

What to WATCH

SONY SIX
Caribbean Premier League
 St Lucia Stars v Jamaica Tallawahs
 Live from 4:00am (Wednesday)

TEN 1
UEFA Champions League
 Sporting Lisbon v Steaua Bucuresti
 Live from 12:45am (Wednesday)

TEN 2
UEFA Champions League
 Hoffenheim v Liverpool
 Live from 12:45am (Wednesday)

Barca sign Paulinho

AFP, Barcelona

Barcelona made Brazilian international midfielder Paulinho their first signing since banking a world record fee for Neymar on Monday after agreeing a 40 million euro (\$47 million) fee with Chinese club Guangzhou Evergrande.

"Barcelona and Guangzhou Evergrande have reached an agreement for the transfer of the player Paulinho Bezerra for 40 million euros," Barca said in a statement.

The 29-year-old has signed a four-year deal with a 120 million euro buyout clause and will be formally presented on Thursday.

The announcement of Barca's third signing of the summer transfer window after Gerard Deulofeu and Nelson Semedo came just hours after the Catalans suffered a 3-1 home defeat to Real Madrid in the Spanish Super Cup first leg on Sunday.

After the game, midfielder Sergio Busquets put pressure on the Barca board by claiming Barca had to strengthen their squad before the transfer window closes on August 31.

WORLD BRIDGE C'SHIP Bangladesh make impressive start

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh made a dream start to their maiden appearance in the World Bridge Championships, beating favourites Italy to secure the sixth position after the first day's play on Sunday.

Bangladesh, one of only two amateur teams out of 22 teams participating in this 43rd world event in Lyon, beat former champions Italy by 23-20 international match points (IMPs). They also outclassed Mexico, by 45-12 IMPs, while losing against Brazil in the other match of the day.

Two wins and a defeat left the Bangladesh team in sixth position with 36.68 points in the main event, called the Bermuda Bowl. Netherlands were leading the table with 49.5 points while Germany were in second position with 40.8 points.

Meanwhile, according to a message received from France, Bangladesh lost their first match of the second day against leaders Netherlands. They fought gallantly against the tournament favourites before losing by three IMPs. Bangladesh were scheduled to play two more matches – against Chinese Taipei and Australia – on the day.

The championships will conclude on August 26 when the final classification will be announced, with each team scheduled to play 21 matches in round-robin format first round. The top eight teams of the first round will advance to the second round.

Led by the Bangladesh Bridge Federation president Mushfiqur Rahman Mohon, the team comprises of six players – captain Mirza Sajid Isphani, Shah Ziaul Huq, Kamruzzaman Sohag, Rashedul Ahsan, Moshir Rahman Nayeem and Asifur Rahman Chowdhury Razib.

They had qualified for this world event for the first time, thanks to their runners-up finish in the Qualifying Zone 4 in UAE in April this year.



Jamaican sprint superstar Usain Bolt poses in his trademark style after taking part in a lap of honour on the final day of the IAAF World Championships at the London Stadium on Sunday.

PHOTO: AFP

Time Bolts past a legend

QUAZI ZULQUARNAIN ISLAM

If destiny and natural justice were the defining elements in dictating the outcome of sporting ties, the greatest sprinter of all time would have walked away from the sport in a blaze of gold and glory. Thankfully, they aren't. Save some very notable exceptions (Roger Federer anyone?) sport hardly mirrors scripts written for cheesy Hollywood blockbusters. Sooner or later the truth catches up with us all; sooner or later time runs out for us all.

Time ran out for Usain Bolt on Saturday, August 5 in London.

To be more specific, time ran out for him about 40 metres into the final 100 metre race of his life. Running on lane 4, Bolt did what he almost always does -- start slow. Yet, coming into the 40-metre mark, he was in familiar territory -- neck and neck with surprise leader Christian Coleman. This is where Bolt has always put on the scarcely believable afterburners that leave the lesser mortals in his wake. But on Saturday the tank was empty. Instead of a

winning smile there was only a grimace. There were no untied shoelaces, no elaborate celebrations, no smiles for the camera -- there was just Bolt wincing across the finish line, firmly in the grip of Father Time.

He finished third. Hardly shambolic, but for an athlete who has not just always finished first, but done so with a panache that defies belief, it was a marker of his new found mortality.

Context, they say is everything. Five years ago, on a beautiful summer night in London, Bolt had walked into the post-race press conference asking for drum-rolls. He had picked up the microphone and said, "I am a legend, bask in my glory." He had told everyone he would now go on to either play for Manchester United as a strike partner for Wayne Rooney or head to the IPL to open the batting with Chris Gayle. And of course he had hated on Justin Gatlin.

