

STAR SPORTS4
Bundesliga
Bayern Munich v Darmstadt
Live from 8:30pm
SONY SIX
Serie A

Inter Milan v Sampdoria
Live from 1:45am (Sunday)
GTV & PTV SPORTS
Pakistan Super League
Islamabad v Karachi
Live from 10:00pm

SONY ESPN HD
Primera Liga
Las Palmas v Barcelona
Live from 9:00pm
Espanyol v Deportivo
Live from 11:30pm

DAY'S EVENT
Asia Cup Qualifiers
Venue: Fatullah
Afghanistan v Oman
Time: 3:00pm



FC Midtjylland forward Pione Sisto (L) scores the equalising goal against Manchester United during their Europa League Round of 32 match in Hernin on Thursday.

PHOTO: AFP

'It's the law of Murphy'

OMNISPORT



Louis van Gaal pinned the blame on Murphy's law after watching Manchester United suffer a shock 2-1 defeat to Midtjylland. Memphis Depay put the visitors ahead in Denmark before goals from Pione Sisto and Ebere Paul Onuachu sealed a famous victory for the home side in the first leg of the Europa League last-32 tie. United lost captain Wayne Rooney to injury before flying out for the game and were dealt another blow when goalkeeper David de Gea picked up a knee problem in the warm-up, meaning Sergio Romero was drafted into the starting line-up as a late replacement.

And, despite conceding his side delivered a poor performance at times, Van Gaal believes United are being plagued by the famous maxim that whatever can go wrong, is going wrong. "It is the law of Murphy. When you start the game and your goalkeeper is [injury] number 14, you're not starting like usual," he said to BT Sport. "A lot of things are happening in the heads of the players. The first 10 or 15 minutes were not so good but after that we came into the match, scored and could have scored more. "But then it's too much. The second half, we don't win any duels, any second ball. You cannot afford a second goal, but we could have scored also - Jesse Lingard had two remarkable chances. It is the law of Murphy, I think.

"I think that, in certain phases, we were not organised. But that happens when you play with another team every week. "It is always possible in football but we have the chance to beat them at home and we have to do that." Van Gaal confirmed De Gea will face further tests on his injury, but praised the performance of Romero, who made a handful of superb saves despite being beaten by Sisto's deflected strike and Onuachu's precise finish. "He has a knee problem. We have to investigate tomorrow, with a scan or something. We can't know that now," he said of De Gea. "Romero did it [filled in well] also in the beginning of the season. I have enough hope in him. The first goal was deflected - it's unbelievable that that's happening."

RESULTS

- Anderlecht (BEL) 1** (Mbodji 67)
- Olympiakos (GRE) 0
- Midtjylland (DEN) 2** (Sisto 44, Onuachu 77) Man United (ENG) 1 (Depay 37)
- Florentina (ITA) 1 (Bernardeschi 59)
- Tottenham Hotspur (ENG) 1 (Chadli 37-pen)
- Borussia Dortmund (GER) 2** (Piszczek 6, Reus 71) FC Porto (POR) 0
- Villarreal (ESP) 1** (Suarez 82) Napoli (ITA) 0
- Saint-Etienne (FRA) 3** (Sall 9, Monnet-Paquet 39, Bahebeck 77) Basel (SUI) 2 (Samuel 44, Janko 56-pen)
- Sevilla (ESP) 3** (Llorente 35, 49, Gameiro 72) Molde (NOR) 0
- Sporting (POR) 0 **Bayer Leverkusen (GER) 1** (Bellarabi 26)
- Valencia (ESP) 6** (Santi Mina 4, 25, Parejo 10, Negredo 29, Andre Gomes 35, Rodrigo 89) Rapid Vienna (AUT) 0
- Augsburg (GER) 0 Liverpool (ENG) 0
- Sparta Prague (CZE) 1** (Julis 64) Krasnodar (RUS) 0
- Galatasaray (TUR) 1 (Sabri Sarioglu 12)
- Lazio (ITA) 1 (Milinkovic-Savic 21)
- Sion (SUI) 1 (Konate 53) **Braga (POR) 2** (Stojiljkovic 13, Rafa Silva 61)
- Shakhtar Donetsk (UKR) 0 Schalke (GER) 0
- Marseille (FRA) 0 **Athletic Bilbao (ESP) 1** (Aduriz 54)

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Morris clinches last-ball thriller

STAR SPORT DESK



South Africa all-rounder Chris Morris hit a four and a six in the last over of a see-sawing match to seal a tense victory by three wickets against England in the first of two T20Is in Cape Town yesterday. South Africa seemed out of the game when they had lost David Miller, their sixth wicket, still needing 21 runs off 11 deliveries to overhaul England's score of 134 for eight. Chris Jordan was the successful England bowler, and he had more success in the fifth ball of the same over when he bowled David Weise. When Chris Topley ran in to start the last over the home team needed 15 with Kyle Abbott on strike. Abbott quickly turned the strike over to the man who won them the ODI series decider against the same opponents less than a week ago, and Morris duly hit the next two deliveries, full tosses both, for four over cover and six over wide long on. A dot ball made it four to win off two. Morris hit the first of those down the ground and scampered a couple. England then missed the chance to force a Super Over when the last ball was played straight to long off but Topley failed to collect the throw that would have enabled him to run out a diving Abbott.

