

PREMIERSHIP

Rampant Reds crush Wigan

Football

REUTERS, London

Wayne Rooney scored twice and Rio Ferdinand grabbed his first goal for Manchester United in a 4-0 rout of Wigan Athletic which pushed the Old Trafford club up to second in the Premier League on Wednesday.

In the night's other game, West Ham United beat Everton 2-1 at Goodison Park.

The victory by Manchester United, which took their tally to 34 points from 16 games, helped Alex Ferguson's men leapfrog Liverpool into second place, nine points behind leaders Chelsea.

Promoted Wigan, on 25 points, dropped one place to eighth.

"It was an important win for us tonight," Ferguson told Sky Sports. "We produced some great football."

"The second goal settled us down and the confidence came back into the team."

"The only thing we can do is keep good, consistent form until the end of the season and if Chelsea slip up we want to be the team that's nearest to them."

United ended a difficult seven-day spell by giving their title rivals a powerful reminder of their goalscoring abilities.

Knocked out of the Champions League a week ago and held to a 1-1 home draw by Everton last Sunday, United made the early running against Wigan and it came as no surprise when the home team took the lead through Rio Ferdinand who headed in a right-wing corner from Ryan Giggs on the half hour.

Rooney was denied by a fine save from Wigan's outstanding goalkeeper Mike Pollitt before the England striker produced a typically clever strike to make it 2-0 in the 34th minute.

After wriggling his way past two defenders in the box, Rooney unleashed a fierce low drive with his

left foot to record his seventh league goal of the season.

Rooney missed an open goal six minutes into the second half, hitting the bar from four metres with Pollitt out of position.

But the former Everton favourite made no mistake in the 55th minute, lifting the ball over the onrushing keeper after being sent clear by Ruud van Nistelrooy.

Van Nistelrooy added the fourth goal from the penalty spot after he was adjudged to have been brought down by Pollitt.

Paul Jewell's 200th league game in charge of Wigan proved a less than memorable occasion for the manager.

Alan Mahon came close to scoring for the visitors, twice forcing full-length saves from Edwin van der

Sar in Wigan's first ever game against United.

At Goodison, James Beattie gave Everton a ninth-minute lead before West Ham hit back through David Weir (own goal) and Bobby Zamora.

West Ham rose to seventh in the table while Everton stayed 15th.



PHOTO: AFP

Wigan Athletic captain Matt Jackson (R) blocks a Wayne Rooney right-footer during their English Premiership fixture against Manchester United at Old Trafford on Wednesday.

Munna named as National Sports Award winner

BDNEWS, Dhaka

Former Bangladesh football captain Monem Munna has been named as a winner of the National Sports Awards for 2005.

The government on Thursday announced the 2005 National Sports Awards that included the country's football icon Munna, who died on February 12 this year.

Munna, who ruled the pitch like a king in the 80s and 90s, breathed his last just at the age of 39.

The other recipients are Golam Ambia and Nazrul Islam Rumi (athletics), major (ret'd) Shahabuddin Chakladar (hockey), Setara Begum (swimming), Biddiut Kumar Roy (weightlifting), Mahbub-ul Alam (judo), Ziaur Rahman (kabaddi), Siddiqur Rahman (golf), SA Sultan and Shah Nurul Kabir (organisers).

Div I cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Jewel hit an unbeaten 96 as Young Pegasus B registered a comfortable six-wicket victory over Surjo Tarun Club in the First Division Cricket League at the Dhaka University ground yesterday.

Pegasus scored 211-4 in 46 overs in reply to Surjo Tarun's 210 all out in 50 overs.

In the day's other match, Azad Sporting Club scored a five-wicket victory over Dhaka Mariners at the City Club ground.

Azad rode on a 72-run knock by Nabab to post 225-5 in 46 overs in reply to Mariners' 224 all out in 50 overs.

WB fuming

FROM PAGE 16 Film stars and eminent personalities of the city also voiced their protests against the coach and the chief selector.

