

Sports

Chepngetich takes marathon gold as heat decimates rivals

Italy's Sara Dossena wheeled away in a wheelchair

DOHA: Ruth Chepngetich won the first title of the World Athletics Championships the women's marathon in a gruelling race that saw many of the pre-race favourites fail to finish as fierce heat and humidity took their toll.

The 25-year-old world number one timed 2hrs 32 minutes 43 seconds in a race whose arduous nature was reflected in all three of the Ethiopians failing to make it past the halfway mark — the trio among around a couple of dozen who found the going too tough.

Some had to be stretchered off, with Linet Chebet of Uganda taken away in an ambulance and Italy's Sara Dossena wheeled away in a wheelchair. "I used my mind — it was not easy," said Chepngetich.

"It's amazing for me, this is a surprise." Defending champion Rose Chelimo of Bahrain took silver and Namibia's Helalia Johannes the bronze in a race in which the runners received water bottles wrapped in ice with Israel's 10,000 metres champion Lonah Salpeter at one point taking a cap with ice in it to cool her down.

"I was not expecting to be a medallist in such tough conditions," said a smiling Chelimo.

"Here was much hotter than Jakarta (where she won the Asian Games title last year)," she added.

Kenyan-born Salpeter, who moved to Israel as a nanny for a Kenyan diplomat and subsequently married her Israeli coach, dominated the early part of the race leading Chepngetich, another Kenyan Visiline Jepkesho, Chelimo and Ethiopian Ruti Aga in fourth.

SUDDEN SURGE

Chepngetich — who is the third fastest woman in

marathon history — blew the group apart with a sudden surge with only Aga, Chelimo and Jepkesho able to go with her.

Salpeter lost valuable ground when she dropped her water bottle at a drinks station and stopped to pick it up.

Chepngetich set an astonishing pace with only 13km gone watched by a fair sized crowd gathered round the Corniche.

One of the pre-race favourites Ethiopia's Rosa Dereje, who was third in this year's London marathon, dropped out with an ankle injury shortly before the 15km mark.

She was one of several who pulled out around that mark. Dossena, Ukraine's Oleksandra Shafar and Clementine Mukandanga all calling it a night.

Oblivious to the growing carnage behind her, Chepngetich briefly opened up a gap but was joined by Kiplagat, Chelimo, Jepkesho and Namibian Helalia Johannes — they held a 55 second lead over Salpeter at the 15km mark.

Ethiopia suffered another blow when Aga found the going too hot for her and came to a halt being led away disconsolately by a team official.

Ethiopia's misery was complete when Shure Demise gave up the ghost before the 20km mark.

Salpeter appeared to have regathered her composure as she reduced the gap between her and the leading quintet from 55 seconds to 11sec with 24km gone.

However, that was as close as the Israeli got as the lead quartet pulled away again — they dropped Jepkesho — to battle for the medals amongst themselves.

Chepngetich made a break for glory as the bell went



DOHA: (L-R) Silver medallist Bahrain's Rose Chelimo, gold medallist Kenya's Ruth Chepngetich and bronze medallist Namibia's Helalia Johannes pose on the podium during the medal ceremony for the Women's marathon at the 2019 IAAF World Athletics Championships in the Khalifa International Stadium in Doha yesterday. — AFP

leaving her three rivals trailing in her wake — Chelimo giving chase but Johannes and Kiplagat's chances of winning had gone.

Chepngetich never allowed Chelimo a sniff of a chance and strode imperiously to victory to give Kenya their fifth gold in the event. — AFP

Lampard gets first home league win as Chelsea beat Brighton

LONDON: Frank Lampard admitted he was relieved to finally earn his first home Premier League win as Chelsea manager after goals from Jorginho and Willian sealed a 2-0 victory against Brighton yesterday.

Lampard had presided over two draws and a defeat in the league at Stamford Bridge since the Blues legend was hired from Derby in the close-season. A League Cup thrashing of minnows Grimsby in midweek was Lampard's only win on home turf until Jorginho's second half penalty broke Brighton's resistance.

Willian bagged the second goal to guarantee Chelsea that avoided failing to win their opening four home league matches for the first time since 1986-87. "The home games have been frustrating for different reasons, so today is a nice one. You are aware of it. You want to win," Lampard said.

"You could almost feel the frustration at half-time because we hadn't put the ball in the net. Hopefully this gives everyone confidence." "Because of the no wins here you fear the worst, but there was a different feel today. I felt the goal was coming and the penalty

was the moment."

Chelsea's third league win this season was just reward for a dominant display that backed Lampard's belief his raw team can challenge for a top four finish. Giving further encouragement to Lampard, the Blues kept a clean-sheet for the first time in 10 games in all competitions this term.

