

What to WATCH

SONY ESPN
Madrid Open
 Live from 4:00pm
Indian Premier League
 Kolkata v Punjab

DRY'S EVENT

KFC Independence Cup
 Venue: BNS
 Sk Russel v Ctg Abahani
 Second Semifinal

Time: 5:30pm
Dhaka Premier Cricket League
 Time: 9:00am
 Venue: Fatullah

Abahani v Victoria
 Venue: SBNS
 Prime Bank v Sk Jamal
 Venue: BKSP-3

Live from 8:30pm
TEN 1 HD
UEFA Champions League
 Real Madrid v Man City
 Semifinal, 2nd Leg

RONALDO 'ALREADY IN HISTORY'

Cristiano Ronaldo has no doubt he will be remembered as one of football's greatest ever players - even though he accepts he cannot please everyone. Real Madrid's record goalscorer is also the leading marksman in Champions League history and needs just seven more goals to become the first player to reach 100 in the competition. Ronaldo concedes he is always likely to have detractors but he insists his remarkable career statistics will guarantee his place in the footballing pantheon. "I don't doubt that I will go down in footballing history," he said. "Whether people like it or not, the numbers speak for themselves. I will be up there with the rest. Some like it more, some like it less, but I have no



Leicester complete a football fairytale

AFP, Leicester

Thousands celebrated and millions around the world watched in wonder as 5,000-1 underdogs Leicester City completed arguably the greatest fairytale in sporting history by becoming English Premier League champions.

Second-placed Tottenham Hotspur's 2-2 draw at Chelsea late on Monday was enough for last year's relegation battlers to seal a scarcely credible title after outshining some of football's most glamorous teams.

Masterminded by manager Claudio Ranieri, Leicester's season of 22 wins out of 36 games and just three defeats was enough to make them champions with two games to spare, with Arsenal, Manchester City, Manchester United and Liverpool all trailing behind.

After fighting off relegation last year and being rated 5,000-1 for the title at the start of the season, the Thai-owned club pulled off a shock rated by many as the biggest seen in sport.

The modest East Midlands club are England's first new champions since Brian Clough's Nottingham Forest in 1978, and their surge in the world's most watched football league has won them admirers across the globe.

Dancing fans waving blue and white flags poured onto the streets of Leicester, while footage on Twitter showed the team celebrating wildly as they watched Monday's game at the home of talismanic striker Jamie Vardy.

The players can now look forward to another title party when they lift the trophy at their



Leicester City fans came out in numbers in central Leicester on Monday after Chelsea's 2-2 draw against Tottenham secured the Foxes' maiden English Premier League title in their 132-year history.

32,000-seater King Power Stadium following Saturday's home game with Everton.

"It's an unbelievable feeling. I've never known anything like it," said Vardy. "We were

scrapping to stay in the league last season and on Saturday we'll be lifting the trophy.

"It's the biggest achievement in the history of a great club and we all feel privileged to be

part of it."

With the Premier League a global sporting phenomenon, attracting billions of pounds in television rights deals, Leicester's triumph has

been followed worldwide.

The Foxes' previous best season in the English top flight was a second-place finish in 1929, and their last piece of silverware was the 2000 League Cup.

"I've never known a spirit like the one between these boys. We're like brothers," said captain Wes Morgan.

Britain's newspapers turned blue in homage, while The Economist magazine asserted: "There has never been a more improbable victory in any sport."

Former Leicester and England striker Gary Lineker, 55, called it "the biggest sporting shock of my lifetime".

"I can't think of anything that surpasses it in sporting history," the BBC TV presenter said.

"I got emotional. It was hard to breathe. I was a season ticket-holder from the age of seven. This is actually impossible."

Twitter said Leicester's win triggered an 86 percent increase in activity on the social media site in Britain.

In Bangkok, the Buddhist monk who has blessed Leicester's players and pitch said he prayed for them during the match between Chelsea and Spurs.

"I prayed for them from 2am till 4am... but the victory does not come from me, it's from the team and the goodness of the owner," he told AFP.

Ranieri, who was reportedly flying back from Italy after visiting his 96-year-old mother when Monday's result came in, said he never expected to win the Premier League when he was hired last year.

