

TEN 1HD

South Africa v Sri Lanka
3rd ODI

Live from 5:30pm

STAR SPORTS SELECT HD1

English Premiership

Chelsea v Arsenal

Live from 6:30pm

Hull City v Liverpool

Live from 9:00pm

Tottenham v Middlesbrough

Live from 11:30pm

STAR SPORTS SELECT HD2

Bundesliga

Bayern Munich v Schalke

Live from 8:15pm

Dortmund v Leipzig

Live from 11:15pm

SONY SIX

La Liga

Malaga v Espanyol

Live from 6:00pm

Barcelona v Athletic Bilbao

Live from 9:10pm

Granada v Las Palmas

Live from 11:30pm

Valencia v Eibar

Live from 1:40am (Sunday)

SONY ESPN

Serie A

Bologna v Napoli

Live from 2:00am (Sunday)

DRY'S EVENT

BANGLADESH CRICKET LEAGUE
(Four-Day Match, Day-1)
Time: 9:30am

Walton Central Zone v BCB North Zone
Venue: Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury
Stadium, Chittagong

Islami Bank East Zone v Prime Bank
South Zone
Venue: Sylhet Int'l Cricket Stadium

Siddikur surges but Jazz forges big lead

SPORTS REPORTER



Siddikur Rahman continued his upward surge in the Bashundhara Bangladesh Open, but it is the young Thai golfer Jazz Janewattananond who took another assured step towards his maiden Asian Tour title at the end of the third round yesterday.

Siddikur, the two-time Asian Tour winner, carded a three-under-par (68) at the Kurmitola Golf Club on Sunday to move up to joint third position at eight-under-par (205). His effort, however, meant he was still five shots off the pace, thanks to the consistent form of Jazz, who carded a two-under-par to take his overall tally to 13-under-par (200). India's Shubhankar Sharma, who had a mixed bag yesterday, was in second position at nine-under-par (204).

After having finished 38th and 35th respectively in the first two editions of the 300,000-dollar Asian Tour event, Bangladesh's premier golfer Siddikur Rahman looks like he is determined to make amends this time. With an even-par first round and a 66 in the second, Siddikur did not buckle under home

pressure as he exchanged six birdies for three bogies at his favourite golf course yesterday. The 32-year-old golfer admitted he is mentally stronger now than before.

"I think my mental game was not as strong in the last two years. I practised a lot and I prepared myself well before

SELECTED SCORES		
POS	NAME	SCORE
1	Jazz Janewattananond (THA)	-13 (200)
2	Shubhankar Sharma (IND)	-9 (204)
3	Siddikur Rahman (BAN)	-8 (205)
3	Dodge Kemmer (USA)	-8 (205)
5	Richard T. Lee (CAN)	-7 (206)
8	Panuphol Pittayarat (THA)	-6 (207)
12	Dulal Hossain (BAN)	-4 (209)
12	Mardan Mamat (SGP)	-4 (209)
28	Jamal Hossain Mollah (BAN)	Par (213)
31	Mohammad Sajib Ali (BAN)	+1 (214)

coming home for this tournament. The game is better and more matured as well. I think that's the difference for me compared to the last two years," Siddikur said at the end of the day.

The man from Madaripur, whom some love to call the Tiger Woods of Bangladesh, feels he is still in with a

shout of breaking his long draught on Asia's premier golf tour.

"I am happy to stay in contention after three rounds in this tournament. It is the first time I am contending in this tournament. I just want to keep doing what I have been doing for the last three rounds tomorrow. If I can do that, I should be able to score again tomorrow," Siddikur said.

The ace golfer will however have to contend with the pressure of playing in the leading flight -- alongside Jazz and Sharma -- in the fourth and final round today. The Thai youngster was not at his best, yet managed to pull away from the rest of the field, mixing four birdies with two bogeys. He was nonetheless happy with the lead he has forged.

"I just tried to do my best out there. Sharma got off to a good start but I managed to hang in there. Playing in the last group in the final round tomorrow, my mindset is definitely going to be different. I will go out there and do my best to secure my first Asian Tour win," Janewattananond said.

Meanwhile, Dulal Hossain of Bangladesh was eyeing a top-10 finish after carding a three-under-par (68) which helped him finish the day in joint 12th position.



Local hope and two-time Asian Tour winner Siddikur Rahman surged to third position after round three of the Bashundhara Bangladesh Open at the Kurmitola Golf Club yesterday.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Ronaldinho to act as Barca ambassador

AFP, Barcelona

Spanish giants Barcelona announced legendary former player Ronaldinho will return to act as an ambassador for the club on Thursday.

