

SPORTS CAFE

Tvesa, Diksha to lead Indian challenge in Spain

BARCELONA: Tvesa Malik and Diksha Dagar will lead a large group of Indian women golfers as the Ladies European Tour caravan reaches Spain for the Estrella Damm Ladies Open presented by Catalunya this week.

Women's football team arrives in UAE for friendly

DUBAI: The Indian women's team safely reached Dubai, UAE, on Thursday for their upcoming friendlies in the UAE and Bahrain, which get underway on October 2.

Nordics call to review women's bikini uniform

COPENHAGEN: The five Nordic countries urged the International Handball Federation to review uniform rules in accordance with gender equality after the Norway team was punished for wearing shorts instead of the mandated bikini uniform.

Athletics investigators take over Belarus case

MONACO: An investigation into two Belarus team officials who tried to force sprinter Krystsina Tsimanouskaya on a flight from the Tokyo Olympics will now be run by track and field authorities.

Weightlifter Kostova banned for doping again

LAUSANNE: Former world champion weightlifter Boyanka Kostova was banned for eight years for doping on Thursday after making her comeback from an earlier sanction for performance-enhancing drug use at the Olympics.

Soccer head suspended for sexual harassment

RIO DE JANEIRO: The president of the Brazilian soccer confederation was suspended for 21 months as a sexual harassment case against him proceeds.

Easy for rop-seeded Rublev in San Diego Open

SAN DIEGO: Top-seeded Andrey Rublev broke to begin each set and was on his way to overpowering wild-card entry Brandon Nakashima 6-2 6-1 in the second round of the San Diego Open.

Barca's grim reality

AGENCIES / Lisbon

The Portuguese, Benfica side beat Barcelona 3-0, for the first time since the sides' first meeting in the 1961 European Cup final, in the Champions League, at the Estádio do SL Benfica, here on Wednesday.

It was an excellent start for Benfica when Darwin Nunez fired in before three minutes had elapsed.

The visitors pressed for an equaliser, Luuk de Jong passing up two presentable chances, but always looked vulnerable at the back.

Nunez hit the post before Rafa Silva reacted smartly to steer in the second and Nunez later slotted in from the spot.

Ronaldinho marked his record 178th UEFA Champions League appearance with the late winner, as Manchester United edged out Villarreal 2-1 in another keenly contested tie, at the Old Trafford.

The visitors had the better of the first half and David de Gea produced a string of fine saves to deny Arnaut Danjuma, Paco Alcacer and Yeremi Pino, before Alcacer did grab the opener, touching home Danjuma's cross.



SANDWICHED... Barcelona's Dutch forward Memphis Depay (C) vies for the ball against two Benfica defenders Lucas Verissimo (L) and Nicolas Otamendi (L) during the match

heading for a point until Ronaldo pounced deep into added time to secure their first win in the group.

Portuguese outfit Benfica stun Barca 3-0; Ronaldo strikes late for Manchester United; Juventus earn hard-fought win over defending champions Chelsea 1-0

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The holders dominated for large swathes in Turin but struggled to fashion chances and always looked susceptible on the break.

It was yet another demoralising loss, as struggling Barcelona faces a grim future in the Champions League.

KEY STATISTIC

Nunez's goal was Benfica's first against Barcelona in 426 minutes, and their first ever against the Spanish side in Lisbon.

Other winners

- Bayern 5-0 Dynamo Kyiv
Atalanta 1-0 Young Boys
Wolfsburg 1-1 Sevilla
Salzburg 2-1 LOSC
Zenit 4-0 Malmö

Junior shooters on target

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA / Peru

Twelve Indian shooters qualified for the final round in their respective events on the opening day of the Junior World Championship in Lima, here on Thursday.

Qualification rounds of six individual events, all Olympic disciplines, where India is expected to fetch at least four gold medals in the corresponding team events.

Rudranksh Patil, Dhanush Srikanth and Paarth Makhija made it to the junior men's 10m Air Rifle finals with scores of 630.2, 629.6 and 629.2 respectively in the qualification round, finishing overall second, third and fourth with top eight making the cut.

Similarly in the junior women's 10m Air Rifle event, Mehuli Ghosh led a trio of Indians into the finals. Her



630.9 was overall third while Ramita shot 629.8 and Nisha Kanwar 629.1 to make it through in fourth and fifth positions respectively. In the junior men's 10m Air Pistol, Naveen topped the standings with a score of 584 to make the finals cut.

Olympic stars call it quits

PTI / New Delhi

Olympic bronze medal-winning Indian hockey star Birendra Lakra on Thursday announced that he is quitting the game with immediate effect, hours after his teammate Rupinder Pal Singh announced his retirement.

"The Odisha star has announced his retirement from the Indian national team. Happy Retirement, Birendra Lakra," HI tweeted.

Hours earlier, Lakra's teammate drag-flicker Rupinder, who played a starring role in the historic bronze-winning Tokyo Olympics campaign, announced his surprise international retirement "to make way for youngsters".

Rio boxing bouts under scanner even as AIBA talks tough

PTI / New Delhi

More than 10 bouts in the 2016 Rio Olympics boxing competition were manipulated for "money" and other "perceived benefits", an independent investigation has revealed, prompting the International Boxing Association (AIBA) to promise a tough selection process for referees and judges at the upcoming men's world championship.

The first phase report of the McLaren Global Sport Solutions' independent investigation into boxing, which was accessed by PTI, has been handed to AIBA and revealed that "a system for the manipulation of bouts by officials existed at Rio". In all, 14 bouts

came under the scanner, including two finals.

"It was a complete reversal of Santa Clause's myth of the naughty and the nice. The naughty were gifted an appointment at Rio because they were willing, or under pressure to support any request for manipulation, while the nice were left out," the report noted referring to the dubious appointment of officials at the Games.

The damning findings of the investigation stated that conspiracy to manipulate Rio results dated back as far back as before the London Olympics of 2012 and that a trial run was carried out during the qualifying events for the 2016 edition.

Qatar to host F1 in Nov 2023

AP / Doha

Qatar will host a Formula One race for the first time in November and for 10 years from 2023. Qatar takes the remaining slot left vacant on this year's reshuffled calendar. The race will start under floodlights at 6 p.m. local time on Nov. 21 at the Losail International Circuit.

As the 20th of 22 races this season, it will be followed by the inaugural Saudi Arabian GP in Jeddah on Dec. 5 and the season-ending Abu Dhabi GP on Dec. 12. "There was a strong will from Qatar to be helpful to F1, and in the course of this process, the vision for a longer partnership was discussed and agreed," F1 said in a statement on Thursday.

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