

A MAKESHIFT GOLF COURSE!

Jamal Hossain Mollah, the second-most successful golfer of Bangladesh, has been reduced to training at this sandy field inside the Bashundhara Residential Area as golf clubs in the capital have remained closed since mid-March due to the coronavirus pandemic. With no realistic hope of any event in the country this year, Jamal is making use of this makeshift course to prepare for two PGTI events in Chandigarh early next month where the two-time PGTI-winner is likely to be accompanied by Mohammad Sayum and Siddikur Rahman, the country's best golfer.



PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Barca, United make it two from two

AGENCIES



Ousmane Dembele struck early and Lionel Messi converted a late penalty as Barcelona won 2-0 at Juventus in the Champions League on Wednesday after Alvaro Morata had three goals disallowed for offside for the Serie A side.

Manchester United, too, made it two out of two as substitute Marcus Rashford scored a hat-trick to thrash Leipzig 5-0 at home, while Chelsea brushed aside Krasnodar 4-0 in Russia. A wave of second-half goals also earned wins for Paris Saint-Germain — after losing Neymar early to injury — Borussia Dortmund and Sevilla.

WINNING IS THE BEST ANSWER FOR MESSI AND CO

Dembele struck with a deflected shot in the 14th minute and Messi capped a fluid display by firing home the 14th penalty of his Champions League career to seal Barca's first-ever win over Juventus in Turin and leave them top of Group G with six points from two games.

However, the club was rocked when club president Josep Maria Bartomeu resigned on Tuesday to avoid facing a vote of no confidence. But midfielder Sergi Roberto said that the win away to Juventus was the perfect reply to the club's boardroom crisis. "The best answer was today's game. We want to win titles and matches as we showed today," he said. "It's all in the past, we're concentrating on our job."

Coach Ronald Koeman agreed that his team had tried to put the boardroom issue out of their minds. "I think we have to concentrate on the sporting side," he said. "It doesn't affect us and it doesn't worry me. We put our energy into football."

ANOTHER USEFUL LESSON FOR PIRLO

Juventus, still missing Cristiano Ronaldo after he tested positive for COVID-19 two weeks ago and still rebuilding under Andrea Pirlo, failed to record a shot on target despite Morata's efforts. "This defeat will help us to grow," said Pirlo.

RASHFORD NETS RAPID HAT-TRICK

Having won at PSG in their opening game, United are now in a commanding position

in Group H and are beginning to look like a squad with real strength in depth. Rashford came off the bench with 27 minutes left and led United to an impressive victory. He is only the second United player to score a hat-trick as a substitute after his manager Ole Gunnar Solskjaer did so against Nottingham Forest in 1999.

Ex-United defender Rio Ferdinand said on BT Sport: "Wow. Marcus Rashford is on fire. It's like being in the playground with a sixth former against the younger boys and he just bullies everyone — too quick and too strong."

MBAPPE ASSISTS, KEAN SCORES

In the same group, PSG overcame a sluggish start to beat Turkish side Istanbul Basaksehir 2-0 away as Moise Kean scored twice and Kylian Mbappe grabbed two assists, securing their first win in this



season's group stage. Thomas Tuchel's side suffered an injury blow, however, as Brazil forward Neymar was forced off in the 26th minute due to a thigh problem. "Towards the end of the first half we suffered. But we played a good game and held out until the end," Kean said.

CHELSEA MAKES IT LOOK EASY

Chelsea kickstarted their campaign by coasting to a 4-0 win at Krasnodar on Wednesday thanks to goals from Callum Hudson-Odoi, Timo Werner, Hakim Ziyech and a late strike from Christian Pulisic.

"We're very happy, four goals scored and none conceded. We had to take a bit of pressure early in the second but I liked lots of things about the way we played," said Lampard.



[Above] Barcelona superstar Lionel Messi celebrates his late penalty during their 2-0 win over Juventus in the Champions League encounter in Turin on Wednesday. [Below] Marcus Rashford left the pitch after an incredible night as his stunning 16-minute hat-trick, the fastest by a Champions League substitute, gave Manchester United a 5-0 win over RB Leipzig.

