

KUWAITI RUNNERS WIN GOLD, SILVER MEDALS IN ASIAN ATHLETICS' CHAMPIONSHIPS



DOHA: Kuwait's Abdulazeez Al-Mandheel (R) and China's Yufei Hu compete in the men's 60m hurdles event during the seventh Asian Indoor Athletics Championships at the Aspire Academy of Sports in the Qatari capital, Doha, yesterday. — AFP

DOHA: Kuwait runners Abdulaziz Al-Mendil and Yaqoub Al-Yoha bagged gold and silver medals respectively, in the 60-meter hurdles race of the 7th Asian Indoor Athletics' Championships in Doha yesterday.

Al-Mendil clinched first place with a time of 7.60 seconds, setting a new Asian record. Al-Yoha came in second with 7.65 seconds while Chinese Zheung Hong Lin came in third with 7.73 seconds.

In remarks to KUNA, coach of the Kuwait national team Bader Dashti said that the athletes, by virtue of their performance, have now qualified for the World Indoor Athletics Championships, to take place in the United States in March.

Calling it a landmark accomplishment, Dashti noted that Al-Mendil and Al-Yoha put on repeat performances, having previously finished in the same placings in the 2014 edition of the championships in China.

Raising the Kuwaiti flag aloft is the incentive for participating in this tournament, Dashti added. Moreover, Al-Mendil told KUNA that having earned the first and second positions, Kuwait has proved that it could overcome the stiffest of challenges, pointing out that he had set two records in the championships, one of 7.66 seconds in the semi-finals and the other, 7.60 seconds in the finals.

After winning a silver medal, Al-Yoha said that the athletes had gone through intense preparations prior to the championships, which instilled in them the confidence needed to compete at such level.

Al-Mendil and Al-Yoha, along with Majed Al-Zaid, Salah Al-Hadad, Youssef Karam and Ali Al-Sabagha, made up the Kuwaiti contingent at the championships. The three-day sporting event, which kicked off on February 19, featured unprecedented international participation of around 400 athletes from 36 nations. —KUNA

WARRIORS BOUNCE BACK FROM LOSS TO DEFEAT CLIPPERS

LOS ANGELES: Klay Thompson scored 32 points, fellow Splash Brother Stephen Curry added 23 and the Golden State Warriors beat the Los Angeles Clippers 115-112 on Saturday to avoid losing back-to-back games for the first time this season. The Warriors were coming off a 32-point drubbing at Portland a night earlier that snapped their 11-game winning streak. They appeared highly motivated to erase that memory from the opening tip, shooting 56 percent in the first half and twice leading by 15 points in the second quarter. Draymond Green had his NBA-leading 11th triple-double with 18 points, 11 rebounds and 10 assists to help the defending champions improve to 49-5. Jamal Crawford scored 25 points off the bench, Chris Paul added 24 and DeAndre Jordan had 16 points and 21 rebounds for the Clippers. They fell to 19-6 without injured Blake Griffin. Their two earlier losses to the Warriors were by a combined 11 points with Griffin in the lineup.

HEAT 114, WIZARDS 94

Hassan Whiteside had 25 points and 23 rebounds in his return from a one-game suspension to help Miami beat Washington. Whiteside was suspended for throwing an elbow at San Antonio center Boban Marjanovic's head on Feb. 9. It was the 11th time in NBA history that a player has had at least 20 points and 20 rebounds in a game off the bench. It was Whiteside's second 20-20 game in his career. Luol Deng had 27 points a night after scoring 30 points in a victory at Atlanta, and Goran Dragic added a season-high 24 points and had eight assists and seven rebounds. The Heat played without All-Stars Dwyane Wade and Chris Bosh for the second consecutive game. Wade has a sore left knee, and Bosh is out indefinitely because of a