The Brazilian, who won the World Player of the Year twice as well as two La Liga titles and the 2005/06 Champions League with Barca in five years at the Camp Nou, has not played since a short spell at Fluminense came to an end in September 2015.

Barca initially announced a 10-year deal had been agreed, but issued a revised statement without a definitive timeframe for the agreement.

"FC Barcelona and Ronaldinho have reached an agreement whereby the Brazilian will become a Club ambassador and representative at various events and activities over the coming years," Barca said in the revised statement.

Ronaldinho, 36, will also be part of a Barca legends team that will play exhibition matches across the world.

Sagna loses fine appeal

AFP, London

Manchester City's French international defender Bacary Sagna on Thursday failed in his appeal against a £40,000 fine (46,480 euros, \$50,178) for making an Instagram post that questioned a referee's impartiality.

Sagna, 32, posted a photo with the caption "10 against 12... but still fighting and winning as a team" on the social network following City's 2-1 victory against Burnley on January 2.

It was seen as a criticism of referee Lee Mason after City had been reduced to 10 men for an hour after Ferdinand was sent off for a lunge on Johann Berg Gudmundsson.

Sagna, who was later involved in an altercation with Burnley midfielder George Boyd which Claret's boss Sean Dyche felt should have resulted in a red card, appeared to take issue with decisions made by Mason in the Instagram post after the match.

Although fined by the FA, Sagna escaped a suspension and was warned over his future conduct.

The monk who could be king

ATIQUÉ ANAM



Jazz Janewattananond has never won an Asian Tour event before. In fact the 21-year-old Thai golfer has never even won an Asian Development Tour event, a second-tier tour in Asia, before. His best finish in a professional career of five years was a tied-third in the 2015 Queen's Cup in his home country.

So Jazz was not expecting much coming into the Bashundhara Bangladesh Open. But today he will be teeing off the final round as the overwhelming favourite to claim the winner's cheque of 54,000 dollars, thanks to three consistent rounds and a yawning lead of four strokes over his nearest competitor. And he has taken himself to that position competing against a field which includes six-time Asian Tour winner Jeev Milkha Singh, a five-time tour winner and former champion of this event, Mardan Mamat, and of course home favourite Siddikur Rahman.

Jazz feels his newfound, relaxed approach to the game has made things easier for him, and he owes that to a fortnight spent as a monk at the end of last year.

"After playing my last tournament of 2016, I went to become a monk for



JAZZ JANEWATTANANOND

two weeks," the serene-looking lanky golfer says. "I prayed and chanted every day in the temple. I felt really peaceful, even till now. I seem to take things a lot

easier now."

Nicknamed Jazz by his music-loving father, the young golfer says that those two weeks helped him develop a different view of life, be a calmer person and focus on his goal without being perturbed by externalities.

"Golf used to be everything for me but now I'm just happy that I get to play in tournaments. It's still important for me but I am happier now when I just focus on enjoying the game rather than the results," Jazz says.

He says his religious belief, together with his affection for his parents and devotion to the late King Bhumibol Adulyadej who passed away last October, encouraged him to spend time as a monk.

"I did it for my parents and my late King. We loved our King. My parents told me to apply what I have learnt as a monk in the tournament this week. That is, to stay peaceful and not worry too much about results. I don't know what will happen tomorrow [Saturday], but one thing I am sure is I will be really happy out there," Jazz says.

Indeed, if Jazz can muster the calmness and focus he developed as a monk to stave off the challenge of home favourite Siddikur Rahman and India's Shubhankar Sharma, he will surely be the new king of Bashundhara Bangladesh Open.

Ramsey out for 3 weeks

AFP, London

Arsenal midfielder Aaron Ramsey will be out for three weeks after sustaining a calf strain during his side's 2-1 loss to Watford, manager Arsene Wenger revealed on Friday.

"Overall from the other night we lose Aaron Ramsey," Wenger told his weekly press conference at the Arsenal training ground in London Colney, north of London.

"He is expected to be out for 21 days. We are a bit short at the moment, but we have young players who can do well."

Ramsey, 26, spent 10 weeks on the sidelines with a hamstring injury earlier this season.

The Wales international's absence leaves Arsenal short in central midfield ahead of Saturday's trip to Premier League leaders Chelsea.

Granit Xhaka is banned, Santi Cazorla remains injured and Mohamed Elneny is preparing for the Africa Cup of Nations final with Egypt in Gabon.

An unusual audience

SPORTS REPORTER



Kurmitola Golf Club is not quite the place where you would expect to see a group of very young children, and surely not ones from the lower reaches of the society, as we all know the game is mostly confined to the elite and played by grown-up men and women.

But yesterday there was a bunch of kids, young and underprivileged, who were trying to absorb the excitement of an Asian Tour event or at least trying to understand what the game was all about. It was not any open invitation or free-entry on a weekend; rather it happened due to the collaboration and goodwill between a charity organisation and golfer Siddikur Rahman.

