



LONDON: (From left) Malaysia's Ridwan Sahrom, Australia's Matthew Glaetzer, England's Joe Truman, New Zealand's Sam Webster, Trinidad and Tobago's Kwesi Browne and Scotland's Jack Carlin compete in the men's Keirin second round cycling event on day two of the Commonwealth Games, at the Lee Valley VeloPark in east London. —AFP

## Proud powers into semi-finals

### Peaty targets redemption; Kenny, Glaetzer strike gold

**BIRMINGHAM:** World champion Ben Proud powered into the semi-finals of the men's 50m freestyle at the Commonwealth Games on Tuesday as breaststroke star Adam Peaty prepared for a shot at redemption. England's Proud, who won the world title in Budapest in June, was third-quickest in the heats, behind compatriot Lewis Burras, who touched in 22.09sec, and Australia's Tom Nowakowski.

"This is what the whole thing's about," said the 27-year-old, who is aiming for a third straight 50m freestyle Commonwealth title. "In the butterfly (he won gold on Saturday) it was about reclaiming my title after a few years. "The freestyle has been with me the whole time. I work a lot harder for it, I put in work every single day. "This is something I am going to do to prove that I have consistently been at the top for eight years."

Canadian world champion Kylie Masse topped the charts in the women's 50m backstroke heats in a time of 27.57, with Australia's Bronte Job and Kaylee McKeown also in the mix. England's Luke Greenbank (1min 56.33sec) was quickest in qualifying for the final of the men's 200m backstroke, ahead of compatriot Brodie Williams. Australian teenager Elizabeth Dekkers was fastest in the women's 200m butterfly heats, timing 2:07.62, while compatriot Sam Short dominated the men's 1500m freestyle heats, touching in 15:02.66.

Ten gold medals are on offer on Tuesday evening on the penultimate night of action at the Sandwell Aquatics Centre, including medals in para swimming. England's Peaty, the world record holder in the 50m breaststroke, is desperate to avenge his "devastating" loss in the 100m event. But the 27-year-old, who missed the recent world championships with a foot fracture, will face a stiff challenge, with Australia's Sam Williamson the quickest in qualifying. Australia lead the way in the Commonwealth pool with 16 golds out of a possible 33.

#### Emotional cycling finale

Meanwhile, England's Laura Kenny and Australian Matthew Glaetzer won Commonwealth Games gold medals on an emotion-packed final day at the track cycling on Monday. Kenny, who has suffered a miscarriage and an ectopic pregnancy since competing at last year's Tokyo Olympics, admitted she had thought it was "going to be my last race".

However, she re-focused and won the women's 10-kilometre scratch on the same track where 10 years ago, aged 20, she won double Olympic gold. Glaetzer battled back from thyroid cancer to compete at the Olympics but after some wretched luck in Birmingham - coming to grief in the keirin and then stripped of his bronze medal in the sprint on Sunday - he won the men's 1,000m time trial.

New Zealand's Ellesse Andrews won her third gold of the Games, landing the women's keirin. Her compatriot, Aaron Gate, also won for the third time at the Games, taking gold in the men's 40km points race. Kenny - watched by husband, fellow cycling great Jason Kenny - whipped off her helmet and whirled her right hand in the air, pointing to the raucous crowd before dismounting and draping herself in the flag of St George.

#### 'Lost spark'

It was a sharp contrast from her emotions in the lead-up to the race. Kenny, who has a young son, had taken bronze in the team pursuit and then finished 13th in the points race on Sunday. She admitted her confidence had been shaken by a horrific crash on that day that had resulted in her team-mate, Matt Walls, being taken to hospital. Her race on Monday was also marred by a crash that led to Indian rider Meenakshi

Meenakshi being stretchered off the track. "You see something like that (Walls going over the barrier into the crowd)... I was having a serious confidence crisis," she told the BBC.

"I just didn't want to be on the track and when that happens I race badly and I don't get a result. "And that's what happened. Whereas today I was so fired up. I kept saying to myself in the toilet, 'I can do this.'" Kenny, who secured England's only track cycling gold at the Commonwealths, said she had told her husband on Sunday night the game was up. "I can't believe it. Honestly, I said to Jase (Jason Kenny) 'I think this is going to be my last race,'" she said.

"I've lost the spark, training doesn't come that easy. I have absolutely just lost motivation. "Then last night I was messaging my new coach Len and I was like 'No, I'm not giving up. I have one more roll of the dice, please just help me. "It could not have been better set up if I tried." Glaetzer had a beaming smile as he stood on the top step of the podium. The 29-year-old had soaked up the applause on his lap of honour, with an Australian flag tied around his neck, Superman style.

"I'm making a habit of bouncing back at the Commonwealth Games," said Glaetzer, who timed 59.505sec. "I'd rather not have such lows to come back from, but it shows there is always a new day and we can always try again," he said. New Zealand and Australia dominated the Commonwealth Games track cycling, which included para track events, winning eight gold medals apiece. Most of the events at the Commonwealths are being held in Birmingham but the track cycling took place at the Lee Valley VeloPark in London. —AFP

## Premier League clubs flex financial muscle

**MANCHESTER:** Premier League clubs have splashed an estimated £1 billion (\$1.2 billion) in the arms race for new talent ahead of the start to the 2022/23 season on Friday, but champions Manchester City remain the side to beat. After winning four league titles in five years, Pep Guardiola's squad has been bolstered by the biggest name arrival of the summer in Erling Haaland. The Norwegian had his choice of Europe's top clubs after scoring 85 goals in 88 games for Borussia Dortmund and followed in the footsteps of his father Alf Inge - a former City captain - to the blue side of Manchester.