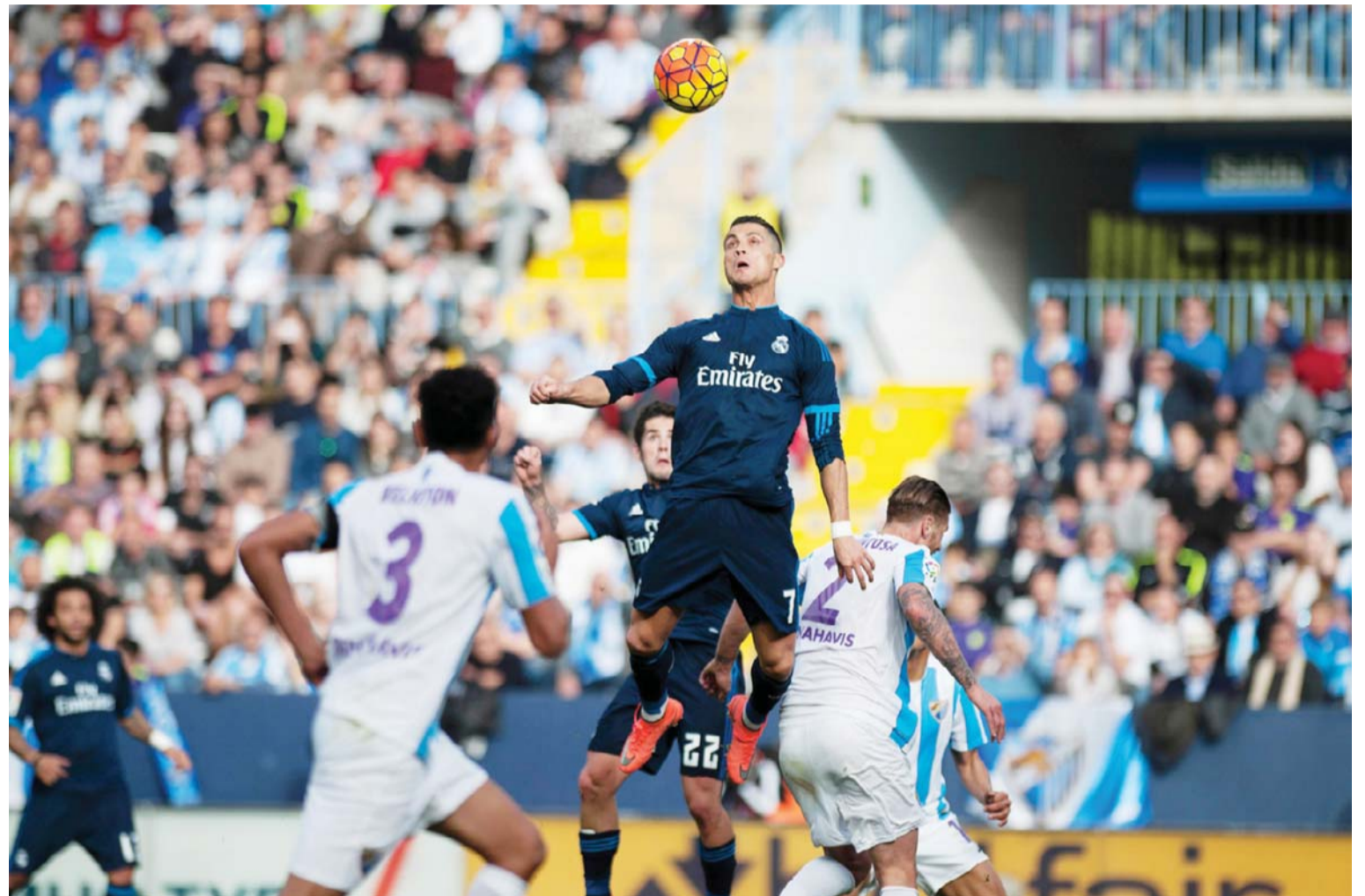
blood clot in his left leg. Bradley Beal led the Wizards with 19 points. Washington played for the third consecutive day and was looking for a rare third win in as many days after beating Utah and Detroit.

BUCKS 117, HAWKS 109, 2OT

Jabari Parker had career highs of 28 points and 13 rebounds, Greg Monroe added 24 points and Milwaukee Bucks outlasted Atlanta in double overtime to end a six-game road skid. Paul Millsap finished with 27 points, and Dennis Schroder had 25 for the Hawks. Atlanta has lost three straight at home for the first time since March 2014. The Bucks overcame the late absence of Giannis Antetokounmpo, who fouled out with 1:11 left in regulation, and held on despite Monroe missing a layup that could've clinched the win in the closing seconds of the first overtime. Milwaukee's Kris Middleton, O.J. Mayo and Michael Carter-Williams each missed one of two free throws in the final seconds of regulation and the first overtime.

KNICKS 103, TIMBERWOLVES 95

Carmelo Anthony had 30 points and 11 rebounds and New York beat Minnesota to snap a seven-game losing streak. Robin Lopez had 26 points and 16 rebounds to give interim coach Kurt Rambis his first victory since taking over for the fired Derek Fisher three games ago. The Knicks outrebounded Minnesota 51-31 and led by 24 points early in the fourth quarter for their first victory since Jan. 29 against Phoenix. Karl-Anthony Towns had 24 points and eight rebounds, and Andrew Wiggins scored 24 points for the Timberwolves. Ricky Rubio had 16 assists, but they dropped their second straight out of the All-Star break after winning three of four going into it. — AP



MALAGA: Real Madrid's Portuguese forward Cristiano Ronaldo (C) jumps for the ball during the Spanish league football match Malaga CF vs Real Madrid CF at La Rosaleda stadium in Malaga yesterday. — AFP

REAL RUE RONALDO MISSED PENALTY IN MALAGA DRAW

MADRID: Cristiano Ronaldo missed a penalty as Real Madrid's hopes of catching La Liga leaders Barcelona were all but ended with a 1-1 draw at Malaga yesterday.

