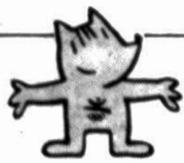


OLYMPIC SPECIAL



A sensational night of track & field

Jury returns Skah his gold

BARCELONA, Aug 4: Khalid Skah of Morocco was reinstated as men's Olympic 10,000 metres gold medal winner on Tuesday following his initial disqualification after winning Monday's race, reports Reuter.



Coach Lahsen Samesame tries to console Khalid Skah, the Moroccan 10,000m runner whose gold medal was confiscated only to be given back by the jury later. — AFP photo

The International Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF) ruled that the title be returned to Skah after a seven-man appeal jury met for one hour and 20 minutes.

IAAF spokeswoman Jayne Pearce said: "The Moroccan protest was upheld because the jury of appeal ruled that Skah had not been assisted."

Skah was booed by hysterical Spanish crowd as he crossed the line first in the 10,000 metres final after a dramatic duel with Richard Chelimo of Kenya.

He was disqualified when the race jury decided he had received help from a lapped runner, fellow-Moroccan Hammou Boutayeb.

The 63,000 crowd at the Olympic Stadium gave their verdict during the race, whistling and jeering as Boutayeb constantly impeded Chelimo during the last laps of the final.

When an elated Skah ran a victory lap draped in the Moroccan flag, the outraged Spanish crowd howled with anger and gave him the gladiatorial thumbs down signal to mark their disapproval.

The race jury, considering an official Kenyan protest, disqualified him and gave the gold medal to Chelimo.

Addis Abebe of Ethiopia was then given the silver and Salvatore Antibo of Italy the bronze.

Skah denied there had been any collusion between him and Boutayeb but Chelimo said the two had talked to each other and accused the race winner of deliberately stepping on him.

An IAAF jury met for 30 minutes Tuesday and decided there was no interference.

"The rule they protested was the lapping rule and they decided he didn't do it," said IAAF spokeswoman Jayne Pearce.

That rule requires athletes being lapped to move out of the way of leading runners and not aid teammates in any way.

"The panel's decision is final," Pearce said.

Kenya nonetheless filed a protest, saying Skah's disqualification was "the right decision."

In a press statement, Kenya's delegation claimed what happened in Monday's race was an "outrageous violation" of track rules.

Moroccan coach Lahsen Samesame said Boutayeb simply did not want to be lapped

and was trying to stay ahead of the leading pair.

"The thing about track is very simple—the best wins," Samesame said. "Kenyans are great runners... and so are Moroccans. At that moment, Skah was the best—he destroyed that field."

During the encounter, the crowd whistled in derision and an official tried unsuccessfully to push Boutayeb off the track.

After Skah outdueled Chelimo in the dramatic final 100 metres sprint, spectators booed and hurled debris as Skah crossed the finish line.

Unfazed, Skah grabbed a Moroccan flag and began a victory lap, only to be showered with more abuse. Chelimo was handed a Kenyan flag and paraded behind, to applause.

"Skah may have won anyway, but what happened, everybody saw," Chelimo said Monday night. "It was unfair, so I am happy now."

An earlier report said Morocco's Khalid Skah was disqualified after winning the men's 10,000 metres final on Monday in a night of sensational events at the Olympic Games.

"I went across to Boutayeb and said 'This is not good,'" Chelimo said. "But he was not understanding English."

Skah said the race jury had been pressured by the public protest into disqualifying him.

IVANOVA DISQUALIFIED

Skah was the second winner to lose an Olympic title through a disqualification on Monday.

World champion Aklina Ivanova of the CIS beat everyone else across the line in the women's 10 km walk — the first time the event has been

staged at the Olympics. But she lost the gold when officials decided she had not kept continuous contact with the ground.

American Michael Conley launched himself 18.17 metres in the men's triple jump final with the aid of a wind just over the permitted two metres a second. It was the second longest wind-assisted triple jump of all time.

Conley said he thought for five minutes he had smashed Willie Banks' world record of 17.97 metres only to find a 2.01 metres a second wind had made it invalid.

Another American, Quincy Watts, ran the second fastest 400 metres in history, clocking 43.71 seconds in the men's semifinals.

Watts broke Lee Evans's Olympic record of 43.86 set at the high altitude of Mexico City in 1968 and only world record holder Butch Reynolds has run faster. Reynolds is presently under suspension for using performance-enhancing drugs.

MCKOY'S GOLD MEDAL

Mark McKoy, who admitted to a Canadian government inquiry in 1989 that he had taken steroids, won the men's 110 metres hurdles.

The 30-year-old Canadian led from start to finish to become the oldest man to win the Olympic high hurdles title and only the fifth non-American to take the crown.

