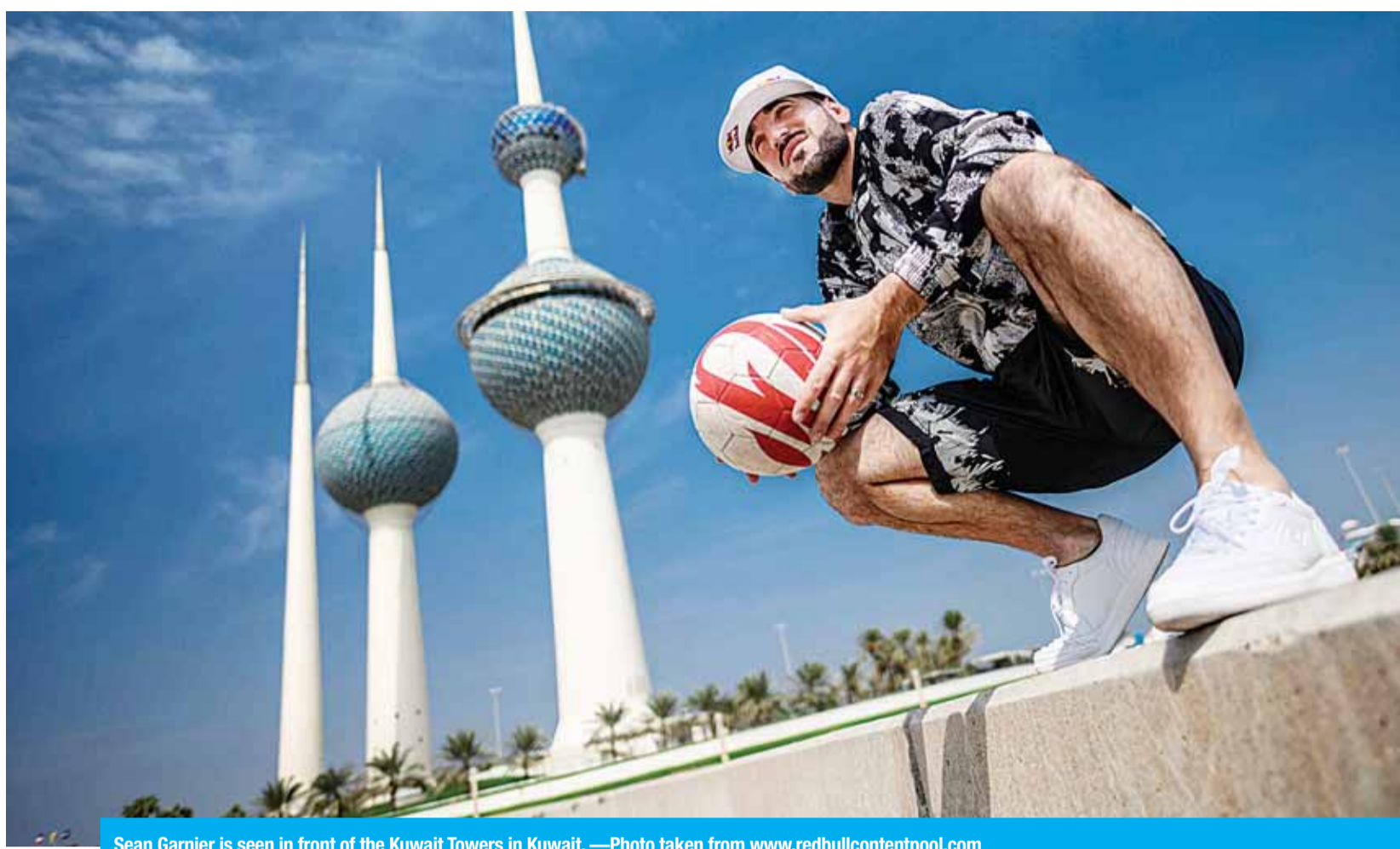


Sports

Photo of the day



Sean Garnier is seen in front of the Kuwait Towers in Kuwait. —Photo taken from www.redbullcontentpool.com

Eagle lifts England's Reid to LPGA lead in New Jersey

NEW YORK: Mel Reid fired an eagle and three birdies in a five-under par 66 on Saturday to seize a one-shot lead going into the final round of the LPGA ShopRite Classic. England's Reid, who was one off the pace heading into the round, had 15-under par total at the Seaview resort in Galloway New Jersey, and was one in front of Americans Jennifer Song and Jennifer Kupcho, who both shot 65. It's the second straight event that Reid, a six-time winner on the Ladies European Tour, has held the 54-hole lead in search of a first LPGA Tour title. She was two-up through three rounds in Portland but finished tied for fifth in a tournament won by compatriot Georgia Hall in a playoff.

