

Riether says sorry to Januzaj

AFP, London

Fulham right-back Sascha Riether apologised to Adnan Januzaj as he accepted a Football Association charge of violent conduct for stamping on the Manchester United rising star.

The incident took place near the end of United's 3-1 Premier League win over Fulham at the London club's Craven Cottage ground on Saturday but was not seen by referee Lee Probert or the linesmen.

However, Riether didn't escape punishment, becoming the first player to be charged under a new FA trial scheme where a panel of three former referees reviews video evidence of incidents not seen by match officials.

The German defender, who had until 6pm local (1800GMT) Tuesday to respond to the charge, took to Twitter to accept the punishment and apologise for his actions.

"I want to say I am sorry to Adnan Januzaj," he said via his account, saschariether. "It was very unlike me and I can only say that frustration got the better of me.

"I also want to apologise to my teammates, fans and everyone at the Club, for the ban incurred following Saturday's match.

"I will accept the consequences of my actions, and hope to put it behind me when I return.

"I want the fans to know that I will be working hard to stay fit and will be ready to continue fighting for the club as soon as I am able."



Manchester City striker Alvaro Negredo celebrates one of his three goals against CSKA Moscow during their Champions League encounter at the Etihad Stadium on Tuesday.

PHOTO: AFP

'We can beat anyone'

AFP, Manchester



Manchester City manager Manuel Pellegrini believes that his side should fear no team in Europe after they crushed CSKA Moscow 5-2 to reach the Champions League last 16.

Having demolished Norwich City 7-0 in the Premier League on Saturday, City have now scored 12 goals in their last two matches.

Alvaro Negredo led the charge against CSKA on Tuesday with a hat-trick, while Sergio Aguero claimed a brace as City qualified for the knockout rounds after successive group-stage exits in 2011 and 2012.

Asked if City could beat any team in the competition, Pellegrini replied: "I think so. But at this level, every team can beat us also.

"There are the most important teams in Europe, the most important teams in Spain, in Italy, in France. I think we have a strong squad and we will see where we can go in this Champions League."

After hosting Group D's bottom side Viktoria Pilsen on November 27, City will conclude the group phase away to defending champions and pool leaders Bayern Munich.

Bayern, City reach last 16

AFP, Paris



Holders Bayern Munich and English side Manchester City became the first teams to qualify for the knockout stages of the Champions League on Tuesday.

Bayern made heavy weather of beating Viktoria Pilsen 1-0 while City reached the knockout stages for the first time, after flopping in the group stage the last two seasons, with a 5-2 thumping of CSKA Moscow in Manchester.

Real Madrid came close to joining them but having gone 2-1 up in Turin against Juventus they were pegged back to 2-2 with a goal by former Athletic Bilbao striker Fernando Llorente the Italian club's saviour.

Cristiano Ronaldo's opener for Real, Gareth Bale got their other, took him level for the all time total of goals scored in the group phase with eight.

French champions Paris Saint Germain also missed out on claiming

RESULTS

Shakhtar Donetsk (UKR) 0 Bayer Leverkusen (GER) 0
Real Sociedad (ESP) 0 Manchester United (ENG) 0
FC Copenhagen (DEN) 1 (Braaten 6)
Galatasaray (TUR) 0
Juventus (ITA) 2 (Vidal 41-pen, Llorente 65) Real Madrid (ESP) 2 (Cristiano Ronaldo 52, Bale 60)
Olympiakos (GRE) 1 (Manolas 13) Benfica (POR) 0
Paris Saint Germain (FRA) 1 (Ibrahimovic 70)
Anderlecht (BEL) 1 (de Zeeuw 68)
Manchester City (ENG) 5 (Aguero 3-pen, 20, Negredo 30, 51, 90+3) CSKA Moscow (RUS) 2 (Doumbia 45+1, 72-pen)
Viktoria Pilsen (CZE) 0 **Bayern Munich (GER) 1**

their place on Tuesday as they were held to a surprising 1-1 draw at home to previously pointless and goalless Belgian outfit Anderlecht, who the French side had thumped 5-0 in their

match a fortnight ago in Brussels.

In the end with the restive PSG fans booing their side, who nonetheless extended their unbeaten start to the season in all competitions, it was Swedish star Zlatan Ibrahimovic who grabbed them a point for the hosts after they briefly trailed.

