



BIRMINGHAM: Australia's Emma McKeon (top) competes to win and take the gold medal in the women's 50m freestyle swimming final at the Sandwell Aquatics Centre. —AFP

Pool queen McKeon makes history; Kiplimo dances to 10,000m victory

Johnson-Thompson on track to end title drought

BIRMINGHAM: Australian swim star Emma McKeon made Commonwealth Games history by winning her 19th medal as Jacob Kiplimo raced to victory in the 10,000m on the first day of track and field. McKeon pulled one ahead of shooters Michael Gault and Phil Adams and fellow swim star Chad le Clos, who has endured a nightmare Games in Birmingham. The 30-year-old South African had looked set to take the record himself when he came to Birmingham but so far he has just a silver medal to show for his efforts. On another dramatic night of action in the pool, Adam Peaty showed the mentality that has brought him three Olympic titles. The 27-year-old Englishman admitted to being at the "bottom of the bottom" after his shock defeat in the 100m but bounced back on Tuesday to take gold in the 50m.

"I had two options this morning I either fight or don't fight," he told the BBC. "Everyone who knows me, knows I fight." Prince William, his wife Kate and their seven-year-old daughter Charlotte attended the morning session of the swimming events. The evening again belonged to dominant Australia, who have now won 22 golds at the Sandwell Aquatics Centre out of a total of 43 on offer.

Kiplimo win

Uganda's Jacob Kiplimo made light of the absence of two-time world 10,000m champion Joseph Cheptegei by destroying his compatriot's Commonwealth Games record at the Alexander Stadium. Kiplimo, who took bronze at the recent world championships, celebrated with a dance on crossing the line after finishing in 27min 09.19sec, ahead of Kenyan pair Daniel Ekenoy and Kibiwot Kandie.

"I think for me for winning this Commonwealth Games title was everything, the most important thing for me this season," said the 21-year-old Olympic bronze medalist. "But

I still have a lot of things to do in the future at the Olympics and world championships." There were golds too for Australia's Nina Kennedy, who built on her bronze in the world championships to take the pole vault title with a best of 4.60 metres, and Chioma Onyekwere of Nigeria in the discus (61.70m).

England's Jake Jarman claimed a fourth gold medal on the final day of gymnastics while compatriot Joe Fraser grabbed his third with victory in the parallel bars. "I'm going to find somewhere in my house to store them (the medals) - maybe a glass cabinet or something like that, if there's space," said the 20-year-old Jarman. On another stellar day for the home nation, Alice Kinsella won the women's floor while Australia's Kate McDonald won gold in the women's balance beam. Cypriot Ilias Georgiou won the men's horizontal bar.

England finished with 10 gold medals out of a total of 14 in the artistic gymnastics. In the more genteel world of lawn bowls, India triumphed in the women's fours final, beating 2018 silver medalists South Africa 17-10, while Wales beat England in the men's pairs final.

"We woke up with the mindset that this is a new day, a new beginning, and that we have the opportunity to do something very special," said India's Rupa Rani Turkey. "We are glad we were able to achieve that."

Samoan weightlifter Don Opeloge won 96kg gold after his dreams of competing in the Tokyo Olympics were dashed by Covid-19 travel restrictions. On Tuesday he performed a celebratory dance and hopes there will be more to come from his compatriots on Wednesday. "We are called the 'Dream Team' in Samoa and we will win more medals. Tomorrow I will be dancing and singing with them." The first-ever Commonwealth 3x3 basketball competition came

to an end with England beating Australia in the men's final while Canada beat the host nation in the women's gold-medal match.

Kenyan woe at Games

Katarina Johnson-Thompson is within sight of her first heptathlon title since being crowned world champion in 2019 going into Wednesday's evening session at the Commonwealth Games. The 29-year-old, who has struggled with injuries, takes a 122-point lead over compatriot Jade O'Dowda into the javelin and 800m after the long jump competition.

She will headline the evening session alongside Jamaica's Olympic sprint champion Elaine Herah-Thompson, who is bidding to bounce back from the disappointment of taking bronze in the 100m at last month's world championships. Kenya's medal hopes suffered a major blow in the morning session when Olympic and world 800m champion Emmanuel Korir was disqualified from the 400m for lane infringement in his heat.

Compatriot Mary Moraa's hopes of an unlikely 400m-800m double also ended as she eased out early in her 400m heat. The world 800m bronze medalist did not seem overly concerned as she had a big smile on her face-she has already qualified for Saturday's women's 800m final. England's Victoria Ohuruogu, who is coached by her sister, the 2008 Olympic 400m champion Christine-sauntered through her heat in 51.34sec, with Jamaica's Junelle Bromfield also through.

Both 29-year-old Ohuruogu and Bromfield won relay medals in the world championships in Eugene, Oregon. "I felt a bit rusty, a few niggles, but happy to go through and on to the next one," said Ohuruogu. The form runner in the



BIRMINGHAM: Gold medalist Uganda's Jacob Kiplimo celebrates on the podium during the medal ceremony for the men's 10,000m athletics event at the Alexander Stadium in Birmingham. —AFP

400m is Sada Williams of Barbados, who took individual bronze at the worlds and looked impressive in winning her heat. Ohuruogu's team-mate, Matthew Hudson-Smith has battled back from mental health issues to take a world bronze in the 400m.

