

SPORTS
sports

Yates steps out of Sky shadows to reign in Spain

AFP | Madrid

Simon Yates stepped out of the shadows of British cycling giants Sky yesterday to secure his maiden Grand Tour triumph at the Tour of Spain for his Mitchelton team.

Yates, a former track racer whose road racing talents took him to the brink of victory in this year's Giro d'Italia, all but wrapped up overall victory on Saturday after yet another strong finish on the final mountain stage.

After a largely processional final stage to Madrid on Sunday claimed by Elia Viviani in a bunch sprint, the 26-year-old Englishman triumphed with a winning time of 82hr 5min 58sec, Enric Mas finishing second overall at 1:46 and Miguel Angel Lopez completing the podium.

"It's a really unbelievable experience. You know I was even nervous today coming into the circuit. Anything could happen, but now I finally pull it off, it's unbelievable," said Yates.

It was Yates' first victory in a three-week race and comes months after the stinging disappointment of losing the Giro d'Italia, having controlled the race for much of the opening two weeks last May.



Simon Yates

On that occasion, Sky leader Chris Froome capitalised on Yates' collapse in the mountains to secure the race's pink jersey and seal his third consecutive Grand Tour after winning the Tour de France and Tour of

Spain in 2017.

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Froome's Grand Tour-win-

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SIMON YATES

ning streak came to an end in July, when teammate Geraint Thomas, who also honed his skills on the track, upset the Kenyan-born Briton to triumph at the Tour de France.

Yates' win on Sunday meant British riders have dominated all three Grand Tours in 2018.

He also took Britain's impressive streak of consecutive Grand Tour victories to five; although it won't be lost on British cycling aficionados that it was the first British win outside of Team Sky.

Thanks to their multi-million pound budget and ability to attract the best cyclists for specific roles and races, Sky are considered the 'Real Madrid' of the professional peloton.

Brave CF announces open workouts in UAE



Jarrah Al Selawe the first welterweight contender from the Middle East along with his coach

TDT | Manama

Brave Combat Federation will host the open workouts in Abu Dhabi at 06:00 PM on 19th September at the Primal Gym at Reem Island, Abu Dhabi.

The open workouts will be held ahead of Brave 16 marking the return of the event to Abu Dhabi, UAE. Brave 16 is held under the patronage of His Highness Sheikh Khalid bin Hamad Al Khalifa.

The open workouts features the top fighters who are being represented in the fight card at Abu Dhabi. The open workouts will be followed by fan interaction and contests for the fans to take part.

The main event features Jarrah Al Selawe from Jordan facing the welterweight cham-

pion, Carlston Harris for the championship. In the co-main event, Elias Boudegzame from Algeria, will defend the featherweight championship against Bubba Jenkins from the USA.

The event also features major superstars including 10 times IBJJF legend, Bruno Malfacine, Team Lakay Fight Team from Philippines, Mohammad Fakhreddine from Lebanon and the undefeated Mounir Lazzez.

The open workouts is aimed to promote martial arts and the message of adopting a healthy and disciplined lifestyle among the youth. A total of 16 nations will be represented in the 16th edition of the promotion soon to be hosted on 21st September at the Mubadala Arena in UAE.

Nibali, Aru make provisional Italy team for cycling worlds

AFP | Milan

Veteran Italian cycling stars Vincenzo Nibali and Fabio Aru have been selected for a provisional 12-man Italy team for the road race world championships in Austria this month.

The two all-rounders struggled during the Tour of Spain, which ended on Sunday.

Former 'Vuelta' winner, Aru, 28, crashed on the Spanish stage race while 33-year-old Nibali, who has won all the Grand Tours including the Tour de France in 2014, has struggled for form.

The pair were selected alongside Domenico Poz-



Vincenzo Nibali

zovivo, Gianluca Brambilla, Damiano Caruso and Gianni Moscon, winner of the Italian one-day race the Coppa Agostoni at the weekend, who has returned in form from his five-week suspension for violent conduct during the Tour de France. The world championships are held in Innsbruck from September 22 to 30.

Finch faces dilemma for Test debut

AFP | Sydney

Hard-hitting Australian Aaron Finch has been a dominant opener in shorter forms of the game but admits he may have to curb his natural aggression if he makes his Test debut against Pakistan.

The 31-year-old master-blasters has played 135 times for his country in the one-day and Twenty20 formats, earning a reputation as one of the world's fastest-scoring batsmen.

But the burly right-hander has never played a Test.

This is likely to change next month after he was a surprise call-up for Australia's two-Test series against Pakistan in the

United Arab Emirates, raising the dilemma of whether to stay true to his natural style or tone it down.

He said yesterday it will depend where they want him to play.

"Being aggressive has made me reasonably successful in international cricket in the two shorter formats so I suppose it depends where in the order they see me fitting in if there is a spot for me in the XI," he said.

"If it's at the top, I think it's about playing your natural game, if it's in the middle there'll obviously be times you come in against a lot of spin and the ball's reversing.

"So I'll sit down with the



Aaron Finch

coach and captain over the next week or so and start nutting out some plans."

But after plying his trade suc-

cessfully for more than a decade, Australia's T20 skipper and one-day international deputy is inclined to simply do what he does best -- score runs however he can.

"After 10 or 12 years you build up a game plan that works well for you and it's not about going right away from that because it's Test cricket or playing in the sub-continent," he said.

"I think it's about just changing your mindset slightly."

As well as his batting prowess, Finch brings vast experience to a squad missing Steve Smith and David Warner due to suspension over the South Africa ball-tampering scandal, and including four other debutants.

Cibulkova to get first shot at US Open champ

AFP | Tokyo

Big-hitting Dominika Cibulkova will get her first crack at newly crowned US Open champion Naomi Osaka after squeaking into the last 16 of the Pan Pacific Open yesterday.

The beefy Slovak overcame the effects of jet-leg and pesky local qualifier Nao Hibino 6-1, 5-7, 6-3 to set up a potential slug-fest with Osaka in her first match since becoming Japan's first-ever grand slam singles champion.

"I'm still fighting with jet-leg but it's going to be a tough match (against



Naomi Osaka

Osaka)," said Cibulkova after a surprisingly tough first match in Tokyo. "She has just won a major so I hope

it's going to be packed and I hope for a good match."

Earlier, Spain's former world number one Garbine Muguruza breezed into second round, the sixth seed beating Switzerland's Belinda Bencic 6-2, 6-4. In other first-round matches, Italian Camila Giorgi overpowered Japan's Misaki Doi 6-2, 6-1 while Estonia's Anett Kontaveit floored Frenchwoman Kristina Mladenovic 6-3, 7-6.

Australia's Daria Gavrilova will need a lengthy ice bath after a marathon 7-6, 3-6, 7-6 victory over Czech Kristyna Pliskova that went to 10-8 in the third-set breaker.

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