

## GOLF

## CRISTIE KERR WINS LPGA LOTTE IN HAWAII FOR 19TH TOUR TITLE

**KAPOLEI:** Cristie Kerr won the LPGA Lotte Championship on Saturday for her 19th tour title, closing with a 6-under 66 for a three-stroke victory.

The 39-year-old Kerr broke the tournament record at 20-under 268, a day after shooting 62 at Ko Olina to match the event mark. She earned \$300,000 to top \$18 million in her career. Kerr hadn't won in 30 starts since the season-ending CME Group Tour Championship in 2015. She was a pedestrian 4 under halfway through Lotte, then made a made a big move. She birdied seven of the last eight holes Friday, soaring into contention with the 62 and growing comfortable walking in her birdie putts before they

fell in the hole. "People think that I do it intentionally," she said. "It never happens when I try to do it intentionally. It's just that once I know it's in, I walk after it."

Kerr called it "epic" and began to count the ways. She had complications with knee surgery in November, keeping her from hitting a shot for eight weeks, and from playing the first tournament of the year. "It feels so good to have overcome so many things to be sitting here," Kerr said. "I played great the last couple weeks coming into here, and I just have a different perspective on life now. I felt it on the golf course today. I was able to keep going forward because I didn't put that extra pressure on myself"

The American overcame sponsor invite Su-Yeon Jang, the South Korean player who led after the second and third rounds and was five ahead of Kerr after three holes Saturday.

Jang had a 70 to drop into a tie for second with top-ranked Lydia Ko (64) and In Gee Chun (67). Jang's first bogey of the week came at No. 6 and she suffered double-bogey two holes later, falling into a tie for first with Kerr.

Canadian Alena Sharp, looking for her first LPGA Tour win in her 241st start, bogeyed the final hole for a 70 to finish alone in fifth at 16 under, a shot ahead of second-ranked So Yeon Ryu (67). Third-ranked Ariya Jutanugarn (69) and Stacy

Lewis (6) were 14 under.

Ko was too far back to really challenge Kerr. "Going into the day eight shots behind there is a huge difference between eight shots and five shots," Ko said. "I knew that it would take the round of my life versus a mediocre round by everybody else. With how the girls are playing, it's just really hard to mend the gap. Considering where I was after the first day (73), I'm pleased with where I finished." Kerr, who was a rookie the year Ko was born, has Top 10s in her last three starts. "I can't remember in 2 1/2 days that I had made so many birdies in my life," she said. "That (first) day and a half that I had struggled a little with my

swing feel it was an unbelievable run."

She has four Top 10s at Lotte, and is the second American to win in the tournament's six years here, after Hawaii's Michelle Wie. Kerr also is the second American to win on the LPGA Tour this year. "Experience is huge," Kerr said. "Very few players are lucky enough like I am to have a career as long as I've had and be competitive as long as I've been competitive. Having that experience and being competitive, it's an advantage."

"I felt like I didn't have it on the first four or five holes, I didn't worry, I didn't rush, and soon as I made my first birdie it was kind of like off to the races. So experience definitely helps." — AP

## NHL

## MAPLE LEAFS BEAT CAPITALS FOR FIRST PLAYOFF WIN SINCE 2013

**WASHINGTON:** Kasperian Kapanen scored his second goal of the game 11:53 into the second overtime and Frederik Andersen made 47 saves as the Toronto Maple Leafs beat the Washington Capitals 4-3 Saturday in Game 2 to even the first-round NHL playoff series.

Kapanen also scored in regulation for Toronto along with James van Riemsdyk and Morgan Rielly, and Andersen made several big stops to keep the Maple Leafs alive. Alex Ovechkin, John Carlson and Nicklas Backstrom scored for the top-seeded Capitals, who are now feeling the heat going into Game 3 Monday in Toronto. Braden Holtby made 48 saves before being beaten on the overtime winner.

Not unraveling in a tough atmosphere, the young Maple Leafs showed they belonged on the same ice with the Capitals after losing Game 1 in OT. Brian Boyle made a slick backhanded pass to Kapanen, who put the puck into a wide-open net to give Toronto its first playoff victory since 2013.

