

Bahrain sack Taylor

REUTERS, Undated

Former England interim coach Peter Taylor was sacked by Bahrain on Friday after spending 15 months in charge.

"It's the federation that have decided to change because recent results have not been good," said the former Leicester City boss who led England for one game against Italy in 2000.

Taylor told Reuters that recent defeats were the result of the players not being match fit because of the lack of league matches.

He denied that political strife in Bahrain had affected performance.

"Some players have good talent but some players need to be stronger, they need to work on the physical side as well as the football side," he added.

Bahrain, who have never reached a World Cup and are ranked 115th, were knocked out of 2014 Asian World Cup qualifying in the third round.

Hitzlsperger joins Everton

AFP, London

Former Germany international Thomas Hitzlsperger has signed with Everton after impressing on trial, the Premier League club announced on Friday.

The former Aston Villa and West Ham midfielder has struggled with injuries in recent years which forced Wolfsburg to release him at the end of last season, but 'Toffees' manager David Moyes has taken the player on a temporary deal until January.

Belgium international Morouane Fellaini is set to miss the next three weeks with a knee problem while Republic of Ireland midfielder Darron Gibson is also sidelined, prompting Moyes looks to shore up his squad.

The 30-year-old Hitzlsperger scored six goals in 52 appearances for Germany and played at the 2006 World Cup and Euro 2008.



What to WATCH

STAR Cricket

Champions League T20

Perth Scorchers v Delhi Daredevils

Live from 5:30pm

Kolkata Knight Riders v Titans

Live from 9:30pm

ESPN

English Premiership

Sunderland v Newcastle

Live from 6:30pm

QPR v Everton

Live from 9:00pm

STAR Sports

MotoGP World Championship

Malaysian GP

Live from 11:00am

Primera Liga

Getafe v Levante

Live from 4:00pm

Granada v Zaragoza

Live from 9:50pm

Osasuna v Real Betis

Live from 11:45pm

Real Sociedad v Atletico

Live from 1:45am (Monday)

Serie A



DAY'S EVENT

National Cricket League

(Four-Day Match; Day 2)

Rajshahi v Dhaka

Venue: Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium, Mirpur

Khulna v Barisal

Venue: Sk Abul Naser Stadium, Khulna

Sylhet v Rangpur

Venue: Rangpur Cricket Garden

Dhaka Metro v Chittagong

Venue: Shaheed Chandu

Tottenham Hotspur striker Clint Dempsey (L) fights for the ball with Chelsea midfielder Juan Mata during their Premier League encounter at White Hart Lane yesterday. Mata scored twice to lead Chelsea to a 4-2 win.

PHOTO: AFP

Mata on the double

AFP, London

Chelsea cemented their position on top of the Premier League as a superb double from Juan Mata

clinched a 4-2 win over Andre Villas-Boas's Tottenham on Saturday.

However, Wayne Rooney ensured Manchester United remain hot on the leaders' heels with a 4-2 victory against Stoke in a game where the England star scored at both ends.

Roberto Di Matteo's Chelsea side were in danger of suffering their first league defeat of the season at the hands of former boss Villas-Boas, who was sacked after just nine months in charge last season, as Tottenham took a 2-1 lead in the second half at White Hart Lane.

But Spanish midfielder Mata struck twice in the space of three minutes to secure Chelsea's seventh win from eight league matches.

Gary Cahill, deputising for the suspended John Terry, fired Chelsea ahead in the 17th minute with a powerful volley.

William Gallas equalised against his former club two minutes into the

RESULTS	
Fulham 1 (Baird 84)	Aston Villa 0
Liverpool 1 (Sterling 29)	Reading 0
Manchester Utd 4 (Rooney 27, 65, Van Persie 44, Welbeck 46)	Stoke 2 (Rooney 11-og, Kightly 58)
Swansea 2 (Hernandez 65, Michu 67)	Wigan 1 (Boyce 69)
Tottenham 2 (Gallas 47, Defoe 54)	Chelsea 4 (Cahill 17, Mata 66, 69, Sturridge 90)
West Bromwich 1 (Long 67)	Manchester City 2 (Dzeko 80, 90)
West Ham 4 (Noble 46, 72-pen,	

second half and Spurs went in front seven minutes later thanks to Jermain Defoe's predatory finish.

However, Chelsea staged a stunning fightback as Mata slotted home in the 66th minute.

Mata then produced a fine finish from Eden Hazard's defence-splitting pass three minutes later and the Spaniard set up the fourth goal for Daniel Sturridge in stoppage-time.

At Old Trafford, Rooney went from zero to hero with a double strike after the United striker initially gave Stoke a shock lead in the 10th minute when he headed into his own net as he tried to clear from Ryan Shawcross.

Rooney was quickly back in United's good books with a headed equaliser -- his first club goal of the season -- from Robin van Persie's cross in the 27th minute.

Van Persie put United ahead on the stroke of half-time as the former Arsenal forward turned in Antonio Valencia's cross to claim his eighth goal in 10 matches for his new club.

Danny Welbeck got United's third with a diving header from Rooney's cross in the 46th minute.

Michael Kightly's solo effort reduced the deficit 12 minutes later.

Terry stays captain

AFP, London

John Terry will continue as captain of Chelsea, the English Premier League club's chairman Bruce Buck said Saturday.

The former England captain was suspended for four matches -- starting with Saturday's league match against Tottenham -- and fined £220,000 by the Football Association earlier this month for racially abusing QPR defender Anton Ferdinand.

