

Sports

Pogba 'back home' at Man Utd in world-record transfer



Chinese reeling after loss of 'precious' gymnastics team crown



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RIO DE JANEIRO: USA's Lilly King (L) celebrates with USA's Katie Meili after she broke the Olympic record to win the Women's 100m Breaststroke Final during the swimming event at the Rio 2016 Olympic Games at the Olympic Aquatics Stadium in Rio de Janeiro. (Inset) Russia's Yulia Efimova cries after she placed second in the Women's 100m Breaststroke Final during the swimming event. — AFP

KING BEATS TAINTED RUSSIAN SWIMMER TO GOLD



SWIMMING

RIO DE JANEIRO: Doping tensions in Olympic swimming erupted after American Lilly King beat tainted Russian rival Yulia Efimova and US superstar Michael Phelps demanded life bans for swimmers with a drug record. Booing broke out in the swimming arena on Monday as Efimova twice convicted of doping but securing an Olympic place on a last-ditch appeal-lined up to challenge the women's 100m breaststroke final. King narrowly beat her then slammed her rival, stoking the controversy over revelations of Russian state-sponsored doping.

"I think it just proved that you can compete clean and still come out on top," King said of her win. She had also criticized Efimova before the race. Clearly devastat-

ed, Efimova burst into tears after the race. Russia sprang to her defense, with Sports Minister Vitaly Mutko describing her as a "good girl," according to Moscow's R-Sport news agency. The attacks were described as a "terrible ordeal."

The red-faced International Olympic Committee (IOC) sought to calm the choppy waters, saying the Games were about "respecting the right of others to compete."

But King was joined in the war of words by US legend Phelps and Frenchman Camille Lacourt among others who lashed out at a Chinese winner. Phelps, who will attempt the astonishing feat of winning his 20th Olympic gold medal later yesterday, launched a broadside at drug abusers and encouraged others to speak out.

Phelps said those punished for doping should face permanent exile from the sport. "I think you're going to see a lot of people speaking up more," the all-time highest Olympic medal winner said. China's Sun Yang, who

won the 200m freestyle on Monday, came under fierce attack from a furious Lacourt.

"Sun Yang, he pisses purple," an enraged Lacourt who came fifth in the 100m backstroke told French radio. "When I see the 200m podium I want to be sick." Sun has already been at the center of a verbal battle with Australia's Mack Horton who beat Sun in the 400m race.

The Sun-Horton dispute has turned into a social media war. China's state-controlled Global Times newspaper called Australia a former British "offshore prison" because of Horton's "drug cheat" remarks about Sun.

THREE BANS

Efimova sought to defend her doping record. "I once made a mistake and served my ban," she said, referring to a 16-month suspension incurred after testing positive for a banned steroid in 2014.

She was given a provisional ban this year after testing positive for meldonium but that was overturned in May by the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS).

Following the Richard McLaren report for the World Anti-Doping Agency, Efimova was suspended again. The report implicated the Russian government in doping. But another appeal to the CAS last week let Efimova and six other Russian swimmers into Rio. The United States and other western countries had wanted a complete ban on Russian athletes.

The row largely overshadowed a day that saw a first gold medal for the Brazilian hosts. It was won by judoka Rafaela Silva, who grew up in Rio's notorious City of God slum. Silva upset world No. 1 Sumiya Dorjsuren in the 57kg final for a hugely welcome win for Brazil after apathy and protests in the run-up to South America's first Olympics.

China got more medals in diving, where Chen Aisen and Lin Yue won the men's 10m platform. China finished the day with five gold medals in total. Russia took gold and silver in the women's sabre fencing as Yana Egorian beat Sofiya Velikaya, who again suffered heartbreak after also losing the 2012 Olympic final. — AFP

AUSTRALIA CLINCH WOMEN'S SEVENS GOLD



RUGBY

RIO DE JANEIRO: Australia became the first Olympic champions in women's rugby sevens when they ran out convincing 24-17 winners over trans-Tasman neighbours New Zealand in the gold medal final at the Deodoro Stadium in Rio on Monday.

The world series champions went behind early in the match but unanswered tries from Emma Tonegato, Evania Pelite, Ellia Green and Charlotte Caslick gave them a lead New Zealand were unable to overcome. New Zealand, who had two tries from the outstanding Kayla McAlister and one at the death from Portia Woodman, performed a tearful haka in front of the crowd at the end of the match, their dreams of gold shattered.

It was the spell that Woodman, the top try scorer in the tournament with 10, spent in the sin-bin for a deliberate knock down around halftime that probably ended those hopes.

Without question the best two of the 12

teams in the tournament, both New Zealand and Australia had come through scares at the hands of the United States on Sunday to stamp their authority on the semi-finals.

After a tight and physical start to the final, McAlister forced her way over in the corner for her sixth try of the tournament to give New Zealand an early lead before Tonegato hit back with her seventh.

Australia had started to find holes in the New Zealand defence and when Woodman was sent off for two minutes, first Pelite then speedster Green benefited from the extra space to give the women in green and gold a 17-5 lead just after halftime.

Charlotte Caslick then nipped over for another converted try to further extend Australia's lead and although McAlister grabbed her second try, two converted scores for New Zealand in little more than a minute was always going to be a big ask.

Woodman did finally weave her way over to score under the posts but the hooter had sounded and Australia were already well into their celebrations when Tyla Nathan-Wong took the conversion.

Canada earlier took the bronze with a 33-10 victory over Britain. — Reuters



RIO DE JANEIRO: New Zealand's Sarah Goss, right, is tackled by Australia's Alicia Quirk during the women's rugby sevens gold medal match against New Zealand at the Summer Olympics in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, Monday. — AP

IRON LADY IN 'GREAT SHAPE' AS SHE SNARES SECOND GOLD



SWIMMING

RIO DE JANEIRO: Hungary's Katinka Hosszu said she felt in "great shape" on Monday as she powered to her second gold medal of the Rio Olympics-and stayed on track for three more. Hosszu, dubbed the "Iron Lady" for her renowned stamina, won the 100m backstroke in 58.45sec, ahead of American Kathleen Baker, as Canadian Kylie Masse and China's Fu Yuanhui finished in a dead heat for bronze. Hosszu, who returned little more than an hour later to book her spot in Tuesday's 200m medley final, said she wasn't feeling any pressure from her heavy schedule, which also includes the 200m backstroke and 200m butterfly. On Saturday, the 27-year-old shattered the 400m individual medley world record for her first ever Olympic title.

"I was already very relaxed before the 400IM which was surprising for me," said Hosszu, who arrived in Rio in search of

her first Olympic medal. "I have been racing so much in the past four years that that was kind of my goal that when we get to Rio it would kind of be second nature and it really feels that way.

"I know I've done the 400IM and the 100 back a million times and now I'm fresh and in great shape," she added. Hosszu was sixth at the turn with world champion Emily Seebohm of Australia leading. She roared home as Seebohm failed not only to improve on the silver she won in London but faded to finish a disappointing seventh. "I can't believe I won the 100 back," Hosszu said. "I dreamt about it, but I could have done eighth, it's so close."

Seebohm, swimming in unfavorable lane seven after a lackluster semi-final performance, was left looking for answers after coming into the Games with the top time of 2016. "I definitely wanted to take it out (fast) and obviously it hurt a bit on the back end," she said. "I did a fantastic warm-up. I couldn't have done anything differently. "My semi needed to be better so I could be in an inside lane and have someone to push me," she concluded. — AFP