PHOTO: AFP

WHAT THEY SAID

It's a fairy tale. It's a football story that only football can write. It's great not just for Leicester fans but for football fans everywhere.

Gianni Infantino

I want to congratulate everyone connected to Leicester; players, staff, owners and fans. I lost my title to Ranieri and it is with incredible emotion that I live this magic moment in his career.

Jose Mourinho

He has done a phenomenal job. I'm happy for him. There are no miracles in football though, only just reward for hard work.

Zinedine Zidane

Many congratulations. An extraordinary, thoroughly deserved, Premier League title.

David Cameron

We've been amazed by the performance of the team. The inspiration given by Nigel Pearson first and now Ranieri. The city has got behind, and are very very proud of.

Sir Peter Soulsby, Mayor of Leicester

When the dream comes true, complimenti King Claudio!

Giorgio Chiellini

Congratulations boss. You've really been great, you deserve all of this satisfaction!

Francesco Totti

Just after the final whistle I got a call from Ranieri. He thanked us for what we did in the second half, and I congratulated him. I didn't see any tears but his voice was trembling a bit. He didn't say much -- 'Thanks' five times.

Gus Hiddink



Claudio Ranieri took his charges out for pizza after their first clean sheet. But as with everything else, he made them work for it, forcing them to bake their own.

TRIVIA

Claudio Ranieri broke Jose Mourinho's record for the shortest time between being appointed as manager and winning the Premier League title.

It was Ranieri's first top division title. No Leicester player other than Robert Huth had won the title before.

Leicester are the first first-time winners of the English top-flight since Nottingham Forest in 1978 and the 24th team to win the English top flight.

Eden Hazard scored his first home PL goal in 365 days against Spurs on Monday. His last goal before that was title decider against Palace last season.

Only for the second time in Premier League history, 21 years after Blackburn won it, the title has moved out of Manchester or London.

Just eight years ago, at 21, Leicester City star Jamie Vardy was making \$44 a week playing for the Stocksbridge Park Steels.

The men behind a dream-come-true



CLAUDIO RANIERI

In Leicester's last season under Nigel Pearson, the Foxes finished with 41 points, leading to his sacking. Ranieri's appointment was met with ridicule after his disastrous spell at Greece. However, the Italian maestro took the Foxes from strength to strength as his impeccable man-management skills sobered even Jamie Vardy.



JAMIE VARDY

Vardy has had the season of his life - scoring 22 goals this season -- but the highlight definitely came against Manchester United when he broke Ruud Van Nistelrooy's record for scoring in the most consecutive games. Vardy latched onto a through ball and put it past David de Gea to score in his 11th straight game, writing his name in history.



RIYAD MAHREZ

Mahrez was plying his trade in the French Ligue 2 just two seasons ago. He was signed in 2014, but we had to wait till this season to see his best. The Algerian was a key cog in the Foxes' machine, scoring 17 goals -- including one hat-trick and three braces -- formed a lethal partnership with Vardy, and ended with 11 assists.



N'GOLO KANTE

N'Golo Kante was the player who embodied Leicester City. Another gem from Ligue 2, he cost 5.6 million pounds in August. And the 'battery-powered' Kante bossed midfielders across England, aiding his team with well-timed tackles and interceptions. He set the example for the rest to follow with his relentless running and tenacity.



KASPER SCHMEICHEL

His father, Peter Schmeichel, won the league with Manchester United numerous times. And after Kasper's success, bookies Coral have his son, Max, at odds of 250-1 to win the league before Liverpool. Kasper made 93 saves over the season, keeping fifteen clean sheets as the final frontier of what on most days was an impregnable defence.

ROLL OF HONOUR

| SEASON | CHAMPIONS |
|----------|----------------|
| 2015-16: | Leicester City |
| 2014-15: | Chelsea |
| 2013-14: | Man City |
| 2012-13: | Man United |
| 2011-12: | Man City |
| 2010-11: | Man United |

OFFERED AT 5000/1

Elvis is found alive.
 Yeti or Loch Ness Monster is proven to exist.
 Christmas is the warmest day of the year in England.
 Kim Kardashian becomes the U.S. president in 2020.
 Barack Obama plays cricket for England after he leaves Oval Office.

