

What to WATCH

TEN ACTION
Champions League
Man City v Juventus
Live from 12:45am (Wednesday)

TEN CRICKET
Champions League
PSG v Malmo
Live from 12:45am (Wednesday)

TEN SPORTS
Champions League
PSV v Man Utd
Live from 12:45am (Wednesday)

XAVI'S TRIUMPHANT DEBUT

His last competitive match was in front of more than 70,000 fans but Xavi Hernandez made his Qatar Stars League debut on Sunday watched by a crowd of just 2,253. For Xavi's new team though, Al Sadd, it was a perfect start to the season, winning 4-0 away in a one-sided clash against newly-promoted Mesaimeer, emphasising their determination to go one better than second place last season. Afterwards, he brushed aside questions about himself, declaring only that the result mattered. "It was positive to



Cult movie '300' inspires Djokovic

AFP, New York

Novak Djokovic admitted he took inspiration from cult movie "300" and its Scottish star Gerard Butler, who was on hand to roar him to victory in the US Open final.

The world number one clinched a 6-4, 5-7, 6-4, 6-4 win over Roger Federer on Sunday to claim a 10th career major.

As he celebrated with his family and team, he also sought out Butler, who was watching from the player's box.

"We are good friends. So he happened to be in the city last couple of days, so I invited him to come," said Djokovic.

"I actually sent him a photo and a message last night. I was watching the '300' movie. When I went to my box, I looked at him. I said, 'This is Sparta. It felt great.'

"That's one of the most inspiring movies I watched. So actually, yeah, he's a very cool guy."

The movie, which recounts the classic Greek story of the Battle of Thermopylae, made a star out of the muscular Butler, who also happens to be a fan of fellow Scot Andy Murray, who beat Djokovic in the 2012 final in New York.

"I was not playing Murray. He thought it was appropriate to come to this match," joked the Serb star.



Novak Djokovic of Serbia kisses the US Open trophy after defeating Roger Federer of Switzerland in the men's singles final at Flushing Meadows in New York on Sunday.

MATCH STATS	
Federer	Djokovic
3 Aces	11
5 Double faults	5
6/13 Break points won	4/23
35 Winners	56
37 Unforced errors	54

REACTIONS
NOVAK DJOKOVIC
I have to share my admiration for Roger, everything he's still doing for tennis. It was a tough one tonight. I have a tremendous respect for Roger. Coming on court knowing you are playing against probably the best player in the game adds a little bit more pressure. I knew he was going to be very aggressive. It was a quite

ROGER FEDERER
I am very disappointed. I had my chances on my racket. I should never been down in the score the way I was. But Novak did a great job of fending them off, and, you know, all of that. It was a tough night, but still, I don't

Novak's Grand 10th

The Serb denies Federer's bid for a historic 18th

AGENCIES, New York



Taking the court more than three hours later than originally planned, Roger Federer and Novak Djokovic delivered two of the best sets of tennis this tournament has seen. By the fourth set, though, the crowd's beloved Federer had lost a step.

He could not keep pace with No. 1 Djokovic, who earned his 10th Grand Slam title with a 6-4, 5-7, 6-4, 6-4 win.

Djokovic has dominated the Grand Slams this year - this is his third major title, and he was runner-up at Roland Garros - but Federer has been playing like he did in his own dominant years.

They'd played 41 times prior to this match, most recently at this year's Wimbledon final, with Federer leading the head-to-head by the slightest margin: 21-20. This final was expected to be a battle.

Just as they prepared to walk out to the court, rain started falling. It forced tournament organizers to push the start back to more than three hours.

From the moment they finally started, it was clear that each had brought his best tennis.

The first set can be best described as a marathon. After forcing deuce five times but failing to convert in Federer's first service game, Djokovic earned three break-point opportunities in Federer's second. He finally converted when a Federer backhand went long, and that too after a 25-shot rally.

But Federer won a quick break to even it at 2-2. The momentum briefly shifted there, as Federer took four straight points to hold serve and take the advantage. Djokovic responded by holding serve, sealing the game with an ace, then quickly breaking Federer. Federer held to 4-5, but Djokovic answered with a quick 40-0 hold to take the set.

The second set absolutely flew. Federer jumped out to 40-0 lead in most of his service games. Djokovic followed suit. They sprinted to 5-4, where Djokovic served to stay in the set. The game turned into an epic, 20-point battle. Federer had set point and failed to convert, before Djokovic closed it out with a 117mph serve.

Djokovic smiled at the crowd, which was so clearly backing Federer. But the fans soon got their wish: Federer broke Djokovic in his final service game, evening the match at one set all.

