

What to WATCH

STAR SPORTS SELECT 1 & 2
US Open
First Round
Live from 9:00pm

PSG LOSE MBAPPE FOR A MONTH

Paris Saint-Germain star Kylian Mbappe will be out for four weeks and Edinson Cavani for three weeks after both came off injured in a Ligue 1 match against Toulouse on Sunday, the French champions have confirmed. French World Cup-winning star Mbappe limped off after hurting his left hamstring during a trademark sprint in PSG's 4-0 win at the Parc des Princes. The injury means he will miss PSG's opening Champions' League group game, which is set for September 17 or 18. He is also set to sit out three league matches as well as France's Euro 2020 qualifiers at home to Albania and Andorra early next month.



2019-20 season from December

SPORTS REPORTER



The Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) yesterday decided to complete the 2019-20 football season within seven months, starting it in December through the Federation Cup.

The decision was made at a meeting of the professional football league committee (PFLC) at the BFF house in presence of representatives of Bangladesh Premier League clubs, who had earlier rejected the game's local governing body's draft plan to start the season in October in a bid to match the domestic calendar with the schedules of AFC Cup and Bangladesh national team's international engagement.

According to the new decisions, the

MEETING DECISIONS (DRAFT)

BFF U-18 football tournament	From Sep 12, 2019
Transfer window for BPL	Oct 1 – Nov 20, 2019
Federation Cup	December, 2019
BPL	Jan – June, 2020
Independence Cup	In between BPL

players' transfer window will open on October 1 and end on November 20 before the Federation Cup takes place in December. The 12th edition of the professional football league, which will start in January, will be completed within six months.

The new decision means the next season will be deferred by two months compared to the just-concluded season, which got underway on October 28, 2018 and ended on August 3, 2019.

"The meeting has approved the points table of 2018-19 Bangladesh Premier League season with two teams – NoFel SC and Team BJMC – relegated. Some clubs have demanded making the number of participating teams even so that they have to wait for less time for their respective matches. We will discuss it at an emergency executive meeting soon to decide the number of participating teams in the Bangladesh Premier League," explained PFLC chairman and BFF's senior vice-president Abdus Salam Murshedy.

Murshedy also said that they are planning to select nearest venues from Dhaka after the clubs proposed venues such as the Army Stadium, Kamalapur Stadium, Cumilla Stadium and Narsingdhi Stadium, subject to fulfilling criteria of becoming venues.

"We held the league in six venues this season and the number of venues won't be reduced next season," ensured Murshedy.

The meeting also accepted the clubs' demand of increasing the number of registered foreign players from four to five even though only four players will be eligible to play in a single match like the last season.

The under-18 tournament with participation of youth sides of Bangladesh Premier League clubs will be held from September 12, the meeting also decided.



Barcelona striker Antoine Griezmann is ecstatic after scoring his second goal against Real Betis during their La Liga encounter at the Nou Camp on Sunday.

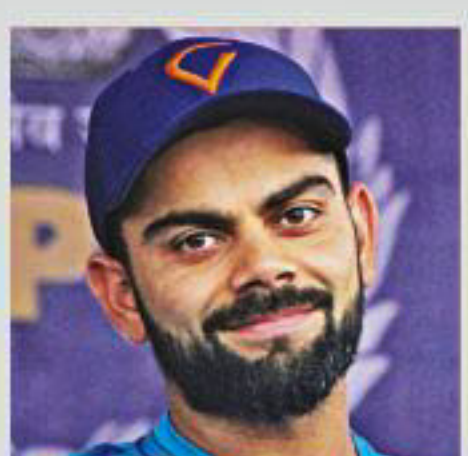
PHOTO: AFP

BD women finish in good fashion

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh team ended their preparations for the upcoming ICC Women's World Twenty20 qualifiers in good fashion as the Tigresses registered a three-wicket victory against Thailand in a T20I encounter in Utrecht yesterday.

After electing to bat, Thailand could only manage 87 for five in 20 overs. Coming in to chase, Nigar Sultana's 37-ball 39 helped the Tigresses reach the target in 18.2 overs with three wickets to spare.



Managing bowlers' workload top priority for Kohli



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Griezmann tried to copy Messi, LeBron

AFP, Madrid

Antoine Griezmann copied Lionel Messi for the goal and LeBron James for the celebration but it was his night for Barcelona on Sunday after he scored twice in a 5-2 win over Real Betis.

Griezmann imitated the basketball superstar by tossing confetti into the air to celebrate his second at Camp Nou, a curling effort into the corner that he said was inspired by watching Messi.

"I saw Leo do this in training, so I tried to copy him," said Griezmann. "And for the celebration, I like the ritual that LeBron did so we tried to do it as well."

Yet Griezmann was the star, if only for the night with Messi in the stands, the Argentinian still short of fitness following a calf injury.

A brilliant Barcelona performance also delivered a resounding response to the doubts arising from their defeat by Athletic Bilbao last weekend, among them a reliance on Messi, the need for Neymar and the future of Ernesto Valverde as coach.

