

Manchester City winger Leroy Sane dismissed any suggestion of a sensational transfer to rival Manchester United as he believes that he is 'on the right side' of Manchester.

Mayweather to fight kickboxer Nasukawa in Japan

American boxer Floyd Mayweather opened the door to his first MMA bout by announcing his next fight will be against Japanese kickboxer Tenshin Nasukawa. Mayweather will pocket tens of millions of dollars for the money-spinning event in Saitama, Japan, on New Year's Eve, but the rules are yet to be decided on a fight that could see Money's first departure from traditional boxing. The Independent reported.

Speaking at a news conference in Tokyo on Monday, Mayweather said the decision to fight in Japan was about expand-

ing his global profile. "I wanted to do something different. I wanted to display my skills outside the US and be in a special fight," he said after signing a deal with Japanese mixed martial arts promotions company RIZIN Fighting Federation. "I spoke with my team and with RIZIN and we put it together. I have fought in the US for all 50 of my fights. As a professional I haven't had a chance to go outside the US to display my skills and to display my talent for the world."

Nasukawa competes in their championships in both MMA and pure kickboxing. He has



Floyd Mayweather Jr. (L) of the US poses for a photo with Japanese Tenshin Nasukawa during a news conference to announce he is joining Japanese Mixed Martial Arts promotional company RIZIN Fighting Federation in Tokyo, Japan, on November 5, 2018.

won all four of his MMA fights. While boxing rules restrict bouts to the use of fists, MMA rules can incorporate kicks, knees and elbow strikes, as well as wrestling, joint locks and chokes.

Mayweather said the terms of the fight would be decided in the coming weeks.

"As far as the weight class and the rules, we will talk about that and will get that situated within the next couple of weeks," Mayweather added.

The 41-year-old had earlier said he would be comfortable fighting under any format.

The Rizin Fighting Federation was founded in 2015 by Japanese businessman Nobuyuki Sakakibara, who was previously the president of Pride Fighting Championships before it was sold to the then-owners of Ultimate Fighting Championship in 2007.

Sakakibara was clearly delighted with his coup.

"There were many twists and turns to get here," he said, sitting between Mayweather and Nasukawa. "We first negotiated with Mayweather's side to convince him to join Rizin."

"(Then) Nasukawa Tenshin was the first guy we could think of, and the only guy we can think of (for this match)."

Mayweather's last bout was in 2017 when he beat Irish MMA fighter Conor McGregor, running his boxing record to 50-0 and earning close to \$300 million.

Mayweather had come out of a near two-year retirement to fight McGregor and afterward said he was done with boxing.

"We do foolish things sometimes but I am not a dam fool. If I see an opportunity to make \$300 million in 36 minutes why not," he said after that fight in Las Vegas.

"But this is the last one, you have my word on it."

Kashima head coach Oiwa plays down fatigue for ACL final second leg

A tight schedule, Kashima Antlers head coach Go Oiwa is confident, will not stop the Japanese side from giving its best when it faces Persepolis in the second leg of the 2018 AFC Champions League final on Saturday.

Kashima, which will take a 2-0 lead into the return leg at the Azadi Stadium, will first have to play Kashima Reysol in the J League today, meaning the Persepolis tie on Saturday will be the club's fourth match in 11 days, having played Cerezo Osaka on October 31, the-afc.com reported.

Fatigue is a genuine concern for Kashima's fans, who desperately want to see their team lift the AFC Champions League title for the first time.

Oiwa, however, isn't concerned about his team's mental and physical state.

"We have been dealing with a tight schedule since the start of the season and I don't think we should start using this as an excuse now. We are 90



'Better opponents'

Meanwhile, Nigerian striker Godwin Mensha spoke of Persepolis' belief ahead of the second leg by insisting the Iranian team has defeated better sides than Kashima Antlers in the tournament.

Persepolis has twice recovered from first-leg deficits in the knockout rounds, eliminating UAE's Al Jazira and Qatar's Al Duhail in dramatic fashion at Azadi Stadium.

"We have played against many good teams who are better than Kashima. I think that Al Sadd was much better, but it's just that we conceded cheap goals [in the first leg]. We will work very hard and try to finish everything at home," said the Nigerian.

"When we arrived [at Kashima Soccer Stadium] we felt their fans, but they now need to come and see what we have in Tehran; we expect our fans to support us in the final," added Mensha, whose side has been inspired by capacity crowds at Azadi Stadium.

minutes away from winning the AFC Champions League and I believe the players will be up for it," said Oiwa.

Oiwa is equally confident that his players will be mentally ready for the challenge Persepolis will surely pose in the return leg.

"The players may be physically and mentally tired now but after a couple of days of rest, they will be looking forward to the return leg."

"We know how supportive the Persepolis fans are but we have a great chance to win the AFC Champions League for the first time and my players will overcome their mental and physical fatigue and be ready for the return leg," said Oiwa.

Ibaka's career-high sends Raptors past Lakers

Serge Ibaka made his first 14 shots on the way to a career-high 34 points, and the Toronto Raptors didn't need an injured Kawhi Leonard in a 121-107 victory over the Los Angeles Lakers on Sunday night.



