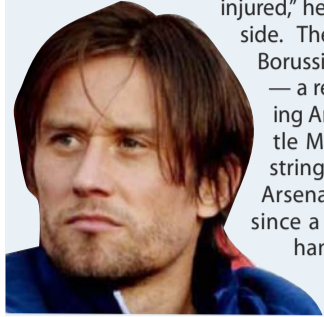


CZECH MIDFIELDER ROSICKY RETURNS TO SPARTA PRAGUE

PRAGUE: Czech midfielder Tomas Rosicky signed a two-year contract with Sparta Prague yesterday, returning to his first club following the end of his contract with Arsenal. "I'm very happy to return to Sparta. I've never forgotten where I got my start," the 35-year-old told reporters. "I'd like to thank Arsenal for everything. They did an incredible job of taking care of me when I was injured," he added about his 10-year stint with the London side. The Czech Republic captain left Sparta in 2001 for Borussia Dortmund for 14.5 million euros (\$16 million) — a record transfer sum for a Czech player-before joining Arsenal in 2006. The veteran player dubbed "the little Mozart" has seen his star career hampered by a string of injuries. Rosicky played only 19 minutes for Arsenal last season because of injuries plaguing him since a Euro qualifier in Iceland in June 2015. A fresh hamstring injury at Euro 2016 then forced him to miss the rest of the tournament. — AFP



REMY LOANED TO CRYSTAL PALACE BY CHELSEA

LONDON: France international striker Loic Remy will spend the 2016-17 season on loan at Crystal Palace from Chelsea, the two Premier League clubs announced yesterday. Remy, 29, has been used sparingly since joining Chelsea from Queens Park Rangers in August 2014, making 46 appearances and scoring 12 goals. The move to Selhurst Park reunites him with Palace manager Alan Pardew, who was Remy's manager during the 2013-14 season at Newcastle United. "This is a very good chance for me and a big opportunity," Remy told the Palace website. "It was very important to know Alan Pardew as he is a very good manager and I am happy to be here." Remy won the Premier League title and the League Cup in his first season at Chelsea. But Chelsea's reliance on Diego Costa meant he rarely featured last season and he would have faced extra competition from new signing Michy Batshuayi had he remained at Stamford Bridge. The former Lyon, Nice and Marseille striker has won 31 caps for France, scoring seven goals, but has not played for his country in nearly two years. "Loic has been a target of mine throughout this transfer window and I'm delighted the deal has been done," Pardew said. — AFP

ARSENAL SEAL MOVE FOR SPANISH STRIKER PEREZ

LONDON: Arsenal have completed a deal to sign Spanish striker Lucas Perez from Deportivo La Coruna, the Premier League club announced yesterday. Arsenal did not disclose either the length of Perez's contract or the transfer fee, but British media reports said the 27-year-old had cost around 17 million pounds (\$22.3 million, 20 million euros). Arsenal are also believed to be close to signing Germany defender Shkodran Mustafi from Valencia for around 35 million pounds. Discussing Perez, Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger told the club website: "He's not only a goalscorer, he's a guy who combines well with partners, who can give a final ball and makes good runs. He's got a good eye for goal and had an outstanding season last year." Arsenal are reported to have seen off competition from Premier League rivals Everton to secure Perez's signature. Perez, who is uncapped, scored 19 goals for Deportivo last season, including 17 in La Liga. He also scored the winning goal in their 2-1 win over Eibar on the opening day of this season. He began his career with Atletico Madrid's C team and has also played for Rayo Vallecano, Ukrainian side Karpaty Lviv and Greek club PAOK. — AFP



VANCOUVER: Man Kaur, 100, of India, competes in the 100-meter track and field event at the Americas Masters Games in Vancouver, British Columbia, Monday. — AP

100-YEAR-OLD RUNNER FROM INDIA INSPIRES AT US MASTERS GAMES

VANCOUVER: Man Kaur from India needed almost a minute-and-a-half to cross the finish line in the 100-meter dash, but she still picked up a gold medal Monday at the American Masters Games. That's because the 100-year-old Kaur was the only female competitor in her age category at the competition for older athletes.

