

What to Watch

DAY'S EVENT

BTV WORLD

Bangladesh U-23 v Nepal U-23

Friendly Match

Live from 4:00pm

TEN CRICKET

Sri Lanka v Pakistan

Second ODI (D/N)

Live from 3:00pm

TEN SPORTS

US Open

First Rd, Day 2

Live from 9:00pm

Bangladesh U-23 v Nepal U-23

Friendly Match

Time: 4:00pm

Venue: Bangladesh Army Stadium

LG

Life's Good

L70 Dual

09:00

Feb 24

MRP BDT 14,990

lgmobilebangladesh

01770433071

8-game ban on Simeone

GOAL.COM, Madrid

Atletico Madrid head coach Diego Simeone has been hit with a total ban of eight matches following his conduct during the Supercopa de Espana clash with Real Madrid.

Simeone was sent from the dugout in the first half of the second leg at the Vicente Calderon on Friday after arguing with the officials on the touchline. He then patted the fourth official on the head and sarcastically applauded the referee before heading to the stands.

The Argentine said earlier that he was willing to "pay the price" for his indiscretion, and the Spanish Football Federation (RFEF) has now deemed fit to punish him for four separate acts of misconduct, totalling an eight-match ban from the touchline.

In an official statement, the RFEF confirmed that Simeone has received a two-game ban for excessive protests over a decision, a four-game ban for striking the fourth official and two additional one-game suspensions for applauding the referee before continuing to remonstrate from the stands.

Yuvi's dad arrested!

PTI, Panchkula

Haryana police on Sunday night arrested Yograj Singh, father of cricketer Yuvraj Singh, in a case of late-night brawl over a car parking in Panchkula town.

Yograj, a former cricketer who has also worked as an actor in Punjabi movies, was held on late Sunday night following the violent clash between a group of his friends and NRI relatives and their neighbours.

Yograj and his friend allegedly attacked a former deputy superintendent of police and his two sons.

Along with Yograj, Panchkula police have arrested four more people including the former cricketer's friend Bhupinder Singh, former Chandigarh DSP Ashanand and his two sons Sumit Nand and Sunil Narang, both advocates.

Monaco take taxi, win finally

REUTERS, Paris

AS Monaco had to use taxis to get to the stadium after their bus broke down but their tale of woe this season was finally ended by Radamel Falcao's header in a 1-0 win at Nantes on Sunday.

The big spenders, who sold World Cup top scorer James Rodriguez to Real Madrid in July, had lost their opening two Ligue 1 encounters and rode their luck at times in Nantes.

Monaco goalkeeper Danijel Subasic gave away a penalty midway through the first half but saved Serge Gakpe's spot kick.

Falcao, who missed out on helping Rodriguez lead Colombia to the World Cup quarter-finals because of injury, is still feeling his way back to full fitness but planted an unstoppable header into the net on the stroke of halftime.

The goal followed great work by full back Layvin Kurzawa, who was excellent all match for Leonardo Jardim's side.

Monaco are 17th in the table, which is led by Bordeaux after Saturday's 3-1 victory at Nice made it three wins out of three. Stuttering champions and title favourites Paris St Germain are sixth on five points following Friday's 0-0 draw at Evian.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Barcelona superstar Lionel Messi (L) scores his second goal against Elche during their Primera Liga encounter at the Nou Camp on Sunday.

Reds complete Mario gamble

AFP, London

Liverpool completed their signing of AC Milan's Italy striker Mario Balotelli on Monday.

Balotelli, 24, emerged as a target for Reds manager Brendan Rodgers last week and Liverpool had been locked in talks with the former Manchester City star's agent since agreeing a reported 16-million-pound fee with Milan.

Those negotiations reached a successful conclusion on Monday and Balotelli's move was confirmed just hours before his new club face his old employers City in a Premier League clash at Eastlands.

"Liverpool can confirm they have completed the signing of Italy striker Mario Balotelli, subject to registration," a statement on the

club's website announced.

