

Perfect streak broken, but legend intact

SMH



To lose was one thing. To be beaten in his last race by a twice-banned drug cheat was the unexpected indignity

to Usain Bolt's farewell.

The world's greatest sprinter, its favourite athlete, Usain Bolt was beaten in his last race by Justin Gatlin, his pantomime rival, and his American teammate Christian Coleman.

For the last two years on the big stage Gatlin had threatened to sour Bolt's moment, but each time Bolt found a way to prevail.

This time Gatlin had his moment, as the villainous counterpoint to Bolt. The Roadrunner was caught, the Coyote finally won.

Bolt had won everything at a major meeting since 2008 other than on those occasions such as in 2011 when he beat himself when he false started. He had never been beaten over this distance in an open field in a world championships or Olympics ever.

This time Bolt was beaten not just by Gatlin but by Coleman too and had to accept bronze, a colour it is doubtful he was aware medals came in.

"It's just one of those things," Bolt said. "My start is killing me. Normally, it gets better during the rounds but it didn't come together. It was rough. A little bit stressed. But I came out like at any other championships and I did my best."

Bolt leaves the sport not how he figured, and hoped, as the legend undefeated to the end but the departs no less diminished. In a sport where

to be clean is as exceptional as to win as regularly as Bolt he stands apart.

Thus, as a corollary of the sport the victor as a twice banned doer could not have been more apt for the times and more poorly chosen.

The 35-year-old Gatlin had previously won the world championship in 2005 and the Olympic gold in 2004. In between has been Bolt and his own bans for drugs.

The London crowd were unforgiving of his time served out of the spot. Gatlin was booed whenever he stepped on the track and loathed for what he represented in contrast to the likeable entertainer who has never failed a drug test.

"I tuned it out (the boos) through the rounds and stayed the course. I did what I had to do," Gatlin said. "The people who love me are here cheering for me and cheering at home."

"It is Bolt's last race. I have had many victories and many defeats down the years. We are rivals on the track but in the warm-down area we joke and have a good time. The first thing he did was congratulate me and say that I didn't deserve the boos. He is an inspiration."

Gatlin ran 9.92s for the gold, Coleman 9.94s for silver and Bolt 9.95s for bronze. He ran out of track to fold in the two Americans.

Coleman beat Bolt in the semi final - by one-hundredth of a second - and in the final his speed from the blocks again had Bolt chasing but unable to overtake him.

The race might exemplify why it is Bolt is leaving. Gatlin might be older but he might also have had more to prove to recover some-



PHOTO: REUTERS

Usain Bolt might not have finished his final solo race the way he wanted, but the Jamaican remained the star attraction of the show. To deafening cheers of his name, a gracious Bolt ran the lap of honour in London on Saturday night after racing in 100m for the last time in his career.



Fans in Kingston, who were watching a broadcast of Usain Bolt's 100m race in London on Saturday, are left in shock after their home town hero finished third in the final individual race of his career.

PHOTO: REUTERS

thing of his tattered reputation by winning again. Bolt needed nothing more to prove.

Did he go one race too many? Bronze is not a bad result, unless you have won only gold. Previously someone who could barely slip below 10 seconds could not hope to upstage Bolt.

So that's good bye. Usain Bolt has left athletics, beaten at the end, yet undiminished and unparalleled.

So what now that Bolt has gone? The ugly view is that the new world champion returns the sport to its grubby past.

Maybe the new king of the sport is Wayde Van Niekerk. He could yet achieve things in his events like Bolt did and so nominally accept the responsibility to be the torch bearer of his sport.

Van Niekerk has the athletic capacity to be that figure but to compare Bolt to Van Niekerk is to compare Shane Warne to Glenn McGrath. One thrilled, entertained and transcended, the other was Glenn McGrath.

The sport will be different without him because

it was different before him. The reason he will not be replaced is the reason he was different from all others and that was not just about his speed.

Bolt was more than a fast runner. He stood outside his sport and above it. He was the rewarding distraction from the behaviour of those with whom he competed.

He was the crossover figure that took the sport away from an ever diminishing pool of trainees. He was watchable in a sport that is mired in its own inertia, its self-inflicted wounding from drugs and a slide into irrelevance in a cluttered and more engaging professional sport market.

Bolt could come back, there are many who suspect he will, but it's doubtful, especially after Saturday night in London.

"I'm not eulogistic that someone who has served two bans has walked off with one of our glittering prizes. But he is eligible to be here," IAAF president Sebastian Coe said on Sunday "It's not the perfect script. I thought Usain was very generous. He was bigger than the moment and it typifies his career."

KING OF THE 100M SPRINT



- 2008 Olympics
- 2009 World Championships
- 2012 Olympics
- 2013 World Championships
- 2015 World Championships
- 2016 Olympics



- 2017 World Championships
- Disqualified from 2011 World Championships

Bolt had never won anything but gold in a global 100m race until yesterday.

Gunners deny Chelsea again

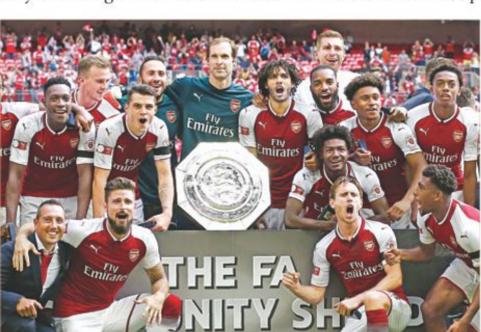
AFP, London

Goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois and star signing Alvaro Morata were the Chelsea fall guys as Arsenal won the Community Shield 4-1 on penalties at Wembley on Sunday.

