



**Bryson DeChambeau powers through to win US Open**  
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## Late Boundedjah strike salvages crucial point for Qatar's Al Sadd

AFC  
DOHA

AL Sadd SC left it late to secure a valuable point as Baghdad Boundedjah helped them to a 1-1 draw against Al Nassr on Matchday Five of the 2020 AFC Champions League Group D on Monday.

The two sides shared the spoils when they met on Matchday Two, with top scorer Abderrazak Hamdallah and Abdulrahman Al Obaid getting on the scoresheet for Al Nassr, while Hassan Al Haydos' goal was supplemented with Abdulrahman Al Amri's own goal to for Al Sadd.



Al Sadd's Baghdad Boundedjah (right) and Nam Tae-hee (3rd left) in action as Al Nassr defence fights to stave off a chance during their Group D AFC Champions League clash at the Jassim Bin Hamad Stadium on Monday. The match ended in a 1-1 draw.



Both teams proved why they are the top scoring sides in the competition with chances coming as early as the fifth minute of play, when Boundedjah squandered an excellent chance to break the deadlock when he fired wide, after a beautifully weighted pass from Korea man Nam Tae-hee.

Another chance fell to the Qatar Stars League side when Akram Afif cut inside from the left flank and started a string of pitch-wide passes that went through Nam Tae-hee and Boundedjah before Al Haydos angled a shot into the top corner, but Brad Jones' acrobatic brilliance denied the Al Sadd captain.

Abdulfatah Adam was responsible for missing the

first big chance that fell to the Saudi Pro League side, after Guilherme was dispossessed in midfield, the result of which was a high ball that Adam chased down before lashing a stinging shot on goal that keeper Saad Al Sheeb pushed out.

The first goal came through Khalid Al Ghannam, after receiving a throw in down the left flank, he dribbled into the penalty area and took on marker Pedro Miguel before taking a shot from an extremely tight angle that rolled between the keeper's legs and

STANDINGS									
GROUP D									
Club	M	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	Pts	
Al Nassr (KSA)	5	3	2	0	9	4	5	11	
Al Sadd (QAT)	5	2	3	0	13	6	7	9	
Sepahan (IRN)	5	1	1	3	4	7	-3	4	
Al Ain (UAE)	5	0	2	3	4	13	-9	2	

settled into the net. Intensity petered out as the game progressed with fatigue setting in, but Nam had a golden chance to equalise five minutes from time when Afif carefully lifted a ball across the box to youngster Yusuf Abdurisag, who headed it down for the

Korea Republic international but the latter missed it. Three minutes from time, Boundedjah gifted his side a point when he curled the ball into Jones' net after Afif had played a ground pass to Nam, the number 10 beautifully played the Algeria interna-

national to finish off. Matchday Six will see Al Sadd face Sepahan, while Al Nassr will face the already eliminated Al Ain FC. **Scoreline: Al Sadd 1** (Baghdad Boundedjah 87') **drew with Al Nassr 1** (Khalid Al Ghannam 22').

## Al Duhail edge Persepolis to get back on track

AFC  
DOHA

ALMOEZ Ali's third goal of the 2020 AFC Champions League was the difference as Al Duhail SC defeated Persepolis FC 1-0 in Group C of the competition at the Education City Stadium on Monday.

Persepolis entered the Matchday Five fixture knowing a win would keep them top of the group going into the final matchday, while for Al Duhail - defeated by Sharjah in their previous match - the three points would take them past their opponents and boost their chances of progress to the Round of 16.

With just three minutes to the break, Persepolis were awarded a free-kick on the edge of the area after dangerous play from Al on Shojae Khalilzadeh. Bashar Resan curled it over the wall but could not get it down in time to hit the target.

A quick exchange of passes at the other end saw Ramin Rezaeian break free in space down the right, but the former Persepolis player watched as his effort was parried by goalkeeper Hamed Lak.

Al Duhail stepped up their efforts after the restart and their pressure resulted in a penalty in the 58th minute af-

ter a heavy Khalilzadeh aerial challenge on Edmilson inside the box.

Al Duhail captain Ali stepped up and fired home his third goal of the 2020 AFC Champions League to put the Qatari side in front.

Persepolis players thought they had come back into the game just six minutes later after Resan tested goalkeeper Mohammed Al Bakri and the Al Duhail goalkeeper spilled his save into the path of Isa Al Kasir, but with the empty goal at his mercy, Persepolis' number 77 fluffed his lines, sending his shot wide from six yards.

The Iranian continued to push forward for an equaliser but found themselves faced with a strong Al Duhail defence and were unable to break through until the final whistle.

The result means Al Duhail now leap above previous leaders Persepolis, reaching nine points for the campaign and enhancing their fortunes ahead of the final matchday.

Yahya Golmohammadi's men remain in contention with their fate to be determined in their Matchday Six encounter against Sharjah. **Scoreline: Persepolis 0 lost to Al Duhail 1** (Almoez Ali 60'(pen)).



Al Duhail's Almoez Ali (2nd left) in action during the AFC Champions League Group C match against Iran's Persepolis at the Education City Stadium on Monday. Al Duhail won 1-0.

STANDINGS									
GROUP C									
Club	M	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	Pts	
Al Duhail (QAT)	5	3	0	2	7	7	0	9	
Persepolis (IRN)	5	2	1	2	4	5	-1	7	
Sharjah (UAE)	5	2	1	2	13	7	6	7	
Al Taawoun (KSA)	5	2	0	3	3	8	-5	6	



# Welliton hat-trick in Sharjah's six-goal show vs Al Taawoun

AFC  
DOHA

AN emphatic second-half display saw Sharjah cruise to a 6-0 victory over Al Taawoun FC to move above them into second place in Group C of the 2020 AFC Champions League on Monday.

