

# Fans celebrate World Cup champs, rally for equal pay

By ALI SWENSON  
Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Adoring fans packed New York City's Canyon of Heroes on Wednesday amid a blizzard of confetti to praise the World Cup-winning U.S. women's national soccer team as athletic leaders on the field and advocates for pay equity off it.

Crowds chanted "USA! USA!" and workers sounded air horns from a construction site as the hourlong parade moved up a stretch of lower Broadway that has long hosted so-called ticker tape parades for world leaders, veterans and hometown sports stars.

Co-captain Megan Rapinoe and her teammates shared a float with Mayor Bill de Blasio and U.S. Soccer Federation president Carlos Cordeiro. Rapinoe struck her now-famous victory pose, took a swig of Champagne and handed the bottle to a fan. Goalkeeper Alyssa Naeher held the World Cup trophy aloft.

Aly Hoover, 12, of Glen Ridge, New Jersey, stood at the sidelines with a poster



AP Photo/Seth Wenig

The U.S. women's soccer team, Megan Rapinoe center, celebrates at City Hall after a ticker tape parade on Wednesday in New York.

of the face of Alex Morgan, another team star. "I just want to be like them," she said.

Garret Prather brought his newborn son "to celebrate how the American women made us proud on and off the field."

The team sealed its second consecutive tournament win by beating the Nether-

lands 2-0 on Sunday. It will get \$4 million for winning the World Cup from FIFA, the international soccer governing body. The men's French team got \$38 million for winning last year.

The U.S. women's team has sued the U.S. Soccer Federation for gender and pay discrimination. The feder-

ation will give the women bonuses about five times smaller than what the men would have earned for winning the World Cup. The case is currently in mediation.

Kate Lane, who watched the parade, called the pay gap "massive" for the soccer players and "across the board" for most women.

"Especially in male-dominated professions," said Lane, of Limerick, Ireland. "Women put just as much commitment into their work as their male counterparts."

She's hopeful the younger generation is soaking up the message from the women's team, noting a girl about 7 years old wearing an "Equal Pay" T-shirt.

Earlier Wednesday, team members joined New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo, a Democrat, as he signed a bill that expands gender pay equality in the state. He said women's soccer players should be paid the same as male players.

U.S. Sen. Joe Manchin, a Democrat, introduced a bill Tuesday that would bar federal funding for the men's 2026 World Cup until the U.S. Soccer Federation provides equal pay to the women's and men's teams.

At a City Hall rally after the parade, de Blasio, also a Democrat, honored the team with symbolic keys to the city, saying it "brought us together" and "showed us so much to make us hopeful."

After chants for "Equal pay!" from the crowd, Cor-

deiro said women "deserve fair and equitable pay. And together I believe we can get this done."

At the rally, Rapinoe noted the diversity of the team: "We have pink hair and purple hair, we have tattoos and dreadlocks, we got white girls and black girls and everything in between. Straight girls and gay girls."

The parade is named for the strands of ticker tape that used to be showered down from nearby office buildings. The tape has since been replaced with paper confetti, which drifted down from office buildings throughout Wednesday's parade, along with documents and spreadsheets folded into paper airplanes.

The Department of Sanitation said it has assigned 350 workers to parade cleanup, with trucks, backpack blowers and brooms at their disposal.

The team had already started celebrating its record fourth Women's World Cup title. After touching down at Newark Liberty International Airport on Monday, players shared a toast and sang "We Are the Champions."

## Trade deadline looms as baseball resumes

By JAY COHEN  
Associated Press

CHICAGO — Francisco Lindor and the Cleveland Indians, looking up at Nelson Cruz and the surprising Minnesota Twins. Matt Chapman and the Oakland Athletics, trying to run down José Altuve and the Houston Astros. Max Scherzer and the Washington Nationals, chasing Ronald Acuña Jr. and the Atlanta Braves.

Baseball ramps up again this weekend, and a handful of contenders have a lot of work to do.

Five of the majors' six divisions feature deficits of at least 5½ games as play resumes after the All-Star Game, in which the American League beat the National League 4-3 Tuesday night. Life is pretty good for two iconic franchises, with Cody Bellinger and the Los Angeles Dodgers in control of the NL West again and Aaron Judge and the New York Yankees looking down on the rest of the AL East despite a rash of injuries.

"This team is capable of some great things," Yankees pitcher James Paxton said. "You've got some really talented players here, guys with a lot of drive, great leadership. We're set up really well to make a good run the second half here as well."

The one exception at the moment is the crazy NL Central, where the Chicago Cubs have a 4½-game advantage — over last-place Cincinnati. Yup, that's right, it's just 4½ games from top to bottom, with Christian Yelich and Milwaukee a half-game back of Javier Báez and the

inconsistent Cubs.

"Nobody really wants to run away with it," Cardinals shortstop Paul DeJong said. "That gives us confidence as a group to think that we can run away with it."

It sets up for some very tough decisions ahead of the trade deadline after trade waivers were eliminated in the offseason, meaning no player can still be claimed and will be eligible for the postseason if they are in the organization before Sept. 1.

Buying or selling will be one tricky call for several teams, all the way to the final days of July. The hard deadline also could affect the prices for some of the top players on the market, possibilities like San Francisco pitchers Madison Bumgarner and Will Smith, Toronto right-hander Marcus Stroman and Detroit lefty Matthew Boyd.