Goals from Chelsea's Victor Moses and Arsenal new boy Sead Kolasinac sent the game to a shootout and with both Courtois and Morata limply squandering their spot-kicks, Arsenal won the trophy for the third time in four years.

Courtois blazed his penalty over the bar before substitute Morata, a £58 capture from Real Madrid, shot wide, allowing Olivier Giroud to seal victory for Arsenal.

Arsenal, embarking upon their first season without Champions League football since 1997, have won on their last nine visits to Wembley, a run stretching back to a victory over Wigan Athletic in the semi-finals of the FA Cup



Arsenal claimed the Community Shield after dispatching a misfiring Chelsea in penalty shootouts at Wembley yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

in 2014.

Arsene Wenger's side open the Premier League season at home to 2016 champions Leicester City on Friday, with Antonio Conte's Chelsea beginning their title defence at home to Burnley the following day.

Moses, sent off after receiving a second yellow card for diving as Arsenal stunned Chelsea 2-1 in May's FA Cup final, partially atoned by putting the champions ahead early in the second half.

But after Pedro had been shown a straight red card for an ugly challenge on Mohamed Elneny, Kolasinac headed in an 81st-minute equaliser to leave the game 1-1 at full-time.

As in the cup final, Arsenal made the more assured start and came within inches of opening the scoring when new signing Alexandre Lacazette curled a shot against the post after a slick counter-attack.

MSC take on Abahani sans coach

SPORTS REPORTER



Mohammedan Sporting Club are gearing up for today's crucial and prestigious Bangladesh Premier League encounter against archrivals Abahani without head coach Syed Naeemuddin.

It would have been unthinkable even in the early 2000s that the Black and Whites would be preparing for any top-flight football match without any coach, but now it has become quite normal, thanks to the Motijheel-based club's nose-dive in fortunes.

With the players busy inside the club rooms ahead of their final preparation at the BUET ground for today's fixture, the Mohammedan club premises looked like deserted as there were neither any supporters nor high officials of the club present there.

Coach Naeemuddin went to Kolkata a few days ago to receive a 'life-time award' from Mohun Bagan AC, right after the team's 0-2 defeat against Sheikh Jamal DC in their league opener. The fallen giants played their second game against Sheikh Russel KC without Naeemuddin, who usually prefers to conduct training single-handedly.

Now the club is about to take on their arch-rivals without any coach in the dugout. The Black and Whites were also left without a head coach midway through the last season after Joshimuddin Joshi left, but they had an assistant coach to take over last season.

"We are not sure whether he will be available for tomorrow's match because he fell sick after receiving the award in Kolkata. He will either



While Abahani are being trained by coach Drago Mamic (L), Mohammedan have only a manager to guide them ahead of their Bangladesh Premier League showdown today.

PHOTOS: FIROZ AHMED



come before or after tomorrow's match," Mohammedan manager Amirul Islam babu said. "It is a big match from the perspective of the supporters of both clubs. The supporters always want their team to become champions, and it not, then at least beat the perennial rivals."

Mohammedan are yet to secure any points after two matches while Abahani have three points following a shock 0-1 defeat at the hands of Farashganj SC in their last match.

Though tremendous excitement, emotion, pressure and nerve once played vital roles in the matches between Abahani and Mohammedan, the affair of the two archrivals has gradually become a one-sided affair because of Mohammedan's loss of strength in past seasons. Abahani are ahead of Mohammedan with seven wins against four defeats in 19 meetings of the professional football league.

"Actually, we play for the sake of the game as there is virtually no appeal or excitement in matches between Mohammedan and Abahani these days

compared to even five or six years ago," Mohammedan captain Zahid Hasan Emily said. "It is important to have a coach in the dugout, but the senior players are thinking of how we could produce a good result against Abahani. One thing playing in our minds is that we will go there for a win, and not think about whether we have a coach or not."

However, Abahani's stand-in skipper Shahidul Alam Sohel is excited about the match and is keen to see his side return to winning ways.

"I still feel a Abahani-Mohammedan match is a special one. Those who play for either of the two clubs don't want to lose this match. I have been playing for Abahani for the last six years and I never take the Mohammedan match lightly. Maybe Mohammedan have not been strong on paper sometimes, but they are actually very strong on the field," said Sohel adding that the Abahani-Mohammedan encounter is a 50-50 affair and the side that would avail opportunities would come out winners.

BEST 100M TIMES

TIME	ATHLETE
9.58	Usain Bolt
9.63	Usain Bolt
9.69	Usain Bolt
9.69	Tyson Gay
9.69	Yohan Blake
9.71	Tyson Gay
9.72	Usain Bolt
9.72	Asafa Powell
9.74	Asafa Powell
9.74	Justin Gatlin
9.75	Yohan Blake
9.75	Yohan Blake
9.75	Justin Gatlin
9.75	Justin Gatlin
9.76	Usain Bolt
9.76	Usain Bolt
9.76	Usain Bolt
9.76	Yohan Blake

*Red indicates athletes who have been caught doping

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