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Qatar's Younoussse and Tijan win in straight sets to storm into semis

TRIBUNE NEWS NETWORK
 TOKYO

QATAR'S Cherif Younoussse and Ahmed Tijan progressed to the semi-finals of the Tokyo 2020 men's Olympic beach volleyball tournament after a straight sets victory over Italy's Paolo Nicolai and Daniele Lupo at Shiokaze Park on Wednesday.

In the quarter-finals, Nicolai and Lupo could not hold on to the three-point lead they opened early into their match with Cherif and Ahmed. After 8-8, the Qatari team took control of the scoreboard and never let go through the end of the first set.

The second set was far more competitive, and the Italians even pushed it to overtime. They denied two Qatari match points, but on the third one Cherif killed to stop the clocks at 2-0 (21-17, 23-21).

"I'm grateful to be in the semi-final, because it took us maybe six or seven years to build this team. It's a long process. But we trust the process."

"For sure, the road is going to be very difficult; there will be some ups and downs. But we didn't give up and we're thankful to be here," said Cherif.

"It was a very tough game mentally. They were playing really well and not giving up. Now we'll get a good rest, because tomorrow we are going to be here again," he added.

In the semi-finals to be held on Thursday, the Qatari duo will take on the reigning world champions Viacheslav



Qatar's Cherif Younoussse makes a block Italy's Daniele Lupo attempts a shot during their men's beach volleyball quarter-final of the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games at Shiokaze Park in Tokyo on Wednesday. Younoussse and Tijan won 21-17, 23-21. (AFP)

Krasilnikov and Oleg Stoyanovskiy of the Russian Olympic Committee who booked

their last four spot beating Germany's Julius Thole and Clemens Wickler 2-0 (21-16,

21-19) on Wednesday.

The two sets of the quarter-final between Krasilnikov/

Stoyanovskiy and Thole/Wickler unfolded following similar patterns.

The Germans had a slight early lead; then the world champs stepped in front.

Thole and Wickler kept the fire burning, but were only able to catch up occasionally without regaining control through the ends of the sets.

At first match point, Stoyanovskiy delivered the winner in an extraordinary manner. In an attempt to block, he practically set the ball for himself and then hammered it into the opponents' side to celebrate with a 2-0 (21-16, 21-19) victory.

Earlier in the day, Latvia's Martins Plavins and Edgars Tocs shocked defending Olympic champion Alison Cerutti and his Brazilian partner Alvaro Filho 2-0 (21-16, 21-19).

On Thursday, Plavins and Tocs will face Norway's Anders Mol and Christian Sorum in a duel for a place in Saturday's final.

The Norwegians defeated Ilya Leshukov and Konstantin Semenov of ROC in the first quarter-final of the day.

After losing their pool match to the same opponents in straight sets, Mol and Sorum got back at Leshukov and Semenov with a 2-0 (21-17, 21-19) win.

"The feeling is amazing! Now we are really, really happy. We played a real good game today and the Russians also played a really good game. I think we played better than in the pool and that was the difference. We made fewer mistakes," Mol said after the match.

"Fighting for the medal now at the Olympics is just a dream come true, and we hope to bring some medals back to Norway."

McLaughlin gold in 400m hurdles WR; Andre de Grasse wins at last in 200m

DPA
 TOKYO

THE women emulated the men on Wednesday when American Sydney McLaughlin smashed her own world record in the 400 metre hurdles for gold at the Tokyo Olympics.

Fellow American Dalilah Muhammad led for most of the race, but McLaughlin sped ahead at the final hurdle to take gold in 51.46 seconds.

World champion and 2016 gold medallist Muhammad also stayed well below McLaughlin's previous record of 51.90 from earlier in the year, clocking 51.58. Dutch ace Femke Bol earned bronze in a European record 52.03.

The fast times came 24 hours after Norway's Karsten Warholm had also obliterated his world record in the men's final, lowering it by .76 of a second to 45.94 seconds on the fast Tokyo track.

"I'm absolutely delighted. What a great race. I'm just grateful to be out here celebrating that extraordinary race and representing my country," McLaughlin said.

"I saw Dalilah ahead of me with one to go. I just thought 'run your race'," she said. Muhammad said: "This means everything to me at this moment. To be 31 and running at your very, very best is absolutely amazing."

There were also fast times in the men's 200m where Canada's Andre de Grasse got a first major title at last as successor to Usain Bolt in the 200m - with whom he fa-



USA's Sydney McLaughlin (C) wins the women's 400m hurdles final setting a new world record during the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games at the Olympic Stadium in Tokyo on Wednesday. (AFP)

mously exchanged smiles in the 2016 semis.

Emmanuel Kipkurui Korir led a Kenyan gold-silver showing in the men's 800m. Peruth Chemutai of Uganda won the women's 3,000 metres steeplechase, and Poland's Wojciech Nowicki got a big hammer throw gold at last.

De Grasse won the 200m in a national record 19.62 seconds as he finally climbed to the top of the podium after eight minor medals in the past at worlds and Olympics, including 100m bronze in Tokyo.

He is the first Canadian to claim a global sprint title because Ben Johnson was

stripped of his 1987 world and 1988 Olympic 100m titles for doping.

De Grasse beat three Americans as Kenneth Bednarek got silver in a personal best 19.68, world champion Noah Lyles bronze with 19.74 while teenager Erriyon Knighton missed the podium in fourth.