"Another great opportunity this week to get it done," Reid said. "Tomorrow I'm going to take my time a little bit more, and hopefully it will make a bit of a difference." Reid put herself in position again with a quick start at Seaview, where she birdied the first and third. She was on the green in two at the par-five ninth and two-putted for birdie and a birdie at the 10th put her alone atop the leaderboard. "I knew it was always in me to do this," Reid said. "I wasn't sure how to get there. It has just taken me a lot more years than I expected it to."

Kupcho and Song both birdied the par-five 18th to close the gap. Kupcho's four-foot birdie attempt wobbled a bit but dropped in the right side as she capped a bogey-free round. The 23-year-old had drained a dazzling birdie putt at the 13th, her effort from the tier above the pin breaking wide and curling back toward the hole, finally dropping in the back side of the cup. "It was just curling and it just back-doored in," Kupcho said. Song also played without a bogey, grabbing three birdies on each side for her share of second. —AFP

Kitata sprints to London Marathon win as Kipchoge suffers rare defeat

Favorite Kipchoge fades to eighth after suffering cramp

LONDON: Ethiopian Shura Kitata outsprinted Kenya's Vincent Kipchumba to win a thrilling London Marathon yesterday as a stunned world record holder Eliud Kipchoge faded late in the race to suffer his first defeat since 2013. In cold, wet conditions, 24-year-old Kitata edged clear in the final metres to win by one second over Kipchumba in a relatively slow two hours, 05.41 minutes.

Sisay Lemma of Ethiopia was third in 2:5.35, with Kipchoge, the hot favorite, who in his last race a year ago became the only man to break the two hour mark for the distance, eighth in 2:06.49 having suffered cramp and a blocked ear. In the absence of injured Kenenisa Bekele, Kipchoge was widely expected to lift a fifth London crown but was never able to impose his usual speed in the relentless cold rain. He was in a pack who went through halfway in just under 63 minutes - very pedestrian in relation to his recent races, not least his official world record of 2:01.39 set in Berlin two years ago.

Ethiophians Lemma and Tamirat Tola, both sporting woollen hats to stave off the cold, took up the

running as the field began to realize that, perhaps, Kipchoge was struggling. They were right. The favorite, whose face never usually gives any indication of suffering, was showing the occasional grimace and he lacked his usual smoothness. At one point the leaders clocked a five minute mile, a virtual jog at elite level. Then, as never previously seen during his all-conquering career, Kipchoge, 35, broke, dropping back from a pack of six with just over three miles to go.

As the pace eventually picked up it was down to three, shoulder to shoulder, as they entered The Mall in a finish more like an 800m race than a marathon. The tall Kipchumba looked as if he would do it as he edged ahead, but Kitata fought back magnificently to take the tape. Kitata, who finished second in London in 2018, thanked his missing compatriot for his victory. "Kenenisa Bekele was helping me for this race and he advised me how to run," he said. "I trained for the same course, I am very happy to win."

Kipchoge had won 12 of his 13 previous

marathons - the blip being a second place behind a then-world record in his second outing over the distance in Berlin in 2013. "I'm really disappointed, I had a problem with my right ear after it blocked, and then I really cramped and had problems with my hip from about the last 15 km," he said. "It's really cold but I don't blame the conditions and I'm still there to come back again."

