

Neymar double sinks Villarreal

AFP, Madrid



Neymar and Luis Suarez once again shone for Barcelona in Lionel Messi's absence as Barcelona beat Villarreal 3-0 to move three points clear at the top of La Liga on Sunday.

The European champions were frustrated by a solid first-half display from the visitors, but finally made the breakthrough on the hour mark when Neymar slotted home Sergio Busquets's through ball.

Neymar then stood aside to let Suarez seal the three points from the penalty spot after Munir El Haddadi had been brought down by Jaume Costa.

And the Brazilian rounded off a sensational display as he volleyed home a stunning third five minutes from time.

Real Madrid can move back to the top of the table on goal difference with victory at Sevilla later on Sunday.

Barca's next outing comes against Madrid at the Santiago Bernabeu on November 21.

Between them Suarez and Neymar have compensated for Messi's injury layoff with knee ligament damage by scoring all of Barca's last 17 league goals as the Catalans have dropped just three points since the Argentine went off injured against Las Palmas six weeks ago.

Villarreal managed to limit the supply to the star South American duo for the first 45 minutes as Jeremy Mathieu had Barca's best chance when his low drive at the end of a flowing counter-attack was well saved by Alphonse Areola.



Barcelona forward Neymar celebrates his stunning second goal, a spectacular volley, against Villarreal yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS



The Bangladesh footballers gear up for a training session at the artificial turf of the Outer Stadium Ground in Dushanbe yesterday. The booters will take on hosts Tajikistan in a FIFA World Cup qualifier on November 12.

PHOTO: BFF

Booters warm up in Dushanbe

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh national team footballers had their first training session at the artificial turf of the Outer Stadium ground in Dushanbe yesterday, having reached the Tajikistan capital on Saturday morning.

The players had a two-hour session, which included an hour-long practice match among the players, in a bid to coping up with the conditions in Dushanbe.

According to the team management, coach Fabio Lopez had some tactical work on the defence, which had conceded a last moment equaliser against the same opposition in the home match of the World Cup qualifiers back in June.

The Bangladesh team also visited the match venue, the Pamir Stadium, where they are scheduled to have a training session today. The match will take place on Thursday.

Siddikur comes second

SPORTS REPORTER



Siddikur Rahman had to endure the fate of the second-best yet again after falling three strokes short of eventual winner Chiragh Kumar in the Panasonic Open in New Delhi yesterday. The two-time Asian Tour winner suffered a recurring lower back injury on the second hole and had to battle through the pain barrier before settling for his second runner-up finish in the event.

Having started the final round one stroke behind Chiragh, Siddikur carded four birdies and same number of bogeys at the Delhi Golf Club yesterday as he shared the second position with Thai Veteran Thaworn Wiratchant at 10-under (278).

The fourth round brought the first even-par score for Siddikur, who had carded 68, 70 and 68 in the three previous rounds. Chiragh, who held the lead since the opening round, finished three shots clear with 13-under (275) for his first title on the Asian Tour.

The veteran Bangladeshi golfer had momentarily took a share of the lead after ending the front nine with three birdies and two bogeys. Chiragh, however, fired birdies on the 11th and 13th holes to get back to a two-shot lead as Siddikur settled for pars. Siddikur, though,



reduced the margin by birdying on the 15th, but consecutive bogeys on the 17th and 18th extinguished his chances of breaking a two-year drought on the tour.

"I thought I wasn't able to play because I was hurt but the physiotherapist gave me some treatment on the fourth tee box and I felt better," Siddikur told Asiantour.com after the end of the round, adding: "I'm happy that I finished my round. I didn't put any pressure on myself to do well or win because I could feel the pain in my back. The win didn't come but it is okay."

Meanwhile, Jamal Hossain Mollah, who had started the day in third position, settled for a joint 23rd-place finish after a disastrous five-over (77) in the final round. Two bogeys and a double bogey on the back nine ended his hopes of a first top-ten finish on the tour.

Ansar, Rajbari through

SPORTS REPORTER

Ansar & VDP and Rajbari moved into the final round of the KFC National Women's Football Championship yesterday.

