

what to WATCH

GAZI TV & TEN CRICKET
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Only T20!
Live from 6:00am (Thursday)
TEN CRICKET
Australia v South Africa

Triangular Series
Live from 1:30pm
STAR SPORTS1
England v India
Second ODI
Live from 3:30pm

TEN SPORTS
US Open
Second Rd, Day 3
Live from 9:00pm

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Lampard ends England career

AFP, London

England midfielder Frank Lampard announced his retirement from international football after a career spanning 15 years on Tuesday.

The 36-year-old's 106th and final cap for his country came on June 23 when he captained England in their final World Cup game against Costa Rica.

Lampard said in a statement released by his management company: "I have taken the decision to retire from international football.

"It has been a very tough decision for me to make which is why I have given it so much thought since the World Cup."

His haul of international caps puts him sixth in the all-time England list behind Peter Shilton, David Beckham, Steven Gerrard, who announced his England retirement last month, Bobby Moore and Ashley Cole.

Everton eye Eto'o deal

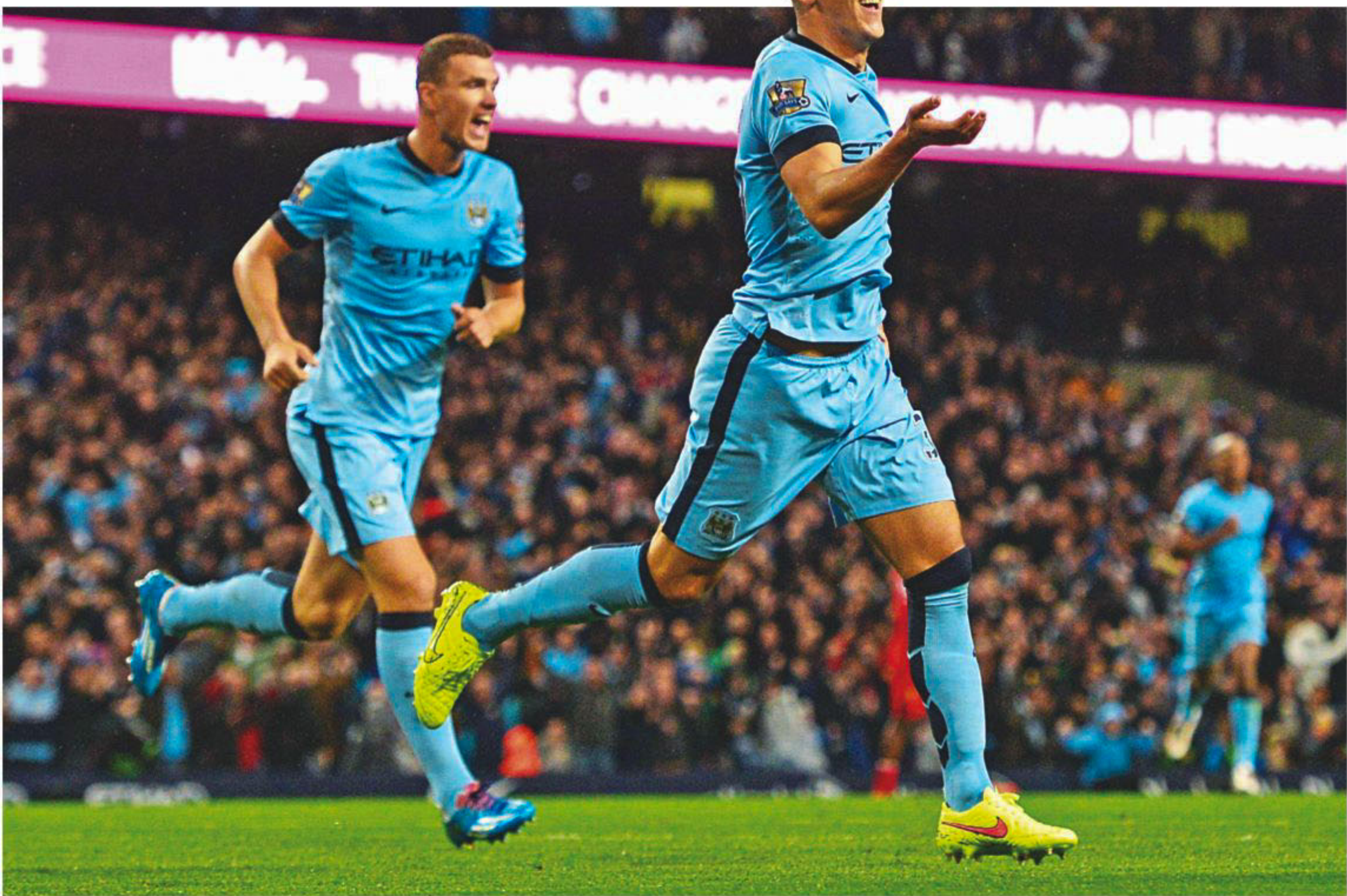
AFP, London

Everton are moving closer to signing Cameroon striker Samuel Eto'o before the end of the current transfer window, several British media organisations, including the BBC, reported Tuesday.

The 33-year-old forward became a free agent at the end of last season following his release by Chelsea.

Everton were reported to have held talks with the former Barcelona and Inter Milan forward last week.

It was thought those discussions had broken down but the Liverpool Echo newspaper said discussions had re-started, with the Merseyside club prepared to offer Eto'o a two-year deal should he complete a medical on Tuesday.



Manchester City striker Stevan Jovetic (R) celebrates his opening goal against Liverpool during their Premier League encounter at the Etihad Stadium on Monday.

PHOTO: AFP

Real cruise, Atletico held

AFP, Madrid



Real Madrid got their La Liga campaign off to a winning start as they beat newly promoted Cordoba 2-0 at home, but champions Atletico Madrid were held 0-0 away to

Rayo Vallecano on Monday.

