



Silva pens new deal

AFP, London

David Silva has signed a new five-year contract with Manchester City, the English Premier League champions announced Tuesday.

Spain playmaker Silva, who has won two Premier League titles with City, is now set to stay with the north-west side until the end of the 2018/19 season.

Silva, 28, has been a central figure at Eastlands since joining the club from Spanish side Valencia in 2010.

"From the moment I joined the club four years ago it has felt like a second home to me," Silva, who has also won the FA Cup and League Cup with City, told the club's website on Tuesday.

"On and off the pitch, I feel incredibly content and fulfilled professionally and personally, so why wouldn't I want to stay and keep winning trophies with this fantastic team?"

"Over the last four years, we have achieved so much together, establishing City as a dominating force in England and now I can see no reason why we won't become one of the top teams in the world."



WHEN THE PROTECTOR TURNS NEMESIS: Chittagong Zila Kriara Sangthta (CJKS) is the custodian of the Outer Stadium next to the MA Aziz Stadium in Chittagong. The apex sports body in the port city is supposed to maintain this ground and make sure boys and girls of that locality happily play on it round the year. Unfortunately the CJKS often rent this facility for commercial purposes to earn some quick bucks. The picture taken on Tuesday shows most part of the ground is occupied by a tent of Nitol Motors for the display of their products. When contacted an EC member of the CJKS Allam Mohammad Iqbal said: "We have rented this ground following a request from Army. We will not rent this facility out anymore." However, it remains to be seen if that promise is meant to be broken.

PHOTO: ANURUP KANTI DAS

Scandal-hit Tavecchio elected

AFP, Rome

Scandal-hit Carlo Tavecchio was elected president of the Italian football federation on Monday, winning 63.63 percent of the vote despite a furore sparked by a racist comment during his campaign.

"I will be president of everyone, especially those who expressed their dissent," an emotional Tavecchio told a press conference following his election.

Tavecchio, 71, sparked outrage in Italy three weeks ago when he referred to African players as "banana eaters" during a speech saying Italy should enforce stringent requirements for non-European Union players.

"Here we get 'Opti Poba' who previously ate bananas and then suddenly becomes a first-team player at Lazio," he said.

Moved to tears after his election, Tavecchio admitted he was "little at ease with words", but promised to "better my rough ways" after a difficult race for the post of president, during which tens of thousands of people had signed a petition calling on him to withdraw his candidacy.

QPR appoint Hoddle

REUTERS, London

Former England manager Glenn Hoddle has been appointed first-team coach at Queens Park Rangers, the Premier League club said on Tuesday.

The 56-year-old, who took charge of England at the 1998 World Cup, has not coached since leaving Wolverhampton Wanderers in 2006 and has been working as a television pundit.

Hoddle will work alongside manager Harry Redknapp at Loftus Road as QPR try to establish themselves in the Premier League after being promoted from the Championship last season.

"I am really pleased to take up Harry's offer to come in and work with him, Kevin (Bond) and Joe (Jordan)," Hoddle told the club's website.

'No more new recruits'

AGENCIES, Berlin



Bayern Munich will not sign any more players during the current transfer window despite a series of injury setbacks as they prepare for Wednesday's German Super Cup against Borussia Dortmund.

Last season's domestic double winners, seeking revenge for last year's defeat by Dortmund in the same game, will be without injured defender Rafinha and winger Franck Ribery is doubtful.

Long-time absentee Thiago Alcantara's comeback will also have to wait with coach Pep Guardiola refusing to pin down a date for his return.

"No, no new players," Guardiola told reporters in Munich. "Thiago will be back and Rafa will be back and Franck will be back so I am happy about this squad."

Defender Rafinha suffered torn ankle ligaments on Saturday and will be out for some time.

Spain international Thiago Alcantara sustained knee ligament damage in May and was ruled out of the World Cup.

"Thiago will be back soon. He really

wants to come back as soon as possible but for these issues we have a doctor and you should ask him," Guardiola said.

Fellow Spaniard Guardiola, in his second season at the Bavarians, will also have to handle the fatigue of his club's six World Cup winners who have only recently returned to training following Germany's triumph in Brazil last month.

"It's great for these players and obviously for the club," Guardiola said. "They have time, I know what they can do but they need time. At the moment we have no time."

He said he had only a handful of fully fit players for the game in Dortmund and would make strategic decisions about other players.

"We have training today. I have until the last moment to decide who plays. Who can play for how long, 15 minutes or 20 or 30 minutes."

"This is a final, and it is not about testing and trying out things. No, no, I am clear about what we need to do. I know who our opponents are, how hard it is going to be. It is not about testing anything."

"I think I only have eight or nine players who can play the full 90 minutes. So I have to see who can play and for how long," Guardiola said.

Bordeaux snap up Contento

AFP, Bordeaux

Bordeaux have signed defender Diego Contento from German champions Bayern Munich on a four-year contract, the French club announced on Monday.

Contento, 24, had spent his entire career at Bayern having coming up through the club's youth system before making his first-team debut in 2010.