Soumitra Chatterjee, hero of many of Satyajit Ray's films, told a press conference it was the saddest treatment that a national hero had ever received.

"It's an act of treachery to cricket that has polluted sport's atmosphere," he said.

West Bengal Urban Development Minister Asoke Bhattacharya said Ganguly was a victim of the Indian cricket board's politics.

"There is no logic in dropping him after his performance in the Delhi Test," he said.



Did U Know?

Sachin Tendulkar has so far scored seven centuries in 15 Tests against Sri Lanka - the most by any player against the islanders.

Akmal scripts big Pak win

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second match at Lahore by seven wickets, laid the cornerstone for a big Pakistan total by giving them a flying start of 74 with Salman Butt (29).

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard of the third limited-overs day-night international between Pakistan and England at the National Stadium in Karachi on Thursday:

PAKISTAN	
Butt c Flintoff b Plunkett	29
Akmal c Plunkett b Collingwood	109
Younis c Jones b Plunkett	0
Yousuf run out	68
Afridi run out	31
Inzamam b Flintoff	45
Razzaq not out	51
Malik not out	1
Extras: (b-5, lb-1, w-13)	19
Total: (For 6 wkts in 50 overs)	353

Fall of wickets: 1-74, 2-84, 3-188, 4-234, 5-272, 6-350.

Did not bat: Sami, Akhtar, Naved

Super-sub: Arafat for Yousof

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Flintoff	10	1	57	1
Anderson	10	0	72	0
Harmison	8	0	62	0
Plunkett	7	0	61	2
Collingwood	8	0	58	1
Blackwell	5	0	25	0
Solanki	2	0	12	0

ENGLAND

Trescothick c Inzamam b Naved	22
Prior run out	2
Strauss lbw b Sami	23
Solanki c Younis b Naved	0
Flintoff b Arafat	36
Collingwood c Butt b Malik	19
Jones c Arafat b Afridi	14
Blackwell c Sami b Afridi	14
Bell not out	37
Plunkett b Malik	7

Harmison c Afridi b Malik

Extras: (lb-7, nb-1, w-5)

Total: (All out in 42 overs)

Fall of wickets: 1-22, 2-40, 3-40, 4-79, 5-101, 6-122, 7-140, 8-145, 9-186

Super-sub: Bell for Anderson

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Akhtar	5	0	23	0
Naved	7	1	31	2
Sami	5	1	18	1
Arafat	5	0	31	1
Afridi	10	0	42	2
Malik	9	1	29	3
Razzaq	1	0	7	0

Result: Pakistan won by 165 runs and take 2-1 lead in the 5-ODI series.

Man-of-the-match: Kamran Akmal.

Toss: England.

Umpires: Rudi Koertzen and Tony Hill.

MSC outplay Abahani

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Away at the Comilla Stadium, Al Shahriar led Sonargaon from the front to register a massive 120-run victory over lowly Orient Sporting Club.

The dashing right-hander struck 73 and Nayeem Islam made 64 as the newcomers, who suffered a 57-run defeat against DOHS, scored 232-9 in 50 overs.

In reply, Orient were bundled out for 112 in 41 overs. Mohammad Rafique was the most successful bowler with 3-15.

Biman thrived on half-centuries by Javed Omar (64) and Shahriar Hossain (76) to register a 42-run win against Agrani Bank at BKSP. Biman scored 214 all out in 49.5 overs while the bankers, in reply, finished managed 172-7.

In another match at BKSP, Victoria amassed 282-3 in 50 overs, the highest innings total in the League so far, against Indira Road KC, who suffered a 79-run defeat.

Pacer Wasquruni Palash picked up four wickets for 46 runs to dismiss Indira Road for 203 in 44.5 overs.

Pakistani Jaffar Kuraisi was the top scorer for Victoria with an unbeaten 72

while Sajjadul Hasan added 62 and Nasiruddin Faruque 54.

The league will resume on December 18 with six matches billed for the day.

