



Spurs may play at the Emirates

ESPN.COM

Tottenham Hotspur are yet to openly discount the prospect of a highly controversial one-year ground share at the home of their local rivals Arsenal, sources have told ESPN.

Spurs have confirmed that they may play a season away from their White Hart Lane home as the club builds their new 56,250-capacity stadium, which was initially scheduled to open at the start of the 2017-18 campaign.

Delays in the building project means Tottenham are "highly likely" to spend a year at an alternative venue.

"Clearly all possible options have pros and cons and we are aware that we shall not be able to find one which will please all parties," read the statement. "We shall however seek to find the optimum solution for the club and our supporters and we shall be sharing our deliberations with our supporters at an appropriate time."

A move to the 30,500-capacity Stadium: MK, used by Buckinghamshire-based League One side MK Dons, could be another option, while there have also been reports that they could look to use Wembley Stadium, which is less than 13 miles away from their current home.

San Lorenzo to make Pope eternal

AFP, Buenos Aires

Top Argentine football club San Lorenzo are to name their new stadium after Pope Francis, who is a fervent supporter of the club.

"San Lorenzo will make Pope Francis eternal," the club said on its Twitter account.

San Lorenzo, which won South America's Libertadores Cup for the first time this year, are to build a new stadium in the historic Gasometro district of Boedo in the Buenos Aires suburbs.

Barca to play in Catalan colours

AFP, Madrid

Barcelona will use a shirt in the red and gold Catalan national colours for their La Liga game on Saturday in a move that could fuel breakaway sentiment in the region.

The club announced Thursday, Catalonia's annual commemoration of its loss of sovereignty, that it would change its shirt from its usual maroon and blue colours.

Barcelona said it had been given approval by the Spanish Football League. The match against Bilbao, from Spain's Basque region which has also seen separatist tensions, will be held at the Camp Nou stadium.

"The club's board of Directors had requested the change in strip, which features a design based on the Catalan flag, as part of the commemorations to mark the 300th anniversary of the September 11 siege of Barcelona in 1714," said a Barcelona statement.

The club said it was "unanimous" in wanting to use the colours of the Catalan flag known as the Senyera. Barcelona played one game last season in the Senyera colours.

Spanish and French forces took Barcelona in 1714 as part of the Spanish War of Succession.

Hundreds of thousands of people were expected to take to the streets of Barcelona on Thursday as part of the commemorations.

Catalonia's government wants to hold a vote on independence on November 9. The central government in Madrid is fiercely opposed to the move.



Barcelona midfielder Xavi Hernandez (L) attends a ceremony during Catalonia National Day at the Rafael Casanova monument in Barcelona yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Torres set for debut

REUTERS, Rome

Fernando Torres has already impressed AC Milan with his autograph-signing abilities and will attempt to show that he is just as prolific when it comes to scoring goals when he makes his Serie A debut on Sunday.

The Spaniard was signed just before the end of the transfer window after an unhappy spell at Chelsea and, although the idea of a misfiring striker joining a struggling team may seem like a recipe for disaster, Milan are confident it will all work out.

"Torres had a difficult year, but he has great desire to do well," coach Filippo Inzaghi said during a recent coaching forum at UEFA headquarters.

"I like to see a player who stops to sign autographs for two-and-a-half hours, it's a sign of respect towards the fans."

"His physical tests were good and I hope that with him Milan will change greatly."

"I have seven strikers and I'm spoiled for choices, my task is to get the most out of them and to understand how to interchange between them," he added.

Torres' signing was completed too late for him to make his debut in Milan's 3-1 win over Lazio in their opening game but, following the international break, he is all set to face Parma on Sunday (1845GMT).

Goalkeeper Diego Lopez, signed from

Real Madrid, is confident his compatriot will rediscover his old form.

"Torres is a very important acquisition," he said. "Fernando has always done incredible things, he has experience and there is nobody else in the team with his profile."

