

DAY'S EVENT	NATIONAL CRICKET LEAGUE Day 1 (Four-day Match)	Venue: Bogra	Venue: Chittagong
		Venue: Fatullah	Venue: Khulna Khulna v Rangpur

Stuttering start for Brazil, Argentina

AFP, Montevideo

Argentina slumped to a shock home defeat against Ecuador while Brazil were beaten 2-0 by Chile on Thursday as upsets dominated the opening round of South America's qualifying campaign for the 2018 World Cup.

A star-studded Argentina side badly missing the inspiration of injured captain Lionel Messi struggled to find a way through a disciplined Ecuador in a lacklustre game at the Estadio Monumental.

The tone for a miserable night for Argentina had been set early on, when Manchester City striker Sergio Aguero was stretchered off the field with what looked like a serious hamstring injury.

The game appeared to be heading for a 0-0 draw entering the final 10 minutes before Ecuador secured a breakthrough from a Frickson Erazo header that fired the minnows into a 1-0 lead.

Moments later Antonio Valencia burst down the right flank and fed for Felipe Caicedo, who slotted home past Manchester United goalkeeper Sergio

since 2000.

"I'm very happy because I have never beaten Brazil, and to beat a team that has caused us so many problems in the past means a lot," Sampaoli said.

"Brazil are a great team, with great players who will surely be in the next World Cup," added Sampaoli.

Brazil had been desperate to move on from a disappointing Copa America campaign which followed their humiliating 7-1 drubbing against Germany in last year's World Cup semifinals.

But the Brazilians, lacking the creative flair of Neymar, struggled to find a way

RESULTS			
Bolivia	0 - 2	Uruguay	(Caceres 10, Godin 69)
Colombia	2 - 0	Peru	(Gutierrez 36, Cardona 90)
Venezuela	0 - 1	Paraguay	(Deris Gonzales 85)
Chile	2 - 0	Brazil	(Vargas 72, Sanchez 90)
Argentina	0 - 2	Ecuador	(Erazo 81, Caicedo 82)



Argentina striker Sergio Aguero is being stretchered off after 22 minutes into the game against Ecuador in Buenos Aires on Thursday. PHOTO: AFP

Romero for 2-0.

The defeat piles the pressure on Argentina coach Gerardo Martino, whose position was already the subject of scrutiny following his team's failure to win the Copa America earlier this year.

Brazil meanwhile -- also missing their talismanic presence with captain Neymar serving a suspension -- were undone by goals from Chile stars Eduardo Vargas and Alexis Sanchez in Santiago.

Vargas, topscorer in Chile's triumphant Copa America campaign, picked up where he left off in that tournament to fire the hosts into the lead on 72 minutes.

Arsenal star Sanchez then applied the coup de grace in the 90th minute, jabbing home from close range after a wonderful flowing move which ripped Brazil's defence apart.

Chile manager Jorge Sampaoli hailed his side's victory, the first by Chile over Brazil