SCORES IN BRIEF

MOHAMMEDAN: 245-7 in 50 overs (Sharma 60, Bashar 4, Dhiman 23, Wasel 32, Mashud 49 not out, Hannan 19, Nadif 33, extras 20; Debabrata 2-20, Hasan 2-39).

ABAHANI: 184-9 in 50 overs (Shadab 14, Hasanuzzaman 21, Faisal 47, Hasan 34, extras 22; Nadif 2-27).

Result: Mohammedan won by 61 runs.

BROTHERS: 244-9 in 50 overs (G Salahuddin 44, Rashedul 52, Ehsanul 46, Hanif 11, Arafat Salahuddin 21, Sadid 24, Enamul 12, extras 18; Rabiul 2-50, Sajju 3-60, Kapali 2-38, Farid 1-36).

CITY CLUB: 170-9 in 50 overs (Rajin 24, Nafees 47, Tushar 6, Taibu 1, Kapali 17, Farid 17, Ashiquar 29 not out, extras 22; Enamul 2-13, Sunny 2-22, Hanif 1-33, G.Salahuddin 2-6).

Result: Brothers Union won by 74 runs.

OLD DOHS: 229 all out in 49.3 overs

(Nazimuddin 65, Tikolo 56, Akram 39, Fahim 3-44, Imtazur 3-45).

KALABAGAN: 170 all out in 49.4 overs (Tareq Mehmood 70, extras 14; Tikolo 4-19).

Result: Old DOHS won by 59 runs.

VICTORIA: 282-3 in 50 overs (Mabud 47, Sajjadul 62, Faruque 54, Jaffar 72 not out, extras 33).

INDIRA ROAD: 203 all out in 44.5 overs (Arif 43, Nazmul 45, Mowla 34, extras 7; Palash 4-48, Jaffar 3-44).

Result: Victoria won by 79 runs.

BIMAN: 214 all out in 49.5 overs (Javed 64, Shahriar 76, extras 28; Rezwan 5-48).

AGRANI BANK: 172-7 in 50 overs (Imtiaz 31, Rezwan 34, extras 10; Sharif 2-32, Jamal 2-20).

Result: Biman won by 42 runs.

SONARGAON: 232-9 in 50 overs (Nayeem 64, Al-Shahriar 73, extras 10, Nazmul Islam 3-58).

ORIENT: 112 all out in 41 overs (Masum 45, extras 13; Rafique 3-15).

Result: Sonargaon won by 120 runs.



PHOTO: COURTESY

Vice-chancellor of BRAC University Professor Jamilur Reza Chowdhury hands over a prize to a winner of the varsity's indoor games tournament during the prizegiving ceremony on Tuesday.

First Aus-SA Test begins today

AFP, Perth

Australia are worried about losing a Test series at home and are under enormous pressure to perform after the Ashes defeat in England, South African captain Graeme Smith said here Thursday.

Speaking on the eve of the first Test that begins on Friday, Smith said his players had taken heart from the Australians' reaction to the so-called "war of words" leading up to the match.

"Even our comments, which were light-hearted in the beginning of the series, which were that it was obvious to see their middle-order is inexperienced in international cricket, has created large reaction," Smith said.

"So that tells us in our mind that they're also scared of losing in Australia."

"There's massive pressure on them and we've taken heart from that and it's certainly given us confidence going forward into the Test match."

Smith, who was clearly pumped-up for the match, denied his team had taken part in any 'sledding' before the Test despite widespread coverage of verbal barbs between the two sides.

"We haven't made one comment about sledding," he said.

Australian captain Ricky Ponting said he had a good relationship with Smith and did not read anything into the exchanges ahead of the three-Test series.

"There's been a lot said and built up about this series already," Ponting said. "There's been a few things said about off the field leading into this Test match but I think that's finished now."

He said it was not his style to criticise opposing teams but added that his team had been motivated by comments from the South African camp.

"I'm not one for coming out and making statements about opposition players or anything like that -- it's just not the way I go about playing cricket," he said.