In the 800m, Korir pulled away coming into the home stretch to get gold in 1 minute 45.06 seconds. Ferguson Cheruiyot Rotich took silver after 2019 worlds bronze, and former 400m hurdles runner Patryk Dobek of Poland was a surprise bronze medallist.

The 2012 and 2016 gold medallist David Rudisha of

Kenya and American world champion Donavan Brazier were not competing, while 2012 silver medallist Nijel Amos and American 2016 bronze medallist Clayton Murphy were no factor, finishing second-last and last, respectively.

"I don't know what to say, just thanks to God. This is a big thing for me after failing to qualify for the final in the 2017 and 2019 world championships. But today is my day," Korir said.

Chemutai caught up and ran away from courageous American leader Courtney Frerichs in the final 200m for gold in 9 minutes 1:45 sec-



First-placed Canada's Andre De Grasse crosses the finish line to win followed by second-placed USA's Kenneth Bednarek (rear C) in the men's 200m final of the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games at the Olympic Stadium in Tokyo on Wednesday. (AFP)

onds. The elated Frerichs took silver as at the 2017 worlds in 9:04.79, and bronze went to Hyvin Kiyeng of Kenya.

World champion and world record holder Beatrice Chepkoech of Kenya was seventh and 2017 world champion Emma Coburn of the US was eventually disqualified having never been in medal contention.

Nowicki got gold with 82.52m at last after finishing third at the last Olympics and the last three worlds. Norway's Eivind Henriksen threw over 80m for the first time in his life while four-time reigning world champion Pawel Fajdek missed the elusive Olympic gold again but got his first medal in the form of bronze.

The multi-events had their first day with heartbreak for both world champions as

Germany's Niklas Kaul and Katarina Johnson-Thompson pulled up injured in their final events of the day.

Canadian ace Damian Warner was the overnight decathlon leader after five events while Dutch Anouk Vetter topped the heptathlon.

In preliminary action, world champion Grant Holloway led the way into the 110m hurdles final and fellow American veteran Allyson Felix made the 400m final in search of her 10th Olympic medal, with 2016 winner Shaunae Miller-Uibo of the Bahamas also through.

German top favourite Johannes Vetter reached the javelin final on his final attempt while Rio 2016 minor medallist Julius Yego of Kenya and Keshorn Walcott of Trinidad and Tobago went out.

MEDALS TALLY

Country	G	S	B	T
China	32	22	16	70
USA	25	31	23	79
Japan	21	7	12	40
Britain	15	18	15	48
Australia	15	4	17	36
ROC	14	21	18	53
Germany	8	8	16	32
France	6	10	9	25
Italy	6	9	15	30
Netherlands	6	8	9	23
South Korea	6	4	9	19
New Zealand	6	4	5	15
Cuba	5	3	4	12
Hungary	4	5	3	12
Canada	4	4	7	15
Brazil	4	3	8	15
Czech Republic	4	3	1	8
Switzerland	3	4	5	12
Poland	3	3	4	10
Croatia	3	3	2	8
Sweden	2	5	0	7
Chinese Taipei	2	4	5	11
Georgia	2	4	1	7
Denmark	2	2	3	7
Norway	2	2	1	5
Jamaica	2	1	2	5
Iran	2	1	1	4
Slovenia	2	1	1	4
Ecuador	2	1	0	3
Greece	2	0	1	3
Uzbekistan	2	0	1	3
Kosovo	2	0	0	2
Qatar	2	0	0	2
Spain	1	4	5	10
Romania	1	3	0	4
Venezuela	1	3	0	4
Ukraine	1	2	8	11
Kenya	1	2	2	5
Hong Kong	1	2	0	3
South Africa	1	2	0	3
Slovakia	1	2	0	3
Serbia	1	1	4	6
Austria	1	1	3	5
Indonesia	1	1	3	5

The Netherlands end Britain's hopes of another hockey title

DPA
TOKYO

BRITAIN'S reign as Olympic women's hockey champions ended at the semi-final stage in Tokyo as they were crushed 5-1 by the Netherlands on Wednesday.

The Dutch emphatically avenged defeat in the 2016 Rio final, when British goalkeeper Maddie Hinch's heroics during a penalty shoot-out ensured gold medal glory.

Argentina later booked their place in the final with a 2-1 win over India, captain Maria Noel Barrionuevo scoring twice after an early goal from India's Gurjit Kaur.

The opening last-four clash at Oi Hockey Stadium was the second meeting of the Tokyo tournament between Britain and the Dutch, with the Netherlands having posted a 1-0 pool win six days ago.

Hollie Pearne-Webb's team once again came unstuck as the Dutch never looked back following two goals in just over a minute during the second quarter when Felice Albers and Marloes Keetels struck.

Albers and Maria Verschoor added further goals during the third quarter, leaving Britain reeling from conceding four times in 19 damaging minutes, before Giselle Ansley netted a consolation, but Frederique Matla added a fifth late on.

It means that Hinch and company will play for the bronze medal at Oi Hockey Stadium on Friday again India before the gold medal match.

Whether they can bounce back in 48 hours from such a



Players of Netherlands celebrate after defeating Britain 5-1 in their women's semi-final match of the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games field hockey competition, at the Oi Hockey Stadium in Tokyo on Wednesday. (AFP)

drubbing, though, remains to be seen.

Chances proved few and far between during a cagey first quarter, with neither goalkeeper forced into a save until the closing seconds.

