suresh Raina on Sunday became a father after his wife Priyanka Chaudhary gave birth to a baby girl at a private hospital in Amsterdam. The India cricketer became a first time father and has named his daughter Gracia. (SOURCE: TWITTER)

ICC denies SLC claims

IANS
DUBAI

THE International Cricket Council (ICC) on Monday denied claims made by Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC) of agreeing to reimburse it the money spent on clearing wicketkeeper Kusal Perera of doping charges.

"ICC confirms it has not received any request for compensation from @OfficialSLC or Perera and it has not agreed to any reimbursement," the ICC wrote on its Twitter handle.

Earlier, a report said SLC secretary Mohan de Silva had claimed that ICC had verbally agreed to reimburse the funds which the board spent in clearing Perera of doping charges.

RCB thump KKR by 9 wickets to stay in race for IPL playoff berth

IANS
KOLKATA

VIRAT Kohli and A.B. de Villiers once again delivered the goods with their bats as their Royal Challengers Bangalore romped home with 9 wickets to spare against Kolkata Knight Riders in an Indian Premier League (IPL) contest at the Eden Gardens here on Monday.

Kohli and de Villiers remained not out on 75 and 59 respectively while Chris Gayle contributed with a 31-ball 49.

The Kohli-de Villiers partnership yielded 115 runs for the men in red and black.

With the win, Bangalore stay alive in the competition with 6 wins from 12 games.

Chasing Kolkata's 183/5, they got off to a flyer as Gayle - who had been in slumber for much of this season - smashed the ball to all parts of the ground.

The burly Jamaican first took on Andre Russell hitting him for 17 in the third over and then clubbed Sunil Narine for two consecutive fours in the fifth.

After six overs, Bangalore were cruising at 63 for no loss but then Gayle was adjudged leg-before-wicket off a Narine delivery.

It was difficult to understand who the home team were as chants of 'Kohli, Kohli' went up time and again around the packed stadium as the Bangalore captain came in - and did not disappoint either as he picked the boundaries at regular intervals.

However, Kohli was dropped at 32 by his opposite number Gautam Gambhir. The miss proved costly as Kohli got to yet another half-century, while his partner at the other end - de Villiers - started clobbering them too.

Before long, the visitors were in touching distance of the total and the duo did the needful with 8 balls to spare.

Earlier twin fifties from Gambhir (51) and Manish Pandey (50) aided by Russell's late blitz of 19-ball 39 helped Kolkata get to a fight-



NO STOPPING HIM: RCB captain Virat Kohli on his half century during the IPL match against KKR at the Eden Garden in Kolkata on Monday. Kohli made 75 not out. (PTI)



RCB's AB de Villiers during his unbeaten innings of 59 at the Eden Gardens in Kolkata on Monday. (PTI)

SCORES

Kolkata Knight Riders
183/5 (Gautam Gambhir 51, Manish Pandey 50; Sreenath Aravind 2/41) vs **Royal Challengers**
Bangalore: 186/1 (Kohli 75 n.o., De Villiers 59 n.o.)

ter and also grabbed the vital wicket of Gambhir who got run-out shortly after getting to his fifty.

Thereafter, new man Yusuf Pathan and the already set Pandey failed to pierce the gaps.

Runs dried down and Pandey was holed out in the deep trying to up the run-rate. Yusuf (6) too was out stumped.

Next to perish was Suryakumar Yadav (5) who was caught at long on by Iqbal Abdulla.

The flurry of wickets also put a brake on the scoring rate much to the relief of Bangalore. But Shakib Al Hasan and Russell enthralled the strong Eden crowd with some powerhitting to propel Kolkata to such a score.

The last three overs yielded 38 runs for the home side.

Even though the hosts lost Robin Uthappa (2) early, Gambhir manage to pick the gaps along with Pandey.

By the end of the powerplay, the team was 51/1.

The onslaught continued in the next over as legspinner Yuvezdra Chahal was carved for 16.

Bangalore then pulled things back a little thereaf-

PAKISTAN-ENGLAND TEST SERIES

Yasir injury concern ahead of first Test

AFP
KARACHI

PAKISTAN leg spinner Yasir Shah needs four to five weeks to recover from a knee injury, officials said on Monday, putting him on track for the team's summer tour of England.

The 30-year-old, who is ranked third in Tests, was forced out of a boot camp in the city of Abbottabad after experiencing pain in his left knee.

The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) said in a statement a scan had revealed a minor injury.

"Shah is suffering from tear in the lateral meniscus along with small osteochondral defect. He needs conservative management which includes physical therapy and extensive rehabilitation. In our opinion he will recover in four to five weeks time," it said.

Shah has been Pakistan's leading bowler in Tests in recent times and his participation is seen as key for the team's chances in the four-Test series in England from July 14.

He has so far taken 76 wickets in 12 Tests and has been taken on the mantle of the country's main spinner after Saad Ajmal's career was derailed following a suspension for chucking.

Shah took 49 wickets in 2015 which helped Pakistan jump to second in the Test rankings. Fifteen of them came in Pakistan's 2-0 win over England in the three-Test series in the United Arab Emirates.

Earlier this year Shah was suspended following a failed dope test, a punishment which was lifted after he pleaded guilty, saying he took his wife's blood pressure tablet by mistake.

The International Cricket Council lifted the suspension in March.

match, against Leicestershire ended in a draw on Sunday.

"Prasad had a few tests and the specialist came to see him today," the South African added.

"We'll have to build him up and get him bowling a number of overs in the nets to have him prepared potentially for the second or third Test."

Sri Lanka's top-order have struggled in England so far this tour but Dimuth Karunaratne made a hundred and Lahiru Thirimanne hit 40 at



Pakistan leg-spinner Yasir Shah is suffering from a muscle tear.

