Brazilian international midfielder Luiz Gustavo has completed his transfer from European champions Bayern Munich to their Bundesliga rivals Wolfsburg, the buying club confirmed on Friday.

"We are delighted to have him with us," declared Wolfsburg sporting director Klaus Allofs after making official a transfer that had been announced in German media reports on Wednesday.

The 26-year-old has signed a five-year deal at the Volkswagen Arena as he looks to cement his place in the Brazil squad ahead of next year's World Cup, although no transfer fee has been announced.

He had fallen down the pecking order at Bayern during their run to the treble of Champions League, Bundesliga and German Cup last season and the summer arrivals of Mario Goetze and Spain's Thiago Alcantara had even further reduced his chances of making Pep Guardiola's team.

Luiz Gustavo first arrived in Germany with Hoffenheim before moving to Bayern in January 2011.

Gustavo seals Wolves move The long wait is over

English Premiership kicks off today

MAIL ONLINE



After a long summer it's finally back. The Barclays Premier League season kicks off this weekend for what promises to be the most exciting campaign in recent

years after a months of upheaval and change at a number of Premier League clubs.

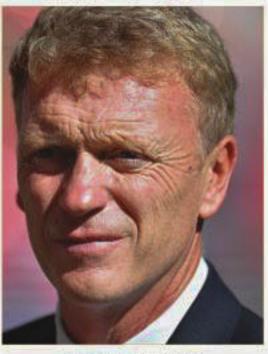
For signs of change look no further than the champions, Manchester United. After 27 years and 38 trophies Sir Alex Ferguson stepped down from the top job at Old Trafford to enjoy retirement. David Moyes will be the man to fill his considerable shoes, after the former Everton boss was hand-picked by Fergie to be his successor.

But will United be winners under another Scot? With the future of Wayne Rooney still undecided, and some patchy pre-season form, it hasn't been the smoothest of starts for Moyes.

Across town at Manchester City there has also been change as Roberto Mancini was ousted after his failure to win a trophy and replaced by Manuel Pellegrini.

The squad already has a new look to it, with City bringing in £90million worth of talent in Fernandinho, Alvaro Negredo, Stevan Jovetic and Jesus Navas. The pressure will be on Pellegrini to return the Premier League crown to the Etihad.

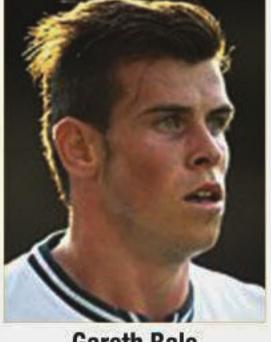
Trying to break the Manchester hegemony will be Chelsea, who have seen the return of the 'Special One', Jose Mourinho.



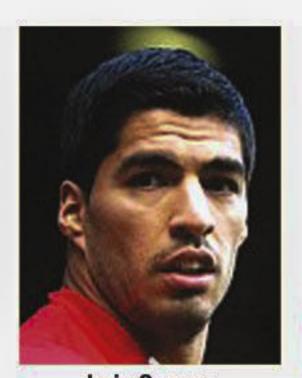
David Moyes



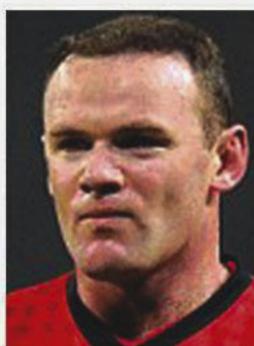
Jose Mourinho



Gareth Bale



Luis Suarez



Wayne Rooney

Bent when he was in charge of Tottenham and is delighted to bring the 29year-old international to Craven Cottage.

Bent joins

England striker Darren Bent

long loan move from Aston

Villa to Fulham, where he

will link up with his former

Bent was Villa's record

January 2011 but he slipped

in the pecking order at Villa

Dutchman Jol signed

behind Christian Benteke

signing when he arrived

manager Martin Jol.

from Sunderland in

Park last season.

has completed a season-

Fulham

AFP, London

"Darren Bent is a striker I have always admired. He has shown in the Barclays Premier League that he is composed and clinical in front of goal but, even if he is not scoring, he is involved in some good link-up play, creating opportunities for his team-

mates," Jol said. "I'm delighted that he has joined us, he gives us pace up front and I am confident that he will add to our goals scored tally this season."

Reports said the deal does not include an option to buy next summer.