And my, had we loved him for it.

That had always been the magic of Bolt -- breathtaking talent peppered with soundbites that propelled him from sporting icon to cultural icon. Bolt was the Muhammad Ali of our times, possessing a talent so ephemeral that it seemed

godly, but a personality so relatable that he seemed the perfect Friday night bar-hopping buddy. You either loved him or you loved him. Every word he said was a soundbite, every race he ran a push to the limits of human ability.

Bolt 2017 is different -- more mature, demure and slower. He called Gatlin 'one of the best sprinters of our time' and, asked about future plans, stated a desire to settle down, get married and have children. And of course he ran slower or worse still, couldn't run at all.

And so it was that on his swansong from the athletic stage, Bolt did the one thing you hoped he wouldn't -- he pulled up. He did so with a grimace and an elaborate somersault but to the watching thousands it was the signal that they had hoped would never come. The end was here of a career that had perfected the truly elemental art of running fast.

"This is crazy, Yohan," Bolt was supposed to have said to his long-time mate Yohan Blake ahead of the final 4x100 meter relay on August 12.

He meant it in an entirely different context, but yes Usain, your career really has been crazy.

Ronaldo punished with 5-match ban

AFP, Madrid

Cristiano Ronaldo was hit with a five-match ban by the Spanish football federation (RFEF) on Monday for pushing the referee after being sent-off in Real Madrid's 3-1 Spanish Super Cup, first leg win over Barcelona.

The World Player of the Year received an automatic one-match ban for his dismissal on Sunday and an extra four games for his reaction towards referee Ricardo de Burgos Bengoetxea.

Ronaldo was also fined 3,805 euros (\$4,500) and has 10 days to appeal the ban.

Should any appeal fail, Ronaldo will miss Wednesday's Super Cup, second leg and Madrid's first four La Liga games of the season against Deportivo la Coruna, Valencia, Levante and Real Sociedad.

Madrid had already signalled their intent to appeal Ronaldo's second yellow card shown for diving eight minutes from time when he went down inside the area

under pressure from Samuel Umtni.

"Ronaldo's sending-off annoys me because even if it is not a penalty, the card is harsh," said Madrid boss Zinedine Zidane after the game.

"We will see if we can do something so that he is available on Wednesday."

Ronaldo was only on the field for 24 minutes as he was introduced as a second-half substitute and fired into the top corner 10 minutes from time to give Madrid a 2-1 lead.

He received his first yellow card for removing his shirt in celebration before being shown the 10th red card of his career two minutes later.

"Once shown the red card, said player (Ronaldo) pushed me lightly as a sign of his disapproval," de Burgos Bengoetxea wrote in his referee's report.

According to the RFEF's rules, such offences are met with a suspension of anything between four and 12 games, but previous cases also resulted in four-game bans.

Coutinho not in Liverpool squad

AFP, London

Barcelona target Philippe Coutinho has been left out of Liverpool's squad for their Champions League play-off first-leg match away to Hoffenheim on Tuesday.

The Brazil playmaker, 25, missed Liverpool's 3-3 draw at Watford on Saturday due to a back problem.

But he submitted a transfer request the day before the game and is reported to have been the subject of an unsuccessful £90 million (\$116.7 million, 99 million euros) bid from Barcelona.

Barcelona have targeted Coutinho, as well as Borussia Dortmund's French winger Ousmane Dembele, after selling Neymar to Paris Saint-Germain in a world-record 222 million euros (\$261.7 million) deal.

Liverpool's American owners Fenway Sports Group issued a statement last Friday saying Coutinho would not be sold at any price.

Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp has said he has no control over the situation.

"As a manager of a football club I have bosses, and if the bosses decide, for example, we sell a player or we don't sell him, then I have to accept it," he said after the game at Watford.

"The only thing is I work with the players I have. That is what I'm always doing."

Liverpool play Hoffenheim at Rhein-Neckar-Arena on Tuesday and welcome the German side to Anfield next Wednesday, with a place in the Champions League group phase at stake.

Neymar charms press

AFP, Paris

Brazilian superstar Neymar took little time to seduce the press in his new home with a goalscoring debut for Paris Saint-Germain at Guingamp.

"Already charmed," said sports daily L'Equipe in response to the 25-year-old's starring role in Sunday's 3-0 win in Brittany.

