

What to WATCH					
<b>STAR SPORTS SELECT 1</b> <b>Indian Premier League</b> <b>Delhi v Rajasthan</b> <b>Live from 4:30pm</b> <b>Bangalore v Hyderabad</b> <b>Live from 8:30pm</b>		<b>STAR SPORTS SELECT 2</b> <b>English Premier League</b> <b>Bournemouth v Tottenham</b> <b>Live from 5:30pm</b> <b>West Ham v Southampton</b> <b>Live from 8:00pm</b>		<b>CITY</b> <b>Cardiff v Crystal Palace</b> <b>Live from 10:30pm</b> <b>Newcastle v Liverpool</b> <b>Live from 12:45am (Sunday)</b>	
		<b>TEN 1</b> <b>La Liga</b> <b>Espanyol v Atletico Madrid</b> <b>Live from 8:15pm</b> <b>Serie A</b> <b>Udinese v Inter Milan</b>		<b>Live from 12:30am (Sunday)</b> <b>TEN 2</b> <b>La Liga</b> <b>Celta Vigo v Barcelona</b> <b>Live from 12:45am (Sunday)</b>	

# It's still 50-50: Emery

AFP, London

Arsenal manager Unai Emery insisted his side's Europa League semifinal against Valencia is still "50-50" despite the Gunners taking a 3-1 first leg lead to Spain. Valencia's bright start at the Emirates on Thursday was rewarded with Mouctar Diakhaby's away goal. But Alexandre Lacazette quickly turned the game around with two goals in eight first-half minutes before Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang's late strike gave Arsenal a two-goal advantage to defend at the Mestalla on May 9. However, Emery, who managed Valencia between 2008 and 2012, knows the tie is far from over due to Arsenal's terrible away record this season. "It is a good result at home, but the second leg is going to be very difficult and maybe different. I consider for both teams it is 50-50," said Emery. "We can be proud of the players. It is not easy to be calm and come back with that result against this team." Arsenal are desperate not just for silverware in Emery's first season but the guarantee of Champions League qualification for next season that winning the Europa League would bring. "We want to win the Europa League to go straight to the Champions League but also to win a trophy," said Lacazette. "We want to finish in the top four in the Premier League and if we can go to Baku

(for the Europa League final) it will be special."

A run of three straight Premier League defeats has left Emery's men needing more favours from Chelsea or Tottenham to stand any chance of Champions League qualification via a top-four Premier League finish.

The Gunners had conceded three times in all three of those defeats to Crystal Palace, Wolves and Leicester and the same defensive deficiencies cost them again early on.

Valencia had already missed a glorious chance to take the lead when Ezequiel Garay blazed over before Diakhaby forced the ball home at the back post for the vital away goal on 11 minutes.

Emery has been reticent to start Lacazette and Aubameyang together up front, but the game turned on one moment of magic from Arsenal's two prolific strikers.

Lacazette played in Aubameyang and the Gabon international left his marker and Valencia goalkeeper Neto on the ground before squaring for his strike partner to roll into an empty net.

Seven minutes later, Arsenal led as terrible defending allowed Lacazette a free header from Granit Xhaka's cross and a weak hand from Neto could not prevent the ball crossing the line.

Lacazette missed two glorious opportunities to complete his hattrick as he firstly failed to connect with an inch-perfect Aubameyang cross before Neto made a brilliant save at his near post to keep the Spanish side in the tie.



Arsenal striker Alexandre Lacazette (L) celebrates after scoring his second goal against Valencia during their Europa League semifinal first leg match at the Emirates Stadium on Thursday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

# Sarri defends benching Hazard

AFP, Frankfurt

Chelsea coach Maurizio Sarri defended his decision to leave Eden Hazard on the bench and said his team "deserved a trophy" after they were held to a 1-1 draw at Eintracht Frankfurt in the first leg of their Europa League semifinal on Thursday. Pedro's first-half equaliser gave Chelsea a potentially crucial away goal after a hard-fought clash at the Commerzbank Arena. Sarri raised eyebrows with his decision to leave Hazard out of the starting line-up, but he said he had no choice but to rest the Belgian star. "Eden was on the bench because he has played 10 games in a row," said Sarri. "It is impossible for a player to play 70 to 75 matches in a season. Sometimes they need to rest, or at least not to play for 90 minutes." "We want to reach the final, and this time I want to win it," added Sarri, whose team lost the League Cup final against Manchester City earlier this season. "Three months ago, we were in trouble. Now we are in the top four and in the semifinal, so I think we deserve to win a trophy." Sarri said his team had made



Chelsea midfielder Pedro (L) celebrates his equalising goal with teammate Olivier Giroud during their Europa League semifinal first leg tie against Eintracht Frankfurt in Frankfurt on Thursday.

PHOTO: AFP

a "mistake" in the opening 20 minutes as they struggled to deal with a determined Frankfurt in the first half.