'I knew I would win a title'

AGENCIES, London



Claudio Ranieri says winning the Premier League with Leicester City is the crowning glory in his career-long wait for a top-flight title. The Italian coach has managed European giants such as Juventus, Inter Milan and Atletico Madrid, but it is with the rag-tag Foxes that he has finally conquered the elite, guiding the club to their first top-flight title.

Having taken the Leicester job on the back of a calamitous four-game stint with Greece that ended in defeat to the Faroe Islands, Ranieri insists little has changed in his leadership between that horrendous run and his astonishing efforts at the King Power Stadium.

"I am 64 years old, I've been fighting for a long time, but I was always positive and had positivity on my side," Ranieri told Rai 3's *Processo del Lunedì* show.

"I always thought that I'd end up winning a league title somewhere eventually. I am the same man who was fired by Greece, perhaps someone there had forgotten about my career."

"It's not as if anyone will forget, but I like to point out I am the same man who was on the Greece bench. I haven't changed."

"I am staying at Leicester. This is a year that cannot be repeated, next year we'll try to fight for a top-10 place, hopefully. We must continue to grow and to do well."

Ranieri was flying back from a dinner date with his mother in Italy while the game was in progress, and described his fluctuating emotions as the title came into sight.

He added: "When something happens to you like this, you can't fully realise it. Tottenham were winning at half-time, so I was a bit downhearted."

"Then when [Gary] Cahill scored, I

thought something could happen. I did celebrate at [Eden] Hazard's equaliser."

While many of Leicester's players partied at Jamie Vardy's house on Monday night, ex-Chelsea boss Ranieri admitted his own celebrations had been very low key.

"I was at home with my wife," he added. "Nothing more. I spoke with my family at home and that was it."

Jose Mourinho had laid into Ranieri when the Portuguese replaced the Italian at Chelsea, saying Ranieri was 'considered a loser'.

"In 2004, after coming to Chelsea and asking why Ranieri was replaced, I was told they wanted to win and it was never going to happen with him. It is really not my fault if he was considered a loser at Chelsea."

In 2008, he was at it again, saying: "Ranieri has the mentality of someone who doesn't need to win. He is almost 70 years old. He has won a Supercup and another small trophy and he is too old to change his mentality."

However, after the Foxes' triumph, Jose changed his tone, saying: "I lost my title to Claudio Ranieri and it is with incredible emotion that I live this magic moment in his career."

Ever since joining Leicester City, Ranieri had said that his one and only goal was to avoid relegation. Even as recently as December, the Italian was adamant that, despite being top of the table, his goal was to get to forty points, the magical mark which usually ensures refuge from relegation.

After eventually reaching forty points with a goalless draw against Bournemouth, Ranieri had said that he would celebrate with champagne.

"Forty points, come on. It's fantastic. We didn't score but it's another clean sheet and champagne for my players, of course. Or maybe the chairman pays. I buy the pizza," said Ranieri.

Real banking on Ronaldo

REUTERS, Madrid



Real Madrid are hoping the fit-again Cristiano Ronaldo can lead them into the Champions League final although strike partner Karim Benzema and defensive midfielder Casemiro will not be participating in today's return match with Manchester City.

Ronaldo completed a full training session on Monday for the first time since injuring his hamstring against Villarreal on April 20 and is expected to start the semi-final second leg against City who were held to a 0-0 home draw in the first game.

Benzema, who is also nursing a hamstring problem, could only do running exercises on Monday.

The 10-times European champions scraped a 1-0 win at

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Real Sociedad in La Liga on Saturday without their two top scorers.

Portugal marksman Ronaldo took no part in last week's tie in Manchester while France forward Benzema went off at halftime. Although Real had the better chances they were noticeably lightweight up front in the second period.

The club's all-time leading scorer Ronaldo has 47 goals in all competitions this season.

His hat-trick in the quarter-final second leg against VfL Wolfsburg overturned a two-goal deficit from the first match, averting an embarrassing exit for Zinedine Zidane's side.

City coach Manuel Pellegrini made eight changes to his team against Southampton on Sunday, in preparation for the trip to Madrid, but the plan backfired as they lost 4-2.

The Chilean was unapologetic about resting some of his players as his side look to reach a first Champions League final.

"I would do exactly the same again because we have an important game on Wednesday," said Pellegrini.