Hinch then reacted sharply from a penalty corner, twice blocking shots as it ended 0-0 following the opening 15 minutes.

The Dutch, though, rocked their opponents through a blistering start to the second

quarter as they scored twice in rapid succession.

Albers pounced for the opener, applying a clinical finish that left Hinch stranded, then before Britain could regroup their opponents struck again when Keetels found the target from distance.

It was a huge double setback for the defending champions and, although they finished the second quarter strongly in terms of possession and territory, they faced a size-

able task to claw things back after trailing 2-0 at half-time.

Britain had to score next, but they fell further behind just two minutes after the restart.

The Dutch forced a penalty corner, and the ball was neatly deflected beyond Hinch's reach by Verschoor to give the Netherlands a 3-0 lead.

It had all unravelled with indecent haste for the 2016 gold medallists, and confidence appeared to drain from them in the morning heat as

the Netherlands exerted a vice-like grip on the game.

Albers then scored her second goal, finishing brilliantly after losing her marker and leaving Britain 4-0 behind, before Ansley pulled one back entering the final quarter.

Britain are a much-changed outfit since their success in Brazil - only Hinch and five others who were part of that triumph have made the trip to Japan - and the aim now is another podium finish.



Britain's Sky Brown competes in the women's park final during the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games at Ariake Sports Park Skateboarding in Tokyo on Wednesday. (AFP)

Brown battles back to become Britain's youngest Olympic medallist



Bronze medallist Britain's Sky Brown poses on the podium of the women's park final at Ariake Sports Park Skateboarding in Tokyo on Wednesday. (AFP)

DPA
LONDON

SKY Brown has been crowned Britain's youngest Olympic medallist after claiming bronze in the women's skateboard park event at the Ariake Urban Arena in Tokyo to complete a remarkable return from injury.

After falling in her first two runs of the final, the 13-year-old nailed her last attempt with a score of 56.47 to finish behind Japanese pair Sakura Yosozumi and Kokona Hiraki.

Brown and favourite Misugu Okamoto struggled with a trick known as the kick flip indy, leaving both facing the prospect of having to go clean on their respective final routines to reach the podium.

And it was Brown who stepped up when it mattered, her third score nudging her to bronze before another fall by Okamoto, who finished fourth, confirmed the Briton's historic medal.

"I'm so happy," said Brown. "I fell twice (trying the kickflip indy) and I was like, 'That's kinda sketchy', so I was like, 'I gotta make it'."

"And I didn't really think I was going to make it but I did it, and I'm so happy." Brown's

achievement is all the more remarkable for the fractured skull and broken bones she suffered during an horrific fall in training last year.

She posted a video clip of the fall on her Instagram account, which has approaching one million followers, along with the message: "I'm excited to come back even stronger and even tougher. My heart wants to go so hard right now." Brown, who was born in Miyazaki, Japan, to a Japanese mother and British father, competed at the US Open in 2016 at the age of eight, and first elected to compete for Britain in 2018.

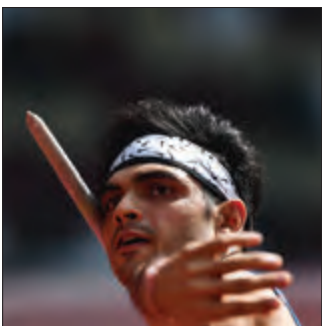
She arrived with plenty of profile, having won the US version of 'Dancing With The Stars: Juniors' in 2018, and expressed her ambition to achieve the almost unprecedented feat of competing in two sports - skateboarding and surfing - at the Games, something from which she was subsequently dissuaded.

In 2019, Brown finished third at the World Skateboarding Championship, and the following year she effectively secured her Olympic qualification by picking up a bronze medal at the Park World Championships in Sao Paulo, Brazil.

Last month, she warmed up for the Games by winning gold in the prestigious X Games, although neither of her key Olympic challengers, Okamoto and Hiraki, were present.

Now she is an Olympic medallist, even if it will take time to settle in.

"It was unbelievable," she said. "Even right now it feels like a dream. It's insane. I'm so happy and so thankful and so proud of every one of the other girls, too."



India's Neeraj Chopra competes in the men's javelin throw qualification during the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games at the Olympic Stadium in Tokyo on Wednesday. (AFP)

Germany's Vetter makes javelin final, India's Chopra qualifies in first attempt

DPA
TOKYO

GERMAN javelin thrower Johannes Vetter saved his best throw for last, qualifying for the finals on his third throw in Tokyo.

Vetter sat in sixth in his group after two throws, with his best falling below qualifying at 82.08 metres.

However, his third and final throw saw him crack the mark, throwing 85.64m.

Just three competitors were able to make the 83.50 qualifying performance in Vetter's heat, including India's Neeraj Chopra and Finland's Lassi Etelatalo.

The 23-year-old Chopra, competing in his first Olympics, took just a few seconds to make to the final as he sent the spear to 86.65m well past the qualifying mark of 83.50m in his first attempt.

The top 12 from the heats will throw for a medal in the finals on Saturday.

Qatar's national football team moves up 16 places to 42 in FIFA world rankings

AGENCIES

THE Qatari national football team advanced 16 places in the FIFA rankings, to 42nd in the world, behind the Russian team, which ranked 41st.

This distinguished position came after the high level presented by the team in the CONCACAF Gold Cup championship, in which it reached the semi-final stage, where it narrowly lost against the US team, which won the title at the expense of the Mexican team.

