



EUGENE: Emmanuel Kipkurui Korir of Team Kenya crosses the finish line to win gold in the Men's 800m Final on day nine of the World Athletics Championships Oregon22 at Hayward Field on July 23, 2022. —AFP

Korir, Pichardo add world titles to Olympic crowns

Tsegay wins world 5000m gold; Injury heartbreak for Warner

EUGENE: Kenya's Emmanuel Korir and Pedro Pichardo of Portugal added world titles to their respective Olympic crowns on Saturday, but there was injury heartbreak for Canada's Damian Warner in the decathlon. Two other gold medalists from last year's Tokyo Games had a mixed bag, Indian Neeraj Chopra having to content himself with silver in the men's javelin, but Dutch runner Sifan Hassan leaving Eugene medal-less after finishing sixth in the women's 5,000m.

The 4x100m relays saw the US women beat a loaded Jamaican team featuring individual sprint champions Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce and Shericka Jackson, to win gold, but a Canada team anchored by Olympic 200m champion Andre de Grasse beat the favored US men's team into silver. "It felt great to do it, to spoil the party for them," said De Grasse, who contracted Covid-19 three weeks before the championships and was too fatigued to race the 200m. "We talked about this moment so many times. We came up a little bit short at the Olympics, and we were all like, we could do better...it's a good way to end the championship."

Korir produced a trademark kick from

200 meters out to win the men's 800m in 1min 43.71sec, well ahead of Algerian Djamel Sedjati with silver and Canada's Marco Arop bronze. "I knew there were some guys close behind me in the last 100m," Korir said. "I was expecting someone to come, but no one did. I never shake my end in training but I do in races. It's like magic. I have been working for this. It's been a long wait-I failed in 2017 and 2019 and I made it now."

Pichardo was imperious in the triple jump, all but tying up competition when he went out to 17.95 metres on his first attempt. "I opened strongly," the Cuban-born Pichardo said, adding that he had been mentally focused on the mythical 18-metre mark in a bid to better his two previous silvers. "My mindset was focused on 18m. It did not come out today, but more importantly, I won gold. This world title was elusive to me."

In the absence of American multiple global medal winner Christian Taylor, world and Olympic bronze medallist Hugues Fabrice Zango of Burkina Faso claimed silver 40cm off Pichardo, while China's Zhu Yaming took bronze. Warner, also a winner in Tokyo, was in full control

of the decathlon after four of the first day's five events, but he pulled up injured in the 400m. He was left lying on the track clutching his left hamstring.

Puerto Rico's Ayden Owens-Delemew is now recalled as the overnight leader, with the second day of action comprising the 110m hurdles, discus throw, pole vault, javelin throw and 1500m.

No mercy shown

Grenada's Peters retained his javelin throw title with a best of 90.54 meters on his sixth and final attempt for victory, having dominated the competition throughout. "To defend the title is not an easy task. I had to push myself," Peters said. "The last attempt, I already knew I was a champion but I was working on my technique in every throw and I finally got it through."

Olympic champ Chopra took silver with 88.13m, while Czech Jakub Vadlejch claimed bronze (88.09). There was also no mercy shown in the women's 5000m, where Ethiopia's Gudaf Tsegay surged down the home straight to win in 14:46.29 ahead of Kenya's Beatrice Chebet and another Ethiopian, Dawit Seyaum. Olympic champion Hassan could only fin-

ish sixth, meaning she will depart Oregon not having made the podium in either the 5,000 or 10,000m.

Hassan produced a stunning 1,500m-10,000m double at the 2019 world championships in Doha before winning 5,000m and 10,000m gold and 1,500m bronze at last year's Olympics in Tokyo. But she admitted that she needed seven months out of competition after her exertions, both mental and physical. "I really overworked last year so I wanted to get a break for my mental part because athletics is not only about running but also about motivation," she said. "It is so hard to get motivated again."

US track legend Allyson Felix, having deferred her retirement, played her part by helping the US women's 4x400m relay qualify for Sunday's final. The US team won their heat in 3:23.38, Felix running the second leg, and will be joined in the final by Britain, Jamaica, Belgium, Canada, Italy, France and Switzerland. Should the US team medal, Felix stands to win her 20th world medal. Her overall world tally currently stands at 19 medals (13 gold, three silver, three bronze), including four individual golds. —AFP

Raphinha strikes again as Barcelona stun Real Madrid

LAS VEGAS: Raphinha made it two goals in two matches as Barcelona defeated Real Madrid 1-0 on Saturday in their Las Vegas Clasico. Raphinha, signed from Premier League Leeds United earlier this month for around \$60 million, followed up his debut in a 6-0 thrashing of Inter Miami with the lone goal of the high-profile clash at Allegiant Stadium, the \$1.97 billion, 65,000-seat home of the NFL's Las Vegas Raiders.

The Brazilian was perfectly placed to intercept an ill-advised pass from Real's Eder Militao along the top of the area. After one touch to settle he lashed a left-footed shot over Thibaut Courtois into the top right corner of the net to put Barcelona up 1-0 in the 27th minute the fourth edition of the Clasico to be played outside of Spain - the second ever held in the United States - featured all the intensity of the long rivalry.

