

SPORTS

Wie gives birth

Ryu wins Korea Women's Open

INCHEON, South Korea, June 22, (AP): Two-time major champion So Yeon Ryu closed with an even-par 72 to win the Korea Women's Open on Sunday in her first tournament in four months because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Ryu won for the first time since the Japan Women's Open in 2018, and it was her first victory on the Korea LPGA since 2015.

Upon winning, Ryu offered her entire prize money of just over \$200,000 for coronavirus relief funds.

Ryu and Hyo Joo Kim, another regular on the LPGA Tour, matched pars on the entire back nine of Bears Best Cheongna Golf Club. Kim shot 70 to finish one shot behind.

Sei Young Kim, who won \$1.5 million for her victory at the LPGA Tour's finale last November in Florida, led by one going to the back nine until she was slowed by three bogeys. She had to settle for a 70 and tied for fourth.

Jin Young Ko, the No. 1 player in women's golf, shot 72 and finished sixth.

Several LPGA Tour players from Korea have been playing their home circuit since it returned five weeks ago. The LPGA Tour is not scheduled to resume until July 31 at Inverness in Ohio.

Meanwhile, Michelle Wie West now has a little one of her own.

The former U.S. Women's Open champion announced on Instagram that she and her husband, Golden State Warriors executive Jonnie West, are parents of a daughter born Friday.

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"Kenna baby, I have waited my entire life to meet you," Wie wrote on Instagram.

They named her Makenna Kamalei Yoona West. The 30-year-old Wie was born and raised in Honolulu. Kamalei is a Hawaiian for "beloved child."

Wie and West, the son of NBA great Jerry West, were married in August. They announced her pregnancy in January.

Wie shot the lowest score ever by a woman competing on the PGA Tour with a 68 at Sony Open when she was 14. She won five times on the LPGA Tour, the biggest at Pinehurst No. 2 in the 2014 U.S. Women's Open.

Simpson celebrates a Father's Day victory with win at Harbour Town

Ancer closes with a 65 as Hatton and Berger tied for 3rd

HILTON HEAD ISLAND, South Carolina, June 22, (AP): Nothing can top the first time Webb Simpson won on Father's Day, a U.S. Open title eight years ago at Olympic Club and hearing his father's laughter on the phone to share the joy.

Harbour Town was special in its own right.

Dressed in his yellow shirt - his late father's favorite color - Simpson emerged from a crowd of contenders with five birdies in a six-hole stretch on the back nine for a 7-under 64 to win the RBC Heritage by one shot over Abraham Ancer and set the tournament scoring record.

"Crazy day," Simpson said.

A three-hour storm delay nearly kept it from finishing. Nine players were still in the mix with an hour to go. Simpson was two shots behind and had only two birdies on his card when he dropped in a 10-footer at No. 12 and off he went.

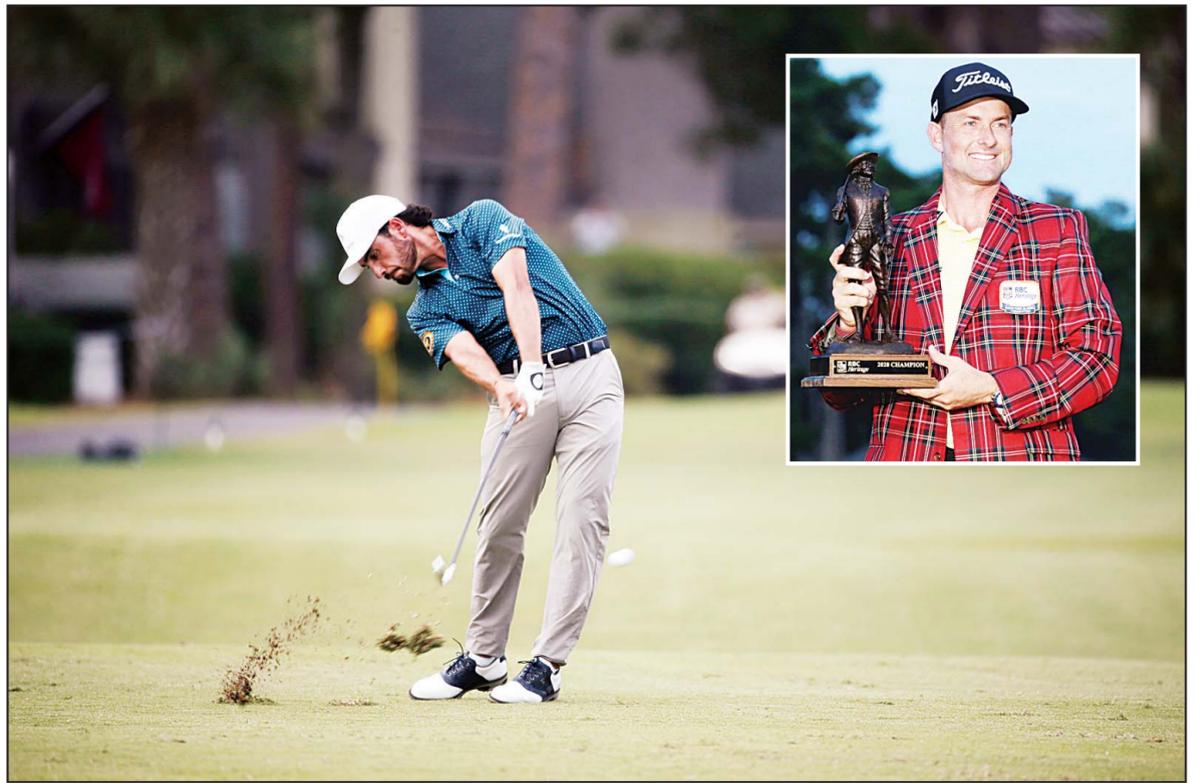
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"I think it's a good thing that guys were making birdies because they kind of forced me to be a little more aggressive and know that pars weren't going to cut it," said Simpson, who finished at 22-under 264 to break by two shots the tournament record Brian Gay set in 2009.

Father's Day has been the final round of the U.S. Open every year since 1976, but it was moved to September in this most unusual year because of the COVID-19 pandemic that shut down golf for three months. The RBC Heritage filled the spot on the schedule and Simpson, now a father of five, became a winner for the second time this year.

"I won The Players on Mother's Day after my dad passed away, and that was really special. That was an emotional win," Simpson said. "U.S. Open on Father's Day, I'll never forget calling my dad after on the way to the press conference, and when he picked up the phone, he just was laughing. That's kind of what he did when he was happy, he would just laugh. So I'm going to miss that laugh today for sure."

"But I thought a lot about him," he said. "This morning I thought about him, and when I was on the golf course, I thought about him. ... He loved golf. He would have loved watching today." It was quite a show.



Abraham Ancer of Mexico hits the 10th fairway during the final round of the RBC Heritage golf tournament, on June 21, in Hilton Head Island, South Carolina. Inset: Webb Simpson holds the championship trophy after winning the RBC Heritage golf tournament, Sunday, June 21, 2020, in Hilton Head Island. (AP)

Simpson, Ancer, Joaquin Niemann and Tyrrell Hatton were tied at 20 under at one point late in the round. It was a matter of who blinked first.

Ancer, who hit every green in regulation, pushed Simpson to the end in his bid to win his first PGA Tour title. He holed a birdie putt from 10 feet on the 17th to get within one, but his approach to the 18th was 40 feet away and his putt to force a playoff came up short. Ancer closed with a 65.

"That's just golf. You've just got to keep trying," Ancer said. "I'm not going to change anything or work on anything. I'm just going to keep doing what I'm doing, and I think that will eventually happen."

Colonial winner Daniel Berger also stayed in the mix by chipping in for birdie on the 17th and closing with a

65. Hatton, whose last tournament was his victory in the Arnold Palmer Invitational, was leading until a poor tee shot led to bogey on the 13th, and bogeys were hard to recover from on this day. He shot 66 and tied for third.

Simpson, who won the Phoenix Open in February, moved to No. 5 in the world. He also moved to the top of the FedEx Cup.

Dylan Frittelli had the low score of a tournament filled with them, a 62 that put him in the lead before the final groups even teed off. Justin Thomas had a 63 and tied him. Both knew it wasn't going to hold up, especially after returning from a storm delay to still conditions and even softer conditions.

But it led to a revolving door of challengers, and even Brooks Koepka got in the mix.

Koepka hit driver on the 331-yard ninth hole that hit on the slope above the bunker and settled 3 feet for his eagle. He birdied the next two to get within one of the lead, but his hopes ended with a 5-foot birdie putt he missed on the par-5 15th. He closed with a 65 and finished seventh, his best result since the Tour Championship.

