

What to WATCH

SONY SIX
The Ashes
Australia v England
First Test, Day Five
Live from 4:00pm

MAGUIRE ARRIVES IN CARRINGTON

Leicester's Harry Maguire has been pictured arriving at Manchester United's Carrington training ground on Sunday morning as the move that we will see him become the world's most expensive defender nears completion. The two clubs agreed a £80m fee for the 26-year-old this week, with the England international set to become Ole Gunnar Solskjær's third summer signing after Daniel James and Aaron Wan-Bissaka. Now, the move has inched one step further after the Yorkshireman was seen arriving at United's training ground where he is expected to iron out the fine details of his move and undertake his medical for the record-breaking transfer. While no official confirmation has been made, Solskjær is already planning for the Red Devils' opening Premier League game with Chelsea with the towering centre-half as part of his squad. The deal is set to be finalised in the coming hours and not only will Maguire become the world's most expensive defender, but he is also set to eclipse the current Premier League window's most expensive transfer - Arsenal's £72m deal for Nicolas Pépé.



--- AGENCIES

City draw first blood

AFP, London

Manchester City fired the first shot in their battle for supremacy with rivals Liverpool on Sunday as they snatched the Community Shield with a 5-4 penalty shoot-out win after a 1-1 draw at Wembley.

Raheem Sterling gave City a first half lead before Joel Matip grabbed a late equaliser for Liverpool in the annual curtain-raiser to the English top-flight season.

In the shoot-out, City keeper Claudio Bravo saved from Georginio Wijnaldum, with Gabriel Jesus driving in the winning kick after successful efforts from Ilkay Gundogan, Bernardo Silva, Phil Foden and Aleksandr Zinchenko.

The jubilant celebrations from City's players and fans showed inflicting an early psychological blow on Liverpool was a moment to savour, regardless of the supposed warm-up status of the game.

"An incredible final from both sides. We had real good moments, but in the last 15 minutes we were exhausted and they had chances to win the game," Guardiola said.

"It was a good test for both teams. It's nice for the players to realise what they will face this season. At this level the difference is nothing, just one penalty. The first title of

the season is ours."

With City installed as favourites to win the title for a third successive season and Liverpool expected to present the strongest challenge to Pep Guardiola's side, their meeting on the eve of the season was a window into what to expect this term.

After pipping Liverpool to last season's Premier League title with 98 points to their rivals' 97, City went on to complete an unprecedented domestic treble by adding the FA Cup to the League Cup they won earlier in the campaign.

But Jurgen Klopp's men didn't dwell on that painful near-miss as they won the Champions League just weeks later.

On the evidence of this hard-fought contest, which featured both flashes of quality and signs of rustiness, there will be little to separate the two teams as they go head-to-head for the major prizes once again over the next 10 months.

Retaining the Community Shield trophy they won 12 months ago would improve City's belief that they can repeat last season's remarkable silverware haul, but Liverpool could take encouragement as well after they finished strongly enough to have won.

The only dark cloud for City was an injury to Bayern Munich target Leroy Sane, who limped off in the 10th minute holding his right leg.

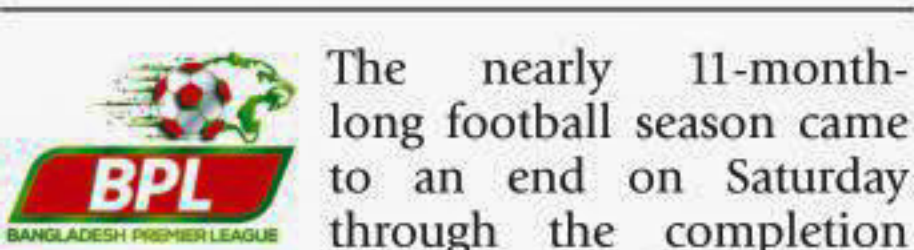


Manchester City players burst into celebration after Brazilian striker Gabriel Jesus (R) netted the match-winning penalty in their Community Shield game against Liverpool. Regulation time had failed to separate the the Premier League's pacesetters and ended 1-1.

PHOTO: AFP

Quality foreigners make BPL competitive

ANISUR RAHMAN



The nearly 11-month-long football season came to an end on Saturday through the completion of the Bangladesh Premier League, which according to the country's top coaches, was very competitive with vivid presence of quality foreign players alongside consistent performance from national team players and promising ones.