"A lot of our players are like that and it's pretty apparent this week that a lot of the South Africans don't mind it either."

LIKELY TEAMS

AUSTRALIA: Ricky Ponting (captain), Matthew Hayden, Justin Langer, Brad Hodge, Michael Hussey, Andrew Symonds, Adam Gilchrist, Shane Warne, Brett Lee, Nathan Bracken, Glenn McGrath, Stuart Clark (12th man)

SOUTH AFRICA: Graeme Smith (captain), AB de Villiers, Herschelle Gibbs, Jacques Kallis, Ashwell Prince, Justin Kemp, Mark Boucher, Shaun Pollock, Makhaya Ntini, Andre Nel, Charlie Lange-veldt, Jacques Rudolph (12th man)

Self-pressure

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important for me and that's how I think you get inspired because everybody would see what you are in your next match. That's why I want to give my best in every game.

"Bangladesh are an experienced side. I have played a lot against them. They have settled well and looked really impressive in the semifinal. We are also picking up, but maybe not enough. We have to do better to beat them."

Replying to a question, the Indian captain said he does not feel the pressure of stardom.

"When people give you pressure that's a different thing. I feel pressure on myself because any player who does not feel that can't perform. I don't bother about expectation of the crowd, but self-pressure is self-help."

Baichung looked rusty in the first three matches and he admitted it.

"It is my first tournament after three months and I am not fully fit. I think I can improve from this tournament only."

Booters aim

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neutralising Baichung would be the key. "He makes the difference. Our centre-backs (Sujan and Rajani) can do it and also, our recent record is better against them," he said.

Hassan Al Mamun, who captained the team in the 2003 final against Maldives in Rajani's absence, said that one needs luck to win a title.

"We have been playing together for long and India have not done well against this batch. With a little luck, we can repeat that."

Star goalkeeper Aminul was thinking of nothing but winning. "I think we don't have to make plans for them. It's India who would be planning to stop us."

"Our hard work has brought us this far. We have to harvest on it now," said playmaker Arman.

Matiur Munna's spectacular golden goal won Bangladesh the semifinal over India when the two teams met in the SAFF Championship in 2003 and the indefatigable midfielder felt they can't look back.

"It's a new game but I feel we will get the local support and the final would be in our favour."

Keane joins Celtic

Football

THE GURDIAN

Roy Keane's long-cherished dream of ending his career in the famous green and white hoops of Celtic was realised on Thursday when the former Manchester United skipper signed for the Scottish club.

The 34-year-old has agreed a contract that will keep him at the Glasgow club until June 2007, reportedly accepting a deal worth up to 70,000 pounds a week less than he earned at Old Trafford.

"It is a great move for me. It was important I took my time over the last three or four weeks," said Keane, as he was unveiled at a press conference. "It has been a strange few weeks but this is a great move for me."

"There has been a lot of speculation in recent weeks over where I was going but I gave every club a chance and I spoke to a lot of managers. I spoke to Madrid up as far as Tuesday and Madrid explained to me they were waiting a week or so. That was fair enough but it was about time I made a decision. Having spoken to the manager [Gordon Strachan], I thought this is the club for me. I have met one or two of the players and feel this is where I belong."

After leaving Manchester United following a bust-up with manager Sir Alex Ferguson last month, the Irishman held talks with a host of clubs in England and Spain before deciding

to join the Scottish league leaders.

While some fans have expressed concern that the arrival of a notoriously prickly character could trigger discontent in the dressing room, most have welcomed Keane, recognising him as one of the most inspirational players of his generation.

Celtic chief executive Peter Lawwell insists the whole club are behind Keane's acquisition. "We are absolutely delighted - the board, the management and the players. We wanted him and eventually got him -



ROY KEANE

total unity across the club, no divisions. He has signed an 18-month contract which we might think will be an initial period. He might be here a bit longer," said Lawwell.

