

What to WATCH

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KLINSMANN QUILTS AS HERTHA COACH

Jurgen Klinsmann shocked the German Bundesliga on Tuesday by announcing he was stepping down as Hertha Berlin coach just 10 weeks after taking the reins at the ambitious capital club. The 1990 World Cup winner announced his surprise decision in a post on his Facebook page, three days after Hertha slumped to a 3-1 home defeat to fellow strugglers Mainz which left them just six points above the drop zone. "After long consideration, I have decided to give up my position as head coach and return to my original and long-term position on the board," Klinsmann said.



Do-or-die for Abahani against Maziya

SPORTS REPORTER



Last edition's zonal semifinalists Abahani are looking forward to getting out of AFC Cup's preliminary round-2 as they take on Maziya of Maldives in Male today.

The match will kick off at 5:00pm (Bangladesh time).

The six-time Bangladesh Premier League champions are on the backfoot following a 2-2 draw in the first leg match at home, with a victory or least a 3-3 draw needed for them to get the better of the Maldivian opponents, against whom the Sky Blues do not have a good record.

Abahani were beaten twice by Maziya (2-0) and New Radiant SC (5-1) in AFC Cup group stages in 2017 and 2018. In the first leg this time, Abahani went behind down twice before bouncing back to level the margin.

"They [Maziya] have a slight advantage for getting two away goals but it is going to be a different game tomorrow [Wednesday] because we have an idea of how Maziya play. We didn't do very well in the first leg and tried to rectify in training. It will be a good test for us," Abahani coach Mario Lemos said at a pre-match briefing in Male yesterday.

Lemos is taking the inspiration from their last group match against Minerva Punjab last year where they needed a win over to emerge group champions and they did it through a last-gasp header from Masih Saighani in the stoppage time of that match in India.

"We have got to be patient. Last year, we were in such a situation when we played

against Minerva Punjab and we needed a win to qualify for the semifinals.

"We want to stop Maziya because they have quality players up front like Ibrahim [Mahudhee]. We have got to do better job of stopping them. If we can stop them defensively, then I think we will have a chance to score. I believe we can score in any match we play," said Lemos, who guided Abahani last season.

Echoing Lemos's sentiment, midfielder Mamunul Islam said they have quality strikers to score if they can defend well against Maziya.

"We worked on team defending in the last four days as the coach showed us role of each player during defending. If we want to give our best and if we do so, we would win the game," Jibon said. "We had different coaches when we lost to Maziya and New Radiant and had not had enough preparation. But this time we have good preparation like last year. We couldn't beat them before but this doesn't mean we can't do it now. If we play according to game plan, it is possible to win the match."

Manager Satyajit Das Rupu hinted that fit-again centre-back Tutul Hossain Badsha is likely to start in place of either Nasir Chowdhury or Raihan Hasan in hot and humid Male.



New Zealand pacer Hamish Bennett (R) celebrates the dismissal of India captain Virat Kohli (2nd L) in the third and final ODI at the Bay Oval in Mount Maunganui yesterday. New Zealand won the match by five wickets to seal the series 3-0.

PHOTO: AFP

Kiwis sweep series despite Rahul ton

AFP, Mount Maunganui



India suffered a rare series whitewash as New Zealand posted a five-wicket win in the third and final one-day international at Mount Maunganui on Tuesday. A KL Rahul century was not enough to save the tourists, who scored a respectable 296 for seven after losing the toss and being asked to bat.

But the Black Caps, stung by a 5-0 whitewash in the recent Twenty20 series, were determined not to let the chance of a retaliatory clean sweep in the ODIs slip away.

Openers Henry Nicholls and Martin Guptill gave the Black Caps a flying start with 80 and 66 respectively before Colin de Grandhomme saw them home when he bludgeoned 58 off 28 balls.

The hosts finished on 300 for five, reaching India's target with 17 balls to spare, despite a mid-innings wobble.

It is the first time India have been

whitewashed in a bilateral ODI series of three or more matches since 1989 and the only time it has ever happened against New Zealand.

Leg-spinner Yuzvendra Chahal was the pick of India's bowlers, taking three for 47.

Earlier, Rahul boosted India's hopes with his fourth ODI century, bringing up the landmark off 104 balls, before departing on 112.

He was supported by a gritty 62 from Shreyas Iyer but most of India's batters failed to live up to captain Virat Kohli's pre-match exhortation to play positively and post a big total.

Prithvi Shaw and Manish Pandey both reached the 40s but no other batters made double figures, with Kohli out for nine.

Still, Rahul looked set to steer India to a huge total before Black Caps paceman Hamish Bennett slowed the scoring with a late flurry of wickets.

Rahul had a life on 64 when Mitchell Santner's throw at the stumps went wide and the batsman made the most of it to score his fourth ODI century, bringing up the landmark off 104 balls, including nine fours and one six.

Bennett dismissed Rahul for 112 and then snared Manish Pandey for 42 off his next ball.

His fourth wicket came when Shardul Thakur sent a full toss straight to de Grandhomme, and the bowler was unlucky not to get another when Navdeep Saini almost edged the next delivery onto his stumps.

