

STAR Cricket
England v Australia
 Fifth Test, Day 1
 Live from 4:00pm
ESPN/STAR Sports
English Premiership
 Chelsea v Aston Villa
 Live from 1:45am (Thursday)

TEN Action
UEFA Champions League
 (Play-off, First Leg)
Fenerbahce v Arsenal
 Live from 12:00am (Thursday)
 Spanish Super Cup
Atletico Madrid v Barcelona

Million tickets go on sale

AFP, Rio de Janeiro



The first batch of nearly one million tickets for the 2014 World Cup in Brazil went on sale on the internet on Tuesday.

The chase for tickets began at 1000 GMT, even though World Cup qualification is far from over and the draw for the final phase does not take place until December 6.

At least 300,000 of the tickets that went on sale are reserved for "those over 60 years old, students and recipients of the Bolsa Familia family grant", the International Football Federation (FIFA) said on its internet site.

Those tickets are branded Category 4, cost between \$15 and \$82.50 (11-62 euros), and are available only to Brazilians.

Foreigners can buy tickets in the other three categories, which cost much more.

Tickets in those categories for the opening match on June 12, 2014 at the Itaquerao stadium in Sao Paulo cost between \$220 and \$495 while those for the final at Rio de Janeiro's Maracana on July 13 will set back fans a minimum of \$440 up to \$990.

The first phase of sales, relating to around a third of the total number of tickets available, lasts until October 6, after which a ballot will be held to determine the successful applications.

So far only hosts Brazil, Australia, Japan, South Korea and Iran have booked their places at the finals.

The World Cup will take place across 12 cities with around 600,000 tourists expected to attend the tournament.



Manchester City forward Sergio Aguero (L) scores the second goal during their Premier League encounter against Newcastle United at the Etihad Stadium on Monday.

PHOTO: AFP

Pressure on Barca

AFP, Madrid



Atletico Madrid coach Diego Simeone put pressure on Barcelona ahead of Wednesday night's first leg of the Spanish Super Cup by saying winning the trophy is more important for the Catalans.

Simeone, who has already led Atletico to success in the Europa League, European Super Cup and Copa del Rey in little over 18 months in the job, believes his side have nothing to lose against the Spanish champions, who started the defence of their league title with a 7-0 demolition of Levante on Sunday.

"The Super Cup is not more important for us than them. Finals are important for everyone. Their status as favourites makes it more important for them because they have the obligation to win it," he told a press conference on Tuesday.

"Barcelona are without doubt the better team. They have (Lionel) Messi, the best player in the world, and they have bought a player that could be the best in the world in Neymar.

"They have (Andres) Iniesta, Xavi, Pedro and Alexis (Sanchez). They have various

players that are important and it is normal that they are favourites.

"With the economic power they have, they are able to assemble this team that we can enjoy because watching Barcelona is a pleasure."

Despite his complementary words towards Barca, the Argentine also sounded confident that Atletico's containing style of play could work to their advantage over the two legs of the tie.

Atletico themselves started their league campaign with a fine 3-1 win away to Sevilla and Simeone believes that match can be used as a template on how to combat Barca's possession-based game.

"On Sunday, Sevilla had 65 per cent possession and we had 37 per cent, but we had more shots, more corners and more goals.

"It is always important to have possession, but with a final purpose. We have a style with less possession because of the players we have.

"They have more, but with a final explosion. They were the inventors of this style and the rest have copied it.

"We need to have patience and be secure and solid in these type of games to take advantage of our opportunities."

City's 4-goal warning to rivals

REUTERS, Manchester



Manchester City started their Premier League campaign in scintillating fashion on Monday with a stylish 4-0 win at home to 10-man Newcastle United that will ring alarm bells for the rest of their title rivals.

With City spending around 90 million pounds (\$141.03 million) on attacking talent for new manager Manuel Pellegrini, it was notable all the goals came from players in last season's squad - David Silva, Sergio Aguero, Yaya Toure and Samir Nasri.

Any sense of dressing room unrest last season under Roberto Mancini had evaporated as Pellegrini's charges, assisted by new boys Fernandinho and Jesus Navas, showed they had listened to his call for an attractive, attacking style of football.

Last season's runners-up took just six minutes to open the scoring with Silva heading in after Steven Taylor failed to deal with Edin Dzeko's shot across the goal.

They doubled their lead on 22 minutes when a low shot from Aguero, set up by a neat flick from Dzeko, went in off the far post.

City's job was made even easier just before the stroke of halftime when defender Taylor was sent off after swinging an arm at Aguero and they made the man advantage count five minutes after the break with Toure's sizzling free kick.

The hosts made it four on 75 minutes when substitute Samir Nasri slotted home and could have had many more if it had not been for some excellent saves by Newcastle keeper Tim Krul as they sent a clear message of intent to their title rivals.

The main victim of Krul's dives and parries was the outstanding Dzeko, who seemed to have been

given a new lease of life after some below-par showings under Mancini and the Bosnian was unlucky not to score from a host of chances he conjured.

The only blot on the day for City was the sight of captain Vincent Kompany limping off with what looked like a groin problem.

With champions Manchester United thumping Swansea City 4-1 in their opener on Saturday and Chelsea beating Hull City 2-0 on Sunday, City were keen to demonstrate that they too meant business.

Their cause was helped by hapless Newcastle defender Taylor, who only half cleared Dzeko's shot that set up Silva's opener, was outpaced by Aguero for the second, appeared to handball another Aguero effort before being sent off before halftime.

The visitors, who had left out midfielder Yohan Cabaye after an approach from Arsenal, had also

lost Jonas Gutierrez to injury just before the break to make the task of playing a whole second half against a hungry City with 10 men even more daunting.

The entire stadium was on its feet when Toure netted the hosts' third with a thumping free kick over the wall and out of reach of Krul.