Sri Lanka paceman Prasad is ruled out

AFP
LONDON

SRI Lanka paceman Dhammika Prasad will miss the chance to repeat his Headingley heroics of two years ago after being ruled out of the first Test against England starting on Thursday.

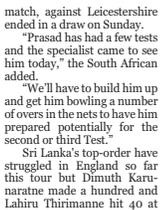
Prasad played a key role in Sri Lanka's first Test series win in England when, in the second and final match of the 2014 campaign, he took five for 50 in the second innings at Headingley, the headquarters of county

champions Yorkshire in Leeds, northern England.

His haul included all of England's top four, in a match Sri Lanka won by 100 runs after clinching victory with just one ball to spare on the final day.

However, this trip saw the 32-year-old injure his shoulder during Sri Lanka's first tour match against Essex last week.

"We're hoping that we can get him bowling again pretty soon," Sri Lanka coach Graham Ford told BBC Sport after the tourists' final warm-up



Dhammika Prasad.

Grace Road.

"As we have gone along players have started to find their feet and find a bit of form," Ford said.

"Every day, there is someone new who is starting to look like he feeling a bit more settled in English conditions."

"Hopefully with a bit more work the boys will have some good belief about what they can do. It is going to be about mental toughness and handling pressure when the Test starts on Thursday."

I'll hit six sixes again, Yuvraj to a kid who fought cancer

PTI
MOHALI

A cancer survivor and a World Cup hero, India batsman Yuvraj Singh gave some vital tips to 17 young kids, who fought their own battles against the dreaded disease, during an interaction here.

Yuvraj, who hit 24-ball 42 runs to guide his IPL team Sunrisers Hyderabad to a seven-wicket win against Kings XI Punjab, interacted with a group of children, many among them aged 7 or 8 years, at the PCA stadium last night.

"When a young kid asked Yuvraj if he will again hit those six sixes, the 34-year-old who hails from Chandigarh, said, 'You pray, I will hit six sixes again.'"

The left-handed batsman, however, said he doesn't know how he hit those six sixes. "Many years have passed since then."

Yuvraj's six sixes in an over remains one of the most cherished moments in Indian cricket, and these came off England's Stuart Broad in a Twenty20 World Cup match in 2007 in South Africa.

One of the cancer survivor boy, aged 8 now, had been diagnosed with cancer when he was just 18 months old. Studying in Class 4 now, the boy said that players like Yuvraj are a great inspiration for him.

"I love cricket and seeing Yuvraj and Suresh Raina in action gives me immense joy," he said.

Yuvraj also gave valuable tips to the children, saying fight with dreaded disease like cancer



Yuvraj Singh of Sunrisers Hyderabad hits a six during the IPL in Mohali on Sunday. (PTI)

teaches you not to take life for granted, not to take your family or friends for granted.

"Think of it as a blessing in disguise that you have an opportunity to live again," he told them.

Yuvraj was Player Of The Tournament in 2011 World Cup, the same year when he was diagnosed with the dreaded disease which he later fought bravely and got cured.

**NEWS
IN BRIEF**

76ers 1st NBA team to land jersey sponsorship with StubHub

THE Philadelphia 76ers have become the first team in the NBA to put a sponsorship logo on player uniforms, striking a deal with StubHub for a spot on one of the hottest pieces of real estate available in sports. StubHub, a website that connects ticket buyers and sellers, will have its logo appear on the front left of the jersey in 2017-18 for the start of a three-year trial period. (AP)

Timberwolves' Towns is unanimous Rookie of the Year pick

MINNESOTA Timberwolves centre Karl-Anthony Towns is the unanimous winner of the NBA Rookie of the Year award. The league made the announcement on Monday, giving the Wolves back-to-back honours after forward Andrew Wiggins won the Eddie Gottlieb Trophy last season. Towns received all 130 first-place votes from a panel of sports writers and broadcasters in the US and Canada. (AP)

Veteran defensive end Jason Jones signs with Dolphins

DEFENSIVE end Jason Jones has signed with the Miami Dolphins, adding depth and flexibility to a front four that should be formidable next season. The deal on Monday was confirmed by the agent for Jones, Michael McCarthy. Jones is expected to back up another Miami newcomer, Mario Williams, and Cameron Wake, who is coming off Achilles tendon surgery. (AP)

Red-hot Lowry leads Raptors into conference final against Cavs

Lowry scores 35 points, DeMar DeRozan added 28 for the Raptors to reach their first conference finals

AP
TORONTO

LESS than two weeks ago, Kyle Lowry was struggling so badly that he stayed past midnight to work on his game after a tough playoff loss.

Now a red-hot Lowry is carrying the Toronto Raptors into their first ever Eastern Conference finals.

Lowry scored 35 points, DeMar DeRozan had 28 and the Raptors reached the conference finals by beating the Miami Heat 116-89 on Sunday. They play in Cleveland on Tuesday night.

"I missed some shots I could have made, but we won the game," Lowry said. "That's all that matters. I'm going to keep pushing and try to be better, and do things to keep helping my team get wins."

After Toronto's overtime loss to Miami in Game 1, when Lowry scored seven points and missed 10-of-13 shots, he stayed behind for more than an hour to practice his shooting alone while work crews picked up garbage from beneath the Air Canada Centre seats.

Things were a lot different in Sunday's Game 7 when Lowry topped 30 points for the second straight game and the third time in the series. A standing-room-only crowd of 20,257 cheered every one of Lowry's baskets, roared in appreciation when he was subbed out with the game winding down, and then chanted "We want Cleveland" as the final seconds ticked away.

"That's just what he does," DeRozan said of Lowry. "He's been doing it all year, he won us countless games."

Checking out early gave Lowry a chance to sit on the bench and soak in the scene as Toronto set franchise records for playoff points and margin of victory.

"It was just a time to relax and just think about the things that we've done, and we have to continue to do," Lowry said.

