

SONY SIX

Primera Liga
Leganes v Barcelona
Live from 5:00pm
Atletico Madrid v Sporting Gijon
Live from 8:00pm

Eibar v Sevilla

Live from 10:30pm
Las Palmas v Malaga
Live from 1:00am (Sunday)

STAR SPORTS 4

English Premiership
Hull City v Arsenal
Live from 8:00pm
Everton v Middlesbrough
Live from 10:30pm

SONY ESPN

Serie A
Lazio v Pescara
Live from 10:00pm
Napoli v Bologna
Live from 12:45am (Sunday)

Mourinho rocked on Europa return

AFP, Rotterdam



Jose Mourinho's reluctant return to the Europa League ended in embarrassment as Tonny Vilhena fired Feyenoord to a 1-0 win over Manchester United in their Group A opener on Thursday.

For a man with a keen eye on his position in the football hierarchy, competing in the Europa League for the first time in 13 years was an unappetising prospect for Mourinho and his players seemed equally uninspired as a much-changed United line-up succumbed to Vilhena's late strike at De Kuip.

It was United's second consecutive defeat after Saturday's painful loss to bitter rivals Manchester City in the Premier League and Mourinho will hope his decision to make eight changes against Feyenoord is rewarded with victory when they return to domestic action at Watford on Sunday.

"Some of the players were playing their first minutes of the season. Obviously some played better than others," Mourinho said.

"I don't want to personalise it. I cannot judge them only on one game.

"We were pushing and Feyenoord capitalised because it is exactly at that moment where we lose the game. We were double unlucky because it's a clear offside."

Twice a Champions League winner with Porto and Inter Milan, Mourinho is usually

launching his latest bid for Europe's top prize at this time of year.

With Wayne Rooney rested and only David de Gea, Paul Pogba and Eric Bailly retained from the side beaten by City, it was little surprise to see United deliver a disjointed performance.

Giovanni van Bronckhorst's team had swept to the top of the Dutch league with five successive victories and they started brightly as Steven Berghuis and Vilhena brought de Gea into action with long-range efforts.

Careless with their passing and lacking a cutting edge up front, United -- also reluctantly in the Europa League group stages for the first time -- were unconvincing for long periods.

Even so, they still carved out the best chance of the first half when Matteo Darmian's cross picked out Anthony Martial, who should have done better than fire wide from the edge of the penalty area.

Not for the first time since his world-record move to United, France midfielder Pogba was a subdued figure and he shot tamely over early in the second half.

With teenage striker Marcus Rashford hauled off after failing to make the most of his first start of the season, Mourinho used all three of his substitutes in the 63rd minute as Zlatan Ibrahimovic, Memphis Depay and Ashley Young came on.

But United were no more energised and they paid for their lethargic display in the 79th minute.



Manchester United manager Jose Mourinho gestures during their Europa League match against Feyenoord in Rotterdam on Thursday. Mourinho suffered his second consecutive defeat as United manager.

PHOTO: AFP

Ballon d'Or returns home

AFP, Paris

The Ballon d'Or deal between France football and FIFA has ended, the French publication and football's governing body announced on Friday.

The coveted award will from now on return to its original home after France Football's agreement with FIFA finished.

The next recipient will be determined by a vote of journalists - players (national team captains) and managers will no longer have a say.

"The contractual agreement between FIFA and France Football expired in January. We told France Football in early August that the contract would not be renewed," the game's governing body declared.

Argentina and Barcelona star Lionel Messi won the award for a record fifth time in 2015.

FIFA plans to continue its annual best player award to male and female players.

FIFA and France Football teamed up in 2010 since when only two players have been nominated for the title known as the FIFA Ballon d'Or - Messi and Cristiano Ronaldo.

The first Ballon d'Or was won by Stanley Matthews, at the time with Blackpool, who beat Alfredo Di Stefano for the inaugural title in 1956.

Up to 1994 only European players were eligible.

The first non-European to win it was the following year, AC Milan's Liberian star George Weah.

World number four Nadal was due to play India's Ramkumar Ramanathan in the first singles rubber of the three-day contest being staged in the Indian capital.

He will be replaced by teammate Feliciano Lopez.

"Rafael Nadal will not play the first game due to stomach infection," an All India Tennis Association (AITA) official told AFP.

No hard feelings

AFP, Turin



Torino and England goalkeeper Joe Hart said Friday he has no hard feelings towards Pep Guardiola despite being unceremoniously forced out at Manchester City and replaced by Claudio Bravo from Barcelona.

Hart, who joined City as a teenager in 2006, signed for the unfashionable Serie A club on a season-long loan deal designed to make sure he is "playing regular football again".

Hart began his Serie A career with a 2-1 defeat away at Atalanta last weekend -- he was at fault for one of the goals -- a far cry from the razzmatazz of the world-famous Premier League.

But the 29-year-old shot-stopper, who suffered huge criticism for the 2-1 defeat to Iceland that sent England crashing out of Euro 2016, said he felt no bitterness towards new City boss Guardiola.

"It was fairly obvious to everyone," Hart told media when asked about the circumstances surrounding his high-profile divorce from City. Asked if Guardiola had been honest with him, Hart said: "He was open with me."

He added: "Football's football... and it resulted in me looking for a new club and, as I said, I'm very happy to be where I am at the moment."

"I absolutely love to play football and it looked like my options were limited (at City). It was an easy decision for me."

"I'm very thankful for the opportunity and I'm proud and happy to be here. I'm looking forward to hopefully having a good season."

Expected to return to the Etihad stadium at the end of the current campaign, Hart has fully embraced the Italian culture.

He started his press conference at Torino's Stadio Olimpico by speaking a few words of Italian.

And although he has yet to receive any welcome messages from his opposite number at city rivals Juventus, legendary goalkeeper Gianluigi Buffon, Hart said he wants to make the most of an experience "few English players" get the chance to have.

"I was looking for an experience outside of English football," added Hart. "Every day

at City I trained with players from all over the world who've managed to make the move to England. So for me it was an amazing opportunity to experience a new style of football.

"I feel confident I can come over here to learn the language and embrace the culture."

"To get the opportunity to try a new league, which a lot of English players don't get the chance to do, was too good an opportunity to turn down."

Although happy to talk about Torino, Hart was more coy when asked about City.

He said he did not watch the Manchester derby last weekend, won by City, because "I was training. I'm pretty limited to what I can watch in my hotel room".

And, amid concerns his England place



JOE HART

could now be at risk, Hart insisted his focus was only on improving his game.

"Goalkeeping in football is ever-evolving. I'm very open-minded to improve and learn every day," said Hart.

"I play football because I love football. Playing regular football is the most important thing for me. I love playing for my country... but it's an ambition of mine to play first-team football."

"My options at City were limited so I'm very grateful to be here. I'm only on loan here and, technically, I'm supposed to go back to City."

"But my focus is on playing for Torino. The (long-term) future will take care of itself but my future is here, it's on Sunday when we play Empoli."

City aim to gain advantage

AFP, London



The Premier League season is only four games old, but ahead of Saturday's home game with Bournemouth, Pep Guardiola's Manchester City already appear the team to beat.

Last weekend's impressive 2-1 derby win at Manchester United left City with the only 100 percent record in the division and they followed it up with a class 4-0 Champions League victory over Borussia Moenchengladbach.

The Gladbach game was held back 24 hours due to a ferocious rainstorm on Tuesday, but Ilkay Gundogan, who made his debut in Wednesday's rearranged fixture, does not believe it will have an adverse effect.

"We are all professional enough to handle such situations and we are all used to playing Wednesday-Saturday," the Germany midfielder said in a video interview posted on the City website.

"It maybe makes a small difference, but we are professionals and we always try to do our best. It shouldn't affect us on Saturday when we are on the field."

"We always want to win and want to play our best football so we're all looking forward to Saturday."

Sergio Aguero was City's match-winner against Gladbach with a hat-trick -- his second in the Champions League this season -- but he is suspended for Bournemouth's visit.

Kelechi Iheanacho, a goal-scoring replacement for Aguero against Gladbach, is expected to take the Argentine's place at the tip of the attack.

David Silva is due to miss out after sitting out the Gladbach game with an unspecified minor injury.

Eddie Howe's Bournemouth registered their first win of the campaign last weekend by edging West Bromwich Albion 1-0.

Guardiola lost only four home league games in his three seasons at

Bayern Munich and while Howe is plotting how to outwit him, he freely admits how much he admires the Catalan's work.

"I think they're an outstanding team," said the Bournemouth manager.

"When I watch them play, I enjoy it, and it's rare for me to say that when I watch an opponent play. They've been very impressive."

United will hope to bounce back from their derby defeat and Europa League loss at Feyenoord when they travel to Watford in one of four games taking place on Sunday.

United captain Wayne Rooney and full-backs Antonio Valencia and Luke Shaw were left out of the mid-week trip to the Netherlands with a view to Sunday's game at Vicarage Road.

Defending champions Leicester City should have a spring in their step again when they welcome Burnley to the King Power Stadium on Saturday.

Claudio Ranieri's men crashed 4-1 at Liverpool last weekend -- the second defeat of their title defence -- but made a memorable Champions League bow in mid-week by winning 3-0 at Belgian side Club Brugge.

"This has gone now. It's been nice to enjoy it, but it's gone now," said Marc Albrighton, who opened the scoring in Bruges.

FIXTURES	
Saturday (1400 GMT unless otherwise stated): Everton v Middlesbrough (1630 GMT), Hull City v Arsenal, Leicester City v Burnley, Manchester City v Bournemouth, West Bromwich Albion v West Ham United	
Sunday (1315 GMT unless otherwise stated): Crystal Palace v Stoke City, Southampton v Swansea City, Tottenham Hotspur v Sunderland (1530 GMT), Watford v Manchester United (1100 GMT)	

Another case of cardiac arrest

AGENCIES, London

Former Hull City star Bryan Hughes has told of his shock at the sudden death of his friend and former teammate Daniel Wilkinson.

Mr Wilkinson, a former youth player at City, collapsed on the pitch during a non-league match in Barnsley. It is thought he suffered a heart attack.

The 24-year-old appeared to stop breathing before going into cardiac arrest during the second-half of a cup match on Monday night.

Mr Hughes said: "It is devastating news. I knew Dan when he was a young lad coming through at Hull City. I then managed him when he was at Scarborough Athletic. This news is really hard to take. He was a very fit lad and looked after himself."

Mr Wilkinson was playing for Shaw Lane AFC in an Integro Doodson League Cup clash against Evo-Stik Northern Premier League rivals Brighouse Town when he collapsed.

Barca seek to rebound

AFP, Madrid



Madrid minnows Leganes get their reward for an unlikely promotion to La Liga when the might of Barcelona's Lionel Messi, Luis Suarez and Neymar grace the 11,000-capacity Estadio Butarque on Saturday.

Leganes have made a fine start to their first season in the Spanish top-flight, winning at Celta Vigo on the opening weekend and holding Champions League finalists Atletico Madrid to a 0-0 draw at the Butarque.

However, Leganes face an even tougher task in stopping a rampant "MSN" of Messi, Suarez and Neymar fresh from scoring six of Barca's seven goals in a Champions League rout of Celtic in midweek on their first start of the season together.

Barca were in no mood for complacency on Tuesday after a shock 2-1 home defeat to another newly promoted side, Alaves, ended their perfect start to the La Liga season last weekend.

Leganes defender Pablo Insua says the Alaves result gives the hosts hope.

"We have to do everything right and have luck," Insua told Marca.

"We saw how Alaves did it and it is clear it can be done, but the circumstances are not the same."

La Liga clash with Atletico. Messi scored a hat-trick whilst Neymar bagged four assists and goal against Celtic as the "MSN" took their combined early season tally to 13.

Neymar hopes to break the incredible 131-goal record they set last year.

"To play with Messi is very easy," the Brazilian said on Thursday.

"We understand each other very well, as does Suarez. We always try to help each other to ensure everything works out well."

Barca's defeat to Alaves means they are playing catch-up to Real Madrid after just three games.

Madrid have made a perfect start to the campaign and can set a club record of 16 La Liga wins with victory at Espanyol on Sunday.

The European champions needed a sensational late fightback to start their Champions League defence with a win on Wednesday as Cristiano Ronaldo and Alvaro Morata scored in the final minutes to turn around a 1-0 deficit against Sporting Lisbon.

FIXTURES	
(all times GMT)	
Saturday Leganes v Barcelona (1200), Atletico Madrid v Sporting Gijon (1515), Eibar v Sevilla (1730), Las Palmas v Malaga (1945)	
Sunday Osasuna v Celta Vigo (1100), Athletic Bilbao v Valencia (1515) Villarreal v Real Sociedad (1730), Espanyol v Real Madrid (1945)	
Monday Alaves v Deportivo la Coruna (1945)	

Nadal floored by Delhi belly

AFP, New Delhi

Tennis star Rafael Nadal pulled out of Spain's opening Davis Cup tie against India on Friday after being laid low by an upset stomach.

World number four Nadal was due to play India's Ramkumar Ramanathan in the first singles rubber of the three-day contest being staged in the Indian capital.

He will be replaced by teammate Feliciano Lopez.



Spanish tennis great Rafael Nadal shows off his football skills at a ceremony to promote the Spanish football league in New Delhi on Thursday.

PHOTO: AFP