

F1 launches new all-female racing series

REUTERS, Abu Dhabi

Formula One on Friday launched an all-female racing series that is set to hit the track next year and prepare young girls to race in the sport.

The new category, which will be called F1 Academy, will feature five teams run by outfits currently competing in F1-feeder series Formula Two and Formula Three. They will each run three cars, creating a 15-strong grid, Formula One said in a statement.

Drivers will be required to bring 150,000 euros (\$155,520) in funding, with F1 matching that amount and teams raising the rest of the 2.25 million euro total budget.

Next year's inaugural season will comprise seven events with three races each, with one round likely to feature on the Formula One support bill, and 15 days of official testing, the statement said.



The World Cup fever is on the rise as football fans browse through flags of different countries on the streets in the Gulistan area where flag-vendors have stockpiled their stores as the 'The Greatest Show on Earth' approaches. PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Kings, Ctg Abahani storm into quarters

SPORTS REPORTER

Bashundhara Kings and Chittagong Abahani stormed into the quarterfinals of the Independence Cup, notching up wins in their respective Group B encounters at different venues yesterday.

Kings recorded an emphatic 3-0 win over Azampur FC Uttara at the Sheikh Fazlul Haque Moni Stadium in Gopalganj while Ctg Abahani inflicted a 4-0 defeat on Fakirerpool Youngmen's Club at the Birshreshtha Shaheed Flight Lt Matiur Rahman Stadium in Munshiganj.

Two successive wins mean both Kings and Ctg Abahani are tied on six points. They will play each other on November 22 to decide the final group standings while Azampur FC and Youngmen's Club were eliminated after two consecutive defeats.

In Gopalganj, Bashundhara Kings faced some resistance after having hit Youngmen's Club for 14 goals without reply in their opening match, but Azampur FC did not pose significant trouble, thanks to a blistering performance from captain Robson Da Silva, who supplied all three goals.



He first lobbed the ball to Rakib Hossain, who simply stepped into the box before sending it

over the advancing Mohammad Razib in the 11th minute before Brazil's Dorielton Gomes -- who scored a double hat-trick in the previous match -- doubled the lead from the spot after Robson was brought down by Sarwar Zaman Nipu in the 57th minute.

Dorielton then brought a long ball from Robson under his spell inside the box and brilliantly nutmegged one defender before firing home to wrap up the win in added time of the second half.

In Munshiganj, Ctg Abahani took only eight minutes to break the deadlock against Youngmen's Club through a strike from Jamir Uddin before Nigerian Yacouba Bamba doubled the lead from the spot in the 18th minute. After resumption, Bamba made it to 3-0 in the 71st minute before Ojekwu David Ifegwu sealed the win from the spot two minutes into the stoppage time.



8000 miles non-stop and still counting, 73-year-old shows the way

STAR SPORT DESK

"It doesn't matter what field you're talking about -- beating somebody else just doesn't do it for me. I'm much more interested in whether I reach the goals that I set for myself, so in this sense long-distance running is the perfect fit for a mindset like mine," renowned Japanese writer Haruki Murakami wrote in his memoir, titled: What I talk about when I talk about running.

The importance of Murakami's mindset can be felt by people from all walks of life but not everyone can adopt it as inspiringly as how the protagonist in this story did, and continues to do so.

Shahudul Haque, SYSCOM's Managing Director, has overcome several health adversities throughout his life, courtesy of his relentless strive towards maintaining fitness. The 73-year-old's fitness routine is bound to inspire.

Over the past 762 days -- as of Thursday since October 16, 2020 -- he walked at an average of 10.5 miles per day, and that too without taking a day-off, tallying over 8,000 miles. Furthermore, he went on to hit an impressive average of 37 floors per day, as per of his stair-climbing routine, in the aforementioned 25-month time period. But that's just the tip of the iceberg.

"I felt healthy, rejuvenated. No other illness affected me throughout this

duration," said Shahudul, referring to the time following the coronavirus pandemic.

"But the biggest change came in 2020 during the time of the Covid-19 pandemic, when I started walking within the confines of my home for hours," he continued.

"When the lockdown restrictions were lowered, I went out for early morning walks, late night walks, and sometimes walked all the way to the office and back. I never missed a single day.

