

Leishman, Ancer stage improbable comeback

International cling to 2-point lead in Presidents Cup



Bashayer Al-Mayyas and Tofool Al-Hasan celebrate with newly-formed Kuwait national team after both clinched Kuwait's first-ever medals in women's weightlifting at an Arab event in Jordan.

Kuwait clinch first-ever medals in women's weightlifting

Bashayer Al-Mayyas and Tofool Al-Hasan both clinched Kuwait's first-ever medals in women's weightlifting amid a newly-formed national team at an Arab event in Jordan.

The duo won a total six medals,

including three silver in the 55kg weight categories going to Al-Mayyas, and three bronze medals across various 49kg events for Al-Hasan, at an Arab youth and juniors weightlifting tournament.

Kuwait Weightlifting Federation

is keen to offer an "equal amount of support for women as it does with their male counterparts," Secretary Mesaleem Al-Adwani told KUNA.

The federation official hailed the milestones as an "honour" for the

country, saying the results were "crucial" on the road to Tokyo 2020 Olympics qualification.

Some 35 competitors, representing 18 countries, are participating in the regional event, which concludes on Tuesday. (KUNA)

MELBOURNE, Australia, Dec 14, (AP): The International team has the lead going into the final day of the Presidents Cup for the first time in 16 years, and it has a trio of rookies to thank for that.

Marc Leishman and unbeaten rookie Abraham Ancer staged a remarkable rally Saturday afternoon in foursomes, going from 5 down with eight holes to play to earn a most unlikely halve against Justin Thomas and Rickie Fowler.

Byeong Hun An and Joaquin Niemann never led in the final match and scratched out another half-point against Matt Kuchar and Tony Finau.

That gave the Internationals a 10-8 lead going into Sunday singles, and a real chance to win the Presidents Cup for only the second time in its 25-year history.

"We've given ourselves ... a great shot to win the session tomorrow and win this cup," said Adam Scott, who has been part of one tie and seven straight losses. "I think we've got to be pretty happy about that. Come out tomorrow, leave it all on the golf course."

Nothing inspired the Internationals more than to watch the final two teams on the course scratch out a half-point

GOLF

despite never leading at any point in the match.

It looked as though it could have been even larger, when the Internationals built a 9-5 lead after the morning session.

The Americans finally showed some fight, even with captain Tiger Woods sitting out for both sessions. And the caddie of Patrick Reed might have shown too much fight. He confirmed in a statement to the Barstool Sports podcast "Foul Play" that he shoved a spectator who he felt got too close to Reed while cursing him.

Kessler Karrain, who is also Reed's brother-in-law, will not be on his bag for the final session. Reed said in a statement he respects the tour's decision and that everyone was focused on winning the cup.

It was the second straight week of scrutiny for the Reed camp, following his rules violation of scooping sand out of the way in the Bahamas that led to a two-shot penalty.

There was plenty of drama Saturday, and all that did was set the stage for 12 singles matches.

Woods put himself out first against Abraham Ancer, who got his first taste of a big stage when he was grouped with Woods at the World Golf Championship in Mexico City in February.

Reed, a target of the fans all week, will play C.T. Pan in the third match. The International team needs six points from the 12 matches to claim the cup for the first time in 21 years.

Reed and Webb Simpson lost matches each of the first two days. Woods sent them out again Saturday morning, and they delivered a dud by making only one birdie in fourballs and losing 5 and 3, to Hideki Matsuyama and Pan.

Even more curious was Woods, who won matches each of the first two days with Thomas, benching himself in the morning and the afternoon, and saying it was best for his team.

Dustin Johnson finally got the board when he and Gary Woodland took down Adam Scott and Louis Oosthuizen in



International team player Marc Leishman of Australia plays from bunker at the 11th green in their fourball match during the President's Cup golf tournament at Royal Melbourne Golf Club in Melbourne, on Dec 14. (AP)

the lead match in foursomes. California rookies Xander Schauffele and Patrick Cantlay rallied from 3 down through 5 holes by winning three straight holes and pulling away at the end over Cameron Smith and Sungjae Im.

It was only the third time in 13 events that the International team had the lead after team matches. It had a three-point lead in South Africa in 2003, the year the matches ended in a tie. And they had a nine-point lead at Royal Melbourne in 1998, the only team to beat the Americans.

The Americans trailed in all four matches Friday and kept it close. The Internationals trailed in all four matches Saturday afternoon and returned the favor.

Both captains appeared to use that as motivation in their press conference. Woods noted that his team could have been trailing 9-1, "and for the International team only to get one point from that point on, for us to fight back and get eight points, was a huge, huge win."

Els couldn't stifle a laugh, for the International team was never leading 9-1 - they were only leading matches.

The shocker of the day was Thomas and Fowler losing a big lead.