Raptors' Serge Ibaka slam-dunks during an NBA game against Lakers at Staples Center in Los Angeles, CA, the US, on November 4, 2018.

Ibaka had 10 rebounds and didn't miss a shot until 5:16 remained in the third quarter, finishing 15-of-17 in a masterful performance. The As-

sociated Press reported. Kyle Lowry added 21 points and 15 assists as the Eastern Conference-leading Raptors improved to 9-1 with their eighth consecutive win over the Lakers since 2014.

Lakers' LeBron James finished

with 18 points and six assists. Kyle Kuzma scored 24 points and Brandon Ingram added 16 for the Lakers. They are 4-6 after their first 10

games with James. Leonard sat out with soreness in his left foot, depriving Lakers fans of their only look at the superstar before he could become an unrestricted free agent next summer. The Lakers would love to sign a second superstar like Leonard, who grew up in the Inland Empire area one hour east of Los Angeles.

While the Raptors embarrassed Los Angeles without any help from Leonard, the Lakers followed a resilient win in Portland on Saturday night with perhaps their worst half since James' arrival.

Toronto took a 41-10 lead with 2:21 still remaining in the first quarter, and Ibaka outscored the Lakers by himself (20-17) in the opening period. Ibaka went 11-for-11 in the first half, while Lowry had 12 assists as the Raptors hit six three-pointers and forced nine turnovers.

The Lakers also missed their first eight three-point attempts before James made back-to-back triples in the third quarter.



JUSTIN SETTERFIELD/GETTY IMAGES

Djokovic completes remarkable return to World No. 1

Serbia's Novak Djokovic on Monday returned to the top of the ATP Rankings for a fourth stint at the pinnacle of men's professional tennis.

Almost two years to the day since Djokovic completed his 223rd and most recent week at No. 1, he replaces Spain's Rafael Nadal in the top spot, at-pworldtour.com reported.

Djokovic is the first player to be ranked outside the top 10 then climb to No. 1 in the same season since Marat Safin in 2000.

Safin was as low as No. 38 on February 28, 2000 before becoming No. 1 on November 20 that year. When Djokovic fell to No. 22 on May 21, 2018, it was his lowest ranking since he was No. 22 as a 19-year-old on October 2, 2006.

"Reflecting on what I've been through in the last year, it's quite a phenomenal achievement," said Djokovic.

"And, of course, I'm very, very happy and proud about it. Five months ago, if you told me that, I would be —

I always believe in myself, but it was highly improbable at that time considering my ranking and the way I played and felt on the court... I'll probably be able to speak more profoundly about it when the season is done and hopefully if I get to finish as No. 1."

Djokovic underwent surgery on his right elbow in January after the Australian Open, which was his first tournament in six months. He reunited with long-time coach Marian Pajda at the Monte Carlo Masters in April and entered the Internazionali BNL d'Italia in May with a 6-6 record. Djokovic has since compiled a 43-5 match record, including a 31-2 mark since the start of Wimbledon.

The 31-year-old won two Grand Slam championship crowns at Wimbledon — which represented his first major title since June 2016 at Roland Garros — and at the US Open for the third time in the same season (also 2011 and 2015).

As the World No. 21 at Wimbledon,

he was the lowest-ranked major champion since No. 44-ranked Gaston Gaudio at 2004 Roland Garros. He defeated Nadal 10-8 in the fifth set of their Wimbledon semifinal, which lasted five hours and 15 minutes.

By beating Roger Federer in August at the Western & Southern Open in Cincinnati, Djokovic became the first player to win titles at all nine ATP World Tour Masters 1000 events since the start of the tournament series in 1990.

He captured his fourth Shanghai Masters title last month and additionally finished runner-up at the Fever Tree Championships at the Queen's Club in June and at the Paris Masters on Sunday where he was beaten in straight sets (7-5, 6-4) by the 22-year-old Russian Karen Khachanov.

Djokovic and Nadal will now battle to become a five-time year-end No. 1 in the ATP Rankings at the Nitto ATP Finals, the season finale to be held at the O2 in London on November 11-18.

UEFA president to 'fight' European Super League

UEFA president Aleksander Ceferin said he will "fight against" the idea of a European Super League as long as he is at the top of European football's governing body.

The latest batch of Football Leaks stories released by German magazine Der Spiegel claimed on Friday that plans for a European Super League with 11 founding members: Manchester United, Manchester City, Chelsea, Arsenal, Liverpool, Real Madrid, Barcelona, Paris Saint-Germain, Juventus and Bayern Munich remain intact, ESPN reported.

The report added that, from as early as November 2018, the 11 teams could sign a "binding team sheet" and commit to the new European Super League

from 2021.

"It would damage football worldwide," Ceferin told German sport magazine kicker. "It would be boring."

"To see Juve vs. Bayern every week would be more boring than let's say

Juve vs. Torino. It's no question for me that I will fight and do all I can against such a league for as long as I am here."

"If we are talking about a closed system, we can forget about solidarity and the development of football. In the long run, the clubs would be the losers."

Bayern CEO Karl-Heinz Rummenigge, meanwhile, rejected reports of the club's push for such a league.

"I am not aware of any Super League news," he was quoted as saying by kicker.

"We neither have any knowledge about this nor have we participated in any talks. That's out of the question for us."



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