Fired on by the home crowd, the hosts caused problems for Chelsea early on before being outclassed for long periods in the second half.

"We started to play after the goal and dominated the game for 70 minutes," said Sarri.

Filip Kostic found the

breakthrough for Frankfurt on 23 minutes, sending a pinpoint low cross to Luka Jovic, who ducked low to flick his header inside the far post.

Frankfurt then tried to grab control of the tie, with Sebastian Rode snapping at Chelsea's heels in midfield and Jovic and Mijat Gacinovic lurking in wait for a chance to break.

Yet Sarri's side eased their way

patiently back into the game, and deserved to draw level when Pedro finally found the net with a well-placed strike just before half-time.

"It was annoying to concede just before half-time, but they have quality in front of goal," said Frankfurt midfielder Gelson Fernandes.

It remained a fiercely contested game after the break, and Chelsea midfielder Jorginho had to be bandaged up after a clash of heads with Rode.

Always a step ahead of Frankfurt in the second half, the visitors nearly took the lead when David Luiz struck the bar with a fizzing free-kick.

Frankfurt had a penalty appeal waved away 12 minutes from time, and both David Abraham and substitute Goncalo Paciencia came close to snatching a late winner.

"I am proud. I don't know how many goals Eintracht Frankfurt would have conceded against such an opponent a few years ago," said Fernandes.

Frankfurt coach Adi Huetter, meanwhile, said that his team would have to be brave when they travel to Stamford Bridge for the return leg next Thursday.

"Chelsea will obviously be clear favourites, but we are optimistic that we can get something there -- everything is possible

# Resalatul retains gold on final day

SPORTS REPORTER



Resalatul Islam retained his supremacy in the men's 10 air rifle event of the Suzuki 9th National Airgun Championships, which concluded at the National Shooting Complex

in Gulshan yesterday.

Resalatul of Narayanganj Rifle Club scored 246.1 points in the final to win the gold after finishing sixth in the qualification round with a score of 589 points while Commonwealth Games gold medallist Abdullah Hel Baki, who finished first in qualification with a score of 594 points, had to be eventually satisfied with a fifth-place finish.

Resalatul's teammate Jesimuzzaman won silver after scoring 245.5 points while SA Games silver medallist Shovon Chowdhury bagged a bronze medal with a score of 224.8 points.

"I am really happy to win back-to-back gold medals in Airgun Championship as I first bagged gold in 2017 [The championship was not held last year]," said Resalatul, who was, however, not satisfied with his qualification score.

In junior men's 10m air rifle event, Rabiul Islam of Narayanganj Rifle Club grabbed a gold medal by scoring 243.8 points while Sheikh Sabbir Ahmed of Army Shooting Association and Sakibul Alam and Al Amin won silver and bronze medals by scoring 242.7 and 219 points respectively.

Thanks to the feat of Resalatul and Rabiul, Narayanganj Rifle Club became champions with three gold, three silver and one bronze medal while Army Shooting Association finished runners-up with two gold, four silver and three bronze medals.

# Gill keeps KKR afloat

STAR SPORTS DESK

Shubman Gill's unbeaten 65 off 49 balls helped Kolkata Knight Riders beat Kings XI Punjab by seven wickets and stay alive in the Indian Premier League (IPL) in Chandigarh yesterday.

After being asked to bat first, Punjab lost both their openers Chris Gayle and KL Rahul cheaply. A 69-run third-wicket stand between Mayank Agarwal and Nicholas Pooran steadied the ship somewhat before the latter was dismissed on 48. However, Sam Curran's unbeaten 55 off 24 balls helped Punjab post a challenging total.

Following the exchange, Kolkata started off brightly as Chris Lynn and Gill scored 62 runs for the opening stand before the latter was dismissed on 46. However, Gill remained unbeaten and saw his side through.

## SCORES IN BRIEF

KKIP: 183 for six in 20 overs. (Pooran 48, Curran 55 not out; Sandeep 2-31.) KKR: 185 for three in 18 overs. (Shubman 65 not out, Lynn 46; Shami 1-15) Result: Kolkata Knight Riders won by seven wickets.

