

STAR SPORTS4

SAFF Suzuki Cup  
FINAL  
India v Afghanistan  
Live from 7:00pm  
TEN CRICKET  
South Africa v England  
Second Test, Day 2  
Live from 2:30pm

STAR SPORTS1

Australia v West Indies  
Third Test, Day 1  
Live from 5:30am  
English Premiership  
Crystal Palace v Chelsea  
Live from 7:30pm  
Everton v Tottenham  
Live from 10:00pm

SONY KIX

Primera Liga  
Rayo Vallecano v Real Sociedad  
Live from 5:00pm  
Real Betis v Eibar  
Live from 9:00pm  
Bilbao v Las Palmas

Live from 11:30pm  
Valencia v Las Palmas  
Live from 1:30am (Monday)  
SONY SIX HD  
Primera Liga  
Deportivo v Villarreal  
Live from 11:30pm

# Espanyol put brakes on Barcelona

AFP, Barcelona



Barcelona missed the chance to open up a three-point lead at the top of La Liga as they were held 0-0 by local rivals Espanyol in a heated Catalan derby on Saturday.

Lionel Messi and Luis Suarez hit the woodwork either side of half-time for the visitors, but Espanyol's physical approach was rewarded with a first point against Barca in eight matches.

Atletico Madrid can leapfrog Barca to the top of the table with victory over Levante later on Saturday, whilst Real Madrid now trail the European champions by three points ahead of their trip to Valencia on Sunday.

The first of three meetings between the sides in 10 days got off to a frenetic start with Espanyol forcing Barca onto the backfoot.

Their best chance came from a set-piece, though, when Alvaro Gonzalez's header was brilliantly stopped by Claudio Bravo and Gerard Pique hooked the ball to safety off the line.

Barca's star front three of Messi, Suarez and

Neymar combined for 137 of a record 180 goals in 2015, but they didn't come to life until midway through the first half when Neymar's dangerous cross fell just behind Suarez.

Messi then struck the angle of post and bar with an almost perfect free-kick as Barca began to take control just before the break.

However, Espanyol had another chance to take a shock lead seven minutes into the second period when Hernan Perez poked a shot just wide after a lung-bursting run into the Barca box.

The hosts had another slice of luck when Suarez could only strike the outside of the post after rounding Pau Lopez and turning away from Gonzalez moments later.

Messi should have done better when he fired straight at Lopez when well placed on the edge of the area and the Espanyol 'keeper made another comfortable save from Neymar's acrobatic effort as they restricted Barca to surprisingly few clear openings in the final stages.

And the closest they came to a dramatic winner was another vicious Messi free-kick from long range that dipped inches wide of the target a minute from time as Barca failed to score for the first time in La Liga this season.



Manchester United star Wayne Rooney (top) celebrates scoring the second goal with teammate Anthony Martial during their Premier League encounter against Swansea City at Old Trafford yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

## Iturbe joins Bournemouth

AFP, London

Bournemouth have signed Roma winger Juan Iturbe on loan for the rest of the season, the Premier League club announced on Friday.

Argentina Under-20 international Iturbe will officially complete his switch to Eddie Howe's team subject to endorsement from the Football Association and a European work permit.

Bournemouth also have the option of making the move permanent at the end of the season for an undisclosed fee.

Iturbe, who has scored three goals in 39 Serie A appearances for Roma, told Bournemouth's website: "It's a big opportunity for me to come and play in the Premier League."

"There were a few clubs that were interested but things happened pretty quickly and once this process was under way it was a straightforward decision for me to make."

"I didn't know a lot about Bournemouth as a club but the more I read and the more I found out how much they wanted me, it's an easy decision to go to a place where you feel really wanted."

Iturbe was born in Argentina but grew up in Paraguay and began his career with Cerro Porteno before joining Porto aged 18.

Successful loan spells with River Plate and Verona convinced Roma to pay £17 million to sign him in 2014, but he didn't quite fulfil his potential in Italy.

