



Joshua Kimmich (L) scored a fantastic volley to extend defending champions Bayern Munich's winning run with a 2-1 win over Lokomotiv Moscow while Casemiro (R) scored in the stoppage time to earn a 2-2 draw for Zinedine Zidane's Real Madrid away to Borussia Mönchengladbach in the Champions League on Tuesday night. Elsewhere, Joao Felix (bottom) scored a brace to give Atletico Madrid all three points against visitors Salzburg. PHOTO: TWITTER

Bayern stay perfect as Real secure a point

AFP, Paris

Holders Bayern Munich continued their perfect start to their Champions League title defence on Tuesday as Real Madrid had Casemiro's late goal to thank for scrambling a 2-2 draw away to Borussia Mönchengladbach. Liverpool and Manchester City also made it six points out of a possible six in Europe this season, after Bayern needed a late Joshua Kimmich strike to claim a 2-1 win at Lokomotiv Moscow in Group A. Leon Goretzka put the Germans ahead early on in front of a limited crowd in the Russian capital, but Anton Miranchuk tucked in an equaliser for Lokomotiv in the second half -- Miranchuk's twin brother Aleksei scored for Atalanta in the Champions League last week.

But Bayern were not to be denied a record 13th straight win in the competition as Kimmich controlled a Javi Martinez pass and volleyed home low from outside the box 11 minutes from time.

"We had to work hard for the victory," Kimmich admitted to



broadcaster DAZN.

FELIX BRACE RESURRECTS ATLETICO

In the same group Atletico Madrid came from behind to beat Salzburg 3-2, with Joao Felix grabbing their late winner. The Portuguese starlet had hit the bar with a stunning overhead kick before Llorente put Atletico ahead in the Spanish capital. Dominik Szoboszlai levelled

before the break and then a Felipe own goal put Salzburg ahead just after half-time.

However, Joao Felix equalised on 52 minutes and then won it five minutes from the end.

In Germany, Real were heading for another defeat in Group B, six days after losing 3-2 at home to Shakhtar Donetsk, as Thuram netted twice for Gladbach, either side of half-time. But Casemiro set up Karim

Zenka to reduce the deficit in the 87th minute and the Brazilian midfielder then scored himself deep in injury time to salvage a point for Zinedine Zidane's team.

"If we continue to play like that, we'll do great things and we'll win matches, that's for sure," said Zidane. It is Shakhtar who lead the section, though, by two points from Inter Milan and Gladbach, after a 0-0 draw with the Italians in Kiev.

CITY CRUISE PAST MARSEILLES

Pep Guardiola's City eased to a second straight win in Group C with Kevin De Bruyne setting up Ferran Torres for the early opener against Marseille after the hosts had carelessly ceded possession.

Ilkay Gundogan and Raheem Sterling added late goals to make it 3-0, leaving Marseille without a point.

Guardiola was confident City could build on their victory after an indifferent start to the Premier League season which has seen them come in for criticism.

"Part of the criticism was right, but you've got to accept it. It's part of our job," Guardiola told BT Sport.

"It's about where we've come from in the last month, with lack of preparation, injuries and Covid-19, but the Champions League is in a good place now."

In the same group Porto beat Olympiakos 2-0 in Portugal with Fabio Vieira and Sergio Oliveira on target.

'TOUGH NIGHT' FOR LIVERPOOL

Meanwhile, Liverpool built on their 1-0 victory at Ajax last week by defeating Danish champions Midtjylland 2-0 in a low-key game behind closed doors at Anfield in Group D.

Diogo Jota finished off a fine move to give Jurgen Klopp's team the lead early in the second half, before Mohamed Salah made sure of the points with a late penalty.

Klopp rested Salah, Sadio Mane and Roberto Firmino from his starting line-up but his defensive worries deepened as Fabinho went off with an apparent hamstring injury.

"It was a tough night," Klopp told BT Sport.

"It's a bit like in a marriage, there are good and bad times. It's not a bad time but it's a tricky time."

'Shakib will come back to achieve more'

SPORTS REPORTER



As of today, the most celebrated cricketer of the country, premier all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan will once again be available for playing cricket -- both at the domestic and international level for Bangladesh. And that would remain as a moment of festivity for fans of Bangladesh cricket who were left shattered and shocked on October 29, 2019 when Shakib was banned by the International Cricket Council (ICC) for failing to report corrupt approaches.

"It is a joyous occasion for Bangladesh cricket" is how Mohammad Salahuddin, Shakib's mentor, described the star all-rounder's return from ban. "Shakib's presence, in itself, is an encouraging factor for players at any level. Bangladesh, however, did not miss him as much due to the pandemic as they would if it were normal times. But



regardless of everything, his return to cricket comes as a huge news for Bangladesh cricket," Salahuddin explained.

"I don't think he will have any problem in any cricketing activities. Shakib's mental state during a bad or a good period remains almost the same. He is such a strong character that his mental state does not change much during a difficult period," he said.

Shakib was supposed to join the Tigers in their planned tour of Sri Lanka and he had also started training for that purpose at the BKSP after he returned to the country in early September. Shakib, however, went back to the United States after the Sri Lanka tour was postponed.

"He had slight trouble running when he practised at the BKSP. He had gained weight but he got back in shape," said Salahuddin, who along with Nazmul Abedeen Fahim, helped Shakib during his training period at the BKSP.

Salahuddin is certain that this ban has helped Shakib learn a great lesson. "I am sure he took a lesson from this. And I do not have any doubts that he will now come back to achieve more and give even more than he already has to Bangladesh cricket."



