

Solheim Cup win featured ‘gimmegate’

BY TONY JIMENEZ
REUTERS

LONDON — The Solheim Cup has developed a penchant down the years for showcasing the good, the bad and the downright ugly of women’s golf and the 14th edition was no exception.

WOMEN’S GOLF

The fans at the St Leon-Rot Club in southwest Germany were treated to some dazzling golf by the U.S. and Europe teams in the women’s version of the Ryder Cup but ultimately the matches will be remembered for an unseemly final-day row that left two of the main protagonists in tears.

No one did more than Charley Hull to highlight the best of women’s golf and it was sad to see the English teenager and 20-year-old opponent Alison Lee needing a shoulder to cry on as they trooped off the 18th green on Sunday morning.

The pair were clearly stunned by what had taken place 15 minutes earlier when Lee mistakenly believed that Hull and morning fourballs partner Suzann Pettersen had conceded a 16-inch putt and the American picked her ball up on the 17th green.

The referee had no option but to award the hole to the Europeans who said later they had offered no sign of a concession to Lee and part-

ner Brittany Lincicome.

Pettersen did a U-turn on Monday, apologizing for a lack of sportsmanship, but the incident enraged the U.S. players and fired them up to overturn a 10-6 deficit and dominate the 12 singles to score a remarkable victory by 14 1/2 points to 13 1/2.

Laura Davies, a veteran of 12 European Solheim Cup campaigns, and defeated 2013 U.S. captain Meg Mallon were also bitterly disappointed by what the BBC described as “gimmegate.”

“I’m disgusted,” Davies told Sky Sports. “We have got our best player, Charley Hull, who has just won a point, and she is in floods of tears. That tells you the wrong thing was done.”

Mallon gave a similar verdict on her Twitter account.

“It’s not the spirit of the Solheim family,” said the American. “This is a game and somehow we lose perspective in these matches. #sad.”

The incident followed close on the heels of an unsavory finger-waving exchange between U.S. captain Juli Inkster and European counterpart Carin Koch 24 hours earlier.

It was alleged one of Koch’s vice captains had given direct advice to one of the European players in contravention of the rules.

Former world No. 1 Annika Sorenstam denied the claims, Koch’s deputy saying she had learned the lessons from Colorado two years ago when she

was the target of similar suggestions.

The evident friction between the teams at St Leon-Rot should not, however, diminish the quality of the golf on display.

Pettersen and Hull stole the show on Saturday with a startling comeback from four down with seven holes to go as they defeated a stunned Morgan Pressel and Paula Creamer on the 18th green of an extraordinary birdie-laden four-somes encounter.

On Friday, Carlota Ciganda produced the shot of the week when the Spaniard holed out with a nine-iron from 135 yards in semi-darkness.

While Hull was the standout performer for Europe for the second Solheim Cup

in a row, Cristie Kerr and Gerina Pillier turned out to be the linchpins of the American team.

Kerr and Pillier picked up three and a half points from their four matches and the latter kept the U.S. alive in the singles when she holed a knee-trembling putt to stop Caroline Masson getting the half-point Europe wanted to retain the trophy.

At the end of it all, Koch was keen to accentuate the positives.

“We talked and we hugged and it’s all good,” Swede Koch said of Inkster. “It seems like these things happen but in the end I think we all need to focus on this great, excellent event and how good it is for women’s golf.”

Brady

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comeback from a 37-13 hole to make it a competitive fourth quarter. They’re not as experienced, as the two rookies on the offensive line can attest. But the parallel that will be drawn all year, especially if the Patriots continue to roll offensively, is how they were motivated by outsiders doubting the legitimacy of their achievements. It was video cameras then; it is deflated footballs now.

“Listen, the truth is, the Patriots ignore that stuff,” Evans said. “There was always a lot of hype. We were confident. We knew we were going to win, and we were picking how much we were going to win by some weeks. We wanted to embarrass the league and humiliate anyone that stepped on the field with us. But it wasn’t because of Spygate.”