"I know something could happen, but I don't take a peek at what people are saying," Smith said. "There's so much out there, and you don't know what's true."

Cleveland could inject some drama into the AL Central as soon as this weekend, when Minnesota comes to town for a three-game series. The Indians hit the All-Star break with the majors' longest active win streak at six in a row, improving to 21-6 since June 1 and moving within 5½ games of the division-leading Twins.

"In the beginning it seemed like we were good,



AP Photo/John Minchillo

American League's Joey Gallo, left, of the Texas Rangers, is congratulated by American League teammate Francisco Lindor, of the Cleveland Indians, after Gallo hit a solo home run during the seventh inning of the MLB baseball All-Star Game on Tuesday in Cleveland.

then all of a sudden in May we had that stretch where we weren't playing as good as we wanted to play," Lindor said. "But right now, we continue to play the game right and we're enjoying it, we're all having fun. We all get along, we love each other, we back each other up. We're having a blast."

Washington also is having some fun again, moving into position to shake up the NL East after a terrible start to the season. Led by a resurgent Scherzer, the Nationals have won 15 of 19 to pull within six games of the division-leading Braves.

Washington plays Atlanta 14 times in the last half of the season, including seven games in July.

"When we can go out there and play our best baseball and play mistake-free baseball, we're a tough team and we can compete with anybody in this league," Scherzer said.

The Nationals have seven players with at least 11 homers, led by Anthony Rendon with 20. But everyone is going deep these days.

Beginning with Thursday night's Astros-Rangers game in Arlington, the game's top sluggers resume their assault on an array of home run records. Yelich leads the way with 31 so far, putting together an appropriate encore to his NL MVP performance a year ago.

The majors are on pace for 6,668 homers, which would smash the record 6,105 hit in 2017, and the real heat of the summer, when hits pick up, is only just beginning.

"Guys are working year in and year out on their swings," Pittsburgh first baseman Josh Bell said during the All-Star break. "We're just focused on trying to put a show on for you guys."

## Rookie Wolff headlines John Deere Classic field

By LUKE MEREDITH  
Associated Press

Matthew Wolff made a name for himself by winning the 3M Open in his fourth PGA Tour start after turning pro.

The 20-year-old who starred at Oklahoma State will try to make it two in a row this weekend at the John Deere Classic in Silvis, Illinois.

Wolff was the tour's youngest winner since Jordan Spieth won at TPC Deere Run at age 19 in 2013. And like Spieth, he's being hyped as a future star as he arrives in the Quad Cities.

Many of the world's best players are either taking the week off or playing the Scottish Open in preparation for next week's British Open. That makes Wolff as good a bet as any to make a run at the title at a venue known for low scores.

"My caddie kind of told me that this course is a little bit like last week, just the driving aspect and kind of the way it sets up," Wolff said. "I played it for the Monday pro-am, and I kind of realized that it was more of a course that suited my eye pretty well and I like the look of it."

Wolff's victory last week at TPC Twin Cities took care of a lot: It earned him instant membership and a two-year exemption on the PGA Tour and invitations to next year's Masters and PGA Championship. But it didn't get him a spot in the field at the British Open. That, too, is a possibility this week: The top finisher not already exempt who finishes in the top 5 at TPC Deere Run will qualify to play next week at Royal

Portrush — and get a seat on the charter flight that the John Deere Classic provides to players making the trip to Northern Ireland.

If he doesn't get there this year, there appear to be plenty of major championship starts in the future for Wolff, who has always shown huge potential.

Wolff, who grew up in Southern California, earned freshman All-America honors for the Cowboys in 2017-18 before winning the NCAA individual title in May. After missing the cut at the Rocket Mortgage Classic, Wolff shot 62-65 over the weekend at the 3M Open, securing the win with a 25-foot putt for eagle from the collar of the 18th green.

That made him the seventh player in the past 80 years to win a PGA Tour event before turning 21, and the other six — Spieth, Tiger Woods, Seve Ballesteros, Phil Mickelson, Raymond Floyd and Rory McIlroy — went on to win multiple majors.

Wolff and his assistant Cole Spradlin rented a van and drove straight from Minnesota to the Quad Cities, arriving around 2:30 a.m. Monday.

"It's a dream come true. I'll say that over and over again. My life changed as soon as that putt went in," Wolff said. "But it only lasts so long, and my goal is to become the No. 1 player in the world."

He's now 135th, but that figures to change soon, too.

The John Deere Classic has long made up for its lack of star power by using sponsor exemptions to lure some of the game's brightest prospects to its event.

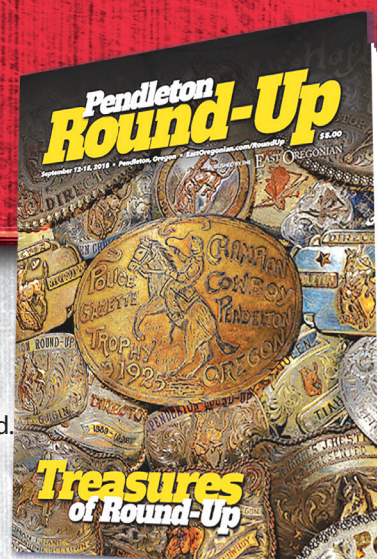
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