The focus now turns to Test cricket, with the first of two five-day matches scheduled to begin in Wellington on February 21.

The results of both matches will count toward the inaugural ICC World Test Championship, in which India are runaway leaders at the top of the ladder.

SCORES IN BRIEF

INDIA: 296 for 7 in 50 overs (Shaw 40, Iyer 62, Rahul 112, Pandey 42; Bennett 4-64)

NEW ZEALAND: 300 for 5 in 47.1 overs (Guptill 66, Nicholls 80, Williamson 22, de Grandhomme 58 not out; Chahal 3-47)

Result: New Zealand won by five wickets and clinched the 3-match series 3-0.

Player-of-the-match: Henry Nicholls.

Player-of-the-series: Ross Taylor.

Ronaldo, Ibra set for Italian Cup clash

AFP, Milan



Cristiano Ronaldo and Zlatan Ibrahimovic are set to go head-to-head in Thursday's Italian Cup semifinal, first leg between Juventus and AC Milan at the San Siro.

Both Ronaldo and Ibrahimovic scored at the weekend in defeats as Juventus fell 2-1 at Hellas Verona, while AC Milan threw away a two-goal lead in a 4-2 defeat by city rivals Inter.

"It wasn't the result we wanted," said the 35-year-old Ronaldo despite becoming the first Juventus player to score in 10 successive league games, just one game short of the Serie A record.

The five-time Ballon d'Or winner has scored 23 goals in all competitions this season.

Ibrahimovic, 38, has scored three goals since returning to Milan last month.

The Swede headed in the second goal on Sunday after setting up the first, but Inter hit back with four second-half strikes.

"I showed that I can still make a difference, even at 38," he said.

But Inter striker Romelu Lukaku will be looking to upstage the two other former Manchester United players against Napoli in the other last-four first leg on Wednesday.

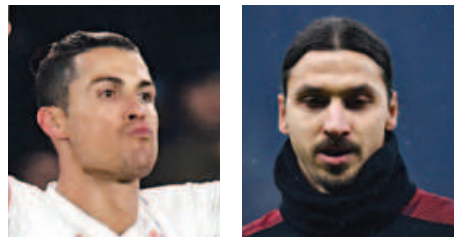
Gennaro Gattuso's Napoli, despite their current slump, ousted holders Lazio in the quarter-finals.

"There's a new king in town," a jubilant Lukaku wrote on Twitter after scoring the fourth goal for Inter in Sunday's derby.

"We run this town." The Belgian was replying to Ibrahimovic's pre-derby post saying that "lions don't compare themselves to humans".

Juventus coach Maurizio Sarri has reason to be worried by his side's away form, with the defending Serie A champions having lost their last two games on the road.

"I hope that someone will help me, it's something we have to resolve," Sarri said



after the loss to Verona.

"Right now we have a difference in performance between home and away."

Juventus are bidding to reclaim the trophy which they held for four seasons until losing to eventual runners-up Atalanta in the quarters last year.

Antonio Conte's Inter are the only one of the four semi-finalists to win in Serie A at the weekend, with Napoli crashing to a 3-2 defeat by lowly Lecce.

Inter's victory lifted them ahead of Juventus on goal difference at the top of the table, as they target their first Scudetto since 2010.

The second-leg ties will take place on March 4 and 5.

Needed more time at Arsenal: Emery

AFP, Paris



Former Arsenal boss Unai Emery says he didn't get enough time to transform the London giants who were on a "downward slope" when he was appointed, France Football magazine reported on Monday.

Emery had 18 months at the Emirates Stadium after a two-year stint with Paris Saint-Germain and a spell which included winning three straight Europa League titles with Sevilla.

"Arsenal had been on a downward slope for two years when I joined them," Emery told France Football.

"We stopped the rot and took the club to the Europa League final (where they lost 4-1 to Chelsea) and took fifth place in the Premier League," Emery said in defence of his tenure that ended in November 2019.

"That season we had qualification for the Champions League in our own hands but it all went wrong."

"I needed more time to manage to transform this club, into the new Arsenal I had been hoping to build," added Emery.

ব্যতিক্রমধর্মী

গণ বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ে

জরুরী নিয়োগ

পোঃ মির্জানগর ভায়া-সভার ক্যান্টন, আতলিয়া, (জাতীয় স্মৃতিসৌধের সন্নিকটে), ঢাকা-১৩৪৪। ফোন: ৭৭৯২২২৪, ৪৪০৭৩০০৭

বর্তমানে সার্বক্ষণিক ২৫৭ এবং খন্ডকালীন ৪৫জন শিক্ষক আছেন। গবেষণা ও জনকল্যাণকর আধুনিক শিক্ষায় আগ্রহী শিক্ষকরা আবেদন করুন। আকর্ষণীয় বেতন ভাতা ও অন্যান্য সুযোগ সুবিধা এবং বাসস্থানের সুবিধা আছে। বেতন আলোচনা সাপেক্ষে স্থির হবে।

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