



Tom Saintfiet takes his charges through an endurance training session at the Birshrestha Shaheed Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Kamalapur yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Saintfiet focusing on goals

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh head coach Tom Saintfiet is planning to concentrate on goal-scoring in his six-day training camp for the second leg of the Asian Cup Play-Off Qualifier against Bhutan, which will be played in Thimphu on October 10.

The 43-year-old coach said that he is not in favour of making too many changes to the 23-member final squad even though he has spoken of two to three changes in the starting eleven.

After playing out a goalless draw against the South Asian opponents last month, Bangladesh now need at least a goal-scoring draw to advance to the final qualifying phase of the Asian Cup and to achieve the target, the Belgian has called up a few strikers including two young strikers from the

under-16 team.

Veteran striking pair of Zahid Hasan Emily and Emanul Haque and young pair of Saad Uddin and Sarwar Zaman Nipu are among the ones called up to the 33-member preliminary squad. The coach is pleased to see Shakhawat Hossain Rony, Hemanta Vincent Biswas, Jewel Rana, Jafar Iqbal and Mohammad Abdullah getting goals in the league matches.

"Emily, Enamul and defender Yeasin Khan have proved their worth in the past by representing the national team. Enamul and Emily have been called up because we have a problem in scoring goals. I wouldn't have called them up had Rony, Sohel Rana and Jibon or anyone else scored goals in the home match. I think we need to find the right strikers," Saintfiet told reporters yesterday ahead of the practice session at Birshrestha Shaheed Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Kamalapur.

"It is positive for me that some players got goals in league matches and Emily started playing again and Emanul has the ability to score goals," Saintfiet said. "We are going to train on scoring goals in the coming days. After tomorrow's training, we are going to work more on tactics."

"I do not want to make too many changes. First of all, we didn't play bad [in the first leg] but we did not score. I want to keep the positive things."

"Hemanta scored for his club last week and didn't play that bad. He has an opportunity to start. In the starting eleven, there could be two to three new names," said Saintfiet, who also hinted that there might be a change in place of Enamul Haque Sharif, who played as a holding midfielder against Bhutan.

Meanwhile, eight players of Chittagong Abahani are expected to join the camp today after the second day's training was conducted with 25 players.

Poch ends Pep's run

Leicester, Manchester United held

AFP, London



Tottenham Hotspur advanced their Premier League title credentials with a superb 2-0 victory on Sunday as Pep Guardiola tasted defeat for the first time as Manchester City manager.

An Aleksandar Kolarov own goal and a Dele Alli strike gave Spurs a third successive league win over City and manager Mauricio Pochettino could even afford for Erik Lamela to squander a second-half penalty.

The result lifted Spurs to second, a point below City, and means the north London club, third last term, have made their best start to a season since their fabled 1960-61 title-winning campaign.

Pochettino was left to celebrate only a second league win over Guardiola in 10 matches, and the first since Espanyol beat Barcelona in their first such encounter in February 2009.

It was Guardiola's first defeat in 12 games

as City manager and following their mid-week 3-3 draw at Celtic in the Champions League, his side have now gone successive games without victory.

Elsewhere, Leicester's spluttering defence of the Premier League title suffered another blow after they were held to a 0-0 draw by Southampton at the King Power Stadium.

Meanwhile, Manchester United manager Jose Mourinho lamented his side's failure in front of the goal, saying they could have scored six after their "best performance all season" saw them held to a 1-1 draw by Stoke City at Old Trafford.

RESULTS			
Burnley	0	-	1 Arsenal
Leicester	0	-	0 Southampton
Man Utd	1	-	1 Stoke
Tottenham	2	-	0 Man City

Higuain takes Juve four clear

AFP, Milan

Gonzalo Higuain hit a brace to help Juventus cement top spot in Serie A with a 3-0 win away at Empoli on Sunday.

Massimiliano Allegri's men travelled to the Carlo Castellani stadium confident of ensuring that they would remain top of the table going into the international break.

Yet they missed a host of chances before striker Paulo Dybala finally broke the deadlock on 65 minutes.

It opened the floodgates, Higuain pouncing on Mario Lemina's pass two minutes later to beat Lukasz Skorupski from the edge of the area.

Three minutes after that, the Argentine cheekily dispossessed Marco Zambelli yards from the goal to round the 'keeper for his second.

Ricciardo wins in Malaysia

AFP, Sepang

Daniel Ricciardo led a Red Bull one-two as Lewis Hamilton's hopes of regaining the world championship lead went up in smoke at the Malaysian Grand Prix on Sunday.

Hamilton was leading with 15 laps to go when his engine exploded at the Sepang International Circuit.

Ricciardo's teammate Max Verstappen finished second while Championship leader Nico Rosberg took third and extended the gap over Hamilton to 23 points with just five races remaining.

Atletico go top as Real held

AFP, Madrid



Real Madrid's stuttering run continued as they were held 1-1 at home by La Liga minnows Eibar on Sunday, drawing a fourth consecutive game in all competitions for the first time in more than a decade.

Fran Rico stunned the Santiago Bernabeu by opening the scoring for the visiting side in the sixth minute, facilitated by some questionable Real defending and goalkeeping from Keylor Navas.

Gareth Bale headed home a Cristiano Ronaldo cross to level in the 17th minute and score his 50th La Liga goal and Bale came close to grabbing the winner in the second half but headed against the farpost. Real were jeered off the pitch at the

final whistle after a fourth consecutive draw.

Real surrendered top spot to Atletico Madrid, who beat Valencia 2-0 earlier on Sunday and provisionally top the table on goal difference, while champions Barcelona can take first place if they win at Celta Vigo later on Sunday.

Antoine Griezmann made amends for missing a second penalty in as many games by hitting the opening goal as Atletico were made to sweat to take all three points at Valencia.

The France hitman saw his first-half penalty beaten away by spot-kick saving specialist Diego Alves, who repelled another penalty from Gabi later on. But he finally blasted past the Brazilian goalkeeper in the 63rd minute, while Kevin Gameiro sealed the points in injury time.

Griezmann finished off a sweeping Atletico break after Yannick Carrasco had teed up substitute Fernando Torres, forcing Alves to parry, and Gameiro knocked the ball back for his fellow Frenchman.

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Dhaka Marketing Office : House 656, Road 09, Ave 04, Mirpur DOHS, Dhaka 1217, Tel: +88-02-58070751-3, Fax: +88-02-58070754, email: milton.dmo@youngonedhk.com
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