Iturbe trained with his Bournemouth teammates on Friday but will not be eligible for Saturday's trip to Leicester.

## PRAN-BSJA CRICKET Second day concluded

SPORTS REPORTER

The second day of the pranbsja media cup cricket tournament concluded at the maulana bhasani hockey stadium yesterday.

Jamuna TV defeated Doinik Jugantor by 3 wickets, Somoy TV crushed New Age by 5 wickets, ATN News routed Doinik Noyadugantor by 4 wickets and SA TV defeated Noya Shokaler Khobor by 3 wickets.

NTV lost by 15 runs to Doinik Bonikbarta while Boishakhi TV beat Jaago News by 4 wickets.

Banglavision defeated BDNews24 by 4 wickets and The Independent defeated Independent TV by 4 runs.

## Zlatan to EPL not impossible

AGENCIES, Paris



Paris Saint-Germain striker Zlatan Ibrahimovic would be ideally suited to a move to the Premier League, his agent Mino Raiola has said.

The 34-year-old sees his contract at Parc des Princes expire in the summer and his agent has hinted at a move to England.

The Sweden star's club contract expires at the end of the season however his future remains far from certain, with a return to Serie A with AC Milan and a switch to MLS both mooted.

While Ibrahimovic himself has stated that a move to Qatar is also an option, Raiola believes a spell in England's top flight would be good for the player.

"I would like to see him in the Premier League," Raiola told Sky Sports News. "I think it's a game that is made for him with his strength, ability, technique, the stadiums have a fantastic atmosphere and that is how football is lived."

AFP, London



Laurent Koscielny scored as Arsenal edged Newcastle United 1-0 on Saturday to pull two points clear of Leicester City at the top of the Premier League table.

Koscielny stabbed home a flick-on from France teammate Olivier Giroud in the 72nd minute at a rain-lashed Emirates Stadium and Leicester were held 0-0 by Bournemouth, with Riyad Mahrez squandering a penalty.

Meanwhile, Wayne Rooney scored as Manchester United ended an eight-game winless run by beating Swansea City 2-1.

Arsenal were bidding to build on the 2-0 win over Bournemouth that had sent them top of the table, but Newcastle squandered several opportunities to go ahead.

Arsenal goalkeeper Petr Cech had to produce smart saves to thwart Giorgino Wijnaldum either side of half-time, while Aleksandar

RESULTS	
Arsenal 1 (Koscielny 72)	Newcastle 0
Leicester 0	Bournemouth 0
ManUnited 2 (Martial 47, Rooney 77)	Swansea 1 (Sigurdsson 70)
Norwich 1 (Tettey 76)	Southampton 0
Sunderland 3 (Van Aanholt 30, Defoe 72, 90+2)	Aston Villa 1 (Gil 63)
West Brom 2 (Sessegnon 60, Evans 90+3)	Stoke 1 (Walters 81)
West Ham 2 (Antonio 10, Carroll 55)	Liverpool 0

Mitrovic diverted a volleyed cross from Ayoze Perez over the bar from close range.

With the home fans growing restless, Koscielny supplied the breakthrough 18 minutes from time, sneaking in behind Perez to toe the ball past Rob Elliot after Giroud had got his head to a high ball.

Leicester have now gone three league games without winning after their stalemate against 10-

man Bournemouth at the King Power Stadium.

Jamie Vardy hit the post in the first half and was then fouled by Simon Francis in an incident that saw the Bournemouth defender sent off and yielded Leicester's 60th-minute penalty.

But for once this season Mahrez's radar betrayed him, the Algerian's penalty parried by Bournemouth goalkeeper Artur Boruc.

At Old Trafford, Rooney scored a milestone winner against Swansea, which made him the second-highest outright goal-scorer in both Premier League (188 goals) and United (238) history.

Anthony Martial headed United in front from Ashley Young's right-wing cross early in the second half, only for Gylfi Sigurdsson to draw Swansea level in the 70th minute from a Modou Barrow cross.

But Rooney converted a cut-back from Martial with a sumptuous near-post back-heel 13 minutes from time as United claimed a first win in seven league games to further ease the pressure on manager Louis van Gaal.

