

What to WATCH

STAR SPORTS 2
ICC Women's T20 World Cup
 India v New Zealand
 Live from 10:00 am
 Australia v Bangladesh
 Live from 2:00 pm
SONY SIX
UEFA Europa League
 Gent v Roma
 Live from 11:55 pm

Arsenal v Olympiacos
 Live from 2:00 am (Friday)
SONY ESPN
UEFA Europa League
 Inter Milan v Ludogorets

Live from 2:00 am (Friday)
TEN 2
UEFA Europa League
 Manchester United v Brugge
 Live from 2:00 am (Friday)

BRESCIA FINED OVER CORONAVIRUS CHANT

Italian club Brescia have been fined 10,000 euros (\$10,800) for fans chanting "Napoli coronavirus" at supporters of their league rivals, the Lega Serie A announced on Tuesday. The Italian league's disciplinary commission fined the northerners for "vulgar, insulting and repeated chants from its supporters against those of the opposing team" in last Friday's game which Napoli won 2-1. More than 332 people have been infected and 10 have died in Italy after contracting the new coronavirus which had until Tuesday been confined to the north of the country. Brescia's hard-core ultra fans apologised in a statement. "We realise that we have made a mistake since our country is facing the possible development of this disease and we apologise to the Italian families involved," it read.



German striker Serge Gnabry scored twice in space of three minutes before Robert Lewandowski added a third as Bayern Munich ran 3-0 winners against Chelsea in their UEFA Champions League fixture at Stamford Bridge in London on Tuesday.

PHOTO: AFP

Griezmann rescues Barca at Napoli

AFP, Naples

Antoine Griezmann rescued a 1-1 draw for Barcelona at Napoli in the first leg of their Champions League last-16 tie on Tuesday.

Frenchman Griezmann struck just before the hour mark in Naples after Dries Mertens had put the hosts ahead in the 30th minute with his 121st Napoli goal, drawing level with Marek Hamsik as the club's all-time top scorer.

Barcelona ended the game with 10 men after Arturo Vidal was sent off with two minutes to go after picking up two yellow cards, following an angry clash with Napoli defender Mario Rui.

"In the end it's a draw that is a good result considering that we have another home game," said Barcelona coach Quique Setien, with his side in a strong position ahead of the second leg at the Camp Nou on March 18.

The clash was the first between the two teams and also a Champions League debut for both Setien and Napoli counterpart Gennaro Gattuso, who took over after the group stage.

"They didn't hurt us, they tickled us," said Gattuso. "It went wrong in one moment and they punished us."

Napoli captain Lorenzo Insigne added: "We could have won, so we're a bit disappointed. It was emotional to face players like (Lionel) Messi."

"If Barca didn't do today what they did three days ago (against Eibar) it's to Napoli's credit," said Gattuso.

"I hope that no one thinks it's over. We know it will be very hard but nothing is finished yet."

"But when on your back you have Messi or Griezmann, you want to play with a little security. This is where we can try to do better on the way back."

Napoli's pressure paid off on the half-hour mark, with Piotr Zielinski breaking free down the right before finding Mertens, who curled a magnificent finish past Marc-Andre ter Stegen.

He equalled Hamsik's record and is now six goals clear of Maradona, but was forced off early in the second half after a Sergio Busquets tackle for which the Spaniard will be suspended for the second leg.

Barcelona did not waste much time in getting on level terms, as Messi and Busquets combined to send Semedo into the box in the 57th minute.

The Portuguese full-back crossed low for Griezmann to power home right-footed.



Barcelona forward Antoine Griezmann celebrates his equalising goal against Napoli in their Champions League fixture at the San Paolo Stadium on Tuesday.

PHOTO: AFP

Man City's appeal lodged

AFP, Lausanne

Manchester City's appeal against their two-year European ban has been officially registered by the Court of Arbitration for Sport, CAS announced on Wednesday.

The Premier League club have vowed to fight the sanction imposed by UEFA on February 14 for breaching financial fair play regulations.

Although CAS did not indicate a time-frame for the appeal process, it is expected to take several months.

In a statement, CAS said: "The Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) has registered an appeal filed by Manchester City football club against the Union of European Football Associations (UEFA)."

School hockey final round on

SPORTS REPORTER

Police Line School of Faridpur came behind to notch a 2-1 win over Rafique Uddin Memorial High School of Cumilla on the opening day of the final round of First Security Islami Bank National School Hockey tournament at the Maulana Bhasani Hockey Stadium yesterday.