Madrid remain nine points behind Barca with 13 games to go after Raul Alcantara cancelled out Ronaldo's opener 24 minutes from time. However, Zinedine Zidane's men were left to rue Ronaldo's miss from the spot to make it 2-0 before the break when Carlos Kameni dived to his left to parry the three-time World Player of the Year's effort.

A point moves Real level with Atletico Madrid in second ahead of the Madrid derby next weekend, but Atletico can move to within six points of Barca with victory over Villarreal later on Sunday.

Madrid were without the injured Karim Benzema and Gareth Bale, whilst James Rodriguez was only left on the bench by

Zidane. Jese Rodriguez was handed a start after scoring Real's second in a 2-0 win at Roma in the Champions League in midweek and should have opened the scoring when he shot straight at Kameni when clean through on 17 minutes.

However, the visitors were fortunate not to be behind moments later when Juanpi scuffed his shot with just Keylor Navas to beat and the Costa Rica international made a comfortable save. Ricardo Horta then missed another glorious chance for Malaga when he fired into the side-netting unmarked at the back post.

When the opening goal did arrive it was in controversial circumstances as Ronaldo headed home Toni Kroos's free-kick despite clearly standing in an offside position. There was no doubt about the penalty award two minutes later when Ronaldo was brought down by Weligton.

Yet, the normally lethal Portuguese from the spot was denied by a fine low save by Kameni. Malaga missed another great chance to level before the break as Navas parried Duje Cop's shot into the air and Sergio Ramos got back to clear the looping ball off the line.

Navas then made an incredible stop just after the restart when Nacho turned Juanpi's cross towards his own goal.

Yet, the Madrid stopper was finally beaten when Malaga's two centre-backs combined for the equaliser as Weligton's low cross was coolly slotted home at the back post by Alcantara.

Malaga could even have snatched all three points as Navas was again forced into action by a looping Charles header.

However, for the second time this season Malaga did enough to take a point from Real and almost certainly stretch their run without a league title to four years. — AFP

NBA results/standings

Atlanta 109, Milwaukee 117 (OT); Miami 114, Washington 94; Minnesota 95, New York 103; LA Clippers 112, Golden State 115.

| Eastern Conference | | | | Western Conference | | | |
|--------------------|----|----|------|--------------------|----|----|------|
| Atlantic Division | | | | Northwest Division | | | |
| | W | L | PCT | | W | L | PCT |
| Toronto | 35 | 18 | .660 | Oklahoma City | 40 | 15 | .727 |
| Boston | 32 | 24 | .571 | Portland | 28 | 27 | .509 |
| New York | 24 | 33 | .421 | Utah | 27 | 27 | .500 |
| Brooklyn | 15 | 40 | .273 | Denver | 22 | 33 | .400 |
| Philadelphia | 8 | 46 | .148 | Minnesota | 17 | 39 | .304 |
| Central Division | | | | Pacific Division | | | |
| Cleveland | 39 | 14 | .736 | Golden State | 49 | 5 | .907 |
| Indiana | 29 | 25 | .537 | LA Clippers | 36 | 19 | .655 |
| Chicago | 28 | 26 | .519 | Sacramento | 23 | 31 | .426 |
| Detroit | 27 | 28 | .491 | Phoenix | 14 | 41 | .255 |
| Milwaukee | 23 | 33 | .411 | LA Lakers | 11 | 45 | .196 |
| Southeast Division | | | | Southwest Division | | | |
| Miami | 31 | 24 | .564 | San Antonio | 46 | 9 | .836 |
| Atlanta | 31 | 26 | .544 | Memphis | 32 | 22 | .593 |
| Charlotte | 28 | 26 | .519 | Dallas | 29 | 27 | .518 |
| Washington | 25 | 29 | .463 | Houston | 28 | 28 | .500 |
| Orlando | 24 | 29 | .453 | New Orleans | 21 | 33 | .389 |

BATSHUAYI SAVES MARSEILLE BLUSHES, CAEN BEAT RENNES

PARIS: Michy Batshuayi scored five minutes into injury time to rescue a point for Marseille in a 1-1 draw at home to Saint-Etienne yesterday, while Caen edged Rennes 1-0.