"We've been waiting for it. We hadn't put together a full 90 minutes. Today it was a good performance, solid, professional. "We lacked more goals because we created enough chances, but we got the clean-sheet we were striving for."

Brighton have now lost all nine league meetings with Chelsea, setting a new Football League record for most games played against one opponent with a 100 percent losing record. Graham Potter's team are winless in six league matches and sit just above the relegation zone.

Chelsea were without N'Golo Kante after he complained of a hamstring niggle following training on Friday, but the France midfielder wasn't missed in this one-sided encounter. "I spoke to N'Golo about it. I didn't want to take the risk today. He could have a chance for Lille



LONDON: Brighton's English defender Lewis Dunk (L) heads the ball under pressure from Chelsea's Belgian striker Michy Batshuayi (R) during the English Premier League football match between Chelsea and Brighton and Hove Albion at Stamford Bridge in London yesterday. — AFP

(in the Champions League on Wednesday)," Lampard said.

Chelsea's dynamic young duo combined early on as Tammy Abraham hit the far post with a glancing header from Mason Mount's inswinging free-kick.

LEADER JORGINHO

Despite their bright start, Chelsea would have been behind against the run of play if Kepa Arrizabalaga hadn't alertly raced off his line to save Neal

Maupay's shot on the edge of the area. Jorginho's pin-point lofted pass picked out Pedro's run, but the Spaniard shot straight at Ryan.

Chelsea needed just five minutes to make their pressure pay off after half-time thanks to Brighton's suicidal overplaying in defence. Adam Webster was the guilty party with a miscued back-pass inside his own area that Mount seized on, provoking a clear foul by the panicked Albion defender. — AFP

Lewandowski makes history to fire Bayern top

BERLIN: Philippe Coutinho shone again and Robert Lewandowski made history for Bayern Munich as the defending champions went top of the Bundesliga yesterday with a 3-2 win at Paderborn after Leipzig crashed against Schalke.

While Bayern were squeezing past bottom club Paderborn, Leipzig were shocked 3-1 at home to Schalke to surrender top spot. Defending champions Bayern took full advantage to top the Bundesliga table before Tuesday's key Champions League clash at Tottenham Hotspur.

Coutinho, who is rebooting his career on loan in Munich after an unhappy stint at Barcelona, played a key role by setting up Serge Gnabry for the opening

goal with a sublime first-half pass.

Having scored his first Bayern goal the week before in a rout of Cologne, the Brazilian playmaker tapped home Gnabry's neat pass after the break before substitute Kai Proeger pulled a goal back for Paderborn.

With time almost up, Lewandowski showed great finishing to put away a Niklas Sule pass to make it 3-1 and became the first Bayern player to score in each of the first six matches of the season, bringing his tally for this campaign to 10.

However, there were nervous looks in Bayern's ranks in the final ten minutes after Paderborn defender Jamilu Collins beat Germany goalkeeper Manuel Neuer from 30 metres out late on.

In Leipzig, Morocco international midfielder Amine Harit inspired Schalke to an impressive away win, drilling home a penalty and setting up a first Bundesliga goal for Welsh teenager Rabbi Matondo.

The Royal Blues raced into a 2-0 lead with first-half goals as towering Senegalese centre-back Salif Sane headed home from a corner on 29 minutes, then Harit drilled home a penalty just before the break. — AFP

and believes he is destined for a similar bright future.

"Nathan has a mentality that reminds me of Declan Rice," Bilic said. "He's only 18 on paper but his mind is 25 or 27 - he's not a kid. He's only a kid in a positive way in that he's not afraid to take the ball forward and have a shot."

"It's our job to keep him humble but there's no doubt that he has an extremely bright future and a great career in front of him." Albion are unbeaten in seven matches and were much the better side at the Kiyon Prince Foundation Stadium as they moved one point clear of second placed Swansea.

"This is the best performance that we played so far," Bilic added. "Straight from the start we were on the front foot. They didn't have a sniff." Andy Yiadom scored a last-minute equaliser as Reading salvaged a 1-1 draw that denied Swansea a return to the top of the table.

Yiadom's unstoppable strike ended Reading's three-game losing streak in the league after Borja Baston's third minute header put Swansea in front. Swansea's winless run has extended to four matches in all competitions. — AFP

West Brom take Championship top spot, Leeds crash

LONDON: West Bromwich Albion manager Slaven Bilic saluted Nathan Ferguson for inspiring a 2-0 win at QPR that sent his side to the top of the Championship after Leeds suffered a 1-0 loss against Charlton yesterday.

Ferguson was outstanding at left-back and scored his first goal for West Brom to put them ahead seven minutes into the second half at Loftus Road. The 18-year-old strode forward from his own half and sent a right-footed strike past QPR keeper Joe Lumley.