"Even the days I felt a little tired or weak, I walked five or six miles and later on had walked around 15-16 miles in other days to compensate for the gap so that my average did not go below 10 [miles per day]."

As Hippocrates, a famous Greek physician of the classical period, had famously said, "walking is man's best medicine," and individuals like Shahudul Haque have shown that the notion is as relevant as ever, and that age is only a mere number.

Being a son of a military officer, Shahudul naturally grew up in an environment dictated by discipline. But unfortunately, he lost his father to a heart attack in 1979. A young Shahudul had then vowed to not take his own health for granted.

For around eight to 10 years, he remained content with jogging regularly in the neighbourhood until he got to

know that jogging on the urban streets may end up damaging his knees in the long run, which triggered his search for more sustainable forms of exercise.

In 1999, he started swimming, almost ritualistically, and maintained the activity for over a decade. After a few years, alongside walking, he added stair-



climbing to his routine. But he never anticipated a serious health crisis awaited him.

"I knew swimming before, but from 1999 to 2010, I swam as a part of my exercise, for around one mile and a half without any breaks. I began climbing stairs after finishing my walking routine.

"However, during the last few years, I started feeling a slight ache on my chest.

It was a minor concern initially as it would go off after a little rest, but this kept on recurring. During an annual medical test in 2014, the doctors informed me that I had cardiac-related concerns," he said.

For someone as devoted to regular exercise as Shahudul, it was very difficult for him and his family to accept the fact that he had a heart blockage.

"The results showed that the primary artery in my heart had 90% blockage and 70% in the secondary. Then I asked them how I survived all this time. They told me that thanks to my consistent exercise, a bypass was automatically created around the blockage and that allowed blood to flow to my heart. Afterwards, I had to undergo a stent placement to fix the blockage," he informed.

Following the procedure, Shahudul started to get back to his regular exercise routine while following his doctor's advice and in 2018, Shahudul's brother gifted him a device that changed his lifestyle for the good: a smartwatch.

"This smartwatch kept me motivated towards walking. It has all my daily, weekly, monthly and yearly records. The data show that my stats are higher than 99% of their other users, and my exercise age is the equivalent of a 35-year-old," the veteran shared his experience with pride, and he now looks forward to the possibility of setting a Guinness world record.

Wimbledon relaxes dress code for women

REUTERS

Wimbledon will relax its strict rules on white clothing at the championships and allow women players to wear dark undershorts and relieve a potential source of anxiety when they have their periods, the All England Club said on Thursday.

Organisers of the grasscourt Grand Slam said the decision was taken following talks with women's tennis organising body WTA, clothing manufacturers and medical teams on how best to support women and girls competing in tournaments.

"We are committed to supporting the players and listening to their feedback as to how they can perform at their best," All England Club Chief Executive Sally Bolton said in a statement.

"I'm pleased to confirm that, following consultation with players and representatives of stakeholder groups, the Committee of Management has taken the decision to update the white clothing rule at Wimbledon."



USA's Taylor Fritz reacts after winning his round-robin match against Canada's Felix Auger-Aliassime in the ATP Finals in Turin on Thursday. PHOTO: AFP

Nadal signs off with win

REUTERS, TURIN

American Taylor Fritz outlasted Felix Auger-Aliassime in three sets and Rafa Nadal avoided matching his worst ever losing sequence with a 7-5, 7-5 victory over Norway's Casper Ruud in round-robin play at the ATP Finals on Thursday.

In a clash of tournament debutantes neither Fritz nor Auger-Aliassime could make inroads on the other's serve but in the first set tiebreaker, the Canadian's normally solid backhand began to misfire and a forehand error put Fritz out ahead.

"It was tough, no one really had any chances early on," Fritz said after his 7-6(4) 6-7(5) 6-2 win.

"I had to just not get frustrated, had to reset. I felt going into the third that a break was coming."

Fritz will face Novak Djokovic in the semi-finals.

Nadal had already been eliminated from semi-final contention when he walked on court in Turin after back-to-back straight-sets defeats in the Green Group by Fritz and Auger-Aliassime.

But the Spaniard was clearly eager not to end a season that began in such spectacular fashion by succumbing to a fifth successive defeat -- something the 36-year-old had not experienced since before his career took off in 2004-05.

Ruud still advanced to the semi-finals but is now 0-8 against opponents ranked in the top three.