They were dormie with three holes to go when Leishman made an 18-foot par putt and Fowler missed his 6-foot par attempt. Then, Thomas missed a 10-foot par putt to end it on 17. On the final hole, Thomas sent his tee shot well to the left and under a tree, leaving the team no chance to get closer than 150 yards from the green. It might not have mattered. Leishman dropped his approach to within 6 feet, a birdie that was conceded.

Woods watched it all unfold from the sidelines, sticking to his job as captain. Even after losing the morning fourballs session, he kept himself out of the lineup in a decision that surprised International captain Ernie Els.

Woods and everyone else will be playing Sunday, including Bryson DeChambeau, who has not played since Thursday.

Long thought to be a strength, the Americans have not won the singles session in the Presidents Cup since 2009. They haven't had to. Now they do.

Australia extend lead in Test against Black Caps

New Zealand trail hosts by 417 runs

PERTH, Australia, Dec 14, (AP): Australia has a stranglehold on the opening Test match against New Zealand after taking a 417-run lead on a wicket that is getting increasingly difficult to bat on under the lights at Perth Stadium.

After New Zealand was skittled out for 166 at lunch on day three in response to Australia's 416, the home side refused to enforce the follow-on and batted again, finishing the day on 167-6 with Matthew Wade and Pat Cummins unbeaten on eight and one runs, respectively.

Despite Australia's second innings collapse from a seemingly comfortable 131-2, New Zealand is facing a big target and starring at a heavy defeat in the first of the three Tests.

"Anytime you chase 350-400 on a wearing wicket it's," Ross Taylor,

CRICKET

New Zealand's top scorer with an unblemished 80, said. "We need to see what Australia are going to do and take it out of their hands and wrap it up."

"Throughout the last few years the strength of this side is the fighting spirit. Regardless of what happens we'll fight and fight right to the end."

Swing bowlers Tim Southee (4-63) and Neil Wagner (2-40) struck just as Australia's Mitchell Starc did the previous night as the home side lost 5-29 in 66 deliveries.

This dented Australia's hope to bat deep into the fourth day before unleashing its pace attack under the lights when the pink ball is most effective. Also, the pitch has deteriorated much quicker than anticipated in the hot conditions with innocuous bounces being regular as seen during the Australian second innings.

"In the grand scheme of the game we're in a good position and in control for the game," Australia's Joe Burns said. "It's a good cricket wicket and naturally with the 40-degree weather it's going to deteriorate."

David Warner (19) uncharacteristically failed twice following 154 and 335 not out in his last two outings in the 2-0 series winning over Pakistan.

After Warner fell, Burns (53) and Marnus Labuschagne (50) shared 87 for the second wicket before Australia's newest batting find miscued a pull and was caught at mid, triggering the middle-order collapse.

Labuschagne took his run tally to 1,022 (average 73.00) to become the first batsman in the 2019 calendar year to complete 1,000 Test runs.



Australia's Travis Head bats during play in their cricket Test against New Zealand in Perth, Australia, on Dec 14. (AP)

He reached the mark in his 10th Test since being recalled as a concussion substitute for Steve Smith in the second Ashes Test in England. He hit three consecutive centuries including 143 in the first innings to add to five half centuries.

Warner lived a charmed life for over an hour facing 63 ball before miscuing a pull of Tim Southee and was caught at mid on. He survived a review for a catch behind on 15 and on 17 narrowly escaped a run out.

During the innings Warner, playing his 82nd Test, became the 12th Australian batsman to amass 7,000 runs in Test cricket. He brought up the milestone with a cover driven boundary off Southee.

Despite the 250-run first innings lead, Australia was wary of bowling the second time as the temperature topped 40 Celsius (107 F) for the third day in a row. This was in addition to being a bowler short with swing bowler Josh Hazlewood ruled out of the match with a hamstring strain.

Earlier, fast bowler Starc took 5-52 - his third five-wicket innings in seven day-night Tests and his 13th overall in 55 Tests - to hurry New

Zealand's batting demise. After slicing through the New Zealand top order with four wickets on the second evening, Starc claimed his fifth wicket controversially when de Grandhomme was adjudged caught by on-field umpire Aleem Dar and upheld by review.

De Grandhomme pulled a couple of boundaries off Starc, and two balls later, tried to fend a short pitch delivery that hit the face of the helmet before Steve Smith at second slip caught it. De Grandhomme reviewed Dar's decision only to be upheld despite a series of inconclusive replays.

Taylor stood between New Zealand and the hosts with a 134-ball innings over 2 1/2 hours hitting nine boundaries before offspinner Nathan Lyon (2-48) forced an edge and Smith at slip took his third catch.

The only other notable contribution came from skipper Kane Williamson (34) before he was brilliantly caught by Smith at second slip to end a fighting 76-run third wicket stand.

The New Zealand innings lasted 55.2 overs over 262 minutes while the Australian first innings consumed 10 1/4 hours and 146.2 overs.

Oly mile & 800-meter champion Snell dead

WELLINGTON, New Zealand, Dec 14, (AP): Three-time Olympic champion and world mile record-holder Peter Snell has died in Dallas. He was aged 80.

Snell, who is regarded as one of the greatest middle-distance runners of all-time, won the 800 meters at the 1960 Rome Olympics aged 21, and the 800-1,500 double at the 1964 Tokyo Games.

He was the first man since 1920 to win the 800 and 1,500 golds at the same Olympics. No male athlete has done so since.

Snell also won two Commonwealth Games gold medals in the 880 yards and mile at Perth in 1962.

He twice held the mile world record and also held world records in the 800 meters, 880 yards, 1,000 meters, and the 4x1-mile relay.

Snell's death was confirmed by family friend and New Zealand sports historian Ron Palenski, who heads New Zealand's Sport Hall of Fame.

Snell was coached by Arthur Lydiard, an innovator who was regarded as one of the world's finest coaches of middle and long distance athletes. Lydiard also coached Murray Halberg to win the 5,000 meters at Rome in 1960.

Snell's wife, Miki, said he died suddenly at his home in Dallas around noon on Thursday. He had been suffering from a heart ailment and had required a pacemaker for several years.

Snell's athletics career was relatively short. He retired in 1965 to pursue educational opportunities in the United States.

Snell graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in human performance from the University of California, Davis, and later with a PhD in exercise physiology from Washington State University.

He became a research fellow at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center in 1981, later becoming director of the university's Human Performance Center.



Bouli celebrates after scoring a goal for Kerala Blasters.

Bouli strikes twice to level scores

Blasters hold Jamshedpur 2-2

KUWAIT CITY, Dec 14: Raphael Messi Bouli helped Kerala Blasters to earn a 2-2 draw against Jamshedpur in an Indian Super League clash Friday, twice in the last 15 minutes to eke out a 2-2 draw for Kerala Blasters.

Bouli struck twice in the last 15 minutes - the first a towering header and the second from a penalty spot after Robin Gurung was bought down in the penalty area.

Kerala had the better scoring opportunities but it was Piti who scored for

SOCCER

Jamshedpur in the 38th minute from a penalty spot and C.K. Vineeth added another in the 71st before Bouli scored a brace to the delight of the home crowd.

With the points being shared, Jamshedpur are third with 13 points from eight matches while Kerala languish seventh with seven points.

Mario Arques, who was deemed fit to start after a lengthy layoff, nearly got his team off to a flying start. Seityasen Singh nicked the ball on the right flank and fed a threatening cross that was headed straight at the goalkeeper by the Spanish midfielder at the far post.

With the game nearing half-time, the referee penalized Vlatko Drobarov's manhandling of Tiri inside the box from a corner conceded by a Seityasen backpass. Piti calmly slotted the ball home from 12 yards.

Kerala came looking for an equal-

Bridge Results

Results of the Bi-weekly Bridge Tournament played on Wednesday, Nov 20, 2019.

1. Ibrahim Al-Qattan / Nabeel M. Al-Hussaini; 2. Ahmed Alruaweh / Mohammed Bushehri; 3. Abdel Aziz Dashti / Khaled Al-Oubaidi; 4. Ahmed Ramdan / Naela Abu Hantash; 5. Bader Al Refaee / Numan Al-Turki; 6. Foula Akil / Abdul Salam Ibrahim.

We conduct duplicate Bridge tournament on every Sunday and Wednesday at 19:30 hours at 'the Graduates Club', next to Kuwait Engineering Society. Interested Bridge pairs or individual players please contact Mohammed Merchant. Tel: # 24815622 / 24841158 / 99612287.

izer soon after the break and Seityasen drilled a low cross into the box from the right flank for Arques who failed to connect at the near post. The loose ball fell perfectly for Sergio Cidoncha whose powerful strike from inside the box went wide.

Cidoncha was substituted by Sahal Abdul Samad in the second half and this gave the hosts a much-needed boost in midfield.

In the 66th minute, the Kerala-born midfielder danced his way past the Jamshedpur defence before getting a shot away. Tiri was well-positioned to block the strike and keep his team in the lead.

Five minutes later substitute Vineeth struck Jamshedpur's second. The forward played a one-two with Farukh Chaudhary before dribbling into the box and finding the gap between Rehenesh and the near post.

In 75th minute Sahal produced a delightful chip from inside the box for Messi who nodded in at the far post to provide a ray of hope for his team.

With three minutes left for the end of regulation time, Kerala found an equalizer. Seityasen Singh dribbled into the box and was brought down by Robin Gurung. Messi stepped up and converted from the spot.