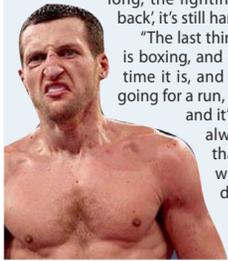


FROCH HANGS UP GLOVES

LONDON: Britain's four-time world super middleweight champion Carl Froch has announced he is retiring from boxing after losing the desire to keep fighting at the highest level. The 38-year-old, who last fought in May 2014 when he knocked out George Groves at Wembley Stadium, hangs up his gloves after winning 33 of his 35 fights in a 13-year professional career. "I'm officially retired from boxing," he said on his Twitter site yesterday. The Nottingham-based fighter, whose only losses came at the hands of Dane Mikkel Kessler and American Andre Ward, told Sky Sports News it was a hard decision. "Making the decision to retire and saying 'It's been a year, it's too long, the fighting machine has gone, it's not going to come back, it's still hard."



"The last thing I think about before my head hits the pillow is boxing, and when I wake up in the morning to think what time it is, and I think it's half six, seven o'clock, should I be going for a run, where's my trainers - it's a lifestyle, a way of life, and it's a mindset. "I'll always have that and I think I'll always be itching for the big fight." Speculation that Froch would retire gathered pace this year when he relinquished his IBF super-middleweight belt after an elbow injury forced him to miss out on a money-spinning fight with Julio Cesar Chavez Jr. — Reuters

WALKING DOWN MEMORY LANE

ST ANDREWS: When Louis Oosthuizen walks on to the first tee at St Andrews tomorrow, memories of his 2010 British Open victory at the Home of Golf will come flooding back as he bids for a repeat performance. The South African led over the final 48 holes at the Old Course five years ago, blowing away the rest of the field to win the Open by seven shots.

"It's great to be back here," Oosthuizen told reporters on Tuesday. "The biggest memory was I think on Monday walking down 18, seeing the grandstands and remembering that moment walking in 2010 on the Sunday afternoon. "It will give me the confidence knowing what I've done here and that I can play this golf course. But you still need to go out and make a good score, play good golf around this track. "If you're not going to be driving the ball well you're going to find a few pot bunkers and you're going to make mistakes. You're going to make bogeys," said Oosthuizen. The 32-year-old is in good form having tied for second place at the US Open last month. For a stunning seven-hole stretch Oosthuizen felt the buzz of major championship battle for the first time in years as he finished four-under-par, one stroke behind winner Jordan Spieth. After a messy run of three consecutive bogeys early in the final round at Chambers Bay, he piled up six birdies over the closing holes including five in a row from the 12th. "I needed to prove to myself to get in that situation of trying to win a major again and the back nine to me was so much fun," said Oosthuizen who will partner former world number one Tiger Woods and Australian Jason Day in tomorrow's opening round. —Reuters

ENRIQUE HOPES PEDRO STAYS

BARCELONA: Barcelona coach Luis Enrique does not want Pedro to leave but will respect whatever decision the Spain forward makes about his future, he said yesterday.

Pedro, 27, revealed on Monday the Spanish and European champions had received offers for him after agreeing to trim the size of his buyout clause and amid reports he is poised to join English champions Chelsea. A World Cup and European Championship winner with Spain, Pedro lost his place in the Barca starting lineup following the arrival of Uruguay striker Luis Suarez last year.

Luis Enrique used Pedro mainly as a substitute last term and he came on in the Champions League final to set up Neymar to score the third goal in a 3-1 victory over Juventus. "I don't want anyone to leave but there is a clause," Luis Enrique told a post-training news conference. "We have to respect his decision," added the former Barca and Spain midfielder, who led the club to a treble of Champions League and Spanish league and Cup titles in his first season in charge in 2014-15.

"I do not deceive anyone and I do not guarantee anyone playing time. It will be his personal decision." Barca begin the defence of their La Liga title at Athletic Bilbao next month, after they meet the Basque club in the Spanish Super Cup and Europa League champions Sevilla in the European Super Cup. — Reuters



A STAR IS BORN AS SARAIVA CLAIMS PAN AM BRONZE

TORONTO: Brazilian pixie Flavia Lopes Saraiva charmed the crowd on the way to winning a bronze medal in the artistic gymnastics women's all-around competition at the Pan American Games on Monday. Packing 70 lbs (31 kg) of pure charisma into a muscular 4-foot, 3-inches (133 cm) frame, Saraiva enchanted the sold-out arena with her playful performance that also marked the 15-year-old as a possible breakout star at next year's Rio Olympics.

