

# What to WATCH

**GTV & MAASRANGA**  
**Bangladesh Premier League**  
 Phase One  
 Ctg Vikings v Khulna Titans  
 Live from 1:30pm  
 Dhaka Dynamites v Sylhet Sixers

Live from 6:30pm  
**SONY ESPN**  
 South Africa v Pakistan  
 Third Test, Day Two  
 Live from 2:00pm

**SONY SIX**  
 Australia v India  
 First ODI (D/N)  
 Live from 8:20am  
**STAR SPORTS SELECT 1**  
 English Premier League

West Ham v Arsenal  
 Live from 6:30pm  
 Brighton v Liverpool  
 Live from 9:00pm  
 Chelsea v Newcastle  
 Live from 11:30pm

**STAR SPORTS SELECT 2**  
 English Premier League  
 Leicester v Southampton  
 Live from 9:00pm

**TEN 1**  
 La Liga  
 Valencia v Valladolid  
 Live from 9:15pm

## DAY'S EVENT

**Bangladesh Premier League**  
 Phase One  
 Venue: Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium

Ctg Vikings v Khulna Titans  
 Time: 1:30pm  
 Dhaka Dynamites v Sylhet Sixers

Time: 6:30pm



Three-time Grand Slam winner Andy Murray was reduced to tears at a press conference ahead of the Australian Open, where he announced that the deteriorating condition of his hip meant that he would not be able to carry on playing much longer.

PHOTO: ATP

## WHAT THEY SAID

Andy, just watched your conference. Please don't stop trying. Keep fighting. I can imagine your pain and sadness. I hope you can overcome this. You deserve to retire on your own terms, whenever that happens. We love you @andy\_murray and we want to see you happy and doing well.

-- Juan Martin del Potro

Congrats @andy\_murray for all your achievements all these years. It was great to play against you all these years. Good luck with everything!

-- Rafael Nadal

@andy\_murray is a great champion who I have the utmost admiration for. I've enjoyed following his stellar career, he is truly one of the greats of our game & a lovely bloke! Arise Sir Andy. I applaud you & wish you well in all your future endeavours.

-- Rod Laver

Tennis will come to an end for us all but the friendships will last a lifetime. What you've done for the sport will live on forever. I'm hoping for a strong and healthy finish for you, my friend!

-- Grigor Dimitrov

If this is true, I tip my cap to @andy\_murray! Absolute legend. Short list of best tacticians in history. Unreal results in a brutal era ..... Nothing but respect here. I hope he can finish strong and healthy

-- Andy Roddick

My thoughts are with @andy\_murray and I really hope we continue to see you fighting on court so you can retire on your own terms. Get well soon... Tennis is better with you.

-- Kevin Anderson

@andy\_murray You are a champion on and off the court. So sorry you cannot retire on your own terms, but remember to look to the future. Your greatest impact on the world may be yet to come. Your voice for equality will inspire future generations. Much love to you & your family.

-- Bille Jean King

## TWO YEARS OF TEARS

**June 9, 2017:** Murray puts shaky form going into the French Open behind him to reach the semifinals before losing to Stan Wawrinka but begins to feel the flare-up of a long-standing hip issue that was previously under control.

**July 12, 2017:** Walking with a noticeable limp, Murray battles into the quarterfinals of Wimbledon but his title defence ends with a five-set loss to Sam Querrey.

**August 26, 2017:** After pulling out of two Masters events and losing his world number one ranking to Rafael Nadal, Murray leaves for the US Open. But two days before the tournament he announces at an emotional press conference that he is pulling out.

**September 6, 2017:** Murray announces he is likely to miss the rest of the year. He undergoes hip surgery in January of 2018.

**July 1, 2018:** Murray pulls out on the eve of Wimbledon, saying it is too soon to play best-of-five set matches.

**August 30, 2018:** Murray makes his Grand Slam comeback at the US Open, beating James Duckworth before losing to Fernando Verdasco.

**January 2, 2019:** Murray makes a third trip to Philadelphia to work with reconditioning expert Bill Knowles but a loss to Daniil Medvedev at his first tournament of the new season in Brisbane shows the hip remains a hindrance.

**January 10, 2019:** Murray says he has been in pain for "about 20 months" and that he will retire after Wimbledon.

# 'This could be my last event'

AFP, Melbourne

A tearful Andy Murray on Friday announced he would likely retire this year due to severe pain from a hip injury, saying next week's Australian Open could be the last tournament of a glittering career.