PHOTO: TWITTER

'Pay cut will have a big impact'

After a seven-month gap due to the coronavirus pandemic, the new football season is around the corner with the month-long transfer window of the Bangladesh Premier League all set to open on November 1. The footballers accepted a big pay cut and will get just 35 percent of the new contracts, which are similar to last season's. The Daily Star's Anisur Rahman talks to rookie national midfielder Nazmul Islam Rasel of Bangladesh Police FC to learn about the players' perception of the transfers and their preparation for the new season.

DS: How do you feel about the upcoming transfers?

NIR: Alhamdulillah, it is a big thing that football, which is our bread and butter, is getting back on the field after a long gap. From that perspective, we are all happy but we are also bearing the pain of getting just 35 percent payment due to the pandemic.

DS: How have you taken the matter of the 35 percent payment and do you think it will have any impact on a majority of the players?

NIR: As we play football, we have to accept it. Only a few national players are offered good pay, ranging between Tk 40 lakh and Tk 50 lakh per season but most players receive much less. We should think of how upcoming players will bear their expenses with just 35 percent, which I think will be less for us.

DS: Will the players have to make any adjustment with payment this season?

NIR: In the Bangladesh perspective, the players have to adjust because a majority of footballers are not paid well, and now they have to make do with just 35 percent of their pay. So they can't contribute to their families like they used to. They also have



to compromise on sporting gear. Suppose a player needs five pairs of boots... now they have to rely on two to three pairs, which costs nearly Tk 25,000 per pair. Besides, a player also needs additional food and gym facilities but they have to compromise with those as well.

DS: Are you satisfied being a professional footballer?

NIR: I started playing professional football in 2011 with a salary of Tk 5 lakh per season and that had risen to Tk 25 lakh in 2019. I am really happy about my career. I think anyone can take up football as a profession but

those who want to be footballers in the future have to work hard to reach a certain stage.

DS: How have you been spending time during the pandemic? Do you have any idea about other players' work plans during the pandemic?

NIR: I have been doing an individual training plan, prepared by national team's head coach Jamie Day and followed it at home during lockdown because we were not allowed to practise at the district stadium or the gymnasium. Players who were outside the national team tried to resume practice after lockdown lifted.

DS: Is the upcoming season going to be challenging for players, who were out of action for seven months?

NIR: We will of course face a challenge because players are not fully physically fit and they need more time to get fit this time around. I think the standard of play will gradually improve as the season progresses.

DS: What do players want from the clubs to prevent transmission of covid-19?

NIR: More or less everyone is worried about covid-19, but we have to play football in this situation and we have to be cautious. We want clubs to ensure a good training and accommodation environment by enforcing strict health guidelines.

Green gets nod for India series

REUTERS, MELBOURNE

Western Australia all-rounder Cameron Green has been named in Australia's squad for the limited overs series against India after producing some sparkling form in the domestic Sheffield Shield.

Described this week by former captain Greg Chappell as the best young player since Ricky Ponting, the 21-year-old talent scored 197 against New South Wales last week.

"Cameron's domestic form has been outstanding and he has carried it through for Western Australia this summer," selectors chairman Trevor Hohns said in a media release on Thursday.

Green is joined in the 18-man squad by all-rounder Moises Henriques, who earns his first callup in three years. Australia play India in three one-day internationals in Sydney and Canberra from Nov. 27, followed by three Twenty20's from Dec. 4.

Squad: Aaron Finch (captain), Sean Abbott, Ashton Agar, Alex Carey, Pat Cummins, Cameron Green, Josh Hazlewood, Moises Henriques, Marnus Labuschagne, Glenn Maxwell, Daniel Sams, Kane Richardson, Steven Smith, Mitchell Starc, Marcus Stoinis, Matthew Wade, David Warner, Adam Zampa

A life of excess : Maradona turns 60 in isolation

AFP, BUENOS AIRES

Notorious for his wild lifestyle, Argentina great Diego Maradona turns 60 on Friday in far more sober circumstances sheltered in self-isolation to protect him from the coronavirus pandemic.

