

MOORE'S HOME HONoured

England's 1966 World Cup winning captain, the late Bobby Moore, was honoured with a blue plaque installed where he lived on Tuesday. The ceremony for the unveiling of the plaque on Moore's childhood home in east London was attended by family, friends and footballing figures. It comes just days before the 50th anniversary of English football's greatest moment, the 4-2 defeat of West Germany, with Moore the only English captain to lift a major trophy. "I'm sure he (Moore) would be deeply touched and it's just a very, very special day and it's wonderful to know that it is going to be here forever," his daughter Roberta told the Press Association. Moore, who died of cancer in 1993 aged just 51, showed such leadership skills that he became captain aged just 22.



Australia move into Olympic village

AFP, Rio de Janeiro

Australia's Olympic delegation, which refused to move into its Rio apartments due to a spate of problems, took a dig at the city's mayor on Tuesday by arriving at the complex with a kangaroo in tow.

After the delegation complained of blocked toilets and leaky pipes over the weekend, Rio Mayor Eduardo Paes, who has repeatedly found himself on the defensive over Olympic conditions, quipped that he should perhaps put "a kangaroo in front of their building to make them feel at home."

The issues delayed the country's athletes from taking up lodging in the brand-new Olympic Village complex at its official opening Sunday.

On Tuesday, as the country's hockey team, archers, gymnasts and shooters finally moved in, they were greeted not only by a kangaroo, but an emu to boot.

Federer to miss Rio

AFP, Paris

Roger Federer said on Tuesday he will miss the remainder of the season, including next month's Olympic Games in Rio, as the 17-time Grand Slam champion recovers from a knee injury.

Federer, who turns 35 in August, underwent knee surgery in February before missing May's French Open with a back problem, and the Swiss star said he was calling time on his 2016 season to focus on his recovery.

"I'm extremely disappointed to announce that I will not be able to represent Switzerland at the Olympic Games in Rio and that I will also miss the remainder of the season," Federer said on his Facebook page.



They may be the new kids in the Bangladesh Premier League, but after their stunning 1-0 win over Sheikh Russel, which was incidentally the only win in the first round, will Uttar Baridhara live up to their billing as spoilers when the second round, after a day's break, resumes in Chittagong today?

PHOTO: STAR

Rise of the minnows

SPORTS REPORTER



The second round matches of JB Bangladesh Premier League gets underway today at the MA Aziz Stadium in Chittagong, with the giants hoping to bounce back after the first round was dominated by minnows.

After one game each, newly promoted Uttar Baridhara Club are surprisingly on top of the 12-team table with three points while 10 other teams except for title contenders Sheikh Russel KC are in joint second position with a single point each. Five out of the six matches have produced identical 1-1 draws while only Uttar Baridhara managed an outright 1-0 win over Sheikh Russel KC.

That all the giants, especially the title contenders, have failed to secure win in their respective first round matches of the professional football league has come as a novelty. The way the supposed minnows fought with spirit against their superior rivals was refreshing while the tie between

the two Abahanis also lived up to the hype as there was plenty of competition on offer in the first round.

"Sheikh Russel's defeat to Uttar Baridhara was an unexpected one, but the difference between other giants such as Mohammedan, Brothers Union, Muktijoddha Sangsad and the minnows such as Rahmatganj MFS, Feni Soccer has reduced. However, we are trying to come back strongly in the second round," said Mohammedan coach Joshimuddin Ahmed Josy.

Arambagh KS coach Saiful Bari Titu explained the reasons behind the unexpected rise of the minnows. He feels that standard of coaching has improved a lot and the coaches are working hard to get results against the big teams. The players are also getting inspiration from teams like Leicester City, Wales, Iceland as well as from the fact that they are being called up for the national team.

Today Uttar Baridhara will take on Sheikh Jamal DC while Sheikh Russel will play against Rahmatganj MFS at the same venue in Chittagong.

Higuain 'betrayed' Napoli

AFP, Milan



Gonzalo Higuain "betrayed" Napoli by joining rivals Juventus, claimed club owner Aurelio De Laurentiis despite pocketing 90m euros (\$98.8m, £75.3m) for the sale of the Argentine striker.

In the most unlikely move of the Serie A summer transfer period, Higuain ended his fairytale three-year spell with Napoli on Tuesday when he agreed to a record five-year deal with the Italian champions that is expected to earn him 7.5m euros a year.

As Juventus fans mostly rejoiced, their Napoli counterparts reacted by posting photos of their idol's Napoli shirt in the toilet.

And De Laurentiis, despite a bulging bank account, was not far behind in slamming the 28-year-old striker whose record tally of 36 goals last season took Napoli to the brink of ending their 26-year wait for the

Serie A title.

He told Corriere dello Sport: "Some people say that to speak of betrayal is exaggerated, but I think the opposite because there is the full sense of betrayal in this (Higuain) choice because of the ingratitude shown."

"Obviously I have to consider the role played by Juventus, but I expected a different kind of behaviour (from Higuain)."

Higuain was feted as the King of Napoli only two months ago when he broke Gunnar Nordahl's 66-year-old record of 35 goals in a single Serie A season as the Azzurri battled Juve for a 'scudetto' title they last won in 1990.

In the end, Napoli finished second but Higuain was undoubtedly the star of last year's campaign.

De Laurentiis slapped a 94.7m euros buyout clause into his contract but when Juventus offered 90m euros over two instalments, the Napoli owner buckled.

De Laurentiis conceded the transac-

tion was above board. But he said Higuain's snap decision to quit Napoli, following advice from his brother and agent, reflected the "unscrupulous" nature of the modern game.

"True, there was the clause so there was no formal impropriety... but the unscrupulous nature of football means there is no respect for sentiment," added De Laurentiis.

"We understood, as soon as Higuain's brother spoke, that we might run the risk of having to look for a new centre-forward."

"But we didn't think that risk was serious, or that he (Higuain) could simply wipe clean his three years spent with Napoli."

Higuain was undergoing a medical in Turin on Wednesday morning ahead of signing a five-year deal that will make him the third most expensive signing in history after Gareth Bale and Cristiano Ronaldo.

He will be officially unveiled on Thursday.

'Sport needs me to win'

AP, London



Whatever controversy is raging in the Olympic world there's one constant: Usain Bolt's bravado and self-confidence.

It's what is expected from the world's fastest man and greatest showman.

"I know the sport needs me to win - and come out on top," Bolt asserts, assessing the damage caused by the Russian doping scandal that has divided sports leaders.

As for his pursuit of a treble Olympic treble next month, Bolt adamantly responds: "I'm not going to lose one of the golds, for sure."

In his last lengthy media appointment before heading to Rio de Janeiro, Bolt spent around two hours over a Jamaican lunch last week in London, discussing his Olympic challenge prospects and the challenges of life.

When letting his guard down does Bolt sounded less invincible. Weighing on the Jamaican sprinter's mind is the fear of hitting 30 next month, the toll of injuries - and even being caught up in an extremist attack.

"It is scary," said Bolt, adopting a rare subdued tone. "But if you live scared, you don't live at all. So I try to live my life to the fullest and when it's my time, it's my time."

Bolt recalls being in Munich as news emerged of the truck attack in the French city of Nice on Bastille Day - July 14 - that killed 84 people. Munich was itself the scene of bloodshed last week with a teenager shot dead nine people.

Bolt usually goes to Munich every three months to visit his doctor, Hans-Wilhelm Muller-Fuhrhart.

"Especially at the start of last year I noticed that injuries take a little bit more time to get back to where you want to be," Bolt said. "My coach always tells me that the older you get it's going to get harder, and you have to push yourself."



But coach Glenn Mills also offered him comforting reassurance Bolt still craves, despite being the 100- and 200-meter world record holder.

Bolt remembers Mills telling him "don't worry you're a champ" at the world championships last year.

It was "one of the roughest years," Bolt said, explaining how his back issue "has really deteriorated over the years."

Bolt's preparations for the defense of his Olympic titles (100, 200 and 4X100-meter relay) have been far from smooth, with a hamstring injury forcing him out of the Jamaican trials.

"I always have little doubts in my mind," Bolt said in a restaurant overlooking London's St. Paul's Cathedral. "But I'm focused and ready to go."

Unlike many of the world's top golfers, who have snubbed the chance to go to their first Olympics.

"I guess it's not as important to them as it is to us who have been competing over the years," Bolt said. "It surprised me when I heard that golf was going to be in the Olympics. There are a few sports in the Olympics that make me go 'Argh.'"

The Olympics are unquestionably the pinnacle of track and field. But

providing the spectacle desired is proving difficult for the men.

"This year is one of the poorest I have ever seen as an Olympic (field) for men really - the women have really shown more promise running fast times," Bolt said. "(The men) have really underperformed this season, but I'm sure when we get to the Olympics it won't be like that."

Bolt expects Rio to be his last Olympics, but he still dangles the possibility of a trip to Tokyo.

"My coach always says 'Usain you can always go on to the 2020 Olympics if you want,'" Bolt said. "So this is why he tells me to stop talking about retirement and just take it a year at a time."

The power of athletics in attracting big audiences would be more difficult

It is scary. But if you live scared, you don't live at all. So I try to live my life to the fullest and when it's my time, it's my time.

without its global superstar.

"People always say to me, 'Usain when you leave the sport, the sport is going to go down,'" Bolt said. "But I'm not going to look at it like that. There are a lot of athletes stepping up."

Unless he decides to continue, Bolt's glory era is due to end after the 2017 world championships in London. He is absolutely certain he will be greatly missed.

"In football you have the debate who is the best footballer, but no one can debate who the fastest man in the world is," Bolt said. "It's going to be a long time, I think, before somebody comes who will be as talented as me to break my records."

IAAF rejects Russian plea

AFP, Paris

Athletics' governing body said Wednesday it had definitively rejected Moscow's request to review its blanket ban of Russia's track and field team from next month's Rio Olympics over state-sponsored doping.

The IAAF reaffirmed a previous decision that ruled only US-based long jumper Darya Klishina was eligible to compete at the Games, which start on August 5, after the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) rejected a wider appeal.

"We received a letter from minister Mutko yesterday requesting a review of Russian athletes," the IAAF said in an email to AFP, referring to Russian Sports Minister Vitaly Mutko.

"We have responded to the minister explaining the IAAF's eligibility rules have been upheld by the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS)."

"The applications by 68 athletes for eligibility to compete in Rio were assessed carefully and on an individual basis by the IAAF Doping Review Board, and only one of them was found to meet the criteria for exceptional eligibility."

"CAS considered the appeals of the 67 athletes fully and rejected them. There are no grounds for further review."

International sports federations, aside from the IAAF, have since Sunday been vetting Russian competitors' suitability for Rio after a damning report last week revealed rampant state-run doping across Russian sport.

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