Toronto will need both Lowry and DeRozan to continue pouring in points to have any chance against the Cavaliers, who are unbeaten so far this postseason.

The two Raptors All-Stars have been inconsistent so far in the playoffs but seem to be finding their form at the right time. They've combined for

more than 50 points in three straight games.

"They're our guys," Raptors coach Dwane Casey said. "They carried us all year. There were some moments of 'Are they ever going to make a shot?' But deep in your heart, you believed that those guys were going to come around."

Toronto won two of three against the Cavaliers in the regular season, with both victories coming at home by a combined six points. Toronto's defeat was a lot more lopsided: they lost 122-100 in Cleveland on January 4.

Scouting booklets for the Cleveland series were sitting on the chair of each Raptors player inside their locker room less than an hour after Sunday's game.

"We know we've got a tough task ahead," Lowry said. "It's always a challenge going against those guys."

Casey declined to say whether centre Jonas Valanciunas, who sprained his right ankle in Game 3 against the Heat, would be available against Cleveland.

"He's still limping around but he's doing therapy 24/7 so we'll see," Casey said.

Whether or not Valanciunas plays, Toronto must control Cleveland's All-Star trio of LeBron James, Kyrie Irving and Kevin Love. They'll also have to defend the 3-point shot — the Cavs have averaged an NBA-best 16.8 3-pointers per game this postseason.

"Obviously we know they've got three All-Stars, they have a supporting cast around those three that make shots," Toronto guard Cory Joseph said. "We've all seen them play in this postseason and they've been making a lot of 3s."

Toronto's last consecutive defeats were road losses at Boston on March 23 and at Houston on March 25.

"This group is hungry," Casey said.

It's also an historic one. Toronto, now in its 21st season, has never won a seven-game series before these playoffs. Now they're the 15th team to win two in the same postseason.

By knocking out Miami, the Raptors left Charlotte, the Los Angeles Clippers and New Orleans as the only NBA teams to never reach a conference final.



Toronto Raptors guard Kyle Lowry (7) drives the ball defended by Miami Heat guard Tyler Johnson (8) during the fourth quarter in game seven of the second round of the NBA Playoffs at Air Canada Centre Toronto, Ontario, Canada on Sunday. The Toronto Raptors won 116-89. (USA TODAY SPORTS)

Elliott the hero as Blues hold on to beat Sharks in Game 1

The goalie made a staggering 32 saves as St Louis win 2-1 in NHL Western Conference finals

AFP
LOS ANGELES

BRIAN Elliott produced a goaltending masterclass as the St. Louis Blues edged out the San Jose Sharks 2-1 in the opening game of their NHL Western Conference finals series on Sunday.

Blues goalie Elliott made a staggering 32 saves as St. Louis took an early advantage in their home Scottrade Center rink.

David Backes had fired St. Louis into a 1-0 lead in the first period before Tomas Hertl leveled shortly afterwards to make it 1-1.

Jori Lehtera scored an un-

assisted goal midway through the second period to break the deadlock, and St. Louis then hung on for a 2-1 victory.

Elliott's masterful display in the goal proved to be decisive, with the goalie stopping 32 of 33 shots throughout.

The goalie's refusal to be beaten included a spell of ferocious pressure in the second period when he saved all 16 shots by San Jose.

Elliott also held firm in a frantic finale as the Sharks pulled opposite number Martin Jones out as an extra attacker.

Sharks coach Peter DeBoer admitted his team had paid the price for failing to capitalise on their dominant second

period.

"The tragedy of the second period was we spent the whole period in their end and lost the period 1-0," DeBoer said.

"That was basically the game. We had to score more than one goal tonight. We had plenty of chances to do that. We had some opportunities to score more than the one we got, and we've got to cash in."

Backes meanwhile heaped praise on Elliott's performance.

"When your goalie is your best player, it gives you a good chance of winning," Backes said.

"It was that way tonight, and it's been that way through the first two rounds. Nothing has changed here."

Lehtera's winning effort came at 9:15 in the second period when he pounced on a stray pass by Brent Burns and rifled a shot past Jones.

It was only Lehtera's second goal in 15 playoff games this season.

Earlier, the Blues had made a dream start to their first conference final game since 2001 when Backes put them ahead on a power play, deflecting Kevin Shattenkirk's shot past Jones.

But just 34 seconds after Backes opened, the Sharks leveled through a Hertl deflection from Burns as Elliott was finally beaten.

Elliott brushed off the setback to hold firm as San Jose chased a second goal.

One of his best saves came from former college hockey team-mate Joe Pavelski in the second period. He also made a sliding save from a Patrick Marleau effort as the Blues rode their luck during a San Jose power play.

Game two takes place on Tuesday in St. Louis.

Kenseth holds off Larson for thrilling victory at Dover

AP
DOVER, DELAWARE

MATT Kenseth used some of his veteran experience to edge Kyle Larson and surge to victory on Sunday in the accident-strewn NASCAR race at Dover International Speedway.

"He's all over me," Kenseth said. "If he would have sunk inside, it would have been over," Kenseth said of Larson, 21 years his junior.

Kenseth snapped a 17-race winless streak skid with his 37th career victory — and denied Larson his first Sprint Cup victory.

Larson made Kenseth work for the victory that secured him a spot in the Chase.

But it was third-place finisher Chase Elliott that may have cost Larson as much as Kenseth's late-race manoeuvring. Elliott, the second-generation rookie who replaced Jeff Gordon in the No. 24, made an aggressive run and briefly passed Larson for second. Their battle took enough steam out of Larson's push that Kenseth was able to create a needed gap and become the fourth Joe Gibbs Racing driver to win in 2016.

Larson matched his career-best finish for owner Chip Ganassi. Elliott had the top finish of his first season at Hendrick Motorsports.

