

ARRIVEDERCI CAPITANO

Francesco Totti, AS Roma's 40-year-old stalwart, walked onto the Stadio Olimpico's turf as a player for the last time in his side's 3-2 win against Genoa yesterday. Named in the FIFA 100 -- a list of the greatest living footballers compiled by the legendary Pele himself -- and with a World Cup winner's medal to his name, Totti leaves with just one Scudetto, which he said was worth more than if he had won multiple titles at Real Madrid. Roma had special shirts made for yesterday's occasion, with a 'Totti 10' logo on the sleeves and a message that is translated to 'one team for a lifetime'. An architect of jaw-dropping goals, Gianluigi Buffon remarked a few days ago: "He [Totti] scored a lot of goals against me. Some were so beautiful that I'd have been ruining a masterpiece if I saved them." The King of Rome will now adjourn to the backroom, working alongside sporting director Ramon Rodriguez Verdejo, more commonly known as Monchi, to continue the work which began with his debut 25 years ago.

—Star Sport Desk



Arsenal, Barcelona, Paris Saint Germain and Borussia Dortmund got something out of their otherwise barren seasons as they won the respective domestic cup competitions. Here, Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger (R), outgoing Barcelona coach Luis Enrique (C), Dortmund coach Thomas Tuchel and star Pierre-Emrick Aubameyang (Top L) and PSG players celebrate after those wins.

PHOTOS: REUTERS

CUP SOLACE

QUICK SINGLES

The following are a few samples of stories that did not make the print edition. However, if they pique your interest, you can always read them online on The Daily Star website by simply scanning the QR codes listed below:

Tigers pose with new kit

Bangladesh players post photos of their new kits for the ICC Champions Trophy 2017.



Sri Lanka hope for Malinga magic at CT

Sri Lanka turn to old warhorse Lasith Malinga to put fight into their Champions Trophy campaign and reverse their decline in the one-day game.



New Pak skipper faces CT acid test

New captain Sarfraz Ahmed will face his stiffest test yet when he leads unfancied Pakistan in the Champion's Trophy -- starting with a highly-charged clash against India.



Stokes still 'affected' by knee injury

England all-rounder Ben Stokes conceded that his troublesome knee is affecting his bowling following his match-winning hundred against South Africa in Southampton, which could be a concern for the hosts ahead of their Champions Trophy campaign, which will start on June 1 against Bangladesh.



Chicharito becomes Mexico's leading goalscorer

Javier Hernandez passes Jared Borgetti as Mexico's all-time leading scorer when his goal in their 2-1 defeat to Croatia took his tally to 47.



Venus Williams set for French Open 20th anniversary

Serena Williams may be missing from this year's French Open, but big sister Venus is still going strong and marks her Roland Garros 20th anniversary.



FOREIGN PLAYERS' QUOTA REDUCTION
Local forwards reaping rewards

SPORTS REPORTER

Local footballers have apparently started to play pivotal roles by scoring more than the foreign recruits during this season's curtain-raising Federation Cup following the decrease of foreign player quotas.

Reducing the number of foreign players has long been a demand from the football pundits due to the goal-drought of the national team at an international level. And now, the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) finally gave in to the demand following the national team's disappointing results against lowly Bhutan in the Asian Cup pre-qualifiers. The decision seems to have had an instant impact on domestic competitions.

So far, some 34 goals have been scored from 16 matches of the ongoing Federation Cup (2.25 goals per match on average), with local players dominating the goal chart with their 18 against the 16 scored by foreign recruits. It is a sharp rise from last edition's Federation Cup figures where 40 goals were scored in the first 16 matches (2.50 goals per match on average), with foreign players scoring 22.

Interestingly, local footballers

had struck 18 goals up to the quarterfinal stage during last season as well, but the number of goals by foreign players was higher. That decrease is a direct result of most clubs playing a local striker alongside a foreign striker.

National discards Nabib Newaj Jibon, Toklish Ahmed, wingers Rubel Mia, Zahid Hossain, promis-

ing strikers Nurul Absar, Mohammad Ibrahim, midfielder Shahrhan Hawlader and a few other unheralded players have put their names on the scoresheet which is being seen as positive sign ahead of Bangladesh's AFC U-23 Championship campaign July.

"If you look back to last season, teams fielding two foreign strikers

along with a midfielder scored more goals in a match and those foreign players made the difference. This time, though, the local players are trying to have the same impact on matches and they are scoring more than the foreigners," opined Chittagong Abahani coach Saiful Bari Titu, who however believes the impact on foreign players also depends on their quality and positions they play in.

The former national coach expects more from local players this season as they are getting more opportunities instead of just warming the side-bench.