"How can she not be a crowd favourite, she is so cute," smiled Rhonda Faehn, the senior vice president of the women's program for U.S. Gymnastics. "And she's very talented."

Along with a golden personality there is huge medal potential in the tiny Brazilian. Saraiva established her credentials at the 2014 Nanjing Summer Youth Olympic Games where she took gold in the floor exercise and silver in beam and all-around.

A bronze behind gold medallist Ellie

Black of Canada and American Madison Desch in Toronto on Monday was another small step towards Rio but the Pan Am competitions lack the presence of gymnastics powers like Russia, China and top Americans, and it will be a much tougher leap to land on the podium in Brazil.

After a wobble on the uneven bars, Saraiva finished with a smile and cheery wave to the crowd that brought more applause.

She then picked up a backpack that she could have camped out in and made her way to the floor exercise, the crowd now eating out of her hand and clapping along to her routine.

"I don't believe everything that has happened," said Saraiva, clutching a Toronto Pan Am Games stuffed mascot, while speaking through an interpreter. "Everybody is talking to me, everybody is looking. "When people clap and scream it makes me happy. "My coach said to me be calm, be relaxed, don't cry, don't be shy stay happy." — Reuters



ONTARIO: Silver medalist Cuba's Asley Gonzalez (left), gold medalist Brazil's Tiago Camilo (center left) and bronze medalists the United States' Jacob Larsen (center right) and Mexico's Isao Cardenas wear their medals earned in the men's -90kg judo competition at the Pan Am Games. — AP

CANADA IN PAN AM DRIVER'S SEAT

TORONTO: Canada's remarkable start to the Pan American Games continued on Monday while Cuban kayaker Jorge Garcia brought his gold medal haul to three and Mexico showcased their diving prowess. Colombia also enjoyed more success in roller speed skating during the third day of competition at the two-week multi-sport event featuring countries from across Latin America, South America, the Caribbean and North America.

But it was hosts Canada that again commanded the spotlight with a 17-medal day that included two gold in rowing and one each in women's all around gymnastics, canoeing, diving, shooting and judo. With 17 gold, 14 silver and 10 bronze, Canada, who set an ambitious goal of a top-two finish, lead all nations in both gold and overall medals.

The United States, who have dominated the Pan Am medal table at every Games since 1955, are second with 36 medals (12 gold), followed by Cuba and Colombia who each have 10 gold medals and 26 in total. Gymnast Ellie Black won the most unlikely gold medal of the day for the hosts as she overtook American Madison Desch to win Canada's first gymnastics gold medal at the 2015 Games.

Black's triumph was a blow to a US team that had topped the podium in every artistic gymnastics competition in Toronto, including the men's all around title earlier on Monday.

"To come here in front of the home crowd, to be able to hit my best competition, I think ever, is unreal," said Black. "This is probably one of the best for me, I can't even believe it."

Garcia, who helped power Cuba to victory in Sunday's men's K4 1000m, became the first athlete of the July 10-26 Games to earn three gold medals after winning the K1 and K2 1000m events. Mexico, who won three of four

diving events contested over the weekend, captured the gold medal in men's and women's three metre springboard on Monday while also scooping up a bronze in the women's synchronised 10m platform. Colombia captured gold in two of the day's four roller speed skating events as Pedro

Causil and Hellen Andrea Montoya Rios won their respective 500m finals while Juan Sebastian Sanz Neira won silver in the men's 10,000m points final. "Persistence and never give up is my motto," said Montoya Rios, who also won the women's 200m time trial. "I am 100 percent dedicated to this sport." — Reuters



TORONTO: Ryan Hawkins (top) and Zachary Cooper of the United States compete during the men's synchronized 10-meter platform diving event. — AP

RULE CHANGE MEANS GATLIN INELIGIBLE FOR ATHLETE OF YEAR

LONDON: Even if Justin Gatlin manages to beat Usain Bolt at next month's world championships, he won't be eligible for the sport's athlete of the year award.

A rule passed by the IAAF Council in November stipulates that athletes found guilty of serious doping violations - including Gatlin - will no longer be considered for the award, the sport's governing body said yesterday. "No athlete who has been sanctioned for a serious doping offense will be eligible," IAAF spokesman Nick Davies said. "This is the same caveat that is used when considering election to the IAAF Hall of Fame."

