

Sports

Japan's Joseph among 26 invited to apply for All Blacks coach role

New coaching team will be named before Christmas

WELLINGTON: New Zealand Rugby bosses have ruled out a foreign coach for the All Blacks, revealing yesterday they have asked 26 New Zealanders to apply including Jamie Joseph, who recently guided Japan to a historic first World Cup quarter-final.

Chairman Brent Impey said it was "a luxury" to have such coaching depth to call on after Steve Hansen stepped down at the end of the Rugby World Cup last weekend. The new coaching team will be named before Christmas, but Joseph is yet to say whether he will seek the All Blacks post or remain with Japan.

"If you look at what we've seen with the World Cup, many of those best coaches come from (New Zealand)," Impey said. "We believe we have covered the field in terms of those coaches who would have the skillset to do the job. This is a specialist job."

The announcement came as Japan's assistant coach Tony Brown revealed he would stay loyal to Joseph and had rejected approaches to join the coaching teams of two leading contenders, Ian Foster and Scott Robertson.

"I made a decision I'm going to stay with Jamie. If he applies for the All Blacks, I'm in. If he stays with Japan, I'm in," Brown said. Brown, a former All Blacks fly-half, has formed a close bond with Joseph since the pair rebuilt an ailing Otago Highlanders into Super Rugby champions in 2015.

The pair elevated World Cup hosts Japan into a top-10 nation with victories over Ireland and Scotland in the just-concluded showpiece.

"It felt right to stick with Jamie and what we've been doing for the last eight years," Brown said. "It was a massive decision. One hundred per cent I want to coach the All Blacks tomorrow. But it didn't feel right floating between three different coaching teams where I don't get a say."

"Jamie puts together a great team and we're all trying to make the team better. That's what I like about Jamie... Everyone's trying to make the team better. "We both want to coach the All Blacks but we both want to do it at the right time. Whether the right time is now, I hope it is or it may not be, it may be in four years."

Impey said the selection panel, which includes former World Cup-winning All Blacks coach Graham Henry, expected applicants to have their coaching support team ready when interviewed. "Whether it's your scrum coach, your backs coach, your defence coach, whatever it is we want to see a team going forward," he said.

"Those 26 candidates know what we've been saying so we're expecting that in the applications. "This is high performance. You've got to get the best, the very, very best. Our standards are very high. We believe our team has to be the best it possibly can."

Former Waikato Chiefs coach Dave Rennie, now with the Glasgow Warriors, said last week he had been asked to apply for the post. Another prominent name believed to be in the mix is Warren Gatland, although the outgoing Wales coach has been told he could not be the All Blacks coach and also keep his contract as the 2021 British and Irish Lions coach. Impey said former Ireland mentor Joe Schmidt was not available for consideration as he is taking a break from the game for family reasons. — AFP



TOKYO: Japan head coach Jamie Joseph arrives for the World Rugby Awards 2019 ceremony in Tokyo. — AFP

Finals of Bowling World Tour today

By Abdellatif Sharaa

KUWAIT: The finals of the Bowling World Tour will be played today with the participation of 12 top players from both genders from around the world. The finals with a total prizes of \$32,500 will be played at Kuwait Bowling Center, with the top winner bagging \$12,500. This one-day event, comes on the heels of the great success the 25th Asian Championship and Kuwait Open enjoyed, making Kuwait the focus of bowling sport lovers.

This is the history of world open tournaments, supervised by the International Bowling



Federation headed by Sheikh Talal Al-Mohammad, the tour will witness a championship as the "finals" with the participation of an elite group of bowlers, where the best three ranked players in 2019 of both genders will find themselves facing a player from the Asian, European and the Americas bowling federations. The continental federations selected Malaysia's Rafiq Ismail and Singapore's Cherie Tan from Asia, Iceland's Arnar Johnson and Sweden's Ana Anderson from Erupe, American Nick Pate and Colombian Clara Guerrero from the Americas to participate in the final.

Today's rounds will be played in two stages the first is a preliminary in the morning, where each player must go through six rounds where the top three quali-

fy to the final, which will take place in the evening.

Meanwhile, 16 players competed in the 13-round final of Kuwait Open which concluded yesterday, they are Australia's Sam Cooley, Iceland's Arnar Johnson, Hong Kong's Michael Mak, Danish Thomas Larsen, England's Stewart Williams, America's Nick Pate, America's Danielle McEwan, Kuwait's Mustafa Al-Mousawi, America's Brad Miller, America's Tommy Jones, Canada's Mitch Hope, Sweden's Martin Larson, England's Dom Barrett, Venezuela's Ildemaro Ruiz, America's AJ Johnson and Finland's Osku Palermaa.

America's AJ Chapman said this is the first time he competed in the Middle East in the open, and he lauded the organization and high level and this what will make him come again to compete here.

Gulf Bank holds press conference announcing Gulf Bank 642 Marathon

KUWAIT: Yesterday, Gulf Bank held a press conference in anticipation of one of its biggest events of the year, the Gulf Bank 642 Marathon. The much anticipated sporting event is scheduled to take place in less than ten days, on November 16, 2019, and invites challenge-seeking athletes as well as beginners to participate in one of Kuwait's biggest community events of the year. Last year's marathon was an unprecedented success with over 7,500 attendees representing over 66 nationalities competing at the event.