"An assist, a goal, class play: NEYMAR succeeded in his PSG debut."

For Le Parisien newspaper it was smiles all round as "Neymar relishes, Paris gorge".

"The Parisian club's marquee signing, Neymar got stronger as the game progressed before scoring his first goal in his new colours."

Neymar-mania showed no signs of abating in France, and in particular the capital, as the 222-million-euro (\$264m) forward started life with PSG in emphatic fashion, linking up perfectly with fellow South Americans Edinson Cavani and Angel Di Maria in a potent front-line.

"Neymar Jr did what he had to so that images of Guingamp, on the Cotes d'Armor, with 7,000 inhabitants, travelled all over the planet, from India to Bolivia and Lapland to Tierra del Fuego: he scored right from his first match in Ligue 1, engulfing this twilight of a new day in an air of celebration," said columnist Vincent Duluc in L'Equipe.

"We could have worried that the Brazilian would do too much, or too little, but no, no reservations, not a drop out of

place, just enough greed to remind everyone that that you don't get big players without big egos."

Former France coach Raymond Domenech said in L'Equipe that the "complicity" with Uruguayan striker Cavani was immediately obvious.

Such was the intense attention on Neymar that Colombian forward Radamel Falcao's sensational hat-trick for champions Monaco in a 4-1 romp at Dijon, and the on-going saga of their attempts to keep hold of teenage French starlet Kylian Mbappe were relegated to the shadows.

"At the heart of the play," said L'Equipe, who described Neymar as PSG's "motor", despite giving away possession several times.

Despite linking well with Cavani and Argentine Di Maria, Neymar may soon have a new striking partner in Mbappe, if L'Equipe is to be believed.

"Mbappe, an air of rupture," said the newspaper in reference to the 18-year-old being left on the bench by Monaco coach Leonardo Jardim for the entire 90 minutes against Dijon.

He is rumoured to want a move to PSG.

Le Parisien, predictably, concentrated on eulogies directed at Neymar, quoting his Brazilian-born Italy international teammate Thiago Motta: "It's a privilege to have him with us."

And likewise the praise from former Guingamp player and now France assistant coach Guy Stephan gushed as he marvelled at Neymar's "unpredictability and seductiveness".



Real Madrid superstar Cristiano Ronaldo (front) had to pay a big price for not taking the flashing red card sportingly during his side's Spanish Supercup first leg encounter against Barcelona at the Nou Camp on Sunday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Costa blasts Chelsea

AFP, London

Out-of-favour Chelsea striker Diego Costa has launched an angry broadside against both the club and manager Antonio Conte, accusing them of treating him like a "criminal".

Costa, 28, has been informed by Conte that he has no future at the club and having been frozen out of the first-team squad, the Brazil-born Spain international has gone home to Brazil.

He says Chelsea "want to sell me to China", but has reiterated his desire to return to former club Atletico Madrid, who are under a transfer ban until January.

"I am waiting for Chelsea to set me free. I didn't want to leave. I was happy. When the

manager does not want you, you have to go," Costa said in an interview published in Monday's Daily Mail.

"In January, things happened with the coach. I was on the brink of renewing my contract and they put the brakes on it. I suspect the manager was behind it. He asked for that to happen."

"They gave me a week extra off, but since then it's fines all the way. They want me training with the reserves. I am not going to do that. I am not a criminal and I am not in the wrong here."

"So, if they need to fine me, let them fine me." Costa was particularly scathing in his criticism of Conte.

"I respect him as a great coach. He has done a good job and I can see that. But as a person -- no," said Costa.



Neymar (L) made a sensational League One debut for Paris St Germain, scoring a goal and providing an assist at the Roudourou Stadium on Sunday.

PHOTO: AFP

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:

Ronaldo sees red as Real cruise
 Cristiano Ronaldo scored and was sent off as Real Madrid beat Barcelona 3-1 in the first leg of the Spanish Super Cup.



Root warns youngsters to expect Ashes barrage
 England captain Joe Root has warned his team's emerging stars to expect a barrage of abuse "which hits you like a train" when they face old rivals Australia.



Handscorn happy to keep wicket in Bangladesh
 Peter Handscorn, who struck a dashing century in the first day of Australia's intra-squad match in Darwin, says that he is happy to don the wicketkeeper's gloves if asked.



Mo Farah rebrands as 'Mohamed' for road career
 British athletics great Mo Farah wants to be known as 'Mohamed' now that he is switching his focus to road racing, he has announced.

