

City lining up  
De Rossi bid?

INTERNET

Italian media claim Manchester City are lining up a new 25m pounds offer to tempt Daniele De Rossi away from Roma.

It is no secret that Roberto Mancini admires the World Cup winning midfielder and wants him at the Emirates.

According to La Stampa newspaper Sunday morning, rumours are swirling around the City training camp in Innsbruck that a new bid for De Rossi is on the table.

The Citizens are prepared to offer around 25m-30m euros to sway Roma's minds.

De Rossi only extended his contract in February, holding him to the Olimpico until June 2017.

The Giallorossi are not in Europe this season after failing to qualify under Luis Enrique, but have new Coach Zdenek Zeman at the helm.

Smalling out  
for 10 weeks

REUTERS, London

Manchester United's England defender Chris Smalling could be sidelined for up to 10 weeks after foot surgery, manager Alex Ferguson said on Saturday.

The 22-year-old, who did not travel on the club's pre-season tour to South Africa, missed the end of last season, Euro 2012 and an Olympic call-up with a groin injury.

He was expected to be ready for the new Premier League campaign but injured his toe in training on Wednesday and the surgery on the broken metatarsal means he will miss the start of the season.

"He got an injury on the Wednesday and, straight away, we decided to have the operation so he's out," Ferguson told the club's television channel MUTV. "It's difficult to say with a metatarsal but it could be 10 weeks."

"He's not carrying any luck, the kid, but he's young and we've done the right thing in getting it done immediately and getting him back on the road as quickly as we can."

Smalling is expected to compete with Nemanja Vidic, Jonny Evans, Rio Ferdinand and Phil Jones for a centre-back role.

United captain Vidic should be fit to start the season after a cruciate knee ligament operation but Evans is a doubt for the league opener at Everton on Aug. 20 with an ankle problem.

De Gea relishes  
Spain-GB final

REUTERS, Madrid



The prospect of cloudy skies, rain and cooler temperatures at the London Olympics is music to the ears of Spain's Under-21s goalkeeper David De Gea.

The Manchester United number one is perhaps more acclimatised to the vagaries of the British weather than many of his team mates, having moved to Old Trafford last year, but will welcome the change from the soaring temperatures of central Spain that have hit 40 degrees Centigrade during the last week.

"It is colder, but from my point of view it is better for playing football," De Gea told Reuters after completing a training session at their national team headquarters in Las Rozas, on the simmering Castilian plain just outside Madrid.

"We just have to get used to it. Obviously I already am, but people quickly adjust."

De Gea says he would like the football final at the 2012 Olympics to be between Spain and Great Britain.

The Madrid-born goalkeeper, highlighted the British team coached by former England international Stuart Pearce as one of their main rivals for the gold medal.

"The British team is very good, I have some colleagues in it, and I wish them all the best," he said. "A team like this always needs to be considered a favourite, and you have to watch out for them."

Spain's Under-19s also scooped the continent's top prize a week ago, a sign that the country's footballing pre-eminence could continue.

"We have a style based more on touch and control, whereas over there (in Britain) it is more aggressive and physical, but that's the only difference," the lanky

21-year-old said.

"Football is football wherever you are."

De Gea dismissed criticism that the patient 'Spanish style' is boring.

"Spain's style is a winning style as the senior team have proved," he added. "It's a style that suits us because of the characteristics of the players we have, and it's a style that wins games."

"(Spain's pre-eminence) could continue for a long time, but there are some very good teams, people know how Spain play, and it is getting tougher."

"First of all I think of us reaching the final. Then, if it is against Britain, that would be great," the 21-year-old said in an interview published Sunday in daily newspaper ABC, adding winning the gold would be "a dream".

"You imagine the national anthem playing and you are there, winning a gold medal. We are very determined and I hope that this is what will happen, but we know it will be very complicated."

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At the end of their training session in Las Rozas the Spanish players took part in a high-spirited penalty shootout amidst whoops and cheers.