"He will bring goals, speed, hard work and I think he can be very important for everyone."

"He has all the characteristics he needs to win in this team, which he has already done with others. I don't see why he can't revive his career here."

Milan finished a dismal eighth last season, a performance which cost both Massimiliano Allegri and Clarence Seedorf their jobs, but, despite another unimpressive performance in the summer transfer window, chief executive Adriano Galliani believes the seven-times European champions can stage a revival.

"There's a positive aura," he told reporters. "I can say that I feel electricity in the air around this new Milan."

"Inzaghi's new Milan is bringing back the enthusiasm among our supporters and I remain optimistic. You will see that the work I am doing with Pippo (Inzaghi) will bring great satisfaction."

"If it goes well against Parma this weekend, then we could reach the game with Juventus (Sept 21) and have 80,000 in the crowd. It would be a wonderful spectacle."

Falcao wants EPL title

GOAL.COM

Radamel Falcao says it is his aim to win the Premier League title with Manchester United this season, despite the club's sloppy start.

The Colombia international joined Louis van Gaal's side on a season-long loan from Monaco on deadline day and is in line to make his debut against QPR on Sunday.

Falcao claims the chance to join Old Trafford was a "great opportunity" and believes a title challenge is possible, despite United failing to register a win in their opening three league games.

"My target is to score goals and win titles," Falcao told FourFourTwo.

"The aim this season is to win the title. It is important for me to help my club and Colombia as we prepare for the Copa America and the next World Cup for 2018."

Ribery won't reverse his decision

THE GUARDIAN

Franck Ribery has insisted he has no plans to reverse his decision to retire from international football despite pressure from the UEFA president, Michel Platini.

Last month, the Bayern Munich forward announced he had played his final game for France, having been forced to miss the World Cup with a back injury. That decision was heavily criticised by Platini, who also threatened the 31-year-old with a ban if he ignores a future call-up from Didier Deschamps.

But Ribery believes the issue has already been resolved and is adamant he will not change his mind. "I have already said before I have retired from international duty and I will not go back on my decision," he told the German newspaper Der Welt.

"I have discussed this with France coach Deschamps and we reached an agreement on it. I want to focus completely on Bayern Munich in the future. That's all I want to say about the matter. I am not going to get involved in all the politics surrounding my decision."

Platini threatened Ribery with suspension if he sticks with his decision, stating

that it was not down to the player to decide when to retire. "If Deschamps calls him up, then he has to come to the national team," Platini said. "That's written in the FIFA statutes. If he doesn't report for duty, then he would be banned for three matches for Bayern Munich."

"It is not the player's decision whether he represents his country, it's the decision of the coach. Ribery cannot simply decide for himself whether he wants to play for France or not."

Ribery is ready to make his season debut for Bayern against VfB Stuttgart on Saturday after overcoming a nagging knee injury.

The German champions have had a less explosive start to the season than last year, drawing 1-1 at Schalke in their second league game after winning their opening match at Borussia Dortmund.

They still have concerns over their new signing Xabi Alonso, who missed training this week due to a foot injury and has only just begun running again.

The Dutch winger Arjen Robben is also training alone following an ankle injury while the defender Rafinha is still some way from coming back following a ligament injury and Bastian Schweinsteiger is also out.

Inter target Asia tour

AFP, Jakarta

Inter Milan's Indonesian owner said Thursday he hoped to bring the team to Asia next year as he tries to lift the club from financial mayhem and into a top-10 team.

Media mogul Erick Thohir became owner of Inter last November when he bought a 70 percent stake in the ailing club.

With a track record of turning cash-strapped ventures around, the entrepreneur is expected to breathe new life into the club, in part by opening new markets and fan bases in Asia.

"After two years touring in the US, we are strongly considering and working hard to bring Inter to Asia next year," he told reporters in the Indonesian capital, Jakarta.

