

# Bayern slaughter Kaiserslautern

AFP, Berlin

Holders Bayern Munich will face Borussia Dortmund in next month's German Cup final after cruising to a 5-1 win over second-division Kaiserslautern in Wednesday's semifinal.

Bayern reached their third consecutive domestic cup final by bouncing back from back-to-back Bundesliga defeats to see off Kaiserslautern, who had knocked out top-tier sides Bayer Leverkusen and Hertha Berlin en route to the semis.

Goals by Bastian Schweinsteiger, Toni Kroos, Thomas Mueller, Mario Mandzukic and Mario Goetze saw Bayern go through to the May 17 final at Berlin's Olympic Stadium.

The Bavarian giants, who wrapped up this season's Bundesliga title with a record seven games to spare, will face Dortmund, who shocked Bayern 3-0 in Munich in the league last Saturday, in a repeat of last season's Champions League final.

Pep Guardiola's Bayern had few problems against the 'Red Devils' of Kaiserslautern as Germany midfielder Schweinsteiger hit the crossbar and then headed home an Arjen Robben corner with 24 minutes gone.

Kroos doubled the hosts' lead at the Allianz Arena on 32 minutes to make it 2-0 at the break.

Robben then won a penalty five minutes into the second half when he was fouled by Kaiserslautern defender Chris Loewe and Mueller fired home the spot-kick.

Kaiserslautern striker Simon Zoller headed home a consolation goal on the hour mark, with his side surviving on less than 30 percent possession, before Mandzukic netted the hosts' fourth to end any hopes of a fight-back.

The Croatia international, who scored a hat-trick in the 5-0 quarter-final drubbing of Hamburg, converted a Goetze cross on 78 minutes.

Goetze then tapped home Bayern's fifth just before the final whistle as the attacking midfielder beat Kaiserslautern's off-side trap.



Bayern Munich striker Mario Mandzukic celebrates his goal against Kaiserslautern during their German Cup semifinal in Munich on Wednesday. PHOTO: AFP

## Siddikur steady on curtailed day

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh's ace golfer Siddikur Rahman was at joint 40th position on a rain-interrupted first round of the Maybank Malaysian Open at the Kuala Lumpur Golf and Country Club yesterday. Siddikur was on par, having gone through 17 holes where he traded one birdie for one bogey, which left him seven strokes off leader Lee Westwood of England.

The former world number grabbed the clubhouse lead with a seven-under-par (65), followed by Nicolas Colsaerts of Belgium a stroke behind.

A total of 156 golfers from around the world are taking part in the 2.75 million dollar event. The first day's play was suspended in the afternoon for over an hour which means that 42 players will return early today to finish their remaining first-round holes before joining the rest for the second round.

## Yuvi drives Bangalore

PTI, Sharjah

Yuvraj Singh struck form with a brilliant unbeaten half-century as Royal Challengers Bangalore crushed Delhi Daredevils by eight wickets in their Indian Premier League opener here on Thursday.

Yuvi (52 not out, three 4s and five 6s) shared 84 runs from just 7.9 overs with captain Virat Kohli (49 not out) for the unconquered third wicket as their side chased down the target of 146 with 20 balls to spare at the Sharjah Cricket Stadium.

Kohli continued with his top form in T20 though he was dropped twice -- on 23 and 24. He hit two fours and three sixes.

RCB left out Chris Gayle due to a back problem but made a strong start though they lost IPL debutant Nic Maddinson (4), the young opener from Australia, in the second over.

Earlier, the Daredevils found themselves in tatters before Jean-Paul Duminy's brilliant unbeaten half-century took them to a decent 145 for four.

Put into bat, the Daredevils were reduced to 35 for four in the eighth over with their top order batsmen coming a cropper before Duminy (67 not out) and Ross Taylor (43 not out) shared 110-runs for the unbroken fifth wicket stand.

