

12 Pass master Ricciardo celebrates surprise Chinese GP victory



13 Commonwealth Games President Martin hands flag to next hosts



15 Naldo screamer seals Schalke win over rivals Dortmund



OLD TRAFFORD: Manchester United's Belgian striker Romelu Lukaku (R) has this headed effort saved by West Bromwich Albion's English goalkeeper Ben Foster (not pictured) during the English Premier League football match between Manchester United and West Bromwich Albion at Old Trafford in Manchester, north west England yesterday.—AFP

Man City crowned champions

United suffer shock loss to West Brom

LONDON: Manchester City were crowned Premier League champions yesterday as Manchester United crashed to a shock 1-0 defeat against West Bromwich Albion. City had moved within touching distance of the title with a 3-1 win at Tottenham on Saturday.

They clinched the silverware 24 hours later thanks to Albion forward Jay Rodriguez's 73rd minute header at Old Trafford. City captain Vincent Kompany led the celebrations, tweeting: "Champions! What a great feeling! So happy to be able to share another trophy with our amazing fans!"

United had denied City the chance to wrap up the title last weekend when they came from two goals

down to beat their bitter rivals 3-2 at the Etihad Stadium. But Jose Mourinho's men still ended up handing the trophy to City with a lacklustre display against bottom of the table Albion, who had won only three times in the league this season before this weekend. "Manchester City, we won it for you" chanted West Brom fans at full-time as United supporters began jeering in frustration at their side gift-wrapping the title for City.

City are 16 points clear of second placed United, who can only take a maximum of 15 points from their remaining five games. Winning the title with five matches to go makes City the joint earliest champions in the Premier League era—matching the achieve-

ment of the 2000-01 Manchester United team.

"Our Time. Our City. Premier League Champions 17/18," City posted on their official Twitter account. It is the fifth time City have been English champions and the third time in the last seven seasons. City defender Benjamin Mendy, who missed most of the season due to injury, turned social media blue as he tweeted: "We are f*****g champions congratulations boys!"

City boss Pep Guardiola had planned a day of golf with his son Marius yesterday, so the Spaniard might have learned of his first Premier League while on the course. Speaking after the win over Tottenham, Guardiola admitted winning the title in England

would be one of the greatest achievements of his glittering career. He won three league titles with Barcelona and twice lifted the Champions League trophy during his Camp Nou reign.

The 47-year-old also took the German title three times with Bayern Munich, but he believes the unique strength in depth and physical demands of the Premier League makes this triumph among his very best. He also conceded it was sweet to triumph in a country where some critics claimed his purist principles couldn't flourish.

Guardiola and his players will have the chance to celebrate properly on Sunday when they host Swansea in their next fixture.—AFP

Bolt on the decks as Games spin to a close

GOLD COAST: Usain Bolt took a turn as DJ as the Gold Coast said goodbye to the Commonwealth Games yesterday after an 11-day tournament where Australia topped the medals table by a distance. Bolt made a surprise appearance on the decks as the Games closed in a colourful ceremony with references to Aboriginal culture—although indigenous protests continued outside.

Australia finished with 80 golds, way ahead of England's 45 and India's 26, in a tally that integrated para sports and was equally split between men and women for the first time. "For those who delivered this event I say, 'You beauty! You did us proud,'" said Queensland premier Annastacia Palaszczuk, as the Commonwealth flag was handed to 2022 hosts Birmingham.

Australia dominated in the swimming pool and in track cycling, while Jamaica felt the absence of the retired Bolt as they struggled in the sprint events. The Games also featured their first transgender athlete, and gay English diver Tom Daley caused a stir when he urged the 37 Commonwealth countries that outlaw

homosexuality to change their laws.

Zero failed drug tests were reported during the event, although India twice fell foul of the Games' "no needle policy" and had two athletes ordered home. However, the Games also saw several protests from indigenous activists who dubbed them the "Stolenwealth Games", a reference to Britain's colonisation of Australia.

Yesterday about 100 protesters were blocked from marching to the stadium by a heavy police presence, preventing a repeat of the tense confrontation before the opening ceremony. Earlier, organisers were criticised for their medical response after marathon runner Callum Hawkins collapsed only two kilometres (just over a mile) from victory and lay prone for some time before help arrived. Officials in turn lashed out at spectators who took pictures of Hawkins as he lay in distress. Australia's Michael Shelley ran past the Scot on his way to victory.

Marathon world record-holder Paula Radcliffe tweeted that there were "big questions" for the organising committee and medical staff. "That should never happen," she said. The Games have been painted by organisers as Australia's chance to burnish its image for sportsmanship after a Test cricket cheating scandal which shocked the nation. Australia also suffered setbacks on the last day when their women's rugby team, the Olympic champions, lost a sudden-death thriller against New Zealand in the inaugural final. Kelly Brazier scored from inside her own half to clinch it 17-12 in the first extra period and avenge New Zealand's defeat to Australia in the 2016 Olympic title decider.—AFP (see page 13)



GOLD COAST: Jamaica's Usain Bolt (C) performs with other artists on stage during the closing ceremony of the 2018 Gold Coast Commonwealth Games at the Carrara Stadium on the Gold Coast yesterday.—AFP