Sharjah got off to a flying start and within six minutes they had handed goalkeeper Cassio his first test of the night. Brazilian forward Welliton broke free down the right and squared for his compatriot Igor Coronado who applied a powerful low finish, but the Al Taawoun goalkeeper was up to the challenge and made the save.

Halfway through the first 45 minutes, Cassio repeated his heroics in an almost-identical manner. This time it was Khalid Bawazir who was set up by Welliton's cross from the right and the midfielder watched Al Taawoun's Brazilian goalkeeper make a fine save to keep the scores level.

Sharjah's pressure finally produced the opening goal of the night in added time of the first half. Winger Saif Rashid

**Sharjah's largest-ever win in the AFC Champions League means they can reach the Round of 16 for the first time in their history with a win against Persepolis in their last game.**



Sharjah's Brazilian forward Welliton scored in the 49th, 57th and 61st minutes to star in Sharjah's 6-0 rout of Al Taawoun at the Education City Stadium on Monday night.

got on the end of a Coronado free-kick and guided his head into the bottom corner with what was essentially the last attack of the half.

Abdulaziz Al Anbari's men started the second half as strongly as they finished the first. A swift counter-attacking move saw Welliton exchange passes with Caio down the left

before breaking free and dribbling past the last defender in style and firing with his left into the roof of the net to double Sharjah's lead four minutes after the restart.

Substitute Mohammed Abdulbasit, who replaced Rashid, made it 3-0 in the 54th minute. Coronado found Bawazir inside the box with a sublime

pass behind the defence and the latter laid it back to Abdulbasit who drilled it past Cassio for Sharjah's third of the night.

Al Taawoun's misery was compounded just three minutes later, after their goalkeeper failed to properly control a back pass, allowing Welliton to snatch the ball and finish into the empty net for Shar-

jah's fourth.

The Emiratis' clinical counter-attacking display continued as they made it four goals in 12 minutes. Coronado sliced a cross from the corner into the near post where Welliton was perfectly positioned to head home for his hat-trick and Sharjah's fifth in the 61st minute.

Caio Lucas added his name to the scoresheet in the 68th minute after Coronado cut inside and fired an effort that was saved by Cassio, only for it to fall into the path of Caio who guided the header past his compatriot and into the back of the net to round off the scoring.

Sharjah's largest-ever win in the AFC Champions League means they can reach the Round of 16 for the first time in their history with a win against Persepolis in their last game, while Al Taawoun's fate is now out of their hands. The Saudis need a win against Al Duhail and a draw between Sharjah and Persepolis to qualify.

**Scoreline: Sharjah 6** (Saif Rashid 45+1', Welliton 49', 57', 61'; Mohammed Abdulbasit 54', Caio Lucas Fernandes 68') **bt Al Taawoun 0.**

## Sporting name academy after 'greatest ever' product Ronaldo

AFP  
LISBON

SPORTING announced on Monday they will re-name their academy after former attacker and five-time Ballon d'Or winner Cristiano Ronaldo.

Ronaldo, who scored in Juventus' first Serie A game of the season on Sunday, joined the capital city side aged 12.

"The Academy will thus immortalise the name of the greatest symbol it ever produced and that will be an inspiration to follow for all the

younger talents," the 18-time Portuguese champions said in a statement.

"The Academia Cristiano Ronaldo will represent Sporting's DNA in its excellence and will follow the destinies of the one that now gives it its name: to be the best in the world," they added.

Ronaldo, 35, made his Sporting debut in 2002 before playing for Manchester United, Real Madrid and Juve.

The Portugal captain has won the Champions League five times as well as the Premier League, La Liga and Serie A.

# Draw with Al Ain ends Sepahan's hopes

AFC  
DOHA

SEPAHAN FC joined Al Ain FC in elimination from Group D of the 2020 AFC Champions League after the two sides played out a goalless draw at Jassim Bin Hamad Stadium on Monday.

Sepahan had started their campaign with a 4-0 defeat of Al Ain at the Hazza bin Zayed Stadium courtesy of Mohammed Mohebi, Kiros, Soroush Rafiei and Mohammad Tayyebi but couldn't find a way past their opponents at the second time of asking.

Thirteen-time UAE champions Al Ain threatened early on, with Caio Canedo forcing a save from keeper Payam Niazmand after careful build up that included striker Kodjo Laba.

It took almost 40 minutes for Sepahan to get a first close chance, when Rasool Navidkia



Sepahan FC joined Al Ain FC in elimination from Group D after their goalless draw in the 2020 AFC Champions League match at the Jassim Bin Hamad Stadium on Monday.

received the ball from teammate Mohammed Karimi and fired from range, but his ball was marginally high.

Early on in the second half, Tsukasa Shiotani played Canedo in with an intelligent through ball, and the Brazilian-

born Emirati forward chipped the ball onto Laba Kodjo, who headed wide off the mark.

Al Ain almost conceded an

own goal less than 10 minutes into the second half, when captain Ismail Ahmed botched a clearance attempt and deflected the ball towards his goal, but keeper Khaled Eissa managed to stop it, before punching the ball away from an on-rushing Sepahan attacker.

A chance fell for the record UAE Pro League champions when a move started by Ahmed Barman was concluded when Bauyrzhan Islamkhan played teammate Laba in, and the latter attempted a cross that was deflected by Mohammed Mehdi into Niazmand's arms.

