

Blackpool goalkeeper Joe Lewis was forced to wear an autographed shirt during a recent English second-tier match, his team-mate Andrea Orlandi has revealed. Struggling Blackpool, who have already been relegated from the Championship, ran out of goalkeeper shirts for last week's 1-1 draw at home to Reading. It meant that Lewis had to start the game wearing a jersey he had signed for presentation to a club sponsor, before an unsigned



**Jibon grabs sole lead**

SPORTS REPORTER  
Jibon Ali grabbed sole lead in the 3rd Patron's Cup Golf Tournament after the end of the third round at the Kurmitola Golf Club yesterday. The promising golfer returned a card of four-under (68) on Wednesday, for a three-round aggregate of 11-under (207) as he leads joint-overnight leader Jamal Hossain Mollah by two strokes. Jamal managed two-under (70) with three birdies and a bogey while the day's performance belonged to Siddikur Rahman, who managed five-under (67) featuring seven birdies and two bogeys, to move up to third position at six-under (210).

**Sharapova pulls out of Fed Cup**

AP, Moscow  
Maria Sharapova has pulled out of Russia's Fed Cup semifinal against Germany this weekend, citing a leg injury.  
In comments released by the Russian Tennis Federation, second-ranked Sharapova said she "couldn't wait" to compete at the match in Sochi, the Russian city where she spent part of her childhood, but added that "the leg injury didn't allow me to prepare for the match to the full extent."  
Russia's Fed Cup captain Anastasia Myskina said Sharapova had picked up the injury during last month's Miami Open, where she slipped to a surprise second-round loss to fellow Russian Daria Gavrilova.

2018 WC, 2019 ASIAN CUP QUALIFYING RD-2 DRAW

**Bangladesh pitted against Soccerroos**

SPORTS REPORTER  
These are exciting times for Bangladesh football. The Bangladesh national team will rub shoulders against the likes of Australia, Jordan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, at home and away, over the course of the next year, thanks to the joint draw for the 2018 World Cup and 2019 Asian Cup Round-2 Qualifiers held at the Malaysian capital of Kuala Lumpur on Wednesday.  
The draw pitted Bangladesh in Group B, with the aforementioned teams, who are all above Bangladesh in FIFA rankings. The teams will compete according to a double round robin format, and the matches will be held from June 11, 2015 to March 29, 2016. The Red and Greens will play their first two matches at home -- against Kyrgyzstan on June 11 and Tajikistan on June 16 -- before playing away in Perth against Australia, the highest-ranked side of the group, on September 13.  
The eight group winners and four best runners-up (total 12 teams) will advance to the final round of qualifying for the 2018 World Cup, while the 24 next best teams from the preliminary stage of the joint qualifiers will compete in a separate competition for the remaining 12 slots in the 24-team 2019 Asian Cup finals.  
Bangladesh Football Federation president Kazi Salahuddin feels that despite being drawn in a tough group, Bangladesh have a great opportunity to earn some valuable experience.  
"It's a great opportunity for Bangladesh team and the players to play at this stage against teams like Australia. It doesn't mat-

ter whether we lose by big margins. We want to capitalise on this opportunity to get experience," said the BFF boss, adding that he already asked head coach Lodewijk de Kruif to come to Dhaka within a week, along with the goalkeeping coach and trainer.  
De Kruif said that the qualifying campaign would be a tough challenge for Bangladesh. "It's a very hard group with Australia and Jordan as favourites. Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan are a bit unknown to us, but they are still higher in FIFA rankings. We will have to make a good plan for this challenging job," said the Dutchman during a conversation with reporters over social media.  
Among the group opponents, Bangladesh have never played against Australia, the defending Asian Cup champions and a four-time World Cup participants, and Jordan, who lost against Uruguay in the last play-off for the 2014 World Cup. Bangladesh have won once, drawn once and suffered four defeats against Tajikistan and lost both times they faced Kyrgyzstan.