Ansar thrashed Khagrachari 12-0, thanks to four-goal hauls from Aumraching Marma and Munmun at the Lakshampur venue while Rajbari defeated hosts Faridpur 3-1 to emerge zonal champions.

PSG run amok

AFP, Paris

Zlatan Ibrahimovic scored twice as Paris Saint-Germain extended their huge lead at the top of Ligue 1 by destroying a hapless Toulouse 5-0 at the Parc des Princes on Saturday.

Frustrated by their inability to put the ball in the net in a Champions League defeat to Real Madrid in midweek, PSG saw Angel Di Maria open the scoring on their return to domestic duty before Ibrahimovic got a brace either side of a Lucas goal. Ezequiel Lavezzi completed the rout.

The win saw the reigning French champions continue their unbeaten start to the domestic season as they made it seven league victories in a row.

The Parisians may be forgiven if they lose no sleep over high-flying Caen, in second place, who closed the gap to 11 points with a tight 2-1 win at home over Guingamp in one of Saturday's late games.

Roma's derby delight

AFP, Rome



Goals by Edin Dzeko and Gervinho in a 2-0 win over Lazio handed title contenders Roma the bragging rights from the Rome derby on Sunday as Rudi Garcia's men moved up to second place in Serie A.

Against the backdrop of a fans' protest that saw the Stadio Olimpico only half full for the fiercest city derby in Italy, hosts Roma made light of the thousands of empty seats to further underline their scudetto credentials.

Roma were in command from the outset and were rewarded in the ninth minute after a dubious penalty decision.

Despite Lazio defender Santiago Gentiletti's challenge on Dzeko appearing to be just outside the area, it was enough to convince the referee to point to

RESULTS		
Torino	0 - 1	Inter Milan (Kondogbia 31)
Empoli (Maccarone 19)	1 - 3	Juventus (Mandzukic 32, Evra 38, Dybala 84)
Roma	2 - 0	Lazio

the penalty spot.

Dzeko made no mistake to slam the ball past Federico Marchetti. Roma however suffered a blow when Mohamed Salah was forced off just before the hour.

Elsewhere, Juventus fought back from a 19th minute opener by Empoli striker Massimo Maccarone with goals from Mario Mandzukic, Patrice Evra and Paulo Dybala securing a second successive league win for the first time this season.

Earlier Sunday Inter Milan went top thanks to a 1-0 win at Torino.

Djokovic eases past Murray

AFP, Paris



Novak Djokovic won his sixth Masters title of the year on Sunday when he defeated Andy Murray 6-2, 6-4 in Paris to put the finishing touches on one of the greatest years in tennis history.

The top seed won the series-closing title for an unprecedented third straight year and a fourth time in all as he dominated the Scottish second seed from start to finish in 1hr 32mins.

The win brought Djokovic's final regular season win-loss record to a stunning 78-5 and takes his unbeaten run, stretching back to August 23, to 22.

He will now go on to the World Tour Finals in London having won three out of four Grand Slam titles and six out of nine Masters 1000 series titles in 2015.

In what was the first Paris Masters final since 1990 featuring the top two seeds, Djokovic stamped his authority on the match from the start.

He won eight straight points from the end of the first game to move clear and pile the pressure on Murray, who had lost nine out of the last 10 matches between the two.

The Scot looked increasingly tight and edgy, electing to play a series of drop shots to avoid a baseline battle with Djokovic which he was losing comprehensively.

Lorenzo wins MotoGP title

AFP, Valencia

Spain's Jorge Lorenzo claimed his third MotoGP world championship with victory at the Valencia Grand Prix on Sunday as he withstood Yamaha team-mate Valentino Rossi's charge through the field.

Rossi climbed to fourth despite starting at the back of the grid as punishment for kicking Marc Marquez at the Malaysian Grand Prix.

However, Lorenzo held off pressure from Honda duo Marquez and Dani Pedrosa to lead the race from start to finish and overcome a seven-point deficit heading into the final Grand Prix of the season and claim the championship by five points.

With 110,000 fans looking on Lorenzo crossed the finish line in a time of 40mins 59.364sec.