## SENATORS 4, BRUINS 3, OT

Dion Phaneuf scored at 1:59 of overtime and Ottawa rallied for a victory over Boston. The Senators rallied from a 3-1 deficit with a two-goal third period to force overtime. The Eastern Conference series is tied 1-1 and Game 3 is Monday night in Boston. Clarke MacArthur, Chris Wideman and Derick Brassard also scored for the Senators and Craig Anderson made 26 saves. Drew Stafford, Tim Schaller and Patrice Bergeron scored for the Bruins. Tuukka Rask stopped 25 shots.

The Senators started the overtime with the man advantage as the Bruins took a delay of game penalty with 12.5 seconds remaining in regulation. Trailing 3-1 to start the third, the Senators scored twice in a

span of 2:20 to tie the game.

## PREDATORS 5, BLACKHAWKS 0

Pekka Rinne made 30 saves in his second straight shutout and picked up two assists, helping Nashville pound Chicago for a 2-0 lead in the first-round playoff series. Ryan Johansen had a goal and two assists as Nashville added a dominant performance to its taut 1-0 victory in Game 1 on Thursday.

Chicago coach Joel Quenneville shuffled his lineup, inserting rookie Vinnie Hinostroza and Dennis Rasmussen and benching veteran Jordin Tootoo and John Hayden. But it was more of the same for the Blackhawks, who once again looked out of sync against the Predators' active defense. Ryan Ellis, Harry Zolnierczyk, Colton Sissons and Kevin Fiala each scored their first career playoff goal. Game 3 is Monday night in Nashville.

## DUCKS 3, FLAMES 2

Ryan Getzlaf scored the tiebreaking power-play goal with 4:46 to play on a bizarre deflection off Lance Bouma's skate, and Anaheim took a 2-0 lead in their first-round playoff series.

Getzlaf's attempted pass across the high slot banked off Bouma's foot and somehow arched through the air and past Calgary's Brian Elliott for the Anaheim captain's second goal of the series. Jakob Silfverberg and Rickard Rakell scored first-period goals and John Gibson made 35 saves in the Ducks' 29th consecutive victory over the Flames at Honda Center since April 25, 2006, extending the longest such streak in NHL history. Mikael Backlund scored a short-handed goal and Sean Monahan had a power-play goal for the Flames. Game 3 is Monday in Calgary. — AP



**HONG KONG:** Britain's Elinor Barker celebrates winning gold in the Women's Points Race Final on the fifth day of the 2017 Track Cycling World Championships in Hong Kong yesterday. — AFP

## CYCLING

## GOLDEN BARKER HAILS EMBATTLED BRITISH TEAM

**HONG KONG:** Elinor Barker praised the support she had received from her embattled British team after she won a morale-boosting gold medal at the Track Cycling World Championships yesterday.

Barker's victory in the points race was among the highlights on the final day as France celebrated two wins and Australia finished top of the medals table. Britain's second gold in Hong Kong came as they await an independent review into allegations of sexism and bullying levelled at team leadership last year.

But Barker, an Olympic gold-medallist and two-time world champion in the team pursuit, said she couldn't have had better support in her successful bid for a maiden individual rainbow jersey. "I've been unbelievably supported in order to try to win this," she said at the Hong Kong Velodrome, after securing a thrilling win over American great Sarah Hammer.

"After the Olympics I had a meeting with about four of the coaches and staff members and said 'I have a new goal, I want to win the points race at the worlds'."

"Instantly they were like 'Yeah, we think you

can do it'. They gave me the space and the focus I needed."

A leaked draft of the review reportedly described a "culture of fear and bullying" at British Cycling but Barker, 22, said many people had a false perception of the team. "I've been going on Twitter and been going 'Oh, really? Is that the case?'"

Because I think if I didn't have Twitter I wouldn't know about it," she said. Barker looked like she would have to settle for her third silver medal in Hong Kong before she pipped Hammer, an eight-time world champion, with a strong finish. The Briton crucially picked up 20 points for gaining a lap with just four of the 100 laps to go, winning the first individual world title of her career.

## 'TODAY WAS SO INCREDIBLE'

France also enjoyed a late rally as they won their second and third gold medals through Francois Pervis in the time trial, and Morgan Kneisky and Benjamin Thomas in the madison.

