



ROBBING THE DEVILS: Bayern Munich winger Arjen Robben is ecstatic after scoring a stunning goal to take his side through in their Champions League quarterfinal against Manchester United at Old Trafford on Wednesday.

Robben breaks MU hearts

AFP, Manchester

Bayern Munich staged a stunning fightback to send 10-man Manchester United crashing out of the Champions League as Arjen Robben's late strike in the German side's 3-2 defeat earned a 4-4 aggregate draw which put them through to the semifinals on away goals.

Louis van Gaal's side, who led 2-1 from last week's quarterfinal first leg, looked dead and buried as Darron Gibson's strike and two fine finishes from Nani put United 4-2 ahead on aggregate before half-time at Old Trafford on Wednesday.

But Ivica Olic reduced the deficit just before the break and United defender Rafael da Silva gifted van Gaal's team a significant break when he foolishly earned a second yellow card early in the second half.

Bayern went for the kill and former Chelsea winger Robben's brilliant finish was enough to secure a semifinal showdown with French club Lyon and end

United's bid for a third successive final appearance.

After losing the lead in the Premier



MAN UNITED: Edwin van der Sar, Patrice Evra, Rio Ferdinand, Nemanja Vidic, Rafael da Silva, Michael Carrick (Dimitar Berbatov, 80), Nani, Darren Fletcher, Antonio Valencia, Darron Gibson (Ryan Giggs, 81), Wayne Rooney (John O'Shea, 55)

BAYERN MUNICH: Hans-Jorg Butt, Daniel van Buyten, Martin Demichelis, Philipp Lahm, Holger Badstuber, Franck Ribery, Arjen Robben (Hamit Altintop, 76), Mark van Bommel, Bastian Schweinsteiger, Ivica Olic (Danijel Pranjić, 85), Thomas Müller (Mario Gomez, 46)

League to Chelsea at the weekend, United are now in danger of ending the season with just the League Cup to show for their efforts.

With Dimitar Berbatov's lacklustre performance against Chelsea still fresh in the memory, perhaps it was no surprise that Ferguson was willing to risk Wayne Rooney as United tried to overturn a first leg deficit for only the second time in seven attempts in the Champions League.

While United had their star man back from an ankle injury, it was Republic of Ireland international Gibson who gave United a dream start in the third minute.

Rafael started the move by streaking away from Franck Ribery before picking out Rooney. The England forward laid off a perfect first-time pass into Gibson's path and, as the Bayern defenders backed off, the youngster lashed a fierce strike past flat-footed Bayern goalkeeper Hans-Jorg Butt for his first ever Champions League goal.

Bayern had barely recovered from that sucker-punch when they were hit by another blow as Nani doubled United's lead.

SEE PAGE 18 COL 2

Friendly soccer

SPORTS REPORTER

Dhaka Metropolitan XI beat touring Myanmar Army team by 1-0 in a friendly football match at the Army Stadium in Banani yesterday.

Earlier Bangladesh Army team played a 1-1 draw with the touring team at the same venue.

Ambassador of Myanmar to Bangladesh Phae Thann Oo, head of the visiting Myanmar Army delegation Major General Hla Shew and a large number of spectators witnessed the match.



Max & SuperSport2

Indian Premier League
Kings XI Punjab v Mumbai Indians
Live from 8:30pm

SuperSport3

Bundesliga
Monchengladbach v
Eintracht Frankfurt
Live from 12:30am (Saturday)



Bangladesh League

Beanibazar v Farashganj
Time: 5:00pm
Venue: Sylhet Stadium

Club Cup Hockey

Mariners v Police
Time: 2:30pm

Abahani v Mohammedan

Time: 4:00pm
Venue: Maulana Bhasani Hockey Stadium

Bracken out in the cold



CRICINFO, undated

The messages to Nathan Bracken telling him it's time to get a real job have been light-hearted, but he knows his mates are right. Bracken lost his Cricket Australia contract on Wednesday and will spend the winter without the security and status of the precious item he has owned for most of the past decade.

At 32, having overcome some serious knee operations, he is effectively a state player despite being ranked as high as No. 2 last year in the ICC's one-day list. Bracken was surprised by the decision, figuring his limited-overs talents would be relied on heavily in the next 12 months, but he has been over-run by a group of younger, fitter and faster bowlers.

He is not angry when he speaks about his omission and at times sounds like he is already in retirement, but he is definitely not stepping down. Just stepping back after five Tests and 116 ODIs, and beginning to think about what life might be like away from his bowling mark.