YEAR'S BEST TIMES

Almost unnoticed in the excitement of easily the most dramatic day on the athletics programme were year's best times for Frenchwoman Marie-Jose Perce and Jamaican Merlene Ottey in the 400 and 200 metres respectively.

rounds he got away to a great start in the final, clearly disconcerting Jackson who clattered into the second and third barriers.

Mekoy then held off Dees and Pierce to win in 13.12 seconds and pledged to continue running "until my legs fall me."

"I have mixed feelings," he said. "I'm glad to win the gold but I'm sad that my training partner Jackson won nothing."

VAN LANGEN'S SURGE

Dutchwoman Ellen van Langen went from seventh to first on the final lap to steal the women's 800 metres from world champion Lilia Nurutdinova.

"I saw that gap and I jumped in to the hole and I ran as fast as I could," Van Langen said.

"When I saw nobody next to me I knew I was going to win. That was the kind of race I expected."

With Ivanova's disqualification, Chen Yueling became China's first athletics gold medalist.

China first took part in the Olympics in Los Angeles eight years ago.

The other final decided on Monday was the women's discus which was a triumph for Cuban Maritza Marten who threw 70.06 metres.

Kenyans threaten to take action

BARCELONA, Aug 4: The Kenyan national Olympic Committee has threatened to take action unless the decision to give the men's 10,000 metres gold medal back to Khalid Skah of Morocco is overturned, reports AP.

Skah was disqualified after Monday night's race and the gold medal given to Kenya's Richard Chelimo.

But on Tuesday the International Amateur Athletics Federation (IAAF) accepted the appeal of the Moroccan team and Skah became only the second man in Olympic history to be reinstated as a champion.

The IAAF jury of appeal, after watching the video of the race, decided Skah had received no assistance from his team-mate Hammou Boutayeb at the end of Monday night's race.

Now the Kenyan's have lodged a formal appeal against Tuesday morning's jury ruling.

"Should this decision by the jury of appeal not be reversed the credibility of the entire future or middle and long distance running world-wide is in jeopardy," said Isiah Kiplagat, the Kenyan team's chief de mission here.

"We reserve the right to take whatever other action our delegation may deem necessary," he warned.

Skah outsprinted Chelimo in the final 100 metres after a fantastic race, but the jury ruled that Hammou Boutayeb, a back marker who was being lapped, had impeded the Kenyan on the last two laps and that Skah had broken Rule 143.2 regarding unfair assistance.

ROK, hosts take team archery titles

BARCELONA, Aug 4: Cho Youn-jeong, who walks through cemeteries to calm her nerves, won her second gold medal of the Olympics Tuesday, helping South Korea to the championship in women's team archery, reports AP.

Cho teamed with Kim Soonyoung and Lee Eung-kyung to give South Korea the gold for the second consecutive Olympics. Among the three, only Kim was on both the 1988 and 1992 teams.

South Korea beat China 236-228 in the 27-shot final round. The Unified Team defeated France 240-222 for the bronze.

Spain won its first archery medal ever in the men's team competition, defeating Finland 238-236 in the gold medal match. Britain beat France 233-231 in the bronze match.

Cho won the individual women's title Sunday, defeating Kim, a two-time world champion, in the finals.

"I get very nervous and fearful about every competition," Cho said, "so I take long walks at night through the cemetery. It calms me down."

The US men's team of Butch Johnson, Rick McKinney, and Jay Barrs had the highest score in the competition when it beat Japan 243-225 in the first round. But the Americans lost to Finland 239-237 in the second round.

"Other countries have learned how to shoot," Johnson said. "Our country has stayed a little stagnant. It's time to make a move."

Athletes will parade at closing

BARCELONA, Aug 4: Olympic organisers have backed away from plans to scrap the traditional athletes' parade at next Sunday's closing ceremony after protests from teams, reports Reuter.

German team chief Ulrich Feldhoff said on Monday that Germany and at least seven other teams had protested against the decision to cut the emotional closing highlight of the 16-day Games.

"The latest version is that a small delegation of athletes will be allowed to march in behind the flagbearers," Feldhoff said. Team chiefs would now meet organisers to haggle over numbers, he added.

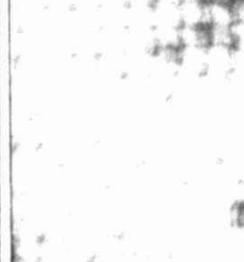
Ceremonies director Josep Roca had said on Sunday that the parade, a high-spirited free-for-all in which athletes march into the stadium together rather than by country, would not take place in Barcelona.

He said it would be better for the athletes to sit in the stands and watch the show and made clear that timing and television schedules played a part in the decision.

"We shouldn't have to put up with everything the Spaniards want to push through. Olympic Games are there for the athletes and not

Hungarian bags fencing gold

BARCELONA, Aug 4: Powerful Hungarian Bence Szabo destroyed a strong Italian challenge to win the men's individual sabre gold medal at the Olympic Games on Sunday, reports Reuter.