**GROUP B**

Australia (63), Jordan (103), Tajikistan (143), Kyrgyzstan (153), Bangladesh (167)
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**BANGLADESH FIXTURES**

June 11, 2015: Bangladesh v Kyrgyzstan (Dhaka)
June 16, 2015: Bangladesh v Tajikistan (Dhaka)
Sept 3, 2015: Australia v Bangladesh (Perth)
Sept 8, 2015: Bangladesh v Jordan (Dhaka)
Oct 13, 2015: Kyrgyzstan v Bangladesh (Bishkek)
Nov 12, 2015: Tajikistan v Bangladesh (Dushanbe)
Nov 17, 2015: Bangladesh v Australia (Dhaka)

GROUP A	GROUP B	GROUP C	GROUP D
UAE, Saudi Arabia, Palestine, Timor-Leste, Malaysia	Australia, Jordan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Bangladesh	China PR, Qatar, Maldives, Bhutan, Hong Kong	IR Iran, Oman, India, Turkmenistan, Guam
GROUP E	GROUP F	GROUP G	GROUP H
Japan, Syria, Afghanistan, Singapore, Cambodia	Iraq, Vietnam, Thailand, Indonesia, Chinese Taipei	Korea Rep., Kuwait, Lebanon, Myanmar, Laos	Uzbekistan, Bahrain, Philippines, DPR Korea, Yemen

**Messi can't remember all his hattricks**

DAILY MAIL  
Ask most players about the hattricks they've scored and they'll describe in detail how they managed to find the back of the net three times in 90 minutes. But that doesn't apply to Lionel Messi.  
The Barcelona star has scored so many trebles at club level - 32 to be exact - that he can't remember each one despite keeping a match ball from every game.  
Speaking to Barcelona's official magazine, Messi revealed that his hattrick balls have a special place in his home even if he can't recall which games they're from.  
"Right now, as we speak, no. I need to see the goals again or for somebody to tell me something about them to actually remember them."  
Less surprising is the one that stands out to him.  
"The one I scored against Real Madrid when we drew 3-3 at Camp Nou was very special for me, for what it meant in the game and because for me it was my first hattrick and it kept us ahead in the league," said Messi.



Juventus midfielder Arturo Vidal celebrates his all-important goal from a penalty during their Champions League quarterfinal against Monaco in Turin on Tuesday.

PHOTO: AFP

**Donald quits SA job**

RUETERS, Cape Town  
Allan Donald has stepped down as bowling coach of South Africa, confirming his departure on Tuesday after four years in the role.  
Donald was appointed in June 2011 as part of Gary Kirsten's management team and continued in the role under current coach Russell Domingo from August 2013.

**Vidal sinks Monaco**  
Madrid derby ends in stalemate

AFP, Madrid  
Atletico Madrid and Real Madrid will fight it out for a place in the Champions League semifinals next week after the two couldn't be separated in a 0-0 first-leg draw at the Vicente Calderon on Tuesday.  
The visitors had by far the better of the chances, particularly in the first period, and Atletico were grateful to goalkeeper Jan Oblak for keeping them in the tie with a string of fine saves.  
Meanwhile, Chilean international Arturo Vidal struck a second half-penalty as Juventus laboured to a 1-0 win over a stubborn Monaco in the first leg of their Champions League quarterfinal in Turin.  
For the fourth time this season Real failed to score at the Calderon as Atletico extended their unbeaten run in the Madrid derby this season to seven games.  
And the sides meet for the eighth time at the Santiago Bernabeu on April 22.  
Atletico boss Diego Simeone kept faith with Oblak in goal ahead of the fit again Miguel Angel Moya and that decision paid dividends after just four minutes when Gareth Bale pounced on an uncharacteristic error from Diego Godin, but placed his shot too close to the on-rushing Slovenian, who spread himself well to make the save.  
Oblak was kept busy throughout the first 45 minutes as he held a free-kick from Cristiano Ronaldo before palming away another fiercely struck shot from Bale.  
His best stop was yet to come as he

dived low to his left to turn James Rodriguez's inventive attempt with the outside of his left foot to safety.  
At the other end, Iker Casillas wasn't forced into action until eight minutes from the break when he comfortably held Antoine Griezmann's shot on the turn.  
The chances continued to come for the visitors as Luka Modric blasted just over when well-placed at the edge of the box before Oblak was tested again by Rodriguez at the end of a stunning counter-attack led by Raphael Varane.



Atletico started the second period more brightly with Arda Turan heading wide from Juanfran's cross.  
Mario Mandzukic was then left with a bloody nose thanks to a stray elbow from Sergio Ramos and the Croatian was on the end of more rough treatment soon after when Dani Carvajal punched him in the stomach.  
Carvajal wasn't punished at the time by Serbian referee Milorad Mazic so could yet be banned for the return leg.