When she crossed the finish line in Vancouver, her competitors — many of them in their 70s and 80s — were there to cheer her on.

Kaur's energy and drive to compete have become an inspiration to participants in the unique international event for athletes over 30. "When she wins, she goes back to India, and she's excited to tell others, 'I have won so many medals from this country,'" said her son Gurdev Singh, 78, translating for his mother. "Winning makes her happy."

After Kaur finished the sprint in one minute and 21 seconds, she stood smiling with her hands raised in the air. Asked how she felt, she breathed heavily and clutched a bottle of water, unable to speak. Earlier, she won gold medals in the javelin and shot put. Singh, 78, who also is competing in the Games, said he encouraged his mother to start running at age 93 because he knew she could become a star.

"I asked her, 'You have no problem, no knee problem, no heart problem, you should start running,'" he recalled. Kaur has now won more than 20 medals in Masters Games across the globe. While practicing in her home of Chandigarh, she goes out every evening to run five or 10 short distances, said Singh.

Singh said his mother believes in promoting running to other older women. "She encourages them, old ladies, that they should run, they should not eat wrong foods, and they should encourage their children also to take part in the Games."

Charmaine Crooks, a five-time Olympian who won a silver medal for Canada in the women's 4x400-meter relay in 1984, serves as an athlete ambassador for the Masters Games. She praised Kaur's "dynamic spirit."

"I know that it's inspired me. Hey, I've got almost 50 more years to go, right?" Crooks said. "She's inspiring everyone, young and old." The World Masters Games take place every four years, with regional games in between. The Americas Masters Games in Vancouver is the first summer regional games in North America, Crooks said.

The average age of the athletes is 49, and there's one man who is even older than Kaur — 101-year-old Nihal Gill of Richmond, British Columbia. — AP



VANCOUVER: Man Kaur, wears the gold medals she won in shot put and javelin events before competing in the 100-meter track and field event at the Americas Masters Games in Vancouver. — AP

CHARGERS SIGN ROOKIE BOSA TO 4-YEAR DEAL

SAN DIEGO: Defensive end Joey Bosa ended his monthlong holdout Monday when he signed a four-year contract with the San Diego Chargers. The team announced the signing five days after the two sides went public in their nasty spat over payment of Bosa's \$17 million signing bonus and whether the contract would have off-set language. The signing also came a day after San Diego's defense played poorly in a 23-10 exhibition loss at Minnesota.

"I'm happy to be here and there is no animosity between us," Bosa said. "It's just a matter of business and I'm happy to have it out of the way. I am very relieved. I knew this was going to get done. I was surprised how long it took. Of course I would have loved to have been out there with my teammates but the NFL is a business." "We just wanted what was fair and what people in that position got the last four or five years," Bosa added.

Coach Mike McCoy said he heard of Bosa agreeing to terms before Sunday's game and said he had to "keep it to myself." "He's here to help us win and I told the team he's here to help us win," McCoy said.

"Regardless of when he got here, let's go." The Chargers threatened last Wednesday to reduce their offer to Bosa under the assumption he wouldn't be ready to play a full season. Bosa, the No. 3 overall pick out of Ohio State, was the last rookie to sign. The Chargers said last week that they had given Bosa's agents their best offer and that it was rejected. Brian Ayrault, Bosa's main representative, replied with his own statement saying the team had manipulated the facts and that going public would not strengthen the team's relationship with the player.

There was no immediate indication of what led to the deal getting done.

Bosa said he's capable of playing in the opener on Sept. 11 at the Kansas City Chiefs. "I'm obviously a step behind the other guys this late into the game," Bosa said.

"I trust the coaches and they obviously have a plan ready for me. I'm just not sure what that is." Bosa also discussed his mother's involvement in



SAN DIEGO: File photo, San Diego Chargers rookie defensive end Joey Bosa trains during an NFL football rookie training camp in San Diego. Bosa's holdout has overshadowed everything else going on with the Chargers, who went public with the contract dispute. — AP

the public side of the contract dispute. Earlier this month, Cheryl Bosa posted a remark toward the Chargers on Facebook. In a reply to someone frustrated by the impasse, she wrote: "It bums me out for him so much."