The just-concluded league, which was the 11th edition of the top-tier professional football league, produced two new records in terms of wins and goals in a single edition. There was a total of 439 goals scored, beating the previous highest of 391 goals during the third edition in 2009-10, which had featured the same number of matches (156) like this one.

A total of 119 matches produced outright results, which is also the best-ever, followed by 110 outright results in the third edition and 98 outright results in the fourth edition, both from 131 matches.

"The league was very competitive as every team had to work hard to register wins, even against the relegated team. Even if you leave out the top four teams

-- Bashundhara Kings, Abahani, Sheikh Russel KC and Saif SC -- there was also intense competition among the lower-half teams and the points they gained proved it," opined Sheikh Russel coach Saiful Bari Titu.

"The number of foreign coaches and players were more this time. Even many foreign players living in Dhaka did not find teams to play. The standard of the foreign players was also better compared to the last season," Titu said.

Considering the AFC Cup, the game's local governing body this time allowed four foreign players including a player from Asia instead of previous season's three foreign-player quota. As a result, the number of goals significantly increased, with 52 foreign players netting 272 goals out of a total of 439. In the last edition, 302 goals were scored in 132 matches.

"Due to the presence of quality foreigners, there were more goals. Besides, except for one or two teams, all clubs played attacking football which was another reason behind more goals," said Maruful Haque, the UEFA A licensed coach of Arambagh KS.

"Except for the champions and runners-up team, the league was more competitive

BPL BY SEASON				
Season	Matches	Wins/Defeats	Draws	Goals
2007	110	81	29	273
2008-09	110	85	25	280
2009-10	156	110	46	391
2010-11	131	98	33	335
2011-12	110	82	28	295
2012-13	72	56	16	162
2013-14	135	95	40	382
2014-15	110	85	25	332
2015-16	132	87	45	342
2016-17	132	95	37	302
2018-19	156	119	37	439

changed as their clubs did not hesitate to provide facilities including a pre-season preparation camp in an attempt to produce good results.

"Except for the good performance of foreign players, some national players showed consistency which is a bit rare in our league," said Titu.

"There were a lot of promising players, of whom a couple of players have already been picked for the national team while a few have potential to be included in near future," said Mintu.

However, all three coaches were unhappy with the length of the season and scheduling of the league. They believe the long season is one of the reasons behind the drop in players' performance.

"Arambagh had to play six matches in 18 days, travelling 2400km on non-AC buses. So it was very tough for the players to recover from fatigue," Maruful said, adding that the standard of refereeing was poor.

"It was bad that one or two referees conducted matches of a certain team. If it continues like this, there will be no improvement in football. Besides, the referees took differing decisions for different in similar scenarios," said Maruful.

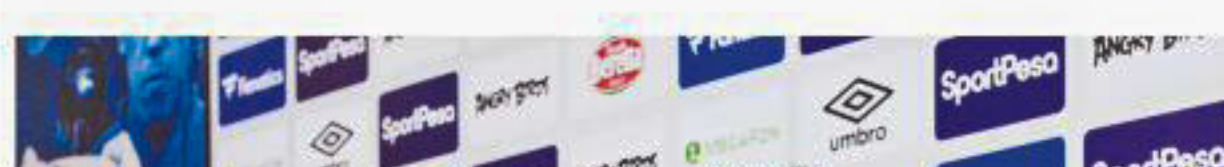
compared to the last 11 years of my coaching career," Maruful opined.

Chittagong Abahani coach Julfikar Mahmud Mintu echoed the same sentiment regarding the foreign players.

"It was good to see some quality foreign players such as Daniel Colindres, Masih Saighani, Bakhtiyar Duyshebekov," said Mintu.

Both Titu and Mintu said that the approach of the participating clubs also

Everton sign Moise Kean



Premier League side Everton have signed 19-year-old striker Moise Kean from Italian champions Juventus on a five-year deal, the clubs said on Sunday.

Juventus said the transfer fee agreed for the Italian international was 27.5 million euros (\$30.54 million), payable in three financial years, with a further 2.5 million euros to be added if certain conditions were met.

"I am very proud and honoured to wear the Everton shirt. I will give my best to this team," Kean said in a statement.

"I was convinced to sign because Everton is a club looking to the future and so am I. I know about the size of the club, it has big ambition and I will work very hard to help us fulfil what we want to achieve."