Earlier, Kenyan world record holder Brigid Kosgei was a comfortable winner of the women's race in 2:18.58 as American Sara Hall produced a great finish to snatch second from Ruth Chepngetich. The races, originally postponed from April because of the COVID-19 pandemic, were run over almost 20 laps of a fenced-off course in a "controlled secure biosphere" around St James's Park. Although there was no mass field this year, around 40,000 people are running the distance at venues of their choice through the day. They will receive official finisher's medals and raise millions of pounds for charities hard hit by the cancellation of the April race. —Reuters



LONDON: Winner, Ethiopia's Shura Kitata poses with his trophy in front of Buckingham Palace after the elite men's race of the 2020 London Marathon in central London yesterday. —AFP

Patriots-Chiefs NFL game postponed after COVID tests

NEW YORK: Yesterday's scheduled NFL game between the New England Patriots and Kansas City Chiefs was postponed by the league on Saturday after positive COVID-19 tests by Patriots quarterback Cam Newton and Chiefs reserve Jordan Ta'amu. The NFL postponed the contest to Monday or Tuesday in the wake of the positive tests for the reigning Super Bowl champion Chiefs, who closed their facility according to the NFL Network, and Patriots, who altered plans to travel to Kansas City for the game.

"In consultation with infectious disease experts, both clubs are working closely with the NFL and the NFLPA to evaluate multiple close contacts, perform additional testing and monitor developments," the league said in a statement. "All decisions will be made with the health and safety of players, team and game-day personnel as our primary consideration." The Chiefs-Patriots clash marks the second game originally set for this weekend postponed by COVID-19 positive tests. The Tennessee Titans and Pittsburgh Steelers contest was moved to October 25 after first being delayed to Monday or Tuesday by the NFL before additional positive results were returned.

If the Chiefs (3-0) are forced to play Tuesday, the Patrick Mahomes-led squad would be looking at three games in nine days with their next contests set for October 11 at home against Las Vegas and four days later at Buffalo. The first sign of trouble came when the Patriots announced a player had tested positive, his identity later confirmed as star run-pass threat Newton when he was placed on COVID-19 reserve, ensuring he would not play this weekend. Newton replaced Tom Brady as the signal caller for the Patriots (2-1) this season after Brady spent 20 years with New England, winning six Super Bowl titles.

"Late last night, we received notice that a Patriots player tested positive for COVID-19," the Patriots said in a statement. "The player immediately entered self-quarantine. Several additional players, coaches and staff who have been in close contact with the player received point of care tests this morning and all were negative for COVID-19. "We are in close consultation with the NFL as well as our team of independent doctors and specialists and will follow their guidance regarding our scheduled trip to Kansas City and game against the Chiefs.—AFP

Enable bids for Arc history, O'Brien withdraws runners

PARIS: Enable bids to become the first horse to win the Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe three times on Sunday, boosted by the shock withdrawal of Aidan O'Brien's four runners. Frankie Dettori and Enable will now face just 10 rivals with the rain-affected ground at Longchamp racecourse the main obstacle to her making history. O'Brien withdrew his quartet - which included the fancied Mogul and Epsom Derby champion Serpentine - late on Saturday after they tested positive for a banned substance.

It is believed the substance may have been in contaminated horse feed. Leading English trainer Roger Varian withdrew all seven runners he had racing in England on Saturday due to using the same feed. Various batches of Gain Equine Nutrition feeds have been found to be contaminated with a prohibited substance. "Unfortunately the results of the urine samples taken from the horses yesterday have come back positive from the French laboratory," read a tweet from O'Brien's Ballydoyle Stables account. "There is a possibility that the contaminant may have left their system by the time of racing tomorrow."

"However we have no guarantee of this, and in order to protect the integrity of racing we have decided to withdraw all our horses from racing tomorrow (Sunday)." Enable may be unaffected by the feed furor but the heavy

Banged-up Heat remain defiant despite 2-0 deficit

LOS ANGELES: Down 0-2 and expecting to be without two key starters, the Miami Heat remain defiant as they look to Game 3 of the NBA Finals against the Los Angeles Lakers on Sunday night in the NBA bubble near Orlando. "We don't give a s--- what everybody else thinks," Heat coach Erik Spoelstra said in the aftermath of the 124-114 Game 2 loss Friday. "What will it take? Whatever is necessary. Simple as that. If you want something badly enough, you'll figure it out. Our group is stubborn and persistent, and we just need to figure out how to overcome this opponent."