But as Carles Perez, Jordi Alba and Arturo Vidal made it three, four and five, the gloom was forgotten, along with Nabil Fekir's opener in the 15th minute that had Betis level at half-time.

"After a defeat, there is always a big reaction," Griezmann said. "We really wanted to play another game and when so many players are missing, the team steps up."

Loren Moron slammed a late strike into the top corner for Betis but by then the game was up as Barca ensured no further ground was lost on Atletico Madrid, who beat Leganes 1-0 earlier on Sunday, or Real Madrid, who were held to a 1-1 draw on Saturday by Real Valladolid.

Barcelona will hope to have Messi back for the trip to Osasuna next weekend but with Luis Suarez and Ousmane Dembele both out for longer, Griezmann's statement

display was timely.

Whether it also affects the club's attempts to prise Neymar from Paris Saint-Germain remains to be seen.

"I have to admit today was an important day for Antoine," said Valverde.

The crowd also enjoyed a goal from the 21-year-old Perez, making his first Barca start, and a substitute appearance from Anssumane Fati, who at 16 became the second youngest player ever to play for the club in La Liga.

Sergio Busquets was at fault for Betis' opener as he gave the ball away, allowing

I saw Leo do this in training, so I tried to copy him. And for the celebration, I like the ritual that LeBron did so we tried to do it as well.

ANTOINE GRIEZMANN
BARCELONA STRIKER

Fekir to drive in his debut goal since he moved from Lyon in July.

Barcelona stay behind Atletico, who maintained their perfect start with another 1-0 victory, this time over Leganes as Vitolo came off the bench to score a second-half winner at Butarque.

Joao Felix, Atletico's 126 million-euro (\$140 million) buy from Benfica and much-hailed replacement for Griezmann, was again quiet but again delivered the match's most memorable moment.

The 19-year-old's perfectly-timed pass provided set Vitolo free while Felix had been picked out by Kieran Trippier, who was faultless on his second Atletico start.

Manosh seeks exemption from SA Games camp

SPORTS REPORTER

Five-time national table tennis champion Manosh Chowdhury has requested the Bangladesh Table Tennis Federation (BTTF) to allow him to stay out of the ongoing training camp for the South Asian Games as he would prefer to train himself in Chattogram while managing his dentistry profession.

Manosh wrote a letter to the BTTF general secretary on August 26 after joining the camp the previous day along with the other players after the BTTF called up a 16-member preliminary squad including eight female paddlers for December's SA Games in Nepal.

Manosh wrote that it is not possible for him to attend continuous training programme in Dhaka as he has to operate a private dental chamber in Chattogram for his livelihood. He is, however, ready to go through the selection procedure for the final squad like he did previously for Commonwealth Games.

The BTTF executive committee had earlier decided to call on players from the ranking list if anyone skips training, making the final selection from among players who would stay in the camp, informed BTTF vice-president Khandokar Hasan Monir.



Bangladesh team undergo a drill session in Kalyani, West Bengal yesterday ahead of today's match of the SAFF U-15 Championship against Nepal.

PHOTO: BFF

Spirited U-15s take on Nepal today

SPORTS REPORTER



Defending champions Bangladesh will look to confirm a place in the final of the SAFF U-15 Championship when they take on Nepal in their third group match at the Kalyani Stadium in West Bengal today. The match will get underway at 3:30pm Bangladesh time.

Bangladesh and hosts India have six points from two matches each, three more than Nepal and Sri Lanka who played two and three matches respectively. Bhutan, the other team in the five-team event, have zero points from three matches.

A win over Nepal will ensure Bangladesh's second successive final berth with the match against India remaining and the players are seemingly confident of crossing the Nepal hurdle after having posted two big wins over Bhutan (5-2) and Sri Lanka (7-1).

However, it will not be an easy match for Bangladesh, who were eliminated from the semifinals of the 2017 edition

following a 4-2 defeat against Nepal despite playing excellent football in group stages.

Nepal started this year's campaign with a 5-0 defeat against India before bouncing back strongly to inflict a 2-0 defeat on Sri Lanka.

"We are determined to give a better performance than the first two matches. Even though we have a few small problems, I think every player will be fit before the Nepal match. We will keep playing attacking football and leave the field with victory," said captain Rakibul Islam, who scored a brilliant goal against Sri Lanka on Sunday.

The team management will bank on the striking pair of Al Amin Rahman and Al Mirad, who together scored nine out of Bangladesh's 12 goals.

"It is always pleasing to get goals and I scored goals in both matches. We want to win for our nation and there is no alternative but to scoring goals. I want to do that because we want to make Bangladesh champions again," said Al Mirad.



Third-seed Karolina Pliskova faced a tough challenge from Tereza Martincova but overcame her fellow Czech competitor 7-6(6), 7-6(3) in a first round US Open encounter at Flushing Meadows in New York yesterday

PHOTO: AFP

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