Spain fly to Glasgow this weekend for



PHOT: AFP

Manchester City's Argentinian forward Carlos Tevez, working as a caddie for his countryman Andres Romero, wears a broad grin as he watches the proceedings of the final round of the British Open Golf Championship at Royal Lytham and St Annes in England on Sunday.

Reds' Rodgers era  
begins with draw

Football

AFP, Toronto

Brendan Rodgers's first game as manager of Liverpool ended in a 1-1 draw against FC Toronto thanks to Adam Morgan's equaliser for the English giants in a World Football Challenge friendly.

Quincy Amarikwa, acquired by Toronto from Major League Soccer rivals the New York Red Bulls early Saturday, wasted no time contributing to his new team, seizing a rebound from a Peter Gulacsi save to give the hosts the lead in the 58th minute.

The advantage was short-lived however, as Morgan knotted the score at 1-1 in the 69th minute, taking advantage of a fine run by Raheem Sterling and salvaging the draw for Liverpool in the opening match of their pre-season North American tour.

After Sterling eluded three defenders, Toronto keeper Quillan Roberts managed to deflect his shot, but Morgan was there to tap it home.

Liverpool were further buoyed by the

return to action of Brazilian midfielder Lucas Leiva, who has been sidelined since November with a serious knee injury.

Rodgers went with a mix of experience and youth to open the contest, with veterans including Jose Enrique and Jamie Carragher joined on the starting side by prospects such as Dani Pacheco and Nathan Eccleston.

Toronto manager Paul Mariner fielded close to a first-choice lineup, with the only change in the team that beat the Colorado Rapids on Wednesday coming in goal, where Freddy Hall replaced Milos Kocic.

After a first half that featured few scoring opportunities, Rodgers made a wholesale change for the second half, with Martin Skrtel and Joe Cole anchoring another group of young players.

In the 75th, Lucas was sent on to replace Krisztian Adorjan, his first appearance since suffering an injury to the anterior cruciate ligament in his left knee.

Liverpool continue their pre-season tour on Wednesday at Fenway Park, home of Major League Baseball's Boston Red Sox, against Italian club Roma. They face English rivals Tottenham on July 28 in Baltimore.

## Carlos the caddie

Football

REUTERS, Lytham St Annes, England

Argentina and Manchester City striker Carlos Tevez had an unlikely role at the British Open on Sunday when he carried compatriot Andres Romero's bag.

The 28-year-old Tevez was among the crowds at Lytham earlier in the week but he was a lot closer to the action in the final round as he caddied for Romero wearing a royal blue jacket and cap.

An unshaven Tevez, grinning broadly all the way round, was not able to inspire his friend who carded four double-bogeys and a solitary birdie to close with a dismal 82 to finish on 18 over and rock-bottom of the field.

"I enjoyed the round," Tevez told reporters. "The course is beautiful. The chance to walk along the course and to be around these great players is a pleasure and something unforgettable."

"This is the dream of everybody who plays golf. It was my first major!"

City manager Roberto Mancini will hope Tevez, who has had back injuries in the past, did not over-exert himself by lugging Romero's clubs for four hours with

the start of the club's Premier League title defence just four weeks away.

"It was difficult to carry the bag because it weighed so much but it was fine," Tevez said.

"I couldn't give any advice about the slopes but I just carried the bag and supported him each hole. Romero is a professional and he knows everything already. We worked together very well."

Tevez is a 13-handicap golfer who had plenty of time to fine-tune his swing when he returned to Argentina for several months last season after being suspended by City for refusing to warmup in a Champions League match.

The former West Ham United and Manchester United forward visited Romero's house on Saturday to ask if he could caddie for him.

"We all agreed Carlos would take the bag today and we really enjoyed the moment," said Romero who finished third behind Padraig Harrington and Sergio Garcia in the 2007 Open at Carnoustie.

"He did not complain at all when I asked him if he was in any pain," the 31-year-old added. "I played really badly today but he was helping me with my confidence."

Dortmund's  
2nd straight  
defeat

AFP, Berlin

Reigning Bundesliga champions and German Cup holders Borussia Dortmund fell to their second consecutive pre-season loss on Saturday when they went down 4-2 at Nuremberg.

