

What to WATCH

SONY ESPN
Euro 2016
Quarterfinal-3
Germany v Italy
Live from 1:00am (Sunday)

STAR SPORTS4
Wimbledon C'ships
Day 6
Live from 6:00pm

STAR SPORTS1
England v Sri Lanka
Fifth ODI
Live from 3:30pm

TEN 1
Tour de France
Day 1
Live from 7:45pm



(L-R) Italy forward Lorenzo Insigne shares a light moment with teammates Angelo Ogbonna, Stephan El Shaarawy (C) and Marco Parolo (R) while Germany players warm up during their respective training sessions yesterday on the eve of their Euro 2016 quarterfinals in Bordeaux.



PHOTOS: AFP

Neymar pens 5-year deal

AFP, Barcelona

Brazilian striker Neymar has signed a five-year contract extension which includes a buy out clause of up to 250 million euros (\$277.5 dollars), the Spanish club said Friday.

The deal will keep the 24-year-old international, widely regarded as one of the finest talents in world football, at Barcelona until June 30, 2021, the club said in a statement.

"The player's buy out clause has been fixed at 200 million euros for the first year of his contract, 222 million for the second and 250 million for the remaining three years," the statement added. The previous buy out clause was 190 million euros.

Clash of the titans

AFP, Bordeaux

Europe's titans clash on Saturday when Germany and Italy meet in the plum Euro 2016 quarter-final with huge stakes for both countries.

Germany captain Bastian Schweinsteiger is poised to make his first start in the Bordeaux match, while Italy's veteran defender Daniele de Rossi faces a race to be fit.

Like two heavyweight boxers eyeing up their opponent before the first bell, both teams have talked up the respect factor and down played the significance of Italy winning the last eight meetings at major tournaments.

In the most recent matches, Italy claimed a 2-1 win in the Euro 2012 semi-finals while Germany romped to a 4-1 win in a meaningless friendly in March.

Joachim Loew's Germany insists they have no 'Italy trauma' as they look to beat the Azzurri at the ninth attempt on a big stage and throw off

their Italian shackles.

Antonio Conte's Italy has compared taking on the world champions as football's equivalent of 'climbing Everest'. Italy have their own trauma after crashing out of the 2014 World Cup in the first round.

Both squads insist this will be their toughest test so far at the European Championship finals.

No doubt penalties have been practised behind closed doors, should the tie be decided by a shoot-out.

The Azzurri proved they are up for the challenge by dumping previous holders Spain out of the competition with a 2-0 win in the last 16.

But Conte's team will have to become the first team to score past the Germans at Euro 2016, unless the tie is settled by penalties.

The clear, often repeated, German message this week has been of great respect, but no fear of the Azzurri.

As has been well documented in the media of both European footballing powerhouses, Italy has a

rare unbeaten record over Germany at major tournaments.

"It doesn't mean anything to me that we have never beaten Italy in a big tournament", said Germany midfielder Toni Kroos.

"They are the best team we will have faced here. I'm looking forward to the game and I'm very optimistic."

But the question will be whether previous failures appear at the back of German minds should Italy take the lead in Bordeaux.

Torino striker Ciro Immobile, who spent an unhappy season at Borussia Dortmund, is not impressed with the respectful noises coming from the Germans.

"We've beaten them so many times ... they're just trying to cover themselves," he said.

"We know Germany are strong and will be sure of themselves. But our victory over Spain has really lifted our confidence."

Germany have all their players fit and no suspensions.

Centre-back Jerome Boateng has recovered from a calf strain which

made him doubtful for the 3-0 win over Slovakia in the last 16.

The burly Bayern Munich defender scored his first international goal against Slovakia.

After three Euro 2016 appearances off the bench, Die Mannschaft's leader Schweinsteiger is poised to make his first start after a knee injury.

Germany's shot-stopper Manuel Neuer is on a record run of five games unbeaten, a first in the 108-year history of the German FA, which includes the 2-0 warm-up win over Hungary.

Italy have Thiago Motta suspended and are waiting on the fitness of two other midfielders.

Italy's De Rossi is almost certain to miss out after injuring his right thigh in the win over Spain.

Likewise, Lazio winger Antonio Candreva is doubtful after suffering a hamstring injury in their 1-0 group stage win over Sweden nearly two weeks ago.

Neither took part in Thursday's Italy training session behind closed doors.

Del Bosque steps down

AFP, Madrid



Vicente del Bosque quit as Spain's coach after the defending champions crashed out of Euro 2016, ending one of football's most successful managerial dynasties.

Del Bosque, 65, won a World Cup and a European Championship in a glorious era for Spanish football. He also won the Champions League twice with Real Madrid.

His legacy was tainted by Spain's disastrous first round exit at the 2014 World Cup and now their defeat in the last 16 at the European Championship. Some of the team's greatest players are also expected to retire soon.

