

HUGHTON TO COACH BRIGHTON

LONDON: Brighton & Hove Albion have named former Newcastle United boss Chris Hughton as their manager, the English Championship (second tier) club said yesterday.

The 56-year-old replaced Sami Hyypia who quit last week following a run of one win in 18 games which has left Brighton 21st in the standings, one place above the relegation zone.

"Chris has an excellent record in coaching and management," chairman Tony Bloom told the club website. "Chris is also a manager who has a track record for developing talent at all levels from academy upwards and will embrace the work we've been doing at the club in this area in recent seasons." Hughton played most of his career as a full back for Tottenham Hotspur and won 53 caps for Ireland. He led Newcastle back into the Premier League in 2010 but was sacked the following season.

Hughton managed Birmingham City in 2011-12 before moving to Norwich City and leading them to 11th place in the Premier League in 2013. He left Norwich in April with the club 17th in the table and they were relegated at the end of the campaign. —Reuters



SHELVEY GETS FOUR-GAME BAN

LONDON: Swansea City midfielder Jonjo Shelvey has accepted a charge of violent conduct and been banned for four matches following an incident in the Premier League match against Liverpool, the club said yesterday. "Swansea City has reluctantly accepted the charge issued by The Football Association against Jonjo Shelvey for violent conduct following an incident in Monday night's Premier League defeat at Liverpool," the club said in a statement. "While the club supports Shelvey's statement that the incident was unintentional, it does not believe the outcome of an appeal would prove positive for the club or player."

The charge came after the FA examined footage from the match in which Shelvey, a former Liverpool player, caught opponent Emre Can with a flailing arm. The incident was unseen by referee Andre Marriner. Shelvey had said on Twitter that he did not intentionally elbow the Liverpool player in the 4-1 defeat at Anfield and he was defended by his manager Garry Monk. Shelvey has been handed the customary three-match ban for violent conduct and an additional match after receiving a red card earlier in the season. The ban starts immediately and he will miss the New Year's Day fixture at Queen's Park Rangers, the FA Cup third-round game at Tranmere Rovers and home Premier League matches against West Ham United and Chelsea. —Reuters

BRUCE RULES OUT SWITCH

LONDON: Hull City boss Steve Bruce has ruled himself out of the running for the Newcastle United manager's job should Alan Pardew complete his expected move to Crystal Palace. Bruce, who has been linked by British media with the Newcastle role, said he was flattered to be tipped for the job but was determined to stay at Hull and keep them in the Premier League.

"People know that I am from Newcastle, I was a Newcastle supporter as a boy and it has been regurgitated since I was a 22-year-old playing for Norwich and Gillingham," Bruce told reporters yesterday. "It would be wrong for the speculation to keep carrying on for the club, for the supporters, for the players. I am determined to see this through and make sure we stay in the Premier League and build on the good work we have done in the last two and a half years. The chairman knows the way I feel and why would I want to leave now? It's not right, and I hope people respect that."

Pardew is expected to take up the vacant role at Palace after he was given permission by Newcastle to talk to the London club on Monday. Palace, who sacked manager Neil Warnock on Saturday, are currently involved in a relegation battle while Newcastle are 10th in the Premier League. —Reuters



MADISON BUMGARNER ATHLETE OF THE YEAR

SAN FRANCISCO: Madison Bumgarner sat in the outfield alongside Jake Peavy before Game 7 of the World Series and told his teammate exactly what needed to happen: Tim Hudson would work a few innings and get the ball to Bumgarner, who would hand it off to the bullpen to finish the championship.

Peavy quickly offered his own prediction that Bumgarner would end it himself. That's exactly what MadBum did, following up a pair of World Series wins with a save at Kansas City to close out San Francisco's third title in five years and cap a brilliant postseason that made him a household name - or, at the very least, a household nickname. He is the 2014 Associated Press Male Athlete of the Year.

