Only the start, says Klopp

AFP, MADRID

A first trophy in seven years for Liverpool, and a first win in seven finals for Jurgen Klopp. The European Cup is heading back to Anfield for the sixth time and their manager is confident there is much more to come.

A beaming Klopp revealed after Saturday's 2-0 final victory over Tottenham Hotspur in Madrid that he had received a congratulatory phonecall from Manchester City coach Pep Guardiola.

Three weeks ago, the Reds were denied a first league title in 30 years by City, despite losing just once and racking up 97 points, but winning the Champions League makes up for that disappointment.

"We promised each other already that we will kick our butts next year again," Klopp said of his brief exchange with Guardiola in between speaking to the world's media at the Metropolitano Stadium. "We will go for everything and we'll see if we get something."

It was a sentiment shared by centre-back Virgil van Dijk as he spoke after being named man of the match in the final.

"In July when we start again, everyone starts on nil and everyone's working towards their goals," he declared.

"Obviously we want to challenge for every trophy if possible. We have the squad for it, but you've also seen it this year, you still have to do it, and hopefully we can challenge Manchester City again next season for the title, because I don't think they will go anywhere, so we won't go

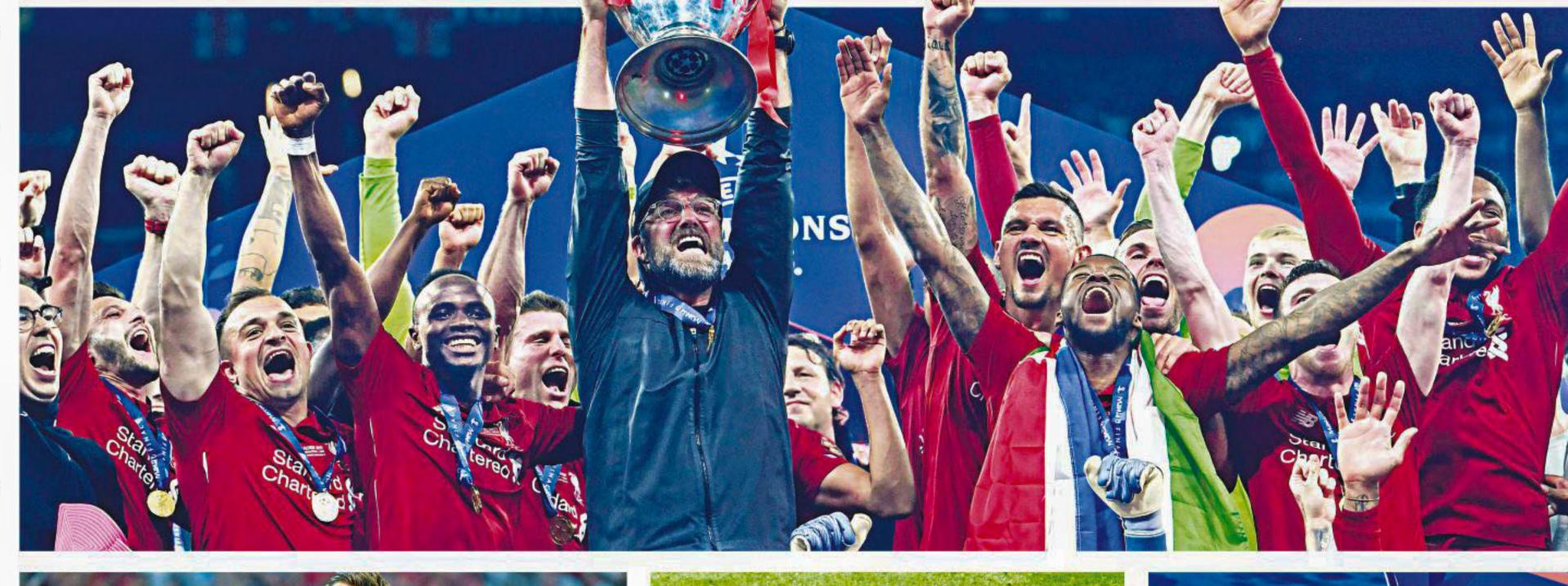
anywhere either." After losing the Europa League final in 2016 and last year's Champions League final against Real Madrid, Liverpool seized their chance this time thanks to Mohamed Salah's early penalty and Divock Origi's late strike.

