

## HE'S STILL GOT IT

Ronaldinho may only have played a cameo role for Queretaro on Saturday night at Club America, however the Brazilian starred with a late brace. Queretaro claimed an impressive 4-0 away win in the Mexican top flight, and Ronaldinho claimed some late headlines following his 84th minute introduction into the match. Two minutes after coming on the pitch Ronaldinho tucked home a chance following a breakaway to make the score 0-3 and then slid a neat shot into the bottom corner in injury time to complete his quick-fire



# 'I'm enjoying as much as I can'

NAIMUL KARIM

A day after Tamim Iqbal cruised his way to a blistering 132 in the first ODI, he was busy trying to manoeuvre himself through an array of journalists at the team hotel, sporting a t-shirt that read 'Every Damn Day'. If his message wasn't clear enough in the lobby of the Pan Pacific Sonargaon Hotel that afternoon, then he surely did ascertain it a day after at Mirpur.

He surged into the past, rediscovered those exquisite drives, took a packed Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium back in time along with him to become only the third Bangladeshi, after Shahriar Nafees and Mahmudullah Riyad, to score consecutive ODI centuries. The secret behind Tamim's turnaround was simple; he has learnt to enjoy the game again, just like he did as a teenager when he had just entered international cricket.

"When I went out to bat, there was only one thing in my head... I wanted to enjoy as much as I could. I wanted to play all my shots. Only after I reached 80 did I actually think of the century. What's more important is that I remained unbeaten, on 116. I managed to do that just once before," exclaimed the opener at the post-match press conference.

"When I was young, I used to excitedly wake up at 6:00 am to play tennis-ball cricket and I used to enjoy a lot. Somehow I missed out on that feeling recently and I want to thank my teammates for helping me get that feeling back. I am enjoying as much as I can," he added.

Unlike the left-hander's controversial celebration in the first match, when he signalled the audience to 'talk now' in response to the criticism that he had been facing for the last couple of months, Tamim seemed a lot more excited yesterday. He lifted his bat and his helmet towards different stands of the stadium.

"I never plan how to celebrate... whenever I did that I failed to reach a century [laughs]. I do whatever comes to me naturally. I requested everyone not to take my last celebration negatively. I let out my frustration. One has to understand what I have been through. I would have accepted criticism against me, but not to my family. The last few months have been hard for them... but I never wanted to hurt anyone.

"I know that I may play bad again; a cricket career is like a circle. But I hope that at that point of time the criticism is restricted to me and not to my family," requested the player.



**YOU'RE ALREADY THIS TALL!** Bangladesh wicketkeeper Mushfiqur Rahim jokes with captain Mashrafe Bin Mortaza's daughter Humaira after the second one-day international against Pakistan at the Sher-e-Bangla Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

# 'We proved our worth'

SPORTS REPORTER



Bangladesh captain Mashrafe Bin Mortaza, after his team's series victory last night, said that he was happy that his side was able to continue the form that it displayed in the ICC World Cup.

"Had we won the New Zealand game in the World Cup it could have been more satisfactory. But still the World Cup went well and we felt then that our next step would be very important.

Especially since we received a huge welcome after coming back here... so much so that at one point I even asked myself if it was too much. The fact was that everybody was supporting us so much... we needed to prove to them that they were doing the right thing," said Mashrafe, while speaking on the importance of the series victory.

"I am thankful to the boys for the way they changed their attitude," he added.

Mashrafe believed that this memorable win would allow them to further progress in international cricket.

The Bangladesh skipper also rubbished the notion that this Pakistan side is a weak one. "When we began the series, many, including our players, said that we were favourites. If you say that we thought that Pakistan was a weak side... that's not true.

"It always takes time when a team goes through a transitional period. But if you see their bowling attack, it's one of the best in the world. I won't say that there is much difference, the wickets also suit them as well," he said.

The paceman also highly

praised his team's bowling effort in the second match as he believed that 239 was not a threatening score.

"Nowadays, 240 -- with these conditions and rules -- has become like 180. Maybe Shakib and I could have bowled better, but I thought Taskin, Rubel and Arafat were really good. We never thought that it would be difficult to chase this target down," said Mashrafe.