"I was sitting in the outfield with Madison and he was asking me how I thought this game was going to play out," Peavy recalled this month. "I said to him: 'Madison, when you get the ball, you're not coming out of the game. You're the best guy we've got.' ... He said, 'Man, that's exactly what I hoped you would say' and exactly what he wanted. He just needed some confirmation, somebody to believe in him as well. I said, 'Fight for that ball, man,' and what he did will go down in the ages as the best ever." The shaggy-haired left-hander who takes as much pride in his pitching and durability as he does his deep North Carolina roots, Bumgarner became October's biggest star for a San Francisco club that really needed one during another improbable World Series run.

Bumgarner finished first in a vote by US editors and news directors. He beat out Dodgers pitcher Clayton Kershaw - who won the National League Cy Young and MVP. Retiring New York Yankees star Derek Jeter and golfer Rory McIlroy tied for third place. The award was announced Tuesday.

After months of the same questions about his well-tested left arm, Bumgarner made light of it all. He had just thrown 270 innings, including 21 with two wins and a save in a World Series that went the distance against the fellow wild-card Royals.

"I got a splinter in my finger the other day. That was kind of painful," Bumgarner quipped, sounding perfectly serious. "Fortunately, it was on my right hand."

Bruce Bochy's 25-year-old workhorse has earned the manager's trust that he will speak up if anything ever feels off with his arm. Otherwise, he's going to keep getting the ball.

With that tricky cross-body, three-quarters delivery - resembling a sling shot - Bumgarner shows hitters the ball briefly with an outstretched arm before that rapid release and suddenly it's right

there leaving batters baffled.

On two days' rest in Game 7, that day he sat with Peavy in Kansas City, he pitched five scoreless innings of relief in a 3-2 win. Only after that would Bumgarner acknowledge he might need a mental and physical break in after tossing a record 52 2-3 postseason innings.

"You know what? I can't lie to you anymore," he said. "I'm a little tired now." Pitching coach Dave Righetti began fielding inquiries before the World Series began about whether Bumgarner had the chance to make three appearances. He knew it could happen, though it wasn't exactly planned.

"You don't realize when you're in the middle of the eye, 'Wow, what this guy's doing is so special,'" Righetti said. "That really hasn't been done in years. ... When you've got a healthy guy who's on a roll, those are the kind of guys who change big series and do special things."

The Giants locked up Bumgarner long-term in April 2012 on a \$35.56 million, six-year contract through 2017. It could keep him in orange and black even longer, given the \$12 million options for the 2018 and 2019 seasons. That almost seems like a bargain now given Bumgarner's performance and star power on baseball's biggest stage.

Bumgarner was MVP of the World Series and NL Championship Series, going 4-1 during the postseason following an 18-10 regular season.

From his four-hit, 10-strikeout gem that got things started in an 8-0 wild-card win at Pittsburgh all the way through his brilliant relief outing in Game 7 of the World Series, Bumgarner dazzled like never before. "He pitched a different game than we had seen from him earlier in the season," Pirates manager Clint Hurdle recalled recently. "We had watched video and saw how much sharper he had gotten as the season played out. In the wild-card game he had command of all his pitches and lived on the edges the entire outing. He also used his fastball up in the zone with deadly accuracy."

Bumgarner made the rounds on the post-Series appearance circuit, then took a break to attend a rodeo. Despite the heavy workload, Bumgarner will be eager for spring training come February.

"Everything feels great and we're looking to just keep a normal offseason and a normal routine," Bumgarner said. It will hardly be normal given the attention and hype he is sure to generate after a spectacular 2014. "I just love the way he's handled everything, all the attention," Righetti said. "It looks like he's stayed the same." —AP



NASHVILLE: Predators center Mike Fisher (12) collides with St. Louis Blues right wing Vladimir Tarasenko (91), of Russia, in the third period of an NHL hockey game. —AP

PREDATORS SEE OFF BLUES

NASHVILLE: Shea Weber scored twice to lead the Nashville Predators to a 3-2 win over the St. Louis Blues on Tuesday night. Gabriel Bourque added a goal for Nashville, which has won two of three.

Chris Butler and TJ Oshie scored for St. Louis, but the Blues lost for the fifth time in six games despite the return of No. 1 goalie Brian Elliott.

