

# What to WATCH

**STAR SPORTS2**  
Indian Super League  
Goa v Delhi  
Live from 7:20pm  
**STAR SPORTS 4**  
English Premiership

Newcastle v Liverpool  
Live from 6:45pm  
Chelsea v QPR  
Live from 9:00pm  
**Serie A**  
Parma v Inter Milan

Live from 1:45am (Sunday)  
**STAR Sports 1**  
English Premiership  
Arsenal v Burnley  
Live from 9:00pm  
**Primera Liga**

Atletico Madrid v Cordoba  
Live from 11:00pm  
Barcelona v Celta de Vigo  
Live from 1:00am (Sunday)  
Real Sociedad v Malaga  
Live from 3:00am (Sunday)

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Real Madrid Foundation head coach Pablo Gomez Revenga (C) imparts some basic football skills to underprivileged children during a YKK football clinic at the MA Aziz Stadium in Chittagong yesterday.

## Barca aim to rebound Suarez to make home debut

AFP, Madrid



Luis Suarez will make his competitive home debut as La Liga leaders Barcelona look to put the disappointment of their defeat to Real Madrid last weekend behind them against Celta Vigo on Saturday.

The Catalans' defeat at the Santiago Bernabeu was their first in the league since coach Luis Enrique left Celta in May to take charge at the Camp Nou and brought Barca back into a five-strong pack at the top of the table separated by just two points.

Suarez returned from a four-month ban for biting Giorgio Chiellini at the World Cup to make his Barca bow against Madrid and had a positive immediate impact as he set up Neymar's early opener.

The Uruguayan also produced a sublime assist for Gerard Pique as Barca lifted the Catalan Supercup with victory on penalties over Espanyol in midweek and Luis Enrique has been impressed

### FIXTURES

**Saturday**  
Granada v Real Madrid (1500), Atletico Madrid v Cordoba (1700), Barcelona v Celta Vigo (1900), Real Sociedad v Malaga (2100)  
**Sunday**  
Athletic Bilbao v Sevilla (1100), Villarreal v Valencia (1600), Levante v Almeria (1800), Elche v Espanyol (2000)  
**Monday**  
Rayo Vallecano v Eibar (1945)

with Suarez's contribution so far. "He played very well, he made the right decisions most of the time and was always involved our play," said Luis Enrique.

"His movement was good and he was desperate to play, as were the rest of the squad."

Lionel Messi and Neymar were given a rare night off on Wednesday, but will return to form their deadly partnership with 20 goals and 12 assists between them in 12 games so far this season.

Jordi Alba and Ivan Rakitic are also expected to return after being surprisingly dropped against Madrid, while Andres Iniesta is sidelined with a calf injury.

Real Madrid have the chance to knock Barca off the top for at least a few hours when they look for an 11th consecutive win in all competitions at Granada earlier on Saturday.

And captain Iker Casillas wants the European champions to have that position locked down by the time La Liga shuts down for Christmas in seven weeks' time.

"We need to try and get first place in La Liga before Christmas, after beating Barcelona we have taken a huge step forward."

Cristiano Ronaldo, Sergio Ramos, Pepe, Luka Modric and Toni Kroos will all return having been rested for Wednesday's 4-1 win over UD Cornellana in the Copa del Rey.

However, Gareth Bale remains a major doubt with the muscle injury that has forced him to miss the last four games.

Champions Atletico Madrid can also temporarily leapfrog Barcelona when they host struggling Cordoba at the Vicente Calderon.



## FIFA sorry for Crimea blunder

AFP, Geneva

FIFA has apologised for an embarrassing diplomatic faux-pas when its video launching the 2018 World Cup logo portrayed the Crimean peninsula as part of Russia.

The disputed clip was beamed on to the facade of Russia's historic Bolshoi Theatre at the official unveiling of the 2018 logo in the Russian capital on Tuesday.

The strategic peninsula of Crimea, long home to Russian military bases, was annexed from Ukraine by Russia in March, sparking the worst crisis between Russia and the West since the Cold War.

World football's governing body issued a statement blaming the blunder on a local video production agency.

"Unfortunately the map of Russia selected and used during the projection by the local service provider escaped our attention and the short sequence in question has been removed," a FIFA spokesman said.

## 'Bayern not out to weaken Dortmund'

AFP, Berlin



On the eve of their Bundesliga showdown, Bayern Munich chairman Karl-Heinz Rummenigge has insisted his club are not trying to weaken rivals Borussia Dortmund by attempting to sign Marco Reus.

Bayern host Dortmund at Munich's Allianz Arena on Saturday with Borussia having finished second to the Bavarians for the last two seasons.

But Dortmund currently lag 14 points behind leaders Bayern and are 15th in the table after four consecutive defeats -- one of the worst starts to a league season in the club's history.