Laba seemed to have opened the scoring when he rose to meet Islamkhan's lofted free-kick into the area, but his headed effort was ruled out for an offside decision on teammate Caio.

The result leaves the Isfahan based side in third with four points, one ahead of Al Ain who trail the group.



Juventus' Italian coach Andrea Pirlo (right) congratulates Portuguese forward Cristiano Ronaldo as Sampdoria's Italian coach Claudio Ranieri looks on at the end of their Italian Serie A match at the Juventus Stadium in Turin on Sunday. (AFP)

## Pirlo off to dream start as Juve open bid for 10th straight title

AFP  
MILAN

ANDREA Pirlo got his coaching career off to a winning start as Juventus launched their bid for a 10th consecutive league title with a 3-0 win over Sampdoria on Sunday.

Swedish debutant Dejan Kulusevski opened the scoring after 13 minutes in Turin with Leonardo Bonucci adding a second on 78 minutes and Cristiano Ronaldo a late third.

The match was played in front of 1,000 spectators as Serie A stadiums reopened on Sunday to a limited number of fans after a seven-month coronavirus lockdown.

Pirlo could not have hoped for a better start to his coaching career having taken over from Maurizio Sarri this summer. The win against Sampdoria, coached by veteran Claudio Ranieri, came just days after the former Italy and Juventus star received his coaching diploma.

"It will take time to put together the mode of play, but I will not copy and paste," warned the 41-year-old.

"I will take inspiration from teams that have impressed -- there was little time, the lads returned from the national teams, we only worked

together for a week."

Juventus handed debuts to new signing Weston McKennie and Kulusevski, who joined from Atalanta in January before immediately returning to Parma on loan.

Kulusevski curled in the first goal in a move started by Ronaldo, who hit the bar minutes later. But it was not until the last quarter of an hour that the champions finally killed off the game they dominated, with Aaron Ramsey missing a chance for a fourth late.

Juventus next head to Roma next week after the side from the capital were held to a goalless draw in their opener on Saturday, before hosting Napoli, 2-0 winners this weekend against Parma.

**Osimhen inspires Napoli**  
Victor Osimhen proved decisive on his Serie A debut inspiring Napoli as they target a return to Champions League football having finished seventh last season.

After a barren first hour in Emilia Romagna, Osimhen came off the bench to provide an electric shock for Gennaro Gattuso's side. Dries Mertens and Lorenzo Insigne scored both goals after his arrival which were set up by Mexican Hirving Lozano.

# Konsa gives Villa winning start against 10-man Blades

AFP  
BIRMINGHAM

ASTON Villa kicked off their Premier League campaign with a 1-0 victory over 10-man Sheffield United on Monday as Ezri Konsa bagged the winner after Emiliano Martinez saved a penalty for the hosts.

United were a man down early on after captain John Egan was sent off for a foul on Ollie Watkins.

Villa keeper Martinez saved John Lundstram's first half penalty in his first appearance following his £17 million (\$21 million) move from Arsenal last week.

Konsa sealed the points in the second half with a looping header, a well-earned reward for a committed display after he played on despite appearing to injure himself sprinting out for the second half.

It was the perfect start for Dean Smith's side, who beat Burton Albion in the

League Cup second round last week, as they look to avoid a repeat of last season's relegation battle.

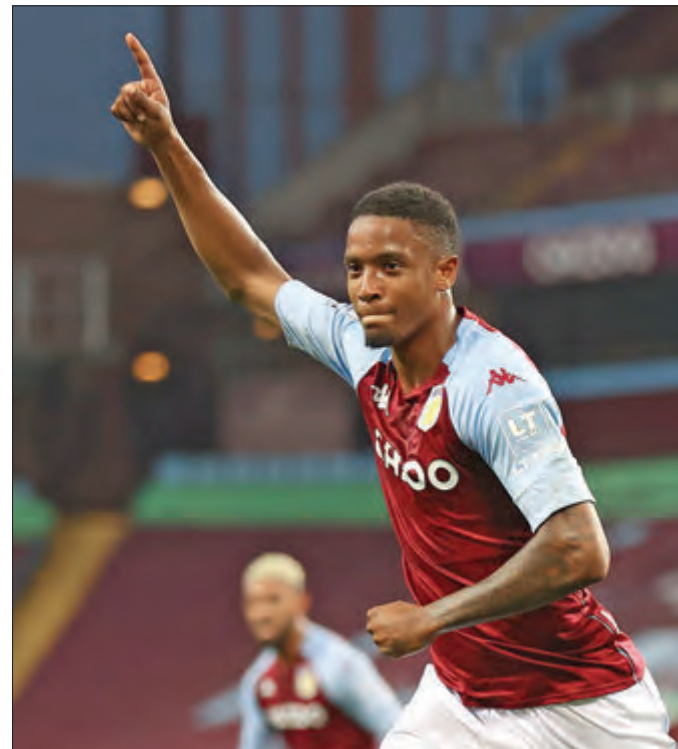
After losing at home to Wolves last weekend, United have now lost their last five league games dating back to last season.

Former Nottingham Forest right-back Matty Cash was given his Villa debut after his close-season transfer and his deep cross provided an early half-chance for John McGinn, who volleyed over from an acute angle.

Watkins, another of Villa's new boys, played a key role as United were reduced to 10 men in the 12th minute.

Tyrone Mings' high long ball sent Watkins racing through on goal and Egan responded by tugging him back, with referee Graham Scott showing the defender a red card that was confirmed by VAR.