Gold medalist Andrei Abduvaliyev of the Unified Team twirls in the hammer throw competition in Barcelona Sunday. — AFP photo

Needles point to sordid reality

Only one athlete, a Chinese women's volleyball player, has tested positive out of the 1,200 competitors tested to date.

But Prince Alexandre de Merode, head of the International Olympic Committee's Medical Commission, admitted some people could have escaped detection.

"The cleaners have found syringes all over the rooms. I find this very serious. No one knows what these people may be injecting themselves with," he said.

Athletes in the Village have also reported that copies of a book describing how to prepare your own doping cocktail to boost performance without being caught are being circulated.

There are persisting rumours of drug-taking amongst the athletes and IOC officials admit privately that the cheaters are well ahead of the testers.

Athletic coaches have revealed a new German drug that boosts the blood but clears itself from the system within four hours.

"It is all but impossible to detect but its effect lasts well after the drug has cleared through the system," explained one coach.

The most effective way to check for drugs is blood testing but because of legal problems the older, less efficient urine sampling is still in place.

But De Merode says that he is determined to see blood testing introduced by the Lillehammer Winter Games in 1994.

American sprint star Owen Torrence added fuel to the drug rumour-mill when she accused two of the Olympic women's 100 metre medal

winner of being on drugs.

Torrence sparked a controversy after finishing fourth in the women's 100 metres race by saying, "I'm disappointed because two people ahead of me were not clean."

"We all know that some people don't respect the rules. I'm just sick and tired of it," added Torrence, runner-up to Katrin Krabbe in last year's World Championships. Krabbe missed Barcelona despite winning a protracted legal battle to overturn a ban for allegedly tampering with a drug test.

"I'm not saying that because I lost," Torrence said. "I don't mind losing if the people ahead of me are clean but two out of three are not clean."

But Prince De Merode confirmed on Tuesday that none of the women 100 metres medal winners had proved positive.

"Magic" Santa

BARCELONA, Aug 4: Magic Johnson, popular star of the US basketball "Dream Team", will take a break from sport on Wednesday to present toys worth 5,000 dollar for local children, reports Reuter.

Johnson, who has become a self-styled ambassador for social causes since announcing he has the AIDS virus, will hand the toys to the mayor of Badalona. They will be given to local children at Christmas.

"I think she's going to be a real inspiration," she said.

Chinese woman spiker banned for doping

BARCELONA, Aug 4: Chinese women's volleyball player, Wu Dang, on Tuesday became the first athlete to be banned from the Barcelona Olympics for taking drugs, reports Reuter.

International Olympic Committee (IOC) spokeswoman Michele Verdier said Wu, 24, had tested positive for strychnine, a banned stimulant.

"She has been excluded from the Barcelona Games and a severe warning has been sent on behalf of the IOC Medical Commission to the doctors of the team," Verdier said.

She said the Chinese women's volleyball team would be allowed to remain in Barcelona and that Wu had not been excluded from the Athletes Village.

The head of the Medical Commission, Prince Alexandre de Merode, said Wu had told the commission she had taken a folk medicine freely available in Chinese pharmacies as a tonic and had not told the team's doctors.

"She also admitted that she had recommended it to other members of the team," De Merode said.

"I consider this an unfortunate case," he said. "There is no reason to treat her harshly at all."

Wu was tested after China lost to the Netherlands on July 31. China lost their first three matches and were to face Spain in a play-off for seventh place on Tuesday.

Wu, chosen at random from the team for the mandatory drugs test, was the first athlete to be expelled from the Barcelona Games since they began on July 25 as a result of doping check in Olympic competition.

Three British athletes were sent home in disgrace from Barcelona last week after tests carried out in Britain before the Games proved positive.

De Merode said Wu's case showed that athletes had to use utmost care when taking medicines. Team doctors also had an obligation to warn athletes of the dangers but the Chinese had not done this.

"We have to teach (athletes) that you don't take anything you want when you want," he said.

"An athlete should not be taking anything without consulting the team doctor," he said.

"She was very sincere. She thought it was a good tonic."

Some 1,200 tests have been conducted to date including those for the final on Saturday of the men's 100 metres, the race that in 1988 sparked the biggest doping scandal in the history of the Olympics.

Boxing result

BARCELONA, Aug 4: Park Duk-Kyu of South Korea, a silver medalist at last year's World Championships, failed to reach the medal round Tuesday at the Olympic boxing tournament, reports AP.

It may not be the ticket-tape parades of New York City, "but for Edmond, America, it will be big," she said.

Miller's medals—two silver, three bronze—are the most won by a US female gymnast since Mary Lou Retton in the Soviet-boycotted Olympics.