Mashrafe said that they put up almost perfect displays in the first two games and that the team is now hoping for a 3-0 finish.

## Modric out for season

AFP, Madrid

Real Madrid suffered a huge injury blow ahead of their decisive Champions League quarterfinal, second leg against Atletico Madrid on Wednesday with the news Luka Modric will miss the majority of the season with knee ligament damage.

Gareth Bale is also expected to miss out against Atletico after limping off after less than five minutes of Madrid's game against Malaga with a calf injury.

Spanish media reported Modric is set to miss out six weeks out which would end his season, barring Real making it to the Champions League final on June 6.

As well as Bale and Modric, striker Karim Benzema is a doubt due to a knee injury which forced him to miss the win over Malaga.

# Wedson, Emeka power Sheikh Jamal

SPORTS REPORTER



Wedson Anselme and Emeka Darlington scored a brace each as defending champions Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club thrashed Chittagong Abahani 4-0 at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday to regain the sole lead in the Manyavar Bangladesh Premier League.

The most lethal striking duo of Dhaka football scene ensured a convincing victory with four goals in the second half after the port city side had managed to keep their mighty opponents at bay for the first half of the match. The win took Sheikh Jamal to 12 points from four matches, three ahead of second-placed Muktijoddha Sangsad, who will have the opportunity to join the leaders when they take on title contenders Sheikh Russel KC today.

That Sheikh Jamal failed to break the deadlock in the first half owed to the compact defensive play from the



PHOTO: COURTESY

**Sheikh Jamal's Haitian striker Wedson Anselme (R) tries to wriggle past a Chittagong Abahani player during their Bangladesh Premier League encounter at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.**

## SHEIKH JAMAL 4-0 CTG ABAHANI

port city side, who were hardly threatened, except for a Landing Darboe free-kick, which rattled the upright on the half-hour mark.

The break came five minutes after the restart when Wedson, the top-scorer of last season, comfortably tapped home after Darlington had chested down a cross from Darboe onto his path.

The Haitian doubled the lead in

the 73rd minute, which took his tally for the league to four goals alongside top-scorer Szabolcs Csorba of Abahani, with a smashing volley after having chested down a cross from Mohammad Linkon.

Emeka then joined in on the act, scoring twice within the next five minutes, as the wheels fell off for Chittagong Abahani. The Nigerian grabbed the third goal of the game in the 75th minute with a placing shot on a cutback from Darboe before driving an angular shot to complete the rout two minutes later. The two goals put the Nigerian alongside Wedson and Csorba for a three-way leaderboard.

Wedson later said that despite having squandered at least eight scoring opportunities in four matches, he would try to go to score better than one-a-game this season.

"I don't know whether I can surpass the number of goals I scored (26 in 27 matches) last season, but this time I have set my target to go beyond 20 goals in 20 matches," said the Haitian.

# Rajasthan's 5th, Mumbai's 1st

AGENCIES



Mumbai Indians beat Royal Challengers Bangalore by 18 runs in a high-scoring affair to register their maiden win in this year's Indian Premier League on Sunday.

Sent into bat, Lendl Simmons and Unmukt Chand first smashed strokeful half-centuries to power Mumbai Indians to an imposing 209 for seven and then veteran off-spinner Harbhajan Singh (3/27) weaved his magic to restrict RCB to 191 for seven.

Earlier in the day, a rampaging Rajasthan Royals thrashed Chennai Super Kings by eight wickets as openers Shane Watson and Ajinkya Rahane hit strokeful fifties to help their team register their fifth straight win. Chasing 157 for a win, Rajasthan rode on a 144-run record opening stand between skipper Watson and Rahane to canter home in 18.2 overs.

## SCORES IN BRIEF

**MUMBAI:** 209 for 7 in 20 overs (Simmons 59, Chand 58, R Sharma 42; Wiese 4-33, Chahal 2-28)  
**BANGALORE:** 191 for 7 in 20 overs (Bisla 20, De Villiers 41, Wiese 47 not out; Harbhajan 3-27)  
**Result:** Mumbai Indians won by 18 runs.

