What to WATCH

STAR SPORTS2
Indian Super League
Delhi v North East
Live from 7:20pm
Serie A
Genoa v Juventus

Live from 1:45am (Thursday)
STAR SPORTS1
Serie A
Cagliari v AC Milan
Live from 1:45am (Thursday)

C'Ron best in Spain

GOAL.COM

Cristiano Ronaldo took the top gong at the LFP awards as La Liga's standout performers from the 2013-14 campaign were revealed on Monday night.

The Real Madrid star was named the best player from last season in Spain's top flight after scoring 31 goals in just 30 league games for the European champions.

The Ballon d'Or holder becomes only the second player to win the prize since its inception in 2008-09, with Lionel Messi having won all five of the previous titles.

"I have to thank my team-mates, Real Madrid, my family... it is a very good moment in my career," Ronaldo, also named best forward of the season, said at the awards ceremony in Madrid.

"For me, the important thing is to win collective prizes, but I like the individual ones, too. I work every day, in training, to continue adding more to this."

As well as the best player and best forward awards, Ronaldo made it a hat-trick by scooping the prize for best goal of the campaign for his strike against Valencia in week 36.

Diego Simeone was honoured as best coach after guiding Atletico Madrid to the title in a remarkable season which also saw them reach the Champions League final.

"I want to share this with my players, without whom none of this would be possible," said the Argentine. "Thanks to Koke, Gabi, Miranda, Courtois... and everyone who made it possible to win the title."

Keylor Navas, now of Madrid, picked up the best goalkeeper accolade for his stunning season with Levante. Sergio Ramos scooped the best defender award and Luka Modric was best defensive midfielder on a successful night for Carlo Ancelotti's players.

Barcelona's Andres Iniesta was best attacking midfielder, while Carlos Bacca (best South American) and Yacine Brahimi (best African) were also recognised. Rafinha Alcantara was named the revelation of the campaign.

The awards for the best players and coach were voted for by the three team captains of each side in the division, though they were not allowed to vote for players from their own club. La Liga coaches chose the revelation award, while internet polls were responsible for the best goal, best African and best South American prizes.

German-heavy Ballon d'Or list

Suarez left out

AGENCIES, *Zurich*

Six members of the Germany squad that won the World Cup were included among the nominees for the FIFA Ballon d'Or award Tuesday, joining Lionel Messi, Cristiano Ronaldo and Neymar on the 23-man short list.

Mario Goetze, who scored the winning goal against Argentina in the World Cup final, was selected along with Germany teammates Toni Kroos, Philipp Lahm, Thomas Mueller, Manuel Neuer, and Bastian Schweinsteiger.

Uruguay forward Luis Suarez was left out following his biting ban.

Suarez was the top scorer in the English Premier League last season with 31 goals in 33 appearances for Liverpool. But his reputation took a hit when he was banned for four months for biting Italy's Giorgio Chiellini in the World Cup group phase.

Messi won the first three years the FIFA and France Football merged their international player of the year awards, while Ronaldo took the honour last year.

Behind the dominant La Liga -- which provided the two Champions League finalists in May -- German Bundesliga accounts for six of the players while five ply their trade in England -- although three of those were playing in Spain until May.

The only two players on the list not playing in one of three major leagues are Sweden's Zlatan Ibrahimovic, at France's Paris Saint-Germain, and Frenchman Paul Pogba, who plays for Juventus in Italy.

The list is striking for the absence of any English player or coach. It is the second year in a row that no English player has made the list.

Germany's World Cup winning coach Joachim Loew and Real's Italian coach Carlo Ancelotti, who guided the side to the 'decima' Champions League title in May, lead the 10-man coaches' list.

The list will be reduced to three names on December 1 before the winners are revealed in an award ceremony in Zurich on January 12.

National team coaches and captains, as well as a media panel selected by France Football magazine, vote for the winners.

The will also be awards for best goal of the year, a fair play award and the naming of the World XI of the year.

Last year, Ronaldo ended Messi's four-year hold on the award while German Juup Heynckes took the coach award after leading Bayern Munich to a treble of Champions League, Bundesliga and German Cup.

BALLON D'OR WORLD PLAYER OF THE YEAR NOMINATIONS

Gareth Bale (Wales), Karim Benzema (France), Diego Costa (Spain), Thibaut Courtois (Belgium), Cristiano Ronaldo (Portugal), Angel Di Maria (Argentina), Mario Goetze (Germany), Eden Hazard (Belgium), Zlatan Ibrahimovic (Sweden), Andres Iniesta (Spain), Toni Kroos (Germany), Philipp Lahm (Germany), Javier Mascherano (Argentina), Lionel Messi (Argentina), Thomas Mueller (Germany), Manuel Neuer (Germany), Neymar (Brazil), Paul Pogba (France), Sergio Ramos (Spain), Arjen Robben (Netherlands), James Rodriguez (Colombia), Bastian Schweinsteiger (Germany), Yaya Toure (Ivory Coast).

FIFA WORLD COACH OF THE YEAR NOMINATIONS

Carlo Ancelotti (Italy/Real Madrid), Antonio Conte (Italy/Juventus FC/Italy national team), Pep Guardiola (Spain/FC Bayern Munich), Jurgen Klinsmann (Germany/ USA national team), Joachim Loew (Germany/Germany national team), Jose Mourinho (Portugal/Chelsea), Manuel Pellegrini (Chile/Manchester City), Alejandro Sabella (Argentina/Argentina national team), Diego Simeone (Argentina/Atletico Madrid), Louis van Gaal (Netherlands/Netherlands national team/Manchester United).

