

Morikawa still on course to finish season as tour's No. 1 player

# Cliff-edge improvisation helps McIlroy lead in Dubai



Mercedes driver Lewis Hamilton of Britain holds pole position award after qualifying session in Lusail, Qatar, on Nov. 20, ahead of the Qatar Formula One Grand Prix. (AP)

## 'RB lack pace'

## Hamilton wins Qatar GP pole

LOSAIL, Qatar, Nov 20, (AP): Lewis Hamilton and Max Verstappen qualified 1-2 for the inaugural Qatar Grand Prix, setting up a showdown between the Formula One championship contenders at the very start of Sunday's race.

Hamilton won the 102nd pole of his career, fourth of the season and first since the Hungarian Grand Prix in August. Hamilton trails Verstappen by 14 points in the championship fight with three races remaining.

He beat Verstappen by 0.455 seconds Saturday to win the pole at Losail International Circuit. The seven-time champion said his stomach had been bothering him since he arrived in Qatar, but a good night's sleep helped his recovery.

## MOTOR RACING

Hamilton said his stomachache made opening day at the new circuit difficult, and he was fourth in both of Friday's practice sessions.

Mercedes made changes in Saturday's final practice and Hamilton said in qualifying he was aided by smart strategy that sent him on track with little traffic and a strong lap by the driver.

Verstappen said Red Bull was lacking pace and noted that teammate Sergio Perez failed to advance to the final qualifying group. Perez will start 11th.

The race is the first in a 10-year deal between F1 and Qatar.

Valtteri Bottas, teammate to Hamilton at Mercedes, qualified third and was followed by Pierre Gasly of AlphaTauri. Gasly has been fast all weekend but a tire puncture near the end of qualifying slowed him.

Fernando Alonso qualified fifth and was followed by Lando Norris and Carlos Sainz.

The weekend opened with the Brazil GP still the main topic of discussion as Mercedes contested the FIA decision not to penalize Verstappen for running Hamilton wide off course last week in Sao Paulo.

Mercedes requested a review of the decision, which the FIA denied in the middle of a Friday press briefing between the principals of the two warring teams. It was a tense 30-minute session between Mercedes head Toto Wolff and Christian Horner, team principal for Red Bull, and both agreed they have no relationship. But Horner also publicly questioned the legality of the Mercedes.

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates, Nov 20, (AP): Rory McIlroy was on the rocks late in his third round at the DP World Tour Championship. Some cliff-edge improvisation, followed by a final-hole birdie, put him back in control.

Seeking a second straight victory to end his season, McIlroy delivered another wild finish at Jumeirah Golf Estates in shooting a 5-under 67 that left the four-time major champion with a one-stroke lead on Saturday.

Sam Horsfield bogeyed the 18th hole to shoot 69 and drop out of a share of the lead with McIlroy, who was 14 under overall in the season-closing event on the European Tour. Collin Morikawa, still on course to become the first American to finish a season as the tour's No. 1 player, was three shots back in a four-way share of fifth place after his round of 69.

Standing on the tee at the par-3 17th hole holding a one-stroke lead,

## GOLF

McIlroy missed the green left and saw the ball bounce through the rough and dance along the edge of the cliffs. It eventually settled on a narrow ledge, to gasps among spectators.

McIlroy opted against taking a drop, which was the preferred choice of his caddie, Harry Diamond, and managed to clip a shot off the stone and through the green. He missed the return chip by inches, but a par was a good result given what could have happened.

"Harry was pleading with me not to hit it," McIlroy said. "He was like, 'We can just go back and make 4 at the last.'"

McIlroy then pitched to 9 feet with his third shot - from just on the green - at the par-5 18th and holed the birdie putt which would regain the lead after Horsfield's bogey a few minutes later.

McIlroy, who won the CJ Cup in Las Vegas last month, closed his second round on Friday with a double-bogey 7 after hitting into water at the 18th.

He made a dreadful start to his third round, too, snap-hooking a 3-wood off the first tee and making a bogey.

McIlroy responded with birdies at Nos. 2 and 3 - two of the seven he had in total.