"Six months off - three with the lock down and then three on my knee - so yeah, it feels like it's been a really long time since I've even felt some juices flowing," Koepka said. "It just felt nice to be in contention."

Rory McIlroy closed with a 70 and tied for 41st, his second straight result out of the top 30 after going seven consecutive events worldwide with no finish worse than fifth.

The PGA Tour now heads to the

Connecticut for the Travelers Championship, and it's still to be determined who will be playing until coronavirus tests are released for those on the charter flight.

The uncertainty stems from the first positive test - Nick Watney on Friday - along with tests for the 11 people who had been in close contact with Watney.

Those 11 people were given two tests, with the second set of results released Sunday night. Both tests came back negative for all 11.

Until the first tournament back at Colonial in Fort Worth, Texas, the area around Harbour Town was crowded with the start of summer vacation.

Those not on the charter will be tested upon arrival in Connecticut. Any positive test means a player must withdraw.

Annual tournament canceled due to pandemic

Young baseball players get memento filled with stadium dirt

TOKYO, June 22, (AP): Japanese high school baseball players, heartbroken because their annual tournament was canceled due to the pandemic, are getting a consolation prize: a spoonful of dirt.

It's not just any soil - it's from Koshien Stadium. Which means it holds special meaning to all who love the game in this baseball-mad country.

Every year, more than 3,000 teams go through competitive regional playoffs to advance to the finals at Koshien in Nishinomiya city, central Japan -- the prized stage that's seen the likes of major leaguers Ichiro, Daisuke Matsuzaka and Hideki Matsui.

And every year, after a team loses, the players, many weeping uncontrollably, scrape the dirt near the dugout to take home as a memento.

On a recent afternoon, it was the

BASEBALL

members of the professional club, the Hanshin Tigers, who were digging with their hands to collect dirt from Koshien, their home stadium.

The dirt will be put in transparent balls hanging from key chains and sent to some 50,000 high school baseball players. Each ball has the words: "2020 102nd Koshien," for the 102nd tournament, and pictures of a ball, bats and the stadium. They are to be delivered in August, when the tournament had been scheduled to start.

Hibiki Kawamoto, a centerfielder and slugger at Iwamichisuikan High School in Shimane Prefecture, western Japan, was thrilled.

The Tigers are his favorite team, and he plans to put the key chain proudly on his bag.

"The game means so much to him. When I get a hit when the team really needs it, I get praised by everyone," he said. "I'm going to play baseball till I die."

Akihiko Tanimoto, a social studies teacher who works with the team, said the players were still working out hard, and the cancellation served as a lesson to not quit in the face of hardships.

"Koshien was our goal, but it is not the purpose of why we play high school baseball, which is about not giving up until it's over," he said in a telephone interview.

The school has made it to the



Akashi Commercial High School baseball players collect dirt of the grounds after being defeated by Riseisha High School during a semifinal game at the National High School Baseball Championship at Koshien Stadium in Nishinomiya, western Japan, on Aug 20, 2019. (AP)

Coric and Dimitrov positive for coronavirus

ZAGREB, Croatia, June 22, (AP): Borna Coric has become the second tennis player to test positive for the coronavirus after participating in an exhibition event in Croatia.

Coric, a Croatian player ranked 33rd in the world, was among about 1,000 people who were tested for the virus after Grigor Dimitrov announced that he was positive. That led to the cancellation of the exhibition event in Croatia, where top-ranked Novak Djokovic was scheduled to play in the final.

Coric played a match against Dimitrov in the Adriatic resort of Zadar on Saturday in the second leg of the exhibition series.

"Hello everyone, I want to inform you that I am positive for Covid-19. Please everyone who has been in contact with me for the last few days gets tested!" Coric posted on Twitter.

He said he was feeling well and has no symptoms.

Koshien summer tournament 10 times.

How the custom of bringing home Koshien dirt originated is unclear. But it's a tradition that dates back decades.

The winning team also gathers the dirt, but only after the final award ceremony, which is witnessed by fans from all over Japan.

They fill Koshien's stands and

cheer raucously, in much the same way American fans follow the NCAA basketball tournament.

The dirt is replenished regularly, to make sure there is enough.

The idea of the key chain originated from Tigers players, who understood the disappointment of having the Koshien dream shattered. Many played in the tournament as youngsters.

"We all pondered what we could do for them, and I think it holds special meaning that we did this for them together as a team," said outfielder Kosuke Fukudome, who took part in the Koshien tournament while at PL Gakuen high school.

"I want them all to stay optimistic," said Fukudome, formerly of the Chicago Cubs, Cleveland Indians and the Chicago White Sox.

'Don't just listen. Help'

The ESPYS focus on honors, pandemic and racial justice

WASHINGTON, June 22, (AP): No red carpet, no nattily dressed athletes, no house band or monologue poking fun at the past year's top athletes and moments.

This was a different version of The ESPYS.

The focus of Sunday night's show on ESPN was hope and inspiration in the time of coronavirus.

NFL quarterback Russell Wilson, along with soccer star Megan Rapinoe and WNBA star Sue Bird, hosted the pre-produced show remotely from their respective homes in Seattle. Each wore Black Lives Matter T-shirts to open the show, and touched on the lives of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery and Breonna Taylor, all of whom were killed by police.

Rapinoe and Bird urged their fellow white athletes to "don't just listen. Help."

"This is the time we've got to have their backs," Rapinoe said of Black athletes. Later in the show, Golden State Warriors coach Steve Kerr, Dallas Mavericks owner Mark Cuban and Olympic gold-medalist skier Lindsey Vonn were among those calling on white athletes to listen, learn and act.

Wilson, who is Black, added, "Our country's work is not anywhere close to being done."

Kevin Love of the Cleveland Cavaliers received the Arthur Ashe Award for Courage for sparking a national conversation about mental health. Two years ago, he wrote an online essay detailing his struggles with mental health, including having a panic attack during a game. As a result, other athletes and fans began sharing details of their own mental health challenges and sharing resources on how to get help.

Love created the Kevin Love Fund and has continued speaking out. During the COVID-19 crisis, he's shared tips on how to cope with the stress and isolation caused by the pandemic.

At home, Love opened a box with the trophy inside, proclaiming, "It's nice and shiny."

"In light of all that's going on in our country today, I accept this award as both an honor and a challenge," he said, looking into the camera. "A challenge to not only continue on my path, but to push beyond it and stay vocal even when silence feels safer."

Minnesota Twins outfielder Nelson Cruz received the Muhammad Ali Sports Humanitarian Award in a videotaped piece introduced by the late boxer's daughter, Laila. Cruz has helped his hometown of Las Matas de Santa Cruz in the Dominican Republic build a police station, a medical clinic and acquire a fire truck and firefighting gear, as well as an ambulance.

Cruz cried and put his head in his hands

before composing himself and saying, "From the bottom of my heart, my family, my foundation and my hometown, thank you."

Snoop Dogg rapped a tribute to NBA superstar Kobe Bryant, tracing his life from high school to a career with the Los Angeles Lakers. Bryant, his daughter Gianna and seven others were killed in a helicopter crash in January.

Taquarius "TQ" Wair, who as a 4-year-old survived a house fire in 2005 that killed his 6-year-old sister, was honored with the Jimmy V Award for Perseverance. Wair was burned all over his body and given just a 20% chance to live. He lost fingers on his left hand. Wair began playing football at age 7 and is now playing at a junior college in Minnesota, with a goal of playing at a four-year school and in the NFL.

Seattle Seahawks linebacker Shaquem Griffin informed Wair via laptop that he was being honored. Wair was handed a box with the trophy inside. He pulled it out and said, "Oh my goodness. Thank you."

"This is humbling for me," Wair said. "My family won't let me give up. Let's see where I can go from here. Stay tuned."

Oscar-winning actress Halle Berry introduced Kim Clavel as winner of the Pat Tillman Award for Service. The boxer from Montreal was pre-paring for her first main event bout on March 21 after winning the North American Boxing Federation female flyweight title last year. But the coronavirus pandemic meant the fight was canceled.

Clavel wasn't idle for long. She had previous experience as a nurse in a maternity ward before focusing on boxing, so she began working in care units across Montreal over the last three months.

Via laptop, Clavel listened as her grandmother told her she was being honored with the award named after the player who left the NFL to join the Army after the 9/11 attacks. Tillman was killed by friendly fire in Afghanistan in 2004.

"When I need motivation, I will look at this trophy," Clavel said.

From her living room, Billie Jean King announced the winners of her namesake Youth Leadership Award, given to those tackling issues in their communities. Joel Apudo, Batouly Camara, Ally Friedman, Jaronn Islar, Chelsea Quito, Elijah Murphy and Niah Woods will receive either a \$10,000 academic scholarship or a donation to the charity of their choice.



Rapinoe