Pervis won the 1km time trial by 0.334sec from compatriot Quentin Lafargue and Czech

riders Tomas Babek, who shared silver after a rare dead heat. Thomas, who brilliantly won the four-event omnium on the last lap of the last race on Saturday, also crossed the line on the 200-lap madison to clinch his second gold in two days.

"It's not easy to stand on my legs," an exhausted Kneisky said, adding: "Everyone was motivated to give everything at the end of the week. Today was so incredible for us - now we'll be focused for the future."

But the championships didn't end happily for Hong Kong's former Olympic bronze-medallist Sarah Lee, who bombed out of the women's keirin in spectacular style. Lee finished fifth in her second-round heat but not before, in her haste to place among the leaders, she appeared to send South Korea's Lee Hye-Jin crashing on the last lap. German great Kristina Vogel eventually took gold in the keirin, picking up her ninth world title and her second in Hong Kong after the women's sprint. Australia were the most successful country, winning three gold medals alongside Russia and France but collecting five silvers and three bronzes for 11 podium places overall. — AFP



**WASHINGTON:** T.J. Oshie #77 of the Washington Capitals and Jake Gardiner #51 and Martin Marincin #52 of the Toronto Maple Leafs go after the puck in overtime of Game Two of the Eastern Conference First Round during the 2017 NHL Stanley Cup Playoffs at Verizon Center on Saturday in Washington, DC. — AFP

## RUGBY

## CANADA WINS SINGAPORE SEVENS ALL-AMERICAN FINAL

**SINGAPORE:** Canada beat the United States 26-19 to win their maiden World Series Sevens title yesterday and cap a day of extraordinary upsets that culminated in the first ever all-American final. The Canadians regained their composure after squandering a 19-0 lead as their North American neighbours levelled the final at 19-19 to score the winning try through Lucas Hammond less than two minutes from the end, denying the US their second tournament success after winning at London in 2015. "We made a couple of mistakes but the character of the team came through," Canadian coach Damian McGrath told AFP.

"This is huge for Canadian rugby. We've lost \$1 million in funding, our 15s results have been poor, so this just gives us a shot in the arm. It's a big deal for us." For the US, it was a bitter-sweet moment. The Eagles made the final after losing in the semis at each of the last three World Series tournaments but coach Mike Friday told AFP the Americans lost the final because they gave Canada too big a start. "The long and short of it is this, you can't gift anyone 19 points and expect to win a cup final," Friday said. "They were always going to get another chance and even though we got back to 19-all, the game was really lost by us in that first five minutes." Canada had never won a World Series title before and earned their way into the final the hard way, beating traditional powerhouses New Zealand 26-14 in the quarter-finals then England 17-5 in the semis. The US also upset

rugby's established giants by beating Olympic champions Fiji 24-19 in the quarters then Australia 40-7 in the semis but their slow start cost them dearly. Canada scored three tries inside the first five minutes through Matt Mullins, Harry Jones and Mike Fuailefau but a lapse in concentration let the US back in.

Perry Baker, the leading try scorer for the series, scored a brilliant solo try to ignite the US comeback and then Stephen Tomasini dived over in the corner to cut the margin to 19-12 at halftime.

"We had more chances but we needed to execute and we just didn't do it." Baker scored again shortly after the re-start to tie the scores as the US seized the momentum but Canada re-settled and got the winner through Hammond to seal the victory.

"It's awesome," Hammond told AFP. "It's pretty emotional for all of us because it's been a long time coming. It shows how far the sport has come, not just in Canada but also the States and it's only going to get better from here." South Africa extended their lead in the championship standings to 25 points with two rounds to go despite finishing sixth, the first time this season they have not made the final. "We were very fortunate to extend our lead," South Africa coach Neil Powell told AFP. "If you had said to me coming into Singapore that we'd extend our lead by another two points we'd have gladly taken it but we're not happy with our performances. We made a lot of mistakes and we were our worst enemies." — AFP



**HONG KONG:** Gold medallists Benjamin Thomas (3rd L) and Morgan Kneisky (3rd R) of France pose with silver medallists Cameron Meyer (L) and Callum Scotson (2nd L) of Australia and bronze medallists Kenny De Ketele (2nd R) and Moreno de Pauw of Belgium on the podium after the men's madison final at the Hong Kong Velodrome during the Track Cycling World Championships in Hong Kong yesterday. — AFP