**SCORES IN BRIEF**  
DD: 145 for 4 in 20 overs (Duminy 67 not out, Taylor 43 not out, Vijay 18; Aaron 1-9)  
RCB: 146 for 2 in 16.4 overs (Yuvi 52 not out, Kohli 49 not out, Patel 37; Shami 1-30)  
**Result:** Bangalore T20 won by 8 wickets.  
**Player-of-the-match:** Yuzvendra Chahal.

## Premier Kabaddi from today

SPORTS REPORTER

The 13-team Walton Smart Phone 14th Premier Division Kabaddi League begins today at the Kabaddi Stadium in Paltan.

Split into four groups, 13 teams including defending champions Bangladesh Army and runners-up Border Guard Bangladesh will initially compete in league matches from April 18-20. Later, four group champions will play in the title-deciding super league from April 22-25.

Five matches will be held today.

## 'Prince of Wales' hungry for more

REUTERS, Madrid

Gareth Bale's brilliant winner in Wednesday's King's Cup final against Barcelona gave the world's most expensive player his first taste of major silverware and the Wales winger is hungry for more.

Bale was hailed as the "Prince of Wales" in the Spanish media on Thursday after he collected the ball wide on the left near the halfway line in the 85th minute at Valencia's Mestalla stadium, shrugged off the attentions of Barca centre back Marc Bartra and charged towards goal.

Arriving in the penalty area and with Barca defenders bearing down on him, he coolly slotted the ball between the legs of goalkeeper Jose Manuel Pinto to secure a 2-1 success and set off wild celebrations in the Spanish capital.

It was a breathtaking end to the 228th meeting between the arch rivals and Bale proved he can step up on the big occasions after a debut season disrupted by niggling injuries, during which many questioned his exorbitant price tag.

His performance also helped Real make light of the absence of injured top-scorer Cristiano Ronaldo and Bale easily outshone Barca's four-times World Player of the Year Lionel Messi, who had another quiet game, and their marquee signing of the close season Neymar.

"It is certainly the most important goal of Bale's career," Real coach Carlo Ancelotti told a news conference. "It came at a decisive point of the match."

Before joining Real from Tottenham Hotspur for a fee of 100 million euros (\$138 million) in the close season, the only trophy in Bale's cabinet was an English League Cup won with Spurs in 2008.

Thanks to his stunning effort, Real are still in with a chance of becoming only the second team after Barca in 2008-09 to win a treble of La Liga, Champions League and King's Cup.

They host holders Bayern Munich in their semi-final, first leg in Europe's elite club competition on Wednesday and are three points behind leaders Atletico Madrid in La Liga with five games remaining.

Bale told reporters scoring the winner in the Cup final was "a dream come true".

"Not just because I scored but because of the work of the whole team," the 24-year-old added.

"It was really special. We've won the first of the three

## Stagehand of God

AFP, Buenos Aires

Diego Maradona's iconic wonder-goal against England in the quarterfinals of the 1986 World Cup has inspired a new Buenos Aires play.

The play -- "Cosmic Kite, Match of the Century" - takes its name from the Argentine radio commentary which accompanied the goal by broadcaster Victor Hugo Morales.

Maradona's famous solo effort, which saw him weave past six English defenders in a mesmerizing dribble from the halfway line before scoring, is often ranked as the greatest World Cup goal of all time.

The goal ultimately secured a 2-1 victory for Argentina in a match also made famous for Maradona's opening "Hand of God" goal.

The emotionally charged win came four years after Britain's 1982 war with Argentina over the Falkland Islands, which Argentina calls the Malvinas.

The new play is a comedy which takes place in a Buenos Aires apartment as three fans gather to watch the game.

"The dictatorship was over, it was the start of democracy in Argentina," actor Jorge Vigetti told AFP. "After losing the war of the Malvinas, the England game was seen as a rematch."

## Bale a la Bolt

AFP, Madrid

Spain on Thursday hailed Gareth Bale's wonder goal that downed arch-rivals Barcelona to win the Copa del Rey final.