Haaland may have had a debut to forget as he missed a glaring opportunity towards the end of City's 3-1 Community Shield defeat to Liverpool on Saturday, but Guardiola warned the pretenders to his side's throne that "the goals will come". "There is no reason not to be confident," added Guardiola. "What these guys have done, not just in the Premier League, but in the cups, the steps we have made in Europe and in many things." In a window of significant change at the Etihad, Argentine forward Julian Alvarez and England international midfielder Kalvin Phillips have also arrived. But Guardiola has let plenty of experience go to Premier League rivals with Gabriel Jesus and Aleksandr Zinchenko heading to Arsenal and Raheem Sterling joining Chelsea. Liverpool are best placed to pounce on any slipping of City's standards.

Jürgen Klopp's side were denied a historic quadruple by the finest of margins last season as they were pipped to the title by a point and lost the Champions League final 1-0 to Real Madrid after winning the League and FA Cup. The Reds have also refreshed their front line with the imposing presence of Darwin Nunez coming in to compensate for the loss of Sadio Mane to Bayern Munich. Nunez did make an immediate impact in the Community Shield, winning a penalty and scoring to turn the game in Liverpool's favor late in the game.

#### Tottenham title challenge?

City and Liverpool have dominated English football for the past five years, but if there is to be a challenge from the chasing pack, it could come from Tottenham. Ahead of Antonio Conte's first full season in charge, the Italian has been heavily backed by the normally thrifty Spurs board with the signings of Richarlison, Yves Bissouma, Ivan Perisic, Djed Spence, Clement Lenglet and Fraser Forster. Crucially, Tottenham have also retained the star duo of Harry Kane and Son Heung-min as they aim for a first league title in 62 years.

Arsenal have been in blistering pre-season form with Jesus on fire in thrashings of Chelsea and Sevilla. Chelsea boss Thomas Tuchel blasted his side as "not competitive" after losing 4-0 to the Gunners in Orlando and the Blues are a team in transition following Todd Boehly's takeover. There is also plenty of work ahead for new Manchester United manager Erik ten Hag with the uncertain future of Cristiano Ronaldo hanging over start of a new era for the Red Devils.

New boys Forest outspend Newcastle: Amid the scale of big spending from English clubs, Newcastle have been surprisingly quiet in their first summer window since a takeover from the Saudi sovereign wealth fund. The Magpies have spent just short of £60 million on Dutch defender Sven Botman, England goalkeeper Nick Pope and a permanent deal for left-back Matt Targett. New boys Nottingham Forest have splashed over £70 million on 12 new signings in the two-time European champions' first season back in the top flight for 23 years.

That sum does not even include a one-year deal for Jesse Lingard worth a reported £200,000-a-week after he joined on a free transfer from Manchester United. Aston Villa's transfer business is arguably the best example of the growing financial gulf between the Premier League and the rest of Europe. —AFP

## US PGA Tour offers record \$415 million in 2022-23 season

**MIAMI:** Faced with a growing challenge from the Saudi-backed LIV Golf Series, the US PGA Tour announced a 2022-23 season schedule on Monday offering a record \$415 million in prize money. The PGA boosted the prize money at eight invitational tournaments, with The Players Championship set to pay out \$25 million, and will offer \$145 million in bonus money, including \$75 million for the FedEx Cup playoffs, which will be trimmed to 70 players from the current 125. The move comes as the LIV Golf Series has offered the highest purses in history to lure big-name talent from the PGA to its upstart tour, which is set to rise from eight events in 2022 to 14 in 2023.

LIV Golf has drawn protests and claims of "sportwashing" from critics citing Saudi human rights issues but such stars as Dustin Johnson, Phil Mickelson, Henrik Stenson, Bryson DeChambeau, Paul Casey and Patrick Reed have jumped to the rebel series that debuted in June. The US PGA, which will return to a season that coincides with the calendar year starting in 2024, tightened its playoffs and boosted select purses after comments from fans, PGA commissioner Jay Monahan said.

"The overwhelming sentiment was they wanted more consequences for both the regular season and the playoffs and to further strengthen events that traditionally feature top players competing head-to-head," Monahan said. "We feel strongly we've accomplished all of these objectives." The 2022-23 PGA season will have 47 tournaments, including three playoff events next August with a field of 70 at the St. Jude Championship in Memphis, 50 at the BMW Championship in Chicago and the top 30 in points advancing to the season-ending Tour Championship at East Lake in Atlanta.

After the season ends, late 2023 will feature events for those outside the top 70 to earn status for the 2024 PGA



ST ALBANS: South African golfer Charl Schwartzel plays a last shot on the 18th hole during the third and final day of the LIV Golf Invitational Series event at The Centurion Club in St Albans, north of London. —AFP

campaign plus a series of "international events" featuring the PGA top 50 in a limited field, no-cut format. No other details were revealed about those events. The St Jude and BMW will see a jump in prize money from \$15 million to \$20 million. The January Tournament of Champions will see its purse rise from \$8.2 to \$15 million next year. It will become the leadoff event of the PGA season when the schedule changes in 2024.

Four events will see prize money jump from \$12 million to \$20 million: the Genesis Invitational in February hosted by Tiger Woods, the Arnold Palmer Invitational at Bay Hill in March, the Jack Nicklaus-hosted Memorial in June and the WGC Match Play in March. Prize money will jump from

\$20 million to \$25 million for The Players Championship in March. The Scottish Open, Barbasol Championship and Barracuda Championship will remain co-sanctioned with the DP World Tour.

The 2022-23 campaign will begin on September 15-18 with the Fortinet Championship at Napa, California, with the Presidents Cup the following week at Quail Hollow. The CJ Cup has been moved from South Korea to South Carolina and will be played in October with the Bermuda Championship the following week. The Rocket Mortgage Classic, won Sunday by Tony Finau, will start June 29 next year while the 3M Open moves to the end of July. —AFP