WHAT TO WATCH

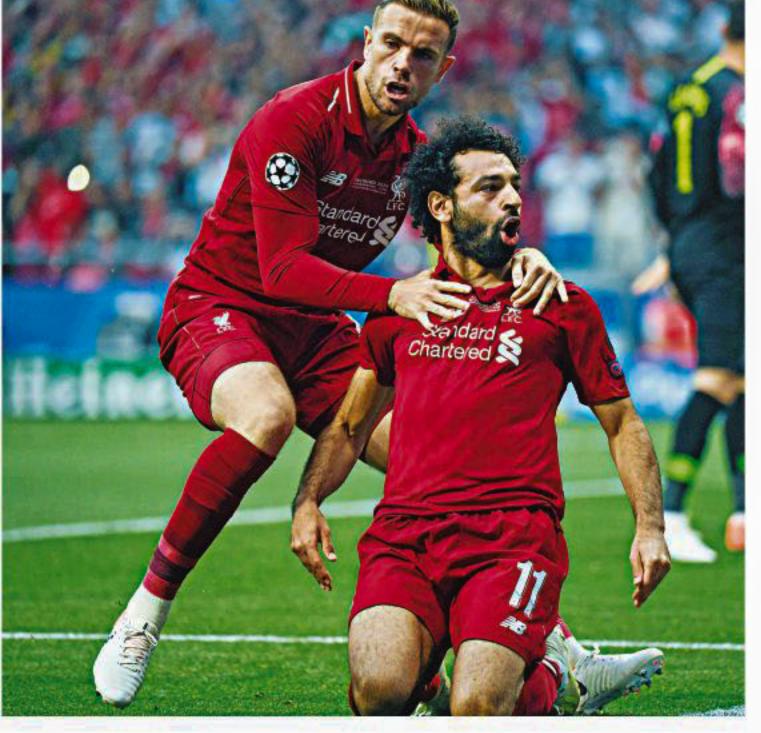
GTV, BTV &

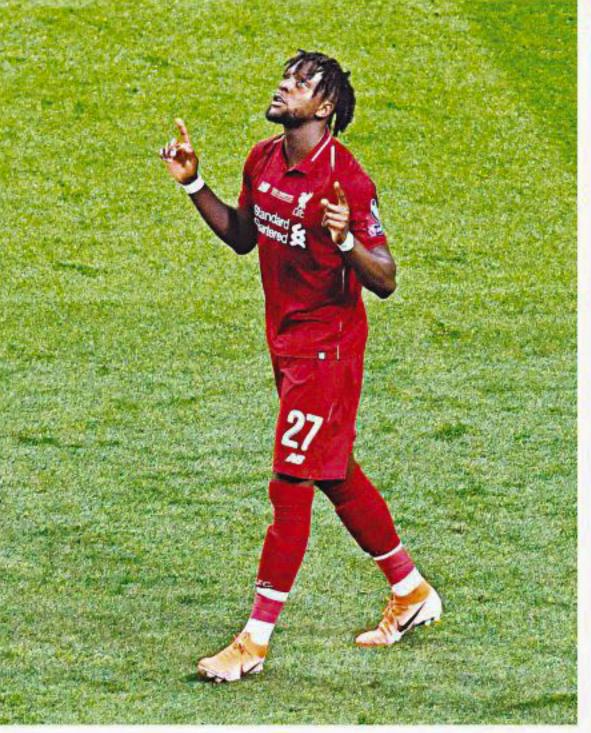
MAASRANGA ICC CRICKET WORLD CUP ENGLAND V PAKISTAN LIVE FROM 3:30PM

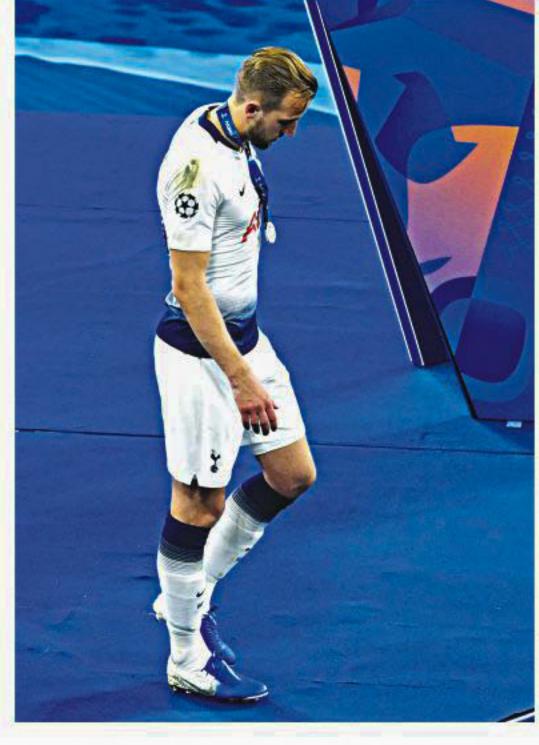
STAR SPORTS SELECT 1 & 2 FRENCH OPEN ROUND-4 LIVE FROM 3:00PM



City







(Anticlockwise from top) Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp (C) and his charges celebrate with the Champions League trophy following their 2-0 win against Tottenham Hotspur in the final at the Wanda Metropolitan Stadium in Madrid on Saturday. Mohamed Salah gave the All Reds a dream start in the final, dispatching a spot-kick in the second minute before Divock Origi confirmed the victory in the 87th minute. For Harry Kane and his Spurs teammates, it was a bitter pill to swallow. PHOTO: AFP/REUTERS

'Proud' **Pochettino** hints he could stay at Spurs

AFP, MADRID

Mauricio Pochettino kept tight-lipped about his future as Tottenham Hotspur coach after his side lost the Champions League final to Liverpool on Saturday.

The Argentine has been linked with a move to Italian champions Juventus and German giants Bayern Munich but suggested he may stay to try to guide Spurs to another final after their 2-0 defeat in Madrid.

"When you live this experience you want to do it again. I hope we can do it again in the future," Pochettino told BT Sport.

"It's about trying, it's about believing, it's about building, and I hope it happens again as soon as possible."

Spurs fell behind to a Mohamed Salah penalty almost straight after kickoff but were the better side after the break before Divock Origi arrowed home the decisive second.