SHORT CORNER	
<b>Mbappe slapped with three-match ban</b> French World Cup winner Kylian Mbappe was banned for three matches Friday following his sending-off for a reckless tackle during Paris Saint-Germain's French Cup final debacle against Rennes.	
The French football Federation (FFF) said they had also opened disciplinary proceedings against Mbappe's teammate Neymar for striking a Rennes fan following the shock defeat on penalties after extra time.	<b>Keita out for season</b> Liverpool midfielder Naby Keita will miss the rest of the season with an adductor injury that is set to sideline the Guinea international for two months, manager Jurgen Klopp said Friday.
Mbappe, PSG's gifted 20-year-old striker, lunged with his studs into the knee of Rennes defender Damien Da Silva near the close of extra time on Sunday.	Keita limped off midway through the first half of Liverpool's 3-0 loss to Barcelona at the Camp Nou during Wednesday's Champions League semifinal first leg.
Having already missed one game, Mbappe will miss Saturday's match against Nice and the trip to Angers the following week but will be available for the last two games of the season.	"Bad news, a high-grade adductor injury with the tendon rupture so it keeps him out for at least two months," said Klopp of Keita, who will now miss Saturday's trip to Newcastle, as well as home games against Barcelona and Wolves -- Liverpool's last match of the Premier League season.
The threat of further sanctions hangs over Neymar, banned for three Champions League games after insulting the referee following PSG's exit from the last 16 at the hands of Manchester United.	"Bad news for us and for Guinea with the Africa Cup of Nations coming up. Not nice," German boss Klopp added.
<b>Rain ends day's play</b> All three of yesterday's Premier Division Women's Cricket League fixtures were abandoned due to inclement weather at each of the three different venues.	<b>Maradona's Dorados held in first leg of final</b> Diego Maradona's Dorados played a 1-1 draw Thursday in the first leg of the Mexican second-division finals, setting up a do-or-die last match of the season against rivals Atletico San Luis.
At BKSP-2 in Savar, Rupali Bank Krira Parishad won the toss and scored 63 without loss in 10 overs before rain stopped play.	The Argentine great will now have to coach the club to an away victory Sunday to win the league title and force San Luis into a playoff for promotion to the first division.
At BKSP-3, Sharmin Sultana's 56 off 62 balls and Shamima Sultana's 45 of 56 balls helped Abahani Limited post 154 for four in 32 overs. Coming in to chase, Bangladesh Krira Shikha Protisthan managed 78 for one in eight overs but then rain intervened.	"We're groggy, but it wasn't a knockout," Maradona said after the match, in which Dorados led most of the way before the late equalizer.
The other game between BD Ansar & VDP and Khelaghar Shamaj Kalyan Shamity was also called off due to rain after Khelaghar scored 36 without loss in eight overs in response to BD Ansar's 108 for seven -- courtesy of Shahnaj Parveen's 42 off 81 and an unbeaten 21 off 26 balls from Tithi Rani Sarkar at the death -- in 36 overs.	

# City valued more than MU in EPL

AFP, London

Manchester City have overtaken Manchester United as the Premier League's most valuable club, with higher wages and lower profits hurting the Old Trafford powerhouse, according to a football finance survey published Friday.

Premier League champions City are valued at £2.364 billion (\$3.07 billion) in 2017/18, up £385 million, according to the study by the University of Liverpool's Centre for Sports Business, while United are valued at £2.087 billion, down £376 million.

The report said United still had the highest revenue of any club in the Premier League but increased costs meant they relinquished top spot in the valuation table.

The pair are the only two Premier League clubs valued at more than £2 billion.

"Manchester City's value increased in 2018 due to a combination of higher revenue and lower wages," the Liverpool University report said.

# Federer returns to clay

AFP, Paris



Roger Federer returns to clay court tennis for the first time in three years at Madrid next week, admitting it feels like a journey into

"no-man's land".

The 37-year-old last tested his ability on European dirt at the Rome Masters in 2016, before opting to concentrate on the world's hard surfaces and grass courts which have yielded the majority of his 101 titles.

But with his career in its twilight, the Swiss has decided to re-enter a realm of tennis for so long dominated

by rival Rafael Nadal -- and Madrid seems the logical venue.

Federer has won two of his 11 clay titles in the Spanish capital where the high altitude helps him negate the traditionally pedestrian pace of the dusty surface.

"I'm very excited. It's a good challenge, a good test. Confidence, I don't know, it's in no-man's land. I have to start from scratch," said Federer after winning his most recent title in Miami.

His long-term aim this spring is Roland Garros where he was champion in 2009 and where he has been a four-time runner-up in 2006, 2007, 2008 and 2011, losing on every



occasion to Nadal.

However, with 11-time French Open winner Nadal in something of a clay court slump, having been deposed as Barcelona and Monte Carlo champion in recent weeks, Federer saw a glimmer of hope.

That shaft of light brightened when world number one Novak Djokovic exited Monte Carlo in the quarterfinals.

"Roger is still very hungry," Federer's coach Ivan Ljubicic told Sky Sports Italia.

"And he has got used to playing on clay again pretty quickly."

Federer's last clay title was in Istanbul in 2015, the same year which saw his last Roland Garros appearance end with a quarterfinal exit at the hands of close friend Stan Wawrinka.

Rome in 2016 witnessed the Swiss star's most recent competitive outing on clay, a straight sets loss to Dominic Thiem in the third round seemingly convincing him that his dirt court career was done.

"I'm not very confident going into this clay court season, I can tell you that -- I don't even remember how to slide anymore," said Federer.

"You know, I'm taking baby steps at this point. To be honest, I didn't play one point -- not one shot on clay last year. Two years ago I played two days.

"Three years ago I played not feeling great in Monaco and Rome and all that. So it's been so little that I really don't know what to expect."