City got the better of CSKA with a Sergio Aguero double and a hat-trick from Alvaro Negredo.

While City won with something to spare -- though their defence looked shaky at times and could be exposed against tougher opposition -- their city rivals Manchester United laboured to a 0-0 draw at Real Sociedad, who gained their first point of the campaign.

Robin van Persie summed up United's frustrating evening hammering his second-half penalty against the post, though, Ashley Young looked to have dived to win it in the first place.

To cap it all United's Belgian international midfielder Marouane Fellaini was sent off in the closing

BOA'S LONG-TERM CAMP Ratna, Rabbi to be included

SPORTS REPORTER

2010 SA Games and 2010 Commonwealth Shooting Championship gold medallist Sharmin Akther Ratna is finally going to be included in the long-term training camp for next year's Commonwealth Games and Asian Games after being left out of the initial short-list of shooting discipline by the federation.

"We sat with the officials of the shooting federation today (Wednesday) and they admitted that Ratna is at the moment the number one shooter in the country and she is one of the medal hopes. They kept her out of their initial list due to her poor performance in practice and for some disciplinary issues," said Bangladesh Olympic Association's (BOA) training and development committee member secretary wing commander Rafiqul Islam after the meeting.

Rafiqul also informed that Ratna is going to be one of eight shooters for the long-term training alongside athletes from archery, taekwondo, boxing and swimming but she would face expulsion from training if same disciplinary allegations are raised against

her again.

Ratna is the country's lone female shooter who has won three gold medals in 10m Air Rifle at the international stage and hit a highest 398 points out of 400.

Like Ratna, Rabbi Hasan of BKSP, who won gold medal in the 10m Air Rifle event of Bangladesh Games, is also likely to be included in the list after BOA's intervention.

BOA president and army chief general Iqbal Karim Bhuiyan had formed a six-member athletes' finalisation committee to look into the matter after some newspapers including The Daily Star ran a story which said top athletes from five disciplines -- shooting, athletics, weightlifting, badminton and table tennis -- were left out in the initial 65-member list.

Rafiqul also informed that they are likely to send a 26-member list to the BOA president for final approval for the ten-month intensive training camp. The 26-member list includes eight shooters, six archers, six taekwondoists, four swimmers and two boxers but the BOA training committee has asked the boxing federation to send two

Casillas shows his worth

REUTERS



If Iker Casillas has become frustrated at losing his untouchable status at Real Madrid, he certainly did not show it on Tuesday in the 2-2 draw at Juventus.

Casillas, restricted mainly to Champions League outings by new coach Carlo Ancelotti this season, responded to speculation that he might leave the club with a string of world-class saves in an epic battle against the Italian champions.

His performance, arguably the best on the Real side, earned congratulations from opposite number Gianluigi Buffon, another talismanic goalkeeper.

"I'm happy Gianluigi Buffon offered me his congratulations at the end of the game," said Casillas, 32.

"It's not easy only playing every two weeks but that's the way it is."

Casillas, who hinted last month he could leave the club if he did not get more opportunities, brilliantly stopped Pepe from scoring an own goal, saving with his feet from six metres' range after the defender diverted Paul Pogba's flicked cross towards goal.

He also used his feet to stop a downward Claudio Marchisio header after the Juve midfielder outjumped Marcelo to get to a Carlos Tevez cross at the far post.

Another pick from an outstanding crop was in the second half when he managed to stop another Marchisio effort at point-blank range.



Real Madrid goalkeeper Iker Casillas (L) makes a stunning save during their Champions League clash against Juventus in Turin on Tuesday.



PHOTO: AFP

SA take 2-1 lead

SPORTS DESK



South Africa thrashed Pakistan by 68 runs in the third One Day International against Pakistan in Dubai yesterday to take a 2-1 lead in the five-match series. Despite some rearguard action from Wahab Riaz and Sohail Tanvir in the eighth wicket partnership, which added 61 runs, Pakistan fell 68 runs short of South Africa's total of 259-8.

Riaz top-scored with 33 while Tanvir added 31, but that was not enough as Pakistan had struggled right through their innings. Leg-spinner Imran Tahir was the wrecker-in-chief with four wickets for 53 runs, claiming the scalps of Misbah-ul-Haq, Asad Shafiq, Umar Akmal and Saeed Ajmal cheaply.

