

## 'GAME OVER' FOR MILAN

Aggrieved at the way the club is being run, AC Milan supporters boycotted their against Cagliari, leaving the San Siro almost empty. An official attendance was not given as a result. Before the game, Milan's Curva Sud ultras group called for fans to avoid the match and to also stop buying official merchandise until the club's top brass offer more transparency as per their future plans. As a vivid display of their discontent, Curva Sud also draped the following banner in the empty terraces.

- INTERNET



## U-23s warm up well

SPORTS REPORTER

Hosts Bangladesh are mulling to adopt counter-attacking approach against Uzbekistan and Syria in the AFC U-23 Championship Qualifiers, beginning from March 27 at the Bangabandhu National Stadium.

Keeping the superiority of Uzbekistan and Syria in mind, coach Lodewijk de Kruij has been working on defensive organisation and how to avail chances in counter-attack. His plans did get fruition as the youth team stunned Federation Cup champions Sheikh Jamal DC 1-0 in a practice match at the Dhanmondi Club ground yesterday.

Winger Jewel Rana headed the decisive goal in the 21st minute of the game, which was dominated by Sheikh Jamal DC despite the fact that the Dhanmondi-based outfit chose a number of fringe players in a few positions.

"When you face a strong side, the main objective is defending. You will also get opportunities against the superior sides and you have to avail those chances in quick counter-attack. I think we have speedy wingers and players to accomplish that objective," said assistant coach Saiful Bari Titu as de Kruij was not willing to talk to media.

The national U-23 side suffered a 0-2 defeat at the hands of Mohammedan SC in the first practice match at the BKSP ground, but the win over Sheikh Jamal will certainly boost their morale ahead of the Qualifiers, which will also feature neighbouring India.

"It was a practice match where we wanted to see the way we want to play against Uzbekistan and Syria and I think players performed better than their first practice match," said Titu. "However, we have to work more with these players. During our stay at the BKSP, we had worked on set-pieces. We also worked on bringing variation in throw-ins as posting a win against the strong sides will depend on set-pieces."

Meanwhile, de Kruij declared his final 23-member squad yesterday, excluding Anisur Rahman of Muktiyoddha Sangsad, Nurul Absar of Rahmatganj and Masuddin Ahmed Chowdhury of BKSP from the earlier 26-member squad.

## Juventus squeeze through

GOAL.COM

Carlos Tevez was the hero as his first half strike helped Juventus see off Genoa 1-0 on Sunday.

The Argentine, who notched a double to help dump Borussia Dortmund out of the Champions League in midweek, lit up the contest with a brilliant solo goal after 25 minutes.

It was not a flawless performance from the former Manchester City man, who saw a second-half penalty saved, but a third consecutive league win and a 17-point lead at the summit rarely appeared to be in doubt.

Roma, currently on a dismal run of form in second place, can close that substantial gap when they face Cesena on Sunday.

A slack pass from Leonardo Bonucci presented Niang with the opportunity to give Genoa a second-minute lead, but the forward curled narrowly wide from 20 yards.

Neither defence looked particularly assured during the opening exchanges and Facundo Roncaglia made a last-ditch block to deny Juventus striker Fernando Llorente.

Genoa felt they should have had a penalty in the 14th minute, but Diego Perotti was booked for simulation following a challenge from Claudio Marchisio.

Juventus continued to struggle for fluency but a moment of magic from Tevez put them ahead.

The Argentina forward slipped past a pair of defenders on a typically bustling run before firing home an angled shot via the underside of the crossbar for his 16th Serie goal of the season.

The visitors' early verve disappeared and it was almost 2-0 on the stroke of half-time as Giorgio Chiellini struck the crossbar when Genoa failed to fully clear a corner.

Mattia Perin was injured in the build-up to the Chiellini chance and was replaced by understudy Eugenio Lamanna soon after.

And, as he did after emerging from the bench against Roma in December, Lamanna thwarted the opposition from the penalty spot.

Roncaglia was penalised for a trip on Roberto Pereyra but Tevez failed to convert his 62nd minute spot kick as the keeper produced a diving save to keep his side in the game.

Genoa's best chance for a leveller came 10 minutes from time, as Andrea Barzagli cleared brilliantly to deny Perotti at the far post, but they could not find a way through, with Juventus continuing their march towards the title.

In the day's other game Empoli beat Sassuolo 3-1, helped by a brace from Saponara and a goal from Mchedlidze. Rugani scored a 49th minute own goal but he won't be haunted as his team secured an easy win.



Right-back Tapu Barman leaps high to head one during Bangladesh under-23 national team's practice match against Sheikh Jamal DC at the club's Dhanmondi ground yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

## PSG finally on top

AFP, Paris

Paris Saint-Germain went top of Ligue 1 for the first time this season after title-rivals Lyon lost 2-1 at home to Nice on Saturday.

The Parisians beat Lorient 3-1 on Friday thanks to a hat-trick from their giant Swedish striker Zlatan Ibrahimovic.

The result leaves PSG on 59 points from 30 games with Lyon, who had taken the Ligue 1 lead from Marseille in the first game of 2015, second a point behind.

## Pardew slams player for dive

REUTERS, London

Crystal Palace manager Alan Pardew has berated his own player James McArthur for a dive in the Palace's 2-1 win at Stoke on Saturday, saying the midfielder should feel embarrassed.