Without the Manchester United bound Angel di Maria, Real were also far from convincing at the Bernabeu but got the three points thanks to Karim Benzema's first-half header and a characteristic thumping finish into the bottom corner from Cristiano Ronaldo in stoppage time.

However, there was no such joy for Atletico as with coach Diego Simeone watching on from the stands they played out a bore draw with Rayo.

Simeone had been handed an eight-match touchline ban earlier in

the day for his conduct towards the officials in the second leg of Atletico's Super Cup victory over Real on Friday and his side suffered a hangover from that match in a lacklustre performance.

Mario Mandzukic had been the match winner against Real, but the Croatian striker had an evening to forget at Valecas as he wasted Atletico's best two openings towards the end of the first-half as he fired into the side-netting from Cristian Ansaldi's low cross and then placed a shot too close to Rayo keeper Cristian Alvarez from the edge of the area.

Rayo had by far the better of the second-half, but despite their failings going forward, Atletico remained solid at the back.

Manucho had the best chance to win the game as he dove to meet Javier Aquino's cross, but his header was turned away by Atletico keeper Miguel Angel Moya.

RESULTS

Real Madrid 2 (Benzema 30, Ronaldo 90) Cordoba 0
Rayo Vallecano 0 Atletico Madrid 0

Cordoba were playing in their first top flight game for 43 years and nearly had a dream start against Real's galacticos when Mike Havenaar pulled his shor just wide from the edge of the area.

The European champions slowly began to impose themselves on the visitors as the first-half wore on and Juan Carlos had to be alert to parry powerful efforts from Ronaldo and Kroos.

Madrid did go in front on the half hour mark as Benzema ended his four-month goal drought at club level with a thumping header to power Kroos' corner in off the post.

However, Cordoba were nearly level from a corner of their own just before half-time when Havenaar got

between Casillas and the Real defence but saw his header fly just off target.

Cordoba appeared to take heart from that opportunity, though, as they were the better team after the break against disjointed Madrid.

