



Brazil striker Julio Batista holds a lion cub at a reserve near Pretoria on Friday. Brazil take on Italy in a crucial Confederations Cup match tonight.

Tevez set to leave MU

Football

AFP, London

Argentinian forward Carlos Tevez will leave English Premier League champions Manchester United, the club confirmed on Saturday.

Tevez's two-year loan deal was set to expire this month because United have been unable to agree a transfer fee with the group of investors who own the economic rights to the Argentine forward.

United offered Tevez a new five-year deal that would have made him one of the highest-paid players at Old Trafford, but said he turned it down.

A statement from Manchester United said: "Following contact received from Carlos Tevez's advisors last night, in advance of the

deadline the Club set for concluding negotiations, Manchester United announces that Carlos will not be signing a new contract with the Club.

"The Club agreed to pay the option price of 25.5 million pounds and offered Carlos a five-year contract which would have made him one of its highest paid players.

"Disappointingly however, his advisors informed the Club that, despite the success he has enjoyed during one of the Club's most successful periods, he does not wish to continue playing for Manchester United.

"The Club would like to thank Carlos for his services over the last two seasons and wishes him good luck for the future."

The decision paves the

way for Tevez, who has been linked to a number of top flight clubs in England including Liverpool and Manchester City, to relaunch his career in the Premier League. He has also been linked with a move to Real Madrid.

Despite playing a leading role in United's success last season the Argentine complained of not playing enough. He was regularly used as a substitute.

Tevez last put on a United strip for the Champions League final in Rome, but had to watch from the bench as Barcelona took a 1-0 half-time lead.

Ferguson eventually sent the Argentine forward on as a half-time substitute but the Spanish giants went on to score another goal to win 2-0.

FORMULA ONE Vettel grabs pole

AFP, Silverstone

German Sebastian Vettel grabbed the fourth pole position of his career on Saturday when he survived a powerful challenge from his Red Bull teammate Australian Mark Webber in qualifying for the British Grand Prix.

The 21-year-old tyro, who shot to prominence by taking pole and winning last year's Italian Grand Prix with the unsung Toro Rosso team, clocked a best time of one minute and 19.509 seconds in the top-ten shootout.

This lifted him clear of veteran Brazilian Rubens Barrichello in a Brawn GP car who took second ahead of Webber, who pushed hard to seize his first career pole. For Vettel it was a second pole in succession and his third this year.

Championship leading Briton Jenson Button in the second Brawn was sixth fastest after struggling for balance and tyre performance in the cold conditions.

Italian Jarno Trulli was fourth for Toyota and Japanese Kazuki Nakajima was fifth for Williams ahead of Button.

Vettel was out early on in the top-ten shootout Q3 and delivered a time of one minute and 20.863 seconds to go top for Red Bull before he was supplanted by Barrichello for Brawn GP and then Webber, who jumped clear by four-tenths of a second.

It was a hotly-contested session with little more than a second separating the top ten drivers midway through Q3 as they delayed briefly for fresh tyres in readiness for their final runs.

The Australian was unable to improve on his first hot lap and Barrichello and then Vettel took over at the top and despite giving it his all on his second run Webber had to settle for third.

On a cool and cloudy day, following overnight rain, the air temperature was only 16 degrees Celsius and the track temperature just 25 degrees.

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Jamie wants Xabi to stay

Football

AFP, Liverpool

Liverpool defender Jamie Carragher has pleaded with Spain midfielder Xabi Alonso to stay at Anfield.

Alonso has been linked with a 20 million pounds move to Real Madrid and has so far refused to rule out a switch to the Bernabeu.

Carragher knows Liverpool's American owners have suffered financial difficulties recently and could be willing to accept a big offer but the centre-back hopes Alonso will stay loyal to the Reds.

"He (Alonso) and Stevie Gerrard were probably our best two players last season. I think Stevie won Footballer of the Year, but if you asked the fans I think they would maybe say that Alonso was our best player last season so he is certainly someone we don't want to lose," Carragher told

Sky Sports News.