"Without a doubt, I have no intention to remain as coach, but you have to be discreet," Del Bosque told Spanish public radio RNE late on Thursday.

"No matter what the result of the Euros, I had no doubt about what my future would be."

"I have handled this issue discreetly. But it is a decision that was taken in advance."

Spain were eliminated from Euro 2016 on Monday after a meek 2-0 defeat to Italy.

Marca newspaper said ex-Granada coach Joaquin Caparros was being lined up to take over the national team.

Del Bosque, who succeeded the late Luis Aragones after Spain's triumph at Euro 2008, is a popular figure in Spain after guiding the national team to a maiden World Cup victory in 2010 and a second straight European Championship title two years later.

The likes of Andres Iniesta, David Silva and Iker Casillas became household names around the globe under Del Bosque's tactful guidance.

He also overcame the traditional rivalry between Barcelona and Real to maintain a united team on the international stage.

In an age of star coaches, his eight years in charge of a top national team is almost unprecedented in modern football.

Some felt a fresh start was needed after Spain's failure to advance beyond the group stage at the 2014 World Cup in Brazil. The side lost their first two games and Del Bosque was criticised for his loyalty to the core of players who won in 2010.

The Spanish federation stuck with him, but Del Bosque's gamble to stay in the job for Euro 2016 did not pay off.

"I had already said it. I had no doubts. It would be hard to win again," del Bosque said. "Maybe we did not perform well against Italy. The first stage went well. But the most difficult part would be winning again."

He said he will remain in his post until his contract expires on July 31.

Bolt breezes into trial semis Ronaldo's dream still alive

AFP, Kingston



It was business as usual for Usain Bolt as he easily qualified for the semi-finals of the men's 100 meters Thursday at the Jamaican Olympic Trials at Kingston's National Stadium.

Bolt, who will be seeking a third-straight triple-triple -- gold medals in the 100m, 200m and 4x100m relays -- hardly worked up a sweat as he won his second round heat in a pedestrian 10.15 seconds.

There were no surprises in either of the men's or women's 100m heats with all the big names advancing to set up what promises to be an explosive Friday evening, when the semis and

finals are set to run.

The only mild surprise was former world record holder Asafa Powell finishing third in his heat in 10.17 seconds behind 20-year-old Jevaughn Minzie (10.15) and Senoj-Jay Givans, who clocked 10.16.

Yohan Blake, who complained that his blocks slipped at the start, was an easy winner in his heat at 10.26.

Nickel Ashmeade won his heat in the fastest time of the night 10.07, ahead of 200m specialist Warren Weir, who finished in 10.17.

Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce cruised in her 100m heat to an easy win in 11.38 seconds to beat former NCAA champions Remona Burchell (11.59).

Elaine Thompson also clocked 11.38 in her heat while Veronica Campbell-Brown clocked 11.39.

Simone Facey won her heat in 11.31 ahead of the veteran Kerron Stewart 11.44, but it was 21-year-old Christiana Williams trying to make her first senior team who had the fastest time of the night running 11.20.

NCAA triple jump champion Clive Pullen, a senior at the University of Arkansas, jumped a personal best 16.90 meters to qualify for the Olympic Games, winning the event.

There was one disappointment as 400 meter runner Janieve Russell was a no-show due to an injury.

Garth Gayle, general secretary of the Jamaican Athletics Administrative Association, said she had requested a medical exemption that would allow her to make the team if she can prove her fitness in time for the start of the Rio Olympics.

AFP, Marseille



Cristiano Ronaldo took his "dream" of an international title another step closer when Portugal beat Poland in a penalty shootout to reach the European Championship semi-finals.

Robert Lewandowski scored barely 100 seconds into the latest night of Euro 2016 drama before Portugal unleashed the player who many say could lead the country's post-Ronaldo era.

Making his first start at Euro 2016, Renato Sanches, a powerful 18-year-old and already a 35 million euro (\$38 million) player, smashed home a 25 metre drive to equalise the match that went into extra time and then penalties.

Sanches followed Ronaldo in hitting home his spot kick as Portugal won 5-3, having again failed to win a game in the allotted 90 minutes. That did not prevent relieved Portuguese celebrations.

Ronaldo said it had been an "unforgettable" night as Portugal had reached their target of a semi-final place. "Everyone should be congratulated."

But the Real Madrid star acknowledged again that the prize he really cherishes is a world or European title. And at 31, he knows time is running out.

"The dream is getting closer and anything can happen now. I'm not missing anything (in honours) and even if my career finished today I would still feel privileged," said the Real Madrid star.

"But I've always said, and I don't hide it, that I would love to win a title with the national team. We're on the right road."

Poland started strongly, with Robert Lewandowski scoring his first goal of Euro 2016 before the stadium had settled.