Federer had two opportunities to break in Djokovic's first service game in the third set, but failed. He had 15 chances to break serve to that point, but only converted on three and Djokovic finally won it when a Federer shot went long.

And from there, the writing seemed to be on the wall. Djokovic proved why he is the one who already held two major titles this year; why he is the world No. 1. In the fourth, Djokovic earned an early break, and another at 4-2 to take complete control.

As the Serbian served for the trophy, the crowd continued rallying behind Federer.

Djokovic probably felt like he was battling against 20,001 people, with grand slam king Federer on the other side of the net. As the match reached its gripping climax, they cheered every point Federer won and celebrated Djokovic's errors as the Serb dug deep to eke out a memorable win.

Balotelli shines in derby defeat

AFP, Milan



A Fredy Guarin rocket fired Inter Milan two points clear at the top of Serie A with a 1-0 win over AC Milan Sunday night, despite an impressive second debut for Mario Balotelli.

Inter now sit two points clear of Chievo with a maximum nine points although Roma, also on seven points, are the Nerazzurri's more notable challengers.

Champions Juventus, with two losses and a draw so far, are down in 16th, eight points off the pace as they endure their worst start to a season in living memory.

"Milan started well, they had us in difficulty at times but it wasn't enough," said Inter coach Roberto Mancini.

"In the end, we deserved the win, but Milan are a good side and they will be battling for a top finish. Juventus as well."

Milan coach Sinisa Mihajlovic had only praise for his team, but lamented their failure to pull level.

"We didn't deserve to lose. We played well, tried to win and all we lacked was a goal," said Mihajlovic.

Milan shaded a lively opening half in

which Carlos Bacca and Luiz Adriano kept the Nerazzurri defence on their toes, home keeper Samir Handanovic notably saving at Adriano's feet early on, while on-loan Manchester City forward Stevan Jovetic drilled just wide of Diego Lopez's post at the other end.

Inter then took the lead when Milan's defence fatally backed off and allowed Freddy Guarin to unleash a drive that beat Diego Lopez at his far corner for his 15th Serie A goal on his 100th league appearance.

Mihajlovic immediately replaced Bacca with Balotelli, the former Inter striker's arrival prompting a deafening chorus of boos that quietened when the on-loan Liverpool forward whipped in a free-kick that went dangerously close to Handanovic's far post.

Balotelli came close again as he shaded the outside of the upright from outside the area with 12 minutes left on the clock.

Minutes later he won a free-kick from a challenge by Guarin, and from 35 yards drove just wide of the upright.

Mancini responded by replacing Perisic with defender Andrea Ranocchia with five minutes to play and Inter hung on to claim city bragging rights.

Champions League back again

AFP, Paris



Manchester United make their eagerly-awaited return to the Champions League away to PSV Eindhoven on Tuesday while last year's beaten finalists Juventus prepare for a trip to Manchester City.

GROUP A

PSG (FRA) v Malmo (SWE)

Paris Saint-Germain, the dominant force in French football, begin another quest to emulate their domestic success on the European stage against Malmo, the 1979 European Cup runners-up, at the Parc des Princes. Zlatan Ibrahimovic, who was rested as PSG dropped their first points of the season in Friday's 2-2 draw with Bordeaux, will come up against his hometown club having made his professional debut with Malmo in 1999. PSG's 33-game unbeaten European home record was snapped by Barcelona in a third straight quarter-final exit last season and the French club will be out to start a new streak against a Malmo side making just their second group stage appearance following last year's debut campaign.

Real Madrid (ESP) v Shakhtar Donetsk (UKR)

Real Madrid face an intriguing first-ever meeting with competition regulars Shakhtar Donetsk at the

Santiago Bernabeu as Rafa Benitez prepares to make his European bow with the record 10-time champions. Cristiano Ronaldo extinguished any fears over his form in emphatic style on Saturday by scoring five goals in Madrid's thumping 6-0 win over Espanyol in La Liga that saw him overtake Raul as the club's all-time leading league goalscorer. Shakhtar, who had their five-year reign in Ukraine ended by Dynamo Kiev last season, are featuring in the group stage for the 11th time after knocking off Austrians Rapid Vienna in the play-off round, having already seen off Turkish outfit Fenerbahce in the previous round.

GROUP B

PSV (NED) v Man United (ENG)

United are back in the Champions League after a painful exile last season, their first run-out seeing Memphis Depay make a quick return to the club he left in the summer. The sides clashed at the same stage of the 2000/2001 competition, with honours shared - United losing 3-1 on the road, turning the tables with the same scoreline at Old Trafford. PSV gained automatic qualification as Dutch champions, while Louis van Gaal's United eased through the play-off route 7-1 against Brugge.