"Every year, we are proud to partner with local organizations that believe in our mission to spread awareness on the importance of health and fitness, and to take the lead in initiatives that benefit the Kuwaiti community. At Gulf Bank, we make it a point to welcome and support all members of our community, which is why the Gulf Bank 642 Marathon is open to participants of all levels," said Ahmad Al Amir, Assistant General Manager for External Communications at Gulf Bank. "Health and fitness are among the most important aspects of our corporate social responsibility program. According to the World Health Organization, the rate of obesity in Kuwait is 73.7%, and diabetics constitute 14.7% of the population, making events like this marathon more crucial than ever. Thanks to our combined efforts, the Gulf Bank 642 Marathon has become one of the biggest community events of the year and a fantastic day of fun for the whole family."

For the fifth year in a row, Gulf Bank is launching the Gulf Bank 642 Marathon in partnership with Pro-Vision Sports Management. The race consists of four categories open to runners of all abilities, including: the 5K Family Fun Walk/Run, the 10K Souq Run, the 21K Half Marathon, and 42K Full Marathon. The 5K is open to runners aged 11 and above, the 10K to runners aged 16 and above, and the 21K to runners aged 18 and above. The race takes runners through beautiful landmarks in Kuwait, starting at the entrance bridge of Souq Sharq, and heading in and out of Souq



AlMubarakiya. The Gulf Bank 642 Marathon is the only marathon in Kuwait that has the AbbottWMM accreditation. The AbbottWMM Wanda Age Group World Rankings, a global age group marathon ranking system. Runners participating in the Gulf Bank 642 Marathon 2019 will get a chance to qualify for the age group ranking program, earning points according to their age, time and gender, aligned with the following age groups for men and women: 40-44, 45-49, 50-54, 55-59, 60-64, 65-69, 70-74, 75-79, 80+.

Gulf Bank will also be hosting the Gulf Bank 642 Marathon Exhibition prior to the race. The three-day health and fitness event is scheduled to take place from November 12-14 at Kuwait International Fairgrounds (Hall 4A). This year's main sponsors include Kuwait Airways, Lincoln Alghanim, Extreme Sports, and Intersport. The exhibition will include a number of health and fitness-related discussions, as well as activi-

ties for participants to enjoy. Participants will also be able to collect their race kits at the exhibition.

Gulf Bank is committed to maintaining a robust corporate social responsibility program. Every year, Gulf Bank extends its support to local youth initiatives, proudly advocating for women empowerment, sustainability, health and fitness, and building on the legacy of Kuwait's heritage and history. This year, Gulf Bank 642 Marathon has partnered with Kuwait Red Crescent Society to bring medical aid to those who are unable to afford medical treatment, providing support in covering the provision of medical devices including pacemakers, cochlear devices, hearing aids, electric wheelchairs, and stents. For event registration and more information, please visit www.gulfbank642marathon.com or access the Instagram account @GulfBank642. Registration closes on November 15, 2019.

Women's boxing icon Adams retires due to medical advice

LONDON: Two-time Olympic champion Nicola Adams, regarded as the pathfinder for women's boxing, is to retire because of fears about her sight, the Briton announced yesterday. The 37-year-old, who became the first ever women's Olympic boxing champion at London 2012 when she took the flyweight crown, said she was abandoning her hopes of winning a third gold next year in Tokyo.

In an open letter to her local newspaper the Yorkshire Evening Post, Adams said she had decided to hang up her gloves because doctors had warned her sight would be permanently damaged if she continued to box.

Adams, who successfully defended her title in Rio, had embarked on a successful professional career and in 2018, within 18 months of doing so, had won a world title — the vacant WBO flyweight belt. "I've been advised that any further impact to my eye would most likely lead to irreparable damage and permanent vision loss," said Adams.

"I'm immensely honoured to have represented our country — to win double Olympic gold medals and then the WBO championship belt is a dream come true... But it's not without taking its toll on my body."

"To my wonderful team, I would not be the fighter I am today without your encouragement and understanding — what you have taught me goes beyond the ring. "Hanging up my gloves was always going to hard, but I have never felt luckier. And I'm so immensely proud of how far the sport has come."

Adams nicknamed herself the 'comeback kid' after returning from shoulder surgery in 2015 to win the inaugural European Games title. She had raised the profile of women's boxing in Britain both in and out of the ring, partly because of her dog, a Doberman called Dexter.

Aged 10 months he had been photographed watching her title fight at the Olympics on a television that had been installed in his kennels and was photographed apparently staring attentively at the screen. — AFP

Former cricket chief on panel to review Wallabies WCup flop

SYDNEY: Former cricket administrator Pat Howard was yesterday named as part of a three-man panel to review the Wallabies 2019 season which culminated in their World Cup flop.

Australia, under Michael Cheika, crashed out of the tournament in Japan at the quarter-final stage to England, sparking stinging criticism of not only his tactics, but his Rugby Australia bosses by domestic media.

Howard, an ex-Wallaby and team performance chief at Cricket Australia, will join four-time Olympic rower Bo Hanson and Australian Test centurion Nathan Sharpe in determining what went wrong. They will work alongside director of rugby Scott Johnson to deliver the review over the next month.

"Having these three individuals leading the process will provide a well-rounded perspective on the Wallabies programme," said Rugby Australia chief Raelene Castle. "It will enable us to take forward any key learnings for delivery into the major tournament preparations of all of our national teams over the next four-year cycle."

All 2019 Wallabies squad members and team staff will be interviewed. It is a continuation of a review process conducted in 2018 that saw the introduction of a three-person Wallabies selection panel and closer working arrangements with Super Rugby clubs.

The review will run separately to the process of appointing a new Wallabies coach after Cheika stepped down. Castle has previously said she hopes to make an announcement on the new coach before Christmas, with New Zealander Dave Rennie the favourite with bookmakers. — AFP