The Portuguese's return has seen the Blues or going, least of all the player himself, it summer of inactivity. installed as the bookies' favourites, helped seems. along by investment in Andre Schurrle and Shrewd investment has Norwich City But we can't wait. Roll on the next nine Marco van Ginkel. The club are still chasing Rooney and his signature could see a power shift from Manchester to London.

The battle for fourth place appears hotter than ever, with Tottenham investing to bid to close the one point gap to Arsenal and secure that elusive fourth spot. But all the good work of bringing in Paulinho, Nacir Chadli and Roberto Soldado will be undone if key man Gareth Bale decides his future lay elsewhere.

Arsenal fans have again been frustrated by the lack of transfer activity. The free transfer of Yaya Sanogo from Auxerre is their only bit of completed business this summer, despite a high-profile chase for Liverpool's Luis Suarez.

On Suarez, nobody at Anfield seems to have the faintest idea whether he is coming

looking at a potential top-half finish, while months... Aston Villa and Sunderland have made a number of changes as they look to improve on last season's positions.

Swansea will look to improve again as well as make their mark in Europe.

Newly-promoted Cardiff City have made their ambitions clear by smashing their transfer record three times, while Palace also broke the bank to bring in Dwight Gayle from Peterborough. Steve Bruce has made some carefully considered signings that could help Hull City stay up.

Elsewhere, long-serving Stoke City manager Tony Pulis was replaced by Mark Hughes and Roberto Martinez stepped into Moyes' shoes at Everton. Newcastle United finally got Loic Remy after a frustrating

What's going to happen? Who knows.

FIXTURES

Saturday

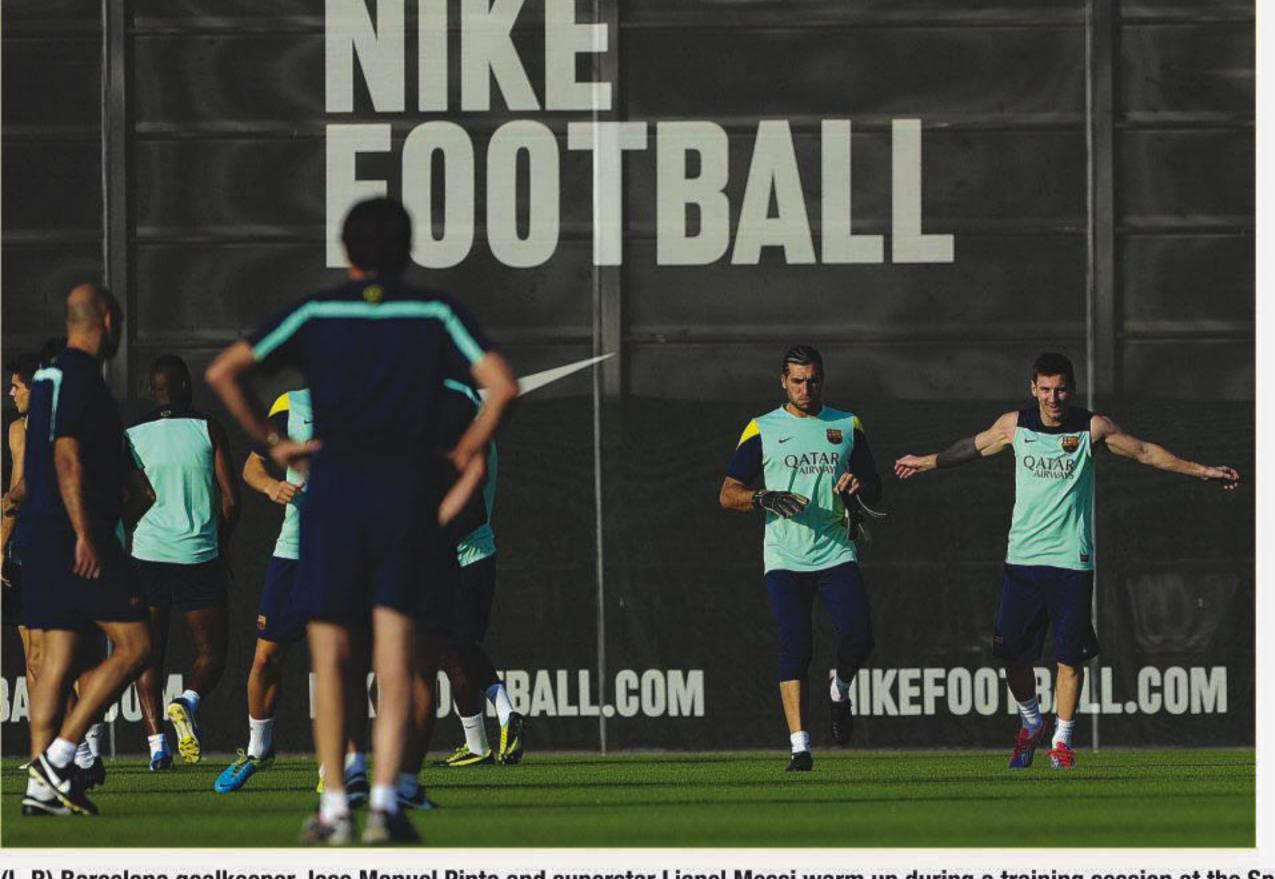
(1400GMT unless otherwise stated): Liverpool v Stoke City (1145GMT), Arsenal v Aston Villa, Norwich City v Everton, Sunderland v Fulham, West Bromwich Albion v Southampton, West Ham United v Cardiff City, Swansea City v Manchester