"You never believe that after one minute you're going to be 1-0 down, a situation that not only changed our plans, it changed the dynamic (of the game)."

"I'm very proud with the effort, how we fight. We played so well, we played so well in the second half. I feel so proud, nothing to say."

Liverpool in sixth heaven

AFP, Madrid



Mohamed Salah scored one of the fastest ever goals in a Champions League final and Divock Origi struck late as Liverpool beat Tottenham Hotspur 2-0 in Madrid on Saturday and won the

trophy for the sixth time. Less than two minutes had been played when Salah smashed in his spot-kick after Moussa

Sissoko had been penalised for handball in the A disappointing final never truly got going after that, but Liverpool will not care, as they saw

Alisson Becker make several confident saves in the latter stages before substitute Origi drilled in the killer second in the 87th minute. That led to an explosion of joy from their supporters inside the Metropolitano Stadium as Jurgen Klopp's side made up for their defeat in last

year's final against Real Madrid and the deflation of missing out on the Premier League title to Manchester City. Salah has his redemption after injury ruined his

night against Real in Kiev, and the revered Klopp has his first trophy as Liverpool manager, three

and a half years on from his arrival at the club. The German ends a run of six straight defeats in finals.

More importantly, Liverpool have their sixth European Cup, further cementing their status as one of football's most storied clubs.