Elliott was activated from the injured list earlier Tuesday after he missed 14 games due to a lower-body injury. He made 44 saves. Weber's short-handed goal 9:02 into the third period gave Nashville a 3-2 lead. His first-period tally made it 1-0. He hadn't scored since Nov. 20 - a span of 16 games.

CANADIENS 2, PANTHERS 1

Pierre-Alexandre Parenteau scored the only goal in the shootout to lift Montreal over Florida. Parenteau's shot glancing off the glove of Roberto Luongo and went into the net in the third round of the tiebreaker.

Jonathan Huberdeau missed on the ensuing attempt, and Montreal improved to 5-1 in shootouts. The Canadiens have won four in a row - including three on the road - and seven of eight. Montreal owns a three-game winning streak against the Panthers.

Brendan Gallagher scored in regulation for Montreal, and Dustin Tokarski had 36 saves in his first start in 11 games. Nick Bjugstad scored Florida's goal. Luongo stopped 33 shots for the Panthers, who lost at home for the first time in four games.

OILERS 3, KINGS 2

David Perron's shootout goal snapped Edmonton's nine-game losing streak in a victory over defending Stanley Cup champion

Los Angeles.

Matt Hendricks and Ryan Nugent-Hopkins scored in regulation for the Oilers (8-22-7), who won for just the second time in 22 games. It was also just their second win against a Western Conference opponent (2-18-6). Drew Doughty and Jake Muzzin had goals for the Kings (18-12-8), who lost for the second time in two nights and dropped their fifth straight on the road.

CANUCKS 3, SHARKS 1

Jannik Hansen scored in the second period, immediately after leaving the penalty box for

an illegal hit to the head, and Vancouver snapped a four-game road losing streak by beating San Jose.

Bo Horvat and Radim Vrbata also scored for the Canucks, who have won their last three games in San Jose. Ryan Miller stopped one of two penalty shots he faced and made 31 saves in all to beat the Sharks for the seventh straight time. Joe Thornton converted his penalty shot, and Joe Pavelski missed for the Sharks, who had two penalty shots for just the second time in franchise history. Alex Stalock made 18 saves as San Jose lost its third straight. —AP

NHL results/standings

Montreal 2, Florida 1 (SO); Nashville 3, St. Louis 2; Edmonton 3, Los Angeles 2 (So); Vancouver 3, San Jose 1.

Western Conference					Tampa Bay								
Pacific Division					Metropolitan Division								
W	L	OTL	GF	GA	PTS	W	L	OTL	PTS				
Anaheim	24	8	6	107	101	54	Detroit	19	9	9	105	94	47
Vancouver	21	11	3	103	94	45	Toronto	20	14	3	124	111	43
Los Angeles	18	12	8	103	94	44	Florida	16	9	9	80	88	41
San Jose	19	13	5	101	96	43	Boston	19	15	3	98	99	41
Calgary	20	15	3	110	100	43	Ottawa	15	14	7	97	99	37
Arizona	14	18	4	86	115	32	Buffalo	14	20	3	75	123	31
Edmonton	8	22	7	79	127	23							
Central Division													
Chicago	25	10	2	117	78	52	Pittsburgh	22	9	5	109	86	49
Nashville	24	9	3	106	78	51	NY Islanders	24	11	1	112	101	49
St. Louis	22	12	3	108	93	47	Washington	18	11	7	105	94	43
Winnipeg	19	11	7	94	87	45	NY Rangers	19	11	4	102	87	42
Minnesota	17	13	4	99	95	38	Philadelphia	14	16	6	100	109	34
Dallas	16	14	5	102	118	37	Columbus	15	16	3	86	109	33
Colorado	13	15	8	92	109	34	New Jersey	13	18	7	82	108	33
							Carolina	10	22	4	72	98	24
Eastern Conference													
Atlantic Division													
Montreal	24	11	2	100	86	50							

Note: Overtime losses (OTL) are worth one point in the standings and are not included in the loss column (L). —AP



KANSAS: In this Oct. 29, 2014, file photo, San Francisco Giants pitcher Madison Bumgarner throws during the fifth inning of Game 7 of baseball's World Series against the Kansas City Royals. —AP