Wolfsburg (GER) v CSKA Moscow (RUS)

This encounter has a distinct sense of deja vu about it as Wolfsburg hosted their Russian rivals in their only

previous Champions League campaign in 2009. The Bundesliga runners-up came out on top that day, only to fall in Moscow and eventually miss out on the knockout stages.

GROUP C

Galatasaray (TUR) v Atletico Madrid (ESP)

Turkish champions Galatasaray enjoyed their finest European hour in 2000, when they defeated Arsenal on penalties to win the former UEFA Cup. They host 2014 finalists Atletico Madrid, who last lifted the European Cup in 1962 but tasted their first league defeat of the early season on Saturday when they went down 2-1 against Barcelona. Dutch maestro Wesley Sneijder will pull the strings for the home side at the Turk Telekom Arena while German international striker Lukas Podolski is the main threat up front.

Benfica (POR) v Astana (KAZ)

Portuguese giants Benfica came agonisingly close to European glory, for the first time since back-to-back European Cups in 1961 and 1962, when losing the 2013 and 2014 Europa League finals to Chelsea and Sevilla respectively. They take on Kazakh debutants Astana who are the first team from their country to qualify for the Champions League group phase. Benfica won a record-extending 34th domestic title last season and are now under the guidance of Rui Vitoria after Jorge Jesus surprisingly departed for city

rivals Sporting Lisbon in the off-season.

Group D

Man City (ENG) v Juventus (ITA)

What should be a meeting between European giants has a feeling of uncertainty about it. City have got off to a flying start in the Premier League with five wins from five but their Champions League record over the last four years has been dire, to say the least, twice failing to get out of the group stage and then twice losing to Barcelona in the second round. Juventus, by contrast, went all the way to a surprise appearance in the final last year, before Barca beat them 3-1. But they have yet to win in three league games this season and confidence is low ahead of their trip to the Eastlands.

Sevilla (ESP) v Borussia Moenchengladbach (GER)

Sevilla have managed two draws but two weeks ago they lost 3-0 at home to Atletico Madrid. Gladbach, though, have had a disastrous start to their campaign and are rock bottom of the Bundesliga after four straight losses, including Friday night's 3-0 reverse at home to Hamburg. Sevilla at least have strong recent European pedigree, winning the Europa League the last two seasons, including knocking out Borussia seven months ago in the round of 32. The Germans are making their first group stage



AC Milan forward Mario Balotelli (L) gets into an argument with Inter Milan's Felipe Melo during their Serie A fixture at San Siro on Sunday.

PHOTO: AFP

Aguero out of Juve tie

AFP, Manchester



Sergio Aguero will miss Manchester City's Champions League opener at home to Juventus on Tuesday due to a knee injury, manager Manuel Pellegrini revealed on Monday.

The Argentina striker, 27, sat out training on Monday after sustaining a kick to the knee from Scott Dann during City's 1-0 win at Crystal Palace on Saturday that forced him to come off in the 24th minute.

"Sergio is not fit for tomorrow," Pellegrini told his pre-match press confer-

ence at the City Football Academy.

"He got a big kick on his knee. We will wait on him. We will see this afternoon how long it will be."

David Silva and Raheem Sterling missed the Palace game with ankle and hamstring problems respectively, but Pellegrini said that both players were fit to face Juventus.

He also expects Fernandinho and Samir Nasri to be available despite the midfielders not training with the rest of the squad on Monday.

"Both are recovering from different things," said the Chilean, whose side have been eliminated by Barcelona in the last 16 in the past two seasons.

Mourinho clashes with Martinez

REUTERS, London

Chelsea manager Jose Mourinho swore at Everton boss Roberto Martinez after being made to wait for his post-match news conference following the champions' 3-1 loss at Goodison Park on Saturday, according to British media reports.

A furious Mourinho decided to interrupt Martinez while he was speaking with a group of journalists near the pitch.

As manager of the away team, Mourinho had expected to be allowed to address the media first so that his team could set off on their journey back to West London, reports said.

"Roberto, next time tell me go before you because we have to travel," Mourinho was quoted as saying in the reports.

"We don't control that, Jose. I don't control that," Martinez said in reply.

To which Mourinho responded with an expletive.

"When he beat us 6-3 (last season), he was such a nice man. I prefer him like that," Martinez said after the Chelsea boss stormed away.