

US EAGLES RIP CHILE TO SEIZE AMERICAS TOURNEY LEAD

WASHINGTON: Mike Te'o scored two tries and the United States routed Chile 64-0 Saturday to seize the lead of the Americas Rugby Championship over Argentina by a lone bonus point.

The South American side took a 24-21 road victory at Uruguay that left them level at 2-0 and one drawn with the Americans, who were deadlocked 35-35 with Argentina in their opening match.

But the 10-try outburst by the US Eagles against Chile earned an extra

bonus point in the overall standings, giving them a 13-12 edge with two matches remaining in the round-robin intercontinental showdown. Canada remained third at 2-1 on 10 points with a 52-25 home triumph over winless Brazil, getting two tries each from Lucas Rumball and Clay Panga.

"To get one try was amazing but to get two was just a bonus," Panga said. "It was an unreal feeling. It's a great testament to how hard the boys worked." Te'o,

from the US Sevens squad, scored in the 64th and 77th minutes and fly half J.P. Eloff kicked seven conversions and scored his first international try, one of six Eagles to achieve that feat in the rout.

"The performance is more important (than the margin)," US coach John Mitchell said. "I think we're still naive in terms of game management, but these are problems that have solutions and we're dealing with a very youthful team."

Also scoring tries for the Americans

were Chris Baumann, Nic Edwards, Joe Taufete'e, Lorenzo Thomas, Jake Anderson, Chad London and Luke Hume. "For me, it was a good performance but maybe too much individualism," Mitchell said. "Sometimes that can happen in a game like this. At times the execution wasn't on, but if you keep going to space there's always going to be a high probability of scoring."

Canada also had tries from Paul Ciulini, Mike Hamson and Ray Barkwill and 13

points kicking from Andrew Ferguson in keeping pace with the leaders. Marcos Bollini, Juan Capiello and Franco Cuaranta scored tries for Argentina, which also had two conversions from Juan Novillo and a conversion and penalty kick by reserve Pedro Mercerat. The scene shifts to South America as the five-week event continues next weekend with the United States at Brazil and Uruguay at Chile on Saturday and Canada visiting Argentina today. — AFP

CHAN WINS GOLD AT FOUR CONTINENTS

TAIPEI: The 2014 Olympic silver medalist Patrick Chan of Canada claimed the men's title at the Four Continents Figure Skating Championships in Taipei yesterday, despite a stressful start to the competition.

Skating to the music of Chopin, Chan kicked off his free skating programme with a quad toeloop/triple toeloop combination and added two triple axel, among others, to bring his total to 290.21 points.

The three-time World champion, 25, admitted he had been "very worried and stressed" when he finished fifth after Friday's short programme, which he attributed to "being jet-lagged and the ice not being perfect."

"But finally today it seemed that everything, my body, the ice, just felt just right and I could finally just relax and enjoy the programme," Chan told a press conference after his victory.

"I just let everything go and focus on myself and not focus on the other skaters. I think it paid off today," added Chan, who was competing in his first Four Continents after taking a one-year break.

China's Jin Boyang, the leader of the short programme, finished runner-up with a total of 289.83 points in his first Four Continents competition.

The 18-year-old also became the first skater to land four quads—a quad lutz, a quad salchow and two quad toeloop—in an international competition. "In my previous competition which was a domestic competition I also landed four quads in my free skate, so it gave me confidence coming into this competition," he said.

"I think I've done better today so I am very happy with this." China's Yan Han took the bronze medal while Japan's Shoma Uno and Takahito Mura ranked fourth and fifth, respectively.

Earlier in the past week Japanese skater Satoko Miyahara, the 2015 World silver medalist, claimed the ladies' single title. In the pairs event, 2015 World silver medalists Sui Wenjing and Han Cong of China took gold. American sibling team Maia and Alex Shibutani, the newly crowned US National Champions, won the ice dance event. — AFP



LA THUILE: Liechtenstein's Tina Weirather, center, winner of an alpine ski women's World Cup super G race, celebrates on the podium with second-placed Switzerland's Lara Gut, left, and third-placed Lindsey Vonn, of the United States, in La Thuile, Italy, yesterday. — AP

WEIRATHER WINS WHILE VONN IS REMINDED OF SOCIAL MEDIA GAFFE

LA THUILE: A daughter of skiing royalty, Tina Weirather of Liechtenstein won a slushy super-G yesterday for her first victory of the season while Lindsey Vonn was reminded of her social media gaffe during another podium finish.