Cantrell won't be surprised if a lot of young Edmond girls try to follow in Miller's lithe footsteps.

"I think she's going to be a real inspiration," she said.

Big reception awaits little girl Miller

EDMOND, Okla, Aug 4: A small girl is coming home to a big reception in Edmond after winning hearts and five medals in Barcelona, reports AP.

Central Oklahomans have a parade and a stack of messages waiting for Olympic gymnast Shannon Miller on Wednesday, said Wanda Cantrell, executive director of the Edmond Chamber of Commerce.

"Young men are calling from all over the country trying to get her phone number," Cantrell said Monday. "One little guy from Denver has probably called seven or eight times today. He says it's a real emergency. It's been kind of fun around here."

City officials plan to strike up the band and let the streamers fly. Edmond's not used to parades outside of the Fourth of July and homecom-

ings, but this might be the biggest homecoming of them all, mayor Randal Shadid said.

Miller, 15, is to arrive at noon Wednesday at Wiley Post Airport. Oklahoma City television station KFOR is paying to fly the Miller family and coaches home and has leased

space in a Wiley Post hangar for a reception.

Cantrell said the parade will be short—a car for Miller, one for her parents and another for her coach, Steve Nunno. She is trying to get cheerleaders from Miller's school, Edmond North Mid-High, and is asking residents to draw up signs and banners.

Mary-Joe Fernandez lines up second tennis medal

BARCELONA, Aug 4: American Mary-Joe Fernandez clinched her second Olympic tennis medal Tuesday, and three Spaniards made sure of two more for the host country, reports AP.

Mary-Joe teamed with friend Gigi Fernandez to beat South Africa's Mriana de Swardt and Elna Reinach and advance to Thursday's doubles semifinals, where both losers go home with bronze medals.

The Americans take on Leila Meskhi and Natlia Zvereva of the Unified Team.

Mary-Joe clinched at least a bronze medal in singles on Monday by beating sixth-seeded Manuela Maleeva-Frangiere of Switzerland, 5-7, 6-1 and 6-0.

In men's singles Tuesday, Jordi Arrese overcame four set points in the pivotal second set and swept Leonardo Lavalle of Mexico, 6-1, 7-6(8-6), 6-1, guaranteeing another Olympic medal for Spain.

Moments after Arrese's match, Arantxa Sanchez Vicario and Conchita Martinez of Spain by finishing off Isabelle Demongeot and Nathalie Tauziat of France, 6-2, 6-4.

Mary-Joe Fernandez will play top seed Steffi Graf of Germany in the semifinals Wednesday, while US team-mate Jennifer Capriati will face Sanchez Vicario.

In the men's singles, No. 16 seed Arrese advanced to the Thursday semifinals Thursday, when he will play either Russian Andrei Cherkasov or Jaime Oncins of Brazil.

The other men's semifinal pits Goran Ivanisevic against Marc Rosset of Switzerland. Rosset eliminated Spaniard Emilio Sanchez in a thrilling match Monday, 6-4, 7-6(7-2), 1-6, 7-6(11-9).

Ivanisevic in semis

BARCELONA, Aug 4: Goran Ivanisevic, eager to give his war-scarred country something to cheer about, became the first athlete from Croatia to win a medal Monday by surviving his fourth consecutive five-set match, reports AP.

The fourth-ranked Ivanisevic advanced to Thursday's semifinals when he beat Frenchman Fabrice Santoro, 6-7 (5-7), 6-7 (1-7), 6-4, 6-4, 8-6. Semifinal losers both win a bronze medal.

All those fighters fighting for the freedom of Croatia are going to be more motivated now, and they're going to try to end that war," Ivanisevic said. "This medal is going to pump them up."

With his remarkable series of victories, Ivanisevic became the first player in tennis' open era to win four consecutive five-set matches in a single tournament. He overcame two match points against Santoro in a duel that took four hours, 25 minutes.

"I was always feeling that I was going to win," the 20-year-old Croat said. "It's a very important match for all of Croatia, not only for me."

"I said to myself, 'You can't lose this match. You have to win. It doesn't matter if you have to stay 10 hours on the court.'"

The scores of his previous victories: — 6-2, 6-2, 6-7, 4-6, 6-3, over Bernardo Mota in the first round;

— 6-7, 6-2, 1-6, 6-3, 6-2 over Paul Haarhuis in the second round;

— 3-6, 6-0, 4-6, 7-6, 9-7 over Jakob Hlasek on Saturday.

That's 20 sets and 209 games in one week. He also has played — and won — two doubles matches.

Ivanisevic's stamina is all the more amazing because the tournament has been played in hot, humid weather. Temperatures on the red clay courts have registered in excess of 110 degrees.

"I have enough left," he said. "To win a gold."

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