"The 24-year-old sealed his switch to Anfield from AC Milan after passing a medical and agreeing a long-term deal to become the Reds' ninth signing of the summer so far."

Balotelli is not eligible to feature against City, but he could travel to Manchester to watch the match after completing a one-on-one training session with the Reds' head of conditioning and fitness Ryland Morgans at the club's Melwood base.

In a statement on the club's website, Balotelli said: "I'm very happy. We've been talking about coming here and now I'm happy to be here."

"Liverpool are one of the best teams here in England and the football is very good here."

"It's a great team with young players, and that's why I came here."

Balotelli, who will wear the num-

ber 45 shirt, is believed to have agreed a three-year, heavily incentivised 90,000-pounds per-week contract as he returns to the Premier League after a troubled 18-month spell with Milan, where he often endured racial abuse from opposing fans.

He scored 30 goals in 54 appearances for Milan, but the Italian outfit were still willing to accept Liverpool's offer for the controversial star, who has netted 13 times for Italy, including the winner against England at the recent World Cup.

Balotelli's arrival on Merseyside represents a major gamble given his reputation as one of the sport's most notorious bad-boys.

As well as dazzling with some spectacular goals, Balotelli has also infuriated a series of managers during a chaotic career which has included spells with Inter Milan,

City and AC Milan, as well as with the Italy national side.

He clashed with Jose Mourinho on numerous occasions at Inter and also fell out with Roberto Mancini at City, with his eventual sale to Milan in 2013 prompted by a training ground fight with the then City boss.

Rodgers initially ruled out a move for Balotelli during the club's pre-season tour of the United States and he is believed to have asked for the player's contract to include strict clauses about his behaviour on and off the pitch.

But the desire to land a top-class replacement for Luis Suarez, who was sold to Barcelona before the start of the season, persuaded Rodgers to sanction the deal for Balotelli, who won the Premier League and FA Cup during his time at City and also lifted the Italian title three times with Inter.

Messi fires Barcelona

AFP, Madrid

Luis Enrique got off to a winning start as Barcelona manager as they shrugged off Javier Mascherano's first-half red card to beat Elche 3-0 thanks to two goals from Lionel Messi on Sunday.

Messi put the disappointment of losing the World Cup final in his last competitive outing behind him to open the scoring, but Barca were momentarily rocked by Mascherano's dismissal for denying a clear goalscoring opportunity moments later.

However, 18-year-old Munir El Haddadi made the game safe with a classy lofted finish on his debut a minute into the second-half before Messi rounded off the scoring.

Two goals in Barca's final pre-season friendly romp over Mexican side Club Leon on Monday had been enough to earn Munir his senior debut in the absence of the injured Neymar and suspended Luis Suarez.

And it was the 18-year-old who had the first meaningful effort of the game as he smashed a shot off the angle of post and bar on 22 minutes.

Barca's captain for the evening Andres Iniesta then also hit the bar from range as the hosts dominated possession without clearing too many clear-cut chances.

However, Elche were punished for giving away possession cheaply near their own area three minutes before half-time as Sergio Busquets played in Messi and he sidestepped two defenders before slotting home on his trusted left foot.

Minutes later, though, the complexion of the game appeared to have changed as Mascherano was shown a straight red card for clipping Garry Rodrigues as he galloped clear on goal.

Instead, Barca were barely bothered by Elche's numerical advantage as Munir flicked home Ivan Rakitic's pass into the far corner a minute after the restart.

Messi then put a seal on a comfortable three points for Barca as he again left three Elche defenders trailing before side-footing past the helpless Vicente Guaita.

Just one minute into Barcelona's La Liga opener against Elche at the Nou Camp, a black cat -- perhaps a cousin of Anfield cat -- scampered onto the pitch and enthralled the crowd. The cat evaded everyone for a little over a minute before a steward finally caught it. But as he carried it towards the tunnel, the cat broke free once again and made its escape.

PHOTO: AFP

Algerian league suspended

GOAL.COM

The Algerian Football Federation (FAF) has postponed next weekend's league fixtures following the death of Albert Eboesse.