Kamil Grosicki hurried past Southampton right-back Cedric Soares to deliver a great cross for Lewandowski to drive past a flailing Rui Patricio as Poland made a flying start.

It was the Polish striker's first goal of the competition, after hitting a record 13 in qualifying.

Sanches, his new teammate at Bayern Munich, came to Portugal's rescue.

German referee Felix Brych waved away Ronaldo's claims for a penalty on 31 minutes despite replays suggesting the Real Madrid star was bundled over by centre-back Michal Pazdan as he went to meet a cross.

Two minutes later, Sanches collected Nani's cutback from the right side of the area and hit a fierce shot that deflected off Grzegorz Krychowiak and beat Lukasz Fabianski at his near post.

Portugal should have hit the winner on 85 minutes, but after sneaking

Quaresma was next up for Portugal and made no mistake firing high into the net to beat Fabianski.

Sanches said it was a "wonderful moment for the team" and for himself to score.

He made little of Portugal's failure to make a clear win again.

"People criticise us but we don't care, because we are in the semis," Sanches said.

Ronaldo looked vulnerable, but Portugal coach Fernando Santos hailed his performance as "amazing".

"People focus on Ronaldo because

Giggs to leave MU

AFP, London



Manchester United legend Ryan Giggs will leave Old Trafford after rejecting Jose Mourinho's offer of a reduced backroom role, according to British media reports on Friday.

Giggs is the most decorated player in United's illustrious history and he amassed a record 963 appearances and 35 major trophies before going on to serve as an assistant to David Moyes and Louis van Gaal.

But the 42-year-old is set to quit United because he feels snubbed both by the club's hierarchy, who reportedly told him he would be offered the chance to succeed van Gaal when the Dutchman left, and Mourinho, who opted not to give him a senior role in his coaching team.

Giggs had one more year on his contract as assistant manager, but Mourinho was said to be concerned the former Wales winger had distanced himself from both Moyes and van Gaal rather than offering public support during the team's struggles in recent years. Mourinho was also believed to be worried that Paul Scholes, a close friend and former United colleague of

Giggs, had become a very vocal critic of Moyes and van Gaal.

Instead of risking a similar scenario during his reign, Mourinho, who officially starts work with United this week after his May appointment, will give the role of assistant manager to his long-time associate Rui Faria.

Mourinho's only concession to Giggs was reported to have been the offer of a position overseeing the connection between United's youth teams and the first team.

But, after considering his options on a holiday in Dubai, he decided he was dissatisfied with that role and how the club has been run during the post-Alex Ferguson era.

Although United hoped Giggs could be persuaded to stay on in a different role, he has decided to call time on almost three decades with the club.

Giggs, who won two of his four matches as United's caretaker manager following Moyes' sacking in 2014, this week worked as a television pundit during Euro 2016.

But, rather than go into the media, he is said to be keen to land a permanent managerial position and, according to the Daily Mail, United are in negotiations with his advisors over a pay-off for the final year of his contract, with an official statement

Nolito signs for Man City

AFP, Manchester

Spanish international forward Nolito has signed for Manchester City from Celta Vigo, the Premier League club confirmed on Friday.

The 29-year-old has agreed a four-year contract and becomes new manager Pep Guardiola's second signing after Germany midfielder Ilkay Gundogan.

It will be the second time both have worked together after Barcelona in 2011, before Nolito joined Benfica.

"Pep Guardiola is one of the best managers in the world," Nolito told City's official website.

"I'll try to bring as much as I possibly can. I'll do everything that the manager asks of me, try my absolute best and do everything I can to try to repeat the form I've shown throughout my career at various clubs."



Portugal superstar Cristiano Ronaldo (R) celebrates his team's quarterfinal victory against Poland with teammates Pepe (L) and Jose Fonte in Marseille on Thursday.

PHOTO: AFP

behind Pazan to meet a high ball from substitute Joao Moutinho, Ronaldo's left foot failed to connect with what looked like a simple chance.

Extra time was notable more for the pitch invader who tried to reach Ronaldo than for real scoring chances. Fourteen security personnel carried the Ronaldo fan off after he was caught.

Goalkeeper Rui Patricio and Ricardo Quaresma were Portugal's shootout heroes. Patricio dived left to save Jakub Blaszczykowski's tame fourth shot for the Poles, who had reached the quarter-finals for the first time.

he has to score, but he played amazing, he is a great captain."

Santos said it was "an exaggeration" to say Sanches was taking over from the team's number one player.

"He played a great game, but he is still growing."

"This is not the future Renato because (in the future) he will be an even better player."

"Renato is still growing and he has to take all his qualities and put it all on the pitch."

Poland were disconsolate.

"It hurts and it will hurt for a long time," Lewandowski said as he