It doesn't mean he's taking the news well. "It's very disappointing to lose it," he told Cricinfo. "As David Hussey said in the paper, he enjoys proving people wrong. I'm in a position where I've done that before and it feels pretty good. I want to prove that me being ranked No. 1 in the world (in 2008) was no fluke, to show that I can get back there."

The cross from Andrew Hilditch and his selectors "changes things dramatically" for Bracken, who was planning to be at full fitness for the tour of the British Isles in June. He points out he was the one-day player of the year at the 2009 Allan Border Medal, but is realistic enough to know that if he heads to England during the winter it will be for the county Twenty20 competition.

"I thought this year, with the amount of one-day cricket and the World Cup in India, that would really improve my chances of getting a contract," he said. "The World Cup years are usually more in favour of the one-day players, but it didn't quite go through as I thought it might."

He has already turned down a T20 contract with Northamptonshire for the winter because it clashed with Australia's itinerary and his

SEE PAGE 18 COL 2

Chargers live another day

SPORTS REPORTER



beat Royal Challengers Bangalore by seven wickets at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bangalore yesterday.

It was just another day at the office for Deccan Chargers until T Suman finally became the first Indian domestic cricketer to perform well for them and saw them through an improbable chase, also keeping them alive in the tournament. Good start with the ball, everything falling apart at the end, it was all going according to the familiar lines when Suman came out with new lines, 78 off 57 from No. 3. Andrew Symonds' 53 off 24 was just the shot in the arm that Deccan needed while going at more than 10 an over in the last 10 overs.

Earlier, Jacques Kallis scored his sixth half-century in 10 innings this season and, along with Virat Kohli, helped stage a spectacular comeback from a middle-over stutter that cost Royal Challengers Bangalore three wickets for eight runs. The two added 95 in 8.4 overs, and that after they put on just 24 off the first 23 balls of their association to put a challenging total of 184 for six at the end of their twenty overs. Kallis scored 68 of 44 deliveries with nine fours and a six while Kohli smashed four fours and same number of sixes to score 58 in 35 balls.

SCORES IN BRIEF

ROYAL CHALLENGERS BANGALORE: 184 for six in 20 overs (Kallis 68, Kohli 58, Dravid 26; Ojha 2-24, Harris 2-37)

DECCAN CHARGERS: 186 for three in 19.2 overs (Suman 78 not out, Symonds 53 not out, Gilchrist 32; Kumar 1-37, Kumble 1-38)

Result: Deccan Chargers won by seven wickets
Man-of-the-match: Tirumalasetti Suman

Nigerian trio sends protest letter against MSC

SPORTS REPORTER

After sitting out two successive matches protesting unpaid wages, Nigerian trio Alamu Bukola Olaleken, Emeka Christian and Dami Emanuel have sent a formal letter to the Bangladesh League organizing committee complaining against their employers Mohammedan Sporting Club.

They have informed the league committee of Mohammedan not paying their wages for a few months. The trio claimed that Emeka Christian and Alamu Bukola Olaleken have been unpaid for the last four months while Dami Emanuel has yet to receive his salary for the last five months. The African trio asked the league committee to look into the matter as the club have failed to respond to their queries. They also asked the committee to

SEE PAGE 18 COL 4

Bangladesh, India reach semis

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh and India emerged unbeaten group champions to reach semifinals of the IHF Handball Challenge Trophy (Men's Under-21) Championship after beating their rivals in respective group matches yesterday.

Pre-tournament favourites India emerged Group A champions beating traditional rivals Pakistan by 40-27 goals in their last group game while hosts Bangladesh finished top of Group B beating Yemen by 33-28 goals in their last group encounters at the Suhrawardy National Indoor Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

India will play Group B runners-up Yemen in the first semifinal at 2pm while Bangladesh will face Group A

SEE PAGE 18 COL 7

Viqarunnissa win school football title

SPORTS REPORTER

Viqarunnissa Noon School & College clinched the title of the Dhaka Metropolitan Citycell Women's School Football Championship beating Agargaon Ideal High School by a solitary goal in the final at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Nini scored the all-important goal for Viqarunnissa in the 27th minute.

Taj Nahar of Sir John Wilson School was adjudged player of the tournament while Maisha became the highest scorer of the meet with five goals. They both received Tk 5,000 as cash reward.

SEE PAGE 18 COL 4

NCL TWENTY20

Franchises taking shape

SPORTS REPORTER



Just two days ahead of another Twenty20 fiesta, three teams have thrown up big names while the other trio have remained

silent on their team composition, particularly their foreign imports. Twenty20 specialists Imran Nazir and Rana Navedul Hasan are set to join the Dhaka Dynamites for the National Cricket League T20s that will begin on April 11.