Mursalin Khan Niloy scored both goals for the Faridpur school.

Meanwhile, Shishu Niketan School of Rangpur played out a 1-1 draw against Police Line School of Mymensingh.

As many as 18 school teams from nine venues of preliminary round, split into six groups, are playing round-robin matches and top teams from each group will advance to the second-phase of the final round.

Sharapova calls time

REUTERS, Berlin

Maria Sharapova, the Russian five-time Grand Slam champion who became one of the highest paid sportswomen in the world, announced her retirement at the age of 32 on Wednesday.

Siberia-born Sharapova, whose Wimbledon victory over Serena Williams in 2004, aged 17, propelled her to superstardom and riches, broke the news in an article for magazine Vanity Fair.

"I'm new to this, so please forgive me. Tennis -- I'm saying goodbye," Sharapova, who gave tennis the ultimate rags to riches story after moving with her father Yuri to train in Florida, aged six, wrote in the article.

Her decision is hardly a major surprise as she has struggled with injuries and poor form since returning from a 15-month drugs ban in 2017, the result of testing positive for heart drug meldonium at the 2016 Australian Open.

The former world number has played only two matches this year, losing in the first round of the Australian Open, with her ranking sliding to 373.

"Looking back now, I realise that tennis has been my mountain. My path has been filled with valleys and detours, but the views from its peak were incredible," she said.

"After 28 years and five Grand Slam titles, though, I'm ready to scale another mountain, to compete on a different type of terrain."

Sharapova, whose trademarks were her ferocious intensity and pounding groundstrokes, completed her career

Grand Slam when she won the French Open in 2010. She also won the Roland Garros title again in 2014, her last Grand Slam crown.

She became the first Russian woman to reach number one in the rankings in 2005 and claimed the U.S. Open title in 2006. She also won the Australian Open in 2008.

Sharapova's career has been blighted by shoulder problems with surgery for a rotator cuff tear in 2008 forcing her off the Tour for six months and dropping her outside the top 100. Battling back to fitness to claim two French Open titles on a claycourt surface she once loathed earned Sharapova admiration, but her career took a dark turn in 2016.

After an 18th consecutive defeat by Serena Williams, in the quarter-finals of the Australian Open, Sharapova failed an anti-doping test and was initially banned for two years by the International Tennis Federation (ITF).

Her ban was eventually reduced to 15 months and she returned to action in April 2017.

Later that year she won the Tianjin Open, the 36th and last title of a career that earned her \$38.7 million in prize money -- a figure dwarfed by off-court earnings that according to Forbes made her the highest-paid female athlete for 11 years in a row.

With the all-too-frequent career breaks, Sharapova has established a confectionary company called Sugapova, from which some of the proceeds go the Maria Sharapova Foundation -- a charity she set up to help victims of the Chernobyl nuclear accident in her native Russia.

While that will keep her busy, Sharapova said the thrill of competition will be missed.

"In giving my life to tennis, tennis gave me a life," she said. "I'll miss it every day, I'll miss the training and my daily routine."



AIUB PL CRICKET

Majestic Masters win title

SPORTS REPORTER

Majestic Masters won the title of AIUB Premier League Cricket Tournament, beating BBA Bravers by three wickets in the final at the AIUB campus in Kuril recently, said a press release from the university.

Azmir became the best batsman and player of the tournament for scoring 437 runs and taking nine wickets during the week-long tournament. Raqeeb of the champion team was adjudged the player of the final.

2022 COMMONWEALTH GAMES Shooting, archery to be held in India

SPORTS REPORTER

The Commonwealth Games Federation has included shooting in 2022 Commonwealth Games and brought back archery into the roster, even though both events will be held in India in January, 2022, six months before the Games will get underway in Birmingham. The shooting and archery events will be held in Chandigarh and Haryana.

The decision was made at an executive board meeting of the Commonwealth Games Federation in London last week following a proposal from Commonwealth Games India. The Games' hosts, Birmingham, had earlier decided to drop shooting from the roster, resulting in a protest from India and Bangladesh. Archery was not in consideration in the 19-discipline roster, which will now feature 21 disciplines.

Bangladesh Shooting Sports Federation and Bangladesh Archery Federation have been apprised of the latest developments and both federations expressed happiness.

Bangladesh won two silver medals in shooting events in the last edition of the Commonwealth Games in Gold Coast, Australia. Even though the country failed to win any medal in archery events in the Delhi Commonwealth Games in 2010, the only time they participated in the discipline, recent performances suggest they have bright prospects in archery events.

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