

## Hataoka finishes alone in second, Kang in third place

# Sagstrom wins Gainbridge LPGA for 1st LPGA Tour title



Nathan Chen performs his men's free skate program at the US Figure Skating Championships on Jan 26 in Greensboro, North Carolina. (AP)

## Brown, Hiwatashi finish 2nd & 3rd

## Chen equals Boitano with 4th straight national skating title

GREENSBORO, North Carolina, Jan 27, (AP): Rocketman has launched — straight to a fourth national title.

With stratospheric jumps and the sort of stage presence that even Elton John would appreciate, Nathan Chen won his fourth consecutive US Figure Skating Championships men's gold medal. Skating to the score from John's biopic, Chen soared far above the competition, winning by more than 37 points.

The ninth man to earn at least that many US championships in a row, and the first since Brian Boitano completed that kind of quad in 1988, Chen hit four quadruple jumps and six triples in his routine that had the crowd on its feet long before it concluded.

"It's a huge deal for me to be able to take the next step to sort of follow in their footsteps," Chen

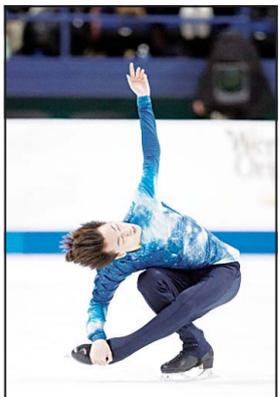
## FIGURE SKATING

said, mentioning Dick Button, Scott Hamilton and Boitano. "They did amazing things well beyond what I have accomplished."

Chen, 20, has not lost a competition since a dismal short program at the 2018 Olympics ruined any chance at a medal. He's won two world championships and three Grand Prix Finals crowns altogether.

Plus the four US titles as he continues raising the standards for men's skating even as he attends Yale full time.

"Each time you win, you gain more confidence," said Boitano, the 1988 Olympic gold medalist and a two-time world winner. "After Nathan won his first world championship, on ice he was like a different man. He has become a dominator, yet in an understated



Vincent Zhou performs his men's free skate program at the US Figure Skating Championships, on Jan 26, in Greensboro, North Carolina. (AP)

## Cycling federation cancels race in China because of virus

AIGLE, Switzerland, Jan 27, (AP): A cycling race scheduled for next month in China was canceled Monday because of the deadly virus that has killed more than 80 people and infected thousands more in the country.

## CYCLING

The International Cycling Union said the second-tier Tour of Hainan, which was scheduled to take place from Feb. 23-March 1, could be postponed to a later date "subject to availabilities on the

calendar."

The next UCI-sanctioned bike race in China is the women's Tour of Chongming Island, from May 7-9.

"The UCI is in regular contact with the Chinese authorities, which are keeping it informed of the evolution of the health situation and its impact on the organization of cycling events in the country," the UCI said. "It will take decisions necessary to ensure the safety of all stakeholders."

China has confirmed more than 2,700 cases of the virus, with 81 deaths. Most have been in the central city of Wuhan, where the illness first surfaced last month.

BOCA RATON, Florida, Jan 27, (AP): Madelene Sagstrom won the Gainbridge LPGA at Boca Rio for her first LPGA Tour title, birdieing the par-3 17th to tie for the lead and winning with a par when Nasa Hataoka missed a 3-footer on the last.

Sagstrom finished with a 2-under 70 for a 17-under 271 total at rain-softened Boca Rio Golf Club.

"I put something on the Instagram in the beginning of the week, saying I'm determined that 2020 is going to be the best season yet. I didn't know it was going to be this good right away," Sagstrom said. "But no, I have worked really hard over many years now, and I think that the biggest change or the biggest journey I have had is within myself and my mental game."

Hataoka shot 69. The Japanese player birdied Nos. 15 and 16 to take the lead, then fell into a tie when Sagstrom birdied the 17th and lost with the bogey on the par-4 18th.

"It kind of helps me out with the beginning two tournaments, being there at the top, gives me a little strength to keep on going for the fol-

lowing many tournaments coming ahead," Hataoka said. "Missing the win gives me more motivation to keep on going for the next many tournaments coming."

She also finished second last week in the season-opening Diamond Resorts Tournament of Champions, losing to Gaby Lopez on the seventh extra hole in a Monday finish.

Sagstrom bogeyed two of the first five holes, then rebounded with birdies

## GOLF

on Nos. 8, 10 and 11 — chipping in on 10.

"It doesn't matter how you start," Sagstrom said. "If you just continue fighting, things can go your way. And I just told myself, 'Keep fighting, keep fighting.'"

Sagstrom made a 4-footer for birdie on 17, then saved par from 5 feet on 18.

The 27-year-old Swede and former LSU star opened with a 72, shot a



Madelene Sagstrom holds her trophy after winning the Gainbridge LPGA golf tournament at Boca Rio on Jan 26 in Boca Raton, Florida. (AP)

career-best 62 on Friday to take a one-stroke lead and doubled her advantage Saturday with a 67.

"I have never been in a situation like

this before, so obviously it was all new to me," Sagstrom said about taking the lead into the final round. "I didn't know how I was going to handle it or if it was going to go my way or not, so my whole goal today was just go out and stay patient and do what I have done the other days."