Wilder introduced on-loan Chelsea defender



Aston Villa's English defender Ezri Konsa celebrates scoring the opening goal during the English Premier League match against Sheffield United at Villa Park in Birmingham, England, on Monday. (AFP)

Ethan Ampadu and moved Chris Basham into midfield and the switch earned United their penalty in the 36th minute.

Basham's clever run onto Oliver Burke's pass forced Matt Targett to concede the spot-kick, but Martinez came to his rescue as he dived to his right to keep out Lundstram's strike.

Villa found it hard to make the numerical advantage count and their frustration was mounting when Watkins missed the target from Cash's cross.

But Konsa finally broke the deadlock from a 63rd minute corner when the defender met Mings' flick-on with a header that floated past Aaron Ramsdale into the far corner.

Seven of Villa's last nine league goals have now come from set-pieces.

Jack Grealish was close to putting the result beyond doubt when he curled just wide from the edge of the area.

## Esperance win Tunisian Super Cup a fifth time

QNA  
TUNISIA

ESPERANCE Sports Tunisia (EST) won the Tunisian Super Cup for football, for the fifth time in its history and the fourth in a row, after beating Club Sportif Sfaxien on penalties 5-4 on Sunday evening at the Olympic Stadium in Rades.

The two teams resorted to penalty kicks after the original time ended with a draw. EST succeeded in achieving the local double after winning the Tunisian League title this season.

With this victory, EST strengthened its record as the most successful team in the championship, after scoring for the fifth time in its history, two titles ahead of its closest oppo-

nents, Club African (CA) and Etoile Sportive du Sahel (ESS).

Esperance Sports was able to achieve the Tunisian Super Cup for the fourth time in a row after winning the championship with its new title for the first time in 1993 by beating Club Mostakbal Almarsaa (AS) 2-0, and the second time in front of the Sports Club in Ham-

mam-Lif 3-1 in 2001, and in the third time against CA Bizerte 2-1 last year.

EST won the Tunisian League title in 2019-2020 season for the 13th time in its history, while Sfaxien won second place in the competition ranking.

The two teams reserved a seat in the next edition of the African Champions League.



Esperance Sports Tunisia won their fifth Tunisian Super Cup title beating rivals CS Sfaxien 5-4 on penalties after a goalless draw at Rades, Tunisia.



# 'Scientist' Bryson DeChambeau powers through to win US Open

AFF  
NEW YORK

BRYSON DeChambeau captured his first major golf title on Sunday, firing a three-under-par 67 to win the 120th US Open and humble a relentless Winged Foot layout.

The 27-year-old American, who bulked up during the coronavirus lockdown in a bid to add power to his game, eagled the par-5 ninth from just inside 40 feet and rolled to a six-stroke victory over 21-year-old countryman Matthew Wolff.

"Oh my gosh. I can't believe it," said DeChambeau, renowned for his scientific approach to the sport. "It has been a lot of hard work."

DeChambeau hit only 23 fairways for the week but finished 72 holes on six-under par 274 thanks to Sunday's only sub-par round at the formidable Mamaroneck, New York, layout.

DeChambeau became the first player since 1955 to win with the only sub-par score in the final round, and just the fourth ever to do it, completing a dominating performance.

Typical deep US Open rough could not stop DeChambeau, whose exercise and protein shakes delivered powerful drives while his calculations and precise readings produced solid shotmaking on a layout that crushed rivals.

"I just kept thinking throughout the back nine, 'We have to keep focused. I have to execute every shot the best I can.' And that's what I did," he said.

DeChambeau's 325 yards off the tee was a driving distance record by a US Open champion, defying convention by attacking without fear, taking swing speed length to outweigh drawbacks of finding the rough.

"I worked my whole life for this," DeChambeau said. "I wasn't that afraid of going off line. I gained the confidence I needed for the week."

The scientist found a major-winning formula. On Saturday night, he was the last player to leave Winged Foot, working into the dark with his driver.

"Sure enough it paid off," he said. "I'm in shock right now. It's amazing."

South African Louis Oosthuizen, the 2010 British Open winner, was a distant third on 282, one stroke ahead of American Harris English after both fired 73 Sunday.

Wolff led last-duo partner DeChambeau by two strokes



Bryson DeChambeau of the United States celebrates with the trophy after winning the 120th U.S. Open Championship at Winged Foot Golf Club in Mamaroneck, New York, on Sunday. (GETTY IMAGES/AFP)

when the day began but, in his US Open debut, failed to become the youngest US Open winner since Bobby Jones in 1923 and youngest major winner since Tiger Woods at the 1997 Masters.

DeChambeau, who spent a three-month coronavirus pandemic layoff building his physique, uses same-length clubs and a chart book for judging putts, bringing some slow-play complaints but also six prior PGA Tour victories.

Ninth-ranked DeChambeau won in July at Detroit and shared fourth at last month's PGA, his best major finish until Sunday.

Wolff led DeChambeau by two strokes at the start but made bogey at the par-3 third. DeChambeau joined him on 4-under with a birdie at the fourth, blasting from rough to 13 feet and sinking the putt.

Wolff missed a downhill 10-foot par putt at the fifth while DeChambeau hit a seven-footer for par and took the lead alone for good, even after they both made bogeys at the eighth.

DeChambeau curled in an epic 40-foot eagle putt at the 556-yard par-5 ninth, but Wolff knocked in a 10-footer to

match him and stay one back.

Wolff began the back nine with a bogey, missing a 10-foot par putt, and DeChambeau rolled in an 18-foot birdie putt at the 11th to seize a three-stroke lead. Wolff took a bogey at 14 and a double bogey at 16 while DeChambeau closed with seven pars, the last on 18 from seven feet to seal victory.