Casillas was forced into his first serious save as he pounced on Matos' shot after an error from Alvaro Arbeloa.

James Rodriguez struggled to recreate his stellar World Cup form on his home league debut after a 75 million euro (\$99 million, £60 million) move from Monaco, but the Colombian did nearly make the game safe for Los Blancos with a fierce strike that Carlos did exceptionally well to parry to safety.

And despite failing to shine, Real did eventually ensure they started with a win as Ronaldo picked up the ball midway inside the Cordoba half and strode forward before unleashing a fine shot low past Carlos.



PHOTO: REUTERS

Liverpool's latest signing Mario Balotelli (R) watches his team during their Premier League match against Manchester City at the Etihad Stadium on Monday.

Mario glad to be back

AFP, Manchester



Mario Balotelli said he was glad to be back in the Premier League after the controversial Italy striker completed his £16 million (\$26.5 million, 20.1 million euros) move to Liverpool on Monday.

Balotelli left England in January 2013 when Manchester City sold him to AC Milan, but the 24-year-old endured a difficult time in Milan, where he was subjected to racial abuse by opposing fans.

After completing his switch to Anfield on a three-year contract worth a reported £90,000 a week, which includes an option for a further year, Balotelli conceded he had been wrong to ever leave England.

"I'm happy to be back because I left England and it was a mistake. I wanted to go to Italy, but I realised it was a mistake," Balotelli told Liverpool's website.

"English football is generally better. English football is beautiful."

Liverpool did not complete the transfer in time for Balotelli to play in their 3-1 loss at City on Monday, but he attended the match and sat in the directors' box wearing a dark top and a beanie hat.

He had earlier completed a one-on-one training session with Liverpool's head of conditioning and fitness, Ryland Morgans, at the club's Melwood base.

Balotelli earned a reputation as a troublemaker during his three-year stint at City, where his antics included setting fireworks off in his own house and brawling with then-coach Roberto Mancini.

MU break bank for Di Maria

AFP, London



Manchester United have agreed a British record transfer fee of £59.7 million (\$98 million, 75 million

euros) to sign Argentina midfielder Angel Di Maria from Real Madrid according to British media reports on Monday.

Several media outlets, including the BBC, reported that United have finally sealed a deal for Di Maria after several days of negotiations with the Spanish club.

The 26-year-old was said to have been seen arriving at United's training ground on Monday evening as he prepares to put pen to paper on a reported five-year contract worth an estimated £200,000-a-week.

Di Maria's move to Old Trafford is

TOP 5 TRANSFERS

Angel Di Maria (Manchester United)	£59.7m
Fernando Torres (Chelsea)	£50m
Mesut Ozil (Arsenal)	£42.4m
Sergio Aguero (Manchester City)	£38m
Juan Mata (Manchester United)	£37.1m

expected to be completed on Tuesday and will shatter the previous British record fee of £50 million paid by Chelsea to sign Spain striker Fernando Torres from Liverpool in 2011.

United last broke the British transfer record when they paid Leeds £29.1 million for Rio Ferdinand in 2002 and the deal will also eclipse the club record £37.1 million they splashed out to sign Juan Mata from Chelsea in January.

Real manager Carlo Ancelotti revealed over the weekend that Di Maria had said goodbye to his team-

mates and he was absent from the Madrid squad as they beat Cordoba on Monday.

His arrival in Manchester would be the headline deal of United's overhaul under new manager Louis van Gaal, who has already spent a combined £72 million on England left-back Luke Shaw, Spanish midfielder Ander Herrera and Di Maria's Argentina team-mate Marcos Rojo, who is also left-footed like him.

Assuming the transfer is finalised on schedule, Di Maria, capped 52 times, could make his debut at Burnley on Saturday as van Gaal looks to revitalise a United team still without a win after the first two games of the new Premier League campaign.

Former Benfica star Di Maria has an impressive pedigree after winning the Champions League with Real last season and the Spanish title in 2012.