Racing in unusually warm weather, Weirather finished 0.57 seconds ahead of Lara Gut with Vonn 0.64 back in third. It was the fifth career win for Weirather, the daughter of two-time Olympic gold medalist Hanni

Wenzel and Harti Weirather, who won downhill gold at the 1982 world championships. With the temperature soaring well above freezing on the Franco Berthod course in the shadows of Mont Blanc, organizers treated the snow with salt to prevent it from melting.

"They did a really good job on the snow. It was not easy to prepare the course," Weirather said. "We were already experienced because in Garmisch we had the same problem, it was also like 10 degrees (Celsius, or 50 Fahrenheit) so we kind of knew how to deal with it."

"When you inspect the course in the morning and there's no salt in it you almost think it's impossible to have a race and then you still have to get ready for a race and be prepared," Weirather added.

For Vonn, it was a second consecutive podium

result after losing sleep to clean up damage from an ill-advised Facebook post. Vonn apologized to her equipment supplier Friday after posting a video of an angry outburst in which she destroyed her bindings with a hammer following a downhill where one ski detached.

'MISTAKES HAPPEN'

The DJ during yesterday's race poked fun at Vonn by playing MC Hammer's 1990 hit "U Can't Touch This," during the American's run.

"That was funny," Vonn said. "There's a lot of jokes out now but I did it to myself. 'Mistakes happen and you just got to move forward and today I was finally 100 percent focused on the skiing and I felt a lot better," Vonn added. "I actually got some sleep last night. So now I'm just thinking about racing and that's what I should be thinking about, because I have a lot of important races coming up."

With bright sunshine, a crowd of nearly 10,000 showed up, many of them young children clamoring for autographs, and Vonn and the other top skiers had to be escorted off the mountain by police officers on skis.

"That was intense," Vonn said. "Coming down from the finish was incredible. There were so many kids and I love that. I love the enthusiasm

they have for the sport and it makes our job a lot more fun as well."

Vonn's overall lead over Gut was reduced to 23 points, while in the super-G ranks she holds a 79-point lead on Gut with three races remaining in the discipline this season.

Fabienne Suter of Switzerland finished fourth and Romane Miradoli of France fifth, while local favorite Federica Brignone of Italy was sixth.

Saturday's downhill winner Nadia Fanchini and Viktoria Rebensburg of Germany were among those who didn't finish.

Up next is a special parallel slalom city event in Stockholm for men and women tomorrow. While Gut said she would travel to Sweden, Vonn was considering skipping the event over concern about a jump on the temporary course - potentially giving up points to her Swiss rival.

"I have to think about all the consequences, the positives and the negatives and we'll see," Vonn said. "The duel is definitely a different beast. I really like duels, actually, but with the jump in there I'm not really sure about it. So I have to make that decision tonight or tomorrow."

The women's circuit then travels to Soldeu, Andorra, for a super-G and Alpine combined next weekend. — AP

COE: IAAF COULD SUSPEND KENYA IF IT VIOLATES DOPING RULES

LONDON: Track and field's governing body is prepared to ban Kenyan athletes from the Olympics in Rio de Janeiro if the country fails to comply with global anti-doping rules, IAAF President Sebastian Coe said.

The IAAF has already suspended Russia's track and field program from global competition, and now Kenya could be at risk of the same sanction.

The IAAF's ethics commission is investigating alleged extortion and doping cover-ups in Kenya involving top officials. The World Anti-Doping Agency has also put Kenya on notice that it could be declared non-compliant with the global anti-doping code.

"We know that a disproportionate amount of reputational damage is caused by a relatively few countries and we have to be very much more proactive," Coe told British television network BT Sport when asked about investigations into Kenya. "Yes, if it means pulling them out of World Championships or Olympic Games then we will have to do that."

"I know the World Anti-Doping Agency has looked very closely at the Kenyan National Anti-Doping Agency, we of course monitor that through the IAAF so that work is ongoing," Coe added in the interview, which was being aired Thursday night.

Kenya's problems with WADA relate to delays in setting up and funding a new national anti-doping body, and delays in passing legislation that would make doping a crime - both promises made to WADA as far back as four years ago.

The Kenyan anti-doping agency announced Thursday that it has received nearly \$3 million from the government to buy anti-doping equipment, including testing kits for all the country's remote training camps.

"We have fully cooperated with WADA, although we recognize there has been delays in the processes, hence the lapse of one of the deadlines that had been put in

place," Anti-Doping Agency of Kenya chief executive Kiplimo Rugut said.

MAKING PROGRESS

WADA said last week that Kenya was under investigation for failing to meet an initial deadline for complying fully with its anti-doping code.

Kenyan track and anti-doping authorities said Thursday they were making progress.