Kean, who was Juve's first player to be born in the 2000s, made his debut for the club at the age of 16 and scored six goals in Serie A last season as the Turin club won their eighth consecutive league title.

The 19-year-old has also scored twice for Italy in three appearances since making his debut last year.

"A striker was one of our priority signings this summer," Everton boss Marco Silva said. "Moise is strong, fast, with many good qualities as a striker and he is just 19 years old."

"He has talent and he is ready to work, ready to improve our squad and gives us different solutions."

Kean became the Merseyside club's fifth recruit of the close season after midfielders Andre Gomes, Fabian Delph, Jean-Philippe Gbamin and goalkeeper Jonas Loss.

Everton, who finished eighth last season, begin their campaign at Crystal Palace on Saturday.

Dengue downs 8 athletes

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Olympic Association (BOA) yesterday decided that a nine-day break from the ongoing preparation camp for December's South Asian (SA) Games will be taken due to the outbreak of dengue fever in addition to the Eid-UI-Adha holidays.

Another five female athletes have fallen victim to the mosquito-borne tropical disease as of yesterday. The number of athletes affected by dengue fever now stands at eight with four kabaddi, three kho kho and one basketball player having been affected. To make matters worse, kabaddi player Muslima Khatun was admitted to the Bangladesh Medical Hospital ICU in Dhanmondi due to low blood pressure.

According to BOA medical committee member secretary Dr. Shafiqur Rahman, however, Muslima has gradually improved since being taken to the ICU yesterday morning. In addition, Rahman also informed that four handball players are suffering from general fevers.

"Considering the overall situation of dengue and Eid-UI-Adha, we decided to give the athletes a nine-day vacation from August 8 to 16 and the athletes are allowed to leave the camp though the initial decision was to stay at the camp under the supervision of the respective federations," said BOA training committee member secretary AK Sarker yesterday.

However, while saying that that the treatment for the dengue patients would continue, Sarker informed that the patient would only get permission to the leave the camp after being granted clearance from the concerned doctors.

It was also learnt that the BOA will likely vacate the dormitory in the Sultana Kamal Women's Sports Complex in Dhanmondi today, where eight female athletes were diagnosed with dengue fever. However, the BOA had already taken massive initiatives to avoid this particular situation by spraying mosquito insecticides through an Army unit while the complex was also cleaned regularly at the BOA's expenditure.



Borussia Dortmund players celebrate after defeating Bayern Munich in the German Super Cup on Saturday night, denying the Bavarians a fourth straight title. PHOTO: AFP

Sancho stars as Dortmund end Bayern's dominance

AFP, Dortmund

England forward Jadon Sancho scored a goal and set-up another as Borussia Dortmund beat Bayern Munich 2-0 on Saturday to deny the German league and cup champions a fourth straight Super Cup title.

Sancho, 19, fed Spain forward Paco Alcacer for Dortmund's opener just after the break before clinching the victory and his side's first trophy since 2017 with a clinical finish within the final half an hour of play.

"We absolutely wanted to win this match, it was very difficult," said Dortmund coach Lucien Favre. "Bayern were very strong and had a lot of possession but we defended well and stayed very compact."

"We knew that we had to go on the counter-attack and we did that very well."

Bayern captain Manuel Neuer said errors proved costly.

"We gave Dortmund the match by making too many mistakes," Neuer said. "We made the mistakes all on our own, we gave them possession and that's why we conceded the goals."

Bayern's inability to make the most of the ball in first 45 minutes came back to bite them almost immediately after the break.

Sancho attacked down the left drawing four Bayern defenders with quick step-overs.

The teenager fed Alcacer at the edge of the box who beat Neuer with a low shot for a 1-0 lead on 48 minutes. Dortmund's lead was doubled

with 22 minutes to go from a clinical counter-attack.

Sancho was free once again on the right wing, he burst into the box beyond Bayern's back-four and nutmegged the experienced Neuer to make it 2-0.

Influential Sancho left the field with 10 minutes to play after seeming to be hurt following an off-the-field challenge by Joshua Kimmich.

Bayern coach Niko Kovac brought on Portugal midfielder Renato Sanches and Benjamin Pavard late-on but they were unable to find the goals to retain the title and the early-season bragging rights.

Bayern start the defence of their league title by hosting Hertha Berlin on Friday August 16 and Dortmund play Augsburg a day later.

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