Terry decided this week not to appeal the decision, leaving Chelsea to decide what action of their own to take.

Manager Roberto Di Matteo refused to say on Friday whether Terry would remain captain, but Buck confirmed he would and that he would not be given an additional ban by Chelsea, although the club have fined him.

"John will continue to be captain of the club. We have taken disciplinary action

and we think it is firm disciplinary action and appropriate for the circumstances," Buck said on talkSPORT radio.

Details of the fine would remain confidential in line with club policy, Buck said, adding that it was the heaviest fine "by far" they had ever meted out to a player.

"We have kept in mind first of all that a court of criminal law found him not guilty. Of course we also note the FA decision and we certainly respect that decision. We've kept these factors in mind, we've consulted with the owner Mr Abramovich," Buck said.

"This is not a decision we've taken lightly, it's not a decision we took in a half-hour meeting, we discussed it over a long period of time and we think we've taken appropriate disciplinary action."

Chief executive Ron Gourlay added that there was no question of Chelsea sacking Terry to send a clear signal that the club has a zero tolerance to racism.

"We haven't tolerated the language that John Terry used."

German defenders over-rated: Lothar

AFP, Berlin

Former captain Lothar Matthaeus has branded several Germany defenders "over-rated" after throwing away a four-goal lead to draw 4-4 with Sweden in a World Cup qualifier.

"Some are overrated. (Mats) Hummel, who was missing in Berlin, is on a good path, but for me, (Per) Mertesacker is not a central defender of international stature," Matthaeus told German daily Bild.

"(Holger) Badstuber and (Jerome) Boateng are not yet of world-class quality.

"Generally, there is a lack of someone who gets under the skin of the opposition. You have to put in a few fouls from time to time!"

On Saturday, Germany coach Joachim Loew cancelled an appointment to appear on German television that evening, because of a fever.

The 52-year-old had been due to answer questions about Tuesday's shock draw in Berlin against Sweden when the hosts conceded four goals in the last 30 minutes.

The result reopened the debate in the German media as to whether the national team is missing strong leadership under captain Philipp Lahm and vice-captain Bastian Schweinsteiger, but Matthaeus said it is not the case.

"We also lost World Cup finals when players like (Paul) Breitner or (Karl-Heinz) Rummenigge were out on the pitch," said Matthaeus, who won 150 caps for Germany and captained the team to the 1990 World Cup title.

"(Steffen) Effenberg played with me when we lost a Champions League final (in 1999 to Manchester United)." But fellow former Germany captain Franz Beckenbauer is backing Loew to get the national team back on the right path with his team top of Group C.

"I say the team will learn their lessons," Beckenbauer, who admitted Germany "disintegrated in the decisive phase" of the Sweden game, told magazine Focus.

Former Bayern Munich star Beckenbauer said he had been reminded of the Bavarians' 7-4 Bundesliga defeat to Kaiserslautern in 1973 when they threw away a 4-1 lead. "It's like a bad chain reaction: first it shakes the midfield, then the defence and at the end, the goalkeeper - and nobody really knows why."

"That is what it was like almost 40 years ago - and it still happens today."

Lille goalkeeper Mickael Landreau dives for the ball during the Ligue One match against Girondins Bordeaux at the Chaban Delmas Stadium on Friday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Potentially explosive derby

AFP, Sunderland

Newcastle manager Alan Pardew has appealed for cool heads from both sets of players and fans during Sunday's potentially explosive local derby at Sunderland.

Pardew is beginning to understand the ferocity of the Tyne-Wear derby after two years in charge of Newcastle and he expects another tumultuous encounter at the Stadium of Light this weekend.

The fixture may not have as much global recognition as the Manchester, Merseyside or Glasgow derbies or the Milan derby in Italy, but the battle

for supremacy in the north-east of England is just as intense as those more glamorous fixtures.

Previous clashes between the clubs have often featured fighting between rival fans in and around the stadium and extra police have been drafted in to ensure any potential flashpoints are quickly dealt with.

Pardew knows that the players' behaviour is also crucial to ensuring such a volatile atmosphere doesn't boil over.

"I have been to many, many games, including the Glasgow derby, and this game is as venomous as that."

"It makes it electric. You don't want to lose that passion, but hopefully at the end of the game, every-

body shakes hands, the better team has won and we all go home safely. That's important."

In the circumstances, Pardew will attempt to set an example on the sideline this time around after angry exchanges between the two benches at St James' Park in March, during which he admits he allowed himself to be carried away.

"There is a little bit of passion flying about and it needs to be conducted in the right manner by players and staff alike," Pardew said.

"But emotions sometimes get the better of you, like it did with me at the end of last season's game when we scored in the last minute. It's an emotive game, we want to win."

Trap vows to fight on

AFP, Dublin

Giovanni Trapattoni insists he will fight on as manager of the Republic of Ireland after emerging unscathed from crisis talks with his employers.

Trapattoni endured calls for his resignation after Ireland suffered a humiliating 6-1 home defeat against Germany in a World Cup qualifier last week.

That dismal result came on the back of Ireland's woeful showing at Euro 2012, where they were the first team eliminated from the tournament after losing all three group matches.

But Trapattoni, whose side beat the Faroe Islands 4-1 on Tuesday, is determined to cling onto his job and, after receiving the continued support of the Football Association of Ireland board earlier this week, the 73-year-old Italian met with FAI chief executive John Delaney for further discussions on Friday.

The talks at the FAI's Abbotstown headquarters were described as "workmanlike and professional" by a spokesman.