



In this Aug 27, 2018 file photo, Bahrain's Hassan Chani celebrates on the podium after winning the gold medal in the men's 10,000m final during the athletics competition at the 18th Asian Games in Jakarta, Indonesia. Chani has been banned for four years on Sept 17, 2020 for blood doping and stripped of his 2018 Asian Games gold medal. The Athletics Integrity Unit says Chani's doping was shown by changes in the blood values in his biological passport. (AP) — See Page 14

Sports

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Roglic tightens grip on Tour lead

INEOS get first win



Poland's Michal Kwiatkowski celebrates after winning the Stage 18 of the Tour de France cycling race over 175 kilometers (108.7 miles) from Meribel to La Roche-sur-Foron, France on Sept 17. (AP)

LA ROCHE-SUR-FORON, France, Sept 17, (AP): Paris, and victory at the Tour de France, are almost within reach of Primož Roglic.

The Slovenian rider safely negotiated the last truly mountainous stage of this year's race on Thursday, moving a big step closer to adding what would be his first Tour win to the Spanish Vuelta title he conquered last year.

Polish rider Michal Kwiatkowski won the saw-tooth Stage 18, up and down over a leg-burning succession of five Alpine ascents. His first stage victory at the Tour was also the first at this race for his INEOS Grenadiers team, a consolation prize after its leader, 2019 Tour champion Egan Bernal, withdrew Wednesday having struggled since the weekend.

By avoiding any mishaps on a brutal stage that included a treacherous stretch of gravel path that punc-



Leeds United goalkeeper Kiko Casilla clears the ball during the English League Cup soccer match between Leeds United and Hull in Leeds, England on Sept 16. Second-string Leeds team lost a penalty shootout 8-9 to third-tier Hull after a 1-1 draw in regulation. (AP)

Tour Results/Standings

1. Michal Kwiatkowski, Poland, INEOS Grenadiers, 4h 47m 33s.
2. Richard Carapaz, Ecuador, INEOS Grenadiers, same time.
3. Wout van Aert, Belgium, Jumbo-Visma, 1:51 behind.
4. Primož Roglic, Slovenia, Jumbo-Visma, 1:53.
5. Tadej Pogacar, Slovenia, UAE Team Emirates, same time.
6. Richie Porte, Australia, Trek-Segafredo, 1:54.
7. Enric Mas, Spain, Movistar, same time.
8. Mikel Landa, Spain, Bahrain-McLaren, same time.
9. Damiano Caruso, Italy, Bahrain-McLaren, same time.
10. Tom Dumoulin, Netherlands, Jumbo-Visma, same time.
11. Sepp Kuss, United States, Jumbo-Visma, same time.
12. Miguel Angel Lopez, Colombia, Astana Pro, same time.
13. Marc Hirschi, Switzerland, Sunweb, 2:04.
14. Pello Bilbao, Spain, Bahrain-McLaren, same time.
15. Simon Geschke, Germany, CCC, 4:32.
16. Nans Peters, France, AG2R la Mondiale, same time.
17. Adam Yates, Britain, Mitchelton-Scott, 4:34.
18. Guillaume Martin, France, Cofidis, same time.
19. Rigoberto Uran, Colombia, EF Pro Cycling, same time.
20. Alejandro Valverde, Spain, Movistar, same time.
21. Luis León Sanchez, Spain, Astana Pro, same time.
22. Sebastian Feichenbach, Switzerland, Groupama-FDJ, same time.
23. Daniel Felipe Martinez, Colombia, EF Pro Cycling, same time.
24. Jan Hirt, Czech Republic, CCC, same time.
25. Warren Barguil, France, Arkea-Samsic, same time.

- Overall Standings (After 18 stages):**
1. Primož Roglic, Slovenia, Jumbo-Visma, 79h 45m 30s.
 2. Tadej Pogacar, Slovenia, UAE Team Emirates, :57s behind.
 3. Miguel Angel Lopez, Colombia, Astana Pro, 1:27.
 4. Richie Porte, Australia, Trek-Segafredo, 3:06.
 5. Mikel Landa, Spain, Bahrain-McLaren, 3:28.
 6. Enric Mas, Spain, Movistar, 4:19.
 7. Adam Yates, Britain, Mitchelton-Scott, 5:55.
 8. Rigoberto Uran, Colombia, EF Pro Cycling, 6:05.
 9. Tom Dumoulin, Netherlands, Jumbo-Visma, 7:24.
 10. Alejandro Valverde, Spain, Movistar Team, 12:12. (AP)

CYCLING

ured the thin front tire of another top contender, Australian Richie Porte, Roglic has just two more stages to digest before being able to ride into Paris on Sunday with the yellow jersey on his shoulders to the finish.