Brady, it seems, does take doubts personal, which made the Bills a perfect target. All week, the Bills declared the Patriots’ reign in the AFC East would end, that this year would be different, that they would push the Patriots around. The Bills scored on their first drive to make it 7-0, and Ralph Wilson Stadium erupted with fans who had been tailgating since dawn, an official from the Guinness Book of World Records on hand to record potentially record-breaking crowd noise.

“It was really loud, there was no doubt,” Brady said.

The Patriots needed to call timeout as their first drive sputtered. On their second, Brady rifled a pass to Rob Gronkowski down the seam to quiet the crowd. He silenced the fans when he rolled right and fired an 8-yard touchdown pass to Julian Edelman. Behind a youthful offensive line and without injured wideout Brandon LaFell, Brady gunned precise passes to nine different receivers. By the end of the afternoon, Brady had improved to 23-3 in games he has started against Buffalo. There would be no new order in the division.

“The game’s not won in the first series,” Brady said.

Postgame, Brady said the clock had started already on next week’s game. The Patriots thrived on narrow focus and detailed preparation, but Brady also has another horizon on his mind at this stage of his career. One of the bizarre results from Deflategate is that we came to better understand Brady’s ultimate motivation. In an email released by the NFLPA in conjunction with his appeal of a four-game suspension, Brady measured himself against Peyton Manning to a college friend. “I’ve got another 7 or 8 years,” Brady wrote. “He has 2. That’s the final chapter. Game on.”

He wants nothing less than to be remembered as the greatest player in the history of football, a desire that only grew fiercer this offseason.

Cutler, Brees to miss games

THE SPORTS XCHANGE

It was not a good weekend for quarterbacks, as three prominent signal-callers could miss several games with injuries, and the status of a fourth is uncertain.

Chicago Bears head coach John Fox said Monday that quarterback Jay Cutler is day-to-day with a hamstring injury, but ESPN reported Cutler could miss “at least two games.”

Jimmy Clausen will start this week at Seattle.

New Orleans Saints quarterback Drew Brees could potentially miss several games

with a shoulder injury, according to the NFL Network.

Brees took a hit to his throwing shoulder in the second quarter of Sunday’s loss to Tampa Bay and he had problems the remainder of the contest.

Dallas Cowboys quarterback Tony Romo could be a candidate for injured reserve-designated to return to the 53-man roster in eight weeks after opting against surgery on his fractured left collarbone.

Lions coach Jim Caldwell said Matthew Stafford is “very, very sore” and he didn’t know whether the quarterback would be able play this week against the Denver Broncos.

shoulder injury ended his 2014 debut prematurely, caught 8 passes for 107 yards, including a 35-yarder.

Secondary struggles

The baptism by fire continued for UMaine’s young safeties at Tulane.

Redshirt freshman Sinmisola Demuren (6 tackles) started at strong safety in place of injured sophomore Darrius Hart, while sophomore Jason Matovu (6 tackles) got the nod at free safety. Redshirt freshmen Mozai Nelson and Jeffery DeVaughn and first-year player Joshua Huffman also saw action.

Hockey

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Center Devin Shore and defenseman Ben Hutton, who were All-Americans in 2013-14, decided to pass up their senior seasons to begin their pro careers.

“I don’t care where we were picked,” said Gendron. “It’s all a reflection of how we’re viewed around the league. We’ll see.”

He said the league is “exceptional” like it is every year.

“There are all kinds of good teams. There are no easy opponents,” said Gendron.

Gendron has had limited exposure to his team thus far because, under NCAA rules, Division I coaches are al-

lowed to conduct just two hours of instruction per week until the official start of the season on Oct. 3.

Teams can hold several captain’s practices without coaches.

“I’ve only had two hours with them but I like the way the team is coming together and the way the older players have taken charge of the team,” he said.

Despite the loss of key players, Gendron said, “We have a whole bunch of guys coming back and if they did their work during the summer, they will be improved. A lot of our players will be assuming larger roles.”

“We also have an older group of freshmen. They’re a bigger group physically and they are more mature. I’m pretty excited about the class,” said Gendron.

shy, and they’re not going to want to get hit again,” he added.

Severance demonstrated his field vision and acceleration. He finished with 12 carries for 144 yards and three touchdowns.

