

What to WATCH

STAR SPORTS SELECT 1
English Premier League
West Ham v Huddersfield
Live from 1:00am (Tuesday)

TEN 2
La Liga
Malaga v Las Palmas
Live from 1:00am (Tuesday)

DAY'S EVENT
Bangladesh Premier League
Muktijoddha v Abahani
Time: 6:00pm
Venue: BNS

LUKE SKYWALKER TURNS WOLVES FAN

Wolverhampton Wanderers now have one of the coolest fan bases in the world as actor Mark Hamill -- the man who played Luke Skywalker in Star Wars -- embraced the club as his own. Despite openly admitting that he had never head of the Championship side until a couple of days ago, Hamill is now a full-blooded Wolves supporter thanks to a little mix-up on Twitter. It all began when Hamill 'liked' a tweet from a Wolves fan, assuming the person in question was talking about the animal. The 65-year-old actor soon realised his error but stuck to his guns/lightsabre regardless, instead vowing to become a staunch ally of the West Midlands football club of the same name. When questioned if he was a real fan, the 65-year-old tweeted: "I am now. Never heard of them until 2 days ago. All because I 'liked' a tweet from a Wolves fan & they made me feel like family. Very nice!"



—AGENCIES

Messi hat-trick takes Barcelona five clear

AFP, Madrid

Lionel Messi's hat-trick saw Barcelona move four points clear of Real Madrid at the top of La Liga as Ousmane Dembele marked his debut with an assist in a 5-0 rout of local rivals Espanyol on Saturday.

Earlier, Madrid paid for the absence of the suspended Cristiano Ronaldo and a series of missed chances by Gareth Bale as they were held to a shock 1-1 home draw by newly-promoted Levante.

Barcelona made no such mistake as for all their early season off-field problems, Ernesto Valverde's men have taken maximum points from their opening three La Liga games.

Messi led the way with a virtuoso performance, but his opener also needed a huge slice of luck as he was wrongly not flagged offside from Ivan Rakitic's through ball before blasting into the top corner.

Barcelona's second arrived thanks to a counter-attack from an Espanyol corner led by Messi and Luis Suarez before Jordi Alba's low cross was slotted home at the near post by the Argentine.

"It is a privilege to play with the best player in the world," said Suarez. "Game-by-game he keeps showing that Messi will be around for a long time to come."

Messi put the outcome beyond any doubt by rounding off his hat-trick with another sharp finish from Alba's cut-back.

Dembele has the unenviable task of replacing

the departed Neymar and Barca's 105 million-euro man had to wait until 22 minutes from time for his debut as he replaced Gerard Deulofeu to a standing ovation.

He showed why Barca have made the 20-year-old the third most expensive player ever as his pinpoint cross was swept home by Suarez to round off the scoring after Gerard Pique had headed home Barca's fourth.

However, even a fine display didn't dissuade the bad feeling towards Barca's under-fire board after a chaotic summer in the transfer market and splits between the boardroom and the dressing room, with Messi and Andres Iniesta yet to sign extensions to their contracts which expire in 2018.

Suarez's fifth goal was met with chants for president Josep Maria Bartomeu to reign.

At the Santiago Bernabeu, a much-changed Madrid paid a heavy price for a slow start as they dropped points at home for the second consecutive game.

"We can't be happy with our performance, above all in the first half," said Real boss Zinedine Zidane.

"We don't need to go crazy. We need to have patience and think about the next game, which is just around the corner."

The hosts were dealt another blow midway through the first half as Karim Benzema limped off.

Atletico Madrid also trail Barca by four points as without the suspended Antoine Griezmann they drew a blank in an intense 0-0 draw at Valencia.

Sevilla moved up to second, just two points behind the leaders, as goals from Paulo Henrique Ganso, Wissam Ben Yedder and Nolito secured a 3-0 win over Eibar.



Barcelona superstar Lionel Messi wreaked havoc in the Catalan Derby on Saturday, scoring a hat-trick in his side's 5-0 win over Espanyol.

