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BIG SHOW BERGER



GERMAN KEEPER'S HEROICS KNOCK CANADA OUT OF WOMEN'S FOOTBALL

Goalkeeper Ann-Katrin Berger saved two penalties in the shootout and scored the winner to knock holders Canada of the Olympic women's football, taking Germany into the semi-finals along with Spain and the United States. The quarter-final in Marseille finished 0-0 after extra time before 2016 gold medallists Germany prevailed 4-2 in the shoot-out thanks to Berger's heroics. The Canadians took gold three years ago in Tokyo but just making it to the last eight this time was a remarkable achievement after they were docked six points in the group stage.

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GULF TIMES
SPORT



ATHLETICS

Caribbean double delight as Alfred, LaFond shine

Crouser win an unprecedented third consecutive Olympic title in the men's shot put

AFP
Paris

Julien Alfred and Thea LaFond led their two tiny Caribbean island nations to first-ever Olympic medals when they won golds in the women's 100m and triple jump at the Paris Games yesterday.

On a heady night of track and field, Femke Bol fired out a broadside at 400m hurdles rival Sydney McLaughlin-Levrone with an incredible show of running that anchored the Netherlands to victory in the 4x400m mixed relay. And American Ryan Crouser won an unprecedented third consecutive Olympic title in the men's shot.

In the 100m, St Lucia's Alfred upstaged the much-hyped American world champion Sha'Carri Richardson, storming to a gun-to-tape victory in 10.72sec. "It means a lot to my country. I'm sure they're celebrating right now," said Alfred.

It was a stunning success in pouring rain at the Stade de France, aided by world champion Richardson's terrible start and the withdrawal before the final of the injured Jamaican veteran Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce. Richardson did fight back to claim silver in 10.87sec, but Fraser-Pryce missed out completely on her bid to become the first Olympian to medal in the same athletics event in five consecutive Games dating back to her gold in Beijing in 2008.

In any case the evening belonged to 23-year-old Alfred, overcome with joy after realising she had bagged St. Lucia their first ever medal of any colour at an Olympics. "Growing up I used to be on the field struggling with no shoes running barefoot, running in my school uniform, running all over the place," said Alfred. "I'm really hoping this gold medal will also help the youth and help St Lucia build a new stadium and really help the sport grow."

In a remarkable turn of events, there was - just 10 minutes later - another gold for a second island nation in the West Indies which also began competing at the Games in 1996. LaFond sailed out to a national record of 15.02 metres on her second effort in the triple jump.

The world indoor champion held her nerve as Jamaica's Shanieka Ricketts went out to 14.87m to claim silver. "It is absolutely beyond my wildest dreams," said LaFond. "The rain was kind of in my favour, it came down as soon as I was done with that second jump - thank you God for working with me!"

LaFond added: "Here we are, Olympic champ. Dominica's first medal, it's gold. Indoor was the first medal, it was gold. What a year, what a life, oh my God, wow! Every time I step on the track is an honour, bearing the flag is an honour, being Dominican is an honour. Representing a country with only 70,000 people and being out here and getting their first medal, a gold, is an honour!"



Julien Alfred of Saint Lucia celebrates after crossing the line to win the 100m gold ahead of silver medalist Sha'Carri Richardson of US and bronze medalist Melissa Jefferson of US during the Paris Olympics at Stade de France yesterday. (Reuters)



Ryan Crouser of United States reacts after winning the shot put gold. (Reuters)

In the field, Crouser was left elated just at being able to compete after a season in which he sustained two elbow injuries either side of a torn pectoral muscle. "I'm just honoured. I feel so lucky to be out there competing," he said. "It took a lot to get back to where I had been in the past. It's made it all the more special to be out there tonight. There were a lot of times I thought I might not be."

Crouser's US teammate Joe Kovacs snatched silver with his sixth and last attempt of 22.15m. Jamaican Rajindra Campbell took bronze.

The drama continued right until the end of a sodden evening session, Norway's Markus



Femke Bol (left) celebrates with teammate Lieke Klaver after guiding Netherlands to 4x400m relay mixed gold at the Stade de France. (Reuters)

Rooth claiming gold in a gripping finale to the decathlon. Rooth accumulated 8,796 points over the two-day, 10-discipline event, only making sure of victory in the final event, the 1,500m.

Germany's Leo Neugebauer took silver with 8,748pts, Lindon Victor of Grenada claiming bronze (8,711). "I was exhausted," said Rooth. "It's mentally hard. I just ran as hard as I could. It was great."

Later, United States broke the world record in winning the Olympic 4x100m mixed medley relay gold, outgunning China and Australia. Their team of Ryan Murphy, Nic Fink, Gretchen Walsh and Torri Huske touched in 3min 37.43sec to narrowly better the mark set by Britain at the Tokyo Games, when the event was first added to the Olympic programme. Zhang Yufei-led China took silver in 3:37.55 with Australia filling the podium in 3:38.76.

