

SPAIN MOURNS SLAIN MATADOR FANDINO

MADRID: Spain's royal family joined politicians and the bullfighting world yesterday in mourning matador Ivan Fandino, gored to death in a fight in France. The death of Fandino, a 36-year-old from the northern Basque region, was front page news in several newspapers in Spain, where interest in the controversial centuries-old tradition remains high. The royals paid homage on their official Twitter feed to "a great bullfighting figure" while Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy lamented the "sad news," as did his culture minister. Valencia torero Enrique Ponce also paid tribute to a fighter well-known for his daring. "Dear Ivan, 'Torero' (super torero), I shall always remember you ... those glorious afternoons. May God receive you in his glory." French fighter Sebastien Castella wrote in Spanish that "death has taken a friend and in a sense a part of our souls." Fandino died in hospital on Saturday after being gored in the ribs by a bull, whose horn punctured his lung, at the Aire-sur-l'Adour bullfighting festival in the south of France.—AFP

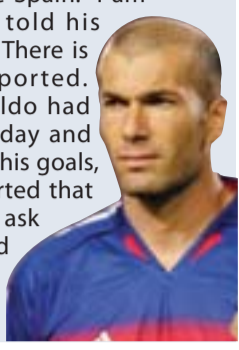


GERMAN KURZ APPOINTED NEW ADELAIDE COACH

ADELAIDE: German Marco Kurz has been appointed the new head coach of Adelaide United for the next two Australian A-League seasons, the club said yesterday. Kurz, 48, replaces championship-winning Spanish coach Guillermo Amor at the Reds. Kurz made 299 Bundesliga appearances as a player with VfB Stuttgart, FC Nurnberg, Borussia Dortmund, Schalke 04 and 1860 Munich. His most successful coaching spell came in charge of FC Kaiserslautern, first guiding them to promotion to the Bundesliga and then finishing seventh in the 2010/11 Bundesliga season. "We're delighted, he's the man we have been pursuing relentlessly," Reds chairman Greg Griffin said. "For the last month we have left no stone unturned to convince him that Adelaide is a genuine football community. He will be given the budget to spend on potential new players including three imports." Kurz said he was impressed by the club set-up. "I was impressed by their effort to convince me," Kurz said in a statement. "I've done a lot of research already about the A-League and I'm very proud to become a part of it." Kurz will arrive in Adelaide ahead of the club's first training session on June 28.—AFP

ZIDANE PLEADS WITH RONALDO AFTER 'I QUIT' BOMBHELL

MADRID: Real Madrid coach Zinedine Zidane broke off his holiday to call Cristiano Ronaldo in a bid to persuade his unsettled star not to quit the club, Spanish sports daily Marca claimed yesterday. Ronaldo, on Confederations Cup duty in Russia with Portugal, is reportedly furious over a tax probe into the off shore accounts dealing with his image rights, and has reportedly vowed to leave Spain. "I am leaving Real Madrid," Marca claim Ronaldo told his Portuguese colleagues. "I have made a decision. There is no turning back," the daily sports paper reported. According to Marca when Zidane heard Ronaldo had sworn to quit he broke off from his family holiday and called his No7 to tell him Madrid "needed him for his goals, and also his winning mentality". Marca also reported that club captain Sergio Ramos had called Ronaldo to ask him to stay. In just 265 games for Real Madrid Ronaldo has scored 285 goals, winning three Champions League finals in four seasons.—AFP



BEST CAPTAINS LIONS AGAINST CHIEFS

ROTORUA: Ireland's Rory Best will become the fifth captain in six games for the British and Irish Lions on their New Zealand tour when he leads the side against the Waikato Chiefs in Hamilton tomorrow.

Tour captain Sam Warburton, who has only led the side once, was not included in the side named yesterday, indicating he will be in the match-day 23, but not guaranteed to start against the All Blacks in the first Test on Saturday.

Coach Warren Gatland said issues to be resolved before naming the first XV included choosing between Warburton and Sean O'Brien, and the make up of the back three, the midfield and the second-row.

In-form fly-half Owen Farrell, also not required to play the Chiefs, was confirmed late Sunday as fit for the Test having recovered from a thigh strain.

Gatland said Farrell was only kept out of Saturday's match against the Maori All Blacks as a "precautionary" measure.

"I was always confident about Owen being fit for the weekend," Gatland said. "I was never unconfident about that." Fullback Leigh Halfpenny, who kicked six penalties in the 32-10 win over the Maori, was undergoing concussion tests but otherwise the Lions are largely injury free.

Liam Williams will play fullback against the Chiefs with the chance to fill the utility on the bench in the Test. "A number of those players in the back three are pretty versatile. It's an opportunity for Liam to go and impress there," Gatland said.

"Anthony Watson did a good job coming on there against the Crusaders and has looked dangerous. We're giving players a chance there from a counter-attack perspective."