Sunday

United (1630MT)

Crystal Palace v Tottenham Hotspur (1230GMT), Chelsea v Hull City (1500GMT)

Monday





(L-R) Barcelona goalkeeper Jose Manuel Pinto and superstar Lionel Messi warm up during a training session at the Sports Center Joan Gamper while Real Madrid midfielder Xabi Alonso heads the ball as coach Carlo Ancelotti looks on at the Valdebebas training ground on Thursday.

AFP, Berlin

or France.

Real Madrid midfielder

Sami Khedira is set to stay

at the Santiago Bernabeu

this season after his agent

fer rumours linking the

poured cold water on trans-

German international with

a possible move to England

"Sami (Khedira) will

again play at Real this

daily Bild on Friday.

tinued Neubauer.

season," Khedira's agent

"I don't know who

amuses themselves by com-

ing up with these rumours

and no help to Sami," con-

The 26-year-old has just

returned from international

duty where he was involved

and it's all a bit annoying

Jorg Neubauer told sports

Spanish Liga gets underway

AFP, Madrid



Barcelona midfielder Xavi Hernandez believes his side will rekindle their intensity and pressing under the tutelage of new manager Gerardo "Tata" Martino. The Argentine was

appointed less than four weeks before Barca kick off the defence of their league title against Levante on Sunday, after Tito Vilanova had to resign due to on-going health problems.

However, Xavi believes the squad are adjusting well to Martino's methods and has backed the new coach to be a success despite his lack of manage-

rial experience in Europe. "He is a leader, capable, prepared and has experience," the 33-year-old told Barcelona sports daily Sport.

"He is transmitting a lot to us. We are recovering a little of the intensity and rhythm that perhaps we lost for various reasons towards the end of last season. We are pressing very well and working well physically.

"He is adding things that he is influencing a lot. For example, on set-pieces we are working differently. We are adjusting and he is a guy that is very clear about what he wants."

Martino's insistence on pressing high up the field was very evident in his only game at the Camp Nou so far as Barca destroyed Santos 8-0 in a friendly that formed part of the deal to bring Neymar to the Spanish cham-

pions. The Brazilian international will also

make his competitive Barcelona debut against Levante, but World Player of the Year Lionel Messi is a doubt as he continues to recover from the quadriceps injury that forced him to miss Argentina's friendly with Italy on Wednesday.

Captain Carles Puyol will definitely be absent for the Catalans after he underwent knee surgery to remove a cyst last month, but Cesc Fabregas and Pedro Rodriguez should be fit to play despite missing Spain's friendly with Ecuador in midweek due to minor injuries.

Real Madrid also get their league campaign underway on Sunday with a new man in charge as Carlo Ancelotti makes his bow at the Santiago Bernabeu where Real Betis are the Monacobackin June. visitors.

Los Blancos have enjoyed a superb pre-season that encompassed victories over Paris Saint-Germain, Chelsea and Inter Milan and Ancelotti will have a wealth of midfield options to choose from following the capture of Isco and Asier Illarramendi from Malaga and Real Sociedad respectively.

Arguably the most enticing fixture Saturday of the opening weekend though comes at the Ramon Sanchez Pizjuan where a new-look Sevilla side host Atletico Madrid.

