

What to WATCH

TEN 1
West Indies v India
Second Test, Day Two
Live from 8:30pm

TEN 2
Serie A

AC Milan Brescia
Live from 10:00pm
Juventus v Napoli
Live from 12:45am (Sunday)
STAR SPORTS SELECT 1
English Premier League

Southampton v Man United
Live from 5:30pm
Man City v Brighton
Live from 8:00pm
Burnley v Liverpool
Live from 10:30pm

US Open
Third Round
Live from 12:30am (Sunday)
STAR SPORTS SELECT 2
Bundesliga
Bayern v Mainz

Live from 7:30pm
Union Berlin v Dortmund
Live from 10:30pm
US Open
Third Round
Live from 12:30am (Sunday)



PHOTO: COLLECTED

Umme Hafsa Rumki, a former footballer, returned to athletics and set a new national record in high-jump during the 15th Trust Bank National Summer Athletics Championships at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Ex-footballer sets high-jump record

SPORTS REPORTER

Having left athletics, Umme Hafsa Rumki tried her luck in football and saw a good future after being chosen as a member of senior women's football team. But the girl from Sirajganj again came back to the sport she loved most and broke a 15-year-old high-jump record to justify her decision to continue as a high-jumper.

Rumki yesterday cleared 1.68 metres to set a new national record in high-jump of the 15th Trust Bank National Summer Athletics Championships at the Bangabandhu National Stadium. The class-12 student erased the previous record of Sathi Parvin, which had stood since 2004, by 0.02 metres.

"I am really happy to set a national record. When I left football in 2017, many asked why I left football which could have earned me a lot of money. Those kinds of talk made me sad.

Since then, I promised to produce good results in athletics which I love most and today all pains have gone," said Rumki, who is participating representing Bangladesh Jail.

Rumki had made a golden start in athletics when she first won gold medal in high-jump during the 2014 Junior Athletics Championships before joining Bangladesh Army next year and won a bronze medal at senior level.

Afterwards, the domestic success of footballers like Krishna Rani Sarker, Israt Jahan Swapna, Maria Manda and Monica Chakma attacked her to enrol into football. As a goalkeeper, Rumki was part of the national under-16 team's tour of China, Japan and South Korea in build-up to the AFC U-16 Women's Championship in Thailand in 2017. She was also part of under-18 team and was selected for the senior team too.

"I wanted to play athletics along

with football, but BFF did not allow that. So I left football to playing athletics. I don't have any regrets leaving football. I have belief that I can show something in athletics and today I have succeeded to produce a new national record," said Rumki.

Asked whether she could win a medal in the upcoming South Asian Games, Rumki said, "Indian and Sri Lankan high jumpers won gold medals clearing 1.75 metres in their respective national championships. I am seven centimetres short of that. But I have been improving gradually as I won gold medal in 2018 Summer Athletics with 1.62 metres and then won gold medal in 2018 national championship with 1.65 metres and now 1.68 metres. If I can improve my technique and the federation provides me with necessary support, I can hope for a medal at the SA Games," said Rumki.

Ronaldo hopes Messi joins him for dinner

AGENCIES, Monaco

Cristiano Ronaldo said he hoped Lionel Messi would join him for dinner one day while the rivals were at a glitzy soccer ceremony at the Grimaldi Forum in Monaco.

Ronaldo and Messi have been inseparable at the highest echelons of their sport for more than a decade, as both have helped their respective teams to domestic and European trophies, scooping up the majority of individual prizes to boot.

But on Thursday they demonstrated their rivalry may be a friendly one when the Juventus FC striker extended an invitation for a night together.

"We shared the stage 15 years, me and him," Ronaldo, sitting next to Messi, said at the UEFA Champions League group-stage draw.



Lionel Messi (L) and Cristiano Ronaldo were sitting side by side during the UEFA Champions League group stage draw ceremony in Monaco on Thursday. The two had a lot to catch up on as the Argentine and the Portuguese were seen sharing light moments during the ceremony.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

"I don't know if it's ever happened in football, the same two guys, in the same stage, all the time. So ... it's not easy. Of course, we have good relationship. We not have dinner together yet, but I hope in the future.