The chase was set up by captain Faf Du Plessis, who anchored the innings in chase of a modest target, albeit on a two-paced wicket. He scored a 30-ball 25 with just one four, but he steadied the ship after the losses of AB de Villiers and Hashim Amla left the Proteas on 35 for two after 5.3 overs. He first built a 31-run third-wicket partnership with JP Duminy and then a 22-run partnership with Rilee Russouw. At 98 for three in the 16th over South Africa were looking good, but the captain's downfall at the hands of Ben Stokes seemed to put England back on top, but it really set the stage for Morris's seven-ball 17 to steal the show. Earlier, England were asked to bat and apart from 27 from Alex Hales and a 30-ball 32 from Jos Buttler none of their batsmen seemed to find form, chiefly because of a stellar spell from leg-spinner Imran Tahir who took four wickets for just 21 runs in four overs.

SCORES IN BRIEF
ENGLAND: 134 for 8 (Buttler 32 not out, Hales 27; Tahir 4-21, Abbott 2-31)
SOUTH AFRICA: 135 for 7 (Du Plessis 25, Duminy 23, Amla 22, Morris 17; Jordan 3-23, Moeen 2-22)
Result: South Africa won by 3 wickets

Siddikur avoids cut in Malaysia

SPORTS REPORTER

Siddikur Rahman made the cut in the Maybank Championship in Malaysia after a one-over-par (72) in the second-round yesterday. The two-time Asian Tour winner managed to avoid the cut by one stroke with an aggregate score of one-under-par (141), as the cut was made at even-par. The Bangladeshi golfer managed a birdie in the front nine at the Royal Selangor Golf Club in Kuala Lumpur yesterday, but three early bogeys at the back nine jeopardised his position. However, the 31-year-old golfer birdied on the par-four 17th hole to make sure he squeezed into the final two rounds at joint 54th position. Nathan Holman of Australia extended his lead to two shots at 13-under-par (129) in the three-million-dollar event.

Mahfuza gets reception

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

Mahfuza Khatun Shila, who won two gold medals in the recently concluded 12th South Asian Games, was accorded a grand reception at her hometown of Nawapara, Jessore yesterday. The Abhaynagar upazila administration arranged the programme at the Nawapara Shankarpasha Secondary School ground. Speaking to The Daily Star, the 23-year old athlete said: "I am happier than ever. Even happier than when I won my gold medals." "I was not given a chance in many competitions despite being fit. Back in 2014 I was supposed to take part in an event in Russia but I was dropped. Hopefully my future performances can further inspire women across the country," she said.

EYE OF THE TIGER

As Leicester City's title rivals prepare for FA Cup action this weekend, Claudio Ranieri's men are enjoying themselves away from the training pitch having been granted a week off. Jamie Vardy - the Premier League's top goalscorer with 19 this season - looked to be particularly enjoying himself as he got to grips with a young tiger. Alongside his wife Becky, the non-league star turned England international was shown feeding the big cat milk during his visit to Dubai. Even though he has made mincemeat of many defenders this term, Vardy will have needed to be careful so as not to end up on the wrong side of the deadly predator. --AGENCIES



Much more than just goals

GOAL.COM



Messi's magical story at Barcelona began back in 2005 when he netted against Albacete in La Liga with a lovely lob after he was set up by Ronaldinho. The brilliant Brazilian was the idol at Camp Nou back then and Leo the new kid on the block.

"One day," Ronaldinho said, "he will be the best player in the world" -- and, a couple of seasons later, he handed over the baton to the youngster whom he had mentored in those early years. Now, just over a decade on, Messi has added 300 goals to that maiden strike in La Liga and heads the scoring charts in the Primera Division. Already 50 clear of Athletic Club legend and long-time record holder Telmo Zarra, he is also 55 clear of Real Madrid's Cristiano Ronaldo. And the Portuguese, now 31, is unlikely to catch 28-year-old Leo. "It's a privilege to be able to have Leo, whatever the situation of the match," Luis Enrique said afterwards of his finest footballer.

And Messi, who on Sunday had turned down the chance of scoring his 300th league goal by passing to his right from the spot for Suarez to score instead, passed up the opportunity of completing his hat-trick in this one as he let the Uruguayan take the kick after Barca won another penalty at El Molinon.

The Uruguayan missed this one but scored a stunning strike of his own later in the game when he curled in off the post with

ALL-TIME TOP SCORERS

Lionel Messi	301
Telmo Zarra	251
Cristiano Ronaldo	246
Hugo Sanchez	234
Raul Gonzalez	228

an angled drive. Earlier, though, Messi had brought up his 300th Primera Division goal for Barca when he hit a low drive into the corner from outside the area, adding the 301st just five minutes later following a combination with Suarez. "Messi's first goal was one of those that only he can see," Barca's economic vice-president, Susana Monje, told Canal Plus after the match. And like that, there have been many, many more. Pep Guardiola used to say that it was impossible to describe Messi because "you have to watch him" and because "we are running out of adjectives" to laud his fantastic forward play. That may be the case but the Argentine looks set to keep on claiming the plaudits, the honours and the milestones for many more years to come - along with trophies to add to the 26 that he already has at Barcelona. And there will be plenty more goals as well. That's 301 now in La Liga and 439 for Barcelona, with 27 in all competitions for the Catalan club in 2015-16 -- and that despite spending almost two months on the sidelines. It's incredibly impressive but, even without the goals, there is so much more to enjoy in his game - and hopefully for many more years yet.



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