"Going through my body was just chills," DeChambeau said.

Xander Schauffele shot 74 and settled for fifth on 284, one stroke ahead of two fellow Americans, top-ranked Dustin Johnson and Will Zalatoris.

"Tough golf course," Johnson said. "I gave myself enough chances, but I just didn't putt well enough."

**120th US Open final round scores:** 274 - Bryson DeChambeau 69-68-70-67; 280 - Matthew Wolff 66-74-65-75; 282 - Louis Oosthuizen (RSA) 67-74-68-73; 283 - Harris English 68-70-72-73; 284 - Xander Schauffele 68-72-70-74; 285 - Dustin Johnson 73-70-72-70; Will Zalatoris 70-74-70-71; 286 - Tony Finau 69-73-73-71; Justin Thomas 65-73-76-72; Webb Simpson 71-71-71-73; Zach Johnson 70-74-68-74; Rory McIlroy (NIR) 67-76-68-75.

## Validated champ says he will experiment more

AFF  
NEW YORK

BRYSON DeChambeau has only just started experimenting with golf after his scientific approach was validated with a US Open victory Sunday at Winged Foot.

The 27-year-old American defied conventional wisdom in the way he won his first major title, blasting drives to record lengths and relying on wedges and putting skills to reduce the fear of escaping dense rough.

"I kept telling everybody it's an advantage to hit it farther," said DeChambeau. "It was a tremendous advantage this week."



It's a lot of validation through science. It definitely is validating I'm able to execute time and time again and have it be good enough to win an Open.

Bryson DeChambeau

"As difficult as this golf course was presented, I played it beautifully. Even through the rough, I was still able to manage my game and hit it to correct sides of the greens and kept plugging away.

"My putting was immaculate. My speed control, incredible. You see me out there on the greens with the device trying to control my speed. So many times I relied on science and it worked every single time."

It's no wonder, then, that DeChambeau is already working on more wonders ahead of the Masters in November.

"I'm not going to stop," he said.

"Next week I'm going to be trying a 48-inch driver. We're going to be messing with some head designs and do some amazing things with Cobra to make it feasible to hit these drives maybe 360, 370, maybe even farther. I don't know."

"I'm just trying to figure out this very complex, multi-variable game, and multidimensional game as well. It's very difficult."

DeChambeau's 325 yards off the tee set a record for any US Open champion even though he found only 23 of 56 fairways over four rounds. He also was the only player without an over-par round.

"It's a lot of validation through science," DeChambeau said. "It definitely is validating I'm able to execute time and time again and have it be good enough to win an Open."

"It's about the journey. Can I execute every shot more repeatedly than everybody else? I was able to do it this week. That's why I won by six."

DeChambeau hopes he is inspiring a new generation of golfers the same way Tiger Woods sent golfers to the gym for better fitness after his 1997 Masters triumph.

"I'm definitely changing the way people think about the game," said DeChambeau. "Whether you can do it, that's a whole different situation."

"I think the next generation that's coming up into golf hopefully will see this and go, 'I can do that too.'"

"I hope I can inspire some people to say there's a different way to do it. Not everybody has to do it my way. Hopefully my way inspires people."

Combating DeChambeau could be tough. Squeeze fairways thinner and his distance becomes a bigger edge with more people in the deep grass. Make them wider and length is an even greater advantage.

"I felt super comfortable out of the rough no matter the situation," said DeChambeau.

One key area that has helped DeChambeau, in addition to the exercise and protein shakes to bulk up muscle mass, is his skill with the putter.

"The putting has gradually improved over the course of my career. I was dead last when I came out on tour," he said.

Science again came to his rescue. "(It) helped me understand how a ball needs to roll in order to give me the best chance to hole a putt," he said.

"Over the course of these four years, every year I've gotten a little bit better. I've gotten in the top 10 now. I don't know how much better I can get, but I'm going to keep trying every single week."



Serbia's Novak Djokovic poses with his trophy after winning the Men's Italian Open final at Foro Italico in Rome, Italy, on Monday. (AFP)

## Djokovic wins record 36th Masters title in Rome; Halep claims crown

DPA  
ROME

WORLD number one Novak Djokovic claimed a record-breaking 36th Masters title in Rome on Monday after a 7-5, 6-3 triumph over Argentina's Diego Schwartzman.

The 17-time Grand Slam champion was a break down in both sets but recovered to win a fifth Italian Open trophy at the Foro Italico before the French Open starts on Sunday.

"I couldn't have asked for a better tournament in Rome before heading to Paris," said Djokovic.

"It was a very challenging week, I didn't play my best tennis but I found it when I needed it in the decisive moments today."

Top seed Simona Halep won her first ever Rome title at the third attempt after defending champion Karolina Pliskova retired from the final through injury with Halep leading 6-0, 2-1.

Romania's Halep raced through the first set with six straight games in 20 minutes as Pliskova struggled to move in the rallies with her left thigh heavily strapped up. Pliskova says the injury was a result of sliding on the clay and playing long, late matches.

"Yesterday I was already feeling like, okay, if this match goes like three sets, then it's going to be very difficult," said Pliskova.

"But this morning and in the night I felt like it's not really good," Pliskova, the Czech world number four, was broken twice more in the three-game second set and with the French Open starting in six days, she decided to end the match after 31 minutes.

Halep previously lost two Rome finals to Elina Svitolina in 2017 and 2018.

"Finally I won it," said Halep after winning a 22nd career title. "I had two finals. The start of my going up in the ranking was here in 2013. So I really dreamed to have this title." The former French Open champion will now travel to Roland Garros as the top seed, due to the withdrawal of world number one Ashleigh Barty.

