

KANTIPUR GOLD
SAFF U-19 C'ship
Nepal v Bangladesh
Live from 3:45pm

SONY SIX
Sri Lanka v India
Second Test, Day 5
Live from 10:30am

STAR SPORTS 4
IAAF World Athletics C'ships
Live from 7:30am & 4:30pm
English Premier League
Arsenal v Liverpool

BALL BOY'S MOMENT

There was a brilliant finish to Saturday's League Two match between Wycombe Wanderers and Dagenham & Redbridge. Dagenham looked odds-on for the three points, after Matt McClure had fired them into a seventh minute lead, however the goalscorer turned from hero to villain in the 77th minute when he was sent off. Wycombe made their extra man count in injury time when Aaron Pierre scored a late leveller. Pierre headed to the corner flag to celebrate his moment, at which point he was joined by a young ball boy, who showed



Skipper Mamunul Islam (R) makes a point to his teammates during the first practice session at the BFF artificial turf yesterday as Bangladesh started preparation for the Asian Cup and World Cup Qualifiers against Australia and Jordan.

Tired booters join camp Sajib drafted in place of Nasir Chowdhury

SPORTS REPORTER



After a hectic second-phase of the Manyavar Bangladesh Premier League where 55 matches were played in 50 days, the national footballers yesterday returned for preparation ahead of the upcoming World Cup and Asian Cup Qualifiers against Australia and Jordan.

The exhausted players apparently need recharging physically and mentally before facing Australia on September 3 in Perth and coach Lodewijk de Kruif promised that he would work on to bring a balance and good feeling among the players instead of going into the heavy tasks.

"We are really tired after playing so many matches in a short period of time. We need physical and mental rest," said captain Mamunul Islam. "The short period of training is not a problem as all the players have been in continuous action. This group of players have been together for the last two years, so there will not be any problem of communication among us."

Mamunul and Co. are excited to play against the Asian champions and at the same time they are determined to give their best to gain some confidence before facing Jordan at home on September 8.

"Everyone knows that there is a gulf of

difference between Bangladesh and Australia, who have a number of European-based players. We will be trying to give more than our best to gain confidence to do well against Jordan," said Mamunul.

Striker Zahid Hasan Emily believes playing against Australia would be a big event in their footballing career.

"We don't know when Bangladesh will get another chance to play against Australia. So this will be a big moment for the players," said Emily. "However, we want to make Australia feel that Bangladesh football is improving."

De Kruif said that they are now focused on three matches (friendly against Malaysia before the Australia and Jordan fixtures) and the result against Malaysia is not that important to him as he wants to work out the way his team will play against Australia through that friendly.

"The players are little tired and I am not pushing them for things like conditional training. It is about having a good feeling and bringing balance among the players before going into the difficult match. We will try to do well and try to give everything for the country," De Kruif told the players in his short briefing before start of training at the BFF artificial turf.

Meanwhile, striker Aminur Rahman Sajib has been included in place defender Nasiruddin Chowdhury, who has been suffering from dengue.

Juve's first at home

AFP, Milan

New Udinese signing Cyril Thereau pounced late in the second half to secure a 1-0 win away to Juventus and hand the champions their first ever opening-day defeat in Turin.

In 40 previous matches on the opening day of the Serie A season, Juventus had lost only once, a 1-0 reverse away to Bari in 2010.

Yet after dominating for long periods, Juve ultimately failed to convert their many chances and were stunned in the 78th minute when Thereau -- signed in the off-season from Chievo -- escaped his marker to slide the ball past Gianluigi Buffon at the keeper's far post.

Udinese, Italy's northern-most club based in the Friuli region, last beat Juventus in 2011. A new-look Juve lined up for their first game of the season after the summer departures of Arturo Vidal (Bayern Munich), Andrea Pirlo (New York City FC) and Carlos Tevez (Boca Juniors).

Coach Massimiliano Allegri deployed a 3-5-2 and for most of the game Juve's expectant fans were thrilled with the decision.

Juve dominated throughout and Udinese struggled to get out of their half but on the flip side the hosts struggled to break down the visitors' stubborn defence.

Belgian GP Hamilton's

AFP, Spa-Francorchamps

Two-time world champion Lewis Hamilton extended his lead in this year's title race to 28 points when he claimed a near-flawless victory ahead of Mercedes team-mate Nico Rosberg in the Belgian Grand Prix at Spa-Francorchamps on Sunday.

Starting from his 10th pole position of the season and sixth in succession, the 30-year-old Briton dominated with some ease as he finished a controlled 2.058 seconds clear of the German.

Hamilton now has 227 points and Rosberg 199.

It was Hamilton's second victory at the Belgian race and his sixth of the season and the 39th of his career.