Kwiatkowski finished arm-over-arm with teammate Richard Carapaz. They did not sprint to the line, instead crossing together, all smiles, their faces caked with dust, with Kwiatkowski's front tire just ahead. Kwiatkowski is a former world champion and veteran of seven Tours who likely would have won other stages before now had he not devoted much of his career to helping other riders win the Tour title.

Carapaz said INEOS' goals for the day were both winning the stage and putting him in the red-spotted jersey awarded to riders who vacuum up the most points on the Tour's climbs. They did both. With Carapaz having secured the jersey on the ascents, the Ecuadorian rider then graciously left the win to his loyal teammate who had helped him up the climbs.

"Basically, he decided," Kwiatkowski said of Carapaz, who last year became Ecuador's first Grand Tour champion by winning the Giro d'Italia. "He's an incredible person."

"We are going to celebrate big time tonight because we all deserve it after so many stages," he said. "We put in a show today."

Further back, in his own battle to keep the overall race lead, Roglic again kept Tadej Pogacar, his Slovenian countryman and closest rival, firmly in his grasp. Roglic surged ahead of Pogacar on the dusty gravel track at the top of the day's toughest climb, making clear that he was in no mood to cede even seconds so close to the finish in Paris.

Roglic remains 57 seconds ahead of Pogacar overall, and has a lead of 1 minute, 27 seconds over Colombian rider Miguel Angel Lopez, still third.

Villarreal host Eibar

Unchanged Real begin title defense at Sociedad

Dortmund young stars rapidly gaining experience, maturity

Bayern as always, team to beat in Bundesliga

MADRID, Sept 17, (AP) — Real Madrid are keeping most of the same players to try to win back-to-back Spanish leagues for the first time in more than a decade.

Madrid begin their title defense on Sunday at Real Sociedad with practically the same squad that a few months ago lifted their first league trophy in three years. They have not won consecutive leagues since 2007-08 as Barcelona have dominated domestically.

The Catalan rivals won eight leagues since Madrid's last double, including three in a row from 2009-11. Barcelona won two in a row in 2015-16 and 2018-19. Madrid's other titles in the last decade came in 2012 and 2017.

The league began last weekend but Madrid didn't play because they received extra time to rest after competing last month in the Champions League Round of 16. Barcelona and Atlético Madrid, who made it to the quarter-finals of the Champions League, won't play in the first two rounds. Europa League winners Sevilla also had their first two games postponed.

Madrid won their only preseason match on Tuesday against Getafe.

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Coach Zinedine Zidane is sticking to a formula that utilizes the entire squad, and isn't afraid of switching schemes — he went from tactics that focused on three forwards at times, or three defenders, and even five midfielders in some circumstances.

The main player who left was James Rodríguez, who joined Everton in the English Premier League. Gareth Bale also was expected to leave and was close to a transfer to Tottenham. But neither Rodríguez nor Bale played a big role in Madrid's 34th league title, when the team won 10 straight matches after the coronavirus break to overtake Barcelona for the lead.

Zidane kept the key players from that run, notably striker Karim Benzema and defender Sergio Ramos, who combined for 13 goals in the team's final 11 league matches. Benzema will continue to be supported by young Brazilians Vinícius Júnior and Rodrygo, and also, hopefully, by an Eden Hazard who won't have to endure so many injury problems as he did last season — his first with the club.

Thibaut Courtois returns as the starting goalkeeper, and captain Ramos will be flanked by Raphael Varane again, with veteran Marcelo and Ferland Mendy exchanging starts in the left back position. Dani Carvajal will likely start at right back, with competition from Álvaro Odriozola after a brief loan to Bayern Munich.

Back from a loan to Real Sociedad was youngster Martin Odegaard, who will be a midfield option to make up for the absence of Rodríguez. The defensive midfield will again be anchored by the experienced trio of Ca-

semiro, Luka Modric and Toni Kroos. Federico Valverde will likely be used often as well, while Francisco "Isco" Alarcón and Marco Asensio remain available as attacking midfielders.

Madrid made some decent cash in the offseason by loaning the likes of right back Achraf Hakimi to Inter Milan and youngster Óscar Rodríguez to Sevilla. Left back Sergio Reguilón is set to move to Tottenham after a stint with Sevilla.

Young Japan forward Takefusa Kubo was loaned to Villarreal, while Reinier will play with Borussia Dortmund, and Brahim Diaz with AC Milan. Defender Jesús Vallejo will be loaned to Granada, and goalkeeper Alphonse Areola returned to Paris Saint-Germain after a season with Madrid.

Villarreal and coach Unai Emery will host Eibar on Saturday, while Real Betis and Manuel Pellegrini will welcome Valladolid on Sunday. Huesca and Cádiz will meet on Sunday in a matchup of promoted clubs.