Gatland said the Lions would be looking to build on the momentum gained from their win over the Maori. "We are five games into the Tour and there is still a lot to play for. Those involved on Tuesday will be playing not only for themselves in terms of further selection but also for the whole squad," he said.

"We are here to win a Test series and we have brought cover for the replacements bench so we can limit the number of players who need to double-up, which is tough to do at this level of rugby."

Dan Biggar will start at fly-half against the Chiefs with Scotland's Finn Russell, one of six reinforcements rushed in over the weekend, on the bench. The other five new call-ups—Scotland's Allan Dell along with Gareth Davies, Kristian Dacey, Cory Hill and Tomas Francis from Wales—were all named among the replacements and can expect to get game time.

Lions (15-1): Liam Williams (Scarlets/WAL); Jack Nowell (Exeter/ENG), Jared Payne (Ulster/IRL), Robbie Henshaw (Leinster/IRL), Elliot Daly (Wasps/ENG); Dan Biggar (Ospreys/WAL), Greig Laidlaw (Gloucester/SCO); CJ Stander (Munster/IRL), Justin Tipuric (Ospreys/WAL), James Haskell (Wasps/ENG); Courtney Lawes (Northampton/ENG), Iain Henderson (Ulster/IRL); Dan Cole (Leicester/ENG), Rory Best (capt, Ulster/IRL), Joe Marler (Harlequins/ENG).

Replacements: Kristian Dacey (Cardiff/WAL), Allan Dell (Edinburgh/SCO), Tomas Francis (Exeter/WAL), Cory Hill (Newport/WAL), Alun Wyn Jones (Ospreys/WAL), Gareth Davies (Scarlets/WAL), Finn Russell (Glasgow/SCO), Tommy Seymour (Glasgow/SCO).—AFP

SPRINGBOKS AND 'MONSTROUS' KOLISI HAILED BY MEDIA

DURBAN: The South African media applauded the resurgent national rugby team yesterday after they clinched a series victory over France in Durban, with special praise reserved for flanker Siya Kolisi.

A 37-15 second Test victory at Kings Park stadium Saturday gave the Springboks a winning 2-0 lead in the three-match series, which concludes in Johannesburg next weekend.

The triumph, coupled with a 37-14 first Test success in Pretoria, have renewed faith in the team after a record eight losses during a calamitous 2016 season.

Simnikwe Xabanisa wrote in the City Press that official man of the match and try-scorer Kolisi delivered a "monstrous performance" in front of a 42,000 crowd in Durban.

"The game had the fingerprints of Kolisi all over it in a monstrous performance not seen in a while from a player in the green and gold jersey. "Kolisi made two try-scoring passes, tackled everything that moved and was all over the ball on the ground like a cheap suit."

"And (Kolisi) still found time to score an intercept try of his own in a performance for the ages. "A performance big on physicality, defence and composure meant South Africa not only won the game, but the series with a match to spare." Mike Greenaway in The Sunday Independent drew a comparison between the victory over France and the previous Test in

Durban—a humiliating 57-15 loss to arch foes New Zealand.

"Who would have thought that eight months after the Boks were booted off the field, the same crowd would be doing the Mexican wave and singing 'ole, ole, ole'. "The celebration was mostly because the vibrant Boks of 2017 have given their supporters reason to believe again. Last year was a terrible car crash in slow motion."

"More than anything, South Africans want to see a Springbok team play with pride and enthusiasm, and we have seen that in abundance over the last fortnight."

"The Springbok team looks hungry, focused and energetic when last year they were lazy, dazed and confused." Mahlatse Mphahlele wrote in the Sunday Times that skipper and No. 8 Warren Whiteley and coach Allister Coetzee may be on to something special. "At the rate these youthful and inexperienced Springboks are going, South Africans can start dreaming again."

"Allister Coetzee said the painful chapter of last season was closed and pleaded with the South African public to take a leap of faith in this new beginning."

"In their thorough demolition of a significantly bolstered France from the first Test, the Boks showed unity, fighting spirit and determination."

"Siya Kolisi was the standout performer, but every Bok put his body behind the wheel and pushed hard with a roaring performance of few mistakes."—AFP



DURBAN: France's Scott Spedding, right, is challenged by South Africa's Jan Serfontein, left, during their international rugby union Test match between South Africa and France in Durban, South Africa, Saturday. — AP



SYDNEY: Australia's Richard Hardwick, right, is pulled over by Scotland's Allan Dell during their rugby union test match in Sydney, Saturday. — AP

RUGBY

CHEIKA VOWS CHANGES TO BUMBLING WALLABIES

SYDNEY: Wallabies coach Michael Cheika has demanded greater urgency from his players and vowed team changes in the wake of their spluttering Test defeat to Scotland.

The Australians gave away two tries and could not make up the leeway despite dominating territory and possession to go down 24-19 to the resilient Scots in Sydney on Saturday. The loss will have ramifications with an imminent slump to sixth in the next world rankings — behind Ireland, Scotland and South Africa—the Wallabies' lowest position since early 2015.

