

## Anderson moving to Fiorentina

REUTERS, London

Manchester United midfielder Anderson is undergoing a medical at Italy's Fiorentina ahead of a potential transfer, the Serie A club said on Friday.

The Brazil international has made 179 appearances for United, but his seven-year association with the club looks set to end after Fiorentina posted a photo on their Twitter account of the 25-year-old undergoing medical checks.

Anderson, who joined from Porto in a combined deal with Nani for 30 million pounds (\$49 million), has been on the fringes of the first team this season having started three games under new manager David Moyes.

His time at United has been blighted by inconsistency, with the player unable to tie down a first-team place, showing only glimpses of his potential.

He also struggled with injury and fitness problems during his time at Old Trafford.

## Novak charges thru' Serena smashes record

AFP, Melbourne



Defending champion Novak Djokovic charged into the Australian Open fourth round Friday and Serena Williams smashed the 39-year-old record for wins at the tournament as a sweltering heatwave finally eased.

Djokovic, gunning for a fourth straight victory at the season's first Grand Slam, simply had too much firepower against Uzbekistan's Denis Istomin as he racked up his 24th consecutive win in Melbourne.

The world number two is also unbeaten since last year's US Open, making him narrow favourite over hot rival and 13-time Grand Slam champion Rafael Nadal, whom he cannot meet until the final.

Djokovic, 26, eased through the first two sets and, after being broken for the first time when serving for the match, he broke straight back and wound it up 6-3, 6-3, 7-5.

Earlier, Williams opened the day's events on a baking hot Rod Laver Arena but she appeared untroubled as she beat Daniela Hantuchova 6-3, 6-3 to reach the fourth round for the loss of 12 games.

Shielded from the sun by a pink cap, the 32-year-old world number one wielded a killer serve as she overpowered the Slovak in 80 minutes, setting up a meeting with Serbia's Ana Ivanovic.

It was Williams' 61st victory at the

tournament, breaking the record set by 11-time champion Margaret Court up to 1975. Williams' first Australian Open match win was on her debut aged 16 in 1998.

China's Li Na soon joined Williams in the next round but she took a very different route after flirting with disaster in a three-set struggle with Lucie Safarova.

Safarova narrowly missed a forehand on match point in the second set and Li then played a nerveless tiebreak before taking it 1-6, 7-6 (7/2), 6-3 in two-and-a-half hours.

Li will now play Russia's 22nd seed Ekaterina Makarova, who beat Romania's Monica Niculescu, while Italian Flavia Pennetta beat Mona Barthel to set up a clash with Germany's Angelique Kerber.

In the evening session, Australia's Sam Stosur suffered further heartbreak at her home Grand Slam when she threw away a one-set lead against Ivanovic.

Stosur, who held her nerve when a first-set tiebreak was interrupted by rain -- while she was on set point -- then faded as Ivanovic won 6-7 (8/10), 6-4, 6-2 to set up a meeting with Williams.

In the men's draw, Spain's super-fit Ferrer again proved impregnable as he ground down France's Jeremy Chardy 6-2, 7-6 (7/5), 6-2 to reach his 15th consecutive Grand Slam fourth round.

Seventh seed Berdych ended the fairytale run of Damir Dzumhur, the first man from Bosnia and Herzegovina to compete at a Grand Slam.



Serena Williams of USA is ecstatic after her victory over Slovakia's Daniela Hantuchova at the Australian Open in Melbourne yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

## Swimming camp from today

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Swimming Federation is set to start a training camp for the upcoming 20th Commonwealth Games from today at Bangladesh Navy's swimming pool with six participants including three female swimmers. The Games will be held in Glasgow, Scotland from July 23 to August 3.

Laila Noor and Golam Mustafa will be conducting the training programme which includes swimmers Mahfizur Rahman Sagor, Mahfuza Akter Shila, Nazma Khatun and Marium Khatun from Bangladesh Navy, Shahjahan Ali Rony from Bangladesh Army and Ariful Islam from BKSP, said a press release yesterday.