PHOTO: REUTERS



Sloane Stephens played near-perfect tennis to win her maiden Grand Slam with a straightforward 6-3, 6-0 victory against Madison Keys in the US Open final on Saturday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

'I wish it could have been a draw'

Stephens says after ousting close friend Keys in final

AFP, New York



US Open champion Sloane Stephens said she wished her US Open final triumph over close friend Madison Keys could have been a draw rather than the rout it turned out to be.

Stephens, the world number 83, raced to a 6-3, 6-0 victory over her 15th seeded American compatriot in just over an hour.

Both women embraced at the net before sitting next to each other courtside as they waited for the post-match ceremony to start.

"Maddy is one of my best friends, if not my best friend on tour and I told her I would not have wanted to play anybody else," said the 24-year-old.

"It's a special moment. I said to her that I wished it could have been a draw."

"If the situation was the other way around, Maddy would have said the same thing. It's incredible. It's what true friendship is all about."

Stephens only returned to the tour at Wimbledon after missing 11 months having undergone left foot surgery.

Her world ranking slid to 957 before semi-final runs at US Open tuneups in Toronto and Cincinnati.

"I had surgery on January 23 and if someone had told me then that I would be the US Open champion, I would have said that would be impossible," said Stephens.

"My journey to get here, I wouldn't change it for the world."

"I should retire now -- I'm never going to be able to top this."

Stephens also praised her mother for her support.

Of course, girl. Did you see that check that lady banded me? Like, yes. Man, if that doesn't make you want to play tennis, I don't know what will.

Sloane Stephens
On wanting another Slam win

"When I was a child she took me to a tennis coach who said that I would be lucky to be a division two player."

"But here I am. So parents never give up on your kids."

Keys too had fought injury battles in recent months, undergoing a second left wrist surgery after the French Open before winning a July title at Stanford.

"I didn't play my best tennis today and I'm disappointed in that but Sloane was very supportive and if there's someone I have to lose to today I'm glad it's her. Sloane is truly one of my favorite people," said Keys.

"If you told me two months ago I'd be holding a US Open finalist's trophy I'd have been really happy and proud of myself."

"It has been a very interesting year."

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:

Sri Lanka to play final T20 in Lahore

Sri Lanka will return to Lahore for a Twenty20 international at the end of October, eight years after gunmen attacked a bus carrying its players in the Pakistan city.

Pakistan take big step in from cold as World comes to play

Pakistan take a huge step towards reviving international cricket at home after years of isolation when they host a three-match Twenty20 series amid tight security against a star-studded World XI.

Mourinho confidence remains intact

Jose Mourinho claimed his confidence in his Manchester United side remains intact despite seeing Stoke City end their perfect start to the Premier League season with a 2-2 draw. Poor defending cost his side a victory but declared himself pleased with United's position on top of the table.

Chittagong Abahani take solo lead

SPORTS REPORTER



Chittagong Abahani took the solo lead in the Bangladesh Premier League with a 2-0 win over Brothers Union as the eighth round got underway at the Bangabandhu National Stadium following heavy showers yesterday afternoon.

Siyo Zunapio's own goal late in the first half was followed by a sixth goal of the league from top-scorer Tawhidul Alam Sabuz as the early pace setters moved to 22 points from eight matches.

The port city side came into the match on the back of a 1-0 win over Muktijoddha, but they were made to work hard on a waterlogged surface by Brothers, who have had a wretched run in the league so far,

with only five points in the bag.

However, the Chittagonians came close to taking the lead in the 17th minute when Sabuz's right-footed shot from the left corner of the box went inches over. The cash-rich outfit took the lead in the 39th minute, albeit in fortuitous fashion as Mamunul Islam's long free-kick met a weak clearance from Brothers defender Ashrafal Karim before hitting Zunapio head's and bouncing into the net.

Sabuz confirmed the victory in the 81st minute, grabbing his sixth goal of the campaign, with a simple tap-in following a cross from Mansur Amin.

The other scheduled match of the day between Abahani and Muktijoddha will be played today at 6:00pm.



Chittagong Abahani striker Tawhidul Alam Sabuz (C) celebrates his sixth goal in the ongoing Bangladesh Premier League as his side notched up a 2-0 win over Brothers Union at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Balotelli brace upsets Monaco

AFP, Paris

Mario Balotelli scored a brace as Monaco's record 16-match winning streak in Ligue 1 was ended with a 4-0 thumping by Nice at the Allianz Riviera on Saturday.

Balotelli's penalty put Nice ahead, before Alassane Plea made it two in the 18th minute.

Monaco tried to apply some pressure in the second period, but Balotelli completed a brace to put the game beyond the reach of the reigning French champions before substitute Ignatius Ganago finished the rout.

Immobile treble sinks Milan

Inter catch Juve at top

AFP, Milan



Ciro Immobile scored a hat-trick as Lazio stunned AC Milan 4-1 in Serie A, while city rivals Inter joined Juventus at the top with a 2-0 win over SPAL on Sunday.

Luciano Spalletti's side were too strong for promoted SPAL and joined Juventus on maximum nine points after the champions beat Chievo 3-0 on Saturday.

Simone Inzaghi's Lazio ran riot over the Chinese-owned Milan with an on-fire Immobile scoring three goals in the space of 10 minutes, including a penalty, in a match delayed for an hour due to torrential rain in the capital.

Riccardo Montolivo pulled one back for the visitors off a deflected Hakan Calhanoglu free-kick, but Vincenzo Montella's side fell to their first defeat in three games.

Lazio remain unbeaten this season and overtake Milan to move third with seven points.

Earlier, Inter Milan's Mauro Icardi added to his Serie A tally with a 27th-minute penalty, giving him a fifth goal of the season after braces in the opening two games.

The spot-kick was awarded after the intervention of the video assistant referee (VAR), after Joao Mario was tripped inside the box with Icardi slotting in. Ivan Perisic sealed the victory after 87 minutes with a powerful volley into the top corner.

Inter and Juventus could be joined at the top by Napoli later Sunday, when they visit Bologna.

After two easy matches against Crotone and Cagliari, Milan got a reality check against Lazio.

Immobile's first was from a penalty on 38 minutes, and four minutes later he added a second with a volley off a Senad Lulic cross.

The Italian international then got his third six minutes later and quickly assisted Luis Alberto for the fourth.

Fiorentina bounced back from successive defeats with their first win of the season -- a 5-0 rout at Verona.

Argentine striker Giovanni Simeone, son of Atletico Madrid coach Diego Simeone, scored his first goal for the Tuscany club after two minutes.

Ancelotti rues 'little mistakes'

AFP, Berlin

Carlo Ancelotti admitted Bayern Munich were caught cold in their 2-0 loss at Hoffenheim on Saturday that left them fifth in the Bundesliga, their lowest position since 2014.

Striker Mark Uth scored both Hoffenheim goals as Bayern head coach Ancelotti paid the price for rotating his squad ahead of Tuesday's Champions League match at home to Anderlecht.

"Little details have made the difference and we went behind because we didn't concentrate," fumed Ancelotti. "It was the same for the second goal, which made things difficult."

"We had a lot of opportunities, but we could not make use of them and did not concentrate 100 percent."

"Hoffenheim only got into the box three times and scored from two of them, the other chance was saved by Manuel Neuer."

Bayern fell behind on 27 minutes after the defence was slow to react to a quick throw-in from Andrej Kramaric which led to Uth firing past Neuer.

"We didn't behave well after going 1-0 down," said Neuer. "We had Hoffenheim completely under control, but we didn't take the lead, that is the problem."

Uth drilled home a second on 51 minutes as the hosts registered back-to-back wins over the Bavarian giants.