Nazir and Rana Naved played in the recently-concluded Port City League where the swash-buckling opener starred for eventual champions Chittagong Brothers Union while the all-rounder was in the books of Noakhali Top Sports.

Apart from the Pakistani duo, the Dhaka franchise are also eyeing Sri Lankan leg-spinning all-rounder Jeewan Mendis to balance an already quality squad of players that include the likes of Mohammad Ashraful, Mahmudullah Riyad and the evergreen Mohammad Rafique. The team will be coached by Bangladesh's assistant coach Khaled Mahmud.

Kings of Khulna, bought by ATN Bangla chairman Mahfuzur Rahman, have contacted Pakistani opener Imran Farhat and are looking for another all-rounder from Sri Lanka.

A team source revealed that the Khulna franchise, to be coached by former Bangladesh coach Sarwar Imran, are eyeing players from

the Indian Premier League (IPL) once the semi-final line-up in that tournament is complete.

The Cyclones of Chittagong, who on Wednesday revealed that Pakistani speedster Shoaib Akhter will be one of their foreign acquisitions, are also looking for another Sri Lankan all-rounder but have already acquired the services of Mohammad Salahuddin, the Tigers' fielding coach.

But apart from Dhaka, Khulna and Chittagong, the other three teams are still undecided on their foreign imports.

Barisal Blazers' Icon Player Shahriar Nafees informed that he would sit with the team owners after today's first practice session to discuss team matters.

"We haven't talked to our team owners about our foreign players. We will do it tomorrow (Friday) when we practice and then we can tell you about our prospects," said Nafees who also added franchises taking shape that former Bangladesh captain Minhazul Abedin would be the coach of their team.

Rajshahi's first-class captain Khaled Mashud was also unaware of his team's foreign players and like the Barisal franchise, the Rajshahi Rangers are still waiting to meet the team owners. Mashud also said that he would like to see Naem Islam captain the team instead of him although the team officials have indicated they want him to lead.

SEE PAGE 18 COL 1



Action from yesterday's IHF Handball Challenge Trophy match between hosts Bangladesh and Yemen at the National Indoor Stadium in Mirpur.

Shoaib thanks all

His family arrives in Hyderabad

PTI, Karachi

Shoaib Malik's sudden decision to divorce the woman he disowned all along left everyone stunned but the Pakistan cricketer, now set to marry Indian tennis star Sania Mirza, on Thursday said it was the most "amicable" thing to do in a situation that was "beyond reasoning".

Shoaib divorced Ayesha Siddiqui on Wednesday despite insisting previously that he was never married to the Hyderabad girl, who claimed that he dumped her because of her weight problems.

The divorce followed days of mudslinging in which Ayesha even filed an FIR against Shoaib accusing him of fraud and criminal intimidation.

Relieved that the controversy was finally over, Shoaib said, "I would like to firstly thank the Almighty and all of you as media and the entire nation of Pakistan in supporting me and giving me the strength to face all what has been witnessed."

"I am no one to judge what is wrong or what is right as the one above knows the truth. I have done what was the best amicable thing to do as it was getting beyond reasoning as each day unfolded," Shoaib added in a statement released by his agent.

The 28-year-old all-rounder, who had earlier claimed that Ayesha duped him into a telephonic nikah by sending photos of some other woman, also sought forgiveness for any hurt he might have caused during the row.

"I have realised that media is part of my family, and request all of you to pray for me and Sania as we are embarking on a beautiful journey of marriage."

"I am proud to be a Pakistani and me and Sania are overwhelmed to see the response in all the people welcoming Sania to Pakistan. Inshallah Sania and I will soon meet everyone personally to thank you all for all the support," he said.

"Thank you once again for all your support and lastly if knowingly or unknowingly I have hurt someone, please forgive me as your younger brother," he added.

Meanwhile report from Hyderabad says, Shoaib's family has arrived in the city for his high-profile wedding.

Among those who flew into the city from Lahore late Wednesday night were Shoaib's mother Sultana Farooq, brother Adil Malik, sisters Shazia Imran and Sadaf Imran, nephew Mamoona Imran and niece Zainab Imran.

Shoaib and his kin are expected to return to Pakistan two days after the wedding.

SEE PAGE 18 COL 5



The players of Viqarunnissa Noon School are over the moon after winning the Dhaka Metropolitan Women's Schools Football Championship defeating Agargaon Ideal High School 1-0 in the final at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR