

Olympic hopeful Rozenberg unleashing series of high-energy tricks

Swedish star fronts skateboarding's move to mainstream

MALMO, Sweden, Feb 11, (AP): Oskar Rozenberg nonchalantly drifts around the skate park before unleashing a series of high-energy tricks - mounting a wall, sliding down a railing with his arms outstretched, vaulting a stairwell, accelerating into a ramp and giving it some air.

"I'm just warming up," the two-time skateboarding world champion and Olympic hopeful says over his shoulder as he floats away.

His long, dark hair flowing beneath his black cap and over his hoodie, the 23-year-old Rozenberg is in his element - and in his own world - as he seeks out every line, every dip and every hollow of the indoor park to satisfy his creative needs.



In this Jan 16, 2020 photo, skateboarder Oskar Rozenberg poses for a photo at Bryggeriet Malmo Skatepark in Malmo, Sweden. (AP)

pop in, back into the transition," Rozenberg said. "It's such a flowy trick. It's just vibey."

If that's akin to a foreign language, it might not be six months from now.

Skateboarding is coming to the Olympics for the first time at this year's Tokyo Games and Rozenberg, a stand-out Swede in a field mostly dominated by Americans and Brazilians, might be its breakout star.

HH the Crown Prince patronizes horse race tournament

KUWAIT CITY, Feb 11, (KUNA): His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah is to patronize the Crown Prince Horse Race Championship at Jahra Equestrian Club on Wednesday.

His Highness deputized Jahra Governor Nasser Al-Hajraf to attend the ceremony, which will kick off at 3:30 pm.

"Oski," as he is fondly referred to, is a skateboarder best known for his outrageous creativity and for thinking on his feet - or, in his case, his wheels. He will arrive in Tokyo as the world champion of the Vans Park Series Pro Tour after his win in Salt Lake City in September.

"He is spontaneous," said John Magnusson, who works for the Swedish Skateboard Association and will be Rozenberg's coach in the run-up to the Tokyo Games. "He maybe has the first two tricks planned and then he goes for whatever. When Oski flows it all together, he is unbeatable because he is that good."

Rozenberg's strength may yet prove to be his weakness when it comes to the Olympics.

The edgy, rebellious, somewhat underworld pursuit of skateboarding is about to enter the mainstream, joining the more structured world of traditional sports.

It will freshen up the Olympics, for sure, and appeal more to younger viewers, but will the popularization of skateboarding mean it loses its counter-cultural status? There are also concerns that judging in the Olympics will be more about box-ticking rather than a desire for expression and creativity, potentially dampening its appeal - and the medal chances of Rozenberg, with his off-the-cuff style.

He thinks, however, that skateboarding being added to the Olympic program has "more positives than negatives."

"It pushes the sport into a different direction it hasn't really been in before," Rozenberg said. "It's kind of new territory."

"A lot of other sports are about jumping a centimeter longer or a centimeter higher than what you did last year. But skateboarding is the opposite of that. There is so much you can do. I think it will actually bring a new aspect to sports."

Rozenberg first came across skateboarding at the age of 9, when he was on a bike ride with his father and bumped into friends at the newly built skate park in Malmo - Stapelbaddsparken.

He tried it out, went back the next day, and "was there every day for four years."

OLYMPICS

He gets particularly excited talking about his current favorite trick, the backside nose blunt.

"You go up on the edge of the quarter pipe, you do a backside 180 turn and you land on the nose. Then you

MLB Roundup

Dodgers, Twins finalize deal

Ahmed, D-backs agree to \$32.5 million, 4-year deal

PHOENIX, Feb 11, (AP): The Arizona Diamondbacks have agreed to a \$32.5 million, four-year deal with two-time Gold Glove shortstop Nick Ahmed.

The 29-year-old Ahmed avoids his final year of salary arbitration with the deal, which keeps him with the team through 2023. The team announced the deal.