Larson refused to bump Kenseth out of his path over the final thrilling laps and wanted a clean pass in the No. 42 to earn the win.

"It doesn't even seem right that he hasn't won yet," Kenseth said. "He's got a bunch of victories in front of him, for sure. He's a really, really clean, hard racer, and a fast learner."

The 44-year-old Kenseth is older than the combined ages of Elliott, 20, and the 23-year-old Larson.

Marlins win at Washington to tighten NL East

AP
WASHINGTON

MIAMI pitcher Jose Fernandez starred on the mound and at the plate, striking out 11 batters over seven innings and driving in two runs to lead the Marlins to a 5-1 win at Washington, further tightening the closely fought National League East division.

The Nationals still lead but are only 2-1/2 games ahead of the fourth-placed Marlins after the completion of an evenly split four-game series.

In the other key NL matchup, Pittsburgh beat the Chicago Cubs for the first time this season, at the sixth attempt, and St. Louis won at Los Angeles to drop the Dodgers out of a share of the NL West division lead.

In the American League, Texas won the game and the fight as the Rangers beat Toronto to move to the top of the AL West and second baseman Rougned Odor landed a solid punch on the jaw of chief provocateur Jose Bautista.

Miami's Fernandez threw a career-high 117 pitches, allow-

ing just one run, and was the key figure in a three-run sixth inning which locked in the victory.

Giancarlo Stanton hit his 11th home run of the season, and also survived an outfield collision with Marcell Ozuna which handed Washington its only run; an inside-the-park homer by Ryan Zimmerman.

Chicago pitcher Jon Lester was tracking toward a no-hitter in the seventh inning and yet still ended up on the losing side as the Pirates won 2-1 at the Cubs. Lester had permitted only two walks and retired 16 straight batters before Starling Marte lined a changeup pitch into right field.

Marte then scored on Jung Ho Kang's double, and Kang homered in the eighth.

Pirates starter Gerrit Cole pitched eight scoreless innings for the win.

Texas' 7-6 win against Toronto lifted the Rangers top of their division, but they probably took more satisfaction at belatedly getting some revenge on Bautista for his condescending bat flip during their playoff series last season.



St. Louis Blues teammates celebrate after defeating the San Jose Sharks 2-1 in game one of the Western Conference Final of the 2016 Stanley Cup Playoffs at Scottrade Center in St. Louis, Missouri on Sunday. (USA TODAY SPORTS)

**NEWS
IN BRIEF****Arteta set to retire after ending Arsenal career, intends to move into coaching**

LONDON Spanish midfielder Mikel Arteta, whose contract with Arsenal is due to expire, has announced his intention to retire from playing and move into coaching. The 34-year-old said he was "99 percent" certain to hang up his boots after turning out for Arsenal for the last time in their 4-0 win over Aston Villa on the final day of the Premier League season on Sunday.

West Ham sign Norwegian midfielder Nordtveit

LONDON English football club West Ham United on Monday announced the signing of Norway midfielder Havard Nordtveit on a five-year contract. "West Ham United are delighted to confirm that Norway international midfielder Havard Nordtveit will join the club on a free transfer on July 1," West Ham said in a statement.

Pizarro in talks with Bremen on new contract

BERLIN Veteran Peru striker Claudio Pizarro is close to signing a contract keeping him at Werder Bremen for another season. "We are in the final stages (of negotiations) and will promptly inform all," club manager Thomas Eichin told the broadcaster Sport1 on Monday. Pizarro, 37, rejoined Bremen for a third spell from Bayern Munich in September.

Cacic names 27-man Croatia squad for Euro 2016 tournament

The Croatian coach said his list included players who have played in European leagues the whole yearAFP
ZAGREB

CROATIA coach Ante Cacic on Monday named a provisional 27-man squad for Euro 2016, featuring the likes of Barcelona midfielder Ivan Rakitic and Real Madrid's Luka Modric but minus Liverpool defender Dejan Lovren.

Lovren was told he would not be picked last month after demanding that he be guaranteed a starting place before accepting to go to the finals in France. But Cacic stressed on Monday that the "doors are not closed to Lovren."

"He has to understand how to behave towards both co-players and coach. Then he could deserve to return," he told reporters.

The 62-year-old was appointed coach last September after Niko Kovac was sacked.

Cacic's appointment raised criticism from fans concerned about his lack of major success as a coach and his lack of charisma compared to his predecessors -- notably Miroslav 'Ciro' Blazevic with whom Croatia finished third at 1998 World Cup in France.

The squad is due to gather in Zagreb on Friday before de-

parting for a training camp in northern Croatia and later in the northern Adriatic town of Rovinj. Five players will join the squad later due to club commitments.

Modric and Mateo Kovacic will be with Real Madrid until their Champions League final against Atletico Madrid on May 28, while Kakitic, Juventus forward Mario Mandzukic and defender Darijo Srna of Ukraine's Shakhtar Donetsk will be involved in national cup finals with their clubs this weekend.

Cacic said his list included "the players who are in good health and have played in European leagues the whole year, that's why they have an advantage."

But it also includes some young players who have been rewarded for good performances with their clubs and at

under-21 level, he added.

Zagreb goalkeeper Dominik Livakovic, 21, and Duje Caleta-Car, a 19-year-old defender playing in Austria with Red Bull Salzburg, were handed call-ups for the first time.

Cacic must reduce his squad to 23 by the end of May.

Croatia will play two friendlies before leaving for France -- on May 27 against Moldova and against San Marino on June 4.

Cacic explained that playing against such weak opposition would allow his players to gather strength for France.

"We had an exhausting and difficult season. Some players are still playing in their clubs so it is better that our opponents are easier. We will have tough rivals at the Euro," he concluded.

