

MESSI IS THE GREATEST

Brazil soccer legend Ronaldo -- considered one of the greatest players EVER -- has touched down in Beverly Hills ... and last night he weighed in on the great soccer debate -- Lionel Messi vs. Cristiano Ronaldo. The argument has been raging for years -- with people claiming each superstar has a valid claim to be called "The Greatest." In fact, some people have said they're the two best players of all time. So, when Ronaldo was leaving Madeo ... where he had the veal milanese by the way ... TMZ asked if he thought Messi deserved to be called #1. Ronaldo gave a resounding, 'yes!' -- INTERNET



Real seek response

AFP, Madrid



European champions Real Madrid may still lead La Liga, but an air of crisis has enveloped the club after they were torn apart by local rivals Atletico Madrid in a 4-0 defeat last weekend.

Negative press headlines followed not only due to the manner of the defeat, but the timing of a party held by Cristiano Ronaldo to celebrate his 30th birthday along with some of his teammates just hours after the match.

Ronaldo's form on the field is also of concern for the Madrid hierarchy: the Portuguese has scored just three times in six matches since picking up the third Ballon d'Or of his career last month and was also sent-off for kickout out at Cordoba defender Edimar during that run.

Indeed there are fears that the patella tendon injury in his left knee that affected his performances towards the end of last season and most notably at the World Cup could have flared up once more.

Club president Florentino Perez held a meeting with the players and coach Carlo Ancelotti on Monday to tell them in no uncertain terms that their performance at the Vicente Calderon was unbecoming of the 10-time European champions.

However, defeat to Atletico could also prove a turning point in Madrid's season just as it did at the start of the campaign.

After losing two of their first three league games, Madrid travelled to face Depor under a similar cloud only to romp to an 8-2 victory which helped spark a club record 22-game winning run.

Los Blancos are still blighted by injuries with Sami Khedira becoming the latest casualty to join Sergio Ramos, Pepe, James Rodriguez and Luka Modric on the sidelines

with a hamstring problem.

However, left-back Marcelo will return from suspension and there could be a debut for Brazilian midfielder Lucas Silva, who joined from Cruzeiro last month.

Just as Real Madrid have faltered, Barcelona have hit their best form of the season so far with 10 consecutive wins to move to within a point of their eternal rivals at the top of the table and 90 minutes of reaching the Copa del Rey final.

The Catalans took their tally to 37 goals in that run with a 3-1 win over Villarreal in the first leg of their Copa del Rey semifinal on Wednesday and will confident of more goals when Levante visit the Camp Nou on Sunday.

Barca won the corresponding fixture 7-0 on the opening day of last season and also stuck five past Levante when they met earlier in the season.

Atletico have had a week off to bask in their derby glory, but will need to keep their winning streak in the league going to maintain their title defence when they travel to Celta Vigo on Sunday.

Spanish international Koke will be sidelined for three weeks with a hamstring injury, but Diego Godin is set to play with a protective mask after breaking his nose early in the derby last weekend.

FIXTURES

(all times GMT)

Saturday

Sevilla v Cordoba (1500), Real Madrid v Deportivo La Coruna (1700), Granada v Athletic Bilbao (1900), Malaga v Espanyol (2100)

Sunday

Valencia v Getafe (1100), Barcelona v Levante (1600), Rayo Vallecano v Villarreal (1800), Celta Vigo v Atletico Madrid (2000)

Monday

Eibar v Elche (1945)

Siddikur misses another cut

SPORTS REPORTER

Country's ace golfer Siddikur Rahman missed the cut in second successive event of the Asian Tour season after a poor second round performance in the True Thailand Classic yesterday.

The 30-year-old golfer scored three-over (75) at the Black Mountain Golf Club yesterday for an aggregate of even-par (144).

The Two-time Asian Tour winner, who had made a very good start to the event with a three-under (69) on Thursday, missed the cut by two shots. This failure comes hot on the heels of his disappointing performance in the Maybank Malaysian Open last week.

However, the Bangladeshi trailblazer will be looking for a reversal of fortune as he returns to his favourite hunting ground at the Delhi Golf Club (DGC) next week for the 1.5 million-dollar Hero Indian Open starting from February 19.

Carroll out for season

AFP, London

West Ham striker Andy Carroll is likely to miss the rest of the season after the Premier League club announced Friday the England international will undergo knee surgery.

The 26-year-old was forced off in West Ham's midweek 0-0 draw at Southampton as Sam Allardyce's side finished the game with only nine men following a red card for goalkeeper Adrian.

West Ham had hoped Carroll would be sidelined for a maximum of six weeks, but doctors informed them that the club's record signing now requires an operation.



'Man Utd miserable under van Gaal'

AFP, London



Manchester United, once a byword for slick attacking football, are playing some "miserable" stuff under manager Louis van Gaal, former United midfielder Paul Scholes believes.

Despite Van Gaal taking United to third in the table in his first season in charge, some critics have attacked the style of play employed by the Dutchman.

Another former United stalwart, Gary Neville, caused a stir when he compared them to a pub side earlier this season, while Scholes is also scathing of their style.

Writing in the Independent newspaper, he said: "At times, United's football is miserable. To beat opposing teams you have to attack, and to attack you have to take risks. Too few of the players in the current team are prepared to take those risks."

He explained: "Part of being a Manchester United player under Sir Alex

Ferguson, perhaps the most important part of being one of United's attacking players, was that when you were in possession you had to take risks in order to create goalscoring chances. It was not an option; it was an obligation.

"In the periods of my career when I stopped passing the ball forward, or when I stopped looking for the risky pass that might open up a defence, the consequences were the same.

"The manager stopped picking me. I got back into the team when I went back to doing it the way he wanted.

"United's history was built on attacking football, which does not always mean that the team kept clean sheets or did not concede chances. Why do you think United have had some of the best goalkeepers in the world over the years? They needed them because the team committed so many players forward.

"It does not give me any pleasure to say that at the moment I am struggling to watch Louis van Gaal's team with any great enjoyment."

Rakib wins GM Chess

SPORTS REPORTER

Grand Master Abdullah Al Rakib emerged champion in the CJKS - Prima Distributions Group Grandmasters Chess Tournament virtue of a tiebreaker at the MA Aziz Stadium in Chittagong yesterday.

Rakib and GM Vahidov Tair of Uzbekistan finished on six points each at the close of the ninth and final round before Rakib was adjudged champion due to greater number of wins than his opponent.

Rakib had beaten his teammate FM Nasir Ahmed while Tair had beaten IM Abu Sufian Shakil in the final round.

GM Niaz Murshed and IM Minhazuddin Ahmed Sagor finished third and fourth respectively, also by tie-breaker as both of them earned equal points of 5.5. Indian IM Somak Palit became fifth with five points.

A total of 2,500-dollar prize money was distributed among the winners.

Here for playing

FROM PAGE S1

Anderson said there were no signs that Saturday's World Cup opener would be spiced with over-the-top banter.

"We've played three games already against them in the last few weeks in the tri series and that was played in a great spirit," Anderson said.

"Both teams were very competitive, but played in the right manner and I presume it will continue like that tomorrow."

Old enemies renew rivalry

FROM PAGE S1

As a pre-tournament favourite Australia will want to begin the tournament on a winning note and the record speaks in favour of them as well. England, on the other hand, will go into the tournament having won only two of their past 15 matches in Australia.

England on the other hand will look to gain confidence from their past results against the hosts. They beat them 4-0 in an ODI series at home in 2012 and also won the Ashes 3-1 in Australia in 2010-11 and 3-0 in 2013.