Real to fight Zidane ban

AFP, *Madrid*

Former France playing legend Zinedine Zidane and his club European champions Real Madrid were embroiled in an embarrassing dispute on Monday with the Spanish Football Federation who according to influential Madrid-based sports paper Marca handed him a three month coaching ban.

The 42-year-old -- who inspired France to the 1998 World Cup trophy and was also a member of the Euro 2000 title winning side -- has been coaching Real's reserve side Castilla but the federation claims he does not possess the required coaching qualifications.

Real have said they will appeal against the punishment by 'all legal avenues open to them'.

The reserve team's assistant coach Santiago Sanchez was also punished.

Real issued a statement declaring their "total disagreement" with the decision taken against one of their former iconic players, who scored a wonder goal for the 'meringues' when they beat Bayer Leverkusen to win the 2002 Champions League trophy.

They pointed out that Zidane "has been authorised by the French Football Federation to work as a head coach in the category Real Madrid Castilla currently find themselves in".

Zidane -- who was linked with the head coach post at another of his former clubs Bordeaux in the close season -- was elevated to reserve team coach at the beginning of this season following a single campaign as Carlo Ancelotti's assistant which saw Real win a 10th European Cup in May.

Spanish coaching school, the Cenafe, has submitted a complaint to the Spanish Federation against Real, claiming they are using assistant Sanchez's name on the teamsheet to bypass the regulations.

The case has sparked controversy in Spain with national team coach Vicente del Bosque telling Cope radio station that "everyone should have a coaching badge".

Rayo Vallecano coach Paco Jemez used tougher language, describing Real's actions as "shameful".

However, both Ancelotti and Dutch football legend Johan Cruyff have spoken out in support of Zidane.

Argentina recall Tevez

AFP, *Buenos Aires*

Juventus striker Carlos Tevez was on Monday called up by Argentina after a three year international hiatus.

The 30-year-old was named in manager Gerardo Martino's squad for upcoming friendlies against Croatia and Portugal after being frozen out during Alejandro Sabella's time as coach between 2011 and 2014.

The last time Tevez played for his country was in the 2011 Copa America quarterfinal when Argentina were knocked out after Uruguay keeper Fernando Muslera stopped Tevez's spot-kick.

Tevez has started the new Serie A season brightly with six goals for Juve and a further two in the Champions League.

Costa needs surgery

YAHOO.COM

Chelsea striker Diego Costa will eventually need surgery on his hamstring.

That would keep him out of action for approximately six weeks. But he doesn't need to have it now.

At this moment, Chelsea are nursing Costa's cranky hamstring through the season, leaving his status for each upcoming match in question and making things completely uncertain as the season goes on. Because of this, he was unavailable for the Blues' match at Old Trafford as Chelsea only netted once in a 1-1 draw. He could miss other big games going forward if the issue isn't ultimately addressed.

This news jives with previous things we've been told about Costa's injury.

Costa himself has tried to play down his fitness troubles on multiple occasions, saying he is able to get himself fit for matches. But manager Jose Mourinho has revealed in the past that Costa isn't training during the week, instead spending all his time between matches nursing his muscle.

Ashton said Jose Mourinho obviously wishes for this eventual operation to happen during international duty so he misses as little time as possible for Chelsea. The Daily Mail man tabbed a Spain match with Belarus – the reverse fixture of Euro 2016 qualifying group stage – on June 14 as a possible time for the surgery. However, that means Chelsea will have to deal with a broken Costa throughout the rest of the season and he would still miss the beginning of their preseason activities for the 2014/15 season. With all that's been reported about Costa's injury and how iffy his status has been for each and every match going forward, it could be something both Chelsea and Spain would like to get out of the way now, especially with the Blues holding a comfortable lead at the top of the Premier League table. Chelsea still looked just as threatening against Manchester United without their frontman, although the finishing was not up to standards.

Spain has just two international matches scheduled between now and March, meaning he could theoretically have surgery after those two matches in early November and return without missing any time for his country.

Chennaiyin thrash Mumbai

GOAL.COM

John Mendoza and Elano were in the mood as they starred for Chennaiyin FC in their 5-0 victory over Mumbai City FC at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium, Chennai on Tuesday evening.

Chennaiyin FC manager Marco Materazzi decided it was time to introduce himself instead of Dhanachandra Singh after the 4-1 Delhi drubbing as he made five changes all over the park.

For Mumbai City, the big news was Nicolas Anelka and Syed Rahim Nabi starting in place of Nadong Bhutia and Tiago Ribiero respectively as the suspended Pavel Cmovs' replaced by Raju Gaikwad in defense.

Materazzi surprisingly played in a holding midfield in front of Mendy and Silvestre with Gouramangi and Suarez manning the flanks.

The game's first real chance fell to Chennaiyin in the seventh minute with Suarez clipping the ball over Mendoza, whose silky first touch took him past Nabi on the left. The Colombian dribbled into the penalty box and laid it up for Elano who fired over. But the referee pulled play back for Friedrich's kick on Mendoza, with the resulting penalty culminating in Elano's fourth goal in as many games.

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