

SPORTS

A5

THE WAIT IS OVER



Hideki Matsuyama, of Japan, tips his cap after winning the Masters golf tournament on Sunday in Augusta, Georgia. Matt Slocum/AP



Hideki Matsuyama becomes the first Japanese player in a green jacket

BY DOUG FERGUSON
AP Golf Writer

AUGUSTA, Ga. — Hideki Matsuyama delivered golf-mad Japan the grandest and greenest prize of all.

Ten years after Matsuyama made a sterling debut as the best amateur at Augusta National, he claimed the ultimate trophy Sunday with a victory in the Masters to become the first Japanese winner of the green jacket.

Matsuyama closed with a 1-over 73 and a one-shot victory that was only close at the end, and never seriously in doubt after Xander Schauffele's late charge ended with a triple bogey on the par-3 16th.

Moments before Dustin Johnson helped him into the green jacket, Matsuyama needed no interpreter in Butler Cabin when he said in English, "I'm really happy."

So masterful was this performance that

Matsuyama stretched his lead to six shots on the back nine until a few moments of drama. With a four-shot lead, he went for the green in two on the par-5 15th and it bounded hard off the back slope and into the pond on the 16th hole.

Matsuyama did well to walk away with bogey, and with Schauffele making a fourth straight birdie, the lead was down to two shots with three to play.

The next swing all but ended it. Schauffele's tee shot on the par-3 16th bounced off the hill left of the green and dribbled into the pond. His third shot from the drop area went into the gallery. It added to a triple bogey, and his third close call in a major.

Never mind that Matsuyama bogeyed three of his last four holes, the first Masters champion with a final round over par since Trevor Immelman shot 75 in 2008.

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David J. Phillip/AP

Hideki Matsuyama, of Japan, holds the trophy after winning the Masters golf tournament on Sunday in Augusta, Georgia.

Last 15 Masters Champions

- 2021 — Hideki Matsuyama
- 2020 — Dustin Johnson
- 2019 — Tiger Woods
- 2018 — Patrick Reed
- 2017 — Sergio Garcia
- 2016 — Danny Willett
- 2015 — Jordan Spieth
- 2014 — Bubba Watson
- 2013 — Adam Scott
- 2012 — Bubba Watson
- 2011 — Charl Schwartzel
- 2010 — Phil Mickelson
- 2009 — Angel Cabrera
- 2008 — Trevor Immelman
- 2007 — Zach Johnson

SWIMMING & DIVING

Katie Ledecky dominates 1,500

Katie Ledecky won the 1,500-meter freestyle at the Pro Swim Series meet with the world's fastest time this year.

She touched in 15 minutes, 40.55 seconds in the outdoor pool on Sunday. Ashley Twichell finished second in 16:06.68.

Ledecky's time was 17 seconds quicker than the second-fastest swimmer, Simona Quadarella who swam 15:57.03 at the recent Italian Olympic trials. Ledecky set the world record of 15:20.48 in 2018.

Ledecky's 800 split would have won the individual event in Mission Viejo and would have been the world's fastest this year as well. Her final time in the 1,500 would have been good enough to place third in the men's event, won by Jordan Wilimovsky in 15:10.44.

Ledecky finished second in the 100 free in 54.22 seconds. Abbey Weitzeil won in 53.68.

The women's 1,500 will be an Olympic event for the first time at the Tokyo Games.

—Associated Press

NASCAR CUP SERIES

Truex outlasts Hamlin to win again

BY HANK KURZ JR.
Associated Press

MARTINSVILLE, Va. — Martin Truex Jr. won a stirring, laps-long duel for the lead with teammate Denny Hamlin in the delayed NASCAR Cup Series race at Martinsville Speedway on Sunday.

Truex, who nudged Hamlin repeatedly in the turns and tried to get to his inside on the straightaways without success, finally made the pass with 15 laps to go, ducking underneath Hamlin coming out of the second turn. He sailed off to victory without another challenge as Hamlin and Chase Elliott battled the rest of the way for second.

Truex won for the third time in the last four races on the 0.526-mile oval, and became the first repeat winner this season.

The race was rained out after 42 laps Saturday night, and was completed as the second part of a doubleheader that started with the completion of the rain-delayed Xfinity Series race from Friday night.

Elliott, who won here last fall on his way to winning the series championship, held off Hamlin for second. Hamlin was third, followed by William Byron and Kyle Larson.

"That was a lot of fun there at the end, racing with Denny," Truex said about his Joe Gibbs Racing teammate. "We raced



Steve Helber/AP

Martin Truex Jr. gives a thumbs-up as he celebrates with a fan after winning a NASCAR Cup Series auto race at Martinsville Speedway in Martinsville, Virginia, on Sunday.

clean and we were able to come out on top."

The outcome was not only disappointing for Hamlin, who had a dominant car and led 276 laps, but also for Ryan Blaney, who won the first two stages and led 157 laps but dragged an air gun out of his pit after the final stop and was sent back to 19th in the field.

Earlier, he and Hamlin were dominant.

Blaney passed Hamlin for the lead on Lap 75 and cruised to victory in the 130-lap Stage 1, and Stage 2 played out much

the same. Hamlin was fast early in the run, pulling comfortable ahead, but Blaney eventually ran him down to win that stage, too.

The race featured several drastic changes in fortunes, perhaps none bigger than for Joey Logano. He was in danger of being lapped at the end of the first stage, but gambled with others by staying on the track to gain track position when most of the leaders pitted.

It worked because another caution flew shortly thereafter, allowing him to pit for the

fresh tires most other teams already had and stayed near the front the rest of the way.

Logano finished sixth.

Misfortune was the case for Alex Bowman, Brad Keselowski and several others because of a major pileup on the backstretch involving more than a dozen cars on Lap 387. Bowman had gotten as high as second before getting caught up in the mess that ended his day, and Keselowski, a two-time winner at Martinsville, also had to call it a day after the wreck.

TRAIL BLAZERS

Kanter has 30 rebounds in win

With each rebound that Enes Kanter added to his new Portland record, his teammates on the bench wildly cheered.

Kanter had 24 points and a franchise-record 30 rebounds, and the Blazers beat the Detroit Pistons 118-103 late Saturday.

Kanter bested Sidney Wicks' Portland record of 27 rebounds set in 1975. Kanter also surpassed his own career high of 26 set while with the Knicks in 2018.

The raucous sideline cheers were a fitting tribute to Kanter, who has served as both a backup and a starter this season as needed.

"I was so happy when I looked at the bench and everybody was up, everybody was cheering, everybody was smiling, everybody was supporting their teammates. That's what we're all about," Kanter said. "That's what Blazers basketball is all about, just supporting each other."

Damian Lillard had 27 points and 10 assists and CJ McCollum added 26 points for the Blazers, who snapped a two-game losing streak.

Center Jusuf Nurkic was not available for the Blazers. Kanter started in Nurkic's place.

—Associated Press