



Everton midfielder Darron Gibson (L) blasts home the all-important goal to upset league leaders Manchester City during their Premier League match at Goodison Park on Tuesday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

## 4th sub, goal-line tech on the agenda

Football

AP, Zurich

FIFA will discuss the possibility of allowing teams to use a fourth substitute in extra time when its rules-making panel meets next month.

The International Football Association Board is set to decide at a meeting in England on March 3 if increasing the current quota of three replacements would help improve matches and reduce injuries.

"The FIFA Task Force Football 2014, the medical committee and the football committee support the proposal in order to maintain the technical level until the 120th minute and to protect the health of the players," FIFA said Wednesday.

Goal-line technology tests will return to the agenda of the rules panel, which is known as IFAB.

The panel will receive progress reports on tests involving eight systems, and decide which will proceed to a scheduled second round of testing starting in March.

FIFA said a final decision

to approve goal-line technology can be taken at a further IFAB meeting on July 2. It could take place in Kiev, the day after the 2012 European Championship final in the Ukraine capital.

IFAB will also study trials of the five-referee system, using additional assistants beside each goal to support referees' decision-making, which conclude at Euro 2012.

The panel will reconsider allowing Islamic female players to wear a hijab, five years after the headscarf was banned for safety reasons.

FIFA vice president Prince Ali of Jordan has urged IFAB to respect cultural traditions and approve a headscarf held in place by a safe Velcro fastener.

IFAB, which is comprised of the four British associations plus FIFA delegates, could also amend the so-called "triple punishment" of sanctioning certain fouls with a penalty kick, red card

and suspension.

FIFA acknowledged that the current system is "widely considered to be too severe."

A suggested amendment calls for a red card only when a player prevents "an obvious goal-scoring opportunity by deliberately handling the ball, by holding or an offence committed from behind inside his own penalty area when he has no opportunity to play the ball."

Other proposals on the agenda include assessing tests at the 2011 Copa America where referees used vanishing spray on the grass to mark the 10 yards (9 meters) that defensive walls must retreat from the ball once placed for a free kick.

FIFA wants the word "blatantly" removed from definitions of a handball offence, and the English Football Association suggested that players must only use tape of the same colour as their socks.

## Mancini takes blame for loss

AFP, Liverpool

Manchester City manager Roberto Mancini admitted he was to blame for the costly defeat that provided Manchester United with renewed hope in the title race.

Mancini insisted he got it all wrong as Darron Gibson's first Premier League goal since March 2010 enabled United to move level on points with City as they crashed to a 1-0 loss at Everton.

Gibson's telling contribution for his new club ensures City have only won once in their last 21 visits to Goodison Park and completed an excellent evening for David Moyes, the Everton manager, who celebrated his 150th game in charge of the Merseysiders in style.

And the City manager was content to take on the chin a defeat that could have serious repercussions as United bid to beat their deadly rivals to the Premier League crown.

## Gibson stuns City

REUTERS, London



Ex-Manchester United midfielder Darron Gibson did his old club a huge favour by scoring the winner for Everton in a 1-0 victory over Premier League leaders Manchester City, while United moved level on points at the top after beating Stoke City 2-0.

Ireland midfielder Gibson left United to move to Goodison Park earlier this month and his fierce strike on the hour, which took a slight deflection, proved decisive.

United, who trail their rivals on goal difference, eased past Stoke thanks to two penalties at Old Trafford from Javier Hernandez and Dimitar Berbatov.

City and United have 54 points from 23 matches, five ahead of Tottenham Hotspur who thumped Wigan Athletic 3-1 at White Hart Lane.

The leaders enjoyed plenty of possession but created few openings to trouble a resolute home defence.

Everton, who paraded new signing Nikica Jelavic at halftime after the Croatia striker's move from Rangers, almost broke through early on but Joleon Lescott was well posi-

tioned on the goalline to clear Denis Stracqualursi's close-range header.

City went closest to an equaliser when midfielder Samir Nasri rattled the crossbar with a swerving 30-metre piledriver on 36 minutes.

The match was halted for around four minutes late in the first half when a fan went on to the pitch and handcuffed himself to a goalpost.

Police freed the man who had attached himself to the post in the goal that City were defending.

United had no problems overcoming Stoke despite handing a first league start to goalkeeper Ben Amos, called up due to David de Gea being ill and Anders Lindegaard injured.

With Wayne Rooney still out with an ankle injury, Ferguson partnered Berbatov alongside Javier Hernandez up front and both made no mistake from the spot.

Mexico striker Hernandez fired home on 38 minutes after Jermaine Pennant had felled Park Ji-sung.

United were awarded a second penalty eight minutes after halftime and this time Berbatov scored after Antonio Valencia was brought down.

RESULTS	
Everton 1 (Gibson 60)	Manchester City 0
Manchester United 2 (Hernandez 38-pen, Berbatov 53-pen)	Stoke 0
Swansea 1 (Sinclair 39)	Chelsea 1 (Taylor 90-og)
Tottenham 3 (Bale 29, 64, Modric 34)	Wigan 1 (McArthur 80)
Wolves 0	Liverpool 3 (Carroll 52, Bellamy 61, Kuyt 78)

## Terry free to lead England

AFP, London

England captain John Terry's court case on racial abuse charges was adjourned on Wednesday until July 9, leaving the Chelsea star free to lead his country at Euro 2012.

Lawyers for Terry had earlier entered a not guilty plea on the footballer's behalf as he prepares to fight charges of racially abusing Anton Ferdinand during a match against QPR last October.

With the English Football Association having declined to take any action against Terry on the basis that he is innocent until proven guilty, the adjournment means the defender is likely to captain England at Euro 2012.

"Mr Terry looks forward to the opportunity to clear his name. He has never racially abused another player in his entire career," the footballer's solicitor said at Westminster Magistrates Court hearing on Wednesday.

## Gabon stay perfect

Football

AFP, Libreville

Gabon continued their charmed run at the Africa Cup of Nations on Tuesday, topping Tunisia to emerge from the first round with a perfect nine points.

Gernot Rohr's already qualified side added the

noted scalp of the 2004 winners to those of Morocco and Niger to finish winners of Group C and earn a quarterfinal date with the Group D runners-up.

With Ghana favourites to claim Group D that could prove a major boost to the co-hosts' outlandish bid to make it to the February 12th final.

Day 11 saw simultaneous

games being played in Franceville, where Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang's goal did it for 2004 winners Tunisia, and in the Gabon capital where the dead' tie between the two eliminated teams ended in a 1-0 win for Morocco over Niger.

The nation's eyes though were trained on events in the country's second city where

Aubameyang, one of the Panthers' main stars, bagged a 62nd minute goal when he collected a loose ball before wrong footing goalkeeper Rami Jeridi for his third goal of the competition.

Tunisia fought to restore parity but the home heroes were resolute in defence to hold on for another famous victory.

"This was our most difficult game so far against a very good Tunisia team, who dominated the game from start to finish," admitted Rohr.

"It was not easy because we were already qualified for the quarterfinals. But thanks to the professional attitude and fighting spirit of the players, we won to finish top of the group."

Tunisia coach Sami Trabelsi said: "We rested some of the players because they have already been booked and we did not wish to risk them before the quarterfinals."

"However, those who played today showed many good qualities because we played well but we could not win the match."



Gabon striker Pierre Aubameyang celebrates his goal during their African Cup of Nations encounter against Tunisia at the Franceville Stadium on Tuesday.

PHOTO: AFP

## Harry paid taxes

Football

AFP, London

Tottenham Hotspur manager Harry Redknapp insisted he had always paid his taxes on Wednesday as he took to the witness stand in his tax evasion court case in London.

The Spurs coach, who denies cheating the public revenue by failing to declare payments made into a Monaco bank account, told Southwark Crown Court he had hired the best accountants to manage his financial affairs.

"I have always paid my taxes. I've always gone to the best available people,"

Redknapp said. "I have always paid too much tax rather than not enough."

Redknapp also said he had enjoyed a close relationship with co-defendant Milan Mandaric, who is accused of funneling cash into Redknapp's overseas accounts when the two men ran Portsmouth.

"There was no-one in the world I would rather be with," Redknapp said. "We had our ups and downs, I was a bit volatile perhaps."

The court broke into laughter as defence barrister John Kelsey-Fry said Redknapp's success in football was "much to the displeasure" of Mandaric's defence counsel Lord Ken Macdonald.

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Muktijoddha v Farashganj  
Time: 3:15pm  
Venue: Bangabandhu National Stadium

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