The Qatari team played five matches in the Gold Cup, winning three, drawing one and losing one match against USA.

With the end of the team's campaign in the continental championship, Qatar will resume their European qualifiers in Group A, and meet with Portugal, Serbia and Luxembourg on September 1, 4 and 7 next.

On the other hand, HE President of the Qatar Football Association, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa bin Ahmed Al Thani, met with President of the Concacaf As-



The Qatar national team during the recently held CONCACAF Gold Cup in the US.

sociation, Victor Montagliani.

The meeting was attended by HE Secretary-General of the Supreme Committee for Delivery & Legacy, Hassan Al Thawadi, and Secretary-General of the Federation Mansour Al Ansari. This meeting comes within the framework of the distinguished relations between the Qatar Football Association and friendly federations, which will enhance future cooperation frameworks.

During the meeting, they discussed issues of common interest and the importance of activating them and ways to develop them in the coming period to serve the football system and increase the bonds of distinguished relations between the two sides.

President of CONCACAF, Victor Montagliani, confirmed that this edition of the Gold Cup witnessed the hosting of the Asian champions Qatar, as

they made a huge contribution and made a great appearance in the tournament, not only on the field but also off the field.

He added that on the field they were fighters and played world-class football, and off the field they were great ambassadors and an honorable model for their country, region and continent of Asia. I thank them for this high-level participation, and for their distinguished friendship.

team table tennis gold since its Olympic inception in 2008.

Men's singles champion Ma Long, who became the first man to win four table tennis Olympic golds on Friday, was again the star of the show against the Koreans.

He partnered Xu Xin for a 11-5, 11-5, 11-8 thrashing of Jeoung Young Sik and Lee Sang Su before returning to dispatch Lee in a trickier win over five games.

"The main issue was that at the start of games we

played well," Ma said. "I think our doubles today was the smoothest match I've had so far. To win the doubles and go 1-0 up was a big help to the team." Germany's men then pulled off a surprise against the hosts, Patrick Franziska and Timo Boll combining to put them 1-0 up before Boll and Dimitrij Ovtcharov won their single matches.

Boll defeated Jun Mizutani 7-11, 13-11, 11-7, 11-7 while Ovtcharov, who lost his first match in the semi, prevailed

11-9, 11-7, 11-8 over Koki Niwa.

After a bronze in Rio, the German men already know they have gone one better but beating the Chinese will be altogether different challenge.

In the women's semi, world number one and Olympic singles champion Chen Meng partnered Wang Manyu to a convincing 11-9, 11-2, 11-4 doubles win over Germany's Petrisa Solja and Shan Xiaona.

Silver medallist Sun Yingsha won her singles tie 11-6,

11-4, 11-9 over Han Ying.

Solja showed most resistance and ensured Germany put at least one game on the board but still went down to Chen 5-11, 11-4, 11-9, 13-11.

Third-seeded Germany were also hammered by China in the final of the Rio Games five years ago but can end on a high in Tokyo against Hong Kong in the bronze medal match on Thursday before the hosts take on the mighty Chinese for gold.

China's Chen said: "This

clash is something we've been looking forward to for so long.

We've finally got to this final. No matter where each of us are positioned, we have to fulfil our responsibilities... and showcase our styles and skills."

China have again dominated table tennis at the Tokyo Games with two golds and three silvers already with Japan next on the medal table with a 1-0-1 record.

The men's team medal finals are on Friday.

Favourites China easily reach team table tennis finals

DPA
TOKYO

CHINA'S men and women powered into the team table tennis finals at the Tokyo Olympics after easy 3-0 wins over South Korea and Germany respectively on Wednesday.

But Germany's men hit back in their semi-final, downing Japan 3-2 to seal their final spot. Japan were already through to the women's gold medal showdown.

China have won every

SC hosts fan parties for Qatar and Mexico supporters during 2021 CONCACAF Gold Cup

TRIBUNE NEWS NETWORK

THE Supreme Committee for Delivery & Legacy (SC) hosted fan parties for Qatar and Mexico supporters during the 2021 CONCACAF Gold Cup.

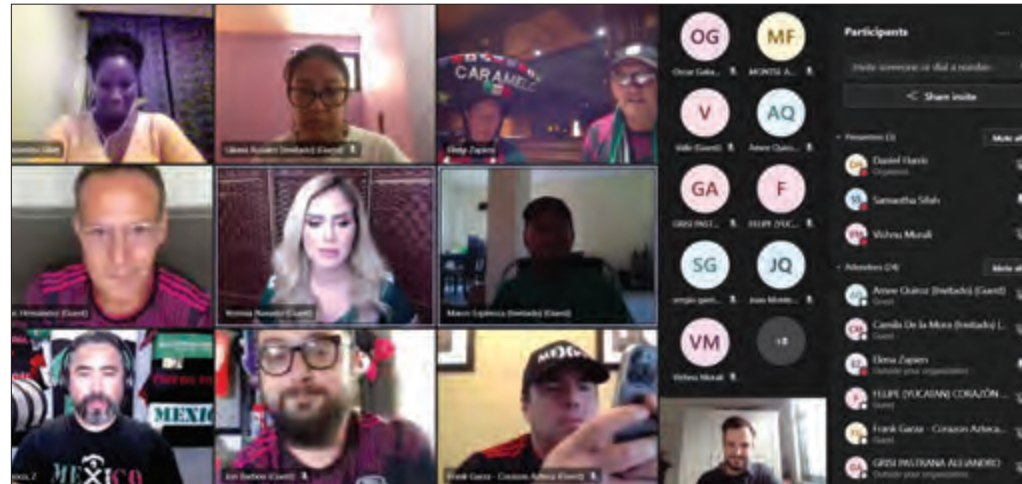
Organised by the SC's Fan Engagement Division, the online events included special guests and a range of engagement opportunities, along with a chance to review teams' performances at the Gold Cup less than 18 months before the FIFA World Cup. Both parties included fan predictions and quizzes, among other interactive activities.

The first party was held ahead of Mexico's 3-0 victory over Honduras in the quarter-finals.

Fans were introduced to former Mexico striker Luis Hernández, the joint highest World Cup goal scorer for his country, who discussed the Mexicans' tactics and preparations for 2022. Additionally,



Online parties included football fun, interactive games and special guests.



fans learned more about the Qatar Fan Leader Network – which was recently launched by the SC and Qatar Football Association – and had the opportunity to ask questions about the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022, which will kick off on 21 November next year.

The second party was

held ahead of Qatar's semi-final match against the United States. It was hosted by Qatar Legacy Ambassador and beIN SPORTS presenter Mohammed Saadon Al Kuwari. Al Kuwari discussed Qatar's successful run to the last four of the Gold Cup and looked forward to the team's participa-

tion in the first FIFA World Cup™ to be held in the Middle East and Arab world in 2022. The party was attended by fans in Qatar and across the region, all supporting the Maroons' journey throughout the tournament. Fatma Al Nuaimi, the SC's Communications Executive

Director, said: "The Gold Cup provided a vital opportunity to engage with fans at home and abroad as we edge ever nearer to hosting the FIFA World Cup. For Mexican fans, it was a chance to learn more about our culture, hospitality and passion for football – helped by Yezenia Navarro, a Mexican

social media influencer who lives in Qatar.

For local fans, the party was an opportunity to celebrate Qatar's success in the tournament and look forward to hosting the World Cup on home soil in only 15 months' time."

Samantha Sifah, the SC's Fan Engagement Manager,

said: "The parties provided a chance for fans in Qatar and Mexico to discuss their team's journeys to 2022 as they excelled at the Gold Cup. Overall, it was hugely exciting for fans and a fore-runner for the fantastic football fans expect to see in Qatar next year."

'Like a trampoline': How are fast Olympic athletics times achieved?

World and other records are tumbling in Olympic athletics with a super-fast track and innovative shoes getting credit apart from the athletes' talent

WORLD, continental and national records are tumbling in Tokyo Olympics athletics and it is not just down to the sheer talent of the athletes.

Technological advances also play a major role in the form of a unique track structure and innovative shoes.

"We are going into a new stratosphere," American Rai Benjamin said after running half a second faster than the previous world record in the 400m hurdles.

But that was only good enough for silver because Norway's Karsten Warholm was even quicker as he got gold in 45.94 seconds, .76 of a second faster than his previous record.

The Swiss Neue Zuercher Zeitung paper also made a space reference saying Warholm's record appeared to have been achieved "on the moon in reduced gravity."

Not to be outdone, the women's hurdlers followed suit on Wednesday with Sydney McLaughlin smashing her world record by .44 with 51.46 and fellow American Dalilah Muhammad close behind on 51.58.

Add to that Elaine Thompson-Herah's sprint double in the second-best times ever, 10.61 and 21.53, and later being quoted she could have been even faster on the Tokyo track.

Some have named the track "bouncy," and Andrea Vallauri from Italian track makers Mondo told the New York Times it allows shock absorption and energy return "like a trampoline."

Vallauri estimated their 12th Olympic track, which includes three-dimensional



Canada's Andre De Grasse, wrapped in the Canadian national flag, kisses his running shoes as he celebrates winning the men's 200m final at the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games in Tokyo on Wednesday. (AFP)



France's Kevin Mayer lies on the track ahead of his attempt in the men's decathlon high jump during the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games at the Olympic Stadium in Tokyo on Wednesday. (AFP)

granules in the surface, leads to a performance gain of around 2 per cent - a lot in events where hundredths of a second decide.

"You can feel the difference. A lot of people talk about the shoes, but I think it's one of those tracks that it gives you that energy right back and pushes you and propels you forward," McLaughlin said.

Muhammad agreed, saying: "I could feel that energy return."

German 200m semi-finalist Lisa Marie Kwayie said the track "works its magic" as soon as you step on it, but according to Warholm the right footwear can also make a difference.

The Norwegian star boasts super-light carbon-plated shoes with titanium spikes, developed by his equipment company Puma together with the Mercedes Formula One team.

He meanwhile dismisses the Nike model that Benjamin wore for having too much foam which could endanger the credibility of the sport.

Sebastian Coe, president of the ruling body World Athletics remains relaxed about the latest innovations which have always been part of the sport.

Looking at the shoes, he was quoted by the PA news agency as saying that "I don't want to strangle the innovation" but that "to maintain is a level playing field" remains the priority. He added in reference to the track: "It's fast. It's clearly fast."

"I'm viewing really talented athletes who are probably running quicker on fast surfaces. I don't think we're seeing any dramatic change in order." (DPA)



beIN SPORTS to exclusively broadcast return of European football league season across MENA

TRIBUNE NEWS NETWORK

BEIN MEDIA GROUP, the global sports and entertainment broadcaster and its flagship sports channel beIN SPORTS will exclusively broadcast the return of the three European Leagues - Ligue 1 (6 Aug - 21 May), the English Premier League (14 Aug - 22 May) and LaLiga (15 Aug - 22 May) - providing an unrivalled viewing experience to its millions of subscribers and viewers in the 24 countries across the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region.

Commenting on beIN SPORTS' exclusive coverage of the European Leagues, Duncan Walkinshaw, Acting Director of Programs for beIN MENA, said: "We are proud to once again to be able to provide our viewers and subscribers with the best viewing experience as the European League football season kicks off."

As our successful coverage of the 2020 Tokyo Olympics comes to an end later in the week, we cannot wait to kick-start the next football season and continue uniting the region through its love of sports".

beIN SPORTS European League Programming As Ligue1, EPL and LaLiga return across the next 2 weekends, every game and goal will be broadcast live and exclusive on beIN, with every game available with Arabic and English commentary.

The best games are also available in Ultra High Definition on beIN's exclusive 4K channel.

The best games of the day are available back-to-back on beIN SPORTS 1 Premium where you will find the regular Arabic talents providing the best analysis around, including Mohammed Aboutrika, Youssef Chippo, Hatem Trabelisi, Tarek Dhiab and Tarek Jalahma.

The English studio will be hosted by Richard Keys and Andy Gray and will be available on beIN SPORTS 1 EN. From Friday 6 August 2021, beIN will kick-start the French Ligue 1 season when Monaco entertain Nantes at 22:00 Mecca on beIN SPORTS 2.

A sensational summer of sport continues on beIN SPORTS as the major European football leagues - including Ligue 1, the English Premier League, and LaLiga - return

On Saturday 7 August 2021, there is the traditional curtain raiser to the Premier League, The Community Shield which this year sees FA Cup winners Leicester City face Premier League champions Manchester City live on beIN SPORTS 1 Premium at 19:00 Mecca.

This will be followed by Troyes vs. Paris Saint-Germain at 22:00 Mecca. What's more, fans across the region will have the first chance to witness the big-name summer signings in action for their new clubs.

Heading into next week, on Wednesday 11 August 2021, from Windsor Park, Northern Ireland, the UEFA Super Cup kicks off at 22:00 MECCA. Champions League winners Chelsea will face Europa League winners Villarreal. This year's Super Cup is available with Arabic, English, and French commentary.

On Saturday 14 August from 14:00 Mecca, the Arabic studio on beIN SPORTS 1 Premium will cover Manchester United vs. Leeds United, followed by Chelsea vs. Crystal Palace, Norwich vs. Liverpool and Real Madrid vs. Alves.

Tottenham and Manchester City kicks off at 17:30 MECCA on Sunday 15 August on beIN SPORTS 1 Premium.

Flag kick

Kane fails to report for pre-season tests

LONDON: Tottenham striker Harry Kane did not report for pre-season tests on Monday. The England captain was due back at the club's Hotspur Way training centre for a Covid-19 test following his three-week break after the European Championship. However, the PA news agency understands Kane did not arrive as planned, throwing his future further up into the air. Spurs - who face Manchester City at home on the opening day of the season - have declined to comment. The 28-year-old is keen to leave the club this window in order to win trophies, but with three years left on his contract, Tottenham have no intention of selling their prized asset. Kane hinted at the end of last term that he would like to join Manchester City, but the Premier League champions have previously indicated they would not pay the sort of 210 million dollar fee required to even tempt Spurs to the negotiating table. Their pursuit of Aston Villa's Jack Grealish is also reported to impact their ability to sign Kane. Kane has been in the Bahamas following England's defeat in the Euro 2020 final and looks to have set his stall out to force a move from the Tottenham Hotspur Stadium.

La Liga to receive big private equity cash boost: Reports

MADRID: Spain's La Liga and other football leagues in the country could be receiving a \$3.2 billion investment from private equity firm CVC, media reports said on Wednesday. The Spanish top flight has reached an agreement in principle with the company, Spanish newspapers such as Mundo Deportivo, Marca and La Vanguardia reported, citing La Liga president Javier Tebas. The league confirmed a deal without giving details when contacted by dpa. The ratification of the agreement, which is still necessary, is considered a formality. According to media reports, about 90 per cent of the money will be distributed among the clubs. The money is not only going to the big clubs such Real Madrid and indebted Barcelona, but also to clubs in women's and amateur leagues. The distribution is to be determined at a meeting of all clubs, but Barca can expect around \$320 million, Real a little more than \$307 million. Both clubs have been pushing for a European Super League because of money worries. Through the deal, Barcelona will be able to sign a new deal with out-of-contract Lionel Messi "without any problems", wrote La Vanguardia and other media. Argentina great Messi has been officially without a club since his contract with Barcelona expired on June 30. According to Spanish media reports, the player and the club reached an agreement in principle as early as mid-July. They wanted to sign a five-year contract, and the 34-year-old would forgo 50 per cent of his current salary. A week and a half before the start of the league season, however, no agreement has been officially announced. Barca's first league match will take place on August 15 at home against Real Sociedad. (DPA)



Jomaanah the Prix Chateaufort sur Sarthe at Le Lion d'Angers in France on Wednesday.

Sheikh Abdullah's Joomana breaks maiden in game style

TRIBUNE NEWS NETWORK

TWO-YEAR-OLD filly Joomana (Olympic Glory x Scandalous) carried the colours of His Highness Sheikh Abdullah bin Khalifa Al Thani to victory when taking the Prix Chateaufort sur Sarthe at Le Lion d'Angers on Wednesday.