Real Madrid, playing their first pre-season friendly, nearly opened the scoring in the 18th minute but Federico Valverde was denied by the post in the 18th minute, seizing the ball after a poor clearance by Jordi Alba and blasting a volley from 25 yards out that beat Marc-Andre Ter Stegen only for the upright to intervene. Two minutes later it was Barcelona who saw a chance get away when Eduardo Camavinga lost possession to Pedri in front of Real's goal. Pedri found Fati, who pulled Real keeper Thibaut Courtois off his line but put his shot just wide of the far post.

Overall it was Barcelona - energized by the debut of Polish striker Robert Lewandowski after his move from Bayern Munich - who controlled the tempo in the first half against the reigning Champions League and La Liga title holders. The first half ended on a testy note after Jordi Alba's sliding tackle on Militao that earned a yellow card. Some jawing and shoving escalated, with players having to step in and separate Madrid newcomer Antonio Rudiger and Barcelona's Ronald Araujo.

Lewandowski's night ended without a goal as he was departed at the half, replaced by Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang as part of a raft of changes at the midpoint. Aubameyang had a chance just two minutes into the second half with a header from the center of the area off a cross by Raphinha but missed it left. A back and forth between substitute Marco Asensio and defender Lucas Vazquez gave Real Madrid a golden opportunity in the 59th minute, but after Vazquez played the ball back to Asensio in front of goal he pulled his shot wide.

They pressed desperately in the closing minutes for an equalizer, but Carlo Ancelotti's side clearly missed French star Karim Benzema, who was granted an extended holiday by the club and sat out the contest after joining up with his teammates in Los Angeles just days before. Real Madrid continue their US tour on Tuesday against Mexico's Club America at San Francisco's Oracle Park baseball venue while Barcelona take on Italian giants Juventus in Dallas on the same night. Both play again on July 30, when Barcelona take on Major League Soccer's New York Red Bulls and Real Madrid play Juventus. —AFP

Kuwait's boxers shine at boxing tournament



KUWAIT: Iraqi Muntadher Naser Ali (left) and KSA's Abdulaziz Al-Atbi compete during the third day of the Kuwait International Boxing Championship at the Kuwait Boxing Hall in the Sabah Al-Saleem district on the outskirts of Kuwait city on July 23, 2022.



KUWAIT: Bahrain's Fadhel Sayed Abbas (left) and Kuwait's Mansour Mbarek compete during the third day of the Kuwait International Boxing Championship at the Kuwait Boxing Hall. —Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat

By Abdellatif Sharaa

KUWAIT: Kuwait 1st International Boxing Tournament will be concluded on Monday with final bouts in the seven Olympic weights in the presence of Chairman Kuwait Boxing Federation Mohammad Mansi, board members and heads of delegations. Boxers from Europe, Africa and Asia seek to win the most gold medals to enable their teams take first place in the championship.

Boxers from the three continents showcased their best in most of their matches in the semi-finals in front of enthusiastic crowds. Kuwait's boxer Abdelrahman Al-Enezi nicknamed (Kuwait Tyson) hopes to end his 15-year carrier by winning the gold medal (90 kg). The semi-finals saw highly competitive and exciting matches between Arab boxers - reflecting the major development of the Arab boxing sport. In the first bout, Kuwaiti boxer Mansour Mubarak gave a brilliant performance - beating Bahrain's Fadhel Sayed Abbas by a unanimous decision in the 51 kg category, while Iraq's Muntadher Ali defeated Saudi Arabia's Abdelaziz in the same weight.

The championship had three competitive bouts in the 80kg category on Saturday evening. Rosenov Willam from Bulgaria was defeated by Iran's Seyedhossein Mirahmadibabaeidari, while Adylbek Uulu Erkin from

Kyrgyzstan defeated Thailand's Borworn Kadamudan. Also, Iran's Seyedshahin Mousavi beat REhemandu Halimulati (China).

Kuwait's Boxing Federation Assistant Secretary Hazzaa Al-Mutairi said the organizing committee continues in its efforts to guarantee the success of the tournament. "We are keen on applying the best international standards. All subcommittees completed their work early to ensure smooth and comfortable participation," Al-Mutairi said. Chairman of Iraq Boxing Federation Ali Takleef lauded the good organization of the first Kuwait International Boxing Championship, adding that the event is considered a model.

Results of the third day of competition were as follows:

In the 51 KG category: Rigi Mostafa (IRI) defeated Sabri Ergyunal (BUL); Mbarek Mansour (KWT) defeated Abbas Sayed Fadhel (BHN); Mannopov Abdumajid (UZB) defeated Shuail Al-Qannas (YEM); Ali Nasser Muntadher (IRQ) defeated Abdulaziz Alatbi (KSA).

In the 63 KG category: Pidnuch Khunatip (THA) beat Hassan Kameel; Lazizbek Fattoev (UZB) defeated Abdullahi (QAR); Sami Yahya (IRQ) defeated Samer Humaidi (KSA) while Faraji Bagher (IRI) beat Muaadh Al-Khameri (YEM).



KUWAIT: Iran's Mostafa Rigi (left) and Bulgaria's Ergyunal Sabri compete during the third day of the Kuwait International Boxing Championship.

In the 80 KG category: Seyedhossein Mirahmadibabaeidari (IRI) defeated Wiliam Rosenov (BUL); Uulu Erkin Adylbek (KGZ) defeated Borworn Kadamudan (THA); Sayedshahin Mosavi (IRI) defeated Halimulati (CHN) while Ruzetov Dilshodbez (UZB) overpowered Talal-Al-Motawaa (KWT).