Atletico enjoyed a fantastic campaign last season as they finished third and won the Copa del Rey. As a result they will face Barcelona in the first leg of the Spanish Super Cup next week and have Champions League football to look forward to.

Negredo and Gary Medel.

Sunday.

competitive."

Real Sociedad v Getafe (1700 GMT), Valladolid v Athletic Bilbao (1900 GMT), Valencia v Malaga (2100 GMT)

Sunday

Barcelona v Levante (1700 GMT), Real Madrid v Real Betis, Osasuna v Granada (both 1900 GMT), Sevilla v Atletico Madrid (2100 GMT)

However, coach Diego Simeone has

"We need to continue in the same

insisted it is important that his team

maintain the consistency they showed

in the league last season, starting on

way, looking for the consistency we

had last season. Therefore, we can't

look beyond the present and that is

not get away from going game by

game. We have had a good pre-season,

especially physically, and we have been

Baptistao are likely to be involved for

Atleti as they try to compensate for the

loss of Radamel Falcao, who joined

Atleti hasn't compared to that at Sevilla

and coach Unai Emery could hand

debuts to as many as 10 new recruits as

the Andalusians have rebuilt following

the departures of Jesus Navas, Alvaro

However, the transfer activity at

New signings David Villa and Leo

"We need to start again at zero and

Sevilla," he told the club's website.

Monday

Paraguay in midweek. Reports had linked the player with a move to Chelsea where his former manager Jose Mourinho is now in charge while Paris

in the 3-3 draw against

Saint-Germain were also rumoured to be interested in bringing him to the Parc des Princes. Khedira, who won his

40th cap against the Copa America finalists, joined Real in 2010 after coming up through the youth system at Stuttgart.

Khedira to stay at Real



Arjen Robben has said Mario Goetze's imminent league debut for Bayern Munich can only be a good thing for the defending champions ahead of Saturday's Bundesliga trip to Eintracht Frankfurt.

Goetze, 21, came off the bench and scored twice for Bayern in Sunday's friendly win at Hungarian champions FC Gyor, his first appearance since tearing a hamstring while playing for previous club Borussia Dortmund in the Champions League semi-

finals last season. Having cost Bayern 37 million euros (US\$49.2m), Goetze is another top name coach Pep Guardiola needs to accommodate in his star-studded midfield.

Goetze is an option alongside Spain Under-21 captain Thiago Alcantara in an attacking midfield role, flanked by France winger Franck Ribery and Germany's Thomas Mueller, leaving Dutchman Robben on the bench.

The 29-year-old, who scored Bayern's winning goal in May's Champions League final against Dortmund, only returned to the starting line-up last season after injury to Toni Kroos, but the he said competition for places is a healthy thing in the Bayern ranks.

"It was our strength last season that we never lost our quality, even when players dropped out with injury," Robben told German daily Bild.

"You have to trust yourself and not be afraid of the opposition.

"And with a World Cup at the end of the season, even if you sit out the occasional game, it could be a positive thing at the end

Goetze set for debut

of the day." With 10 full international midfielders in the Bayern squad, Brazil's Luiz Gustavo is on the verge of a move to VfL Wolfsburg accord-

just now. While Bayern kicked off the season with a 3-1 win over Borussia Moenchengladbach last Friday, Eintracht were hammered 6-1 at

ing to reports while Munich travel to a

Frankfurt side who are licking their wounds

promoted Hertha Berlin. And they could be forgiven for feeling a sense of trepidation ahead of this weekend's game, given that Bayern have not lost in any

of their last 19 away matches in the Bundesliga.

Bayern's Spain star Javi Martinez will also be looking to maintain his remarkable Bundesliga record of having yet to lose a German league match after 25 wins and three draws.

Champions League finalists Dortmund host promoted Eintracht Braunschweig on Sunday with Germany midfielder Ilkay Gundogan out for two weeks with a back injury he aggravated playing for his country in Wednesday's 3-3 draw with Paraguay.

(kick-offs 1330 unless stated, all times GMT)

Saturday

VfB Stuttgart v Bayer Leverkusen, VfL Wolfsburg v Schalke 04, Werder Bremen v Augsburg, Freiburg v Mainz 05, Hamburg v Hoffenheim, Eintracht Frankfurt v Bayern Munich, Borussia Moenchengladbach v Hannover 96 (1630)

Sunday

Nuremberg v Hertha Berlin, Borussia Dortmund v