"Wish we pulled an Eli Manning on draft day." On Thursday, Cheryl Bosa retweeted an article critical of the Chargers and added the comment, "The Chargers were petty and terrible even before they tried to stiff Joey Bosa."

"What do you expect a mom to do?" Bosa said. "She loves me, she wants what's best for me and she made a dumb decision, like I have before, saying something she shouldn't have said on social media. She honestly had no idea it

was public, she thought, because she was sending it to somebody else. Leave it to a mom to mess up on Facebook." Bosa's father, John, is a former first-round draft pick of the Miami Dolphins. He held out for 41 days as a rookie.

Bosa missed 31 days but said he followed a stringent workout regimen while away. "I was doing everything I could to be ready when I showed up here," Bosa said. "I think I've put myself in the best possible shape I could be in."

The Bosa spat came amid the Chargers' push for a ballot initiative that will ask voters for a \$1.1 billion subsidy via an increase in the hotel tax to help pay for a new stadium and convention center downtown. — AP



RIO DE JANEIRO: Documents belonging to Ireland's Patrick Hickey, a member of the International Olympic Committee's executive board, that include his Olympics' credential and passport are displayed alongside Olympic tickets during a police press conference in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, Aug 17, 2016. — AP

IRISH CHIEF HICKEY FREED PENDING TICKET PROBE

RIO DE JANEIRO: A Brazilian court granted conditional release from jail Monday to top Irish Olympic official Patrick Hickey due to ill health while he is investigated over an alleged ticket scam. Rio de Janeiro Judge Fernando de Almeida agreed in a ruling to "revoke the preventive imprisonment ordered against the patient Patrick Joseph Hickey," but ordered him not to leave Brazil.

Hickey, 71, is the highest-profile suspect in an alleged scam to illegally sell tickets to this month's Rio Olympic Games for thousands of dollars. Prosecutors have estimated the profits from the black market sales at \$3 million.

Hickey is an International Olympic Committee member and head of the Olympic Council of Ireland and the European Olympic Committees. He was arrested at dawn on August 17 at a luxury Rio hotel where he was staying with other IOC members.

He was held in Rio's Bangu maximum security prison. "It does not seem that his release will pose any obstacle or risk for public order or criminal proceedings," de Almeida ruled. Hickey had still not left jail by early evening Monday,

the prisons service told AFP in an email. His lawyers had requested his release "given the patient's critical state of health," court documents showed. Hickey's lawyer Anne Marie James said last week that he has a "serious heart condition."

JAIL CONCERNS

Hickey spent one night in a Rio hospital after his detention, which stunned the International Olympic Committee (IOC) at the height of the Games. His family urged the Irish government to "urgently intervene in addressing the extremely worrying issues surrounding his arrest and detention," in a statement last week via their lawyer.

James said the family were "gravely concerned" about the manner of Hickey's arrest, his detention in a high-security prison without charge, his health and his right to a fair hearing.

On August 26, more than a week after his detention, she said Hickey had still not been charged nor been able to apply for bail. She said the family believe he has been through a "degrading and humiliating ordeal."

IOC president Thomas Bach said Hickey had the right to be considered innocent until proven guilty. The Olympic Council of Ireland has commissioned an independent review of its handling of Rio 2016 ticketing arrangements.

IRISH, BRITISH SUSPECTS

The courts on Saturday provisionally released another Irish suspect: Kevin Mallon, director of British hospitality firm THG. Mallon was arrested on August 5 and was also held at Bangu.

Police said they seized hundreds of tickets from Mallon. Mallon was caught in a hotel in the heart of the Olympic zone, selling tickets to a group of buyers.

Tickets, including for the Rio opening ceremony, with a face value of about \$1,400 were offered for sale at \$8,000, police said. On August 21, they seized passports from three other Irish Olympic officials suspected in the scam: Kevin Kilty, Dermot Henihan and Stephen Martin.

Police have issued arrest warrants for several other suspects including Marcus Evans, a British businessman who is the chairman of the Ipswich football club in England. — AFP