Spanish newspapers paid homage to Bale's strength and power while the Welsh winger himself declared that winning the cup was "a dream come true".

Madrid daily Marca recreated his 58 metre run at an average speed of 27 kilometres an hour on its front page.

Inside he was christened "Gareth Bolt" thanks to a burst of pace reminiscent of Jamaica's six-time Olympic sprint gold medallist Usain Bolt.

The As daily led with "Bale brings the bullet", whilst he was also roundly believed to have won his personal head-to-head with Barca's Brazilian star Neymar in the battle of last year's big money buys.

The goal proved to be the perfect riposte

for a player who had received plenty of criticism for going missing in previous big games this season.

Bale more than filled the shoes of World Player of the Year Cristiano Ronaldo. He was involved in Angel di Maria's opener for Madrid before winning the game six minutes from time with his stunning strike.

A beaming Bale appeared before the world's media happy to admit that winning his first trophy as a Madrid player had been the highlight of his career to date.

"It is a dream come true," he said.

"It feels amazing. It is my first trophy and hopefully the first of many."

However, the 24-year-old was not as amazed as most about the run and finish that tilted the game in Madrid's favour, having scored in similar fashion for Wales against Iceland back in March.

Bale set off down the left wing and despite Marc Bartra pushing him well off the side of the pitch, he galloped through on goal to slot low past Jose Manuel Pinto.

## Man City run aground

AFP, London

Liverpool's position atop the Premier League table was strengthened on Wednesday when title rivals Manchester City were held to a 2-2 draw at home to bottom club Sunderland.

Beaten 3-2 at Liverpool on Sunday, City were bidding to close to within four points of Brendan Rodgers's side in the first of their two games in hand.

Fernandinho's 2nd-minute goal at the Etihad Stadium put City on track, but after Connor Wickham scored twice in the last 17 minutes, the hosts needed a fortuitous 88th-minute

**RESULTS**  
Everton 2 (Naismith 61, Mirallas 86) Crystal Palace 3 (Puncheon 23, Dann 49, Jerome 73) Manchester City 2 (Fernandinho 2, Nasri 88) Sunderland 2 (Wickham 73, 83)

equaliser from Samir Nasri just to rescue a point.

The result left City six points below Liverpool in third place and although Manuel Pellegrini's side still have a game in hand, the title is inching ever closer to Anfield.

City were without injured midfielder Yaya Toure, but top scorer Sergio Aguero returned to their starting

line-up alongside Alvaro Negredo as Pellegrini made five changes to the team that lost at Liverpool.

The hosts made an ideal start, with Negredo winning the ball back and finding Aguerro, whose pass enabled Fernandinho to open the scoring from eight yards.

Fernandinho should have made it 2-0 when he blazed over from a Pablo Zabaleta knock-down after Vito Mannone had saved from Aguerro, but Sunderland then created several chances to equalise.

John O'Shea twice headed wide from set-pieces, while Fabio Borini and Adam Johnson each fired efforts narrowly wide before half-time.



Sunderland forward Connor Wickham (R) scores one of his two goals against Manchester City during their Premier League encounter at the Etihad Stadium on Wednesday. PHOTO: AFP

## Snooker comes back to Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Chittagong

The Lotto 29th National Snooker Championship is set to take place at the Chittagong Club from tomorrow with a total of 57 players taking part in the 8-day event.

This is the first time since 1993 that the Bangladesh Billiard and Snooker Federation (BBSF) is organising the championship in the port city.

Speaking at a press conference, Syed Mahbub, the BBSF general secretary, emphasised on how most sports events are usually Dhaka centric which is not helping development of sports and emergence of new players in other districts.

The participating players come from eight clubs including Chittagong Club, Dhaka Club, Gulshan Club, Narayanganj Club and Comilla Club. The event is being sponsored by Italian sportswear brand Lotto.