MEDALS TALLY

TEAMS	G	S	B	T
1. China	16	12	9	37
2. United States	14	24	23	61
3. France	12	14	15	41
4. Australia	12	8	7	27
5. Great Britain	10	10	13	33
6. South Korea	9	7	5	21
7. Japan	8	5	9	22
8. Italy	6	8	5	19
9. Netherlands	6	4	4	14
10. Canada	4	4	7	15
11. Germany	4	4	2	10
12. Romania	3	3	1	7
13. Hungary	3	2	2	7
14. Ireland	3	0	2	5
15. New Zealand	2	4	1	7
16. Croatia	2	1	1	4
17. Belgium	2	0	2	4
17. Hong Kong	2	0	2	4
19. Azerbaijan	2	0	0	2
20. Brazil	1	4	5	10
21. Israel	1	4	1	6
22. Sweden	1	2	2	5
23. Georgia	1	2	0	3
24. Switzerland	1	1	4	6
25. Spain	1	1	3	5
26. Kazakhstan	1	1	2	4
26. South Africa	1	1	2	4
28. Ukraine	1	1	1	3
29. Uzbekistan	1	0	2	3
30. Czech Republic	1	0	1	2
30. Guatemala	1	0	1	2
32. Argentina	1	0	0	1
32. Dominica	1	0	0	1
32. Ecuador	1	0	0	1
32. Norway	1	0	0	1
32. Philippines	1	0	0	1
32. Saint Lucia	1	0	0	1
32. Serbia	1	0	0	1
32. Slovenia	1	0	0	1
32. Uganda	1	0	0	1
41. Mexico	0	2	1	3
42. North Korea	0	2	0	2
43. Greece	0	1	3	4
43. Poland	0	1	3	4
45. Jamaica	0	1	1	2
45. Kosovo	0	1	1	2
45. Türkiye	0	1	1	2
48. Denmark	0	1	0	1
48. Ethiopia	0	1	0	1
48. Fiji	0	1	0	1
48. Mongolia	0	1	0	1
48. Tunisia	0	1	0	1
53. India	0	0	3	3
54. Chinese Taipei	0	0	2	2
54. Moldova	0	0	2	2
54. Tajikistan	0	0	2	2
57. Austria	0	0	1	1
57. Egypt	0	0	1	1
57. Grenada	0	0	1	1
57. Lithuania	0	0	1	1
57. Portugal	0	0	1	1
57. Slovakia	0	0	1	1

READ AS: G- Gold, S- Silver, B- Bronze, T- Total



Thea LaFond of Dominica celebrates after winning the triple jump gold.

SPOTLIGHT

Hemeida set to fulfil his dream of competing at Olympics

By Sports Reporter
Doha

Bassem Hemeida will become the fifth Aspire Academy graduate to compete at the Olympics since the academy opened its doors in 2004, when he takes part in heats of the 400m hurdles at the Paris Games tomorrow.

The 24-year-old says that moment will be the culmination of his hard work and dedication and the fulfilment of an ambition. He is one of three Aspire Academy graduates who have been chosen to represent Qatar at the Paris Olympics alongside defending high jump champion Mutaz Barshim and 800m runner Abubaker Abdullah Haydar.

Barshim will be participating in his fourth Olympics after making his debut at London 2012, while Haydar is taking part at his third Games. The trio all began their development at Aspire Academy before continuing their careers as part of the Qatar Athletics Federation's teams at inter-

national competitions.

Hemeida qualified for Paris by not only being crowned Asian champion in Thailand in 2023 but also running an Olympic qualifying time of 48.64 seconds. That run also saw him earn a place at the World Athletics Championships in Budapest, Hungary, where he reached the semi-finals before claiming a silver at the Asian Games in China as he set his personal best of 48.52.

Now, he has the chance to shine and show what he is capable of at sports' global showcase, the Olympic Games. "It's a dream come true and an honour to represent Qatar on the world stage. I'm excited and proud to compete at the highest level," he said.

He is confident that he is in the best physical and mental condition ahead of the Games. "I've been training intensely with sprint workouts, hurdle drills, and strength conditioning," he continued.

"Additionally, I've focused on nutrition and recovery to ensure peak performance. Mental preparation is also crucial, and I have been using some vital lessons from

the World Championships last year to help this time. I've been working on building mental resilience, visualisation techniques, and strategies to handle pressure and maintain focus."

Hemeida paid tribute to Aspire Academy for helping him prepare for the biggest moment of his career so far. "Aspire Academy provided top-notch training, coaching, and support," he continued. "I also learnt several other key elements for Olympic success at the Academy, such as discipline, perseverance, and strategic thinking."

He will also be hoping to inspire younger brother Seif Hemeida as he prepares to compete in the pole vault at August's World Under-20 Athletics Championships in Lima, Peru.

Seif, who is coached by who is coached by the QAF's Pawel Szczyrba, is a student-athlete at Aspire Academy and at just 18, he is already the Qatar national record holder for the pole vault. His leap of 5.55m earlier this year is also the joint-highest jump for an under-20 athlete in 2024



Bassem Hemeida qualified for Paris Games by not only being crowned Asian champion in Thailand in 2023 but also achieving an Olympic qualifying time of 48.64 seconds.



BOXING

Khelif into semis, ensures medal amid gender row

'THERE WAS NEVER ANY DOUBT ABOUT THEM BEING WOMEN'

Paris
Reuters

Imane Khelif beat Hungary's Luca Anna Hamori by unanimous decision in a welterweight quarter-final at the Paris Games yesterday to ensure Algeria's first Olympic boxing medal since 2000.

The 25-year-old Khelif, who has been in the eye of a storm about eligibility, had a quick start against Hamori, letting fly with flurries of lightning-fast punches to win the first two rounds on every judge's score card, despite the Hungarian landing a couple of strong shots.

The Algerian was slightly less willing to engage in exchanges in the final round, which had more than its fair share of clinching and grappling, but she did enough to win by a comfortable margin. The pair hugged after the final bell, before a tearful Khelif embraced her coaches on the sidelines.

Khelif and a second boxer, Taiwan's Lin Yu-ting, were disqualified at the 2023 World Championships in New Delhi after falling foul of the International Boxing Association (IBA)'s eligibility rules, which include preventing athletes with XY chromosomes from competing in women's events. The IBA did not specify on what grounds they failed. It has never been shown that the boxers have a genetic condition giving rise to a difference of sexual development (DSD).