Trained by Henri-Alex Pantall, Joomana built on two-placed efforts at Deauville and Croan respectively, and scored a game victory, on her third start, under jockey Soufiane Saadi.

Breaking alertly from the stalls, Saadi settled Joomana just behind the early leaders through the early stages of the 1,400m contest.

With a strong pace being set by Hypnotized (Dream Ahead), Joomana had to be hustled along on occasion and still had a few lengths to find entering the home straight.

Staying on for pressure, Joomana closed strongly inside the final 200m and headed Hypnotized in the shadows of the post. Speedy Charm (Charm Spirit) also finished with a flourish and took third close home.

Bred by Haras de Victo, Joomana is by Olympic Glory (Choir). Her dam, Scandalous (Monson) was unraced, but has now produced three winners and is a full sister to dual Listed winner Sereth (Monson).

Hosts bowled out for 183 after opting to bat; India 21 for no loss in reply

AGENCIES
NOTTINGHAM

INDIA bowlers breathed fire in helpful conditions to dismiss a vulnerable England for 183 after the hosts won the toss and opted to bat on the opening day of the first Test of the World Test Championship cycle at Trent Bridge on Wednesday.

Joe Root's decision backfired though the captain himself made a good 64.

Jasprit Bumrah (4/46), who was not at his best during the World Test Championship final against New Zealand, was back in his element and ran through the opposition alongside his new ball partner Mohammad Shami (3/28). In fact, all the pacers including Mohammad Siraj (1/48) and Shardul Thakur (2/41) made the ball talk throughout the England innings lasting 65.4 overs.

Opener KL Rahul, playing his first Test in two years, and Rohit Sharma, took India to 21 for no loss at stumps, surviving 13 testing overs from England fast bowlers.

For a packed crowd at Trent Bridge, it was a treat to watch the Indian pacers display their supreme skills.

Shami moved the ball both ways, Bumrah bowled his fast swinging yorkers, Thakur flaunted his natural outswinger and Siraj used the scrambled seam to perfection.

India bowled brilliantly but their job was made easier by the English batsmen, who looked under prepared for red ball cricket after coming fresh from white ball games in The Hundred.

Root was the only batsman who looked comfortable in the middle and Jonny Bairstow, to a certain extent, as the duo shared a 72-run stand.

England, who were 138 for four at Tea, lost their last six wickets for 45 runs and it was not for Sam Curran's unbeaten 27 towards the end, they would have struggled to cross 180.

Shami, who had removed Bairstow at the stroke of Tea, struck four balls after the break by having Daniel Lawrence caught down the leg side, a soft dismissal.



India's Jasprit Bumrah (C) celebrates with teammates after taking the wicket of England's Rory Burns (L) for a duck on the first day of the first Test against India at the Trent Bridge cricket ground in Nottingham, Nottinghamshire, on Wednesday. (AFP)

Scoreboard

ENGLAND (1ST INNINGS)	28-3; Siraj 12-2-48-1; Thakur 13-3-41-2; Jadeja 3-0-11-0 (2nb)
R. Burns lbw b Bumrah	0
D. Sibley c Rahul b Shami	18
Z. Crawley c Pant b Siraj	27
J. Root lbw b Thakur	64
J. Bairstow lbw b Shami	29
D. Lawrence c Pant b Shami	0
J. Buttler c Pant b Bumrah	0
S. Curran not out	27
O. Robinson c Shami b Thakur	0
S. Broad lbw b Bumrah	4
J. Anderson b Bumrah	1
Extras: (b1, lb4, nb4)	13
Total: (all out, 65.4 overs, 321 mins)	183
Fall of wickets: 1-0 (Burns), 2-42 (Crawley), 3-66 (Sibley), 4-138 (Bairstow), 5-138 (Lawrence), 6-145 (Buttler), 7-155 (Root), 8-155 (Robinson), 9-160 (Broad), 10-183 (Anderson).	
Bowling: Bumrah 20.4-4-46-4 (2nb); Shami 17-2-	
INDIA (1ST INNINGS)	
R. Sharma batting	9
KL Rahul batting	9
Extras: (b1, lb1, nb1)	3
Total: (For no wkt, 13 overs, 55 mins)	21
To bat: C Pujara, V Kohli, A Rahane, R Pant, R Jadeja, S Thakur, J Bumrah, M Shami, M Siraj.	
Bowling: Anderson 3-1-9-0; Broad 5-1-9-0 (1nb); Robinson 4-3-1-0; Curran 1-1-0-0.	
Match position: India are 162 runs behind with all 10 first-innings wickets standing.	
Toss: England	
Umpires: Richard Kettleborough (ENG), Michael Gough (ENG).	
TV umpire: Richard Illingworth (ENG).	

T20 World Cup: India to face Pakistan on October 24

ANI

NEW DELHI

THE much-awaited high-octane clash between India and Pakistan in the upcoming T20 World Cup will take place on October 24 in Dubai.

Speaking to ANI, sources in the know of developments confirmed the date. "Yes, the arch-rivals will clash on October 24." Last month, the International Cricket Council (ICC) had announced the groups for the Men's T20 World Cup 2021 to be hosted by the BCCI in Oman and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) from October 17 to November 14.

Arch-rivals India and Pakistan have been placed in Group 2 of the Super 12s.