They now have more than Barcelona or Bayern Munich, and twice as many as their great rivals Manchester United.

Perhaps the occasion was just too much for Tottenham in their first ever appearance in the Champions League final. Beating Liverpool was always going to be a big ask, and they have now lost all three meetings with these opponents this season, winning just one of their last 15 encounters.

Mauricio Pochettino's decision to start Harry Kane after nearly two months out did not pay off, and he is still looking for his first trophy after five years in charge.

Nevertheless, if they can keep him, and with the impetus from the move to their new stadium, maybe they will be back on such a stage before

That they were here at all was remarkable,

Lucas Moura's sensational hat-trick that dumped out Ajax in the semi-finals capping a memorable Champions League season all round.

The stage was set for this match, only the second all-English final, but after all the hype and the stories of fans paying thousands for tickets for a game they simply could not miss, this was a strangely subdued affair between the two goals. Kane gamble backfires

Perhaps the stakes were simply too high, or perhaps the three-week break since the end of the Premier League season was to blame.

Most likely the suffocating Madrid heat impacted on the players and prevented this from being like a typical Premier League clash.

However, it might also have been a result of the opening goal coming so early, badly affecting Tottenham's confidence.

Pochettino had opted to start Kane after an ankle injury, meaning Lucas was on the bench. Kane hardly touched the ball.

Eight members of Liverpool's team also started last season's final, when Salah went off injured and in tears in the first half.

This time Liverpool were the ones celebrating

after a whirlwind start, Slovenian referee Damir Skomina pointing to the spot inside 25 seconds when Sissoko blocked Sadio Mane's cross with his arm.

Salah confidently blasted home the penalty for

the second-fastest goal ever scored in the final of the modern Champions League. The only faster effort was Paolo Maldini's

effort for AC Milan against Liverpool in Istanbul in 2005, when the Anfield side famously won on penalties. Spurs just did not get going, and there was

none of the frenzied pressing and attacking associated with Klopp's side, although Trent Alexander-Arnold and Andy Robertson both came close in the first half.

Pochettino's team did improve after the break, but Virgil van Dijk was immense for Liverpool and there was no way past Alisson, with the Brazilian saving well from Son Heung-min and Christian Eriksen late on.

It was left to Origi, one of the heroes of the stunning semi-final win over Barcelona, to wrap it up with three minutes left as he swept home inside the box to end any doubt.

A REN

Serena's pursuit of 24th major title on hold

REUTERS, PARIS



Serena Williams's quest for a record-equalling 24th Grand Slam singles title was put on hold on Saturday after the former

world number one was knocked out of the French Open in the third round following a 6-2 7-5 defeat by fellow American Sofia Kenin. Chasing Margaret Smith Court's

all-time record, which was built over the amateur and professional eras, Williams failed to recover from a woeful opening set on Court Philippe Chatrier. In the players' first meeting, world

number 35 Kenin pulled Williams around the court and made the most of her opponent's unforced errors to set up a last-16 encounter with

Australian eighth seed Ashleigh Barty. Kenin made the most of Williams's shaky start, breaking for 3-2 as the 10th seed sprayed the court with unforced errors.

Williams's forehand was woeful and her opponent piled on the pressure to move 5-2 up with another break.

Williams was broken to love in the first game of the second set and looked nothing close to finding a solution against Kenin's pace. 'Williams was hitting short,

however, allowing Kenin to step into the court and dictate play. But in the sixth game, Williams finally broke to level for 3-3 as Kenin showed more signs of nerves, disputing several calls from the umpire or the linesmen.

It was her way to stay in the game, however, and she claimed the decisive

break for 6-5 with a lighting-quick service return that left Williams stranded.

Kenin missed a forehand on her first match point, and it was Williams who handed her the win when she sent a backhand long, filling the youngster's eyes with tears.