Matheus Pereira also scored his first Albion goal, the on-loan Sporting Lisbon man netted with a late free-kick to seal the victory. Former West Ham manager Bilic, who worked with England midfielder Declan Rice at the east London club, was full of praise for Ferguson

Debilitating humidity stifles Doha marathon

DOHA: Women's marathon runners were rushed for medical attention, faces contorted in pain while other competitors hobbled off the track in the inaugural road race of Doha's World Athletics Championships.

Humidity of more than 73 percent and temperatures of almost 33 degrees Celsius (91 degrees Fahrenheit) dogged the race, specially started at midnight to avoid peak heat, as it meandered along a course on Doha's Corniche coast road.

"You see somebody down on the course and it's just, extremely grounding and scary," said Canada's Lyndsay Tessier, 41, who was one of those to finish, coming in ninth. "That could be you in the next kilometre, the next 500 meters."

"It was just really scary and intimidating and daunting. So that was enough to hold me back." Around two dozen runners in the 68-strong marathon field fell by the wayside as the sweltering conditions took their toll, in a sport which rarely sees drop outs at this level.

Kenya's Ruth Chepngetich won gold when she took the tape after 2 hours 32 minutes and 43 seconds, crediting "training in a hot area" of her home country for helping her to tame the elements.

Tessier's fellow competitors filed behind her as she spoke to the media, some held up by their coaches and others too exhausted to stop and speak. "I'm just really grateful to have finished standing up," added Tessier.

The Championships' organisers told race participants that the event's timing could be changed if conditions proved prohibitive but ultimately pressed ahead with the original plan. Almost all of the runners were saturated with sweat by the halfway point and most ran with bottles as some video cameras being used to film the race malfunctioned because of the conditions.

A mild breeze that lapped the corniche during the opening ceremony and fireworks display had dwindled by the end of the race leaving the runners to bear the brunt of the surging humidity.

Marathon runners and walkers do not have the luxury of competing in the championships' principal venue, the air-conditioned Khalifa Stadium where the climate is maintained at 23-25 degrees.

France's defending 50 km walk world champion Yohann Diniz strongly criticised the IAAF for being made to compete in Doha's humid conditions. "I am extremely upset. If we were in the stadium we would have normal conditions, between 24-25 degrees, but outside they have placed us in a furnace, which is just not possible," he said on Friday. "They are making us guinea pigs."

Tessier said that seeing so many competitors drop out of one race was "alarming and you feel for them because you do know the training that's gone into this". "You know how badly everyone wants it and wants to be here. You don't wanna finish it or end it that way," she said as sweat dripped off her face and a team member followed behind her with water.

Throughout the race, medical golf carts ferried runners who dropped out to a busy medical tent as a team of doctors, which included an expert on heat in sports, assessed their condition. Namibia's Helalia Johannes, who secured bronze, said hydration also played a key role in her strong showing. "I cannot say I enjoyed the event — there was a song that says 'I must finish'," she said. "I didn't miss any water point." — AFP

| Live | | Matches on TV (Local Timings) | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE | | | |
| Leicester City v Newcastle United FC | beIN SPORTS | 18:30 | |
| SPANISH LEAGUE PRIMERA | | | |
| RCD Espanyol v Real Valladolid | beIN SPORTS HD 3 | 13:00 | |
| SD Eibar v Celta de Vigo | beIN SPORTS HD 3 | 15:00 | |
| Deportivo Alaves v Real Mallorca | beIN SPORTS HD 3 | 17:00 | |
| Levante v Osasuna | beIN SPORTS HD 3 | 19:30 | |
| Sevilla FC v Real Sociedad | beIN SPORTS HD 3 | 22:00 | |
| ITALIAN CALCIO LEAGUE | | | |
| SSC Napoli v Brescia | beIN SPORTS HD 4 | 13:30 | |
| SS Lazio v Genoa CFC | beIN SPORTS | 16:00 | |
| US Lecce v AS Roma | beIN SPORTS HD 4 | 16:00 | |
| Udinese Calcio v Bologna FC | beIN SPORTS | 16:00 | |
| Cagliari Calcio v Hellas Verona FC | beIN SPORTS | 19:00 | |
| AC Milan v ACF Fiorentina | beIN SPORTS HD 4 | 21:45 | |
| GERMAN BUNDESLIGA | | | |
| Fortuna Dusseldorf v SC Freiburg | beIN SPORTS | 16:30 | |
| FC Koln v Hertha Berlin | beIN SPORTS | 19:00 | |
| FRENCH LEAGUE | | | |
| RC Strasbourg v Montpellier HSC | beIN SPORTS | 16:00 | |
| Nimes Olympique v Saint Etienne | beIN SPORTS | 18:00 | |
| Olympique Marseille v Stade Rennais | beIN SPORTS | 22:00 | |