"Hopefully we can announce it in a few weeks' time. But Asia is a choice and we are looking at which cities we can visit," said Thohir, who is usually media shy.

Thohir said that the club had been grown over the past six months.

"The challenge is not only the revenue but how you manage the budget. Some of our players, for sure they want to have a bigger contract, a longer contract," he said.

"It was a tough job last year. We let go of a lot of our heroes which is not easy."

Inter has bought several star players this summer, including Manchester United's centre-back Nemanja Vidic from Serbia and Cardiff's midfielder Gary Medel from Chile.

Inter's midfielder Ricardo Alvarez will join the English club Sunderland in a seasonal loan.

"I don't think most of the players like to sit on the bench the whole season so it's good to send Ricky to Sunderland as a loan. He can grow in Sunderland," Thohir said.

Thohir, who has said he has "come to Inter to win", is now focused on investing in young players and making Inter a world top-10 team.

Inter is not Thohir's first sporting project -- he bought into Major League Soccer club DC United and the Philadelphia 76ers basketball team, both of which showed marked improvements in performance since his involvement.

Snr football from today

SPORTS REPORTER

The Senior Division Football League gets underway today at the Birsreshtha Shaheed Mostafa Kamal (BSMK) Stadium in Kamalapur with ten clubs fighting to secure their places in the second-tier professional league.

The league will be held over two legs with the champions and the runners-up qualifying for the Bangladesh Championship League (BCL), subject to meeting the requirements of playing the professional football league, informed BFF senior vice president Abdus Salam Mursedy at a press conference at the BFF House yesterday.

Promoted Basabro Tarun Sangho, Friends SWO, Swadhinata KS and Bangladesh Boys Club and Dhaka United SC, relegated from BCL, will join Jatrabari KC, Fakirerpol Young Men's Club, Dhaka Wanderers Club, T&T Club and Mohakhali XI in the league.

Dhaka Metropolis Football League Committee (DMFLC) chairman Sheikh Maruf Hasan informed that the matches of the league might be shifted to the Paltan ground, Army Stadium and the BUET ground if an astro-turf pitch is installed at the BSMK Stadium.

Bengal Group has earned the right of sponsorship with an amount of Tk 15 lakh.

CBF happy with Dunga

AFP, Rio de Janeiro

Brazil coach Dunga can be satisfied with his first few weeks back in charge of the national side emerging from the ashes of the World Cup, the Brazilian Football Confederation said Wednesday after an overnight friendly win over Ecuador.

However, the media were somewhat overwhelmed with a 1-0 win over Ecuador in New Jersey which saw Neymar miss a sitter but set up Chelsea midfielder Willian for the solitary goal.

The newspapers mused that without him the team are ordinary.

The Barcelona star had scored the goal which beat Colombia a week earlier in Miami as Dunga began his second spell in charge with a win. His first term ended after a 2010 World Cup quarterfinal loss to the Netherlands.

Willian's goal at the Metlife Stadium made it two wins and two clean sheets for Dunga since replacing Luiz Felipe Scolari.

"Brazil showed once again they very much depend on Neymar," commented Rio's O Dia daily.

But the outgoing and incoming presidents of the Brazilian Football Confederation, Jose Maria Marin and Marco Polo Del Nero saw reason for optimism.

Marin said Dunga has presided over "two good victories" as he seeks to set his stamp on a new squad containing just ten of the troupe humbled by Germany in their World Cup semi-final.

Del Nero, who takes over at the CBF next year, said the new regime "has got off to a very good start."

Neymar agreed.

"It's great to get off to a winning start. It gives you confidence" -- something which drained away after his World Cup injury.

Dunga is mining new home talent, selecting seven home-based players for his squad, including Corinthians defender Gil and Cruzeiro striker Ricardo Goulart -- to just four under Scolari, three of whom were reserves.

Dunga insisted his new faces had "made the most of their opportunities" Tuesday.



FERNANDO TORRES