## Sachin to get Bharat Ratna on Feb 4

CNN-IBN, New Delhi

Indian cricket legend Sachin Tendulkar will receive the Bharat Ratna on February 4. According to a report, president Pranab Mukherjee will confer India's highest civilian award to Tendulkar at a ceremony to be held next month.

Tendulkar, who retired from international cricket on November 16, 2013, was chosen for Bharat Ratna Award on the same day.

The Master Blaster played his 200th and final Test against West Indies at Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai. Tendulkar became the first sportsperson to be picked for Bharat Ratna.

At 40, Tendulkar is the youngest to be chosen for Bharat Ratna. He will be the 42nd recipient of the honour.

## MU face Chelsea test

AFP, London



Having stemmed a run of three straight defeats by beating Swansea City last Saturday, Manchester United will look to provide further evidence of their backbone at Chelsea this weekend.

The 2-0 win over Swansea enabled United to avenge their FA Cup elimination by the Welsh club a week earlier, but victories for all the teams above them meant they remained 11 points off the pace in the Premier League.

When the sides met in August, drawing 0-0 at Old Trafford, the season was only a week old, but while champions United have floundered since then, Chelsea are riding high in third place ahead of Sunday's encounter.

The London club have already dispatched Manchester City and Liverpool at Stamford Bridge this season and have never lost at home in

the league under manager Jose Mourinho, but United midfielder Darren Fletcher is undaunted.

"We are expected to win every game and it doesn't matter if it is Swansea at home or Chelsea away -- it is viewed as a disaster if we don't win," the Scottish

### FIXTURES

Saturday

(1500 GMT unless otherwise stated):

Arsenal v Fulham, Crystal Palace v Stoke City, Liverpool v Aston Villa (1730 GMT), Manchester City v Cardiff City, Norwich City v Hull City, Sunderland v Southampton (1245 GMT), West Ham United v Newcastle United

Sunday

Swansea City v Tottenham Hotspur (1330 GMT), Chelsea v Manchester United (1600 GMT)

Monday

midfielder told the United website.

"We will treat it like we do with every other game. We will go to win. We know it is a great challenge going to Chelsea, but we can take some confidence from the Swansea game and we are fully confident of going down there and getting more of the same."

Leaders Arsenal displayed the sort of nerve required to mount a sustained title challenge when they won 2-1 at Aston Villa on Monday evening, having seen all of their title rivals win over the previous weekend.

Arsenal welcome relegation-threatened Fulham to the Emirates Stadium on Saturday and manager Arsene Wenger has been eager to play down injury concerns surrounding his side.

The Frenchman will be without Theo Walcott, Mikel Arteta, Aaron Ramsey and Thomas Vermaelen for the visit of Fulham, while Nacho Monreal and Nicklas Bendtner are doubtful.

## Looking to pile pressure

AFP, Madrid



Real Madrid can pile the pressure on La Liga leaders Barcelona and Atletico Madrid by moving into a three-way tie at the top of the table with a win away to struggling Real Betis on Saturday.

Madrid closed the gap on their title rivals to three points last weekend thanks to a hard-fought 1-0 win away at Espanyol, whilst Atletico and Barca played out a 0-0 draw at the Vicente Calderon.

All three sides are still competing on three fronts as they progressed into the quarter-finals of the Copa del Rey in midweek ahead of a return to Champions League action next month.

Despite a run of good results, Madrid's performances have failed to convince in recent weeks with 91 million euro (\$124 million, £77 million) signing Gareth Bale looking particularly off-colour.

A win for Real would mean they would

move joint top for the first time since mid-September and Los Blancos will be heavy favourites against a Betis side rooted to the foot of the table and without a win in the league 12 games.

Barcelona are in action on Sunday as they travel to Levante where Lionel Messi is expected to start.

### FIXTURES

(all times GMT)

Saturday

Real Betis v Real Madrid (1500), Elche v Rayo

Vallecano (1700), Granada v Osasuna (1900), Espanyol v Celta Vigo (2100)

Sunday

Getafe v Real Sociedad (1100), Villarreal v Almeria (1600), Levante v Barcelona (1800), Atletico Madrid v Sevilla (2000)

Monday

## Neymar out for several weeks

REUTERS, Madrid

Barcelona's Brazil forward Neymar will be sidelined for three to four weeks after a scan confirmed he had damaged tendons in his right ankle, the La Liga leaders said on Friday.

