

## Punjab defy Rajasthan

STAR SPORT DESK

Bottom-of-the-table King's XI Punjab denied Royal Challengers Bangalore an opportunity to move into the second position in the Indian Premier League table with a 22-run win in Mohali last night. The Punjab side managed to restrict Virat Kohli and Co to a paltry 84 runs in 10 overs after scoring 106 in the rain-curtailed affair.

Wriddhiman Saha's 12-ball 31 and Axar Patel's unbeaten 20 gave the Punjab side the challenging total after the match started with a delay of two hours and forty-five minutes due to rain. Already out of IPL 2015 play-off contention, the Punjab side then kept the Rajasthan scoring in check with Patel starring with two wickets for 11 runs in two overs.

**SCORES IN BRIEF**  
**KING'S XI PUNJAB:** 106 for 6 in 10 overs (Saha 31, Patel 20 not out; Patel 2-12)  
**RAJASTHAN ROYALS:** 84 for 6 in 10 overs (Mandeep 20, Kohli 19; Patel 2-11)  
**Result:** King's XI Punjab won by 22 runs.

## Pique eyes 'historic' final

AFP, Madrid

Barcelona defender Gerard Pique has welcomed the prospect of facing eternal rivals Real Madrid for the first time in a Champions League final in Berlin early next month.

The Catalans sealed their place in a fourth final in 10 years with a 5-3 aggregate win over Bayern Munich, despite losing the second leg 3-2 on Tuesday, whilst Madrid must overturn a 2-1 first leg deficit when they host Juventus on Wednesday.

"A final against Madrid would be very exciting and historic," said the Spanish international.

Barcelona are not just on the verge of their fifth European Cup, but are three matches away from just the second treble in the club's history.

Luis Enrique's men will seal La Liga with victory over Atletico Madrid on Sunday and also host Athletic Bilbao at the Camp Nou in the Copa del Rey final on May 30.

"It is a great stat to be in a fourth final of the Champions League in 10 years. During these years our era has been defined by results, our philosophy and I am very happy to have been part of these years."



Barcelona striker Neymar (L) celebrates his second goal with forwards Luis Suarez (C) and Lionel Messi during their Champions League semifinal against Bayern Munich in Munich on Tuesday.

PHOTO: AFP

## A dream strikeforce

INTERNET



The man who was almost ousted was also the man who figured it out.

During Barcelona's big "crisis" in January, manager Luis Enrique almost lost his job, after having reportedly lost the confidence of superstar Lionel Messi. But he survived that quasi vote of no-confidence and Barca has lost just once since. More importantly, a compromise was finally found to reconcile three of the finer attacking talents of their generation – and just about every generation before it.

Last season, Neymar's insertion into a Lionel Messi-dominated attack could seem fairly awkward. While he'd cost more than Barca had ever laid out for any player before, he and Messi got in each other's way a lot, with the Argentine playing up top and the Brazilian in his shadow on the left. Neymar delivered just nine league goals, 15 in all competitions. It was a disappointing return on investment.

Last summer, Luis Suarez was added for even more money, and after he sat out his biting suspension that had carried over from the World Cup, the Uruguayan seemed lost. Suarez, like Neymar, had grown accustomed to his team's attacking campaigns revolving around him. His teammates at every previous club had played in his service, just as Neymar's had at Santos. He struggled to find the room to deploy his explosive game, typically consisting of explosive bursts into space and long dribbles inside from the flanks.

But then a simple switch turned the tide on Barcelona's season as well as that of its attackers. By moving Suarez up top to central striker and Messi back to the right flank – where he'd come up at Barca yet had floundered under Tata Martino last season – everything suddenly clicked. Suarez found space to operate higher on the field, and Messi found happiness and freedom underneath him.

Essentially, the other two still move on a swivel around Messi, with Suarez commanding attention from the defenders to open up areas for the Argentine. Neymar

mostly hangs out until they find him for a final ball or a finish. That, certainly, is how Bayern Munich was defeated 5-3 on aggregate on Tuesday to send Barca to its first Champions League final since 2011.

And that's what has allowed Neymar to score 37 goals in all competitions so far this season, Messi to bag another 53 and Suarez to collect an equally staggering 20 assists.

This tweak may have been the direct doing of Luis Enrique – a former Barcelona right winger himself, incidentally – or a pact forged by Suarez and Messi on the training ground. The various accounts differ on this. But whether it's his own inspiration or that of his players, the manager deserves credit for trying it and sticking with it.

Certainly, Pep Guardiola, the man vanquished on Tuesday, will forever get the plaudits for building this team, and rightly so. The spine that all else is affixed was his handiwork. But Neymar and Suarez joined after he left following the 2011-12 season. And Luis Enrique figured out how to make it all coalesce.