Ahmed has had a reputation as an elite defensive shortstop since his debut with the D-backs in 2014 and has steadily improved his hitting. He hit a career-high .254 last season with 19 homers and 82 RBIs in 158 games.

The D-backs hope Ahmed can anchor the middle of the team's defense along with Ketel Marte, who will likely split time between second base and center field. Ahmed won his Gold Glove in each of the past two seasons.

Ahmed's signing caps a busy off-season for the D-backs. The moves include signing free agent pitcher Madison Bumgarner and outfielder Kole Calhoun, re-signing outfielder David Peralta and acquiring outfielder Starling Marte in a trade.

Arizona's pitchers and catchers have their first workout of spring training Wednesday. The full team has its first workout on Feb 17.



Ahmed

Mookie Betts and David Price are Los Angeles Dodgers. The Boston Red Sox are tax dodgers.

Boston and Los Angeles finalized the on-again, off-again deal that will send the AL MVP and AL Cy Young winner to the West Coast - just hours before the Red Sox are scheduled to open spring training.

The Dodgers hope the players will be the missing pieces after seven straight division championships all ended short of their first World Series title since 1988. The Red Sox have already achieved their biggest goal of the off-season: Ditching more than \$70 million in salary to get under baseball's collective bargaining tax threshold for 2020.

The Red Sox will receive outfielder Alex Verdugo and two prospects: infielder Jeter Downs and catcher Connor Wong. According to a person with knowledge of the deal, Boston will send cash to the Dodgers, reportedly half of the \$96 million owed for the next three seasons.

Catcher Tony Wolters argued for a \$2,475,000 salary in arbitration, and the Colorado Rockies said he should be paid \$1.9 million.

The 27-year-old made \$960,000 last year, when he hit .262 with one homer and 42 RBIs in 411 plate appearances. A decision by arbitrators Jeanne Vonhof, Dan Brent, Edna Francis is expected Tuesday.

Teams are 3-0 in decisions this year. Los Angeles Dodgers outfielder Joe Pederson, Minnesota pitcher José Berrios and Atlanta reliever Shane Greene all lost their cases.

Ten players remain scheduled for hearings, which run through Feb 21.

Major League Baseball is considering expanding the playoffs to nearly half the 30 teams and allowing higher-seeded wild-card teams to choose opponents.

The playoffs would grow from 10 clubs to 14 under the plan, first reported by the New York Post. There would be four wild cards in each league, up from two.

Details were confirmed by a person familiar with the proposal who spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because MLB did not authorize any public comments. Another person, also

speaking on condition of anonymity, said MLB has been looking at several plans.

Any proposal would have to be negotiated with the players' association. The current collective bargaining agreement runs through the 2021 season.

Oakland Athletics right-hander Daniel Mengden underwent surgery on his pitching elbow.

The A's said Mengden had arthroscopic surgery to shave a small spur off his elbow. The team gave no timetable for Mengden's return.

Mengden was 5-2 with a save and a 4.83 ERA in 13 games, including nine starts, over three stints with Oakland last year.

Jeurys Familia and Edwin Diaz hope improved nutrition will lead to better results.

Familia weighed 270 pounds at the end of last season, when he was 4-2 with a 5.70 ERA, allowing 62 hits in 60 innings with 63 strikeouts and 42 walks. The 6-foot-3 reliever had 51 saves in 2006, when he was an All-Star. He said rice and fried foods were his problem.

An All-Star who had 57 saves for Seattle in 2018, the 165-pound Diaz was acquired from the Mariners along with second baseman Robinson Canó. He struggled with his slider and went 2-7 with a 5.59 ERA and seven blown saves in 33 chances. He lost the closer's job, and the Mets suggested he consider looking at his diet.

Former major league pitcher Mike Bolsinger sued the Houston Astros, claiming their sign-stealing scheme contributed to a poor relief appearance in August 2017 that essentially ended his big league career.