Croatia will have drawn in Group D and will begin their



Croatian national soccer team Head Coach Ante Cacic named his squad for EURO 2016 Championship, in Zagreb, on Monday.

campaign against Turkey in Paris on June 12 before facing the Czech Republic in Saint-Etienne five days later and then taking on Spain in Bordeaux on June 21. Croatia squad:

Goalkeepers: Danijel Subasic (Monaco/FRA), Lovre Kalinic (Hajduk Split), Ivan Vargic (Rijeka), Dominik Livakovic (Zagreb)
Defenders: Darijo Srna (Shakhtar Donetsk/UKR), Vedran Corluka (Lokomotiv

Moscow/RUS), Domagoj Vida (Dynamo Kiev/UKR), Ivan Strinic (Napoli/ITA), Gordon Schildenfeld (Dinamo Zagreb), Sime Vrsaljko (Sassuolo/ITA), Tin Jedvaj (Bayer Leverkusen/GER), Duje Caleta-Car (Salzburg/AUT)

Midfielders: Luka Modric (Real Madrid/ESP), Ivan Rakitic (Barcelona/ESP), Ivan Perisic (Inter Milan/ITA), Mateo Kovacic (Real Madrid/ESP), Milan Badelj (Fiorentina/ITA), Marcelo Brozovic (Inter Milan/ITA), Alen Halilovic (Sporting Gijon/ESP), Domagoj Antonic (Dinamo Zagreb), Marko Rog (Dinamo Zagreb), Ante Coric (Dinamo Zagreb)

Forwards: Mario Mandzukic (Juventus/ITA), Nikola Kalinic (Fiorentina/ITA), Andrej Kramaric (Hoffenheim/GER), Marko Pjaca (Dinamo Zagreb), Duje Cop (Malaga/ESP).

Federation chief hails Conte after match-fixing acquittal

Of those accused, Mauri is the only active player although he has already been sanctioned for his roleAFP
MILAN

ITALIAN football federation (FIGC) president Carlo Tavecchio on Monday saluted Azurri coach Antonio Conte, after he escaped a prison term by being acquitted of sporting fraud in a match-fixing affair.

Prosecutor Roberto di Martino had requested a six-month sentence for Italy coach Conte and a fine of 8,000 euros (\$9,063), as well as similar sanctions for his former assistant at Siena, Angelo Alessio, following accusations they failed to report episodes of match-fixing while Conte was in charge at Serie B side Siena in 2011.

Reports on Monday said Conte had been acquitted of the charges, allowing him to lead Italy into this summer's Euro 2016 before he takes over

Conte, who in 2012 served a four-month ban in relation to the affair, had been accused of not reporting an episode of match-fixing relating to a Serie B match.

as Chelsea manager following the tournament.

Tavecchio said he welcomed the news with "great satisfaction" and that it would allow Conte, who is set to name a preliminary 30-man squad for Euro 2016 later Monday, to now fully focus on the job at hand. "It was with great satisfaction that I heard news of Antonio Conte's acquittal by the Cremona Tribunal today," Tavecchio told the ANSA news agency.

Finally, his position has been clarified. My faith in him was never up for discussion. Now, we can be even more concentrated on the European



Italy's head coach Antonio Conte was cleared of match-fixing on Monday, after a fast-track trial in Cremona.

Championships."

Conte, who in 2012 served a four-month ban in relation to the affair, had been accused of not reporting an episode of match-fixing relating to a Serie B match with AlbinoLefte from May 2011 when he was coach of Siena.

Although former players and other figures were implicated, Conte was the most notable.

The 46-year-old former Juventus coach has always denied any wrongdoing in an affair in which players allegedly colluded with underworld figures to fix matches and reap the rewards of an illegal betting network.

A lawyer for Conte, Francesco Arata, said last month: "He's a total stranger to the betting world and that's why he will be cleared by the judge."

Alessio, Conte's assistant during three title-winning seasons at Juventus and now with him at Italy, risked a four-month sentence but was also acquitted.

The affair, however, has yet to reach its conclusion and could see former players Beppe Signori, one of the top players in Serie A in his prime during a five-year spell with Lazio, among others, feel the full force of the law.

The report said "up to 90" people are involved although Signori, Cristiano Doni, Gigi Sartor and Mauro Bressan -- all former Serie A players -- as well as current Lazio captain Stefano Mauri, are all in the dock facing accusations of transnational sporting fraud.

Of those accused, Mauri is the only active player although he has already been sanctioned for his role in the affair.

Mauri served a six-month ban for failing to report match-fixing, meaning he missed most of the start of the 2014-2015 season, returning to the fray on February 2014.

COUNTDOWN TO EURO 2016 CHAMPIONSHIP



Real Madrid's Cristiano Ronaldo celebrates after scoring a goal during the Spanish league match at the Municipal de Riazor stadium in La Coruna on Saturday. (AFP)

Euro 2016 Ronaldo's last chance for Portugal glory

Euro 2016 will be Ronaldo's fourth and at 31 possibly last European Championship finalsAFP
LISBON

FOR a player that has won almost everything on an individual and collective level, the one honour that agonisingly eludes Cristiano Ronaldo is an international trophy with Portugal.

Euro 2016 will be Ronaldo's fourth and at 31 possibly last European Championship finals.

The previous three have all promised much only to end in varying degrees of disappointment for the three-time World Player of the Year. There have also been tears and torment.

Cristiano Ronaldo dos Santos Aveiro has long been destined for greatness. In the year of his 16th birthday, he played for Sporting Lisbon's under-16, under-17, under-18, reserve and first teams.

Two years later, he had

been snapped up by Manchester United, whose boss Alex Ferguson had been impressed by the teenager in a United-Sporting friendly. The No. 7 shirt became synonymous with Ronaldo.

In 2004, Ronaldo announced his presence on the international stage, scoring twice as Portugal reached the final on home soil before suffering a devastating defeat to shock winners Greece.