Pliskova will consult her doctor before she travels to France to contemplate her chances of playing.

"I have to see the doctor just to see if it's nothing like really that heavy kind of injury," Pliskova explained.

"Because if I want to go far in a Grand Slam, then it's going to be, like, two weeks of tennis, which I'm not sure today I can do."

Despite his defeat, Rome was a success for Schwartz-

**Simona worried after player fails virus test at Roland Garros**

PARIS: World number two Simona Halep said Monday that she was worried about the coronavirus situation in Paris after hearing that a female player had tested positive during qualifying at Roland Garros.

"I heard before the match and, of course, it worries me," said Halep after winning her first Italian Open title after defending champion Karolina Pliskova retired injured while trailing 6-0, 2-1 in the final.

"But I'm sure that measures will take place there, and we will be safe enough to be okay to play and to be safe."

"I don't know yet because I'm not there. After I get there, I will have a feeling."

A statement from French Open organisers did not name the player but explained she would quarantine for seven days, adding that five other players suffered the same fate the day before.

World number four Pliskova, who was playing in Rome with her left thigh heavily bandaged, also stressed the need for caution.

"You have to be really careful where you go, and still you don't know if you can get it or where you can get it and from who. I mean, that's the situation right now."



Romania's Simona Halep poses with her trophy after winning the Women's Italian Open at Foro Italico in Rome, Italy, on Monday. (AFP)

## Generation Amazing and Qatar Foundation kick off disability awareness workshop cycle

SC.QA

GENERATION Amazing (GA) has collaborated with Qatar Foundation (QF) to deliver a disability awareness workshop series for coaches working with children and youth in Qatar.

Among those in attendance were a select number of GA and Paris Saint-Germain Academy coaches. The workshops will continue to be rolled out over the coming months with the next due to take place in October 2020.

Coaches learned how to use accessible equipment as well as ways to implement teaching resources in the workshops for those with special needs.

In continued efforts to ensure the programme is inclusive, GA are further adapting their curriculum to include children and youth with different coach assistance needs.

Speaking on the series of workshops, GA Programmes Director, Nasser Al Khori said: "Following a period of inactivity out on the pitch due to the COVID-19 outbreak, we are delighted to get out on the training ground



and resume our programme activities together in collaboration with Qatar Foundation for this important session in disability awareness."

Al Khori, added: "Continuing to further extend the Generation Amazing programme to participants of all abilities is important to us as we reach and empower children and youth with our football for development methodology."

Inclusion is one of our core values and giving all children the chance to take on essential life skills like communication, leadership and teamwork through such an engaging sport like football, will help secure

their futures."

Amy Johnson, Director of Community Engagement at QF, said: "Inclusivity, accessibility, and equality of opportunity are values found at the core of Qatar Foundation, and they are reflected in this ability-friendly training program that we are delighted to now be offering in partnership with Generation Amazing."

She added: "Our collective goal is to ensure that all members of society can access high-caliber sports programmes that enable them to live healthy lifestyles, have fun, and engage with others. By equipping coaches from Qatar and around

the world with the skills to provide such opportunities, this programme aims to help create new pathways for people of all abilities to enjoy sport."

GA Master Coach, Hamad Mohamed, led the workshop alongside QF Senior SEN/ASD Football Specialist Ryan Moignard. Speaking about the activities, Mohamed said:

"The coaches all engaged well with the training material and adapted to the equipment and assistance requirements needed in order to deliver successfully inclusive sessions. We look forward to hosting further workshops in the months to come."



### Sporting talent

#### Tennis ace Barty wins golf tournament

SYDNEY: Multi-talented Ashleigh Barty has conquered tennis, been a professional cricketer and has now added another string to her sporting bow by winning a golf tournament. The world number one Australian would ordinarily be in Europe preparing to defend her French Open crown on the Roland Garros clay.

But she pulled out over coronavirus fears, having also missed the US Open, and instead of swinging a racquet picked up her golf clubs.

The 24-year-old proved she has what it takes on a course designed by Greg Norman, claiming the Brookwater Golf Club women's title near Brisbane with

a commanding 7 and 5 triumph in the matchplay final.

"Champions," she wrote on Instagram Monday accompanying a picture of herself holding a trophy alongside men's winner Louis Dobbelaar.

"Is there anything you can't do?," asked one social media user, while another equally in awe wrote: "Wait...what? Tennis-Cricket-Tennis-Golf? @ashbarty - you beauty!"

Barty, who played cricket for Brisbane Heat in the Women's Big Bash League in 2015-16, has been working on her golf game during her Covid-19 enforced absence from tennis. (AFP)



# 27 Olympics and 17 World C'ship medallists to take stage in Doha Wanda Diamond League this Friday

**World record holder Duplantis to set field alight in pole vault**

TRIBUNE NEWS NETWORK  
DOHA

TEN Olympic medallists from Rio 2016 and 17 World Championship medallists from Doha 2019 will star at the Wanda Doha Diamond League to be held at the Suhaim Bin Hamad Stadium on Friday (September 25).

Across a high quality programme, event highlights are expected to include the men's pole vault and 1500m, and the women's 100m and 3000m.

In the men's pole vault, world record holder Armand 'Mondo' Duplantis (Sweden) - World Championships silver medallist in Doha 2019 - will again be the one to watch.

Having set an outright world record of 6.18m at the World Indoor Tour meeting in Glasgow in February, he is now officially the best vaulter in history following his incredible 6.15m clearance at the Wanda Rome Diamond League last week (September 17). His outdoor best exceeds Sergey Bubka's previous record of 6.14m which stood for a remarkable 26 years.

