

What to WATCH

STAR SPORTS SELECT 1
Indian Premier League
Rajasthan v Chennai
Live from 8:30pm
SONY ESPN
UEFA Europa League

Quarterfinals
Benfica v Eintracht
Live from 1:00am (Friday)
SONY SIX
UEFA Europa League
Quarterfinals

Villarreal v Valencia
Live from 1:00am (Friday)
TEN 1
UEFA Europa League
Quarterfinals
Slavia Praha v Chelsea

Live from 1:00am (Friday)
TEN 2
UEFA Europa League
Quarterfinals
Arsenal v Napoli
Live from 1:00am (Friday)

DAY'S EVENT

Dhaka Premier League
Time: 9:00am
Khelaghar SKS v Shinepukur
Venue: Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium, Dhaka

Gazi Group v Prime Bank
Venue: BKSP-4, Savar
Mohammedan v BKSP
Venue: Khan Shaheb Osman Ali Stadium, Fatullah

Bangladesh Premier League
Bashundhara Kings v Saif Sporting
Time: 3:30pm
Venue: Sheikh Kamal Stadium, Nilphamari

Rahmatganj v Sheikh Russel
Time: 4:00pm
Venue: Bangabandhu National Stadium, Dhaka

Pep upbeat despite first-leg defeat

REUTERS, London

Manchester City coach Pep Guardiola remained unruffled despite his side's surprise 1-0 defeat by Tottenham Hotspur in their Champions League quarterfinal, first leg tie on Tuesday.

City had lost only once in their past 23 matches in all competitions, a run that had seen them lift the League Cup, reach the FA Cup final and trade top spot in the Premier League with Liverpool in a thrilling title race.

They controlled large periods of the game against Tottenham, but looked vulnerable to the counter-attack and their usual slick passing occasionally seemed laboured.

The quadruple remains possible but City will have to keep alive their European hopes the hard way -- having not overturned a tie in which they have lost an away first leg since 1971.

They lost 3-0 at Liverpool in the first leg of last season's quarter-final so City's task is less daunting this time.

"Last season was much worse," Guardiola told reporters. "Except for a few

chances we conceded in set-pieces and some counter-attacks, we controlled the game and played quite well.

"I would have liked us to score a goal but the situation is what it is."

City's cause was not helped by Sergio Agüero's first-half penalty miss after Danny Rose was harshly adjudged by VAR to have used his arm to block Raheem Sterling's shot.

Despite plenty of incursions deep into Tottenham territory, City managed only two shots on target as an attack that put 10 goals past Schalke in the last round misfired.

City also laboured somewhat to beat Brighton & Hove Albion in the FA Cup semi-final at Wembley on Saturday, but Guardiola was not about to start criticising his team.

"When we don't play well I say it, but I don't have that feeling," said the Spaniard. "They're a team who press a lot but they couldn't do that -- especially in the second half, when we arrived many times in the final third."

"We played so well on the second ball. Next week, hopefully our fans can support us every single minute."



Tottenham Hotspur striker Son Heung-Min celebrates his all-important goal against Manchester City during their Champions League quarterfinal first leg match in London on Tuesday.

PHOTO: AFP



Liverpool striker Roberto Firmino jumps for joy after scoring the second goal against Porto during their Champions League quarterfinal first leg encounter at Anfield on Tuesday.

PHOTO: AFP

Liverpool ease past Porto

AFP, Liverpool



Liverpool closed in on a Champions League semifinal meeting with Barcelona or Manchester United after sweeping aside Porto 2-0 in the first leg of their quarterfinal tie at Anfield.

Far from the late drama that has accompanied the Red's Premier League title bid of late, Naby Keita and Roberto Firmino struck inside the first 26 minutes to put the hosts in command.

"2-0 is a really good result, I would have taken it before the game and I take it now," said Liverpool boss Jurgen Klopp.

"It was a good game, a controlled game. We deserved the win 100 percent and scored two wonderful goals."

Liverpool's only regret may be not building a more emphatic lead to take to Portugal for next week's second leg.

However, a fourth clean sheet in five home Champions League games this season means an away goal at the Estadio do Dragao on April 17th will leave Porto needing four to progress.

"We have to go there, we have to fight, Porto will do everything to strike back but that's how it

should be in the Champions League quarterfinals," added Klopp.

Liverpool thrashed the Portuguese giants 5-0 in the first leg of their last-16 tie last season and the scoreline could have been just as embarrassing for Sergio Conceicao's men had the hosts been more accurate in front of goal.