This sounds like a fairly minor accomplishment, given their respective talents, but consider that no other Barca manager during all these glorious years had quite figured out his front line. Frank Rijkaard, Guardiola, Tito Vilanova and Martino all couldn't work out how to get a striker to coexist optimally with Messi. Samuel Eto'o, Thierry Henry, Zlatan Ibrahimovic, David Villa and Alexis Sanchez were all tried up front, with more or less the same outcome: solid results. But the formula to maximize everybody's ability was never found.

And where, in the wake of the club's transfer ban of the past transfer window (which will run through the summer), the defense has been increasingly exposed in the high-stakes games, the attack has more than compensated.

Previous Barcelona teams dominated by the grace of their midfielders and ability to find Messi. This one and whatever silverware it wins this year – and a treble is still eminently possible – will do so on the merit of a front line finally come good.

For that, Luis Enrique should get to take a bow.

## Anelotti gets touchline ban

AFP, Madrid

Real Madrid boss Carlo Ancelotti is banned from sitting on the bench for the rest of the La Liga season after receiving a two-game touchline suspension by the Spanish Football Federation on Wednesday.

The Italian was reported by referee Carlos Clos Gomez for sarcastically applauding the officials at the end of Madrid's 2-2 draw with Valencia on Saturday which all but ended their title hopes.

Los Blancos trail Barcelona by four points with just two games away to Espanyol and home to Getafe left to play.

## Rodriguez extends Saints stay

AFP, London

Jay Rodriguez has ended speculation about his future by signing a new contract with Southampton that will keep him at the Premier League side until 2019, the south coast club said Tuesday.

A ruptured cruciate ligament has kept the 25-year-old striker on the sidelines for more than a year but several of Saints' top-flight rivals had been linked with a move for Rodriguez, whose current contract only had a year to run.

## Pep backs Barca to win final

AFP, Munich



Bayern Munich coach Pep Guardiola is now backing his ex-club Barcelona to win the Champions League after his Bavarian giants bowed out 5-3 on aggregate in the semifinals.

Guardiola's Bayern exited at the last-four stage for the second year running, despite ending Barcelona's 18-game unbeaten run with a 3-2 semifinal, second-leg win in Munich.

Bayern were given an early glimmer of hope in their bid to overturn a three-goal deficit in Munich when the unmarked Medhi Benatia headed home on seven minutes at the Allianz Arena.

But Barca effectively booked their place in the Berlin final on June 6 when Luis Suarez twice set up Neymar to score for the visitors before half an hour had been played.

Bayern produced a rousing second-half performance with goals by Robert Lewandowski and Thomas Mueller, but Barcelona advance to face either bitter rivals Real Madrid or Juventus in the final.

Having won 16 titles as a player, then a further 14 in four years as head coach at the Camp Nou, Guardiola is backing Barcelona to claim their first European crown since 2011 at Berlin's Olympic Stadium on June 6.

"I want to congratulate my players, I am really happy to be their manager on a day like today," said Guardiola, as Bayern denied Barcelona a first win in Munich at the fifth attempt.

"But I hope Barcelona can now win their fifth Champions League title in Berlin.

"You can only beat Barcelona when you take the ball away from them, with it they are so strong.

"We didn't make the most of our chances in the first leg, but here we did.

"It wasn't enough at the end of the day, but there you go.

"I hope the Spanish league has the rights to be screened in Germany soon, so that fans here can appreciate what a good player Lionel Messi is on a regular basis.

"He was a pleasure to coach when I was at Barcelona and he has demonstrated yet again what he can do."

The win over Barcelona ended Bayern's four-match losing streak.

**pstc Population Services and Training Center (PSTC)**

PSTC has shifted its Head Office from ~~New Circular Road~~ to **Niketon** and PSTC has rebranded after **37** years of its journey by changing its logo from  to 

**Please contact us at our new office location**

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**হটলাইন নাম্বার ০১৮ ৪২৪৪ ২০২১**

**জানুক সবাই দেখাও ভুলনা**

**জাতীয় হাইস্কুল প্রোগ্রামিং প্রতিযোগিতা ২০১৫**

জাতীয় হাইস্কুল প্রোগ্রামিং প্রতিযোগিতা ২০১৫ তে রেজিস্ট্রেশন করে অংশ নাও আইসিটি কুইজ ও প্রোগ্রামিং প্রতিযোগিতায়। আর সবাইকে দেখিয়ে দাও তোমার ভেতরে লুকিয়ে থাকা বিশৃঙ্খলের সম্ভবনা!

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 সেকেন্ডারি - ৯ম থেকে এমএসসি পরিক্ষার্থী  
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**প্রোগ্রামিং প্রতিযোগিতা:**  
 জুনিয়র - ৬ষ্ঠ থেকে ৯ম শ্রেণী  
 সিনিয়র - ১০ম থেকে এইচএসসি পরিক্ষার্থী ও পলিটেকনিক ৪র্থ সেমিস্টার

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