Having suffered two heart attacks in the last 20 years and contracted hepatitis, Maradona's precaution after a bodyguard started displaying coronavirus symptoms earlier this week is understandable.

A life of excesses with cocaine and alcohol have taken their toll on the mercurial talent's health. "It was impossible that this lad would turn out well," said former international and Boca Juniors team-mate Hugo Perotti said earlier this year. Perotti was referring to Maradona's early fame that set him on a path to brilliance, glory but also excess and almost tragedy.

Born in a poor Buenos Aires neighborhood on October 30, 1960, Diego Armando Maradona quickly marked himself out as special talent. Since then this charismatic and contradictory man has fallen many times only to rise again from the abyss, and always in his unique and

inimitable way.

Defiant and ingenious, macho, a loyal friend and spiteful enemy, Maradona has always been magnetic. "At 18 he couldn't walk around in Africa. A plane was stuck because the runway was full of people," said Perotti. "It was in 1981, when there was no internet, mobile phones, nothing. He surpassed every human and normal barrier. And I think he paid the consequences of all this."

IDOLIZED LIKE A GOD

First came the highs. Having made his name helping Boca win the Argentine title, he earned a move to Catalan giants Barcelona at just 21. At 25 he — practically singlehandedly — dragged Argentina to World Cup glory at Mexico 86.

In the quarter-final against England he displayed both the devil in him, and his genius, first scoring a goal with his hand — which he later dubbed the "Hand of God" — and then embarked on a mazy run, bamboozling the England defence to score one of the greatest goals in World Cup history.

Back in his homeland he was idolized like a god, to the point

that a group of fans created the Church of Maradona in devotion to him. The next year he would lead ambitious Italians Napoli to their first Serie A title; a feat he would repeat three years later.

"I would like to always watch Diego, dribbling for all eternity," sang the rock band Ratonés

in the final. The next year his Napoli career ended in disgrace after he was handed a 15-month ban for taking cocaine.

The 1994 World Cup in the United States was supposed to be something of a resurrection for Maradona, but instead he was sent home in disgrace after failing



Paranoics in one of dozens of songs dedicated to Maradona.

'THEY CUT OFF MY LEGS' Maradona broke down in floods of tears in 1990 after he failed to inspire an ill-disciplined Argentina to retain the World Cup, losing 1-0 to West Germany

another dope test. "They cut off my legs," Maradona complained. Realistically, although he played on for a couple of years back at Boca, his playing career was as good as over. As a coach he never enjoyed the same success, and certainly did not have the same flair.

RECKLESS LIFE

His coaching career has been regularly interrupted by bouts of ill-health, mostly self-inflicted. In 2001, four years after his retirement, Maradona addressed a packed Bombonera — the home ground of his beloved Boca Juniors — and alluded to his addictions: "I've made mistakes and paid for it but the ball was never soiled."

That was a year after he suffered his first heart-attack while on holiday in the Uruguayan seaside resort Punta del Este. In 2004, weighing well over 100-kilograms (220 pounds) despite standing only 1.65-meters (5ft 5in), he suffered another that almost killed him.

It sparked a radical decision to undergo gastric bypass surgery to lose 50kg but it wasn't the end of his troubles as alcohol abuse saw him taken to hospital twice in 2007.

But he never stayed down for long, nor out of the headlines, particularly due to his friendships with various prominent left-wing leaders in Latin America, such as the late Cuban revolutionary leader Fidel Castro, or Venezuela's Hugo Chavez and extra-marital affairs.



Pakistan take a further step out of the wilderness as international cricket hosts when they welcome Zimbabwe for their first ODI in a year today, with England and South Africa both lining up tours. The three one-day internationals, when Babar Azam will debut as ODI captain, are also Pakistan's first in the new World Cup Super League, the qualification process for the 50-over World Cup in 2023. In the 13-team World Cup Super League, seven sides plus hosts India will qualify for the World Cup. All teams will play four home and four away series, with each match worth 10 points. Pakistan's three ODIs and three T20Is against Zimbabwe will be played behind closed doors in Rawalpindi.

PHOTO: TWITTER