Earlier, Jean-Paul Duminy and Faf du Plessis hit solid half-centuries to guide South Africa to 259-8. Duminy scored 64

and added an invaluable 70 for the fourth wicket with AB de Villiers (34) to turn South Africa's good start to a challenging total after they won the toss and decided to bat.

The 29-year-old left-hander hit three boundaries off 89 balls and gave the innings the much needed impetus with a 66-run fifth wicket stand with David Miller (34), adding 65 in the last ten overs.

Du Plessis had steadied the innings during his 60-ball knock, adding 77 for the second wicket with Quinton de Kock who made 40 from 57 balls.

Paceman Mohammad Irfan finished with 3-45 in his 10 overs.

SCORES IN BRIEF

SOUTH AFRICA: 259 for 8 in 50 overs (De Kock 40, Du Plessis 55, Duminy 64, De Villiers 34, Miller 34; Irfan 3-46, Ajmal 2-38, Afridi 2-40)

PAKISTAN: 191 all out in 44.3 overs (Riaz 33, Shehzad 32, Tanvir 31; Tahir 4-53, Morkel 2-35)

Rooney challenges Arsenal

AFP, San Sebastian



Manchester United forward Wayne Rooney has said Arsenal still have to prove they have the consistency to fight for the Premier League title this season.

The two sides meet this Sunday with the North Londoners eight points clear of United at the top of the table after a blistering start to the campaign.

United's form is also on the up, though, as a 0-0 draw with Real Sociedad on Tuesday night extended their unbeaten run in all competitions to eight games.

And Rooney believes Arsenal -- who haven't won a trophy for over eight years -- still have to show they can last the distance of the 38-game season.

"We've beaten Arsenal many times in the past. They are in good form at the

minute, they're top of the league, so we know it is going to be a difficult game.

"But we have to go into the game confident that this is the game that will bring us back into the mix.

"We'll have to wait and see where they are in March. We've seen before that they've been in the top two until February, March time and then dropped off so it's down to them to try and stay there.

"They are doing brilliantly and are in a great position so it is down to us to match them.

"We know we are playing better and are stating to do well. There are only 10 games gone so there is no big worry at the minute."

Rooney started the 0-0 stalemate in San Sebastian, but was replaced by Robin Van Persie with half an hour remaining to keep him fresh for Sunday's clash at Old Trafford.

Van Persie went onto miss a penalty and saw another effort strike the post as United failed to secure the win that would have all but sealed their place in the last 16.

The English champions still lead Group A by a point from Bayer Leverkusen with two games remaining.

However, Rooney was frustrated not to have taken all three points having had by far the better of the chances in a cagey encounter.

"We're disappointed not to get the three points. I thought we were the better team, but overall it is another clean sheet and decent result."

And Rooney is sure that Van Persie's spot-kick failure won't affect his confidence ahead of the meeting with his old side at the weekend.

"Most forwards in the world miss penalties, it is one of those things. That won't affect him I'm sure."

Navy join MSC at top

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Navy Chess Team joined holders Mohammedan SC on top of the Rupahali Sarees Premier Division Chess League at the close of the fifth round at the Bangladesh Chess Federation hall room yesterday.

Bangladesh Navy beat Gopalganj Chess Club 4-0 to earn eight match points from five games, equal to Mohammedan SC, who however played a game less.

Titas Club were in second position with seven points as they beat Sreejan Chess Club 4-0.

In the day's other games, Leonine Chess Club beat Faith Chess Club 3-1 and Access Group Chess Club drew with Pritam-Prism Chess Club 2-2.

Schwarzer quits int'l football

AFP, Sydney

Veteran goalkeeper Mark Schwarzer, Australia's most-capped player, has announced his retirement from international football, reports said Wednesday.

The 41-year-old had been keen for a swansong at the 2014 World Cup in Brazil but has now informed Football Federation Australia he is quitting with immediate effect, Fox Sports said.

Currently the back-up keeper to Petr Cech at Chelsea, Schwarzer has played 109 times for Australia since his debut in 1993.

But his recent move from being Fulham's first-choice gloveman to playing second fiddle to Cech raised questions as to whether he would be able to hold onto his starting role in the team.