"He dived," Pardew said. "He should be embarrassed. He's a great professional and that's unlike him."

"We keep moaning about diving but it grates on me. I was surprised but it shows what pressure does to players."

AFP, Manchester



Steven Gerrard's last game against Manchester United ended with an ignominious red card as Juan Mata's superb

double condemned Liverpool to a 2-1 defeat at Anfield on Sunday.

In his final appearance against his club's eternal foes before leaving for the Los Angeles Galaxy, Liverpool captain Gerrard came on at half-time, only to be sent off after 43 seconds for a crude stamp on Ander Herrera, who had created Mata's 14th-minute opener.

Mata added a glorious, volleyed second goal and despite Daniel Sturridge's reply and Wayne Rooney seeing a late penalty saved, United held on to condemn Liverpool to a first league defeat since their 3-0 loss at Old Trafford in December's reverse fixture. Liverpool's run of 13 games without defeat had given them an opportunity to knock United out of the Champions League places, but instead Louis van Gaal's side remain fourth, a healthy five points above their rivals with eight games of the season remaining.

After a fourth consecutive league win -- and only a second success at Anfield in eight visits -- United will now anticipate forthcoming games against Aston Villa, Manchester City and Chelsea with something

## Game, Set, Mata

LIVERPOOL 1 - 2 MANCHESTER UNITED  
(Sturridge 69) (Mata 14, 59)

### MATCH STATS

Liverpool		United
32	Possession	58
7(1)	Shots(on Goal)	6(4)
75%	Pass accuracy	82%
2	Corners	3
13	Fouls	17
13	Tackles	28



### Star Man: Juan Mata

Touches-90, Shots-2, Goals-2, Passes-73, Pass accuracy -91.8%

approaching the confidence of old.

With Pele and United greats Alex Ferguson and Bobby Charlton in the directors' box, there was no shortage of football royalty in attendance as the two teams -- both unchanged -- took to the field beneath warm spring sunshine.

Visiting goalkeeper David de Gea had

to slide out and foil Raheem Sterling early on, but it was United who took control, patiently stringing passes together in defence and probing for gaps in a Liverpool side who displayed uncharacteristic carelessness with the ball.

At the KC Stadium, Chelsea survived some self-inflicted wounds to secure a 3-2 win against Hull City that kept them firmly on course to win the title for the first time since 2010.

The Blues are now six points clear again over Manchester City, with a game in hand making their position even stronger.

Jose Mourinho's side took just 78 seconds to go in front with strike from their Belgium midfielder Eden Hazard and in the ninth minute Diego Costa curl a fine finish into the far corner for his 19th league goal of the season.

But Hull reduced the deficit in the 26th minute thanks to Egypt international Ahmed Elmohamady, who swept home Andrew Robertson's cross from close range. And Steve Bruce's team equalised just two minutes later after a disastrous piece of play from Chelsea goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois.

Courtois redeemed himself with a series of second half saves and Chelsea grabbed a priceless winner in the 77th minute when McGregor allowed a fairly tame shot from French forward Loic Remy, who had only been on for three minutes, to escape his grasp and trickle into the net.

## France name squad for Brazil friendly

AFP, Paris

France coach Didier Deschamps on Friday named Benoit Costil in his 23-man squad for upcoming friendlies against Brazil and Denmark in place of injured Hugo Lloris who had to go off after sustaining a gash to his right leg following an early collision with team-mate Kyle Walker in Saturday's Premier League win.

France play Brazil on March 26 at the Stade de France in Paris and Denmark three days later.

**Goalkeepers:** Steve Mandanda (Marseille), Stéphane Ruffier (Saint-Etienne), Benoit Costil (Rennes)

**Defenders:** Patrice Evra (Juventus/ITA), Christophe Jallet (Lyon), Laurent Koscielny (Arsenal/ENG), Bacary Sagna (Manchester City/ENG), Mamadou Sakho (Liverpool/ENG), Raphael Varane (Real Madrid/ESP), Benoit Tremoulinas (Sevilla/ESP), Kurt Zouma (Chelsea/ENG)

**Midfielders:** Maxime Gonalons (Lyon), Geoffrey Kondogbia (Monaco), Blaise Matuidi (Paris SG), Moussa Sissoko (Newcastle), Morgan Schneiderlin (Southampton), Dimitri Payet (Marseille)

**Strikers:** Mathieu Valbuena (Dynamo Moscow/RUS), Karim Benzema (Real Madrid/ESP), Antoine Griezmann (Atletico Madrid/ESP), Alexandre Lacazette (Lyon), Nabil Fekir (Lyon), Olivier Giroud (Arsenal)

## School hockey final today

SPORTS REPORTER

Armanitola Govt High School and Khanjanpur High School of Jyppurhat advanced to the final of the First Security Islami Bank National School Hockey Championship beating their respective semifinal opponents at the Moulana Bhasani Hockey Stadium yesterday.

Armanitola registered a hard-fought 1-0 win over Dinajpur Zilla School in the second semifinal, thanks to a last-ditch strike from Shihab Hossain while in the first semifinal Khanjanpur High School beat JM Sen High School of Chittagong 4-3. The final will be held today at the same venue.

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-18°C temperature and more storage must be ensured in freezer part for Bangladeshi weather & food habit.



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