Carragher admits he is concerned that Alonso isn't the only player being touted for an Anfield exit. Alvaro Arbeloa is interesting Real, while Spanish goalkeeper Jose Reina has emerged as a target for Barcelona.

"I'm like any fan, I get excited about who we might bring in. The players are exactly the same as the man on the street, you pick up the paper hoping you are going to see you've signed someone," Carragher added.

"But there has been a bit of speculation about players moving on, so at the moment I'm hoping that doesn't happen rather than people come in. We have got a great side at the moment, and I'm sure the manager will make a couple of additions, but we don't want to lose anyone."

One player certain to remain at Liverpool despite reports of a transfer is Spain striker Fernando Torres, who is reportedly on Manchester

United's hit-list after they accepted a world record 80 million pounds bid from Real for Cristiano Ronaldo.

Carragher believes United will find it hard to replace Ronaldo and he expects Sir Alex Ferguson to buy several players to make up for losing the Portuguese winger.

"He makes a big difference to Manchester United, even though they have a lot of other great players, and I think he was the one for them," Carragher said.

"But I'm sure Sir Alex Ferguson knows what he is doing and to have 80 million pounds to go and spend, that's a lot of money. It will be difficult to replace Cristiano Ronaldo, but maybe they will do it a different way and get two or three players."

"It's difficult to replace that, but I'm sure they will sort it out. Hopefully they won't bring in someone as good as Ronaldo!"

ITALY V BRAZIL Lippi targets win

AFP, Pretoria

Italy coach Marcello Lippi has told his side they must show more initiative as the world champions prepare for a crucial clash with Brazil in the Confederations Cup on Sunday.

The Italians deviated from

the script in their upset 1-0 loss to Egypt in Johannesburg on Thursday to leave them needing a victory against the South American champions to keep

their tournament hopes alive.

They have three points in Group B, the same as Egypt who have a much easier task against the United States on the same day.

Brazil have six points after winning their opening two games with who goes through to the semi-final potentially being decided by goal difference.

"We are in a very difficult group, very different from the other group," said Lippi. Group A features Spain, Iraq, South Africa and New Zealand.

"We weren't very aggressive against Egypt," he added. "We didn't play like we had planned. When Egypt started to play and scored, it all unravelled and we stopped playing. We didn't go for the ball."

He knows they have a huge

task ahead of them against Dunga's team of superstars, aware that only a victory will do if they want to stay in the competition.

"We've simply got to win," he said. "We'll try to play positively from the first minute and try and take the initiative but we must also be prudent because the opponent is Brazil."

Italy goalkeeper Gianluigi Buffon said their problem was that they only picked up their game after conceding a goal, something he admitted must change against Brazil.

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their approach to matches, in that we often react only after moments of significance, like conceding a goal," he told reporters.

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"We must show that we can compete with one of the favourites for next year's World Cup."

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Bolt home burgled

AFP, Kingston

The home of triple Olympic champion Usain Bolt was burgled on Tuesday night while the Jamaican sprinter was competing in the Czech Republic, police revealed on Thursday.

The burglars entered the property in the St Andrew area of Kingston between midnight and four o'clock in the early hours of Wednesday morning.

Bolt's half-brother, Sadeke Bolt, was asleep in the house at the time.

The robbery was reported to the police by Sadeke Bolt and confirmed by Usain's mother, Jennifer.

"That's all they took," she said.

Bolt, the undisputed star of the 2008 Olympics in Beijing, was in action in the Czech city of Ostrava on Tuesday and set a year's best time of 9.77sec in the 100 metres.

Mellberg going to Olympiakos

AFP, Athens

Greek champions Olympiakos on Friday said that Swedish international defender Robinho declared that Brazil were just getting started.

"We played well (against the United States) but we want to play even better in the games ahead."

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