Four years later, Ronaldo looked set to make amends. He was at the prime of his career having led Manchester United to the Champions League a month before arriving in Austria and Switzerland.

Yet, distracted by protracted rumours about his switch from United to Real Madrid -- that would only come about a year later -- Ronaldo found the net just once as after an im-

pressive group stage, Portugal bowed out to Germany in the quarter-finals.

Euro 2012 will arguably haunt the Madeira-born superstar the most. Ronaldo came into the tournament on the back of a record-breaking 60-goal season.

He can become the first man to score in four European Championships and is just three goals from Michel Platini's record of nine in the finals.

His double against the Netherlands led Portugal out of the cliched group of death also

including Germany. Ronaldo struck the winner against the Czech Republic in the quarter-finals, but watched on in anguish as Portugal again fell short by the finest of margins against a Spain side replete with Barca players exacted revenge on penalties in the semi-finals.

Never one to shy away from the big moment, Ronaldo's desire for glory got the better of him as he opted to take Portugal's fifth penalty. The problem was the shootout never got that far as Spain won 5-3 leaving Ronaldo to look ruefully at the Donetsk night sky claiming there was "no justice".

As well the grand collective prize, there are also individual accolades on offer that will entice a record hoarder like Ronaldo.

He can become the first man to score in four European

Championships and is just three goals from Michel Platini's record of nine in the finals.

Both targets look eminently achievable in a group containing tournament debutants Iceland, Hungary -- in their first major tournament since 1986 -- and Austria.

The chance to deliver a telling blow in his eternal battle with Lionel Messi for another Ballon d'Or is also at stake.

Ever yet for the preening peacock Ronaldo, after the millions earned, league titles and Champions Leagues won in Manchester and Madrid, the real goal must finally be delivering for his country.

"There will be many other opportunities to win in Europe throughout my career, and make up for this huge disappointment," he said as a 19-year-old after defeat to Greece in 2004.

NEWS
IN BRIEFHonda extend Pedrosa's contract
to end of 2018

TOKYO: Spanish MotoGP rider Dani Pedrosa will stay at Honda until the end of the 2018 season, the Japanese manufacturer said on Monday. The 30-year-old will be starting his 250th grand prix in Italy this weekend. Pedrosa has been with Honda all his career, winning the former 125cc and 250cc world championships that are now Moto3 and Moto2 respectively.

Malaysia's Lee into Thomas Cup
quarter-finals

KUNSHAN: Lee Chong Wei came through an unexpectedly tight first game against German unknown Kai Schafer before Malaysia reached the Thomas Cup quarter-finals with a 5-0 whitewash on Monday. The 33-year-old, who will target his maiden Olympic title in Rio in August, was matched nearly blow for blow in the opening game before winning 21-19, 21-15 on day two in Kunshan, China.

Metro line to open 4 days before
Rio Olympics

RIO DE JANEIRO: The metro line extension, the key legacy project of the Rio de Janeiro Olympics, will open just four days before the games and offer only limited service. State Transportation Secretary Rodrigo Vieira announced the plans in an interview on the broadcaster RUTV. The delayed subway line is just one in a long list of problems confronting South America's first games.

Hayne's Rio dream will not be derailed by doping rules

Hayne said on Sunday he had chosen to "retire" from the NFL after being approached by the Fiji Rugby Union

REUTERS
WELLINGTON

FJI'S Olympic committee see no impediment to Jarryd Hayne joining their rugby by sevens team for the Rio Games, even though he has not been subject to World Anti-Doping Agency accredited testing procedures while playing in the NFL.

Hayne, who played one season for the San Francisco 49ers, said on Sunday he had chosen to "retire" from the NFL after being approached by the Fiji Rugby Union about making himself available for Rio.

Former Australian Sports Anti-doping Authority (ASA)

DA) head Richard Ings, however, said in comments widely reported by Australian media that the former rugby league international would be ineligible for the Olympics.

His reasoning was that Hayne would have to be part of a WADA-recognised testing programme for six months prior to the Aug. 5-21 Games.

The NFL has its own anti-doping policy but is not a signatory to the WADA code. The head of Fiji's Olympic Committee said she could not speak about Hayne specifically but said their selection policies did not require athletes to go through an effective six month stand-down period while

they entered the testing programme prior to representing the country.

"No (there is no requirement). Every athlete who becomes a squad member and then finally a Team Fiji member is aware that at some stage they could be randomly chosen to be drug tested," FOC Secretary General Lorraine Mar told Reuters from Suva.

"There is no criteria that they have to be tested a number of times. So that's not a consideration, but the athlete needs to be aware they could be drug tested."

Mar said World Rugby could have rules about players being required to be available for drug testing before being allowed to compete.

World Rugby's Regulation 21, which deals with the anti-doping policy, does not mention a stand-down period for



In this November 2013 file photo, Australia's Jarryd Hayne (left) is being tackled during the 2013 Rugby League World Cup Final between Australia and New Zealand at Old Trafford in Manchester. (AFP)

players returning to competition unless they have previously retired or are serving a ban and are in the "registered testing pool". The registered testing pool is for players whose behaviour was considered "high risk". Such play-

ers contemplating a return to competition are required to make themselves available for six months testing beforehand. Under Article 20 of the WADA code, the only requirements for athletes who have not been "regular members" of

a sport -- like Hayne -- is that they make themselves available for testing and comply with the relevant whereabouts rules.

entrants for competition, they must be made available for testing.

The Fiji Rugby Union were unavailable for comment on

Monday. Fiji sevens coach Ben Ryan has welcomed the decision by 28-year-old Hayne to make the switch but said there were no guarantees he would make the final 12-man squad for Rio despite his rugby league pedigree.

Hayne is expected to join the Fiji squad in London for this weekend's final round of the Sevens World Series.