Sagstrom won in her 69th career LPGA Tour start. She's the 12th Swede to win on the tour, and the first since Pernilla Lindberg in the 2018 ANA Inspiration. Sagstrom won three times on the Symetra Tour in 2016 and led the money list to graduate to the big tour.

Danielle Kang was third at 15 under after a 69. She parred the final eight holes.

"I kept hitting it to 30, 35 feet," Kang said. "And they're not easy to make. So, it's hard to two-putt, to be honest."

Celine Boutier shot 70 to finish fourth at 13 under. Sei Young Kim was 11 under after a 73.

The tournament was the first official event in Boca Raton since the 1989 Oldsmobile LPGA Classic.

# Leishman 'rallies' to win Farmers Insurance Open



Marc Leishman, of Australia, hits out of the bunker on the 13th hole of the South Course at Torrey Pines Golf Course during the final round of the Farmers Insurance golf tournament on Jan 26 in San Diego. (Inset): Marc Leishman of Australia holds up the winner's trophy after winning the Farmers Insurance Open at the Torrey Pines Golf Course on Jan 26 in San Diego. (AP)

## Herbert claims 1st European Tour title

SAN DIEGO, Jan 27, (AP): Marc Leishman realized he had at two-shot lead as he stood over a 6-foot birdie putt on the final hole at Torrey Pines. He also knew Jon Rahm was the only one who could catch him.

That made his final birdie all the more important.

It turned out to be the winner in the Farmers Insurance Open, much to Rahm's surprise.

Leishman shot 31 on the front nine to seize control, came up with three big par saves on the back nine and closed with a birdie for a 7-under 65 and a one-shot victory.

Rahm played so badly at the start — two bogeys and a double bogey through five holes — that he started firing away, and few players are more dangerous. He made an eagle and three birdies over a five-

## GOLF

hole stretch to at least have a chance.

His one mistake, aside from a bogey on the 15th hole, was not knowing the score.

It might not have changed anything. Rahm hit the green on the par-5 18th, and it went to the top ridge — the pin was on the lower level in a bowl. He was in the same spot from where he made eagle in 2017 that secured his first PGA Tour title.

His putt died to the left and short. His caddie told him, "Good try."

Rahm shot 70. When he won at Torrey Pines in 2017, he rallied with a 65 to win. This time, it was Leishman's turn.

Leishman and Rahm are the only players to win with a 65 in the final round since the South Course was revamped and lengthened ahead of the 2008 US Open.

## Woods stunned to learn of Bryant's death

SAN DIEGO, Jan 27, (AP): Tiger Woods has heard just about everything from playing before the biggest crowds in golf, and he tends to ignore it. Most puzzling was what he kept hearing along the back nine Sunday at Torrey Pines.

"Do it for Mamba."

Only after Woods finished his final round of 2-under 70 to tie for ninth in the Farmers Insurance Open did he realize what it meant. His caddie, Joe LaCava, told him as they walked to

the scoring room that Kobe Bryant died in a helicopter crash.

Woods could be heard replying, "Excuse me?" Such was the shock for Woods that he made a rare detour from his two media stops to sign autographs, presumably to collect his thoughts. Woods typically signs after he is done with his interviews.

"One of the most shocking, tragic days that I've ever been a part of," Woods said.

Rory McIlroy, needing a victory to return to No. 1 in the world, started three shots behind in the final group and opened with two straight bogeys.

He missed a short birdie attempt on the third, and then pulled his tee shot into the hazard and had to scramble for bogey.

Much like Rahm, he stayed in the mix by playing his last five holes on the front nine in 5 under. McIlroy couldn't make up enough ground, shot 69 and tied for third with Brandt Snedeker (68).



Australia's Lucas Herbert celebrates with his trophy after he won the Dubai Desert Classic golf tournament in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, on Jan 26. (AP)

Tiger Woods, trying to set the PGA Tour record with his 83rd career victory, never got anything going. Woods had to settle for a 70 and tied for ninth, six shots behind.

Woods and Kobe Bryant began their pro careers the same year. Only after the round did Woods learn Bryant had died in a helicopter crash about 30 minutes north of Los Angeles.

## Also:

**DUBAI:** Lucas Herbert marked Australia Day in his native country by capturing his first professional title, beating Christian Bezuidenhout of South Africa at the second hole of a playoff to win the Dubai Desert Classic after a wild final round on Sunday.

Herbert rolled in a birdie putt from 2 feet at the 18th on his third trip up the par-5 last hole at Emirates Golf Club, after Bezuidenhout failed to get up and down from the back of the green for his own birdie.

The 24-year-old Herbert dedicated his victory to the people back home battling Australia's unprecedented wildfire crisis.

"Obviously there's some pretty awful stuff happening right now in Australia with the fires," Herbert said.

"Everyone around the world is behind us and hopefully we can keep fighting harder than what I did on the first playoff hole. That's nothing compared to the firefighters and volunteers putting out the fires. Sending all my love back home and hope everyone is well."

Herbert and Bezuidenhout both shot 4-under 68s to come from six shots behind at the start of the final day to finish on 9-under 279, two strokes clear of three players — Tom Lewis (74), Dean Burmester (72) and Adri Arnaus (70).

Bryson DeChambeau, seeking to retain the title, finished with four straight bogeys to drop out of contention and wound up four shots off the lead after a 76.