Without Bam Adebayo (neck) and Goran Dragic (foot) on Friday, Miami showed grit in avoiding being blown out the way Game 1 unfolded,

rain throughout the week in Paris has turned the ground at Longchamp into a real challenge for her. Dettori described the going as "heavy" after riding there on Saturday with fellow jockey Christophe Soumillon going further and saying it was the "most gruelling" he had ever experienced at the track.

'A very calm horse'

Enable's trainer John Gosden mused it was "Nature's way of getting back at us (humans)" after years of neglecting it. The 69-year-old Englishman, who along with Dettori is bidding for their fourth win in six editions of the Arc, fears the race is going to turn into a grim test of endurance. "She (Enable) doesn't much like that ground. She prefers the easy side of good, so she can show her class, but it is going to be a bit of a slog," said Gosden. "It is drying up now and it is tacky, but you might get another shower or two. "It is Longchamp, by the River Seine - it is deep." Enable would not have been running but for seeing her hopes of a third successive Arc triumph last year dashed when runner-up having been collared by Waldgeist in the dying strides. "I think Prince Khalid (Abdullah her owner and breeder) was brave in saying we'll try again," Gosden told English broadcaster ITV. "We're here and we're trying. We care about the filly in every way, she's a gorgeous filly to be around and she's been with us for five years."

"Let's hope she gets a great run round - and if she wins, marvellous, if she doesn't, she couldn't have done more for racing." She reminds me of the great jumping legends who had tremendous popular appeal Denman, Arkle, Desert Orchids - she's that kind of feeling," Gosden is two-handed as he runs his legendary three-time Ascot Gold Cup winner

when the Heat trailed by as many as 32 points. Jimmy Butler led the way with 25 points, 13 assists and eight rebounds in playing 45 minutes, and Kelly Olynyk was a surprise off the bench with 24 points and nine rebounds. The Heat may need that again and more Sunday as Adebayo and Dragic-two of the team's top three scorers these playoffs—are both listed as doubtful.

"We're never giving up," said Butler. "We're going to fight, and we're going to ride with this thing 'til the wheels fall off. It's not over. We're just down 0-2; we got to do something special." For the Lakers, the key is doing more of the same. Los Angeles has been dominant the first two games, outscoring and outrebounding Miami. The Western Conference champs have been potent both in the paint and from long range, and they show little sign of slowing down with LeBron James and Anthony Davis leading the way. "Those guys are playing at an extremely high level, and hopefully we can get two more wins," said coach Frank Vogel.

Davis is averaging 33 points and 11.5 rebounds



PARIS: Italian jockey Frankie Dettori riding horse 'Enable' - reacts after finishing second during the 2019 Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe flat race at the ParisLongchamp race track in Paris. —AFP

Stradivarius but he dislikes the 'bottomless ground' even more than Enable. Winning the Arc has been the dream of Japanese turfists for decades but their one runner Deirdre has been in poor form this year. Enable's greatest dangers appear to be the Jean Claude Rouget-trained duo Sotsass and Raabihah and Francis-Henri Graffard's German Derby winner In Swoop. Graffard says those who back In Swoop should not be unduly alarmed if he is trailing behind the other runners early on. "He's by nature a very calm horse, which can almost give the impression that he's not engaged mentally in his race," said Graffard. "He only really hit full stride in the final 200 metres of the race (the German Derby) before going on to win." —AFP

through the first two games, and James is just behind at 29 and 11. The dynamic duo has elicited comparisons to Kobe Bryant and Shaquille O'Neal, who combined to win three consecutive championships for the Lakers from 2000-02. "To be in the conversation with those two guys, myself and AD, is just very humbling, because I grew up watching those guys," James said. "... It's very humbling that we can be even mentioned with those greats."

Prior to the Finals, the Heat hadn't lost two consecutive games all postseason. Miami entered the series 12-3 after powering through the Eastern Conference. The last time a team came back from 0-2 to win the Finals was in 2016, when James' Cleveland Cavaliers accomplished the feat against the Golden State Warriors. As such, Los Angeles isn't ruling out Miami yet. "Until we win four games, we haven't accomplished our goal," Lakers guard Alex Caruso said. "It's been over a year together, and we've talked about the same goal from Day 1. We're still here chasing that same goal. Until we get four wins, we're staying hungry." —Reuters