The 24-year-old striker died after being struck on the head by an object thrown from the stands after JS Kabylie's 2-1 home defeat to USM Alger, in which he scored his side's only goal.

The FAF has now confirmed the temporary suspension of domestic competition, while the remainder of the Cameroonian's salary is set to be paid to his family.

A statement read: "All the matches of the championships of professional and amateur leagues... scheduled across the country for the weekend of August 29 and 30 are suspended and postponed until a later date. This is in homage to Albert Eboesse, who tragically died, and also to protest the irresponsible actions of some fanatics and hooligans that perpetuate violence in stadiums and has reached unacceptable proportions."

"FAE, the federal office and members of the general assembly will study soon other more coercive measures that may disqualify the offending club from all competitions."

Enrique delighted

AFP, Madrid

Barcelona boss Luis Enrique hailed Lionel Messi's on his return to competitive action after the disappointment of losing the World Cup final as he scored twice in a 3-0 win over Elche on Sunday.

"With Leo playing in his element we have taken the first step and now we move onto the second," said Enrique.

"It is clear that Messi is the best player in the world. He has a unique quality that it is easy to see. Giving assists, scoring goals, pressing, defending, he does everything."

Messi opened the scoring three minutes before half-time with a trademark left-footed finish, but the hosts briefly looked in trouble when Jaiver Mascherano was sent-off for denying a clear goalscoring opportunity moments later.

However, any Barca nerves were settled just a minute into the second-half as Munir El Haddadi doubled their advantage on his

senior debut and Messi classily rolled home his second of the game just after the hour mark to round off the scoring.

"If he wanted Messi could be the best defender in the world. We see him do even more difficult things in training against high quality opponents in his teammates," Enrique added.

"He has a magic wand and he will continue being the best in the world as long as he wants."

Big money summer signings Claudio Bravo, Jeremy Mathieu and Ivan Rakitic were also making their Barca debuts, but it was their latest wonderkid from the La Masia academy Munir who stole the show.

"I am very happy to have made my debut and that the team won the game," he said.

"It is an honour for me to score here at the Camp Nou with these players like Messi and score a goal."

The 18-year-old owed his chance to the absence of the injured Neymar and suspended Luis Suarez.

Monaco forward Radamel Falcao (L) celebrates his all-important goal with teammate Lucas Ocampos during their League One match at the La Beaujoire Stadium on Sunday.

PHOTO: AFP

Van Gaal unhappy

AFP, Sunderland

Louis van Gaal has demanded an immediate improvement from Manchester United after admitting their start to the season has not been good enough.

They avoided matching their worst opening sequence to a Premier League campaign since 1992 by earning a point with an unconvincing display in a 1-1 draw at Sunderland.

But after the first-day defeat at home to Swansea, the new Old Trafford manager was left with much to ponder, his assertion that his side need a miracle to win the title this season looking increasingly accurate.

He revealed confidence was low after seeing Juan Mata's goal at the Stadium of Light on Sunday cancelled out by Sunderland's Jack Rodwell to leave the former champions already five points behind the early pace-setters in their attempts to improve on a disappointing seventh-place finish in May.

"So much is down to confidence," van Gaal said. "In pre-season, our confidence was much better than it is now. We're working hard to improve and if we win the next match then that confidence will start to come back."

The Dutchman added: "The players are disappointed because we thought we would win today [Sunday], and yet we have one point and it's not good enough for United."

Kramer to the rescue

AFP, Berlin

World Cup winner Christoph Kramer scored in the final minute as Borussia Moenchengladbach came from behind to draw 1-1 with VfB Stuttgart in the Bundesliga on Sunday.

German midfielder Kramer came off the bench to cancel out Alexandru Maxim's 51st-minute opener for the visitors and deny Armin Veh a first win in his second spell as Stuttgart manager.

Antonio Ruediger had a goal rightly disallowed for the visitors on 32 minutes before Raffael headed off target for Gladbach.

The home team wasted an even better chance three minutes into the second half.