Fans hopeful of a trouble-free WC



REUTERS, Hamburg

Tens of thousands of ticketless fans will travel to next year's World Cup in Germany from England, the Netherlands and other countries with a reputation for trouble.

Beer drinking will be the number one pastime of many, the black market in tickets will flourish and vast public viewing areas will see fans of rival teams meeting unsegregated in huge numbers across the country.

It sounds like a recipe for the sort of hooliganism that blighted the World Cup in France in 1998 but representatives from fan groups are urging authorities not to fear the worst.

They believe trouble can be avoided at the June 9 to July 9 soccer tournament if police and organisers learn the lessons of the recent past.

"We're convinced that if we welcome people in Germany like guests and look after the needs of fans then you create a much more secure atmosphere," Michael Gabriel of the German KOS fan project told Reuters this week.

It is perfectly understandable that hooliganism is one of the major fears for police and local organisers, after the problems in 1998, the last time the World Cup was held in Europe.

Then, a French policeman was beaten almost to death by German hooligans and English fans rioted in Marseille.

In Germany next year, 100,000 fans from England are expected, while ticketless supporters will cross from bordering countries such as the Netherlands, Poland and France.

Police union chief Konrad Freiberg has already warned that

the resources are not in place to secure the thousands of public viewing sites that will go up across the country.

So what should the police do to ensure order?

According to the fan experts meeting in Hamburg, Germany should copy the low-key policing that helped to ensure a trouble-free European Championship in Portugal last year, while an alcohol ban should not even be considered.

"Most fans are against violence," said England's Kevin Miles, international spokesman for the Football Supporters' Federation (FSF). "Most fans think that having no ticket and drinking large amounts are fine."

Groups such as the KOS in Germany, the FSF in England and Euro Support of the Netherlands set up fan embassies around the host country, providing information on cheap accommodation, places to eat and drink, other entertainment on offer and advice if things go wrong.

Banning orders in Britain prevented several thousand of the worst England hooligans travelling to Portugal for Euro 2004 and the system will be in place again for Germany next year.

Michael Endler, head of the German police unit monitoring hooliganism, praised the move this week, saying it was the most effective way of dealing with the hooligan programme.

For Miles, that sort of comment proves the value of the banning orders in changing attitudes.

"Banning orders serve to relax the foreign police," Miles said. "They think the worst of them won't be here."

"There's no reason for particular concern," Endler expressed his confidence.

The fan groups share that confidence and are looking for-

Mexico beat Hungary

REUTERS, Mexico City

Veteran defender Claudio Suarez made a record-equalling 173rd international appearance as Mexico beat Hungary 2-0 on Wednesday, their first win over a European side since the 2002 World Cup.

Striker Francisco Fonseca and defender Joel Huiqui scored in each half before a 25,000 crowd at the Chasefield stadium in Phoenix, Arizona, against opponents who played almost the entire game with 10 men.

Suarez, three days short of his 37th birthday, started the game and played 69 minutes as he equalled the record of Saudi Arabia goalkeeper Mohamed Al-Deayea.

The game swung Mexico's way in the 10th minute when Hungary had Denes Rosa sent off for an ugly challenge on Olvera.

Fonseca opened the scoring in the 32nd minute, heading home from close range for his 15th goal in 23 internationals since his debut last year.

Huiqui added the second six minutes after halftime when he fired home from six metres following a free kick on the left for his first international goal.

Liverpool in World Club C'ship final

AFP, Yokohama

Liverpool overwhelmed Deportivo Saprissa 3-0 Thursday to book a place in the final of the World Club Championship and extend their winning streak to eight games and a record 11 clean sheets.

A brace from Peter Crouch and a stunning Steven Gerrard volley shattered any dreams the Purple Monster, as the CONCACAF winners are known, had of playing against South American champions Sao Paulo on Sunday.

"At 2-0 we were thinking we need the third so they don't get a chance. After the third it was easier. Our idea was another clean sheet so I am happy," said Liverpool manager Rafael Benitez.