**CHENNAI:** 156 for 4 in 20 overs (Smith 40, Bravo 62 not out, Dhoni 31 not out; Morris 1-19)  
**RAJASTHAN:** 157 for 2 in 18.2 overs (Rahane 76 not out, Watson 73; Jadeja 1-29)  
**Result:** Rajasthan won by 8 wickets.

## Chelsea, Balo most abused

AGENCIES, London

A study into the levels of abuse targeted at Premier League clubs and players online has revealed that more than 130,000 abusive posts have been made via social media so far this season.

The research, carried out by anti-discrimination body Kick It Out, found that Chelsea were the most targeted club, with - surprise surprise - Mario Balotelli suffering more abuse than any other player.

The numbers (taken from Twitter, Facebook, forums and blogs) equate to 16,800 discriminatory posts a month, 551 per day, one message every 2.6 minutes.

# Real keep up chase

AFP, Madrid



Real Madrid remain just two points behind Barca at the top of the table as goals from Sergio Ramos, James Rodriguez and Cristiano Ronaldo secured a 3-1 win over Malaga despite a rare missed penalty from Ronaldo.

A fourth consecutive La Liga win ensured Madrid remain in the title hunt with only 6 games to go in the La Liga season.

Carlos Kameni prevented the Hernandez from opening the scoring with a fine save, but there was nothing he could do to prevent Ramos turning home Ronaldo's free-kick after 24 minutes.

Kameni produced more heroics to prevent Rodriguez doubling Madrid's advantage with a sweetly struck shot, but Malaga should have gone in level at the break as Sergi Darder slashed wide with the goal at his mercy.

Nordin Amrabat flashed wide with another good opening for the visitors after

## RESULTS

**Rayo Vallecano 2** (Amaya 23, Miku 90) **Almeria 0**  
**Deportivo la Coruna 1** (Riera 77) **Atletico Madrid 2** (Griezmann 5, 21)

**Real Madrid 3** (Ramos 24, Rodriguez 69, Ronaldo 90+2) **Malaga 1** (Juanmi 71)

**Athletic Bilbao 4** (Aduriz 45, 46, Ibai Gomez 79,

the restart, while Madrid's bad luck continued as Ronaldo struck the post from the penalty spot after Rodriguez had been upended by Samu Castillejo.

However, there was no stopping Rodriguez's 14th goal of the season as he blasted into the top corner after a neat one-two with Ronaldo.

Malaga replied almost immediately as Juanmi headed home Roberto Rosales's cross, but Madrid saw out a nervous spell before Ronaldo slotted home from Hernandez's pass in stoppage time.

## Novak Monte Carlo master

AFP, Monte Carlo

Novak Djokovic set another career record on Sunday with his second Monte Carlo title, as the Serb became the first man to win the opening three Masters 1000 events in a season through a 7-5, 4-6, 6-3 defeat of Tomas Berdych.

The top seed had to survive a comeback from his Czech rival as well as a 70-minute rain interruption which came as he led by a set and 3-2 on serve in the second.

Djokovic's victory was his 17th straight win of the season and also marked a fourth straight Masters 1000 title after also winning at Paris Bercy last November.

# Tuchel confirms Dortmund job

AFP, Berlin



Thomas Tuchel will succeed Jurgen Klopp as Borussia Dortmund's head coach for next season on a three-year contract, the Bundesliga club announced on Sunday.

The 41-year-old Tuchel, who was Mainz's coach until May 2014, will be officially presented as Dortmund's head coach once the current German league season finishes on May 23 and he will start work on July 1.

After winning the 2011 and 2012 Germany league titles, Klopp dropped a bombshell last Wednesday when he announced he will leave at the end of the

season after seven years in charge.

The charismatic Klopp has been linked to several English Premier League sides, but insists is giving no thought to his future until after Dortmund's last five league games, with the team eighth following Saturday's 3-0 home win against Paderborn.

Tuchel is regarded as one of Germany's top coaches after five years at Mainz, where he managed to consistently coax impressive results out of the mid-table side.

Under Tuchel, Mainz set a new club record by winning their first seven league matches of the 2010/11 season, including an away win at Bayern Munich, and reached the Europa League for the first time by finishing seventh in last season's Bundesliga.