It took the hosts just five minutes to open the scoring as Keita got his second goal in as many games having waited nine months to open his Liverpool account.

The Guinean got the benefit of a big deflection off Oliver Torres as his strike from the edge of the area left veteran goalkeeper Iker Casillas helpless.

Mohamed Salah ended his eight-game goal drought as Liverpool returned to the top of the Premier League table with a 3-1 win at Southampton on Friday, but the Egyptian got his angles wrong when he failed to double the hosts' lead with just Casillas to beat moments later.

Conceicao was visibly furious with his side's slack defending, but Porto could easily have got back into the tie when Alisson Becker saved well with his feet from Moussa Marega.

Liverpool then had to survive a VAR review for a potential handball against Trent

Alexander-Arnold as Alisson palmed the ball into his full-back.

Soon, though, Alexander-Arnold was helping twist the knife into Porto at the other end with his eighth assist of the season.

Jordan Henderson, playing in a more advanced midfield position than normal, cut the visitors' defence open for the England international to square for Firmino to tap into an empty net.

"Hendo is a brilliant player and I'm really happy he can show that again," said Klopp.

"He likes that position so it is my fault he played for one-and-a-half years as the holding player, but we needed him there."

Only a matter of centimetres denied Liverpool a third early in the second half when another excellent Henderson allowed Sadio Mane to volley home, but the Senegalese was flagged offside.

The fine balance Liverpool must strike in maintaining their quest for European glory while also trying to end a 29-year wait for a league title was in evidence as Klopp withdrew Mane and Firmino in the final quarter with one eye on Sunday's Premier League visit of Chelsea.

Mumbai pull off last-ball thriller

PTI, Mumbai



Stand-in captain Kieron Pollard's sensational 83-run knock put KL Rahul's maiden Indian Premier League hundred in the shade as Mumbai Indians pulled off a thrilling last-ball three-wicket win over Kings XI Punjab in Mumbai yesterday.

Rahul and Chris Gayle, who struck a 36-ball 63, powered Kings XI Punjab to an imposing 197 for four after being asked to bat.

Pollard single handedly brought his side back in the game with his 31-ball knock, punishing the Punjab bowlers with 10 sixes and three fours.

Alzarri Joseph (15 not out), who added a crucial 54 runs in 23 balls with Pollard for the seventh wicket, and Rahul Chahar (1) managed to hold their nerves to take side past the finish line.

SCORES IN BRIEF

Punjab: 197 for 4 in 20 overs (Rahul 100 not out, Gayle 63; Pandya 2-57, Behrendorff 1-35)

Mumbai: 198 for 7 in 20 overs (Pollard 83, De Kock 24; Shami 3-21, Ashwin 1-37)

Result: Mumbai won by 3 wickets.

Player-of-the-match: Kieron Pollard.



Players and officials of Gono University team pose for a photograph after becoming champions in the women's football event of the Bangabandhu Inter-University Sports Champs following a 7-0 win over Jahangirnagar University team at the Gono University campus in Savar yesterday.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

Leaders Kings face Saif SC

SPORTS REPORTER



Newcomers Bashundhara Kings will look to extend their unbeaten run in the Bangladesh Premier League when the league leaders take on Saif SC in their apparent last hurdle of the first phase at the Sheikh Kamal Stadium in Nilphamari today.

The tie between the leaders and fourth-placed side is expected to be a mouth-watering one as Bashundhara Kings have secured three points in each of their five home matches against Abahani, NoFEL SC, Rahmatganj MFS, Arambagh KS and Sheikh Russel KC while Saif SC has enjoyed hundred percent success in their previous four matches against Sheikh Jamal, Mohammedan, Brothers Union and Team BJMC.

Even Bashundhara Kings started their campaign with a 3-0 win over holders Abahani, they only secured narrow victories

in their last four home matches. However, they will have their full squad at their disposal and they are likely to field all four foreigners for the first time today.

An outright win will consolidate Bashundhara Kings' position on top of the 13-team table and will ensure that they finish the first leg on top even before they play their last game of the first leg. On the other hand, a win will not only bring Saif SC back into the title race.

Saif SC is gearing up to tame unbeaten Kings and they are taking inspiration from their recent performances against Mohammedan SC, Sheikh Jamal DC and NoFEL SC.

