

Sports

Photo of the Day



Daniil Ivanov performs in Russia. — Photo taken from www.redbullcontentpool.com

Maradona death probe to include nurses, psychologist

BUENOS AIRES: A psychologist and two nurses who helped care for football legend Diego Maradona before his death have been added to a widening involuntary manslaughter probe, a judicial source told local media Monday. Maradona died of a heart attack outside Buenos Aires on November 25, weeks after undergoing brain surgery on a blood clot.

His psychiatrist Agustina Cosachov and heart surgeon Leopoldo Luque are already under investigation, as they were treating Maradona before his death. The three people newly under investigation must appear before prosecutors this week, the judicial source told local media. Investigators are trying to determine if any of the five people who had Maradona in their care were in any way negligent. Maradona was suffering from liver, kidney and cardiovascular disorders, but there were no signs of alcohol or narcotics consumption, according to his autopsy.

Luque, the surgeon, in November responded to the launch of an investigation for involuntary manslaughter by saying he did "everything he could, up to the impossible" for an "unmanageable" patient. A first autopsy conducted the day Maradona died found he had suffered from liquid on the lungs with acute heart failure brought on by a disease of the heart muscles that makes it harder to pump blood. — AFP

No hugs or high-fives: Olympic organizers unveil athlete rulebook

Athletes tested at least once every four days

TOKYO: No socializing, no handshakes and definitely no hugs — that's what athletes at the coronavirus-postponed Tokyo Olympics can expect this summer, according to a virus rulebook released yesterday by organizers. The 33-page document — the last in a series of "playbooks" drawn up in a bid to ensure the Games can go ahead safely — also warns athletes they could be kicked out of their events if they break strict anti-virus rules.

Under the guidelines, athletes will be tested for the virus at least once every four days, and will be barred from competing if they return a confirmed positive test. Their time in Japan will be "minimized to reduce the risk of infection," and those staying at the Olympic Village will be expected to "avoid unnecessary forms of physical contact." Organizers said yesterday that they still plan to hand out around 150,000 free condoms to athletes, but the new rulebook urges them to "limit your contact with other people as much as possible."

"If you have been to the Games before, we know this experience will be different in a number of ways," the guidebook warns. "For all Games participants, there will be some conditions and constraints that will require your flexibility and understanding."

The guide for athletes and team officials is set to be revised in April and again in June, and follows the release of handbooks for sports officials, media and broadcasters last week. The document lays out further detail on virus testing for athletes, with a

negative test required within 72 hours of travelling to Japan and again immediately upon arrival.

There will be no quarantine for athletes, and they will still be allowed to attend training camps in Japan before the Games begin, but all movements must be rigorously logged and the use of public transport is subject to permission. Athletes "must not visit gyms, tourist areas, shops, restaurants or bars" and can only go to "official Games venues and limited additional locations."

They are also advised to wear masks at all times except when they are competing, training, eating, sleeping or outside in open space. The virus rulebooks are being released as organizers, Olympic officials and Japan's government works to build confidence that the Games can go ahead safely despite a surge in infections globally.

While vaccinations are recommended for athletes, they will not be a requirement to participate in the Games. Support for hosting the virus-postponed event remains low in Japan, with around 80 percent of Japanese backing cancellation or further postponement — something organizers have ruled out.

The rollout of the virus rules has been overshadowed by a row over sexist comments made by Tokyo 2020 chief Yoshiro Mori, who faces calls to resign after claiming women speak too much in meetings. So far, he has apologized but declined to step down. The Games are due to open in Tokyo on July 23. — AFP



TOKYO: In this file photo a large size Olympic rings symbol is seen at "Tokyo Waterfront" in the waters of Odaiba Marine Park on August 6, 2020, while being transferred back to the factory where it was manufactured for a safety inspection and to receive maintenance. — AFP

LeBron shines as injury-hit Lakers leave it late

LOS ANGELES: LeBron James scored a 28-point triple double as the injury-depleted Los Angeles Lakers bagged a fifth consecutive win on Monday in a 119-112 overtime defeat of the Oklahoma City Thunder. For a second straight game, James and the Lakers were forced to dig deep in overtime, overturning a double-digit deficit early in the fourth quarter to grind out their 19th win of the season.

With the Lakers missing Anthony Davis and Alex Caruso through injury, Oklahoma City led for long periods with Shai Gilgeous-Alexander (29 points) and Darius Bazley (21) outstanding. Oklahoma City led 90-79 with just over 10 minutes remaining but saw their lead cut in half at 107-102 with two minutes left.

An 8-0 run put the Lakers in charge with just seconds of regulation left before Gilgeous-Alexander nailed three free throws to tie the game and force overtime. The Lakers reasserted themselves in the extra period however, with Montrezl Harrell, Dennis Schroder and Wesley Matthews putting them 117-110 ahead.

A James slam-dunk made it 119-112 to seal the Lakers win. James finished with 14 rebounds and 12 assists to complete his third triple double of the season. He was backed with 19 points from Schroder and 21 from Harrell off the bench. Matthews also delivered a big contribution off the bench with 16 points.

A relieved James said the Lakers needed to improve their urgency after being forced to come from behind. "We've got to be more conscientious how we start games," James said. "Getting down double digits is not something we want to have. Our pace was very slow at the start of the game, but we



LOS ANGELES: LeBron James of the Los Angeles Lakers shoots against the Oklahoma City Thunder in the first half at Staples Center on Monday in Los Angeles, California. — AFP

understand that and we know what we need to do to change that."

Bucks roll on

In Denver, Khris Middleton and Giannis Antetokounmpo led the way as the Milwaukee Bucks notched a fifth straight victory with a 125-112 defeat of the Nuggets. Antetokounmpo finished with 30 points and nine rebounds as Middleton added 29 points with 12 assists and eight rebounds.

Bryn Forbes had 15 points while Brook Lopez and Donte DiVincenzo added 13 points apiece. Elsewhere in the Western Conference on Monday, Devin Booker poured in 36 points as the Phoenix Suns overpowered the Cleveland Cavaliers 119-113. Mikal Bridges added 22 points for Phoenix with Deandre Ayton adding 15 against a Cavaliers side who slumped to a fourth straight defeat.

In San Antonio, Stephen Curry led the scoring with 32 points including six three-pointers but it was not enough to stop the

Golden State Warriors falling to a 105-100 reverse against the Spurs. San Antonio improved to 14-10 with the win and are now fifth in the Western Conference standings. The Spurs recorded a third straight victory thanks to 27 points from Dejounte Murray while DeMar DeRozan added 21 points.

In Dallas, the Mavericks withstood a late fightback from the Minnesota Timberwolves before completing a 127-122 win. The Timberwolves, bottom of the Western Conference with only six wins against 18 defeats, looked to be on course for a crushing defeat after trailing by 20 points early in the fourth quarter. But Minnesota whittled the deficit to just three points at 120-123 with 27.7 seconds before the rally faltered.

Elsewhere Monday, LaMelo Ball had a hot hand with seven three-pointers in a 24-point tally as the Charlotte Hornets routed the Houston Rockets 119-94. Six Hornets players finished in double figures as the visitors slid to defeat. — AFP

England thrash India by 227 runs in first Test

CHENNAI: Joe Root led England to an emphatic 227-run win over India in the opening Test yesterday, taking the upper hand in their bid for a rare series victory against the hosts on their patch. Paceman James Anderson took the key wickets in a magical spell as India were dismissed for 192 on the final day while chasing a record 420 to win in Chennai. Spinner Jack Leach claimed four wickets.

"It is a very good victory but in the scheme of the series, it is just the start," Root told reporters. "India are a brilliantly good team, especially in these conditions and a proud nation as well. They will come back hard at us, but to sit here 1-0 up is really good."

In the opener, the England captain outfoxed India, who were on a high after their sensational series triumph in Australia last month, with his bat and his tactics. He became the first batsman to score a double century in his 100th Test as his 218 guided England to 578 in the first innings. He was also the top scorer with 40 in the second innings of 178.

Root acknowledged that it had been a "crucial toss" to win in order to make the big first innings. "But from that point we had to follow through and make the most of a very good wicket. We did that very well and posted a good score," he said. "To take 20 wickets in very alien conditions, to our bowlers is huge credit." The win has taken England to the top of the World Test Championship table as India drop to fourth. The series will decide who will meet New Zealand in the final at Lord's in June.

Anderson masterclass

India were hanging on to the chase after Leach struck early with the wicket of overnight batsman Cheteshwar Pujara for 15, and Anderson using his reverse swing on the wearing pitch to claim three wickets. Shubman Gill completed his third Test fifty in just his fourth game before Anderson took away his off-stump. Three balls later he cleaned up Ajinkya Rahane for nought.

Anderson got India's first innings hero Pant for 11 and spinner Dom Bess chipped in with the wicket of Washington Sundar for nought as India slipped to 117-6. Root hailed the bowler, who has now taken 611 test wickets, for the way "he goes about things, challenging himself constantly and getting better all the time" even at the age of 38. "He's a great role model to the rest of the group."

India captain Virat Kohli fought a lone battle, reaching his 24th Test fifty before being bowled by Ben Stokes for 72 on a delivery that stayed low. Leach and fast bowler Jofra Archer combined to run through the tail. "England played far more professionally," said Kohli, whose side were all out for 337 in the first innings. "England were ready for the grind and were far more equipped than we were. With the bat as well as the ball, we left a lot of things to be desired."

England have recorded five series wins in India since 1933. They last won under Alastair Cook in 2012-13 in a series when Root made his Test debut. They lost the last series in 2016. Root came into this series on the back of match-winning scores of 228 and 186 against Sri Lanka last month. The second Test begins Saturday with spectators allowed into Chennai's M A Chidambaram Stadium — a first for Indian cricket since the coronavirus pandemic outbreak. — AFP