During his time at Bayern Contento, primarily a left-back, was part of a squad that won the Bundesliga three times as well as the German Cup on three occasions and the 2013 Champions League.

He found himself stuck behind Philipp Lahm, David Alaba and Rafinha in the pecking order at Bayern though and made just 49 league appearances over the past five seasons.

Chilean Pitbull ready to show his bite

REUTERS, Milan



Chile defender Gary Medel took part in his first training session with Inter Milan on Monday after completing his move from English Championship side Cardiff City.

"I'm finally at Inter and I'm thrilled to be part of this great club," he told Inter's television channel.

Asked if it is true that he is nicknamed the Pitbull, Medel replied: "Yes, it is... I bite."

Italian media said the transfer was finalised on Saturday but it was not confirmed by Inter at the time.

Medel, who can feature in the centre of the defence or midfield, was one of the outstanding players as Chile reached the last 16 of the 2014 World Cup, beating title holders Spain on the way.

The 27-year-old, famous for his extraordinary will to win, spent one year at Cardiff having previously played for Universidad Catolica, Boca Juniors and Sevilla.

Raised in one of Santiago's toughest neighbourhoods, Medel has recently put behind him a poor disciplinary record which saw him receive 13 red cards and become involved in a series of controversial incidents.

In September 2007 he was given a six-match ban for spitting at an opponent during a Chilean league match against Deportes Concepcion and one month after that he was arrested for drink-driving.

In January 2009 Medel was injured when his car crashed on the highway from Vina del Mar to Santiago and he was thrown out of the vehicle.

Recalling the incident later, he said that as he sat slumped in the wreckage of his vehicle he could not feel his legs and feared he was paralysed from the waist down.

A month later a teenage girl fell to her death from the ninth-floor balcony of his apartment. An investigation cleared him of wrongdoing but the incident cast a shadow over the player.

Medel once said that the sport was his lifeline. "For my own sake it's a good job that I chose football," he explained.

Luiz debuts with victory

AFP, Naples



Brazil centreback David Luiz began life with his new club French champions Paris Saint Germain with a 2-1 win in a friendly against Italian side Napoli on Monday in Naples.

The 27-year-old -- who cost the French side a reported 50million euros (£39.9m, \$67.1m) when he signed from Chelsea in June -- fared better than his national and club captain Thiago Silva, who had to go off in the 13th minute and trudged to the dressing room with his right thigh strapped with ice.

Both only returned to France last week after taking a holiday following the World Cup where Luiz wept openly following the 7-1 humiliation by eventual champions Germany in the semi-finals -- Luiz captained the side as Silva was injured -- and then lost to the Dutch in the third place match.

Two others who also only recently returned Argentinian Ezequiel Lavezzi and Uruguayan striker Edinson Cavani received different reactions from the home crowd for whom they were heroes until they left in 2012 and 2013 respectively.

Lavezzi -- who impressed at the World Cup and was arguably Argentina's most effective player till he went off at half-time of the 1-0 defeat to Germany in the final -- went off to a standing ovation but Cavani was booed and jeered throughout.

Lavezzi's compatriot Gonzalo Higuain gave Rafael Benitez's side the lead six minutes into the second-half only for PSG's Swedish star Zlatan Ibrahimovic, who had come on at the beginning of the second-half, to level four minutes later.

Luiz went close to opening his account for PSG with a thunderous header from a corner in the 76th minute but it went over the bar.

The visitors secured victory with a superb solo effort by Javier Pastore, the Argentinian outfoxing several Napoli defenders before slotting home 13 minutes from time.



Paris Saint-Germain star Zlatan Ibrahimovic (C) celebrates his goal with teammate Marquinhos (L) during their friendly match against Napoli in Naples on Monday.

PHOTO: AFP

Statistics show progress

REUTERS, London



English soccer has always been renowned for its pace, power and tough-tackling but new research appears to quantify the idea that current Premier League teams are playing a different game now than as recently as six years ago.

A study conducted by the University of Sunderland and Chris Barnes, the Head of Sports Science at West Bromwich Albion, analysed the physical and technical performance levels of more than 1,000 Premier League players over 23,000 "match observations".

Over a seven-season period from 2006/07 to 2012/13 the findings showed how the English top flight has transformed its approach from long balls and 4-4-2 formations into a league dominated by

passing, possession and high-intensity.

After watching Barcelona enjoy great success with their tiki-taka style, many English clubs have tried to perfect their own versions of possession play.

Titled, "The Evolution of Physical and Technical Performance Parameters in the English Premier League," the study showed that players in the 2012/13 season produced 40 percent more passes with a greater success rate than in 2006/07.

Despite that increase, players in the 2012/13 season completed 84 percent of their passes compared to 76 percent in 2006/07.

"We can clearly see the evolution within the game between 2006/07 and 2012/13," Paul Bradley from the University of Sunderland said.

"It is likely that this is a consequence of players developing physically, technically and tactically in their preparation."

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