The former world number one and three-time Grand Slam winner broke down at a press conference in Melbourne as he said the pain had become almost unbearable.

"I can play with limitations. But having the limitations and the pain is not allowing me to enjoy competing or training," the emotional Scot said.

Thirty-one-year-old "Sir Andy" said he would like to finish at his home Grand Slam in Wimbledon, but ruefully admitted he might not make it that far.

He will be remembered as the first British man to win Wimbledon in 77 years and as a player who battled his way to the top in a golden era for the game alongside Roger Federer, Novak Djokovic and Rafael Nadal.

"Wimbledon is where I would like to stop playing, but I am not certain I am able to do that," he said. "I've been struggling for a long time. I'm not sure I can play through the pain for another four or five months."

"Pretty much done everything that I could to try and get my hip



Andy Murray celebrates after lifting his second, and quite likely final, Wimbledon trophy in 2016.

PHOTO: AFP FILE

feeling better and it hasn't helped loads."

He pulled out of last year's Australian Open to have hip surgery and only returned in June at Queen's Club in London.

He ended the season at Shenzhen in September after only a handful of appearances to concentrate on working his way back to full fitness.

But he was knocked out in the second round on his return at Brisbane last week and called it quits on Thursday after less than an hour of a practice match in Melbourne against Djokovic, with his movement clearly hampered.

"I think there is a chance the Australian Open is my last tourna-

ment," he said.

While he intends to begin his opening-round match against 22nd seed Roberto Bautista Agut next week, how his body withstands potentially gruelling five-set clashes in energy-sapping heat remains to be seen.

One of the so-called Big Four, along with Federer, Djokovic and Nadal, who have dominated the game for years, Murray's ranking has slumped to 230.

He hasn't reached a Grand Slam final since winning his second Wimbledon title in 2016, but has nevertheless enjoyed a glittering career since turning professional in 2005, with not only three Grand

Slam titles, but two Olympic gold medals and 45 ATP crowns.

Notably, in 2013 Murray became the first British man to win Wimbledon for 77 years, ending the nation's obsession with finding a champion to follow in the footsteps of Fred Perry.

Top Australian coach Darren Cahill, who until recently was mentoring world number one Simona Halep, said Murray was an example of the never-say-die attitude that separated the best from the average.

"When you search for examples of 'emptied the bucket to be as good as they could be' there should be a picture of Andy Murray sitting

2x Wimbledon champion (2013, 2016)

2x Olympic Gold medalist (2012, 2016)

2012 US Open champion

2016 ATP World Tour Finals winner

14 Masters 1000 titles

45 total ATP titles

under that quote," he tweeted. "Remarkable discipline for training, competition, sacrifice, perfection, a little crazy but a legend of a bloke."

Murray said he had an option of another operation on his troublesome hip, but it was more about his quality of life after hanging up his racquet.

"That's something I'm seriously considering right now," he said.

## Barca down but not out

AFP, Madrid

Philippe Coutinho scored a crucial away goal but Barcelona have work to do to avoid a surprise exit from the Copa del Rey after losing 2-1 to Levante on Thursday in the first leg of the last 16.

Lionel Messi, Luis Suarez and Marc Andre ter Stegen were among several key players rested at the City of Valencia Stadium, where Levante took advantage as Erick Cabaco and Borja Mayoral gave them a two-goal cushion.

Coutinho, however, making his first start in almost a month, converted an 85th-minute penalty to leave Barca in touch heading into next week's second leg at the Camp Nou.

"When (Ousmane) Dembele didn't play, everyone asked about him, now Coutinho doesn't play, it's the reverse," Valverde said afterwards. "When you don't play and you aren't happy, you have to fight to change things."

# Pogba back in time for Ole's litmus test

AFP, Manchester



United's Premier League match at Tottenham this weekend, interim manager Ole Gunnar Solskjaer said on Thursday.

The France midfielder linked up late with his teammates for a warm weather training camp in Dubai this week after being injured in a challenge by Jonjo Shelvey during the 2-0 victory at Newcastle on January 2.

Pogba missed last Saturday's 2-0 FA Cup victory over Reading as a result of the knock, but trained well in the United Arab Emirates, according to Solskjaer.

"He looked OK towards the end, so he will be fit. He did have some problems but he came through last couple of sessions well, so he should be OK," the Norwegian said.

Solskjaer has made a perfect start as United's coach since replacing the sacked Jose Mourinho on December 19, winning each of his first five matches in charge.

The former United striker has made clear since his return to Old Trafford he would love the manager's job on a permanent basis.