"It does not worry me now that we may face an Olympic ban, since ADAK (The Anti-Doping Agency of Kenya) is working out a policy bill which will be taken to parliament to be made into law,"

said Jackson Tuwei, the acting president of Kenya's track and field federation. "I am confident we will succeed. And since we have been given another two months we will work day and night to conform with the rules."

Former marathon world record-holder Wilson Kipsang is urging the Kenyan government to implement the necessary measures, including fast-tracking legislation criminalizing doping.

"We must all step up the fight against doping because if we are banned, Kenya will never be the same again," Kipsang was quoted as saying by Kenya's Daily Nation.

"This is a country which has made its name as an athletics giant. We have done well in the Olympic and world championships and therefore, we should not miss out complying with the doping directives."

Earlier this week, the chief executive of Kenya's track and field federation took temporary leave after two athletes alleged in an interview with The Associated Press that he asked them for a bribe to reduce their doping bans.

The IAAF's ethics committee is already investigating three other senior Athletics Kenya officials, including its president, for doping cover-ups and other alleged misconduct. — AP



IAAF President Sebastian Coe

MARLINS EXCITED TO HAVE BONDS AS HITTING COACH

MIAMI: Giancarlo Stanton grew up a Dodgers fan and remembers attending their games when Barry Bonds would step to the plate for the Giants.

"It's one of those sounds you never forget - how loud those boos were," Stanton said. Bonds has turned down the volume by keeping a low profile since 2007, his final year as a player. Now the polarizing home run king is back in the major leagues as hitting coach for Stanton and the Miami Marlins.

Bonds wore his familiar No. 25 and a smile as he faced a cluster of notebooks and cameras during media day Saturday at Marlins Park. The session included no boos or questions about steroids, and only one brief reference to the Hall of Fame, where Bonds is an uncharacteristic 0 for 4 in the annual balloting.

He received 44 percent of the vote in January, a career high but far short of the 75 percent needed for induction. Nonetheless, he said he considers himself a Hall of Famer.

"There's not one player that ever could say I'm not one," he said. "There's not a coach who ever coached me who says I'm not one. In my heart and soul, and God knows, I'm a Hall of Famer."

Bonds will likely hear some jeers around the NL this season. Marlins players have expressed no reservations about working with the steroids-tainted slugger, however, and Stanton sounded enthusiastic despite an inadvertent choice of words that caused a few double-takes.

"I'm going to go in the lab, get to work and see what we can come up with," he said. Bonds will begin working with Stanton, reigning NL batting champion Dee Gordon and two-time AL batting champ Ichiro Suzuki, among others, when the full squad reports for spring training

tomorrow in Jupiter, Florida.

"He can help everybody," veteran infielder Chris Johnson said. "If you can't pick something up from him, I don't know who can help you. You'd be an idiot not to be picking his brain all the chances you get."

Bonds might agree. He said he knows what will work if a player is willing to put in the time, and as a mentor, he said he can be another Willie Mays.

SPRING TRAINING

"It's great to be in the position I'm in, the same thing as my godfather Willie was," he said.

Bonds said spring training will be a time to develop relationships and perhaps step on toes. He was already acquainted with Stanton, who played against Bonds' son in high school in Los Angeles and grew up a fan of the Giants slugger.

"Me and my brother would fight over his rookie cards and stuff," Stanton said. "I still have a couple I stole from him."

Bonds is the career leader in home runs with 762 and a seven-time NL MVP, but the Marlins are treating him like one of the guys. Ace Jose Fernandez, a .190 career hitter, joked that he can hit the ball farther than the new hitting coach.

"I'm 51 years old, so he'd better," Bonds responded with a laugh. "If he doesn't, he's terrible."

In recent years Bonds worked as a guest instructor for the Giants in spring training and privately tutored several players, including Alex Rodriguez. Hiring him in Miami was team owner Jeffrey Loria's idea, and new manager Don Mattingly supported the move.

Bonds said he has missed competition and clubhouse camaraderie, and saw coaching as a

way to honor his late father, former major leaguer Bobby Bonds, who taught Barry how to hit.

Bonds convinced the Marlins he's willing to put in the long hours the job requires. "I've been a hitting coach, and I know how much time it takes," Mattingly said. "I wanted to make sure Barry was ready for that, and he was."

Mattingly, a six-time All-Star, said the hiring upgraded his staff's collective resume. "Between me and Barry," Mattingly said with a smile, "we hit over a thousand homers." — AP



JUPITER: Miami Marlins hitting coach Barry Bonds attends workouts for the team's pitchers and catchers at baseball spring training at Roger Dean Stadium on Friday, in Jupiter, Fla. — AP