Neymar had to be replaced midway through the first half of Thursday's 2-0 King's Cup last 16, second-leg win at Getafe.

The injury was the latest setback for the 21-year-old, who had not started a match since Christmas due to a lack of fitness and a stomach bug.

"Tests conducted this morning confirmed that the player Neymar Jr. has a sprained right ankle," Barca said in a statement on their website.

"The approximate period of time he will be out is three to four weeks," they added.

Neymar should be back for Barca's Champions League last 16, first leg at Manchester City on February 18 but he will miss Sunday's La Liga game at Levante as well as this month's two-legged Cup quarterfinal, also against the Valencia-based side.

Before they play City in Europe's elite club competition, Barca have La Liga matches against Malaga, Valencia, Sevilla and Rayo Vallecano and the club said he would definitely miss the Malaga and Valencia games.



Barcelona superstar Lionel Messi celebrates his second goal against Getafe during their Copa del Rey second round match at the Coliseum Alfonso Perez Stadium on Thursday.

PHOTO: AFP

## Messi fires Barca

AFP, Madrid



Lionel Messi scored twice, including one brilliant individual effort, in his first start of the year as Barcelona beat Getafe 2-0 in the second-leg of their Copa del Rey last 16 tie to progress 6-0 on aggregate.

With his side already leading 4-0 from the first-leg, thanks in part to two goals from Messi on his first appearance as a substitute after two months out, Martino made nine changes to the side that started Saturday's La Liga 0-0 draw at Atletico Madrid.

Neymar was also making his first start of the year after recovering from a bout of gastroenteritis.

However, his return lasted only 23 minutes as he had to be helped off the field by two members of the Barca medical staff as he turned his ankle in attempting to cross the ball from the left side of the area.

The visitors shrugged off the loss of the Brazilian, though, as Cristian Tello's driven cross was turned in at the near post by Messi

### RESULTS

Villarreal 0 Real Sociedad 1 (Ros 32)

Real Sociedad win 1-0 on aggregate

Getafe 0 Barcelona 2 (Messi 43, 63)

Barcelona win 6-0 on aggregate

two minutes before half-time.

And the best was still to come from the diminutive Argentine as he danced past three Getafe challenges before rounding goalkeeper Jordi Codina and finishing from a tight angle for his fourth goal of the tie just after the hour mark.

Messi went on to complete the 90 minutes and Martino said he was now confident that his compatriot is now fully match fit.

"He was out for 60 days, but physically he feels good and you can see he is now ready to play the 90 minutes. It was just a matter of time until he did it."

Martino also took the opportunity to hand Xavi Hernandez his 700th appearance for the club as he replaced Cesc Fabregas

## Dominant show from Editor's XI

SPORTS REPORTER

National cricket selectors Faruk Ahmed and Habibul Bashar live not far away from Mohammadpur's Residential Model School and College premises, so they will consider themselves lucky that they were not present to see the match between The Daily Star's in-house teams -- the Editor's XI and the Managing Editor's XI. Had they been present, it may well have ruined all of their plans for the upcoming home series against Sri Lanka, so complete and impressive was the Editor's XI's dominance as they won by eight wickets.

In a 15-over match on a difficult pitch, Editor's captain Abul Kalam Azad chose to field first and from then on it was all one-way traffic as opening bowlers Tuhin Shubhra Adhikary and Pankaj Karmakar stifled the Managing Editor's XI batsmen. To go for the kill, Azad brought on star player Fazlur Rahman, who was reluctant to bowl because of a pain in his leg. He then conjured memories of Kapil Dev's heroic injury-hampered spell against Australia in Melbourne 1981, taking three wickets to snuff out the fight from the opposition.

When chasing a modest 87 Fazlur and Naimul Karim, who hit the first six of the match, made light of the difficult wicket and put on 50-plus for the first wicket. Fazlur remained not out as Editor's XI contained home with more than four overs to spare.

Career at Meghna Bank

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