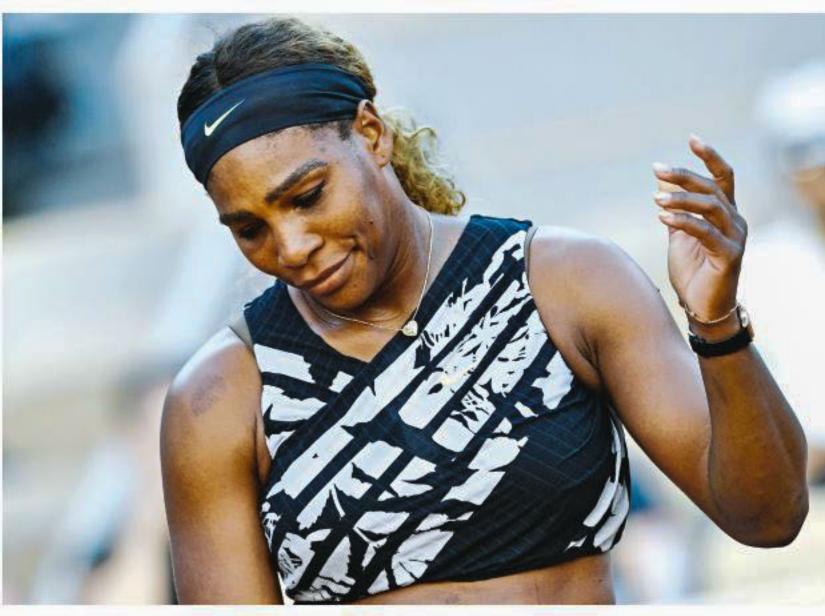


PHOTO: AFP

Serena Williams reacts frustratedly during third round defeat against fellow American Sofia Kenin in the French Open at the Roland Garros on Saturday.

opener

AFP, Brisbane

The Gabba has been locked in to host Australia's opening Test of the 2021-22 Ashes series against England after a major upgrade to the stadium was announced.

The ground, where Australia haven't lost a Test since 1988, the longest active streak in world cricket, was overlooked for the first Test against India last summer.

With a Aus\$35 million (US\$24 million) upgrade to public, corporate and media facilities announced on Saturday, Cricket Australia confirmed the Ashes opener would be at the Gabba.

"Nothing excites Australian cricket fans like an Ashes series on home soil," said CA chief Kevin Roberts.

"The upgrades to the Gabba will ensure that in hosting the first Test... fans in Queensland will get the first opportunity to enjoy world-class cricket while experiencing the upgraded facilities."

Gabba to host 2021 Ashes Neymar denies rape allegation

REUTERS, Sao Paulo/Rio de Janeiro

Brazil star Neymar has denied accusations of rape contained in a Sao Paulo police report seen by Reuters, saying he had been the victim of an extortion attempt by a lawyer claiming to represent the woman he is alleged to have assaulted.

The woman alleged that Neymar had drunkenly assaulted her this month at an upmarket hotel in the French capital, where he plays for the Paris St Germain

A statement issued by Neymar's management on his website (www. neymaroficial.com) said the 27-yearold forward completely repudiated the allegations.

"Although he was surprised by the news, the facts were already known to the player and his staff, considering that a few days ago he was the victim of an attempted extortion, practiced by a lawyer from Sao Paulo who said he represented the interests of the alleged victim," read the statement.

"The player's lawyers were immediately notified and have since taken all appropriate steps.

"We completely repudiate the unjust accusations and, above all, the exposure

situation.

in the press of an extremely negative "All evidence of attempted extortion

The woman told police that Neymar arrived at the hotel that night "apparently drunk," and that they talked and

to her account.

"caressed". "However, at some point, Neymar became aggressive, and through violence, practiced sexual intercourse against the will of the victim," the police report says.

and non-rape will be submitted to the

police authorities in a timely manner."

According to the police report, the

unnamed woman told investigators in Sao

Neymar's assistant sent her plane tickets

and on May 15 she checked in to the Hotel

The Sofitel hotel did not immediately

Sofitel Paris Arc Du Triomphe, according

Paulo that she met Neymar on Instagram

and he suggested they meet in Paris.

respond to a request for comment.