And there is also bad blood between the clubs' senior bosses.

Bayern have signed stars Mario Goetze and Robert Lewandowski from Dortmund in the last two years and Rummenigge had stirred further tensions by revealing Borussia's Germany winger Reus is their next target.

He has drawn attention to the release clause in Reus's Dortmund contract, which runs until 2017, but Rummenigge insists Bayern are not out to weaken Dortmund's squad.

"We don't have to weaken anybody. Every transfer has exclusively one goal: to strengthen the team's quality," Rummenigge wrote in Saturday's match programme.

Rummenigge also pointed out that if

Bayern signed Reus they would only be copying the actions of Dortmund, who signed the 25-year-old from Borussia Moenchengladbach at the end of the 2011/12 season by activating his buy-out clause.

Dortmund chief executive Hans-Joachim Watzke has made his feelings clear about Rummenigge's interest in Reus, while the player has said his only priority currently is to leave Munich with three points for Dortmund.

"There was simply no need for him to have said anything, but that is not his style," said Watzke.

Traditionally, senior figures from the rival teams dine together before a Bundesliga match, but that will not be the case on Saturday.

"There is no invitation, so I don't have to turn it down," revealed Watzke.

"We don't have any sort of relationship and we don't have to. He's responsible for Bayern Munich, as I am for Dortmund. So there is nothing we have to do together."

Watzke said he preferred dealing with Bayern's former president Uli Hoeness, who is currently serving a three-and-a-half-year prison sentence for tax evasion.

"I always had a very exciting relationship with Uli Hoeness, who I really miss, because he was someone who came at you straight on and with an open visor," said Watzke.

"You could argue with him, but you always knew where you stood with him -- that's something I personally always really liked."

## Gerrard may leave L'pool

GOAL.COM

Liverpool captain Steven Gerrard has revealed he is prepared to ply his trade elsewhere if he is not offered a new contract.

Gerrard's current deal expires at the end of the season and the midfielder says talks over a new deal are yet to take place.

The 34-year-old has previously hinted he would be open to the idea of playing abroad following Frank Lampard's move to MLS expansion franchise New York City.

And a departure from his boyhood club - where he has made over 480 Premier League appearances - could become reality if Liverpool decide not to offer the veteran new terms.

"I can only worry about this season 'cause I'm only contracted until May," Gerrard told The Daily Telegraph.

"As it stands at the moment, I'm here until the end of the season and want to make the most of it. I certainly won't be retiring this summer. I will play beyond this season."

"We will have to wait and see if that's at Liverpool or somewhere else. That's Liverpool's decision. If they don't come then I will see what's out there."

Gerrard has been a mainstay for Liverpool this term, playing in every Premier League match ahead of Saturday's trip to face Newcastle United.

## United scent City blood

AFP, London



Scared by a run of three games without victory, misfiring Premier League champions Manchester City will attempt to reassert their authority when they host derby rivals Manchester United this weekend.

Having blown a two-goal lead to draw at CSKA Moscow in the Champions League, City fell six points behind league leaders Chelsea after losing at West Ham United and were then knocked out of the League Cup by Newcastle United.

Wednesday's 2-0 loss at home to Newcastle came despite City manager Manuel Pellegrini fielding a strong team, and goalkeeper Joe Hart has called on his team-mates to raise their game against United on Sunday.

"Not everyone's exactly at their peak at the moment, but we just need a few players, myself included, to step up," the England goalkeeper, who was rested against Newcastle, told Sky Sports News.

"It will come back. It's just one of those difficult patches that we've gone through many a time. Last season, we had less points and were in a worse position (at this stage of the season), and we won the league."

"We've got to look to things like that, but the main thing is to get it right on Sunday."

David Silva is a doubt for City after going off against Newcastle with a knee injury, but Yaya Toure is expected to feature despite being substituted in the second half.

Wayne Rooney, the leading scorer in Manchester derbies with 11 goals, has completed a three-match suspension and is set to return to the United attack despite reports he has sustained a foot injury.

A 94th-minute equaliser by Robin van Persie earned Louis van Gaal's United a morale-boosting 1-1 draw at home to Chelsea last weekend.

United lost 4-1 and 3-0 to City last season, but victory at the Etihad would take them to within a point of the champions.

### FIXTURES

**Saturday**  
(1500 GMT unless otherwise stated):  
Arsenal v Burnley, Chelsea v Queens Park Rangers, Everton v Swansea City, Hull City v Southampton, Leicester City v West Bromwich Albion, Newcastle United v Liverpool (1245 GMT), Stoke City v West Ham United  
**Sunday**  
Aston Villa v Tottenham Hotspur (1600 GMT), Manchester City v Manchester United (1330 GMT)  
**Monday**  
Crystal Palace v Sunderland (2000 GMT)

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