Newcastle's woeful defending was exposed yet again with 15 minutes to go when Nasri, who had come on for the lively Aguero around the hour-mark, had plenty of space to send in a low left-footed shot.

Considering new signing Alvaro Negredo, the Spain striker who scored four goals in his final La Liga game for Sevilla, was only introduced 10 minutes from time and had a goal wrongly disallowed for offside, City fans have good reason to believe there could be plenty more goalfests to come this season.

Lions thrash BD A

SPORTS REPORTER

Centuries from Luke Wright (143 off 68) and Gary Balance (115 off 89) led the England Lions to a thrashing 202-run victory over Bangladesh A in the first one day of the three-match series at the County Ground in Bristol yesterday.

Batting first the Lions posted a mammoth 353 for 4. In reply Bangladesh A were bundled out for 151 in 47 overs. The Lions made a slow start after being put into bat and were poised at 112 for 3 at the end of 29 overs. However, Wright's whirlwind innings which included 10 sixes and 11 fours changed the scenario of the game.

In reply, the visitors were in trouble right from the start when opener Anamul Haque was dismissed for a duck. The visitors' highest scorer was captain Jahurul Islam who scored an 80-ball 36. Wright, who finished with figures of 2 for 5 with the ball, was adjudged the player of the match.

Parker joins Fulham

REUTERS, London

England midfielder Scott Parker has joined Fulham on a three-year deal, the Premier League club said on Monday.

The 32-year-old left Tottenham Hotspur for an undisclosed fee after spending two years at the north London club.



Deportivo Riestra's emotional motivator, Argentina legend Diego Maradona (R), speaks with a player after winning their debut match 2-1 against San Miguel in Buenos Aires on Monday.

PHOTO: AFP

Pardew fumes at Arsenal

AFP, London

Newcastle manager Alan Pardew accused Arsenal of showing disrespect after turning down the Gunners' £12 million bid (14 million euros, \$19 million) for France midfielder Yohan Cabaye on Monday.

Cabaye has been targeted by Arsene Wenger as the Arsenal manager looks to bolster his injury-hit squad after Saturday's dismal 3-1 defeat at home to Aston Villa on the opening weekend of the Premier League campaign.

But Wenger's offer for Cabaye is reported to have fallen well short of Newcastle's £20 million valuation and Pardew was furious that Arsenal chose the day of the Magpies' Premier League opener against Manchester City to make their approach.

Pardew was forced to leave out Cabaye at the last minute because he felt the timing of the bid may have unsettled the former Lille midfielder and in his absence Newcastle produced a poor display in a 4-0 defeat.

"You prepare for three days with a player of that talent and that was taken away from us because we were shown disrespect from Arsenal on the eve of the game," Pardew said.

"For him to have his head turned in that way was difficult.

"Why it couldn't wait until tomorrow I don't know."

Villa test for Chelsea

AFP, London



After a triumphant homecoming as Chelsea manager at the weekend, Jose Mourinho must steel his side for Wednesday's visit of a buoyant Aston Villa in the Premier League.

The Portuguese made his return to the home dug-out at Stamford Bridge on Sunday after six years away and quickly slipped back into the old routine, overseeing a 2-0 defeat of Hull City that extended his run of unbeaten home games in the English top flight to 61.

The game was over once Frank Lampard made it 2-0 with a 30-yard free-kick in the 25th minute, but Mourinho's men can expect a more searching examination at the hands of Paul Lambert's Villa.

The Midlands club stunned Arsenal 3-1 at the Emirates Stadium on Saturday and with Christian Benteke already in goal-scoring form, they look poised to banish memories of last season's nervous dalliance with relegation.

Lampard, one of eight survivors in the squad from Mourinho's first stint, says Chelsea's aim for this season is to mount a sustained title challenge after finishing third last season and sixth in 2012.

"The Premier League is very difficult these days. The games come thick and fast and consistency is difficult," said the 35-year-old England midfielder, a two-time title-winner under Mourinho in 2005 and 2006.

"What the manager did last time he was here was to keep us on the ball so we won week in, week out, and that's what we have to do again.

"What matters now is Aston Villa come on Wednesday after beating Arsenal with a very quick and young team, so we can't rest on our laurels. We have to keep kicking on."

With a trip to Manchester United to follow on Monday, Mourinho may elect to rotate his squad for a game that has been brought forward due to Chelsea's involvement in the UEFA Super Cup in Prague on August 30.

Juan Mata will hope to feature after remaining on the bench against Hull due to a calf complaint, while either Romelu Lukaku or Demba Ba could be asked to deputise for Fernando Torres in attack.

Ashik, Aireen out in semis

SPORTS REPORTER

Sprinter Ashik Kumar Halder and Aireen Akter were eliminated from the semifinals of the boys' and girls' 100m sprints respectively in the 2nd Youth Asian Games in Nanjing, China yesterday. Ashik finished his race in 11.47 seconds to end up joint 14th among 16 participants while Aireen finished her race in 12.78 seconds to grab the 15th position.

Meanwhile, swimmer Nazma Khatun finished 22nd among 26 participants in the 50m butterfly event with a timing of 31.79 seconds. Weightlifter Mabia Akter finished eighth among nine participants in the 58kg category. The three-on-three basketball team lost against South Korea by 16-21 points.

Verratti extends PSG contract

AFP, Paris

Italy midfielder Marco Verratti has extended his contract with Paris Saint-Germain for an additional year, tying him to the French champions until June 2018.

PSG revealed the news in a statement on Tuesday after a summer in which Verratti reportedly demanded a significant salary increase at the Parc des Princes.

Verratti moved to Paris from Pescara for 11 million euros in the summer of last year and played 36 matches last season, including nine in the Champions League.