His 80th podium finish equalled the mark of the late great Ayrton Senna.

Reception for Sheikh Jamal, U-16s

SPORTS REPORTER

Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club yesterday accorded a reception to its team, which won the Bangladesh Premier League and winning booked a place in the AFC Cup Play-offs, as well as the Bangladesh U-16 national football team for winning the SAFF U-16 Championship.

The three-time professional league champions secured the play-off spot in the 2016 AFC Cup after thrashing Casa Benfica of Macau 4-1 and holding FC Alga Bishkek to a 1-1 draw in Kyrgyzstan earlier this month.

"Sheikh Jamal have played four tournaments abroad in the last two seasons and returned with four trophies (three champions and one runners-up trophy) to uplift the image of the Bangladesh clubs as well as the country. I want to thank the players for their achievement," said the club's president, Manzur Kader, at the reception held at the club premises.

The club management also declared that it would form a stronger squad keeping most of its players from the current squad in

a bid to producing a positive result in the play-off fixture and clinching hattrick of titles in the professional league.

Bangladesh Football Federation president Kazi Salahuddin conveyed a congratulatory letter to the club from FIFA president Sepp Blatter.

Sheikh Jamal have also been invited by Atletico de Kolkata, the Indian Super League franchise, to play a friendly match in Siliguri on September 19, it was informed.

"It is a big honour for us that a team like Atletico de Kolkata have invited us to play a friendly match and we will travel to India if we can manage with the schedules of the national team where we have 13 players," said Kader.

While according reception to the under-16 team, Kader urged the game's governing body to give these boys a proper platform to flourish.

"We are felicitating the U-16 team to inspire them as they have earned something big beating India twice and they are our future stars," said Kader.

Dulal Brothers Limited (DBL), a sponsor-partner of Sheikh Jamal DC, gave away cash award worth Tk 10,000 to each of the members of the under-16 squad while Sheikh Jamal provided a crest to each player

SAILORS U-15 NAT'L C'SHIP Winning start for Dhaka, N'ganj

SPORTS REPORTER

Dhaka and Narayanganj districts made winning start in the eight-team final round of the Sailor BFF National U-15 Football Championship yesterday.

Dhaka earned a 2-1 victory against Jessore District at the Bangabandhu National Stadium, with Rubel and Emon netting for the winners. Narayanganj thrashed Thakurgaon by 5-1 goals at the Abahani Ground in the other match of the day.

Balo linked to Milan

APP, Milan

Mario Balotelli has been linked with a return to AC Milan after club CEO Adriano Galliani spoke of his love for the Liverpool misfit.

Balotelli's club career has stalled at Anfield after joining the Reds from Milan last year.

But with former Sampdoria coach Sinisa Mihajlovic now in charge of the seven-time European champions, reports in Italy claim Balotelli is on his way back to the club.

Galliani indicated that both he and club president Silvio Berlusconi would support Balotelli's return.

Pedro gives West Brom the Blues

APP, London



Pedro Rodriguez scored on his debut as Chelsea survived captain John Terry's dismissal to beat West Bromwich Albion 3-2 on Sunday and claim their first win of the season.

Home side West Brom, who left out star striker Saido Berahino following a failed bid from Tottenham Hotspur, scored twice through James Morrison, who also had a penalty saved by Thibaut Courtois.

But Jose Mourinho's visitors held on for victory after Pedro had opened the scoring and had a hand in Chelsea's second, scored by Diego Costa to make it 2-0.

Cesar Azpilicueta scored a rare goal to give Chelsea a 3-1 half-time lead after Morrison had reduced the arrears.

And Terry, who was substituted at half-time against Manchester City last weekend, lasted just 54 minutes before he was dismissed for a professional foul on Salomon Rondon.

Morrison then headed in his second goal to set up a tense finish, but Chelsea held on.

Costa fired the game's first real chance wide for Chelsea in the opening minutes.

But the home side made an energetic start and were rewarded with a penalty in the 13th minute when Nemanja Matic was adjudged to have tripped Callum McManaman, although the visitors were upset with referee Mark Clattenburg's decision.

Courtois came to his side's rescue, however, as he saved with his trailing leg as he dived to stop Morrison's drilled, low effort from the spot.

Albion should have led on 18 minutes, too, when Craig Dawson rose highest to meet a Morrison free-kick, but sent his header over the bar.

And they were punished on 20 minutes when Pedro began to repay his transfer fee, believed to be in the region of 21.2 million pounds. The Spain international, formerly of Barcelona, exchanged passes on the edge of the penalty area with Eden Hazard and netted the opening goal with the aid of a deflection off Gareth McAuley.