Duplantis is joined in Doha by reigning world champion Sam Kendricks (USA), in addition to London 2012 Olympic gold medallist Renaud Lavillenie (France).



Sweden's Armand Duplantis cleared 6.15m to eclipse Ukrainian legend Sergey Bubka's 26-year mark in men's pole vault during the IAAF Diamond League competition on at the Olympic stadium in Rome on September 17. (AFP)



The men's 1500m includes Olympic and world 3000mSC champion Consensus Kipruto (Kenya), world silver medallist over 5000m (Selemon Barega) and 3000mSC (Lamecha Girma), both Ethiopia, and world 3000mSC bronze medallist Soufiane El Bakkali (Morocco).

Double Olympic sprint champion Elaine Thompson-Herah (Jamaica) and multiple World Championships medallist Marie-Josée Ta Lou (Ivory Coast) will go head-to-head in the women's 100m.

Thompson-Herah's 10.85 season's best - set at the Wan-

da Diamond League meeting in Rome - is the fastest time of the year to date.

Olympic silver medallist Dafne Schippers (Netherlands) has withdrawn.

In the women's 3000m, an exciting field brings together Kenyan quartet Hellen Obiri and Beatrice Chepkoech, 2019 world champions over 5000m and 3000mSC respectively, in addition to Olympic 3000mSC silver medallist Hyvin Kiyeng; world 5000m runner-up Margaret Chelimo Kipkemboi; world 1500m bronze medallist Gudaf Tsegay (Ethiopia); and world 10,000m



Doha's Qatar Sports Club will host the revised 12-event programme for the Wanda Doha Diamond League which includes sprint hurdles and 800m for both men and women; 100m, 3000m and long jump for women; and 200m, 400m, 1500m and pole vault for men.

bronze medallist Agnes Jebet Tirop (Kenya).

Obiri, Olympic 5000m silver medallist and 2019 World Cross Country champion, proved her recent good form with a world-leading 14:22.12 to win the 5000m at the Wanda Monaco Diamond League in August.

In total, six reigning world champions and three reigning Olympic champions will return to Doha for the Wanda Doha Diamond League.

In addition to those noted above, Timothy Cheruiyot (Kenya), world 1500m cham-

panion, will race over 800m.

The 24-year-old, who has a best of 1:43.11 from August 2019, clocked an impressive 3:28.45 to win the 1500m in Monaco, just four one-hundredths of a second outside his lifetime best.

Mike Rodgers (USA), 4x100m world relay gold medallist, will line up in the 100m.

Faith Kipyegon (Kenya), Olympic 1500m champion, will star in the women's 800m. The 2017 world 1500m champion, runner-up in Doha 2019, set a national record of 2:29.15 for 1000m in Monaco, narrow-

ly missing the world record for the rarely-run distance.

"In spite of incredibly challenging circumstances, I'm proud of the fantastic fields we've put together for this event," says Khalid Al Marri, Wanda Doha Diamond League Meeting Director.

"It's been a tough summer for everyone, yet we've witnessed some exceptional track and field performances. I'm confident that in Doha, the fourth and final competitive meeting of this shortened 2020 Wanda Diamond League series, that we'll provide a fit-

ting finale."

Doha's Qatar Sports Club will host the revised 12-event programme for the Wanda Doha Diamond League which includes sprint hurdles and 800m for both men and women; 100m, 3000m and long jump for women; and 200m, 400m, 1500m and pole vault for men.

Due to the impact of Covid-19, the 2020 Wanda Diamond League does not form a structured series of events leading to a final and athletes will not earn Diamond League points this season.

## Umpire 'man of the match' after short-run howler

AFP  
DUBAI

FORMER India star Virender Sehwag led the criticism on Monday after an umpiring error that may have affected the outcome of an IPL game.

Kings XI Punjab lost to Delhi Capitals in a super over on Sunday after the teams were tied at 157 each at the end of the Twenty20 match.

But in the 19th over of Punjab's chase, square-leg umpire Nitin Menon had signalled Chris Jordan for a short run - not grounding his bat inside the crease when running between the wickets.

TV replays showed Jordan's bat was in the crease.

But nothing could be done as the third umpire does not have authority to overturn an on-field call, unless it is referred for review.

In the super over, South African quick Kagiso Rabada struck twice to limit Punjab to just two runs, a total that Delhi overhauled in just three balls.

As social media erupted over the short-run decision, Sehwag tweeted: "I don't agree with the man of the match choice. The umpire who gave this short run should have been man of the match."

"Short Run nahin tha (It wasn't a short run). And that was the difference."

Cricketer-turned-commentator Aakash Chopra posted: "One short that wasn't. Technology must take over in these cases... What if #KXIP don't make it to the final four by 2 points??"

Umpiring standards also came into question in last year's IPL, during which India captain Virat Kohli tersely commented: "We are not playing club cricket."

Kohli's team Royal Challengers Bangalore were denied a win when the umpires missed a clear no-ball by the Mumbai Indians' Lasith Malinga on the final delivery.

Kings XI needed 1 run off three balls when they lost in the Super Over.

## De Villiers hits fifty as RCB trump SRH

AFP  
DUBAI

SOUTH African veteran AB de Villiers struck a brisk half-century as Royal Challengers Bangalore opened their Indian Premier League Twenty20 campaign with a win over Sunrisers Hyderabad on Monday.