The International Olympic Committee (IOC), which last year stripped the IBA of its status as boxing's governing body over governance issues and took charge of the Paris 2024 boxing competition, cleared both boxers to compete.

"God willing, we will continue fighting for my country that I love



Algeria's Imane Khelif celebrates her victory over Hungary's Anna Luca Hamori in the women's 66kg quarter-final during the Paris 2024 Olympic Games at the North Paris Arena in Villepinte yesterday. (AFP)

the most," Khelif told Algerian state television after her win.

Khelif will face Janjaem Suwannapheng of Thailand, whom she beat at the world championships before being disqualified, in Tuesday's semi-finals.

"It is hard, she has suffered a lot - as a child and now as a champion, she has suffered so much during these Games," said Khelif's coach Mohamed Chaoua.

"Where is the humanity? Where are the associations for women's rights? She is a victim."

The North Paris Arena had a number of Algerian fans in attendance, who cheered on Khelif throughout the bout and chanted "Imane, Imane, Imane" loudly while waving the country's flags.

"We were quite sad to see that controversy; she's an athlete who

is well supported in Algeria and we're behind her," Algerian fan Kawther Laanani told Reuters.

IOC president Thomas Bach yesterday said there "was never any doubt" that Khelif and Lin were women who had every right to compete at the Paris Olympics.

"We are talking about women's boxing. We have two boxers who were born as women, raised as women, who have passports as women and who have competed for many years as women and this is a clear definition of a woman," Thomas Bach told a press conference.

"There was never any doubt about them being women."

On Friday, Hungary's boxing federation said it had contacted the IOC to object to Khelif's participation in the tournament.

But yesterday, Hungary's IOC

representative Balazs Furjes said there was never any question of Hamori not fighting Khelif and the team trusted the IOC to make the right decision.

Khelif won her round-of-16 bout in 46 seconds on Thursday, when her Italian opponent Angela Carini pulled out of the fight.

Carini was hit with multiple punches in the first 30 seconds, before raising her hand and returning to her corner to withdraw from the fight.

Taiwan's double world champion Lin faces Svetlana Kamenova Staneva of Bulgaria in a featherweight quarter-final today.

The Bulgarian Olympic Committee said it had voiced its concerns over Khelif's and Lin's presence at the tournament during a meeting with the IOC's Medical and Scientific Commission on July 27.

Boxing body offers prize money to beaten Italian amid gender row

The International Boxing Association has pledged to award prize money to Italy's **Angela Carini**, whose 46-second Olympics defeat to an Algerian boxer at the centre of a gender eligibility row has left the sport on the ropes.

Carini stopped her fight against Algeria's Imane Khelif after receiving two strong punches to the face, refused to shake hands with her opponent and then collapsed to the canvas sobbing.

But the bout sparked controversy as Khelif had been disqualified by the IBA during last year's world championship after failing unspecified gender eligibility tests. There is no suggestion that Khelif, who has fought on the women's circuit for years, including in the Tokyo Olympics, identifies as anything other than a woman. The International Olympic Committee (IOC) cleared her to fight at the Paris Games as they use the gender stated on the passport as their criterion for eligibility. Khelif and Taiwan's Lin Yu-ting appear to be caught in the crossfire of a row between the IBA and the IOC, which ejected the boxing body from the Olympic movement after financial and ethical irregularities.

Referring to Carini's reaction at the end of the bout, IBA President Umar Kremlev said: "I couldn't look at her tears."

"I am not indifferent to such situations, and I can assure that we will protect each boxer. I do not understand why they kill women's boxing," added Kremlev. "Only eligible athletes should compete in the ring for the sake of safety." The IBA said it would reward Carini prize money "as if she were an Olympic champion."

The association said it was awarding all gold medalists \$100,000, of which \$25,000 will go to the national federation and \$25,000 to the coach. It was not immediately clear how much Carini would be offered and the IBA did not immediately respond to a request for comment. Carini has since apologised for not congratulating her opponent. "All the controversy made me sad and I'm sorry for my opponent too. It's nothing to do with her. She was here like me to fight," she told the *Gazzetta dello Sport*. "I was angry because my Olympics had just gone up in smoke but I've nothing against Imane Khelif. On the contrary, if I saw her again, I'd give her a hug," she added.

(AFP)



DRESSAGE

Werth sets medal record as Germany team win gold



Germany's gold medalists Frederic Wandres, Isabell Werth and Jessica von Bredow-Werndl celebrate with their medals on the dressage podium during Paris 2024 Olympic Games at the Chateau de Versailles in Versailles, Paris, yesterday. (Reuters)

Versailles
Reuters

Germany's dressage queen Isabell Werth became her country's most decorated Olympian yesterday as she led her team to victory over Denmark and Britain in a closely fought battle.

Werth, 55, put in a strong performance and scored 79.89% in the dressage team finals, held in the Grand Prix Special format, with Wendy, a black mare she has trained for only six months.

Defending Olympic champion Jessica von Bredow-Werndl later sealed the razor-thin win for Germany who got a total score of 235.79 points, ahead of Denmark with 235.67 and Britain on 232.49.

"No one can say that dressage is boring. It was really exciting to the very last point," Werth told a press conference. Asked about her own achievements she said: "I am really happy and proud about it... Now we will take, hopefully soon, a little glass of wine or champagne, because we haven't got any yet."

Werth has become the most successful German in Olympic history with eight gold and five silver medals. She is also the most decorated rider and the first athlete to win medals in seven Olympic Games.

"Hats off to her. I never try and match Isabell. She is the undisputed queen of dressage," said Britain's Carl Hester, one of the last dressage greats of Werth's generation still competing.

