

# What to WATCH

**TEN 2**  
Euro Qualifiers  
Georgia v Switzerland  
Live from 8:00pm  
Gibraltar v Ireland  
Live from 11:00pm  
Spain v Norway  
Live from 1:45am (Sunday)

DAY'S EVENT

**Dhaka Premier League**  
Time: 9:00am  
Prime Doleshwar v Khelaghar SKS

Venue: BKSP-3, Savar  
Shinepukur v Uttara SC  
Venue: KSOAS, Fatullah

Brothers Union v BKSP  
Venue: SBNS, Dhaka

## HOENESS REVEALS PEP'S TECHNIQUE

There is no doubt that the likes of Manchester City and PSG have incredible wealth behind them. But rarely is there a light shone on the injections of cash they receive for the world's best players. Uli Hoeness, the president of Bayern Munich, has pulled the curtain back on the world of these huge transfers, however, and outlines Pep Guardiola's dealings with the Sheikh of Abu Dhabi in a rather tongue-in-cheek manner. "My friend Pep told me what happens when he wants a player that costs more than €100 million," Hoeness said at a financial conference in Munich recently. "He puts some videos together of the player and goes to see the Sheikh. Once he is there, there is an opulent feast put on during which he teaches the videos to him and the money is transferred. The next day, the Sheikh raises the price of oil a little bit and recovers the money." -- AGENCIES



PHOTO: BFF

Bahrain players celebrate the only goal in their 1-0 win over Bangladesh in the AFC U-23 Championship Qualifiers at the Khalifa Sports City Stadium in Manama last night.

## U-23s lose 1-0 against Bahrain

SPORTS REPORTER



Despite putting up a spirited show, Bangladesh suffered a 1-0 defeat against Bahrain in their first Group B match of the AFC U-23 Championship Qualifiers at the Khalifa Sports City Stadium in Manama last night.

Jamie Day's charges had their backs against the wall all through the match against a much-higher ranked side who were playing at home, yet they showed character to fight till the end to come up with the smallest margin of defeat.

The only goal of the game came in the 21st minute when Bahrain captain Mohamed Yusuf Hardan found the net with a diagonal shot after being set up with an across-the-box pass, with the Bangladesh defenders failing to clear the line.

While the Bahrain players were pretty wayward in front of goal except for that one occasion, special praise must go to Bangladesh goalkeeper Anisur Rahman Zico who made some brilliant saves to keep the margin of defeat to a minimum. The five-man defence also gave Zico enough support while the woodwork came to Bangladesh's rescue once early in the second half.

Bangladesh, buoyed by raucous expatriate support, had a few attacking moves of their own too, but those moves -- in the form of either corner kicks or throw-ins -- failed to trouble the opposition goalkeeper.

"I'm really pleased with the effort and the work rate. The boys put in a fantastic shift," Bangladesh coach Day said in his post-match press briefing.

"Bahrain had the quality in the areas that mattered and we didn't. They created the better chances, while we lacked that bit of quality to make it count when we had our chances," the coach opined.

Meanwhile, group favourites Palestine thrashed Sri Lanka 9-0 in the opening fixture of the group earlier in the day.

Bangladesh will play against Palestine in their second match on Sunday.

## Hazard lifts Belgium

### Depay triggers Dutch rout of Belarus

AFP, Paris

Eden Hazard ensured Belgium kicked off their qualifying campaign for Euro 2020 in style on Thursday with a brace in a home victory over Russia, while a Memphis Depay-inspired Netherlands romped to a 4-0 win over Belarus.

World Cup semifinalists Belgium earned a battling 3-1 win over Russia in Brussels as Hazard struck twice for Roberto Martinez's side in their opening game in Group I.

Youri Tielemans rounded off a flowing move with a crisp low strike to fire Belgium ahead on 14 minutes at the King Baudouin Stadium, but Thibaut Courtois gifted Russia an immediate equaliser.

The Real Madrid goalkeeper, put under pressure by Artem Dzyuba, panicked and scuffed the ball straight to Denis Cheryshev who duly swept home into an empty net.