The Scottish defeat comes against the backdrop of a demoralising Super Rugby season for Australian teams and the negativity over the drawn-out SANZAAR saga to cull three teams from next year's competition.

Cheika has signalled changes following the chastening defeat for the next Test against Six Nations strugglers Italy in Brisbane on Saturday. "I'd say so, I'd say there'd be a few," Cheika told reporters after Saturday's loss. "It's about being more urgent to the game, you've got to make it happen—it's not just going to happen for you."

"You've got to have guys with that attitude. You eliminate all the excuses and you just stay at it and make the team come there."

Cheika, who cut a frustrated figure watching the game from the coach's box in the stands, said the Wallabies were "half-a-yard away all the match". Compounding the loss was the Wallabies' self-inflicted wounds during a dreadful opening half.

The Scots led 17-12 at half-time with both their tries coming off Australian mistakes. Centre Duncan Taylor swooped on a poor Will Genia pass and fly-half Finn Russell charged down Genia's clearing kick for another try.

'WILL' POWER LACKING

Only two tries from Israel Folau—one from a long ball from Bernard Foley and the other when the athletic fullback soared spectacularly to snatch Foley's pinpoint crossfield kick—kept the Wallabies in the first half.

Yet despite the intensity ratcheting up after half-time and Australia hitting the front at 19-17 midway through the second half, Scotland roared back with a magnificent try by openside flanker Hamish Watson.

Winger Lee Jones hurdled a tackler and linked with Taylor to give Watson clear passage to the try-line and the Scots held on to their advantage to the final whistle.

"We made so many breaks. We didn't have enough guys there to will the ball over the line," Cheika said. "That's something that we've got to get sorted out because otherwise we'll always be in these battles when we maybe shouldn't be. "There wasn't a huge amount of dropped balls, or we didn't have a lot of missed tackles or anything like that."

"But in some of the key moments, you need to have that focus of like, 'I'm going to step up and make this happen.'" Skipper Michael Hooper admitted after the game he had erred in not tak-

ing kicks for goal with a couple of penalties in the final stages.

"I really thought we had the momentum. I'm the ultimate believer in our guys to do the job and maybe too much so tonight," Hooper said. "In hindsight, maybe we could have gone to the goal just to mount up a bit of pressure."

"However, I was feeling that we were starting to get some really good pressure built on them with the amount of time we were spending in their 22, and I was waiting on a try to happen."

"I thought it would. It got very close a couple of times. Look, yeah, frustrating but plenty to look at on Monday."—AFP

JONES HAILS ENGLAND VETERANS AND ROOKIES

SANTA FE: England coach Eddie Jones hailed his Test veterans and international rookies yesterday after a 2-0 Test series triumph in Argentina achieved without many unavailable stars. A drop goal from outstanding fly-half George Ford with six minutes left sealed a thrilling 35-25 second-Test victory in north-eastern city Santa Fe.

Last weekend, England won an epic first Test 38-34 in San Juan thanks to a try by debutant winger Denny Solomona 100 seconds from time. British and Irish Lions call-ups for the tour of New Zealand and injuries robbed Jones of 30 candidates for the end-of-season visit to South America.

"I thought Chris Robshaw and Mike Brown were absolutely exceptional," said 57-year-old Australian Jones, referring to two of the few "old hands" in the Santa Fe line-up.

"Both of them demonstrated why they have represented their country more than 50 times," he told reporters. Flanker Robshaw, back after shoulder and ankle injuries ruled him out of the Six Nations Championship and the first Test in Argentina, foraged tirelessly.

Full-back Brown engineered the pick of the four England tries by leaping to intercept a

cross-field kick from Argentina fly-half Nicolas Sanchez during the opening half.

He then darted down the field and cleverly cut inside to draw defenders before passing out to centre Piers Francis, who scored. Jones also lauded Ford, labelling his performance behind an often battling pack as "brilliant".

"It was not a great attacking game from him—he had to find another way given the circumstances. "We did not have much ball, but kicking that field (drop) goal at the end was tactically brilliant."

Jones warned his rookies before the second Test that it might be the last chance to impress before a 45-man training squad is named during August with the World Cup in mind. "A few of the new guys have done really well," said the architect of a sensational 2015 Rugby World Cup triumph by minnows Japan over twice former champions South Africa.

Among the forwards, Jones praised prop Harry Williams, lock Charlie Ewels and flankers Mark Wilson, Sam Underhill and Tom Curry, a teenager. Williams, try-scorer Ewels and Underhill started in Santa Fe, Wilson came off the bench and Curry was rested after a superb first Test display.—AFP



SANTA FE: Argentina's Ramiro Moyano, left, tries to tackle England's Mike Brown during a rugby test match against Argentina in Santa Fe, Argentina, Saturday. — AP