The victory brings some relief to Germany, who so far have failed to deliver on expectations in most sports and are 10th in the medals table, as the Olympics head into their second week. Riders have won half of Germany's four gold medals.

Britain's chances took a hit when star rider Charlotte Dujardin was barred from the competition a few days before the Games over a video that showed her hitting a horse, reviving a debate over the sport's ethics and Olympic future.

Speaking to reporters after his ride, veteran Hester said he was "excited and proud" of the good performance from his pupil Becky Moody, the young rider who stepped in to replace Dujardin. Denmark's Cathrine Dufour

had the best individual performance with a score of 81.2% with MSJ Freestyle, a mare she took over from Dujardin a few years ago. The Danish riders said the tight result, setting their team just 0.12 percentage points behind Germany after three rounds of jury votes, was a testament to how exciting their sport could be rather than a cause of frustration.

"It was mega fun sport today," said Dufour. Her teammate Daniel Bachmann Andersen added: "If you flip the medal the right way, you can see there's some gold in it."

Germany have won 14 gold medals, or two thirds of all those awarded in the dressage team competitions in the modern Olympics, including every gold since 1984 apart from 2012 when Britain snatched it on home turf.

MOTORSPORT

Bastianini wins British MotoGP sprint as Bagnaia crashes out

AFP
Silverstone, United Kingdom

Ducati rider Enea Bastianini won the British MotoGP sprint at Silverstone yesterday as championship leader Francesco Bagnaia crashed out on lap five.

Bastianini was followed in second by Jorge Martin (Ducati Pramac), who now stands just one point behind Bagnaia in the overall standings ahead of today's main race. Pole-sitter Aleix Espargaro (Aprilia) finished third.

Martin was quickly on to Espargaro's tail at the start of the race, overtaking on lap one and appearing to take control. Bastianini struggled to stay with him for the first couple of laps but slowly reeled him in before sliding past to take the lead which he held until the end for his first win of any kind since taking the Malaysian MotoGP last November.

"I am very happy," said Bastianini. "It was a very good fight with Jorge, we were pushing the limit. The lap time was too crazy, all the sprint has been crazy."

"It's my first victory of the year, I'm so happy at one of my favourite tracks, Silverstone. Fantastic."

Martin's second place gave him nine points and tightens the race at the top of the standings but a win would have put him above

Bagnaia. "Right from the start, I took the lead but Enea was much stronger today," he said after the race.

Six-time world champion Marc Marquez, who went into the sprint third in the title race, was running a comfortable fourth when he crashed on the penultimate lap - only the second time he has failed to score points in a sprint this season. He subsequently dropped to fourth in the title race behind Bastianini who goes up to third.

An eventful start saw Franco Morbidelli rear-ending Marco Bezzecchi's Ducati, both Italians sliding off the track, debris cascading from their bikes. All three will be ready to go again in today's MotoGP for which Espargaro, Bagnaia and Bastianini will start on the front row with Martin just behind them. Espargaro surprised Bagnaia with a brilliant late lap in qualifying earlier yesterday to snatch pole position. The 35-year-old Spaniard, who is retiring at the end of the year, reclaimed the lap record for Silverstone where he won 12 months ago with a time of 1 minute 57.309 seconds, which was 0.208sec ahead of Bagnaia.

"I'm happy with my performance today especially in the qualifying," said Espargaro after the sprint. "In the sprint I did all I could. I was at the limit, it was a nice race and hopefully tomorrow we can push even more."



Ducati Lenovo Team's Enea Bastianini celebrates after winning the British Grand Prix sprint in Silverstone, Britain, yesterday. (Reuters)

TENNIS

Zheng beats Vekic to claim historic gold for China

Ebden, Peers win men's doubles gold

AFP Paris

Zheng Qinwen became the first Chinese player to win Olympic tennis singles gold when she defeated Croatia's Donna Vekic yesterday, hailing her victory as a "proud" moment for herself and her country.

The 21-year-old came through 6-2, 6-3, winning only China's second ever tennis gold after Li Ting and Sun Tiantian's women's doubles triumph at Athens in 2004.

Zheng's victory came on the same Court Philippe Chatrier at Roland Garros where in 2011 celebrated compatriot Li Na became China's first Grand Slam champion in a landmark moment for the sport.

"Nothing can describe my emotion, every round was super difficult and I did everything I could to get a medal for my country," said Zheng, who has improved on the Olympic record of Li, whose best performance was a fourth place in Beijing in 2008.

"I feel my country will be proud of me, I'm proud of myself. My family are at home, I'm sure they are screaming at the TV."

"I just fight every match. I have a special energy playing for my country. I never give up."

World number seven and Australian Open runner-up Zheng took advantage of settling into a groove faster than her opponent and broke for a 2-0 lead.

Vekic and Zheng went head-to-head with some brutal hitting but the Chinese star's 12 winners to the Croat's three proved crucial and her accuracy shone again with a set-clinching break in the eighth game.

Zheng had saved a match point in her grueling third-round win over Emma Navarro and then ended four-time French Open champion Iga Swiatek's 25-match winning run at Roland Garros to reach the gold medal match.

Match-hardened by those tests, Zheng held to love in the opening game of the second and broke again for a 2-0 lead as the errors piled up for 28-year-old Vekic.

However, the Croat, who knocked out world number two Coco Gauff in the third round, and saved a match point in her quarter-final win over Marta Kostyuk, hit back with her first service break of the contest.

Zheng thwarted any hint of a revival by converting a fourth break point for a 5-3 lead before



Gold medalist Qinwen Zheng (right) of China, silver medalist Donna Vekic (centre) of Croatia and bronze medalist Iga Swiatek of Poland pose for a selfie at the Roland-Garros Stadium. (Reuters)

sealing victory in the next game. "I'm disappointed," said Vekic. "But once everything settles I will be proud of myself."