"Those who are getting opportunities this time must justify the decision of decreasing the number of foreign players by putting more impact on matches. And to do so, those players, especially the strikers, must be prepared individually and need to hit the target regularly," said Titu, who wants to pin hopes on young strikers to overcome the goal-drought of the national team.

"It is positive that strikers like Jibon, Toklish are getting goals regularly but it will be more positive for the national team if the young and unheralded players hit the target regularly in domestic matches," opined the former national footballer.



Abahani forward Rubel Mia is one of those who have grabbed the opportunity of a regular start with both hands.

PHOTO: STAR FILE

Enrique unsure of future plans

STAR SPORT DESK



Luis Enrique clinched his ninth and last trophy with Barcelona on Saturday night with a 3-1 victory over Alaves in the Copa del Rey. The Spaniard took over a team in shambles from Tata Martino, but he turned things around and won a sensational treble in his first season.

After three seasons at the helm, his haul stands at two La Liga titles, and one title in the FIFA Club World Cup, Spanish Super Cup and Champions League each.

There may not have been much to savour this season, but the most memorable Barcelona moment in recent times was made under Enrique's charge, as the Blaugrana overturned a 4-0 deficit against Paris Saint Germain in the Champions League to complete an incredible comeback with a 6-1 win at the Nou Camp.

When quizzed about his plans for the future, Enrique joked that he was even open to changing sports.

"I do not know what I will do in the future, I am open to any possibility, perhaps even changing sports," he said in the post-match press-conference.

Enrique's departure also coincides with the Catalan giants' change in fortunes. Barcelona had dominated at the national and international level for almost a decade, but it is looking increasingly likely that Zinedine Zidane's Real Madrid will be the dominant force in Spanish football for the next few years.

On that subject, Enrique said he was proud of the rivalry between the two clubs. "The rivalry is healthy, it has to exist and the important thing is to be proud of your colours and give everything you can," he said.

Enrique ended the presser by thanking his players for giving him everything they had over the course of the difficult season.

"I can only admire their professionalism over the past three years, this title belongs to everyone and I have received one hundred per cent effort from the team and I have tried to push them all to their limit," he concluded.

'We have to exploit Juve's weaknesses'

STAR SPORT DESK



Ahead of the Champions League final, which is less than a week away, Real Madrid superstar Cristiano Ronaldo spoke about his side's chances of defeating Juventus and becoming the first team to retain the trophy since the inception of the current format in 1992/93 season.

"Every player in the [Madrid] dressing room wants to make history," Ronaldo told UEFA. "It would be a privilege to be the first team to win consecutive editions of the Champions League."

Ronaldo admitted that it would be a tough battle and likened it to their Champions League final clash with Atletico Madrid, but he stressed that everyone at the club believed in themselves.

"We are aware it will be an extremely difficult match but we are Madrid so we know we have a realistic shot at winning. This final will be similar to the previous ones [against Atletico Madrid], it's basically a coin flip."

"Both squads will attempt to take advantage of the opponent's mistakes; whoever plays a cleaner match should prevail, hopefully it's us."

"It will be an exciting match-up for both players and fans, we have high expectations."

The 32-year-old was full of praise for his opponents, but he added that every team has a weakness and Los Blancos would need to find Juventus'.

"[Juventus] are an excellent team, as they proved by winning both Serie A and Coppa Italia, and they have completed a fabulous campaign in Europe."

"They like using tight coverage, like Atletico. While Juventus certainly have a superb defence, there is always a weak spot, we need to find out how to attack it."

The Portuguese talisman also spoke about his coach, Zinedine Zidane, and said how his admiration for the Frenchman had only grown with time.

"[Zidane] has done a terrific job, he is proving his status as a world-class coach. I used to admire him as a player and my admiration has done nothing but grow. He's a positive, hard-working and respectful person, everybody in the squad is really pleased with him."

"It's not easy to manage this sort of dressing room, because every player wants to play a lot of minutes, but he's been able to spread playing time among all of us."



Vettel wins in Monaco

REUTERS, Monaco

Sebastian Vettel stretched his championship lead over Lewis Hamilton to 25 points on Sunday after becoming the first Ferrari driver since Michael Schumacher in 2001 to win Formula One's showcase Monaco Grand Prix.

Team mate Kimi Raikkonen, on pole for the first time in nine years, lost out in the pitstops but secured a Ferrari one-two with Hamilton finishing seventh for Mercedes after starting 13th.

The German celebrated as jubilantly as his seven times champion compatriot would have done, whooping over the radio and beaming from the podium as mechanics sang the Italian national anthem.

"It's obviously a great day for the team...great to get the points, great to get the win," said Vettel.

As with Schumacher in his pomp there was also a distinct whiff of 'team orders', with Raikkonen pitting first and Vettel staying out for a further five laps in a move that worked in his favour.

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