However, his opponent on Sunday, Tottenham head coach Mauricio Pochettino, is believed by many observers to be the likeliest person to get the United job.

Solskjaer praised the Argentinian and justified the reports.

"He has done a very good job. That speculation is there for a reason -- because he has done well -- but it's not my job to rate managers. My focus is on me and my team."

The interim boss, though, has rejected the idea that this match represents his first serious chal-

I've been brought up in a way that we need to attack teams. I think that's our strength as well, going forward and attacking, as a team when you look at us now the way we've played.

**OLE GUNNAR SOLSKJAER**  
 MANCHESTER UNITED MANAGER

lenge in charge of United, following wins over Cardiff, Huddersfield, Bournemouth, Newcastle and Reading. Although the Norwegian admitted the need to be aware of what rivals are good at, he was adamant that his front-foot approach would not change, regardless of the opposition.

"You adapt to any opposition we play. You all know the best teams in the league and of course we have to be aware of their strengths."

One of United's biggest test will be containing the threat of Tottenham striker Harry Kane, the joint-leading scorer in this season's Premier League, with 14 goals.

"He's not bad is he? He is a fantastic goal scorer and one of the best in the world, but I have got a couple that I'm happy to work with. Sure, whoever plays with him and trains with him can talk more about him, but from the outside he is a fantastic finisher," the 1999 treble winners said.



PHOTO: MANCHESTER UNITED

Manchester United midfielder Paul Pogba was back to his flamboyant best during training in Dubai yesterday, pulling off a few tricks including this no-look pass ahead of the Red Devils' clash against Tottenham Hotspur on Sunday.

## SHORT CORNER

### Vegas PD requests Ronaldo's DNA for rape case

Las Vegas police have asked Cristiano Ronaldo to submit a DNA sample as part of their investigation into rape allegations made against him.

The Portuguese forward -- who plays for Juventus in Italy's Serie A league -- has vehemently denied the accusations, and his lawyer Peter Christiansen told AFP the request was standard procedure.

The Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department said it had made an official request to Italian authorities, adding it is "taking the same steps in this case as in any other sexual assault to facilitate the collection of DNA evidence". -- AFP

**Zia in second position**  
 Grand Master Ziaur Rahman shared second position alongside 22 other competitors at the close of the fourth round of the 17th Delhi Open International Grandmasters Chess Tournament in

New Delhi, India yesterday.

Zia drew with Belarus GM Aleksandr Alekseyev in the fourth round to secure 3.5 points from four matches and is now scheduled to play against Tajik GM Amonatov in the fifth round today.

Five GMs -- three Indian and two Iranian -- shared the lead with maximum four points.

FM Mehdi Hasan Parag, who is scheduled to play against Russian GM Deviatkin Andrei today, beat Indian Godson Merlin to grab three points from four matches while Tahsin Tajwar Zia, who held Vietnamese GM Tran Taun Minh to a draw in the second round, beat Indian Ayan Pal in the fourth round to secure 2.5 points. -- Sports Reporter

### Mahadi in final

Mahadi Hasan Alve moved into the final of the boy's singles event in the ITF Asian 14/U Development Championships 2019: Division II with a straight 2-0 win over Iranian Anirali Ghavam in the semifinals in Bangkok yesterday.

Alve beat Ghavam 6-4 and 6-1 to advance to the final of the meet for the first time as a Bangladeshi player, said a press release yesterday.

In the boy's doubles, Bangladeshi Roman Hossain paired with Pakistani Hamid Isral Gul booked a spot in the final with a 3-6, 7-6 and 10-8 win over Nepalese pair Arvan Giri and Aarav Hada. -- Sports Reporter

**Muller out of Liverpool clashes**  
 Thomas Muller is set to be unavailable for both legs of Bayern Munich's Champions League last-16 clash with Liverpool after UEFA hit the forward with a two-match ban.

The Germany international was sent off in Bayern's final Group E game after a dangerous high challenge on Nicolas Tagliafico, which saw him catch his opponent with a boot to the head.

However, the Bavarian giants swiftly announced their intention to appeal against the decision, branding his challenge a "hard but unintentional foul". -- Agencies



The Aga Khan Gold Cup Golf Tournament began at the Kurmitola Golf Course yesterday. Air Chief Marshal Masihuzzaman Serniabat inaugurated the event.



The 7th Floor team celebrate after winning The Daily Star's Intra-Office Cricket Tournament at the Dhaka Residential Model College field yesterday. PHOTO: STAR