In the day's other match, Sheikh Russel KC will look to bounce back from their disappointing performance in the last match against Muktiyoddha Sangsad and aim to secure three points against Rahmatganj MFS at the Bangabandhu National Stadium.

SHORT CORNER

Athletes' commission formed

As per instructions of International Olympic Committee (IOC), the Bangladesh Olympic Association (BOA) has formed a six-member athletes' commission by naming former table tennis player Zobera Rahman Linu as its head.

The commission also includes former national footballer Abdul Gaffar Chowdhury, top golfer Siddique Rahman, sprinter Shirin Akter, SA Games gold medalist swimmer Mahfuza Akter Shila and SA Games gold medalist shooter Shakil Ahmed in the commission.

The commission had its first meeting at the BOA conference room yesterday. The commission will deal with things related to the athletes and recommend those to the BOA. As per principle of IOC athletes' commission, the national athletes' commission will also look after the interest of the athletes and seek help from international arbitrators in order to protect the interest of athletes if needed.

--SPORTS REPORTER

Nike makes Moukoko a millionaire

Borussia Dortmund's 14-year-old prodigy Youssoufa Moukoko has signed a one-million-dollar sponsorship deal with Nike, according to a report in German tabloid Bild.

The young striker has been making waves in Dortmund's youth system, scoring 36 goals in 21 games for the Under-17 team this season.

His exploits have earned him a sponsorship deal which most teenagers could only dream of, Bild reported

on Wednesday.

The German paper claimed that Moukoko had already received around a million euros (\$1.1 million) for signing with Nike, and was in line to receive further premiums worth up to 10 million euros depending on how his career develops.

The extra premiums would only kick in if and when Moukoko makes his professional debut in the Bundesliga, Bild reported.

--AFP

Argentina and Colombia to host 2020 Copa America

The Copa America will be held in Argentina and Colombia, CONMEBOL announced on Tuesday, marking the first time in the tournament's modern era that it will be split between two countries.

South American football's governing body said in a statement that the competition's structure would also be rejigged, with two groups of six instead of the current format of three groups of four being used for this year's edition in Brazil.

The top four of each group will qualify for the quarterfinals.

"The new format provides a total of 38 games and gives fans the opportunity to attend at least five matches in a neighbouring country," the CONMEBOL statement said.

After the 2020 edition, the Copa America will be held every four years in order to have it played the same year as UEFA's European Championship.

--AFP



Tottenham Hotspur striker Harry Kane receives medical treatment before leaving the pitch injured during their Champions League quarterfinal first leg tie against Manchester City in London on Tuesday.

PHOTO: AFP

Kane could be out for season

AFP, London



Tottenham face an anxious wait to discover the full extent of Harry Kane's latest ankle injury after manager Mauricio Pochettino voiced concerns the forward could be out for the rest of the season.

Kane limped off the pitch after a challenge with England teammate Fabian Delph during Tuesday's Champions League quarterfinal first-leg win over Manchester City at the Tottenham Hotspur Stadium.

It immediately looked serious as Kane was unable to put any weight on his left foot and was helped down the tunnel, later leaving the ground on crutches and with the joint in a brace.

The club's medical staff will allow any swelling around the joint to subside before a scan to reveal how bad the injury is.

Pochettino admitted that the injury could end the England captain's season, which would be a huge blow to the club's hopes of Champions League progression and also qualification for next year, with Spurs still locked in a top-four battle.

England boss Gareth Southgate will also be concerned, with the Nations League Finals looming in June.

"It's very, very sad. It's going to be tough and we're going to miss him -- maybe for the rest of the season," Tottenham's Argentine coach told BT Sport.

Munoz, Hurtado in town

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) yesterday flew in two Colombian female football stars -- Katerin Fabiola Castro Munoz and Jessica Hurtado -- to promote the upcoming Bangamata U-19 Women's International Gold Cup, which is scheduled to take place in Dhaka from April 22 to May 3.

Katerin Castro had been a member of Colombian women's team during the 2011 FIFA Women's World Cup. The 27-year-old striker scored five goals for the national team so far. Jessica Hurtado was another professional footballer who is now involved with sports management and coaching.

Both footballers are expected to meet with BFF president Kazi Salahuddin this afternoon. They are also expected to meet the Bangladesh under-19 women's team and take part in a football clinic involving budding footballers.

Bangladesh, United Arab Emirates, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Laos and Tajikistan will compete in the Bangamata U-19 Women's International Gold Cup.