Michy Batshuayi had a shot cleared off the line, and later hit the post, but Hazard restored Belgium's lead just before half-time after drawing a foul from Yuri Zhirkov in the area.

The Chelsea playmaker sealed the three points two minutes from time with an alert finish, while Aleksandr Golovin was sent off for Russia just before the end.



Belgium talisman Eden Hazard (L) led from the front during a Euro 2020 qualifying match against Russia on Thursday night, scoring twice in a 3-1 win at the King Baudouin Stadium in Brussels. PHOTO: REUTERS

"I enjoyed myself tonight. I take a lot of pleasure from this victory, in which I scored two goals," said Belgium captain Hazard.

"After our last game against Switzerland (a 5-2 defeat), we had to respond in front of our own fans."

Cyprus thrashed San Marino 5-0 to provisionally seize top spot in the group, while Scotland crashed to a humiliating 3-0 loss in Kazakhstan -- a nation ranked 117th in the FIFA rankings.

Yuriy Pertsukh and Yan Vorogovskiy notched early goals for Kazakhstan before Bakhtiyor

Zainutdinov's terrific header extinguished any chance of Scotland recovering.

In Rotterdam, Memphis Depay pounced on a sloppy backpass to put the Dutch ahead inside 60 seconds against Group C opponents Belarus.

The Lyon forward set up Georginio Wijnaldum for their second on 21 minutes, with Depay tucking away a penalty after half-time following a foul by Mikhail Sivakov.

Depay whipped in a cross for skipper Virgil van Dijk to nod in a fourth late on, leaving the

Netherlands level on points with Northern Ireland, who beat Estonia 2-0 with Niall McGinn and Steven Davis on target in Belfast.

"It's hard to choose between the goals and the assists," said Depay. "The first goal was good because it was the outside of my foot, but I also enjoyed the flick that set up the second."

Krzysztof Piatek continued his magnificent season as he came off the bench to grab the only goal in a 1-0 win for Poland away to Austria in Group G.

The AC Milan forward, already with 19 goals in 27 Serie A appearances this term, has now scored twice in three outings for his country following his international debut in September.

"This was a first step in qualifying. It was a very important game and a very important win. We took three points and so we're very happy," said Poland striker Robert Lewandowski.

World Cup runners-up Croatia, relegated from the top tier of the Nations League last year, ground out an unconvincing 2-1 victory against Azerbaijan in Zagreb.

Rami Sheydaev put Azerbaijan on top on 19 minutes before Croatia hit back through Borna Barisic and a 79th-minute effort by Andrej Kramaric in Group E.

Slovakia top the section on goal difference following a 2-0 defeat of Hungary in Tmava, as Ondrej Duda and Albert Rusnak scored for the hosts.

## Quagliarella back from the cold

AFP, Milan



At 36, Fabio Quagliarella has put his years of torment at the hands of a stalker behind him as he prepares to line up for Italy over eight years after his last cap thanks to the best season of his career in Serie A, where he is the top scorer ahead of Cristiano Ronaldo.

Even if Roberto Mancini is focusing on youth as he rebuilds the Azzurri after their failure to qualify for last year's World Cup, the Italy coach could not ignore Quagliarella's remarkable performance with Sampdoria where he has scored 21 goals in 28 games, two more than Ronaldo and Polish sensation Krzysztof Piatek.

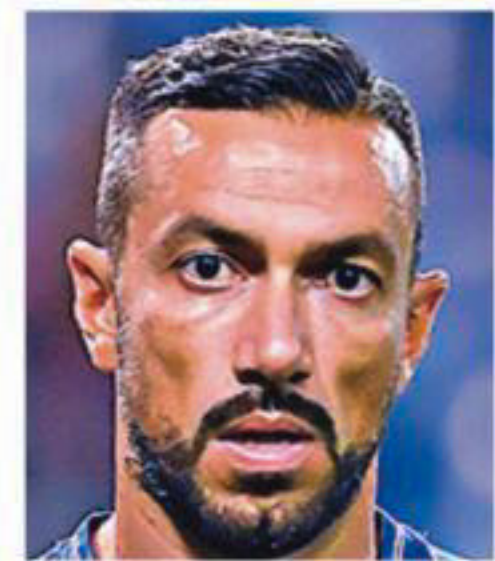
The veteran could earn his 26th cap -- eight and a half years after his last -- in Italy's Euro 2020 Group J qualifiers against Finland on March 23 in Udine or Liechtenstein in Parma three days later.