Morikawa, playing alongside McIlroy, birdied three of his first six holes to move into a tie for the lead with his playing partner and four others. The American made par on each of his final 12 holes to slip off the pace.

"It was all over the place," Morikawa said. "Front nine played pretty good but overall just didn't take advantage of the par 5s."

"All three days have kind of been a little bit of this, a little bit of that, and got one more day to kind of put everything together and hopefully put a low one out there."

Morikawa is the highest-placed of the six players who can still win the Race to Dubai and is unlikely now to need a victory to clinch the title.

Billy Horschel is second behind Morikawa in the points race but is 37th in the 52-man field, eight shots adrift of his compatriot.

# Vlhova beats Shiffrin in first slalom of World Cup season

Dürr finishes 3rd

LEVI, Finland, Nov 20, (AP): Practice made perfect for Petra Vlhova on Saturday, beating Mikaela Shiffrin in the first World Cup slalom of the season.

The Slovakian overall champion had been training for three weeks in Finnish Lapland and skipped a parallel event in Austria last week to get ready for the first race in her strongest discipline.

The tactics paid off. Vlhova posted the fastest time in both runs. She initially lost a few hundredths from her slim lead of .11 over Shiffrin but accelerated near the end of her final run to win by .31 as the pair continued their dominance in the annual event in Finnish Lapland.

Lena Dürr finished .84 behind in third for the German skier's second career podium result, nearly nine years after winning a city event in Moscow.

No skier other than Vlhova or Shiffrin has won the traditional season-opening slalom since then-overall champion Tina Maze triumphed in

## SKIING

2014. Shiffrin and Vlhova have now each won it four times.

"Here on this kind of slope I like to ski, it's something special to me," said Vlhova, who won two slaloms in one weekend here last year.

It was Vlhova's 21st career win and first since working with her Swiss coach Mauro Pini, who replaced Livio Magoni in the offseason.

Magoni had coached Vlhova for five years and the Italian helped her become the first overall champion from Slovakia, but he was forced to leave following unflattering remarks on Vlhova's style of skiing reportedly made by him in an interview with an Italian newspaper. "I feel more happy, more free. That's it," Vlhova said about working with Pini.

Having dealt with a back issue that hampered her training over the last few weeks, Shiffrin was made to wait at least one more day in her bid to match the 32-year-old record for most World Cup victories in a single discipline. Currently on 45 slalom wins, the American is one short of Swedish great Ingemar Stenmark's best mark in giant slalom. Another slalom is scheduled for Sunday.

The American three-time overall champion was gracious in defeat.

"I think it was clear that Petra had, all together, better skiing and better consistency," said Shiffrin, who regained the lead in the overall standings. After three races, Shiffrin has 180 points and is followed by Andreja Slokar of Slovenia on 168 and Vlhova on 160.

"It was a quite successful day, especially when I look at the last three or four weeks," Shiffrin said. "I had some good skiing and I had some sections that certainly weren't perfect but still quite good. It's always really great to start the season with a podium, so that's awesome."



Slovakia's Petra Vlhova competes during the first run of an alpine ski, World Cup women's slalom in Levi, Finland, on Nov 20. (AP)

# Andrade keeps WBO middleweight title

MANCHESTER, N.H., Nov. 20, (AP): Demetrius Andrade stopped Jason Quigley of Ireland in the second round Friday night to retain his World Boxing Organization middleweight title at Southern New Hampshire University Arena. The 33-year-old Andrade, from Providence, Rhode Island, improved to 31-0 with his 15th knockout, dropping Quigley (19-2, 14 knockouts) three times.

In the second round, Andrade sent Quigley to the canvas with a left to the temple. After Quigley got up Andrade swarmed over him and dropped him in a corner with a right hand to the top of the head. Referee Arthur Mercante Jr. stepped in and stopped the fight at 2:24 of the second round.

In the final minute of the first round, Andrade floored Quigley with a left

hand to the body and a right to the top of the head.

Andrade successfully defended the WBO middleweight title he won in October of 2018 for the fifth time. In his last defense, he won a unanimous decision against Liam Williams on April 17. All five defenses were against European fighters. Andrade is now turning his attention to other top middleweights such as World Boxing Council champion Jermal Charlo, as well as undisputed

super middleweight champion Canelo Alvarez.

The co-main event between World Boxing Council flyweight champion Julio Cesar Martinez of Mexico and McWilliams Arroyo was a no-decision after two rounds due to a cut along Ar-



Andrade

## BOXING

royo's left eye that he sustained due to an accidental head butt. Martinez (16-1, 1 no contest 14 knockouts) retained his title. Both fighters knocked each other down in the first round. In the second, after the cut opened, Martinez dropped Arroyo (21-4, 1 no contest, 14 knockouts) in the second.

## Tourists beat hosts by 8 wickets

# Pak clinch T20 series with win vs B'desh

DHAKA, Bangladesh, Nov. 20, (AP): Fakhar Zaman hit 57 not out to guide Pakistan to an eight-wicket victory over Bangladesh that clinched the three-match Twenty20 series 2-0 on Saturday.

Zaman and opener Mohammad Rizwan put on an 85-run stand that was instrumental in overhauling Bangladesh's paltry 108-7 with 11 balls to spare.

Rizwan scored a patient 39 off 45 with four boundaries.

Zaman was watchful after captain Babar Azam (5) dragged fast bowler Mustafizur Rahman's (1-12) delivery on to his stump in the third over, similar to his dismissal in the first match.

## CRICKET

"Wasn't easy to play shots early on, wanted to build partnerships and succeeded," Zaman said. "Thankfully we finished it off well."

He paced the innings, especially after being reprieved on 26 when Saif Hassan dropped his catch in deep mid-wicket off legspinner Aminul Islam (1-30). Zaman brought up his seventh half-century off 40 balls and then finished the game off on his own, as Pakistan got to 109-2.

Shaheen Shah Afridi (2-15) and Shadab Khan (2-22) caused the damage to Bangladesh amid Najmul Hossain's resistance after captain Mahmudullah opted to bat first.

Najmul struck 40 off 34, hitting five fours.

Afridi, replacing Hasan Ali, continued his habit to strike in the first over as he trapped Saif Hassan leg-before for duck in the fifth ball.



Scotland's Duhan van der Merwe (center), tries to break through Japan's defence during the Autumn International match between Scotland and Japan at the BT Murrayfield Stadium, Edinburgh, Scotland, on Nov 20. (AP)

Naim Sheikh edged Mohammad Wasim's delivery to first slip for 2 in the second over, leaving Bangladesh at 5-2.

Afif Hossain flicked Afridi to six over backward square leg in the first ball he faced. He also cut Wasim past point for a boundary as Bangladesh appeared to be in control.

Najmul Hossain Shanto at the other end recovered from his vulnerable start to dominate bowlers.

But Shadab Khan stifled the innings and brought an end to the 46-run partnership when Afif's premeditated reverse paddle cost his wicket for 20.

Najmul chipped in the air to give Shadab, who dived to his left to take an excellent catch, his second wicket.

## Japan hold out

# Hogg becomes Scots' sole record try-scorer

EDINBURGH, Scotland, Nov. 20, (AP): Captain Stuart Hogg became Scotland's sole record try-scorer as Japan was held out 29-20 before a thrilled crowd at Murrayfield on Saturday.

Hogg's 25th career touchdown took him clear of Iain Smith and Tony Stanger in a first half they flattered to finish 19-6 ahead.

But Japan rallied to trail 26-20 with eight minutes to go, and Scotland didn't make the win safe until Finn Russell's penalty in the 79th.

The victory was a satisfying third for the Scots this autumn, beside Tonga and Australia.

They crumbled in the last quarter

## RUGBY

against world champion South Africa last weekend but enjoyed a profitable series, including debuts for 12 players. They also paid back Japan somewhat for knocking them out of the 2019 Rugby World Cup in the pool stage.

Japan came into the match a massive underdog after a thrashing from Ireland and barely beating Portugal. But a rejig of the tight five and the return of former captain Michael Leitch inspired the Japanese to their best effort of their European tour. It gave Scotland a scare.

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