**Sk Jamal keep winning Nadal, Wawrinka start with wins**

SPORTS REPORTER  
Defending champions Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club continued their winning streak in the Manyavar Bangladesh Premier League with a 2-0 victory over Feni Soccer Club in their third match at the Sangsardha National Stadium yesterday.  
Haitian striker Wedson Anselme put Sheikh Jamal ahead before Nigerian frontman Emeka Darlington ensured the third consecutive win for the Dhanmondi giants, who sit on the top of the 11-team table with maximum nine points, three ahead of Mohammedan SC and Muktiyoddha Sangsardha.  
On the back of 2-1 win over Rahmatganj MFS, Sheikh Jamal started strongly and went close to taking a lead in the tenth min-

**SK JAMAL 2-0 FENI SOCCER**

ute but Wedson saw his grounder from the top of the box hit the woodwork. The Haitian however wasn't to be denied in the 24th minute when his glancing header on a cross from Landing Darboe beat the Feni goalkeeper Semilullah.  
Four minutes later, the Gambian curled in a free-kick for Emeka, who headed home to take the game away from Feni.  
Feni Soccer, however, made a few sporadic attacks in the second half but could not breach the backline of the champions.  
"In the second half, we could not carry the momentum of the first half because the boys tried to do everything quickly which is not suited with the style of Sheikh Jamal," said coach Maruful Haque, who was however satisfied as his team kept a clean sheet.

AFP, Monte Carlo  
Eight-time champion Rafael Nadal and holder Stan Wawrinka both expressed quiet relief at getting back to clay after opening wins on Wednesday at the Monte Carlo Masters.  
For third seed Nadal, his 6-2, 6-1 second-round victory against French wild card Lucas Pouille came as a huge relief after a poor season and just one small South American trophy to hand since winning a ninth Roland Garros title last May.  
"I'm glad to be back here and playing on clay," said the troubled Spaniard who improved his record at the seaside Country Club to 51 wins and just three losses as he moved into the third round.  
Nadal never faced a break point while breaking his wild card opponent three times.  
Nadal spent 68 minutes in proving that he will not roll over on his preferred surface.

**Klopp to quit at end of season**

AFP, Berlin  
Jurgen Klopp wants to stand down as Borussia Dortmund manager at the end of the season, German daily Bild reported on Wednesday.  
The 47-year-old, who joined the club in 2008, intends to step aside one year before the end of his contract.  
According to Bild, he wants to refresh his batteries after a successful seven-year spell at Dortmund during which he has led them to two Bundesliga titles (2011 and 2012), a German Cup (2012) and the final of the Champions League (2013).

**Atletico duo in hot water**

AFP, Madrid  
Atletico Madrid's Mario Suarez and Miranda could find themselves in hot water after seemingly making an offensive remarks against Serbian referee Milorad Mazic.  
Suarez blasted Mazic following Atletico Madrid's 0-0 draw with bitter neighbours Real Madrid in the Champions League on Tuesday night.  
The 28-year-old picked up a booking and will miss next week's second leg through suspension.

But he risks much worse than that after claiming UEFA should not have put a Serbian in charge of such an important match.  
"The referee was very bad. You can't have a Serbian in charge of a Champions League quarterfinal, that isn't taking it seriously enough," fumed Suarez.  
"I hope that in the second leg the referee will be better with more fluid and normal decisions."  
"The referee wasn't up to it, but they made mistakes as we do."  
"The game was very evenly balanced, we know each other so well and the tie is still open."

**Sania makes us all proud, says Shoab**

AFP, Karachi  
Pakistan's ex-cricketer captain Shoab Malik said on Tuesday he was proud his Indian wife Sania Mirza had become the world's top-ranked doubles tennis player, adding it was an honour for both countries.  
"I am extremely proud and overwhelmed with joy," Malik told AFP. "It's a matter of pride for Pakistan as she is my wife and, of course, she is from India and she represents her nation with 100 per cent determination to be the best."  
"It's also a victory for all tennis players and tennis fans in India and Pakistan on what is possible with hard work at a global level," he said.  
Malik said he had celebrated with his family after watching the match from his hometown of Sialkot in Pakistan before calling his in-laws in India to congratulate them.



Bangladesh Sports Press Association's sports centre, named after renowned sports journalist late Abdul Hamid, being inaugurated by Kazi Nabil Ahmed, chairman of Gemcon Group and BFF vice-president, where association president Rana Hasan and general secretary Sanat Babla were also present.

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