Swiatek claimed the bronze medal on Friday by seeing off Anna Karolina Schmiedlova. It was a rollercoaster tournament for Zheng, who needed back-to-back three-hour matches to defeat Navarro and then former world number one Angelique Kerber.

In both matches she had to claw back deficits while against Navarro she even found her reputation under attack when the American described her as "cut-throat" with "no respect".

However, her run to the final created one fan in the shape of Novak Djokovic. "She's a terrific person. I really like her a lot," said the Serbian star on the eve of the gold medal match.

"(Getting to the final) is a huge deal for China, for her, but also for our sport. China is such a huge country, a huge market, and they've been waiting for a big champion and a big name since Li Na."

Australia's Matthew Ebden and John Peers won the men's doubles gold with a thrilling victory over Austin Krajicek and Rajeev Ram of the United States.

The unseeded pair came back from a set and break down to win 6-7 (6/8), 7-6 (7/1), 10-8 against their fourth-seeded opponents.

It was Australia's second Olympic men's doubles title after Todd Woodbridge and Mark Woodforde triumphed in Atlanta in 1996. For Peers, it was a second Games medal to go with the bronze he claimed alongside Ashleigh Barty in the mixed doubles in Tokyo three years ago.

SHOOTING

USA's Hancock beats Prince for fourth skeet gold

Paris Reuters

Vincent Hancock cemented his status as a skeet shooting great after winning his fourth Olympic gold medal, beating protege and fellow American Conner Prince at the Paris Games yesterday.

The 35-year-old qualified behind Prince but dug deep into his vast experience to prevail 58-57 to secure his fourth gold in five Olympic appearances.

Hancock becomes only the sixth athlete to win the same Olympic individual event four times. "I'll never get tired, it's something I work for," the American said when asked if his Olympic victories were getting predictable. But he had the confidence that once he made the six-shooter final, a medal was well within his reach.

"I was thinking 'God, please help me get through this round and let me have a chance in the final. If I can just get to the final, I know I can do it'."

After Taiwan's bronze medalist Lee Meng Yuan dropped out of the race for the gold, the Americans were tied at 54-54 and Prince missed the first in his final sequence of four shots, which proved decisive.

Hancock needed four hits to write his name into the record books, and the American did just that before making a heart gesture to his wife and kids in the stands.

The mentor-protege camaraderie was evident as Hancock and Prince frequently high-fived celebrating each other's success.

Earlier, the women's 25 metres pistol event provided intense drama culminating in shoot-offs to determine the gold and bronze medalists.

Yang Ji-in struck gold in her dream Olympic debut but the 21-year-old was made to work for it by local favourite Camille Jedrzejewski, who won silver.

Both the shooters were tied at 37 in the final, forcing a shoot-off in which Yang eventually prevailed 4-1. "This gold medal has proved I am the world's best right now," said Yang, her eyes already on the 2028 Games in Los Angeles.

"I will have to train harder to try to put the flag highest once again in LA."

Jedrzejewski was effectively out of the gold medal reckoning after missing the first three shots in the shoot-off, while Yang hit two of them.

"I lost maybe because my emotions were running very high, but I'm happy with my silver!"

"There was a lot of emotion in the hall, and it was a really intense competition."

Hungary's Veronika Major won the bronze, also via shoot-off, denying India's Manu Bhaker a third medal at the Paris Games.

Georgian great Nino Salukvadze finished last in the qualifying round in her record-equaling 10th Olympic appearance.



Skeet gold medalist Vincent Hancock (right) and silver medalist Conner Lynn Prince pose with their medals yesterday. (Reuters)

BADMINTON

Chen and Jia win doubles gold as Yufei eliminated

Paris Reuters

China's Chen Qingchen and Jia Yifan beat compatriots Liu Shengshu and Tan Ning to the women's doubles badminton gold at the Porte de La Chapelle arena in the Paris Games yesterday.

Japan's Chiharu Shida and Nami Matsuyama bagged bronze after defeating Malaysia's Pearly Tan and Thinaah Muralitharan earlier in the day.

The final was aggressive from the start, with a series of powerful smashes from Liu and Tan on the very first serve. But Chen and Jia, who won 22-20 21-15, are world number one for a reason and overcame their third-ranked rivals.

Once the match finished, however, both teams were all smiles and hugs, all four wrapping themselves together in a Chinese flag.

It was China's second gold medal in badminton at Paris, having won the mixed doubles final on Friday. The country has won 20 gold medals in the sport since its inclusion at the Olympics in 1992 in Barcelona.

Japan's Shida and Matsuyama took bronze with a more comfortable 21-11 21-11 win over Malaysia's Tan and Muralitharan.

In the women's singles quarter-finals earlier in the day, defending Olympic champion and world number two Chen Yufei was dethroned by her compatriot He Bingjiao, who won 21-16 21-17, in a near-silent stadium as many Chinese spectators did not appear to pick a side.

Thailand's Ratchanok Intanon and world number eight Gregoria Tunjung of Indonesia were initially neck-and-neck before Tunjung



Women's badminton doubles gold medalists Chen Qingchen and Jia Yifan celebrate as they pose with their medals yesterday. (Reuters)

took the lead, winning 25-23 21-9. The match was an affair of flashy backhands, gentle net-game and well-aimed smashes. Tunjung is her country's last person standing in Paris - Indonesia has medalled at every Olympics except London since badminton became an Olympic sport.

"There is pressure, being the last Indonesian left. But I didn't want to think too much about that," Tunjung said. "I told myself that I should play for myself and do my best."