"Of course I miss playing in Spain," he added. "We have that battle. He push me and I push him as well. So it's good to be part of the history of football."

Regardless of Ronaldo's intent, there might be somebody who would warn Messi against going to Ronaldo's house for dinner.

The Portuguese striker's former Manchester United teammate Patrice Evra once said he was "done" after spending just one afternoon with Ronaldo.

Both Ronaldo and Messi missed out on the UEFA Men's Player of the Year award on Thursday, as the Liverpool FC defender Virgil van Dijk was rewarded with the coveted prize.

NATIONAL SUMMER ATHLETICS CHAMPIONSHIPS

Hasan, Shirin fastest

SPORTS REPORTER

Mohammad Hasan Mia dethroned Mohammad Ismail to become the fastest man in 100m sprint of Trust Bank 15th National Summer Athletics Championships clocking 10.61 seconds in electronic timer at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

In women's 100m sprint, Shirin Akter of Bangladesh Navy retained her title, her national title in a row, after clocking 12.20 seconds while her teammate Shohagi Akter and Sharifa Khatun of Bangladesh Army won silver and bronze medals finishing with 12.47 seconds and 12.48 seconds respectively.

Hasan, who joined Bangladesh Army just a month ago, delivered the first gold for army in seven years since his successor Mohan Mia had won the 100m sprint in 2012 national athletics Championships.

Hasan, a class-10 student of BKSP, had lost to against Ismail of Bangladesh Navy, who had set a national record (hand-timing) in the national meet in February this



Mohammad Hasan Mia became the new fastest man of the country while Shirin Akter extended her record-run in women's 100 sprint on the first day of Trust Bank 15th National Summer Athletics Championships at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

year, but this time he had the last laugh as Ismail settled for a silver with a timing of 12:47 seconds. Rakibul Hasan of Bangladesh

Navy finished third with a timing of 12:48 seconds.

The emergence of Hasan is, however, not an accident as he also won the 100m sprint in last year's summer meet. Hasan has won 11 gold medals at junior and senior level since coming into athletics in 2016.

"I'm happy because my hard work finally paid off. I will try to hold on to my position in future. I want to produce better timing in future," said the 5.5-inch sprinter.

"I know running in South Asian Games is very tough because senior and good athletes take part there and I must improve my timing if I want to have a good result," said Hasan from Cumilla.

Sprinter Shirin is also optimistic about the SA Games in December in Nepal as she wants to work hard in the ongoing training camp.

"I have talked to my coach [Abdullah Hel Kafi] about it. I am ready to do any hard work and follow the instructions to improve myself because I want to win gold medal in SA Games," said Shirin.

Neymar's move to Barca off

AGENCIES, Paris

The Brazilian's potential return to the Camp Nou has been one of the transfer sagas of the summer and talks have continued this week ahead of deadline day on September 2.

However, El Mundo Deportivo reports on Friday that the move has been all but ruled out after Barca failed to reach an agreement with PSG.

The Catalan club has considered a complex proposal involving a large sum of cash as well as Ousmane Dembele, Ivan Rakitic and Jean-Clair Todibo.

However, the Barcelona board has decided that such a proposal is not financially viable and have rejected the counter-offer.

That means that Neymar's return to Catalonia is very unlikely, save for some late and dramatic developments.

Smalling set for Roma move

AFP, Rome

Manchester United defender Chris Smalling has travelled to Italy to complete a loan move to Serie A club Roma, the English team's manager Ole Gunnar Solskjaer confirmed on Friday.

The 29-year-old England centre-back joined United from Fulham in 2010 and extended his contract until 2022 last December.

Day believes Bangladesh can beat Afghanistan

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh football team's head coach Jamie Day conceded that Afghanistan are a better side, both physically and technically, but his team can get the better of the Afghans if his players have a good day when the two sides meet in the first match of the second round of joint qualifiers for the 2022 World Cup and the 2023 Asian Cup in Dushanbe, Tajikistan on September 10.