OM's Belgian forward Batshuayi had come off the bench 15 minutes from the end and headed home a Romain Alessandrini free-kick with virtually the last touch of the ball.

That was a 13th league goal of the season for Batshuayi, putting him behind only Zlatan Ibrahimovic in the Ligue 1 goalscoring charts.

It was only five minutes from time that St Etienne thought they had scored the potentially winning goal that would have sent them above Nice into third place in Ligue 1 — the final Champions League qualifying spot.

Kevin Monnet-Paquet shot home left-footed from Romain Hamouma's pass. Under-pressure Marseille coach Michel was pleased with his side's performance despite the disappointing result.

"Nothing we saw (on Sunday) was new: we created chances, we were close to scoring, we got back into the match just like against Lille (a 1-1 draw), we fought to the end and there was a lot of courage," he said.

The draw barely helps either side as St Etienne could lose fourth spot to Lyon or Rennes later on Sunday while Marseille are 10th and still five points behind Nice in the

tight race to qualify for Europe's premier club competition.

Asked if he feared for his job, Michel said: "I don't think about that, never. I think about doing my job and going forwards."

Later yesterday Caen ended a three-match losing streak, as a first goal in French football for Burundian midfielder Saidi Ntibazonkiza saw off Rennes.

The 28-year-old has broken into the first team in recent weeks and took his chance with a fine second half finish, moving Caen above their opponents and to within two points of the top three.

For Rennes though the pressure continues to build, they are now lower in the table than they were a month ago when they sacked former manager Philippe Montanier and brought in Roland Courbis.

There was one positive for Courbis as midfielder Yoann Gourcuff made his first start since rejoining the club in the summer, being withdrawn in the 59th minute.

On Saturday, Paris Saint-Germain maintained their 24-point lead at the top with a 4-1 victory over lowly Reims as Ibrahimovic scored a brace. They now need only three more wins and a draw from their final 11 matches to win the Ligue 1 title.

Monaco remain second and determined to delay PSG's inevitable crowning as French champions after a 3-1 win over rock-bottom Troyes sent them eight points clear of Nice, who drew 0-0 at Bordeaux on Friday night. —AFP

DORTMUND BEAT LEVERKUSEN IN INTERRUPTED BUNDESLIGA GAME

BERLIN: Borussia Dortmund's 1-0 win at Bayer Leverkusen in the Bundesliga was interrupted for eight minutes yesterday after the home side's coach refused to be sent to the stands.

Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang's 64th-minute goal - his 21st of the season and his 50th in 86 Bundesliga games - was enough for second-placed Dortmund to restore the eight-point gap behind Bayern Munich.

But referee Felix Zwayer sent Roger Schmidt off for complaining vociferously over the positioning of a free-kick in the build up to the goal, when Leverkusen striker Stefan Kiessling lost the ball and fouled Sven Bender. Matthias Ginter took a quick free kick from where the ball rolled to Erik Durm, who crossed for the onrushing Aubameyang to shoot to the unguarded net.

"I was too stubborn, I reacted emotionally. I was sent a signal from 45 meters that I should go to the stands," Schmidt said. "It was definitely a mistake of mine. I didn't think the game would be interrupted. I hurt my team through that."

Zwayer ordered both sides off the pitch when Schmidt made no sign of moving, prompting widespread confusion among players and fans. Zwayer and his officials also walked off, leaving the field vacant for several minutes - until players and officials came back out.

"To interrupt a game like that and to make things so hectic is completely unnecessary," Leverkusen sporting director Rudi Voeller said.

His annoyance was compounded minutes after the restart, when Dortmund defender Sokratis wasn't penalized for blocking Javier "Chicharito" Hernandez's header with his arm in the penalty area.

Schmidt blasted the decision. "Not to give the penalty for handball is crazy," the Leverkusen coach said. "If he sees that he's going to whistle it," Dortmund counterpart Thomas Tuchel agreed. Marco Reus missed a great opportunity to secure the win for Dortmund, before Hernandez shot wide in injury time with the equalizer beckoning. Aubameyang missed the biggest chance of the first half just before the

break when he fired wide with only the goalkeeper to beat after he was set up by Christian Pulisic. The 17-year-old American Pulisic was making his first league start for Dortmund.

"Both teams can do more," Germany coach Joachim Loew said of an uneventful first half. Schalke was to host in-form Stuttgart and Hannover was facing Augsburg in a relegation battle later yesterday. — AP



LEVERKUSEN: Dortmund's goalkeeper Roman Buerki catches the ball during the German Bundesliga soccer match between Bayer Leverkusen and Borussia Dortmund in Leverkusen, Germany, yesterday. — AFP