South Korea's An Se-young, the women's world number one and also her country's last hope, started off her first game with Japan's Akane Yamaguchi on the back foot, losing 15-21.

She rallied in the second to win 21-17 before dominating in the third with a score of 21-8. Tunjung and An will face off in the semi-finals today, but An already has her eye on the gold.

In the other quarter-final Rio gold medalist and world number four Carolina Marin of Spain defeated Japan's Aya Ohori in straight sets, 21-13 21-14.

ROAD RACE

Evenepoel delivers double for cycling-mad Belgium

AFP Paris

Belgium's Remco Evenepoel survived a dramatic late puncture to take Olympic road race gold yesterday, delivering a historic double for his cycling-mad country after already winning the time trial.

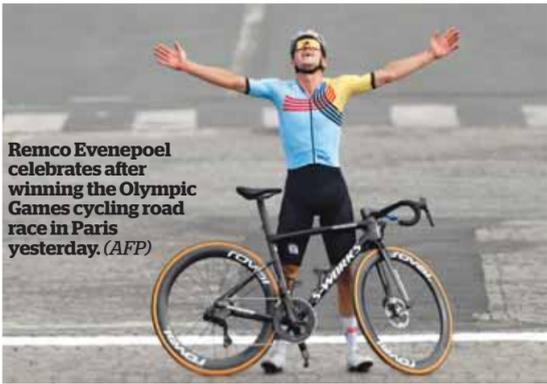
The double gold ensures Evenepoel's place in the pantheon of cycling greats and marks an impressive comeback four years after he plunged over a wall into a ravine during a race in Italy.

He is the only man to have ridden the Olympic double. Dutch cyclist Leontien Zijlaard completed the women's double at the 2000 Olympics in Sydney.

"So proud to win this and to be the first ever to take the double. It's history," said the 24-year-old Belgian. Cheered on by massive roadside crowds, Evenepoel was clear leader when disaster struck.

The puncture sent him shuddering to a gut-wrenching halt less than 4km from the finish line, Evenepoel frantically waving his arms at his team as he waited for a replacement bike.

The team car arrived quickly



Remco Evenepoel celebrates after winning the Olympic Games cycling road race in Paris yesterday. (AFP)

and a panicked Evenepoel, unaware of the advantage he had on his pursuers, dashed over the remainder of the course to seal victory in front of the Eiffel Tower. "I really feel sick from the effort, especially with that stressful moment with about 4km to go," he told reporters.

"The (team) car wasn't ready for that moment... but in the end I had enough time. What a day!" he added. The race embarked on beneath the Eiffel Tower on a huge loop to the west of the city past the race track at

Saint Cloud and the Palace of Versailles. At 273km, the course was the longest in Olympic history, and the race was contested without team radios, which can reward a lone attacker as opponents find it difficult to organise a collective counter-attack.

Escape specialist Ireland's Ben Healey broke away solo with an early attack before Evenepoel bridged the gap to him inside Paris. One of the pre-race favourites, Evenepoel then left his rivals for dead after attacking

on a climb to Montmartre. German rider Nils Politt received a huge cheer when he took a toilet break at the Deux Moulins cafe on the same climb. Evenepoel rode solo over the final 15km of the race, eventually finishing well clear of French pair Valentin Madouas and Christophe Laporte, who took silver and bronze. He got valuable support from fellow Belgian Wout van Aert, who led Evenepoel through the early action and then stalled rivals once his compatriot was clear.

His main rival Mathieu van der Poel of the Netherlands attacked on the first climb of Montmartre, but finished 12th, just ahead of British Olympic mountain bike champion Tom Pidcock.

"When Remco went, I knew it was a really dangerous moment. I'm happy for him," said van der Poel. A series of well-timed advances made the difference for Evenepoel in a race that will go down as perhaps the greatest win of his career.

The Belgian star won the best young rider's award at his first Tour de France two weeks ago and said he partied so hard he stayed in bed for two days before dominating a rainy, crash-marred Olympic time trial yesterday.

South Korea's Lim wins individual gold, Suhyeon takes silver

South Korea's Lim Sihyeon won gold in the women's individual archery event at the Olympics yesterday, her third title in her first Games.

Lim's compatriot Nam Suhyeon took silver and France's Lisa Barbelin fought off South Korea's Jeon Hunyoung to claim the bronze, her country's first medal in the event bringing a wild roar from the crowd.

Lim has won the gold medal in all three of her events in Paris. "Before the Paris Olympics,

I wasn't able to sleep very well. After this match, I'll finally go to bed," she told reporters. Weather conditions at Esplanade des Invalides

varied throughout the afternoon, as over-cast skies alternated with bright sun and the archers dealt with both wind and still air, forcing them to constantly adjust their aim. In the gold medal competition, Lim and Nam were well-matched and each had one set with a perfect score. The two helped South Korea win their 10th

consecutive gold medal in the women's team event earlier in the Games. But Lim, who also won gold in the mixed team event, overtook her teammate 7-3 to win the individual title.

Spectators backing France and South Korea rivalled each other to display their support yesterday, waving flags and banners and stomping their feet. On winning the bronze, Barbelin's elation was evident as she raised her arms and shouted to the crowd as the spectators matched her excitement.



HORSE RACING

Qatar Goodwood Festival wraps up with spectacular success

By Sports Reporter
Goodwood, UK

The Goodwood Racecourse saw the conclusion of the Qatar Goodwood Festival, which was held under Qatari sponsorship for tenth time. Over five days, the 2024 edition saw 38 races and the final day was marked by a remarkable increase of spectators.