City, Arsenal held

AFP, London



Premier League leaders Manchester City and nearest challengers Arsenal were both held to draws on Sunday as they each dropped points in the title race.

City, surprisingly, could only manage a goalless draw away to bottom-of-the-table Aston Villa, the Birmingham club marking new French manager Remi Garde's first match in charge with a point that owed much to a fine display by goalkeeper Brad Guzan.

Arsenal, who kicked off later on Sunday, knew that if they beat arch-rivals Tottenham Hotspur in the North London derby they would leapfrog City, who they still trail on goal difference, at the top of the table with a victory at the Emirates Stadium.

But instead they had to make do with a 1-1 draw.

RESULTS		
Arsenal (Gibbs 77) (Kane 32)	1 - 1	Tottenham
Aston Villa	0 - 0	Man City
Liverpool (Coutinho 42)	1 - 2	Crystal Palace (Bolasie 21, Dann 82)

Meanwhile Liverpool suffered their first defeat in seven games under new manager Jurgen Klopp with a 2-1 loss at home to Crystal Palace.

Manuel Pellegrini lost the services of Wilfried Bony to a hamstring injury and then watched in frustration as City failed to make their second-half domination count in a match where Villa ended a dismal run of seven successive defeats.

At the Emirates, Arsenal fell behind to a 32nd-minute goal from Spurs' Harry Kane, who got on the end of a clever ball over the top from Danny Rose and went past Laurent Koscielny, mistakenly trying to play the England

Aussie security team 'assured'

SPORTS REPORTER



The anxiety on the part of the Australia football team seems to have been allayed after a two-member security delegation of the Football Federation Australia (FFA) yesterday expressed its 'satisfaction' over the security measures taken here following a meeting with the home minister, high-ups of law-enforcing agencies and the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF).

FFA's head of security, Mark Saliba, said he was 'satisfied' with the security measures taken, and answered in the affirmative when asked about Socceroos' scheduled arrival in Dhaka on November 14. The crucial FIFA World Cup qualifying fixture between Bangladesh and Asian Cup champions Australia is scheduled to take place at the Bangabandhu National Stadium on November 17.

During yesterday's meeting, the Dhaka Metropolitan Police commissioner presented security plans to the delegation while the state minister for home affairs, Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal, assured that the government would provide them 'best possible security' to the Australian contingent during its stay in Dhaka.

"We have talked with the Australian security delegation and assured them that we will be providing the best possible security to the Australian football team. We have experience of hosting big sporting events and we will be hosting more in future, including the under-19 World Cup, and we will hopefully hold those events efficiently," said Kamal after the meeting.

"We have assured them that we have taken this tournament (match) very seriously. They have not asked for any special security measures; rather we apprised them of what measures we are taking. They have felt that we have experience and we can handle this," added Kamal.

BFF and AFC security officer and additional inspector general of police (crime and operation), Sheikh Mohammad Maruf Hasan, said: "As a BFF and AFC security officer, I am satisfied with the security measures that been taken for the Australia football team. Compared to the security measures we had taken to host tournaments in the past, the security measures this time are more stringent."

While these two Australian officials are expected to stay until the end of the November 17 fixture, another FFA member is scheduled to arrive here today to inspect the logistical issues such as hotel, match venue, practice venue and transport route. A security official of the FIFA is also scheduled to arrive here tomorrow.

"The FIFA security official will hold two meetings with the officials of the law enforcement agencies and the home minister, apart from his routine activities. A co-ordination meeting may also take place on either November 15 or 16," informed BFF general secretary Abu Nayeem Shohag.

The FFA had earlier expressed its concern about the security situation here in the wake of Australia cricket team's postponement of its scheduled tour to Bangladesh in the fourth week of October. The FFA reportedly took the matter to world football's governing body, FIFA, in a bid to move the match to a neutral venue, but its plea was reportedly rejected. The FFA has, meanwhile, sent its contingent list to the BFF while FIFA has sent its list of designated match officials.



Super-sub Kieran Gibbs (L) hammers in the second-half equaliser as Arsenal salvage a point against Tottenham Hotspur in the north London derby at the Emirates Stadium yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS