

What to WATCH

STAR SPORTS SELECT 1
Bundesliga
 Hertha Berlin v Bayer Leverkusen
 Live from 12:30am (Thursday)
STAR SPORTS SELECT 1
Bundesliga
 Koln v Eintracht
 Live from 10:30pm
 Hamburger Dortmund
 Live from 12:30am (Thursday)

SONY ESPN
La Liga
 Sevilla v Las Palmas
 Live from 2:00am (Thursday)
TEN 1
Serie A
 Juventus v Fiorentina
 Live from 12:45am (Thursday)
TEN 2
La Liga

Billovo v Atletico Madrid
 Live from 12:00am (Thursday)
Real Madrid v Real Betis
 Live from 2:00am (Thursday)
TEN 3
Serie A
 Benevento v Roma
 Live from 10:00pm
Lazio v Napoli
 Live from 12:45am (Thursday)



Real Madrid will welcome back Cristiano Ronaldo (L) for their visit to Real Betis tonight after the Portuguese forward completed a five-game domestic ban.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

Ronaldo returns against Betis

REUTERS, Madrid

Real Madrid striker Cristiano Ronaldo will return to action against Real Betis on Wednesday after serving a five-match suspension, as the champions look to keep the pressure on La Liga leaders Barcelona.

Ronaldo was sent off during the Spanish Super Cup win over Barcelona on Aug. 13 and banned for five matches after pushing the referee, meaning he is yet to feature in the league this season.

The Portuguese hitman struck twice in his only appearance since the incident, a comfortable 3-0 win over Apoel Nicosia in the Champions League last Wednesday.

Youngster Borja Mayoral and Gareth Bale struck for a weakened Madrid on Sunday as they beat Real Sociedad 3-1, but as well as Ronaldo, Marcelo and Toni Kroos are expected to return after suspension and injury respectively.

Despite the impressive display against a previously unbeaten Real Sociedad, Ronaldo's return will be vital for Madrid as they look to take advantage of a soft fixture schedule over the next two months to push

rivals Barcelona.

Madrid's home clash with Betis marks the start of a run of league fixtures which, on paper, they should win, including home games against Espanyol, Eibar and Las Palmas.

"If we carry on like this we can do a lot of damage," said Real Madrid coach Zinedine Zidane after his side's win in the Basque Country.

"We're back on track but we've got to keep going because there's another game on Wednesday."

Mid-table Betis have not beaten Madrid in the league at the Bernabeu in 19 years and only five times in 51 attempts.

If they are to defeat them on Wednesday, they will need experienced winger Joaquin, 36, and summer signing Andres Guardado, 30, to continue their excellent form.

"They are like kids in a school yard, they give it back to the guy that gives it back to them," Betis coach Quique Setien said of the midfielders.

"Guardado is a footballer I can't describe, extraordinary. He has enormous quality and an enormous work rate. Just like Joaquin, they are reference points for the team."

No problem with Neymar: Cavani

AGENCIES, Paris

Edison Cavani has eased fears of a Paris Saint-Germain bust-up with teammate Neymar following their disagreement over a penalty kick at the weekend, with the striker insisting there is "no problem" between the pair despite conflicting reports in France.

"These things are created. I don't know why these stories are created. The truth is that there are normal things, things that happen in football," Cavani told Gol de Medianoche de Radio Universal.

"I learned of the story just now talking with my brother, about people saying that Cavani won't let anyone take penalties and that there's a problem with Neymar. The truth is that there's no problem."

"He [Neymar] has just arrived and like I said from the off we are keen for him to adapt in the best way possible. I think that's been proven because you can see he is adapting quickly."

'I just want to enjoy my game'

ASIANTOUR.COM



Bangladesh's premier golfer Siddikur Rahman will be looking to continue his good form in Japan when he tees off for the Asia-Pacific Diamond Cup which starts on Thursday.

Siddikur enjoyed a tied-ninth finish in Japan earlier in April, which was his second top-10 result on the Asian Tour so far this season, and he is ready to challenge for top honours after taking time off last week.

"I had a top-10 finish in Japan earlier this year so I feel good coming back here again. I had some good memories and I feel confident coming here although it's a different course this week. I hope that will help me in my title challenge this week," the two-time Asian Tour winner said.

The 32-year-old added that he was hoping to reproduce that good form when the

tournament gets underway at the Caledonian Golf Club and said that he felt a good result was just around the corner.

"I am still hopeful that a good result will be just around the corner for me so I am looking forward to this week. The season's been pretty good. I had some good results on the Asian Tour and the European Tour this year. I'm riding on the confidence but there are still many more tournaments to go."

The 1.37-million-dollar event is co-sanctioned by the Asian Tour and the Japan Golf Organisation and features many big-name players, but Siddikur said that he was only focused on his own game.

"I don't want to think so much about that yet. I just want to enjoy my game. What will happen, happens. If I keep thinking about it, it will pile pressure on me so I will just do my best this week and stay relaxed, which is the most important."



Bangladeshi golfer Siddikur Rahman had a rough time on his last outing in Switzerland, but he is hoping to bounce back in Japan.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

QUICK SINGLES

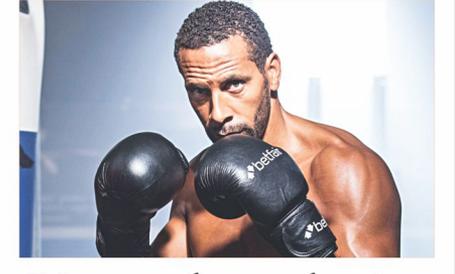
The following are a few samples of stories that did not make the print edition. However, if they pique your interest, you can always read them online on The Daily Star website by simply scanning the QR codes listed below.

India, South Africa closer to tour agreement
 South Africa and India are believed to be close to an agreement on a schedule for a tour of South Africa in January and February.

Dembele recovery time lowered
 Barcelona hope recent signing Ousmane Dembele could be back in action in three and a half months after successful surgery on a torn hamstring in Helsinki.

Cyclist pedals around the world in 78 days
 A British endurance cyclist has smashed the Guinness World Record for the fastest circumnavigation of the planet on a bicycle, riding 18,000 miles (29,000km) in under 80 days.

Dortmund brand Dembele bonus story 'fake news'
 Borussia Dortmund CEO Hans-Joachim Watzke has branded his 'fake news' reports that Ousmane Dembele's injury means Barcelona will pay the German club 10 million euros less in bonuses.



Rio to take up boxing

AFP, London

Former England football captain Rio Ferdinand confirmed Tuesday he will train to become a professional boxer with the ultimate aim of challenging for a title belt.

The 38-year-old former Manchester United star, who retired from football in May 2015, is taking part in online betting firm Betfair's "Defender to Contender" project and will be training with former WBC super-middleweight champion Richie Woodhall.

Ferdinand will be seeking to qualify for a British Boxing Board of Control licence before starting training and competing for a title belt.

"Boxing is an amazing sport for the mind and the body," said Ferdinand. "I have always had a passion for it and this challenge is the perfect opportunity to show people what's possible. It's a challenge I'm not taking lightly - clearly not everyone can become a professional boxer - but with the team of experts Betfair are putting together and the drive I have to succeed, anything is possible."

Ferdinand, who will also work with personal trainer Mel Deane,

added on Twitter: "It's happening... Can't wait to get started with the team @betfair have put together."

Ferdinand, who currently works as a pundit with BT Sport and the BBC, will hold a press conference in London on Tuesday.

Woodhall, a former Olympic medalist turned Team GB trainer, believes Ferdinand has the ability to turn professional.

"In all honesty, I think Rio can definitely box as a professional fighting time," he said. "He has natural power in his right hand, is extremely fit and is very enthusiastic to learn, which is encouraging."

Style-wise, he's very raw and I'll have to develop this which will take time but he has all the natural ingredients, height and reach advantages over boxers in his weight division and definitely has potential to win a title in the future."

Ferdinand's love of boxing is apparent on social media, with a picture on his Twitter profile showing him draped in the WBA, IBF and IBO heavyweight title belts of his friend Anthony Joshua.

The Londoner, who won 81 caps for England, was in attendance when Joshua defeated Wladimir Klitschko at Wembley Stadium in April and posed for pictures with the Olympic gold medalist.

Rafa, Roger to team up

AGENCIES, Prague

Rafael Nadal and Roger Federer will put their epic rivalry to the side as they team up for the Laver Cup.

The competition will be world No 1 Nadal and 19-time Grand Slam champion Federer play for Team Europe against a Rest of the World side in Prague after what has been an incredible year for the duo, who have turned back the clock and shared four Grand Slams.

The duo will headline a strong European team, while Americans Sam Querrey and John Isner lead the Rest of the World as the inaugural Laver Cup begins on September 22.

Each team will be captained by a legend, with Bjorn Borg taking charge of the Europeans and John McEnroe on the other side.

Wazza gets a lift to training

AFP, London

Everton striker Wayne Rooney was given a lift to training on Tuesday after he was banned for two years for drink-driving.

The 31-year-old, wearing a black baseball cap, arrived at the club's Finch Farm training complex in the passenger seat of a black Range Rover.

The former England captain issued a statement following his court appearance in which he apologised for his "unforgivable lack of judgement in driving while over the legal limit."

Neuer ruled out till January

AFP, Berlin



Bayern Munich have confirmed their Germany goalkeeper and captain Manuel Neuer will be out until January having undergone another operation on Tuesday after again fracturing his left foot.

The 31-year-old had only returned at the end of August after fracturing the same foot in April. He suffered the fresh injury in training on Monday.

"The fact that Manuel Neuer has suffered a new injury means we are all very sorry for him," said Karl-Heinz Rummenigge, the Bayern chairman. "The operation went optimally and that is the most important thing now. Manuel will be available for us again, back in his old shirt, in January."

This is Neuer's third operation on the same foot in six months after minor surgery for a toe injury in March and then again in April after initially fracturing his foot.

Neuer's latest injury blow sparks concerns about Germany's skipper nine months before the World Cup kicks off.

Bayern confirmed Neuer underwent the operation at a clinic in Tuebingen, south-west Germany and has had a plate inserted in his foot.

Fans urged to drop 'racist' Lukaku chant

AFP, London

British anti-discrimination group Kick It Out on Tuesday called on Manchester United fans to stop a "racist" chant about striker Romelu Lukaku.

The 24-year-old arrived from Everton in the summer and has quickly become a popular figure, netting seven goals in as many games.

Lukaku already has a chant in his honour, but the song refers to the size of his "mahood", using a stereotype about black men that has led Kick It Out to call for action.

A United spokesman said: "We are seeking advice from the relevant bodies. We have a zero-tolerance (approach) towards discrimination."

'The pressure is on City'

AFP, London



Manchester United's Ander Herrera says "F A V O U R I T E S" Manchester City face intense pressure to win the Premier League after their summer spending spree and trophyless campaign last season.

The Manchester clubs are joint top of the table with exactly the same record - 13 points from five games and a plus-14 goal difference.

United won the Europa League, League Cup and Community Shield in Jose Mourinho's first campaign at the helm but finished a disappointing sixth in the league.

Abu Dhabi-owned Manchester City spent the most of any Premier League club during the summer transfer window - £215 million (\$290 million, 242 million euros) while United splashed out more than £140 million.

"Man City have spent the biggest amount in the Premier League so they are the principle contenders for the title," said Herrera.

"We will try to be there as well. We have quality as well and we will fight for every title. But I think because of the money they have spent they are the favourites."

The United midfielder, who has struggled for time on the pitch this season, added: "We won three titles last season and City didn't win anything. They are under pressure."



ANDER HERRERA