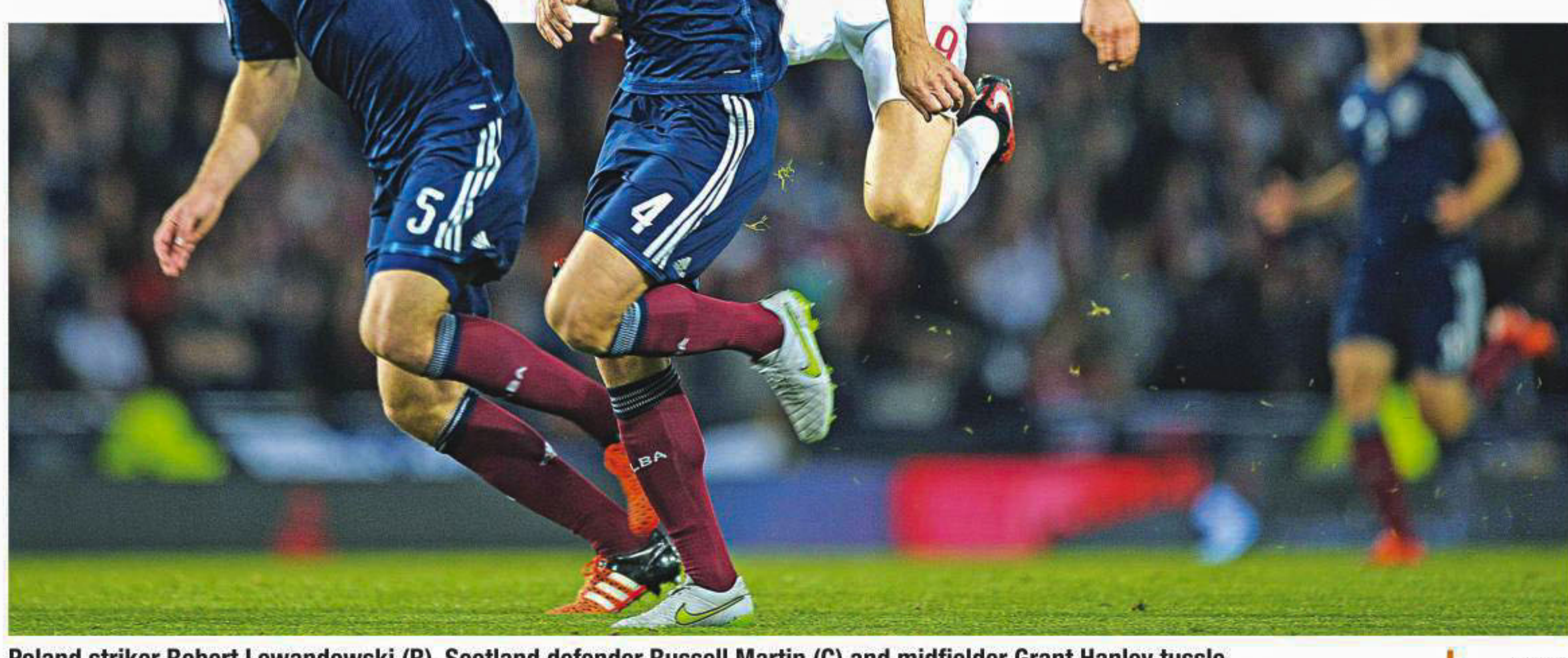
through a physical Chile side who were fortunate to finish the game with 11 men.

Yet while Argentina and Brazil were left reeling, there were no such problems for Uruguay, who shrugged off the absence of star strikers Luis Suarez and Edinson Cavani to score a historic first ever away win over Bolivia in La Paz.

The high altitude of La Paz has often left visiting sides gasping for breath, with Uruguay suffering a 4-1 thrashing in their last trip to the Bolivian capital in 2012.

However goals in each half from Martin Caceres and Diego Godin clinched a clinical 2-0 victory for the Uruguayans, who had never won in La Paz in five previous attempts.

Colombia meanwhile opened their qualifying campaign with a 2-0 win, Teofilo Gutierrez and Edwin Cardona getting the goals in a hard fought victory over Peru in Barranquilla.



Poland striker Robert Lewandowski (R), Scotland defender Russell Martin (C) and midfielder Grant Hanley tussle for the ball during their Euro 2016 qualifier in Glasgow on Thursday. PHOTO: AFP

N Ireland, Portugal thru' Lewandowski hits two more; Germany made to wait

AFP, Paris

World champions Germany missed a chance to clinch their place at Euro 2016 after losing 1-0 to the Republic of Ireland on Thursday, while Northern Ireland secured their first finals trip after beating Greece 3-1.

In Braga, Portugal also locked down their place at next summer's tournament in France after beating Denmark 1-0 to wrap up top spot in Group I.

Joachim Loew's Germany just needed to avoid defeat in Dublin to seal qualification but came unstuck as Shane Long's second-half goal kept the Irish in with a chance of securing automatic qualification in their final game in Poland.

A draw at home to Georgia on Sunday, though, will still be enough to send Germany to next year's tournament, although they will likely be missing Mario Goetze who was injured on Thursday.

Bastian Schweinsteiger is also likely to miss out after being sidelined in Dublin due to a training ground groin strain.

Poland and Ireland go into Sunday's showdown in Warsaw level on 18 points, having drawn the first meeting 1-1.

The Poles remain ahead of Ireland on goal difference, however, despite being held to a 2-2 draw by Scotland in Glasgow.

Robert Lewandowski continued his incredible goalscoring form with a third-minute opener for Poland at Hampden Park but the hosts replied through Matt Ritchie's terrific long-range strike just before half-time.

Steven Fletcher then put the Scots ahead on 62 minutes with a wonderful curling effort but Lewandowski rescued a point right at the death to spell the end of Scotland's qualification hopes.

In Belfast, Northern Ireland ensured they will make their first-ever appearance at the European championships next June after easing past Euro 2004 winners Greece 3-1.

Michael O'Neill's men needed two points from their remaining two matches to secure a top-two finish in Group F, but wrapped up qualification with a game to spare.