In this May 26, 2018 file photo, Real Madrid's Gareth Bale celebrates after scoring his side's second goal during the Champions League final soccer match between Real Madrid and Liverpool at the Olimpiyskiy Stadium in Kiev, Ukraine. (AP)

win 19 of their last 20 league games and a record-extending eighth straight Bundesliga title.

Bayern start Friday at home against Schalke, before Dortmund play Borussia Mönchengladbach on Saturday and Leipzig host Mainz on Sunday. Bayern will follow that with matches against Sevilla in the European Super Cup on Sept. 24 and against Dortmund in the German Super Cup six days later.

After the last campaign finished without fans, a deal between German politicians Tuesday allows supporters back into stadiums for a six-week trial at maximum 20% capacity — with one big exception.

Bayern wanted 7,500 fans on Friday but fell foul of a rule which keeps the stadiums closed if the local coronavirus infection rate climbs too high.

Games with partial crowds have split Germany's vocal fan groups. Boycotts are rare but many say they won't take part in any organized displays of support for the team. Social distancing rules kill the atmosphere, some argue, and there's widespread discontent with the perceived unfairness of barring away fans and allocating the few available tickets by lottery.

With barely four weeks between the

Champions League final against Paris Saint-Germain and the start of the new league season, it's hardly surprising that Bayern's squad have changed little.

Forward Leroy Sané is finally eligible to play after joining from Manchester City in July and could make his debut against Schalke, the team he left in 2016. New signings were barred from the Champions League tournament. He will need to find his place in an attack already boasting Lewandowski, Kingsley Coman and Serge Gnabry.

Midfielder Thiago Alcántara left Bayern after seven years for Liverpool on Thursday and likely won't be replaced. Three loan signings have also moved on. Philippe Coutinho is back at Barcelona, with Ivan Perisic returning to Inter Milan and defender Alvaro Odriozola to Real Madrid.

Erling Haaland and Jadon Sancho lit up the Bundesliga last season — Haaland with 13 goals in 15 games and Sancho with 17 goals and 17 assists — but Dortmund's title challenge was once again let down by defensive frailty.

Perhaps surprisingly, Dortmund have not bought a center back. However, they have replaced rampaging right back Achraf Hakimi, who was on loan from Real Madrid, by signing the more experienced Thomas Meunier from Paris Saint-Germain.

Sancho is still a Dortmund player — so far — despite a determined attempt by Manchester United to buy him. The transfer window closes on Oct. 5.

Seventeen-year-old English mid-

SOCCER

fielder Jude Bellingham looks like Dortmund's next young sensation after arriving from Birmingham, and scored on his debut in the German Cup on Monday. But there's still a lack of depth at the back, with midfielder Emre Can drafted in at center back for the cup game.

Leipzig's run to the Champions League semifinals was remarkable for a team only founded 11 years earlier, even given Red Bull's financial backing, but they obscured a fundamental weakness for next season.

Without Werner, both of Leipzig's goals in the 2-1 quarterfinal win over Atletico Madrid came from midfielders, and the 3-0 semifinal loss to PSG could have been very different had center forward Yussuf Poulsen not missed a good first-half chance while trailing 1-0.

New signing Hwang Hee-chan started in the center forward role and scored in Leipzig's first game of the new season, a 3-0 win over third-division club Nuremberg in the German Cup.

Belgium top first rankings since pandemic shutdown

ZURICH, Sept 17, (AP) — The first FIFA men's world rankings for five months were still led by Belgium on Thursday after the shutdown of European teams during the coronavirus pandemic ended in September.

Belgium lead an unchanged top four nations from 2018 World Cup winners France, Brazil — which have yet to play in 2020 — and England.

Portugal, the reigning European and UEFA Nations League champions, rose two places to No. 5.

Rankings after the November international break will decide seedings when FIFA draws the European qualifying groups for the 2022 World Cup in early December.

The 10 highest-ranked European teams will be top-seeded in groups where only the winners will advance directly to the finals tournament in Qatar. Three more teams will qualify through playoffs scheduled in March 2022.

Currently, Germany are the ninth-best European ranked No. 14, and No. 15 Switzerland would take the last top-seeded place in the draw. Denmark are

next at No. 16. Senegal are the top-ranked African nation at No. 20, and No. 28 Japan lead Asian confederation teams.

World Cup hosts Qatar are ranked No. 55.

Rankings

1. Belgium (1)
2. France (2)
3. Brazil (3)
4. England (4)
5. Portugal (7)
6. Uruguay (5)
7. Spain (8)
8. Croatia (6)
9. Argentina (9)
10. Colombia (10)
11. Mexico (11)
12. Italy (13)
13. Netherlands (14)
14. Germany (15)
15. Switzerland (12)
16. Denmark (16)
17. Chile (17)
18. Sweden (17)
19. Poland (19)
20. Senegal (20) (Previous position in parentheses)