Gatlin, who won the 100 meters at the 2004 Athens Olympics but then served a four-year doping ban from 2006-10 after testing positive for testosterone, has been in excellent form recently. The American sprinter ran 9.75 seconds last week at a Diamond League meet in Lausanne, Switzerland, and 19.57 in the 200 at last month's US champi-

onships. His results last season, when he ran the fastest 100 and 200 of the year, landed him on the list of 10 men in contention for the season-ending athlete of the year award. His doping past, however, led critics to complain that Gatlin should not be considered for the prize. Gatlin was then left off the three-man shortlist, and the prize was eventually won by French pole vaulter Renaud Lavillenie.

At the worlds in Beijing, Gatlin is expected to be the main challenger to Bolt, the world-record holder and defending champion in both events.

In an extract from the minutes of last year's meeting, the IAAF wrote that the majority of the council members supported the recommendation because "it enhanced the credibility of the sport, it protected the rights of clean athletes and it assisted in further establishing inappropriate behavior in the sport that would not be honored by the IAAF in the future." — AP

TORONTO: American gymnast Sam Mikulak won his second gold medal in the Pan Am Games on Monday, and he's almost certain to be in the Rio de Janeiro Olympics a year from now contending for a medal. Not bad for starters. But he says his real passion, the secret behind his growing fame, lies with a herbal tea called "mate" (pronounced MA-tay), which is ever-present in Argentina, Uruguay and southern Brazil. Argentina-born Pope Francis is often seen drinking it, and Albert Einstein was reportedly a big fan of the beverage, which is officially Argentina's national drink alongside wine.

"If I ever go there to the Vatican, I'll know he (Pope Francis) drinks it," Mikulak said in an interview with The Associated Press. Mikulak, who won gold medals in the team and overall competition, came close to Olympic medals three years ago in London - placing fifth in both the vault and team competition. He credits much of his success to drinking the infusion, whose complete name is "yerba mate."

The tea-like drink is traditionally brewed in a hollowed-out, dried gourd and sipped from the gourd through a metal straw, known in

Spanish as a "bombilla."

It's ordinary to see people in Argentina or Uruguay walking the streets with a thermos of hot water and the gourd, prepared to brew the infusion almost anywhere. You can even see motorcyclists lugging around a thermos, tucked under an arm or hanging from a shoulder strap.

"I think it helps your mind and brain mellow and focus a bit more than normal," Mikulak explained. "That's why I drink it as an athlete."

The yerba mate shrub is grown extensively on plantations in northern Argentina and southern Brazil. The dry leaves contain caffeine, other natural herbs and look a bit like green tea, with a similar bitter taste. Mikulak said he was introduced to it by chance by friends in high school in southern California.

"I went to practice afterwards and just had a phenomenal day," he said. "I felt energized, I felt in tune with my mind and body, and I felt very controlled over my emotions. It's perfect for gymnastics. You don't ever want to get too hyped. You want to have the calm middle - not too relaxed, not too hyped." He's been sold ever since, which is an understatement.

Mikulak, who graduated a few months ago from the University of Michigan, has teamed up with several friends from high school - Alex Anunciation and Jordan Gaarenstroom. They set up a company to can the tea and sell it online. Mikulak said it was Anunciation in high school who first introduced him to the drink as a way of "relaxing with friends and taking a break from the crazy life you might be living." Sales so far are limited, though the plan is to eventually sell in shops and stores.

It goes under the name "MateBros," which bills itself as an "energy drink alternative." "It's huge in South America, and the U.S. doesn't have it at all," Mikulak explained. "So maybe what we need is to Americanize yerba mate and put it in a can. Some traditional people might not like the change, but they can keep drinking it like always."

Mikulak said he has dreams for the up-start business, although he acknowledged the possibility of failure, similar to a stumble by a gymnast in a well-practiced routine. "I've fallen on my routines," he said. "After, I've gotten up and had to do better the next time. That's the mentality we've had our entire lives, and that's a mentality entrepreneurs have." — AP



TORONTO: The United States' Madison Desch performs the floor exercise during women's artistic gymnastics all-around competition in the Pan Am Games. — AP

US GYMNAST SHARES SECRET: ARGENTINE HERBAL TEA 'MATE'