Skipper Steven Davis prodded in a first-half opener at Windsor Park before Kilmock forward Josh Magennis, deputising for the suspended Kyle Lafferty, headed in a corner for his first international goal to double the home side's lead after the break.

Davis then netted his second of the contest before Christos Aravidis scored a late consolation for the Greeks.

Ovidiu Hoban's 91st-minute equaliser for Romania kept them in pole position to claim the second automatic qualifying spot from Group F after a 1-1 draw at home to Finland.

Romania, who travel to the Faroe Islands in their final game, will assure themselves of automatic qualification providing they match Hungary's result in Greece at the weekend.

Joao Moutinho's second-half goal for Portugal earned Fernando Santos's men a place in France.

RESULTS			
Georgia	4 - 0	Gibraltar	(Vatsadze 30, Okriashvili 35-pen, Vatsadze 45, Kazashvili 87)
Ireland	1 - 0	Germany	(Long 70)
Scotland	2 - 2	Poland	(Lewandowski 3, Ritchie 45, S. Fletcher 62)
Hungary	2 - 1	Faro Islands	(Jakobsen 11)
N. Ireland	3 - 1	Greece	(S. Davis 35, 58, Magennis 49)
Romania	1 - 1	Finland	(Hoban 90+1)
Albania	0 - 2	Serbia	(Kolarov 90+1, Ljajic 90+4)



Northern Ireland players celebrate a goal during their historic victory against Greece, which put them into the Euro 2016 finals, in Belfast on Thursday. PHOTO: AFP

Zim win a thriller

AFP, Harare

Sikander Raza and Craig Ervine both hit half centuries as Zimbabwe edged Ireland by two wickets with six balls to spare in the first one-day international on Friday.

Set a target of 220 runs to win the first of the three-game series, Raza hit an unbeaten 60 off 72 balls with four boundaries.

Ervine also made 60 with this runs coming off 78 balls and featuring five fours.

Earlier, Ireland reached 219-8 in 50 overs after being put into bat with Gary Wilson top scoring with an undefeated 70 from 88 balls and five boundaries.

The second game of the series takes place at the same venue on Sunday.

SCORES IN BRIEF
IRELAND: 219 for 8 in 50 overs (Stirling 24, Wilson 70 not out, Joyce 53, McBrine 23 not out; Nyumbu 2-35, Masakadza 2-45)
ZIMBABWE: 222 for 8 in 49 overs (Chibhabha 22, Ervine 60, Williams 24, Raza 60 not out; McBrine 2-53, Dockrell 2-29)
Result: Zimbabwe won by two wickets.
Player-of-the-match: Sikander Raza.

'I'm the Normal One'

AFP, Liverpool

New Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp described himself as "The Normal One" as he faced the media for the first time on Friday following his appointment as successor to Brendan Rodgers.

Chelsea manager Jose Mourinho famously described himself as "a special one" in his first press conference in English football in 2004, earning him the nickname 'The Special One'.

But Klopp, 48, told a packed room of journalists at Anfield: "I don't want to describe myself. I'm a totally normal guy. I'm the Normal One."

The former Borussia Dortmund head coach was appointed on Thursday on a three-year contract following the dismissal of Rodgers, who was sacked last Sunday after three and a half years at the club.

"I am a normal guy from the Black Forest. I don't compare myself with genius managers in this club's history," added Klopp, who led Dortmund to two Bundesliga titles and a Champions League final appearance.

"It's cool that you're looking for that, but it's not my part to think about that. I don't



JURGEN KLOPP

think any manager starts by saying that they want to be a legend.

"I was a very, very average player. I was at a special club in Germany with Mainz 05 and then had a great opportunity to take Dortmund for seven years. Now I'm here and I hope to enjoy my work."

In an interview with the club's in-house television channel, LFCTV, Klopp described the job as "the biggest challenge ... in the world of football".

His first game at the helm will be a trip to Tottenham Hotspur in the Premier League on October 17.

Liverpool won the last of their 18 league titles in 1990 under the stewardship of Kenny Dalglish.

Rodgers led them to a second-place finish in 2014, but they finished sixth last season and are currently in 10th place in the table with 12 points from eight games.

While Klopp called for patience, he has set himself the objective of winning a league title by 2019.

"It's been crazy here," he said. "But it's not so important what people think when you come in. It's important what people think when you leave. So please give us time."

"This could be a very special day, if you are patient. When I sit here in four years, I think we will win one title."

Klopp introduced a style of high-octane football during his time at Dortmund and he pledged that Liverpool would play at "full throttle".

"I believe in a playing philosophy that is very emotional, very fast and very strong," he said. "My teams must play at full throttle and take it to the limit every single game."

He added: "Liverpool has extraordinary supporters and Anfield is a world renowned home, with an incredible atmosphere."

Benzema on the double

AFP, Nice

Euro 2016 hosts France coasted to a third successive victory on Thursday as Real Madrid striker Karim Benzema scored twice in a 4-0 friendly win over Armenia.

The win followed a 1-0 victory over Portugal and a 2-1 success against Serbia in September.

Benzema was on target in the 77th and 79th minutes after Antoine Griezmann (35) and Yohan Cabaye (55) had put the French firmly in the driving seat.

The win also set up Didier Deschamps's side for stronger future challenges with friendlies against Denmark, world champions Germany and England to follow before the end of the year.

Griezmann hit his sixth international goal in his 21st game after being teed-up by Benzema, who enjoyed a much-needed confidence-boosting evening.

The Real Madrid star is top of the scoring charts in Spain but had not netted for France since October 2014.

But before the end of the night, he had tucked away his 26th and 27th international goals in his 81st outing.

SA GAMES TRAINING CAMP Athletes to move to hotels

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Olympic Association (BOA) is considering shifting athletes from the NSC dormitory to hotels due to the poor state of the dormitory.

The idea to accommodate the athletes, who are in training camp for the upcoming South Asian Games, in hotels adjacent to the Bangabandhu National Stadium came up after the BOA high-ups, including its president and secretary general, visited the dormitory on Thursday.

"We think the NSC dormitory is unusable for athletes, which is why we are thinking of accommodating them in hotels like the Pacific, the Imperial and the Peer Yeamin which are close to the training facilities," said BOA's deputy secretary general Ashiqur Rahman Miku.

Out of 564 athletes in 20 disciplines, some 69 athletes were in the dormitory and would now be accommodated in hotels, it has been learnt. The athletes of other individual disciplines have lodged in dormitories of the Bangladesh Women's Sports Complex, the Mirpur Krira Palli and the Maulana Bhasani Hockey Stadium.

The BOA training and development committee, however, is not fully satisfied with the progress of training of most of the disciplines. Training in most of the disciplines except for archery, shooting, weightlifting and swimming got underway from the first week of August.

Meanwhile, a three-member BOA delegation will leave here today to attend a meeting of the South Asian Games body in Chennai to finalise the number of events. Hosts India has reportedly decided to exclude events such as swimming, kabaddi, weightlifting, taekwondo, kabaddi and wushu from the women's roster, which the Bangladesh contingent is displeased about.

"We have already talked to the Indian officials over phone and we will raise the issues in the October 11 meeting in Chennai," said Miku, who is also a member of the delegation.

Loew blasts '100th long ball'

AFP, Dublin

Germany coach Joachim Loew saw his world champions humbled 1-0 by the Republic of Ireland in Euro 2016 qualifying Thursday but blasted the home side for scoring from their "100th long ball".

Shane Long's 70th-minute strike gave Ireland a first ever competitive victory over the Germans that guaranteed at least a playoff spot, and offers them a serious chance of automatic qualification for the finals in France next summer.

Germany's fate is in their own hands, with a home game against Georgia to come on Sunday and only one point required to reach the finals.

"It was one of the most unnecessary defeats we have suffered in recent years," said Loew.

"It was to be expected that we would face nine or ten players behind the ball and Ireland hitting long, hopeful balls. They only had one opportunity to score."

"We created loads of chances but wasted too many of them. Against opponents like this we needed to score. We avoided 99 of those long balls but the 100th was one too many."

Sepp appeals suspension

AFP, Paris

FIFA president Sepp Blatter has filed an appeal of his 90 day suspension from foot ball, the New York Times reported Friday.

Blatter complained in the letter to FIFA's judge that he had only found about his suspension after it was made public Thursday, the report said.

Blatter, who has led football's governing body since 1998, was suspended by FIFA's ethics committee as the 79-year-old faces a Swiss criminal investigation.

Blatter sent a letter to Hans-Joachim Eckert, the German judge who leads the adjudicatory chamber of the ethics committee, the US newspaper reported.

In it the Swiss official complains of the brusque and unfair treatment he received and demanded a hearing to argue his case in full.

The newspaper cited a person close to Blatter who said the FIFA president had learned of the decision to suspend him "only after FIFA had announced it publicly ... on his office computer."

Blatter is under investigation by Swiss prosecutors for criminal mismanagement.

UEFA leader Michel Platini has also been suspended for 90 days pending an investigation, and has already announced his intention to appeal.

Swiss investigators are looking into a two million dollar payment made by FIFA to Platini in 2011.