As usual, since the initial edition sponsored by QREC in 2015, the Festival has been a success in the full sense of the word. Excellence was there in every single detail, whether in terms of organisation, quality racing and attendance of race-goers.

RECORD QATARI VICTORY FOR SIXTH YEAR IN A ROW

Qatar's excellence was not limited to organisation and sponsorship it has been associated with a victory on the highest level with the Al Shaqab Racing-owned Al Ghadeer landing the PA Qatar International Stakes for the second straight year for himself and for the sixth year in a row; a feat re-confirming Qatar as a world's pioneer in Arabian horse racing.

It was also a first successful step by the champion horse towards retaining his legendary title as the champion of the Doha Triple Crown, which he landed in February this year. All eyes will be on Al Ghadeer at ParisLongchamp in the Qatar Arabian World Cup and then at Al Rayyan in HH The Amir Sword Festival next year.



Education Above All Foundation CEO Fahad bin Hamad al-Sulaiti with the connections of Term Of Endearment, which won the Qatar Lillie Langtry stakes at the Qatar Goodwood Festival yesterday.

The Qatari presence at Goodwood was further consolidated as Qatar Tourism, represented by Visit Qatar, announced the renewal of the multi-year partnership with

Goodwood Racecourse with effect from 2025. The partnership comes in continuation of the successful collaboration with Qatar Racing and Equestrian Club over 10



Jockey Billy Lee rides Term Of Endearment to Qatar Lillie Langtry stakes win.

TERM OF ENDEARMENT WINS QATAR LILLIE LANGTRY STAKES

Following the feature race of the final day of the Festival, CEO of Education Above All Foundation (EAA) Fahad bin Hamad al-Sulaiti crowned the winners of the day's feature, the Group 2 Qatar Lillie Langtry stakes, presented by EAA. It was Term Of Endearment who carried the colours of Cramel Acheson to the winners' enclosure for trainer Henry De Bromhead and jockey Billy Lee. The five-year-old mare scored

her second black-type straight victory, having won a Gr 3 last time out. The five-year-old was a winner of the Group 3 William Hill Bronte Cup Fillies' Stakes at York when last seen.

At Goodwood, Term Of Endearment was always in a prominent spot. With Caius Chorister and Night Sparkle still in front over two furlongs out, the Irish mare gradually improved her position. Left in the lead inside the final furlong, Term Of Endearment stayed on well despite edging left to beat Night Sparkle by three quarter of a length. River Of Stars kept on in third.

GYMNASTICS

Biles vaults to third gold in Paris, Yulo makes history

Defending Olympic and world champ Andrade settles for silver

AFP
Paris

Simone Biles soared to women's vault gold yesterday, capturing her third gold of the Paris Games to take her career tally to seven as Carlos Yulo and Rhys McClenaghan made history for the Philippines and Ireland.

With two stunning vaults, including a spectacular version of her signature Yurchenko double pike, Biles improved to three-for-three in Paris after claiming the individual all-around title and team gold with the USA. Biles was simply untouchable, leaving reigning Olympic and world champion Rebeca Andrade of Brazil delighted with silver as American Jade Carey took bronze.

Biles took control with her opening vault, the Yurchenko double pike now named the Biles II. After a season spent perfecting the vault, Biles said she had performed it for the last time. "I kind of nailed that one," Biles said.

On a vault so difficult no other woman attempts it, Biles soared off the vault table and even though her momentum carried her back a step on landing, her execution score of 9.4, along with the 6.4 difficulty score, added up to a score of 15.700. Biles produced another explosive effort on her second vault, a Cheng, scoring 14.900 for a winning average of 15.300 points.

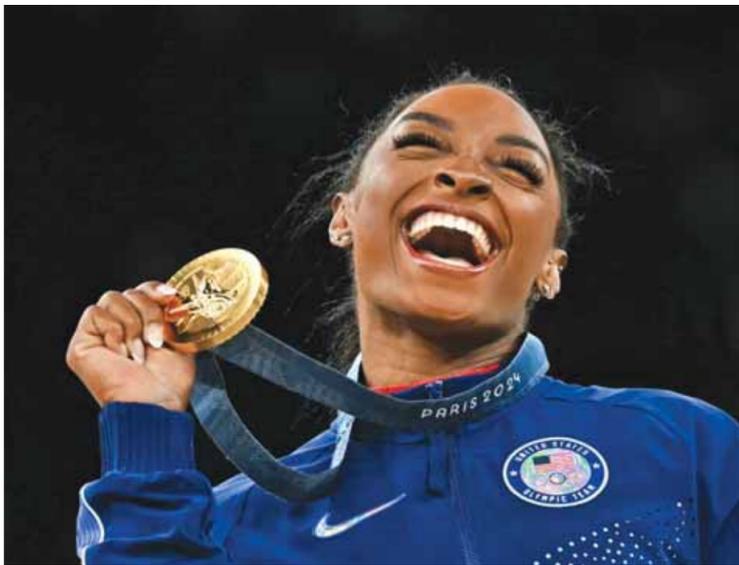
Andrade opened with a beautiful Cheng vault that garnered 15.100 points. She had a slight hop on the landing of her second vault for a 14.833 and an average of 14.966. Carey was the last of eight finalists and snatched bronze with an average of 14.466, denying North Korea's An Chang-ok.

Biles, clad in shimmering red, gave a big smile as she received another rapturous reception at Bercy Arena. Her smile was just as big as she saluted the judges after landing her second vault, and she was still smiling as she high-fived coach Laurent Landi. The US great now owns a total of 40 world and Olympic medals - 30 of them gold.