Jovetic sinks Liverpool

AFP, Manchester



Stevan Jovetic scored twice as champions Manchester City beat last season's runners-up Liverpool 3-1 on Monday in the first major showdown of the new Premier League campaign.

Mario Balotelli was in the stands to watch new employers Liverpool take on former club City after completing his £16 million (\$26.5 million, 20.1 million euros) move to Anfield from AC Milan, but it was another 24-year-old who took centre stage at the Etihad Stadium.

Jovetic's debut campaign at City was spoilt by injury, but the Montenegro striker scored either side of half-time to send Manuel Pellegrini's side towards victory over the team they tipped to last season's title.

The only point of concern for Pellegrini was an injury to striker Edin Dzeko, who hobbled off mid-way through the second period, but his replacement, Sergio Aguero, needed only 23 seconds to score City's third.

It was a first away loss of 2014 for Brendan Rodgers's Liverpool, who replied through a Pablo Zabaleta own goal, and left City one of only four teams to have won their first two fixtures.

The events of last season's run-in were clearly fresh in the minds of City's fans, who goaded visiting captain Steven Gerrard over his costly slip in Liverpool's loss to Chelsea in April by chanting: "He's gonna slip in a minute!"

The home supporters saw their side make the more positive start beneath steady rain at the Etihad, with Dzeko shooting wide, Zabaleta volleying over, and Yaya Toure working Simon Mignolet from 20 yards.

But Liverpool withstood the pressure, and after Gerrard had seen a long-range effort deflected wide, Joe Hart had to beat away a crisp strike from England team-mate Daniel Sturridge at his near post.

Left-back Alberto Moreno was enjoying his Liverpool debut following his move from Sevilla, but four minutes before half-time, his error allowed City to go ahead.

Ivanovic, Stosur advance

AFP, New York



Former French Open champion Ana Ivanovic, the eighth seed, eased past Alison Riske of the United States, 6-3, 6-0 in a tie to reach the second round of the US Open on Tuesday.

Australia's Samantha Stosur, the 2011 champion, went through with a 6-1, 6-4 win over Lauren Davies of the United States.

China's Zhang Shuai can only dream of the success achieved by the likes of Williams, Ivanovic and Stosur.

The 32nd seed lost 6-1, 6-2 to Germany's Mona Barthel leaving Zhang with a 0-12 career record at the Grand Slams.

British spirits were equally low as interest in the women's singles came to an end with Heather Watson slumping to a 6-1, 6-1 defeat to Romania's Sorana Cirstea.

Ealier on Monday, Former champions Andy Murray and Maria Sharapova reached the second round, Murray overcoming painful muscle cramps as well as Robin Haase.

Eighth-seeded Murray, who won his first Grand Slam title at Flushing Meadows in 2012, defeated the 70th-ranked Dutchman 6-3, 7-6 (8/6), 1-6, 7-5, but said the painful cramp that struck without warning could have cost him the match.

Top-seeded Novak Djokovic breezed past a US Open novice in the first round Monday, beating Diego Schwartzman 6-1, 6-2, 6-4 in a match that finished a few minutes before midnight.

Djokovic was never in trouble against a 22-year-old opponent from Argentina playing in his first main draw at Flushing Meadows.

French Open champion Maria Sharapova swept the last 10 games to surge past fellow Russian Maria Kirilenko 6-4, 6-0 and into the second round.

Venus Williams, the winner in 2000 and 2001, also advanced, defeating Japanese veteran Kimiko Date Krumm 2-6, 6-3, 6-3.

Australian Open winner Stan Wawrinka, seeded third, moved smoothly into the second round with a 6-2, 7-6 (8/6), 7-6 (7/3) victory over Czech Jiri Vesely.

Milos Raonic, the big-serving Canadian who is among the young guns vying to end the Grand Slam hegemony of the game's Big Four -- Djokovic, Federer, Rafael Nadal and Murray -- pelted Japanese qualifier Taro Daniel with 20 aces in a 6-3, 6-2, 7-6 (7/1) victory.

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