Bartomeu's parting bombshell

AFP, MADRID

Josep Maria Bartomeu resigned as Barcelona president on Tuesday, along with his board of directors, and left with a bombshell admission that he had accepted a proposal for the club to play in "a future European Super League".

Bartomeu's departure comes following mounting pressure from fans and his public falling-out with Messi. His resignation could affect the future of Messi, who will now be given a new project after trying to leave in August.

"I want to communicate my resignation along with the rest of the board," said Bartomeu in an official announcement. "It's a composed and relaxed decision, agreed with all my fellow directors."

However, it was his revelation about a Super League which seems certain to make the biggest waves beyond Catalonia. Bartomeu said he accepted a proposal on Monday for Barcelona to play in "a future European Super League" which "would guarantee the financial stability of the club".

Earlier this month, Barcelona announced losses of 97 million euros (\$114m) for last season, with debt more than doubling to 488 million euros.

Bartomeu and his board could even be held personally liable for the financial shortfall.

REFEREE AZIZ A bastion of sporting courage

AL-AMIN

Referee Abdul Aziz died on Tuesday afternoon. He was suffering from multiple diseases. He was 68.

As he left us silently, he left behind a legacy of a superstar referee that many of the current generation may not know. But for those who have grown up watching domestic football from the 1970s to early 1990s, Aziz was the most decorated referee the country has ever produced.

His courage and determination in domestic football, especially when it came to the Dhaka derby involving Abahani and Mohammedan at that time, was discussed in the same breath as the game itself.

His iron-fisted handling of the game in that volatile atmosphere in front of over-capacity crowds at the Bangabandhu National Stadium is still fresh in the memories of regular visitors to the country's 'theatre of dreams'.

He was jeered as theta (stubborn) Aizya (Aziz) from the stands. It was actually a compliment for his courage. Be it an important game or a less significant fixture, or any game he was conducting across the country, he was never too far from the centre of attention.

His popularity as a referee was unmatched. Many letters he received from his followers were addressed just to "Referee Aziz, Gandaria".

"Still, we got those letters at our address from the postman," said Aziz's daughter Maksudah Aziz.

She also said how troublesome those years were for her father. "My father used to ride a Vespa. Before every big game he brought us back home from school early as a safety measure. My father received many unnamed letters before every big game with various kinds of threats, like we will be attacked at night and so on," Maksudah said while recalling those heady days.

Referee Mozaffar Hossain often acted as one of the two deputies (linesmen) in those big games. "He was an extraordinary person. Before a big game he always told us don't be afraid, I'm with you. Let's do our job," Mozaffar Hossain told this reporter on Wednesday. Referee Rafiqul Islam was one of the few who tried to emulate Aziz. "I have always tried to follow his style, like rushing to the spot immediately after a foul," said Rafique.

He however admitted that he never

dared to return objects hurled from the stands as Aziz often did. Referee Mahabubur Rahman Mukul said there are many stories that speak of Aziz's courage.

"Fans advanced up aggressively towards him when he was conducting a game in Mymensingh. But he stood firm against all odds with a flag stand in hand. Besides, as a FIFA referee he also conducted games with distinction and there were instances when he overruled the referee's wrong decision as his deputy," said Mukul, adding that Aziz was a true follower of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and his ideology. Aziz was not just a referee but also a very good organiser. As an officer of Agrani Bank, he played a key role in making its football and cricket teams popular.

What was perhaps lesser known was his more defining contribution as a physical sports teacher before becoming



a banker. Amiinul Islam, one of the finest athletes and the sole centurion in the country's first-ever Test, knows it better than most.

"Aziz sir was our physical teacher in Gandaria High School. It was the '80s and our annual sports ran for seven days at that time. He was the key person and my brother was with him during that festivity, from which athletes like us emerged. Those sporting activities in schools and localities acted as the base for producing quality sportspeople," Amiinul told the Daily Star from Melbourne.

"Unfortunately, that is missing now. His honesty earned him everyone's respect. He has always been our family friend. With his departure the country has lost a great sports personality," Amiinul concluded.



HA-DU-DU

The traditional games are not completely disappearing from rural Bangladesh as a game of ha-du-du was held in Domtari village in Khansama Upazila of Dinajpur district in front of a huge crowd yesterday. A festive mood prevailed at the venue with the vibrant presence of people of all ages.

PHOTO: KONGKON KARMAKER

Junior Hockey deferred

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangabandhu Al-Arafa Islami Bank Junior (U-21) Asia Cup hockey has been deferred by five months and will now take place in June.

Bangladesh Hockey Federation (BHF) was supposed to host the tournament in January next year.

"As the youth and sports ministry don't want to permit hosting international tournament this year in fear of the second wave of coronavirus, we decided to push the tournament till June," BHF acting general secretary Mohammad Yousof said.

QUIZ CONTEST

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QUIZ - 07
Which is the right location for STAR Cineplex Mohakhali Branch?

WINNERS LIST OF QUIZ - 06

1. Ahsanul Kabir, Bhatara
2. Abeer Hasan Chisty, Uttara
3. Al-Amin Shykat, Dhaka University
4. Asmaul Salim, Khilgaon
5. Yeasir Arifat, West Madartek
6. Fahmida Begum, Gulshan
7. Aqib Zaid, Mohammadpur
8. Md. Shantto Khan, Tejgaon
9. Anisa Khanom, Tejgaon
10. Purnava Siddika, Aftabnagar