Biles, 27, is already fielding questions about Los Angeles 2028, to which her answer yesterday was "Never say never." She still has plenty to do in Paris, with balance beam and floor exercise finals coming up tomorrow, capping her return to the Olympic pinnacle after a bout of the disorientating and dangerous mental block called the "twisties" saw her pull out of most of her events in Tokyo.

Hailed by many for prioritising her mental health, Biles was also criticised by some as a quitter three years ago. As she burnishes an Olympic legacy launched with four golds in Rio, Biles has noticed the critics are oddly silent. "They're really quiet now, so that's strange," she said with a laugh.

Biles' latest stunning turn was sandwiched between a pair of Olympic firsts. Yulo won the men's floor exercise to give the Philippines a first gymnastics gold - and just their second Olympic gold medal ever - while McClenaghan triumphed on pommel horse to give Ireland a first Olympic gymnastics medal.



Simone Biles of the United States celebrates with her gold medal after winning the women's vault event during the Paris Olympic Games at the Bercy Arena yesterday. (AFP)



Carlos Edriel Yulo of the Philippines celebrates after winning the floor exercise gold. (Reuters)

Yulo pulled out all the stops, upping his degree of difficulty mark from qualifying and nailing his gravity-defying three-and-a-half twist to close his routine for a score of 15.000 points. "In the qualifications, I played it very safely," Yulo said. "Today, I felt I couldn't hold back and hesitate. If I really wanted to win, I needed to give my everything."

Yulo, 24, pushed Tokyo Olympic champion Artem Dolgopyat into second with a routine that garnered 14.966 points and Britain's Jake Jarman earned bronze with 14.933 points. Yulo, whose career ups and downs have in-

cluded vault and floor world titles but also a disappointing Tokyo Games campaign and a last-place finish in all-around qualifying at last year's world championships, collapsed in tears as the final competitor's score was read and he was confirmed as champion.

McClenaghan, a two-time world champion, edged out Kazakh Nariman Kurbanov on pommel horse. American Internet sensation Stephen Nedorosik earned bronze as Britain's Max Whitlock was not only denied a third straight gold in the event but also in his bid for an unprecedented fourth straight medal on the same apparatus.

SWIMMING

Record-equalling 9th gold for Ledeccky

AFP
Paris

American Katie Ledeccky made history yesterday with her ninth career Olympic gold while Canada's Summer McIntosh underlined her status as the rising star of the sport with her third gold of the Paris Games. Ledeccky powered to a fourth straight 800m Olympic freestyle title to equal the record for most gold medals won by a woman athlete in any sport. The 17-year-old McIntosh produced a superb late surge to win the 200m individual medley to add to her triumphs in the 400m medley and 200m butterfly.

Ledeccky has dominated in the 800m since winning the event as a 15-year-old at the London Games in 2012, and while she was pushed all the way by Australian Ariarne Titmus, the defence of her crown never truly looked in danger. The 27-year-old hit the wall in 8min 11.04sec, ahead of Titmus (8:12.29) and the United States' Paige Madden (8:13.00)

A ninth gold drew her level with former Soviet-era artistic gymnast Larisa Latynina as the only women ever to collect that many titles. The greatest distance swimmer the sport has seen, she had already won the 1500m and earned silver in the 4x200m freestyle relay and bronze in the 400m freestyle in Paris. No other woman swimmer has won gold at four different Olympics and Ledeccky said that was the record that gave her particular satisfaction.

"I think four times one is the one that kind of means the most to me. I felt like I put a lot of pressure on myself but I'm just really happy that I could get the job done," she added. Titmus, who beat Ledeccky in the 400m freestyle, was full of admiration for the American's achievement.

McIntosh led from Australian Kaylee McKeown after the backstroke before the USA's Alex Walsh grabbed the advantage at the last



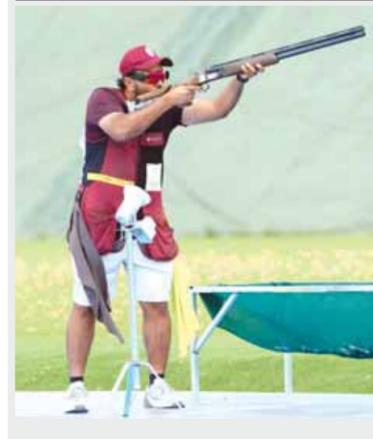
Katie Ledeccky of United States poses with her gold medal after winning the 800m freestyle.

turn, following the breaststroke leg. But McIntosh once again produced the killer final lap to grab a thrilling victory. American Kate Douglass took silver while McKeown took the bronze after Walsh, who had finished third, was disqualified.

Hungary's Kristof Milak claimed his country's second swimming gold of these Games with victory in the men's 100m butterfly. Canada's Josh Liendo took silver while his compatriot Ilya Kharun claimed bronze. It was the second time this week that the Hungarians have been celebrating at La Defense Arena after Hubert Kos took gold in the 200m backstroke. Milak was a silver medalist in the same event in Tokyo and also took silver in the 200m fly behind Leon Marchand this week. He now has two career golds in the fly, adding to his 200m success three years ago.

In the mixed 4x100m medley relay, the USA took gold with a world record time to eclipse China and Australia. Their team of Ryan Murphy, Nic Fink, Gretchen Walsh and Torri Huske touched in 3min 37.43sec to narrowly better the mark set by Britain at the Tokyo Games.

Al-Athba finishes 15th in skeet shooting



Qatar's shooter Rashid al-Athba finished 15th in the skeet qualifications yesterday as he failed to qualify for the final at the Paris Olympics Games. At the Chateauroux Shooting Centre, the 36-year-old shot 118 out of 125 targets. Al-Athba was placed 23rd after three series on the first day, and he shot a 24 and 25 in the next two series yesterday but that was not enough for him to enter the final.