

## Ozaybi cruises to RRR half marathon win

*Saller snatches it on the line in the female race*

BY RICHARD SLATER

**RIYADH** — The Riyadh Road Runners (RRR) held their annual half marathon race at Dirab Golf Course recently. The race was well attended despite being held on the same weekend as the Half Ironman triathlon in Bahrain, in which many Riyadh based athletes participated.

In the male race, Saudi national Hamad Ozaybi started at a canter and immediately began to put

time into his rivals, opening up a lead of over 200 meters by the first turn. Ozaybi put more and more distance between himself and the other athletes throughout the race, with only the injured Mo Foustok managing to keep within touching distance. Eventually Ozaybi claimed victory in a time of 1:18:31, a fantastic effort and a full 6 minutes faster than his last half marathon with RRR in 2013.

Behind the two front runners, Bengt Lofgren and Stephen

Young were engaged in an exciting battle for third place, with the experience of Lofgren eventually proving key and ensuring him a podium place, a mere minute in front of his American rival.

The female race looked set to be wide open, as perennial winners Laura Blazek and Claudine Roghi were both absent for the first time this season. In their absence club newcomer and unknown quantity Franziska Saller won the race, despite seeing the

substantial lead that she held after the first lap almost wiped out by a charging Nikki Layne on the closing straight.

Marie-pierre Arminjon, a regular in the top 5 throughout the past few seasons, took a comfortable third place, well clear of the fast improving Kasha Grymule who finished fourth, but looks to be getting quicker every fortnight.

The Riyadh Road Runners thanked Dirab Golf Course for hosting the race and Carrefour for providing water and food for the runners.



Mo Foustok and Hamad Ozaybi

Male race: 1. Hamad Ozaybi (KSA) 1:18:31, 2. Mo Foustok (KSA) 1:24:08, 3. Bengt Lofgren (SWE) 1:32:16.

Female race: 1. Franziska Saller (GER) 1:46:09, 2. Nikki Layne (UK) 1:46:14, 3. Marie-pierre Arminjon (FRA) 1:47:32.

## Dhoni, McCullum and Raina fetch millions in IPL draft

**NEW DELHI** — Indian and New Zealand skippers Mahendra Singh Dhoni and Brendon McCullum were drafted for more than one million dollars into new cricket teams Tuesday for the Indian Premier League following a graft scandal.

A new team from the western city of Pune paid 125 million rupees (\$1.8 million) for limited overs captain Dhoni for the next edition of the lucrative Twenty20 tournament.

Dhoni joins Australian captain Steven Smith who was sold for 55 million rupees (\$820,000) and South African Twenty20 captain Faf du Plessis who went for 40 million rupees (\$597,000) on the same team.

The other franchise from the western city of Rajkot chose McCullum for 75 million rupees (\$1.1 million), James Faulkner for 55 million rupees (\$820,000) and West Indian Dwayne Bravo for 40 million rupees (\$597,000).

The franchises have replaced Chennai Super Kings and the Rajasthan Royals — teams banned from the glitzy tournament for two years on the recommendation of a Supreme Court-appointed panel, after a corruption scandal.

They were allowed to choose five



MS Dhoni to play for Pune and Suresh Raina for Rajkot

Australia's Shane Watson and Mike Hussey, South Africa's Chris Morris and the West Indies' Dwayne Smith remain unsold and will now be auctioned in Bangalore in February.

The 2013 IPL season was mired in controversy after police launched legal proceedings against several officials from the teams and three Rajasthan Royals' players for illegal betting and

expected to return to the IPL after their bans end following the 2017 edition.

### Australia schedules more domestic pink ball matches

Flushed with the success of the inaugural day-night Test match, Cricket Australia has further embraced the innovation by scheduling another pink ball round of four-day Sheffield Shield matches for mid-February.

More than 123,000 fans passed through the gates at Adelaide Oval over the three days of last month's experimental test against New Zealand, a record for a non-Ashes match.

That far outstripped the paltry crowds for the Test against West Indies last week at Bellerive Oval in Hobart as well as the Brisbane and Perth matches against the Black Caps — all played in more traditional daylight hours.

Round seven of the interstate Sheffield Shield championship will now take place under lights with the WACA in Perth, the Gabba in Brisbane and Adelaide all hosting day-night matches starting on Feb. 14.

Australia and New Zealand players reported that there was more movement from the pink ball under lights in



### Longchamps finishing post fetches record auction price

**PARIS** — The original finishing post at the Longchamps racecourse just outside Paris was sold at auction for 21,000 euros (\$23,140) Monday. The sale set a new record for objects from the hippodrome that hosts the world famous Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe race. "The results exceeded our most optimistic expectations," said Pierre-Yves Lefevre, the auctioneer. "The finishing post is nothing but a metal tube with a red disk and it was sold for 21,000 euros! That's the magic of the place and proves that racetracks are not dead." — AFP

### MLB upholds Rose's lifetime ban from baseball

**NEW YORK** — All-time hits leader Pete Rose's bid to have his lifetime ban from Major League Baseball overturned was denied by Commissioner Rob Manfred Monday due in part to his admission that he still bets on baseball. Rose, who has been ineligible for Hall of Fame consideration since being banned in 1989 for allegedly gambling on games while playing for and managing the Cincinnati Reds, met with Manfred in September to make a case for reinstatement. In a written decision, Manfred said Rose still bets on baseball, even though gambling got him banned from the sport, and that it would be an "unacceptable risk" to let him back in the game. — Reuters

### Victory captain diagnosed with brain condition

## Beckham

**NEW YORK** — New York Giants wide receiver Odell Beckham Jr. had a stomach flu in recent days.

On Monday night, he made the Miami Dolphins sick, scoring the game-tying and game-winning touchdowns, finishing with seven catches for a season-high 166 yards.

Beckham was the main target for quarterback Eli Manning, who passed for four touchdowns to lead the Giants past the Dolphins 31-24 at Sun Life Stadium.

"I wasn't going to be able to make it through the game," Beckham said of how he was feeling. "I could see both my calves cramping and my quads, (too)."

Seeing that, Beckham ran into the locker room early in the third quarter, received two bags of intravenous fluid, then came back to dominate the second half.

Manning completed 27 of 31 passes for 337 yards and did not throw an interception, helping the Giants (6-7) pull into a three-way tie for first place in the NFC East along with the Philadelphia Eagles and Washington Redskins.

The game-winning touchdown was an 84-yarder to Beckham with 11:13 left in the fourth quarter.

"A little double move," Manning said of the play. "The safety (Reshad Jones) was getting low and got Odell on a slant. We hadn't practiced it in a while, but we talked about it earlier today that it might come up."