De Villiers smashed 51 off 30 deliveries to guide last year's wooden spooners Bangalore, captained by Virat Kohli, to 163 for five and a 10-run victory in Dubai.

Bangalore, led by leg-spinner Yuzvendra Chahal, bowled out Hyderabad for 153 despite a valiant 61 by Jonny Bairstow.

"It's amazing and last year we were on the other side of the results," a delighted Kohli said in the post-match presentation.

The David Warner-led Hyderabad collapsed from a



Royal Challengers Bangalore skipper Virat Kohli with AB de Villiers celebrates his team's opening IPL 2020 win over Sunrisers Hyderabad in Dubai on Monday.

comfortable 121 for two to be packed off in 19.4 overs with Kohli taking a good outfield catch off Dale Steyn.

De Villiers struck his 34th fifty in the IPL after losing Kohli for 14 and innings top-scorer Devdutt Padikkal, who scored 56 on IPL debut.

De Villiers, 36, smashed fours boundaries and two

sixes to take his count of hits over the fence to 201 for Bangalore, who are still searching for their maiden IPL title.

**SCORES: Royal Challengers Bangalore 163 all out (Padikkal 56, de Villiers 51, Natarajan 1-34) beat Sunrisers Hyderabad 153 all out (Bairstow 61, Pandey 34, Chahal 3-18) by 10 runs.**

## Boxing, mental health coach for Australia's 'bubble' cricketers

AFP  
SYDNEY

AUSTRALIA have appointed a mental health manager and introduced boxing sessions to help players cope with life in anti-coronavirus 'bubbles', with some facing the prospect of months in controlled environments as international cricket resumes.

The Australians, minus those at the Indian Premier League, are now in 14 days' isolation at a hotel adjoining Adelaide Oval after five weeks in a bio-secure environment in England, where they pulled off a dramatic one-day series win over the world champions.

Some, like coach Justin Langer, face a further fortnight in quarantine when they cross state borders and return to their home bases, with more of the same awaiting players throughout the Australian cricketing summer.



The Australians, minus those at the Indian Premier League, are now in 14 days' isolation at a hotel adjoining the Adelaide Oval after five weeks in a bio-secure environment in England.

With players spending extended periods in bubbles, away from their families, Langer is acutely aware that managing mental health is as important as his players' physical wellbeing as they prepare to take on India in a Test series.

"We've got to always recognise that when we talk about our sports people, whether it's

cricketers or football players or rugby players, they are also human beings and we must respect that," he said in a Zoom call on Monday.

"There are certainly challenges, but we are aware of that. We are keeping an eye on them to make sure they are all staying physically and mentally healthy."

When Cricket Australia explained to the players what the summer schedule might look like, "the blood drained out of some of their faces", Langer added.

Depending on playing commitments, Cricket Australia has forecast some could experience up to 150 days in the controlled environments required by coronavirus protocols.

"It's a long time away from our families and home. But we know the sacrifices we have to take to ensure cricket stays up and running and we keep entertaining people," he said.

To help them cope, Cricket Australia has appointed a new mental health manager and Langer has introduced boxing.

"I know from a lifetime of doing it, there is a real advantage of staying fit and healthy and letting off some steam," he said. "It's as much to keep us stimulated."

But for the ever-competitive

Langer, it is not all just for fun.

"I've said for many, many years that the best form of training for batting, particularly, is boxing because you have to concentrate, it's footwork, it's technique. You've got to have good defence and offence."

Australia are scheduled to play four Tests against India from early December, with a one-off Test against Afghanistan in November, although the dates and venues have yet to be confirmed.

"We will take real confidence out of England, the guys coming back from the IPL will take real confidence out of that, there will be four Sheffield Shield (red ball) games leading up to the summer," he said.

"So we will be well prepared and we'll be hanging out to play cricket for Australia and we'll be ready to take on India, and what a huge contest."

## ACS International School Doha's new sports mascot adds competitive bite

TRIBUNE NEWS NETWORK  
DOHA

THE ACS International School Doha has launched its new sports mascot as it moved into its landmark new campus this September.

ACS Doha Wolves is the new mascot for the new era, ushering in a new vision for sport at the school.

"The Wolves' will feature in all the school's sports activities and will represent the school at events and sports matches with the competitive 'bite' of this fearsome animal. The decision to move to a new mascot was born out of listening to the community of parents, staff and students the school says. Conscious that middle school

sense of caring for one another and community in both our competitive teams but also across the school.

The wolf has been received exceptionally well by the students and gives us plenty of room to build around the symbol and what it means to be part of a pack."

ACS Doha is also using the popularity of the mascot in promoting the use of face masks by the students and distributing customised 'wolf' masks carrying the slogan 'safety in the pack'.

The new mascot represents a step-change in sports at the school, with plans for the creation of a sports-centric hub which engages the whole school community at the cam-



**ACS Doha is also using the mascot in promoting the use of face masks by the students and distributing customised 'wolf' masks carrying the slogan 'safety in the pack'.**

pus' enhanced COVID-secure facilities.

An all-weather athletics track, a double-sized sports hall, fitness suite, 4G (FIFA standard) artificial football pitch, and wellness and warrior studios are among many amenities incorporated in the state-of-the-art landmark campus that are available for the school's community to enjoy, with a 25-metre swimming and learners' pool opening soon.

Parents will also eventually be able to participate in yoga, tai-chi, HIIT and spin classes throughout the day and evening.

Excellent viewing facilities and a sports café ensure that everyone can be a part of the action, making it an attractive multi-functional hub for all sports enthusiasts, a school release stated.

Wolf packs are highly interdependent units and from day one at ACS we instil a