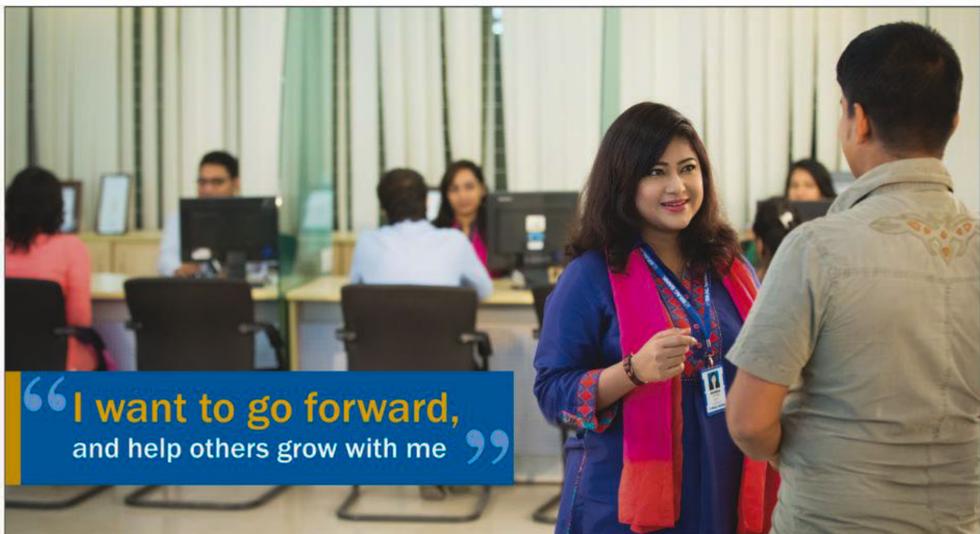
Bad blood always boils whenever these two teams meet and players are intimidated from various sides. Bailey had to encounter

a few uncomfortable questions with regards to that; an issue though which he handled brilliantly.

"No," he said when he was asked if he had seen the posters of the inner city and a banner which said "Missing! a pair of ... if found, return to the English cricket team."

"Very witty, isn't it? Who's come up with that? Hungry Jacks or something? Very good," Bailey responded. The stage is set for a flying start to the tournament in Melbourne. As a result many would hope that the rain Gods go easy on the match and not spoil the party like it did yesterday.

Though today's forecast is good, Melbourne's weather is quite unpredictable, much like a cricket match.



"I want to go forward, and help others grow with me"

In BRAC Bank we create that opportunity

"Our vision is to build a profitable and socially responsible financial institution focused on markets and businesses with growth potential, thereby assisting BRAC and stakeholders in building a just, enlightened, healthy, democratic and poverty free Bangladesh." -- Be a partner in this noble cause.

The 3P philosophy of "People, Planet and Profit" is at the core of BRAC Bank and forms a part of the DNA of its business endeavors. BRAC Bank is currently looking for ambitious, smart, goal-oriented and enthusiastic individuals from a multi disciplinary background for the following position:

MANAGEMENT TRAINEE OFFICER

Upon successful completion of extensive on-the-job and classroom training coupled with nationwide local attachments, the qualified candidates will be placed in different divisions of the bank.

Key Requirements:

- Graduation from **ANY DISCIPLINE** with a minimum CGPA of 3.3 or First Class from reputed top tier universities only
- CGPA: 4.00 on a scale of 5.00 at S.S.C & H.S.C levels
- Maximum 26 years of age as of March 31st, 2015
- High career aspirations with strong interpersonal communication and people skills
- Be hard working, self-driven and change oriented
- Be willing to move anywhere in the country to bring banking services to the door steps of our valued customers

Remuneration:

Selected incumbents during the training period of one year will be entitled to a monthly salary of Tk. 40,000. Upon satisfactory performance, selected MTOs will be confirmed as "Senior Officer" and integrated with the existing pay and service rules of the Bank.

How To Apply:

- Visit www.bracbank.com and download the "MTO Application Form" from the Career Tab
- Fill up the "Application Form" and attach two copies of your recent passport size photograph and updated resume
- Marking your envelope with the post applied for. Send the completed application to BRAC Bank Limited, 1 Gulshan Avenue, Gulshan - 1, Dhaka - 1212 or email to hr@bracbank.com

Application Deadline: February 28, 2015

Member of: GLOBAL ALLIANCE FOR BANKING ON VALUES | Winner 2013: FT SUSTAINABLE BANKING AWARDS Emerging Markets, Asia | Winner 2013: THE ASIAN BANKER BEST MANAGED BANK IN BANGLADESH

BRAC BANK

আমরা আছি

REAL MAN NEVER HURTS WOMEN

Be a real man, not only in this valentine, but throughout your life.

Kool For The Real Man