Bolsinger's suit in Los Angeles County Superior Court seeks unspecified damages for interfering with and harming his career. He's also asking that the Astros forfeit their nearly \$30 million in postseason shares from their 2017 World Series title, with the money going to children's charities in Los Angeles and a fund for needy retired players.

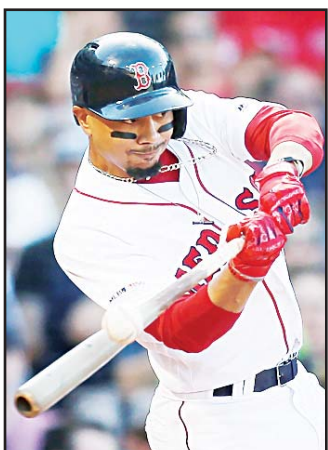
Masahiro Tanaka feels cheated by the Houston Astros.

Tanaka's Yankees lost to the Astros in a seven-game AL Championship Series in 2017.

Baseball Commissioner Rob Manfred found the Astros broke rules against electronic sign stealing in 2017, including during the postseason.

"Yeah, I do feel that way," the Yankees pitcher said through a translator Monday after working out at the team's minor league complex.

Houston won all four home games against the Yankees in the playoffs, when the Astros players had the advantage of the sign-stealing system, and lost all three in the Bronx. The scores of the first two games were both 2-1.



In this Aug 10, 2019 file photo, Boston Red Sox's Mookie Betts hits an RBI-double during the sixth inning of a baseball game against the Los Angeles Angels in Boston. (AP)

Islanders keep Ovechkin at 698 goals, beat Capitals 5-3



Washington Capitals left wing Alex Ovechkin (8), of Russia, and New York Islanders defenseman Scott Mayfield (24), left wing Michael Dal Colle (28) and Derick Brassard battle for the puck during the second period of an NHL hockey game on Feb 10 in Washington. (AP)

Kucherov's OT goal lifts Lightning over Blue Jackets

WASHINGTON, Feb 11, (AP): Anthony Beauvillier scored twice, Josh Bailey had three assists and the New York Islanders kept Alex Ovechkin stuck at 698 career goals in beating the Washington Capitals 5-3.

The Islanders jumped out to a 5-1 lead and held on to hand the Capitals a second consecutive regulation loss at home. Washington also lost center Evgeny Kuznetsov to a scary-looking upper-body injury when he was crunched into the boards in the second period.

Leo Komarov, Devon Toews and Jordan Eberle also scored, chasing Washington rookie goaltender Ilya Samsonov after he allowed five goals on 20 shots. Braden Holtby, who got yanked after allowing seven goals on 25 shots behind a similarly weak defensive performance Saturday against Philadelphia, stopped all 12 shots he faced in relief.

Thomas Greiss made 25 saves to pick up his 16th victory of the season for New York. Barry Trotz improved to 4-0 in Washington as Islanders coach since leading the Capitals to the Stanley Cup in 2018.

ICE HOCKEY

John Carlson, Lars Eller and T.J. Oshie scored for the Capitals.

Lightning 2, Blue Jackets 1, OT In Columbus, Ohio, Nikita Kucherov scored his second goal of the game 31 seconds into overtime to give Tampa Bay its seventh straight win.

Columbus' Zach Werenski turned the puck over behind his own net and Victor Hedman fed it out to Kucherov, who beat Elvis Merzlikins for his 27th. The Lightning won the first meeting of the teams since the Blue Jackets swept Tampa Bay in the first round of the 2019 Stanley Cup Playoffs, giving Columbus its first-ever postseason series victory.

Former Blue Jackets backup Curtis McElhinney, starting ahead of Andrei Vasilevskiy on the first night of a back-to-back, had 31 saves to extend the Lightning's point streak to nine games (8-0-1). They are 19-2-1 in the last 22 games.

Oliver Bjorkstrand scored for Columbus, and Merzlikins finished with 28 saves.