Bangladesh, currently ranked 182nd in FIFA, have not beaten Afghanistan, 33 positions higher than them, at senior level in the last four decades. The coach understands the magnitude of the challenge, but recent performances and his own method of work give him confidence.

"We've shown over the last 14 months that whoever we've played, we've given them a very good game - fitness-wise and with the ball, we've matched them. Yes, Afghanistan are higher in FIFA rankings and it's going to be a very tough game, but it's a challenge that our players are looking forward to," Day said during a press conference at the Bangladesh Football Federation house yesterday.

The 26-member squad, barring the seven Abahani players, have been training in Dhaka for the last one week following a three-week break after the completion of the Bangladesh Premier League. Most of the focus in the last week's training was on regaining fitness and on technical aspects. The team management will start working on tactical aspects, especially regarding the opposition team, once they reach in Dushanbe.

The coach will likely have a look at the Abahani players, who were supposed to return from their AFC Cup engagement in North Korea

in the early hours of today, and announce his final 23-member squad in the evening ahead of tomorrow morning's departure for Dushanbe.

The coach, however, is pretty satisfied with the overall condition of the players - fitness and performance-wise - but he wants more in terms of goals.

"I'm happy with the back four and the midfield, and the forwards are working hard. I would be happy if we could get more goals. The task for [Nabib Newaz] Jibon and Motin [Mia] is to take the league form to the international game," the coach said.

Whenever Bangladesh play against

under-23 teams, they were bigger and stronger than us too. We need to limit free-kicks and set-pieces where they can take advantage. We need to make it hard for them to score or get past you..... It's 11 men and against 11 men and if our 11 men can play better than them, then we can hopefully get a positive result," Day said.

Even though the gameplan for the Afghanistan match has not been chalked out yet, from the coach's assertion it is obvious that the team will play counter-attack based football. "Counter-attacking football has worked pretty well for us in the past, but we want to have more to it. Most of the teams that we've played

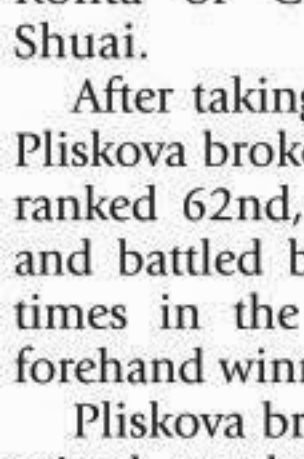
teams such as Afghanistan, one thing that comes into discussion apart from the technical aspects is the physical advantage that those teams enjoy. The Afghans are undoubtedly physically stronger and bigger than the Bangladesh players, but the coach believes that disadvantage can be minimised if the players do other things well.

"I don't see it being a problem [the physicality of the Afghan players]. They're probably a little bit bigger and stronger than our players, but in the past we played Qatar and Thailand

have probably had 70 percent of the ball. So we have to make sure we are organised, that everyone knows their job and we have to make sure when we get the ball we do something with it," the England-born coach said.

The Bangladesh team will play two practice matches against two local clubs in Dushanbe as part of their preparation. The men in red and green will play against FC Kuktosh, the third-place finishers of Tajikistan's top league last season, on September 3 before playing against sixth-place finishers CSKA Pamir on September 4.

AFP, New York



Czech third seed Karolina Pliskova, chasing her first Grand Slam title, advanced to the fourth round of the US Open yesterday by outlasting Tunisia's Ons Jabeur 6-1, 4-6, 6-4.

Pliskova, the 2016 US Open runner-up who could finish the fortnight as world number one, booked a spot in the last 16 against either British 16th seed Johanna Konta or China's 33rd-seeded Zhang Shuai.

After taking the first set in 26 minutes, Pliskova broke to open the second. Jabeur, ranked 62nd, had her right knee retaped and battled back to break Pliskova three times in the second set, the last on a forehand winner to force a third set.

Pliskova broke to start the third set and seized another in the fifth game on an errant Jabeur forehand before advancing on a backhand winner after two hours and



Bangladesh football team head coach Jamie Day (2nd from R) addresses a press conference at the BFF house yesterday, ahead of the team's departure for Tajikistan tomorrow.

PHOTO: BFF