This will see the two teams clash in the group stages of the showpiece event. The groups,

selected on the basis of team rankings as of March 20, 2021, see defending champions the West Indies pooled along with former champions England, Australia and South Africa in Group 1 of the Super 12s, with two qualifiers from Round 1 joining them.

Group 2 will comprise of former champions India and Pakistan, New Zealand, Afghanistan and the other two qualifiers from Round 1.

Eight teams will contest the first round including automatic qualifiers Sri Lanka and Bangladesh with the remaining six who booked their spot through the ICC Men's T20 World Cup Qualifier 2019.

Ireland, Netherlands and Namibia join Sri Lanka in Group A, whilst Oman, PNG and Scotland will face Bangladesh in Group B.

Quick read

KKR's Morgan confirms IPL participation

ENGLAND'S limited-overs captain Eoin Morgan has confirmed he will return to lead the Kolkata Knight Riders for the rescheduled second half of the IPL in the UAE. Speaking at Lord's on Tuesday night, Morgan, as per ESPNcricinfo, said: "If some guys go to the IPL, they'll play in similar conditions (to the World Cup). We've a lot of cricket to play between now and then. We've planned on the tour going ahead - that's been part of our planning for a long time now - but equally, given the nature in which we now compete and live our lives, it's not a bad thing for guys to go to the IPL." (ANI)

Hossain excels as Bangladesh trump Australia to take 2-0 lead

ICC

MIRPUR

BANGLADESH handed Australia their second defeat in a row to go 2-0 up in the five-match T20I series with a five-wicket win in the second match at the Sher-e-Bangla Stadium on Wednesday.

Bangladesh are now on the cusp of making history - their first-ever bilateral men's T20I series win over Australia.

Mustafizur Rahman starred with ball with returns of 3/23 while Afif Hossain, who top-scored with a 31-ball 37* for his side, was adjudged Player of the Match.

Earlier, reeling from their first-ever defeat against Bangladesh in the shortest format, Australia opted to bat. And yet again, it wasn't the best of starts for the visitors with the early departure of Alex Carey (13) leaving them on the back-foot. His opening partner Josh Philippe soon followed suit, being bowled by Rahman for 10.

Mitchell Marsh and Moises



Bangladesh's Afif Hossain (R) celebrates with teammate Bangladesh's Nurul Hasan after winning the second Twenty20I against Australia at the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium in Dhaka on Wednesday. (AFP)

Scores: Australia 121/7 (Mitchell Marsh 45, Moises Henriques 30, Mustafizur Rahman 3-23); Bangladesh 123/5 (Afif Hossain 37*, Nurul Hasan 22*, Ashton Agar 1-17).



India supporters look on from the crowd during play on the first day of the first Test between England and India at Trent Bridge in Nottingham on Wednesday. (AFP)

straight to Rahul, leaving the hosts at 66 for three.

While the Indian pacers kept asking questions with the ball constantly moving around, Root seemed to find answers more often than not. He played with soft hands and close to his body, and was quick to latch on to the loose balls.

In the morning, the Indian fast bowlers were up to the task, reducing England to 61 for two at Lunch.

With the sun beating down on Trent Bridge, Root opted to bat on a dry pitch with a decent covering of grass on top.

Bumrah trapped Rory Burns in front with a sharp in-swing in the first over of the match after setting him up

with three out-swingers.

Bumrah bowled his heart out in his six-over spell beating the batsmen multiple times. Shami, who bowled seven overs first up, too troubled Zak Crawley (27 off 68) and Dom Sibley on a number of occasions but as it often happens with him in England, the outside edge eluded him.

After India wasted one review for a caught behind in the same over, Siraj finally induced an inside edge from Crawley's bat and this time skipper Virat Kohli reviewed it successfully.

Sibley survived a close lbw shot off Bumrah at the stroke of lunch but Kohli resisted the temptation for another review and rightly so.

es Henriques would go on to establish a steady stand for the visitors, giving them some confidence of posting a challenging total on the board. But Shakib Al Hasan worked his magic with the ball, plotting the downfall of Henriques on 30.

The middle-order failed to give any sort of support to Marsh, who was again tasked with the effort of embarking on a one-man job of saving the Australian innings from a collapse.

But his dismissal on 45 by Shoriful Islam meant that Australia would stutter home to an under-par score of 121/7 in their 20 overs, which would then require a herculean task from their bowling unit in order to be defended.

In reply, Bangladesh's innings got off to a shaky start with Soumya Sarkar being bowled by Mitchell Starc for nought. Mohammad Naim too could not carry on his good form, which helped him rise in ICC Men's T20I rankings, with Josh Hazlewood knocking off

his stumps. Shakib and Mahedi Hasan then put on a 37-run stand, which solidified the ship for the hosts. But Shakib's dismissal on 26 reignited Australian hopes, as they desperately sought a way back into the match, and the series.

From 58/2 at one stage, Bangladesh slipped to 67/5 in 11.5 overs.

They lost Mahmudullah for a duck in the next over after Shakib's dismissal, and Mahedi was stumped by Wade for 23 two overs later.

Australia had derailed Bangladesh's line-up and they were back in the game, but Hossain and Nurul Hasan (22* runs from 21) had other plans. Together they ensured there weren't any more hiccups on the way to chasing their target. They batted with caution and stitched an important, unbeaten 56-run stand, taking their side across the line with eight balls to spare.

The two sides will meet again at the same venue for the third match on Friday.