"I may be the oldest of the group, but I'm living everything with great enthusiasm and serenity," Quagliarella told Rai Sport on Thursday. "I'm now at an age where you also know how to manage emotions."

"This is the Italian national team, there's no need to give caps away. If the coach calls up certain players, it's because he's convinced they can give a big hand and that's why I'm here," he said. "Being called up by the Azzurri is a great source of satisfaction. There are so many strong young players with great personalities and for me it's nice to be here, even if I'm playing it by ear."

Former Manchester City boss Mancini had already invited the Sampdoria striker to take part in a training camp in February. Before that the last time he had been at the national team's training centre at Coverciano was in 2015 under Antonio Conte.

"I know that at my age, things can change from one day to the next, but the national team has always been a goal, and being in the midst of all these young people gives energy," said Quagliarella.



## Siddikur in decent form in Malaysia

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh's premier golfer Siddikur Rahman moved into the third round of the Maybank Championship in Malaysia with an aggregate score of three-under-par (141).

The two-time Asian Tour winner showed decent form in the first two rounds, firing 70 and 71, to be placed tied 22nd in the three-million-dollar event.

The 34-year-old golfer exchanged seven birdies for two bogeys and two double-bogeys in an up-and-down performance in the second round at the Saujana Golf and Country Club on Friday.

Thomas Pieters of Belgium was leading the charge at eight-under-par (136).

A total of 74 golfers made the cut for the weekend rounds.



## SHORT CORNER

### Liverpool as champions the stuff of nightmares for Rooney

Former Manchester United and Everton forward Wayne Rooney has said he cannot bear the thought that old foes Liverpool might win the Premier League title this season.

Rooney, who began his career with Liverpool's Merseyside rivals Everton before moving to Manchester United, said he would rather defending champions Manchester City win the league instead.

Liverpool are top of the table with two points more than second-placed City, who have a game in hand.

"It's a great reason to be out the country when those two are going head-to-head for the title," Rooney, who now plays for Major League Soccer side DC United, told talkSPORT.

"I hope Man City get over the line before Liverpool. I couldn't bear to see them win it, it would be a nightmare for any Evertonian." --REUTERS

**World Cup 2022 only target for new UAE coach Van Marwijk**  
Dutch coach Bert van Marwijk says getting the United Arab Emirates to the World Cup finals for only the second time in 2022 will be the sole focus of his time in charge of the team.

The 66-year-old former Netherlands, Saudi Arabia and Australia coach was unveiled as the successor to Italian Alberto Zaccheroni on Thursday.

"I'm only here for one thing and that's to qualify for the World Cup," he told reporters in Abu Dhabi after signing a three-year deal with the option of another two years.

"It takes a long time and the first thing we



Bangladesh's ace paceman Mustafizur Rahman, known as the 'cutter-master', tied the knot yesterday with bride Sadia Parven Shimu at his home district of Satkhira in a simple ceremony that he is pictured going to attend with his parents. Mustafizur's special day continues the wedding festivities for Bangladesh cricketers following Mehedi Hasan Miraz's wedding on March 21. PHOTO: KALLYAN BANARJEE

have to deal with is the first qualification round and that's why I'm here." --REUTERS

**Chiesa out of Italy's Euro 2020 qualifiers**

Federico Chiesa has been ruled out of Italy's opening Euro 2020 qualifiers against Finland and Liechtenstein because of injury, the Italian football federation (FIGC) said on Thursday.

The 21-year-old left the Italian team's national

training centre at Coverciano, outside Florence, to return to his club Fiorentina for treatment on a recurring muscle problem in his left leg.

Chiesa has scored 12 goals for Fiorentina in Serie A and the Coppa Italia this season, and is regarded as one of the rising stars of the side Roberto Mancini is building in the wake of Italy's World Cup failure. --AFP

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