## James involved in police chase



James Rodriguez pulls into Real Madrid's Valdebebas training facilities while an undercover police car follows closely behind him.

PHOTO: INTERNET

AGENCIES, Madrid



Real Madrid star James Rodriguez could find himself in hot water after allegedly being involved in a high-speed pursuit by police on his way to training at the Ciudad Real Madrid, one of Los Blancos' training facilities, in Valdebebas on Friday.

The Colombian was driving at 200 km/h on the M-40 motorway -- where the speed limit is 120 km/h -- when he was spotted by an undercover police car. The police then turned on their sirens and bellowed over their car loudspeaker, "Pull over on the right! Pull over on the right!"

James, however, refused to stop and continued speeding all the way till he reached the training facilities. The access gate to Valdebebas opened for the player but not for the police in pursuit due to a timing mechanism.

At that point, the media gathered at the ground clearly heard the police tell security: "We were chasing him at 200 km/h on the M-40." After that the police officers were finally allowed into the facilities.

Eventually club employees allowed the policemen access to the training centre.

James was driving a top of the range Audi and was alone in the car. He could now be facing serious charges, including failing to stop after a direct order from a police officer as well as speeding charges if it is shown he was doing 200km/h.

## Gerrard eyes Reds coaching role

AGENCIES, Los Angeles



Former Liverpool captain Steven Gerrard is planning a return to the club in a coaching role when his playing career ends, which could be this year.

The 35-year-old, who won 10 trophies at Liverpool, left at the end of last season to join Los Angeles Galaxy.

"I'm not 100% sure but I think it will probably be my last year as a player," Gerrard said.

"I have had a chat with [Liverpool boss Jurgen] Klopp. The club have let me know they're keen for me to come back."

Gerrard, who made 710 appearances for Liverpool and won 114 England caps, added:

"I am always going to be biased towards Liverpool and the FA and basically when I am back home I am going to carry on with my punditry work and try and move around clubs and gain more experience, going to watch managers and learn more."

"I am basically available from November, December [2016]. Everyone in the football world will know I am available and hopefully I will be 75% into my coaching badges."

"I have regrets I didn't start my coaching badges at 21-22," he said.

## Raiola to talk with Klopp

AGENCIES, London



Mario Balotelli's time at Liverpool will live long in the memory of Reds fans...but for all the wrong reasons.

The firebrand Italian striker was a £16m disaster under former manager Brendan Rodgers.

The former Anfield boss brought in the ex-Manchester City forward with some of the money gained from the sale of Luis Suarez.

Liverpool fans were glad to see the back of the star when he was loaned out to AC Milan for the season and will probably hope that's the end of his time on Merseyside after he scored just one goal in 16 games.

But Balotelli's agent Mino Raiola believes the 25-year-old could still have a future at the club under new boss Jurgen Klopp.

Raiola told Sky Sports News he plans to speak to Klopp, saying: "For sure. That is part of my job, to speak to all the managers. I

know Klopp from [representing] Henry Mkhitarayan at Dortmund.

"If we talk about the quality and the talent Mario has, that is without question."

"Then you also need a manager that believes in you and gives you the chance to prove yourself. We will talk to him when it is time to talk to him."

Balotelli has been hampered by injury and has only managed one goal in four starts at the Serie A club.

Raiola admitted that Balotelli has to do the business on the pitch at Milan before he can think about his future.

"I think it is too soon. Obviously if Mario does what he has to do, there is maybe another view on him also."

"He had to go away because with Brendan [Rodgers] there was no possibility to develop any more. There was a preconception towards Mario and I think from his private part of life he has proven them wrong."

"But we have to be realistic. He didn't perform well in 2015 and 2016 needs to be his year. That is his challenge."



Top seed Roger Federer (3rd from L) of Switzerland poses with performers following an Aboriginal welcoming ceremony in Brisbane yesterday ahead of the Brisbane International tennis tournament.

PHOTO: AFP