

**STAR SPORTS 4**  
SAFF Suzuki Cup  
India v Nepal  
Live from 7:00pm

**STARSPORTS 1**  
Australia v West Indies  
Second Test, Day 2  
Live from 5:30am

**TEN CRICKET**  
South Africa v England  
First Test, Day 2  
Live from 2:00pm

## POCHETTINO SCREAMS AND SHOUTS

Tottenham Hotspur manager Mauricio Pochettino has cited American pop stars Britney Spears and Will.I.Am as examples for his players to follow as they go in search of Premier League success. Pochettino, quoted Spears and Will.I.Am's song 'Scream and Shout' in an attempt to keep his players' minds focused on their own performances.

"I think it's like what Britney Spears and Will.I.Am sing: 'Everybody in the club, all eyes on us, all eyes on us,'" the Argentine said, in comments published in British newspapers on Saturday. "Because it's not important what others do, for me it's important to assess our season and how we can compare with us, not how we compare with another team."

-AFP



## Benteke sinks Leicester

AFP, London



Leicester lost 1-0 at Anfield on Saturday, their first away defeat of the campaign, with Christian Benteke sliding home a 63rd-minute winner after coming on to replace the injured Divock Origi before half-time.

Benteke spurned a gilt-edged chance to make the game safe in stoppage time when he was thwarted by Wes Morgan after Leicester goalkeeper Kasper Schmeichel had gone up for a throw-in, but his earlier strike was enough to give manager Jurgen Klopp a first win in four league games.

Manchester City reignited their title challenge by bouncing back from Monday's 2-1 defeat at Arsenal with a breezy 4-1 win over second-bottom Sunderland that left them three points off the summit.

Raheem Sterling, Yaya Toure and Wilfried Bony scored inside the first 22 minutes to put City in control, with Kevin De Bruyne adding a fourth before Fabio Borini replied for Sam Allardyce's side.

Tottenham Hotspur tightened their grip on fourth place by overcoming Norwich City 3-0 at White Hart Lane, where Harry Kane scored twice -- the first a penalty -- to take his tally for the season to 13.

Tom Carroll was also on target.

Diego Costa scored twice as Guus Hiddink began his second spell as Chelsea interim manager with a 2-2 draw at home to Watford, Oscar missing a late penalty that would have given the champions all three points.

Troy Deeney, with a penalty, and Odion Ighalo put Watford 2-1 ahead after Costa had given Chelsea a 32nd-minute lead, but the Spain striker equalised in the 65th minute from Willian's pass.



Stoke City striker Bojan Krkic (C) celebrates his opening goal with teammates during their Premier League encounter against Manchester United at the Britannia Stadium yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

## Pressure mounts on Van Gaal

AFP, Stoke-on-Trent



Under-pressure Manchester United manager Louis van Gaal admitted that he did not know if he retained the backing of the club's board after Saturday's 2-0 defeat at Stoke City.

Pre-match media reports claimed that Van Gaal would be sacked if United lost at the Britannia Stadium and they duly went down to first-half goals from Bojan Krkic and Marko Arnautovic in the Premier League fixture.

United have lost four games in succession in all competitions for the first time since 1996 and gone seven games without victory for the first time since the 1989-90 season.

Asked if he felt he still had the support of the United board and owners the Glazer family, Van Gaal told Sky Sports: "It's another situation. We have lost the fourth game, so you have to wait and see."

On whether he was still the right man for the job, the 64-year-old Dutchman said: "It's more difficult because I'm also part of the four matches that we have lost."

"So people are looking at me. I have to deal with that, but much more important is that the players have to deal with that because they have to perform."

Van Gaal had described the game as "must-win", but said that "the pressure" upon himself and the team, as well as swirling wind inside the stadium, meant that his players "don't dare to play football".

Van Gaal stormed out of his pre-match press conference in Manchester on Wednesday due to the speculation about his position, but he dismissed the suggestion that the pressure was getting to him.

"You don't understand my message," he said. "My message was that media are saying things and writing things that do not conform to what is happening in Manchester United."

"That was my message, not that I'm hurt because I am used to that."

United, who have slipped out of the Premier League's top four and been eliminated from the Champions League this month, are next in action on Monday, when they welcome Chelsea to Old Trafford.

United midfielder Michael Carrick said that Van Gaal still had the support of his players.

"Of course," Carrick said. "You can single anyone out in this situation. As a club and as a group of players and as a staff, as a manager, everyone together, we have to stick together. We have to win football matches."

"We've all got to take responsibility for that. The only way to get through it is work hard, stick together and keep believing that it'll turn for us."

## Sprechen Sie Deutsche, Mertesacker?

AGENCIES, London

Arsenal captain Per Mertesacker spread his own version of Christmas cheer on Friday with a heartfelt, if not the most tuneful, version of the carol, Silent Night, in its original German.

"We hope you and your family have a great Christmas," said the 31-year-old before bursting into a rendition of the song which was composed in his mother tongue with the lyrics refashioned for English countries.

Mertesacker managed, with a cheesy grin, to sing three lines - 'Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht [Silent night, holy night], Alles schläft; einsam wacht [All is sleeping, alone watches], Nur das traute hochheilige Paar [Only the close, most holy couple]' - before bursting into laughter.

## Klopp makes case for winter break

AFP, Liverpool

Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp believes the Premier League should follow their European rivals and introduce a winter break to help increase the national team's chances of success.

"You have too many games, that's for sure," Klopp told the BBC's Football Focus programme.

"You have no break, too many tournaments. I think everybody knows that's not the way to be successful."

RESULTS		
Aston Villa (Ayew 62-pen)	1 - 1	West Ham (Cresswell 45+2)
Bournemouth	0 - 0	Crystal Palace
Chelsea (Costa 32, 65)	2 - 2	Watford (Deeney 42-pen, Ighalo 57)
Liverpool (Benteke 63)	1 - 0	Leicester
Man City (Sterling 12, Toure 17, Bony 22, De Bruyne 54)	4 - 1	Sunderland (Borini 59)
Stoke (Bojan 19, Arnautovic 26)	2 - 0	Man United
Swansea (Ki 9)	1 - 0	West Brom
Tottenham (Kane 26, 42, Carroll 80)	3 - 0	Norwich

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