The 2011 and 2012 German champions had been beaten 3-1 at Belgian side Club Brugge last weekend.

Dortmund were without their German internationals Mats Hummels, Marcel Schmelzer, Ilkay Gundogan, Mario Goetze and Marco Reus, who are still on holiday after Euro 2012.

Against Nuremberg, Dortmund coach Juergen Klopp waited an hour before turning to his overseas players, Croatia's Ivan Perisic and the Polish trio of Robert Lewandowski, Lukasz Piszczek and Jakub Blaszczykowski.

Kuba scored in the 62nd minute, two minutes after coming on, to bring Dortmund level at 2-2.

Sebastian Kehl had given Dortmund the lead inside the first 15 minutes, only for Hanno Balitsch to reply in the 30th minute.

Veteran Marek Mintal gave Nuremberg the lead from the penalty spot in the 44th minute, with second-half goals from Sebastian Polter and Mike

Panathinaikos  
sign Fornaroli

AFP, Athens

Greek Super League club Panathinaikos announced Saturday that they have signed Uruguayan striker Bruno Fornaroli on a three-year deal.

The club did not reveal financial details of the deal. Fornaroli, 24, began his career with Nacional (2006-2007) and has been under contract with Sampdoria (2007-2012). He has been loaned by Sampdoria to San Lorenzo (2008-2009), Recreativo de Huelva (2009-2010) and Nacional (2011).

Ghana to  
play China

AFP, Accra

Ghana will meet China in a friendly match in Beijing on August 15, the Ghanaian Football Association (GFA) announced on Saturday.

The Black Stars will use the match to warm up for the first leg of their 2013 Africa Cup of Nations qualifying tie against Malawi, which is due to be played on the weekend of September 7-9.



Tour de France winner Bradley Wiggins (L) is congratulated by teammate Austria's Michael Rogers as they cross the finish line on the Champs-Elysees Avenue at the end of the 120 km last stage on Sunday.

PHOTO: AFP

Wiggins wins  
Tour de France

AFP, Paris

Bradley Wiggins was crowned Britain's first Tour de France champion on Sunday after helping Sky teammate Mark Cavendish to secure a fourth consecutive stage win on the world-famous Champs-Elysees in Paris.

Wiggins, who virtually sealed victory when he won his second time-trial of the three-week epic on Saturday, finished the 3,479km race with a 3min 21sec lead over British team-mate Chris Froome after the 20th and last stage.

It was Isle of Man sprinter Cavendish's fourth consecutive stage win on the Champs-Elysees, taking his tally of stage wins in this year's race to three and to 23 overall.

Three years after Wiggins equalled Scot Robert Millar's 1984 best British finish of fourth overall, in 2009, Wiggins finally achieved his childhood dream of winning the world's most prestigious bike race.

Italian Vincenzo Nibali of the Liquigas team finished third overall at 6:19.

Team Sky achieved the rare feat of a 1-2 on the podium, the first since 1996, when Dane Bjarne Riis finished ahead of his German team-mate at Telekom, Jan Ullrich.

It is also the first time compatriots have taken the first two places since France's Laurent Fignon finished ahead of five-time winner Bernard Hinault in the 1985 edition.

Frenchman Thomas Voeckler of Europcar won the polka dot jersey for the race's best climber, with Slovakian Peter Sagan of the Liquigas team easily securing the green jersey for the points competition.

American Tejay Van Garderen made up for BMC team leader Cadel Evans' disastrous title defence by winning the race's white jersey for the best-placed rider aged 25 and under.

Evans, who made history by becoming Australia's first champion in 2011, eventually finished nearly 16 minutes behind Wiggins.

## SPORTS POLL

## WEEKLY QUESTION

Did Milan make a mistake by selling Ibrahimovic to PSG or was it smart business?

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## STAR Cricket

England v South Africa  
First Test, Day 5



## Premier Div Hockey

S Bima v Bangladesh SC  
Time: 2:30pm  
Ajax v Usha  
Time: 4:15pm  
Venue: Maulana Bhasani