NHL Results/Standings

WASHINGTON, Feb 11, (AP): Results and standings from the NHL games on Monday.

Team	P	W	L	OT	GF	GA	Pts
Philadelphia	4	Florida	1	Tampa	2	Columbus (OT)	1
NY Islanders	5	Washington	3	Vancouver	6	Nashville	2
Arizona	3	Montreal	2	Calgary	6	San Jose	2

Eastern Conference								Western Conference															
Atlantic Division				Central Division				Pacific Division				Central Division											
P	W	L	OT	GF	GA	Pts	P	W	L	OT	GF	GA	Pts	P	W	L	OT	GF	GA	Pts			
Boston	57	34	11	12	188	143	80	St Louis	56	32	15	9	178	160	73	Vancouver	57	31	19	5	147	141	67
Tampa	56	36	15	5	201	151	77	Colorado	54	32	16	6	197	154	70	Dallas	57	29	23	5	173	172	63
Toronto	56	29	19	8	200	187	66	Dallas	57	29	23	5	173	172	63	Minnesota	55	26	22	7	178	183	59
Florida	55	29	20	6	193	185	64	Winnipeg	55	26	22	7	178	183	59	Chicago	55	25	22	8	169	181	58
Montreal	58	27	24	7	179	176	61	Minnesota	55	26	22	7	178	183	59	San Jose	55	25	22	8	167	173	58
Buffalo	56	24	24	8	159	176	56	Chicago	55	25	22	8	169	181	58								
Ottawa	55	18	26	11	147	188	47																
Detroit	57	14	39	4	118	213	32																

Note: Two points for a win, one point for overtime loss. Top three teams in each division and two wild cards per conference advance to playoffs.

Flyers 4, Panthers 1

In Philadelphia, James van Riemsdyk had a goal and assist, Carter Hart stopped 30 shots in his return from injury and Philadelphia beat Florida.

Travis Sanheim, Ivan Provorov and Claude Giroux also had goals for Philadelphia, which is 6-1-1 in the last eight. The Flyers improved to 19-5-4 at home.

MacKenzie Weegar scored for Florida, which has lost four straight.

Panthers goalie Sergei Bobrovsky, who began his NHL career with the Flyers in 2010, had 30 saves.

Coyotes 3, Canadiens 2

In Montreal, Jakob Chychrun scored a tiebreaking power-play goal with a minute left, lifting Arizona past Montreal.

Derek Stepan and Taylor Hall also

scored for the Coyotes, who scored three goals after going down 2-0 early. Antti Raanta made 26 saves.

Jake Evans and Brendan Gallagher scored for the Canadiens, who had won three in a row. Carey Price stopped 31 shots.

Flames 6, Sharks 2

In San Jose, California, Milan Lucic and Tobias Rieder scored in a span of 34 seconds early in the first period, Matthew Tkachuk added a highlight-reel tally in the third, and Calgary beat San Jose.

Zac Rinaldo, Mark Jankowski and Mikael Backlund also scored to give the Flames back-to-back wins following a three-game losing streak. David Rittich made 34 saves.

Erik Karlsson and Brent Burns scored for the Sharks, who were trying for their first three-game winning streak since November. Aaron Dell made 31 saves.

Canucks 6, Predators 2

In Vancouver, British Columbia, Jacob Markstrom stopped 36 shots, and Elias Pettersson and J.T. Miller each had a goal and an assist to lead Vancouver.

Zack MacEwen, Brandon Sutter, Jordie Benn and Jake Virtanen also scored for the Canucks, who ended a four-game losing streak. Quinn Hughes had three assists to take over the lead in the rookie scoring race with 44 points.



Tampa Bay Lightning goalie Curtis McElhinney (left), tries to clear the puck in front of Columbus Blue Jackets forward Emil Bemstrom, of Sweden, during the second period of an NHL hockey game in Columbus, Ohio on Feb 10. (AP)