Lochte dominates field to win 200m
IM at Arena
Pro Series

Lochte wins the 200-meter individual medley in 1 minute, 58.97 seconds

AP
CHARLOTTE

RYAN Lochte might have found something more difficult than preparing for the US Olympic swimming trials -- like helping Pittsburgh Steelers running back DeAngelo Williams learn how to swim.

"He says he can doggie paddle but doesn't really know how to swim, so that will be a lot of fun," Lochte said about Williams, who attended the Arena Pro Swim Series meet Sunday.

Lochte, who has the same Charlotte-based athletic trainer as Williams, showed the NFL star a thing or two about swimming when he closed the four-day meet in impressive fashion by winning the 200-meter individual medley in 1 minute, 58.97 seconds, nearly 2 seconds ahead of Olympic teammate Conor Dwyer.

The 11-time Olympic medalist also won the 400 IM on Friday.

Lochte started the 200 IM on the inside lane after qualifying seventh and bolted to a big lead on the second leg with a strong backstroke, making the turn in 55.07.

Despite the win, Lochte wasn't all that thrilled with effort because of his final leg of the race, the 50-meter freestyle.

"My legs feel like cinderblocks," Lochte said.

Coach Dave Marsh from SwimMAC Carolina said Lochte's didn't close well, but remains on pace for the US Olympic trials in June in Omaha, Nebraska.

"He had a great 150 (meters), but all weekend he has had heavy legs and he hasn't had that spark that I've seen in practice," Marsh said. "The way he is swimming in practice was better than I saw this weekend. He's lethargic with his ability to get up on the water. For him not to be able to kick coming home on the final 50 sees his legs are going to need a lot more rest."



Ryan Lochte swims to a first place finish in the men's 200m IM during the 2016 Arena Pro Swim Series at Charlotte Swim Meet at the Mecklenburg County Aquatic Centre in Charlotte on Sunday. (AFP)

But Marsh said Lochte won't begin to taper until two or three more weeks of heavy work.

"Hopefully with the right amount of rest, I will be there," Lochte said.

Lochte also placed sixth in the 100 freestyle on Sunday.

In other men's action, Arkady Vyatchanin nipped Tyler Clady by 0.16 seconds to win the 200 backstroke in 1:59.09. Cody Miller took the 50 breaststroke (27.53), Santo Condorelli won the 100 freestyle (48.41) and Connor Jaeger blew away the field to capture the 1500 free (14:59.13).

Mexican Ricardo Vargas punched his ticket to the Rio de Janeiro Games in August by virtue of his third place finish in the 1500 free.

In women's action, 15-year-old Penny Oleksiak from Canada won the 100 freestyle (53.41) beating Chantal Van Landeghem (54.13) and 28-year-old four-time Olympic gold medalist Dana Vollmer (54.19). Vollmer had qualified first for the finals when she broke a meet record by swimming a 53.59 in the preliminaries, but didn't have enough left for the finals.

Vollmer is looking for her first Olympic medal since the birth of her son 14 months ago. She said having a baby has actually helped relax her when she prepares for swimming events.

"Swimming used to be how I defined myself," Vollmer said. "But I know that my son is not even going to remember the swimming version of me. He'll just know Mommy. And that completely took the pressure off of my racing."

In other women's events, Leah Smith took the 800 freestyle (8:30.45) and Caitlin Levins captured the 200 individual medley (2:12.72). Dominique Bouchard won the 200 backstroke (2:09.14) and Lilly King took the 50 breaststroke (30.35).

2020 TOKYO OLYMPICS SCANDAL



Japanese Olympic Committee President Tsunekazu Takeda answers a question during the lower house budget committee at the parliament in Tokyo on Monday. (REUTERS)

Japan vows to cooperate
in French Olympic probe

PM Abe said he had ordered full cooperation with the investigators into the \$2 million payments

AFP
TOKYO

JAPAN vowed to cooperate with a French probe into \$2 million allegedly paid to help Tokyo secure the 2020 Olympics on Monday, as the son of ex-world athletics chief Lamine Diack denied receiving the money.

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said he had ordered full cooperation with the French investigation into the payments, sent to a Singapore bank account which has been linked to Diack's son, Papa Massata Diack.

Japanese officials have been swift to deny wrongdoing in what is the most serious in a series of problems to affect the 2020 Games, including over the main stadium's design and the event's official logo.

French prosecutors said

last week they suspect the payments were intended to help secure the 2020 Olympics for Tokyo, which beat out competition from Istanbul and Madrid.

Japan's Olympic chief last week insisted the payments were a "legitimate consultant's fee", while the top government spokesman insisted the "bid was clean".

And Prime Minister Abe told parliament on Monday: "I have instructed the education and sports minister to fully cooperate in the investigation." "Education and sports minister Hiroshi Hase told the Japanese Olympic Committee and the former bid committee to cooperate in the investigation," he added, according to Jiji Press.

French prosecutors said some 2.8 million Singapore dollars (1.8 million euros, \$2

million) were paid to the now defunct Black Tidings consulting company, which Britain's Guardian newspaper has linked to Papa Massata Diack.

Lamine Diack was an International Olympic Committee member in 2013 when Tokyo won the hosting rights

French prosecutors said last week they suspect the payments were intended to help secure the 2020 Olympics for Tokyo, which beat out competition from Istanbul and Madrid.

Diack and his son already face corruption charges in France.

The payments were discovered as part of an inquiry into allegations the Diacks organised bribes to cover up

failed dope tests by Russian athletes, French prosecutors said. France became involved as the money may have been laundered in Paris.

But Diack's son, Papa Massata Diack, speaking to Kyodo News agency in his native Senegal, insisted he hadn't received any money from the Tokyo bid team.

"I haven't got any money," he said in Dakar. "Let them investigate... I have nothing to hide," he added.