“We’ve got Dylan with the speed, and he’s going to be more the finesse guy, and Ray’s going to be our power back,” Arthers said. “When we need a short-distance

run, he’s the guy that we’re going to be looking to really pound it up the middle and get the tough yards.”

The Witches also showed plenty of balance as Garrett Ireland netted 82 yards on 10 carries and quarterback Logan Rogerson added four carries for 59 yards with a touchdown.

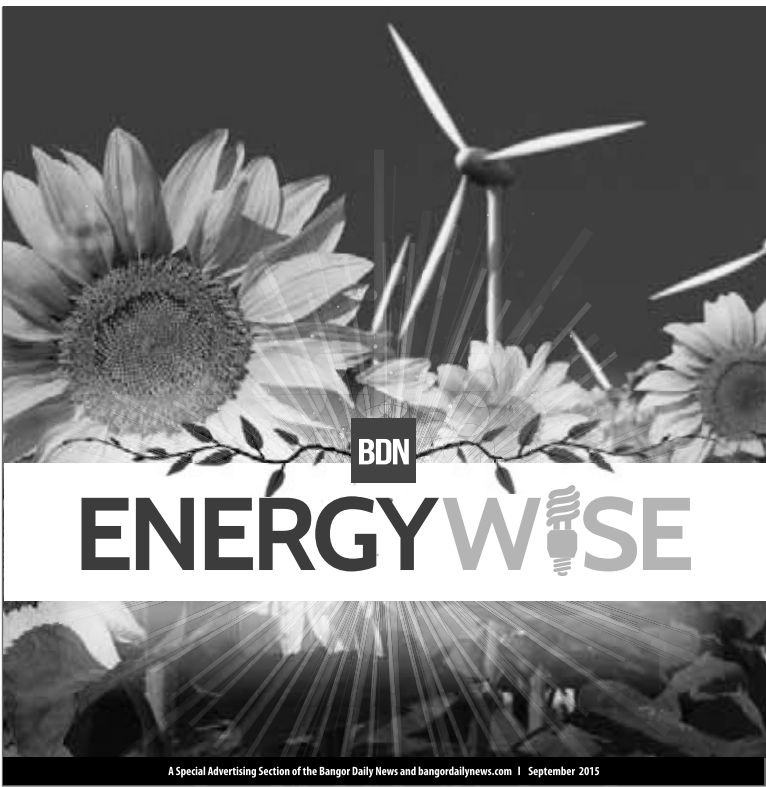
“We tried to simplify what we’ve been running for plays and really focus on a

set amount of what we have in our playbook,” Arthers said. “The line has really started picking up different reads up front on the defense, and our backs are real hungry to run the ball hard and get up in there and make contact.”

Brewer is preparing for Friday’s 7 p.m. showdown on the road against undefeated Skowhegan (3-0) at Reggie Clark Field.

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Soccer

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They’re a possession team, and they can strike quickly. It’s going to be a competitive game.”

Camden Hills coach Meredith Messer, Charlotte Messer’s mother, expects a fast-paced physical game.

“It’s going to be fun to watch,” she said.

Meredith Messer added that having two teams meet for the first time ever with both being undefeated is

like something “out of a movie [script].”

Brewer coach David Hamel, whose team has played both recently, said, “It should be a good one.

“I wouldn’t be surprised if it was a shootout. Both teams like to push forward. A big key will be how the goalkeepers play. Neither has been truly tested this year,” said Hamel, referring to Windjammer Dutch exchange student Jana Spieker and Bangor veteran Emily Gilmore. “There is a difference in depth. Camden Hills has a

very good first 11, but they only play a few players off the bench. Bangor funnels in fresh legs constantly.

“If Camden Hills can withstand Bangor’s constant pressure and keep their legs [fresh], they’ll have a better chance,” he added.

Emma Gutheinz, the Camden Hills’ all-time leading scorer, has 13 goals to lead the Windjammers, and Messer and Brynne Anderson have eight each. Bangor’s balanced attack has been led by Sarah Bragg, Luci Clein, Libby Speckhardt and midfielder Grace Morris.