The children spent a wonderful time at a place 'they had never come before' and cheered on 'Siddikur bhai', who had a few days earlier visited their shelter abode of Ekmatra Society in Mirpur and asked them to come and see him play.

Siddikur himself was seemingly very happy, both with his performance on the day and for being among children he could so readily identify with, as the ace golfer himself comes from a very disadvantaged section of society. Before becoming Bangladesh's leading exponent with golf club in hand, the 32-year-old's passion for the game was stoked during his time in Kurmitola as a ball-boy and later as a caddie.

"I visited them a few days ago. They had asked me a lot of things. They had probably heard my story from someone and they said they were inspired by me," Siddikur told reporters after having a photo session with the kids at the end of the day's play. "It is a different experience for me and a very refreshing one. I'm very happy that they are here."

All roads lead to Bridge

AFP, London



Antonio Conte says Chelsea must seize the chance to move a step closer to winning the Premier League when the leaders face Arsenal in Saturday's crucial summit meeting.

Conte's side are nine points clear at the top with 15 games remaining and victory over title rivals Arsenal at Stamford Bridge would be a significant moment in the race to replace Leicester as English champions.

Beating the third-placed Gunners would move Chelsea 12 points clear of Arsene Wenger's side, as well as sending a message to the chasing pack that the Blues are determined to hold onto their lead.

Conte would dearly love to see off Arsenal after the north Londoners' 3-0 victory at the Emirates Stadium in their previous meeting this season.

That was the most chastening moment of Conte's first season at Chelsea and the Italian, whose side have lost only one of their last 17 league games, said: "There are 15 games remaining and 45 points. Now we must focus on Arsenal."

"They are a great team who can fight for the title. Don't forget we lost 3-0 away."

FIXTURES

(1500 GMT unless stated)

Saturday
Chelsea v Arsenal (1230 GMT), Crystal Palace v Sunderland, Everton v Bournemouth, Hull v Liverpool, Southampton v West Ham, Tottenham v Middlesbrough (1730 GMT), Watford v Burnley, West Brom v Stoke

Sunday
Leicester v Manchester United (1600 GMT), Manchester City v Swansea (1330 GMT)

"This could be a good chance for us to show that the second part of the season we are a totally different team if you compare us to the previous game."

"It is a good chance for us. We play at home, which is very important, but it will be a really tough game."

With Chelsea held to a 1-1 draw at Liverpool on Tuesday, Arsenal squandered an opportunity to close the gap as they crashed to a shock 2-1 home defeat against Watford.

Wenger's side haven't won at the Bridge since 2011 and they must end that barren run to remain in the title hunt.

Arsenal goalkeeper Petr Cech, who won four league titles during his time at Chelsea, said of the Watford defeat: "It was a huge setback because we wanted to put ourselves in a better position going into the weekend."

"I always say that at this level you cannot play 80 minutes, or 85. You have to play 90 minutes with full concentration and everybody on top of their game."

Second-placed Tottenham host Middlesbrough as they try to regain ground on Chelsea after drawing their last two matches.

"With the mentality we have here, we would be upset to finish in the same position as last season," said Tottenham's Eric Dier, whose team lost out to Leicester in the title battle last term.

"We want to be better and we want to show it. Everyone wants to reach the very top."

At the King Power Stadium both managers will be in the spotlight as troubled Leicester and spluttering Manchester United clash.

Leicester's fairytale title triumph already seems like a distant memory as Claudio Ranieri's team find themselves just two points above the relegation zone after three successive defeats.



Cameroon players are ecstatic after their second goal against Ghana during the 2017 Africa Cup of Nations semifinal in Franceville on Thursday.

PHOTO: AFP

Cameroon stun Ghana to reach final

AFP, Franceville

Michael Ngadeu and Christian Bassogog both netted in the second half as Cameroon beat Ghana 2-0 in Franceville on Thursday to reach the Africa Cup of Nations final.

A finely-poised tie remained goalless until the 72nd minute, when Ghana goalkeeper Razak Brimah failed to deal with a free-kick into his area and John Boye's weak defensive header merely served as an assist for Ngadeu to control and fire home.

Bassogog then broke away to clinch the win and spark wild celebrations as Hugo Broos's side progress to a final against Egypt in Libreville on Sunday.

That will be the Indomitable Lions' first Cup of Nations final since they lost 1-0 to the Egyptians in 2008. Then they also beat Ghana in the semifinals.

"It is a real dream for us to get to the final," said a delighted Broos.

"I am very happy, especially for the team. They are an exemplary group and on off the field and they deserve to be in the final."