He added that he had been friends with Ian Tan Tong Han, formerly the sole proprietor of Black Tidings, since the 2008 Beijing Olympics. But he said he didn't know Tan's company was contracted by the Japanese bid team.

"I've been in this sports business for 25 years. I know the rules," Diack said, adding that Tokyo's bid "shouldn't be

tarnished" and had been done "very fairly".

Tsunekazu Takeda, the Japanese Olympic Committee president who led Tokyo's bid, said the money was for "professional services" for consulting work.

"I never knew there was a link (between the company and Papa Massata Diack)," Takeda told lawmakers in parliament on Monday. "Anyway, if it is in the realm of acquaintance there is no problem," he added.

"Internationally it is quite common" to have a contract with an international consultant, Takeda added. "The controversy comes after Tokyo had to scrap its original main stadium design due to its eye-watering price tag, and also had to weather plagiarism accusations over the Games' initial logo.

EMIR CUP VISITS UMM SALAMA & KHALIFA MODEL SCHOOLS

Exciting students welcome the iconic cup, host plenty of activities in celebration

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The Emir Cup completed its tour of schools with a visit to Umm Salama Primary School for Girls and Khalifa Model Independent School for Boys. A large number of students and members of the staff welcomed the iconic symbol of soccer supremacy in Qatar and gathered around it take memorable pictures.

The visit to Umm Salama Primary School for Girls included a fun-packed day on which the students performed a specially choreographed dance to celebrate the Emir Cup's stop-over in their school ahead of the final match.

Moza al Mahshadi, owner and Principal of Umm Salama Primary School for Girls, commented: "It is a pleasure for the school to host the Emir Cup on its tour. This tournament is of utmost importance to us and the school children and we are all excited to be part of the final match on May 20. This tournament is the most important football tournament in Qatar in which all clubs compete to win, to have the honour to meet in person the Emir His Highness Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al Thani."

As part of its mission to educate the students about the importance of taking part in sports and adopting a healthy lifestyle, Khalifa Model Independent School for Boys celebrated the Emir Cup's visit by organising a mini football tournament for

the students and countless sports activities.

A small exhibition was also held, in which health advisors gave tips to the school children about healthy eating and lifestyle, importance of taking part in sports and staying active during and after school hours.

Commenting on the occasion, Nawal al Tamimi, Principal of Khalifa Model Independent School for Boys, said: "We are proud to welcome the Emir Cup in our school and to be part of the promotional campaign for this year. Being part of this major event has a great impact on the students and faculty as it makes us feel involved in the biggest football competition of the year."

She added: "Sports and games play a vital role in the well-being of our students and we constantly organise countless sports and football-related activities for the school children as it is our responsibility to ensure that our students live a healthy and active lifestyle."

The trophy tour is part of the Emir Cup 2016 promotional campaign which aims to instill a football culture in Qatar and involve all segments of the community specifically schools to take part in the events and activities that are organised by the QFA to build up an exciting atmosphere ahead of the final match.

The Emir Cup final is scheduled at the Jassim Bin Hamad Stadium in Al Sadd on May 20 at 7 pm.



Umm Salama Primary School for Girls welcome the Emir Cup during its tour.



Umm Salama Primary School students present a programme to celebrate the Emir Cup trip to their school.



School children from Khalifa Model Independent School for Boys receive healthy diet tips during the Emir Cup's promotional trip in Qatar.



QSL CEO Hani Ballan and other officials with successful participants of the match analytics system, organised by the QSL Football Development Department and Prozone Sports Ltd.

QSL, Prozone Sports host course for analysts

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THE Qatar Stars League Football Development Department and Prozone Sports Ltd jointly awarded participants of their four-day educational course, organised to implement and use the Prozone match analytics system.

The award ceremony was attended by QSL's CEO Mr Hani Ballan, Ahmed Al Harmi Executive Director of Competition and Football Development and Miguel Hestor Director of Football Development at the QSL.

The participants who were presented certificates in recognition of completing the course were: Zlatan Aganovic, Saad al Qurashi, Khalid al Subaie, Shady Mami, Naem Ahmad, Azam Mohamed, Mirgani Alzain Elnour Ba-

biker, Magdi Abdallas Musa, Abdulaziz al Muhannadi and Khalid al Hamar.

Speaking at the start of the ceremony, QSL CEO Hani Ballan congratulated the successful participants and said, "On behalf of everyone at the QSL, I would like to congratulate you all on reaching this milestone. I would also like to thank Qatar University and Prozone for their efforts in this course and I look forward to further collaboration in the training and development of football analysts in Qatar."

Ahmed al Harmi also expressed similar sentiments and said on the occasion, "I would like to thank all the participants. It's good to see a mixture of professional players and graduates in the group. I would like to thank you for all your efforts in the course and I hope to see you

all working in the football family as analysts in the future."

Al Sailiya Club stars Majdi Siddiq and Mirgani Babiker were happy to be involved in the course. "I would like to thank the QSL on putting up this course. I have found it very insightful and a useful tool for myself, especially for now and in the future for a career after football," claimed midfielder Siddiq.

Mirgani Babiker was also proud to have graduated from the course in football analysis, with the help of the QSL. "This course has been really helpful for me, not only to develop as a player but also as a career option moving forward. Courses like this are a huge step forward for players in Qatar and how to develop these analytical skills, which are important in football."

QATAR VOLLEYBALL TEAM COACH TO BEGIN WORLD LEAGUE PREPARATIONS ON MAY 19



Qatar's new coach Roberto Piazza arrived in the country on Sunday to begin preparations for the upcoming FIVB Volleyball World League. The camp of the national team is due to begin in Doha on May 19. The inter-continental round will begin on June 17 and will end with the World League finals on July 17. Qatar will take part in the Group Three along with Tunisia, Kazakhstan, Mexico, Spain, Chinese Taipei, Greece, Puerto Rico and Venezuela.