He eased into the second round in a time of 46.26 and the disqualification of Korir has removed a sizeable obstacle for his ambitions of taking gold. "I have tired legs, but it was a controlled heat really," he said. "My recent British record (44.35, set in May) gives me loads of confidence coming here, but the job's not done." Muzala Samukonga might have paid a hefty price for running a personal best of 44.89 to win his heat as he clutched his right hamstring. The Zambian ended up being taken off in a wheelchair. —AFP

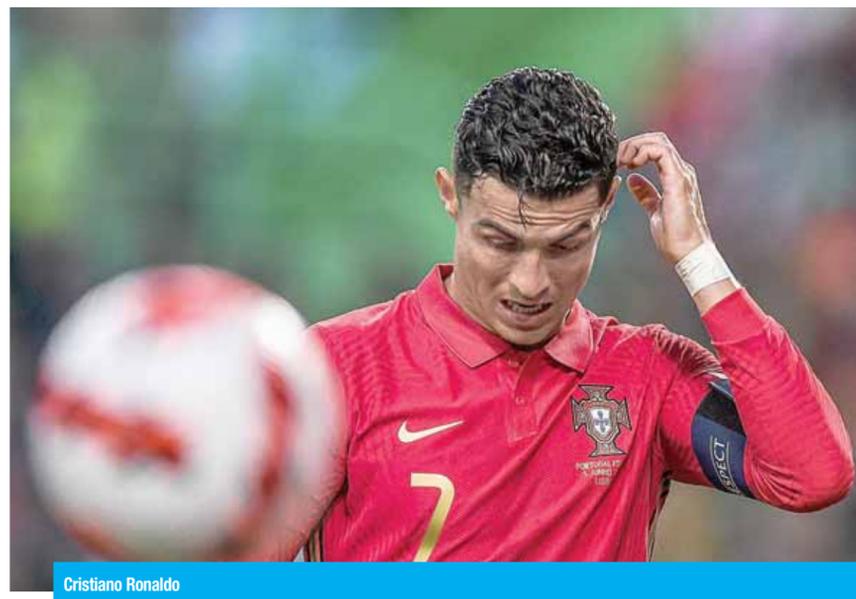
Ronaldo, Maguire most abused Premier League players on Twitter

LONDON: Manchester United's Cristiano Ronaldo and Harry Maguire have received the most Twitter abuse of any Premier League players, a report published Tuesday has found. Analysis by British media regulator Ofcom of 2.3 million tweets in the first half of last season found nearly 60,000 abusive posts, affecting seven in 10 top-flight players. Half of that abuse was directed at just 12 individuals - eight from United.

Twitter was chosen due to its popularity with players, and because it makes data available for research but the study does not take into account the safeguards that are in place. Ofcom is preparing to regulate technology companies under new Online Safety laws aimed at protecting users. "These findings shed light on a dark side to the beautiful game," Ofcom group director for broadcasting and online content Kevin Bakhurst said. "Online abuse has no place in sport, nor in wider society, and tackling it requires a team effort."

"Social media firms needn't wait for new laws to make their sites and apps safer for users. When we become the regulator for online safety, tech companies will have to be really open about the steps they're taking to protect users. We will expect them to design their services with safety in mind." The report identified two peaks in the frequency of abusive tweets. The first came on the day Ronaldo rejoined Manchester United-August 27 2021 - generating three times more tweets than any other day (188,769), of which 3,961 were abusive.

The volume of posts can largely be explained because of Ronaldo's 98.4 million followers. On this day, the Portugal forward was mentioned in 90 percent of all tweets aimed at



Cristiano Ronaldo

Premier League footballers and 97 percent of abusive tweets. The second peak came on November 7 when Maguire tweeted an apology following Manchester United's 2-0 home defeat by Manchester City, with many posts using insulting language towards the England defender.

Twitter said it also removed more than 38,000 abusive tweets, with a spokesperson telling Britain's PA news agency they were "committed" to combating abuse and did not tol-

erate harassment on grounds of race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity or sexual orientation. At an Ofcom event at the National Football Museum in Manchester on Tuesday, Manchester United women's player Aoife Mannion said using social media was a particular "deal with the devil" for female footballers. "We do need it because we need the exposure and visibility we get from it, we don't need the abuse," she said. —AFP

Kuwait's FA hires Bento as national team head coach

KUWAIT: Kuwait Football Association appointed Portuguese former capped international Rui Bento as national team head coach on Tuesday. The FA also appointed his compatriot Emilio Peixe as head coach for the U-20s side and a referee committee, headed by Irishman Alan Snoddy. Bento, 50, began his senior playing career in 1991 as a centre back for Portuguese Primeira Liga record title-holders and two-time UEFA Champions League winners Benfica, retiring at Sporting Lisbon in 2004.

He won the Primeira Liga twice with Lisbon clubs Boavista and Sporting in the 2000-01 and 2001-02 seasons respectively, where he played as a defensive midfielder and the FIFA U-20 World Cup with the Portuguese national team. Bento's managerial career began in 2009, his most significant sides managed being Boavista and Portugal's U-17s between 2008 and 2011, along with a brief stint at the Saudi Pro League with Al-Ahli Saudi FC. —KUNA