It was 2-0 minutes later when Pedro turned provider as his side broke from a West Brom corner.

He collected a pass from Willian and tried a cross-shot, which was turned in from close range by Costa.

Albion were back in the game within five minutes when Morrison made up for his earlier miss with a fine, low finish.

Suarez breaks Bilbao after Messi misses a penalty

APP, Madrid

Barcelona exacted revenge for their Spanish Super Cup defeat to Athletic Bilbao to get off to a winning start in La Liga thanks to Luis Suarez's solitary second-half strike.

Lionel Messi's troubles from the penalty spot continued as he saw a first-half spot-kick saved by Gorka Iraizoz.

However, his strike partner ensured that miss didn't prove costly as Suarez volleyed home early in the second-half to hand the champions all three points.

Luis Enrique's men were returning to the ground where they were thrashed 4-0 in the first leg of the Super Cup just nine days ago and were without the suspended Gerard Pique, whilst Neymar wasn't fit to take part after just returning to training following a bout of the mumps.

Athletic were also missing a number of first-team regulars, though, and struggled to match their high-energy performances in the two Super Cup matches after also playing in the Europa League on Thursday.

After a quiet start the game burst into life when referee Carlos del Cerro Grande controversially pointed to the spot when Suarez went down under a challenge from Gorka Elustondo.

However, Messi failed to open the scoring from the resulting spot-kick as Iraizoz flew to his right to make a brilliant save.

The Argentine has now missed five penalties for club and country in the past year and failed to find the net in 14 of the 63 penalties he has taken for Barca.

Iraizoz produced an even better stop moments later to prevent Suarez sweeping home Sergi Roberto's cross to ensure Athletic went in level at the break.

The Uruguayan wasn't to be denied just eight minutes into the second-half, though,

as he connected sweetly on his left-foot with Jordi Alba's cross.

Roberto was deputising in an unusual position at right-back after replacing the injured Dani Alves midway through the first-half, but his impressive showing continued as he smashed a shot off the bar from a narrow angle as Barca threatened to double their advantage.

However, the visitors suffered another injury blow when Sergio Busquets was stretchered off with an ankle problem and were left hanging on with a makeshift back-four.

Ibai Gomez had the Basques' best chance to equalise 10 minutes from time, but he blasted over when the ball fell invitingly inside the Barca box.

And Messi nearly sealed the three points with a stunning individual run past a host of tired Athletic defenders, reminiscent of his opening goal in the Copa del Rey final between the sides in May, but his finish lacked the accuracy needed to beat Iraizoz.

Earlier on Friday, Atletico Madrid kicked off their La Liga campaign with a 1-0 win over newly promoted Las Palmas, but failed to live up to pre-season expectations in a nervy display.

Antoine Griezmann got the only goal of the game with a deflected free-kick after 16 minutes.

However, Atletico struggled to create clear-cut opportunities and were nearly made to pay when David Simon headed against the bar for the visitors.

Atletico have unusually been the biggest spenders in Spain over the close season after a quiet summer in the transfer market for Barcelona and Real Madrid.

Jackson Martinez made his debut up front, whilst Filipe Luis returned at left-back after a difficult year at Chelsea.

However, it was last season's top scorer Griezmann who again made the difference. Valencia were made to pay for missing three clear-cut chances early on away to Rayo

Kiwis level series

REUTERS, Potchefstroom

An unbeaten century from opener Martin Guptill eased New Zealand to an emphatic eight-wicket victory over South Africa in the second one-day international at Sunwes Park on Sunday.

Set a modest 205 for victory, New Zealand cruised to their target with 33 balls to spare on the back of Guptill's 103 not out as they finished on 207 for two.

The victory levels the three match series at 1-1, with the deciding match to be played in Durban on Wednesday.

After winning the toss and electing to bat, South Africa never got momentum in their innings and were bowled out in the final over for 204, not helped by losing their last three wickets to run out.

New Zealand bowled with accuracy on a slow wicket as the Proteas batsmen reached the boundary rope on just 15 occasions.

SCORES IN BRIEF

SOUTH AFRICA: 204 all out in 49.3 overs (Rossouw 39, De Villiers 31, Behardien 70, Philander 30 not out; Milne 2-39-2, Bracewell 3-31)

NEW ZEALAND: 207 for 2 in 44.3 overs (Guptill 103 not out, Latham 64, Worker 20 not out; Phangiso 1-37, Tahir 1-42)

Result: New Zealand won by eight-wickets.

Player-of-the-match: Martin Guptill.



Barcelona forward Luis Suarez celebrates after scoring the all-important goal against nemesis Athletic Bilbao in their opening La Liga match at the San Mames Stadium in Bilbao yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS