

Liverpool win 7-goal thriller

AFP, Liverpool

Liverpool had to do the job twice over on Champions League upstarts Salzburg to get their defence of the competition back on track, but again relied on a prolific front three to cover over the cracks of an unsettled defence.

Mohamed Salah finally secured a thrilling 4-3 victory with his second of the night at Anfield after the holders had let an early 3-0 lead slip to the free-scoring Austrian champions.

However, the Egyptian's strike partners were just as impressive as Sadio Mane opened the scoring against his former club and Roberto Firmino played a huge part in three of Liverpool's four goals.

There was plenty to concern Klopp, who insisted the whole world now knows what he already did -- that a side crowned champions of Europe in June and on a 16-match winning streak in the Premier League remains a work in progress.

Salzburg have scored 51 goals this season and while few teams may match the fearless attacking prowess of Jesse Marsch's

It was far away from being a perfect game, but it was a typical Liverpool game, very exciting.

Jürgen Klopp
Liverpool manager

young side, Liverpool's defensive frailties were too easily exposed.

Joe Gomez endured a torrid night deputising for the injured Joel Matip, stand-in goalkeeper Adrian nearly had another horror moment as an attempted pass out from the back was charged down, and even the normally flawless Virgil van Dijk was left floundering on the floor by Hwang Hee-Chan for Salzburg's first goal.

Klopp will hope to have Brazilian number one Alisson Becker and Matip back for the rest of the group stages to restore the solidity to a defence.

But with their team in need, after a 2-0 defeat to Napoli on matchday one, the ever-reliable trio of Salah, Mane and Firmino stepped forward to ensure a nervy night for the hosts did not turn into a nightmare.



Barcelona's Luis Suarez celebrates his second goal in a 2-1 win over Inter Milan in a Champions League encounter at Camp Nou on Wednesday. Although Inter went ahead just two minutes in, (Inset) coach Antonio Conte was left to rue the missed opportunity.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Suarez magic stuns Inter

AFP, Barcelona

Luis Suarez scored a scintillating double and the returning Lionel Messi set up the winner as Barcelona came from behind to beat Inter Milan in a thrilling contest at Camp Nou on Wednesday.

Lautaro Martinez fired Inter ahead after just two minutes and Antonio Conte's side, mean in defence and ruthless on the break, looked capable of pulling off an historic victory in Group F.

But Suarez broke down the Italians' determined back-line with a stunning volley just before the hour and then finished off a weaving Messi run in the 84th minute to complete a pulsating 2-1 win.

Inter had never beaten Barcelona

away from home in the Champions League but were the better side for long spells, particularly in the first half when they should have added to their one-goal lead.

Instead, Barca's deadly duo came up trumps again, Suarez breaking through just as the hosts looked to be running out of ideas before Messi, back from injury, teed up his partner for the decisive second.

Inter play Juventus at home on Sunday, sitting top of Serie A after winning all of their six games so far and on this evidence, they could go far in Europe too.

Barcelona will be wary of the return fixture at the San Siro in December, which could yet decide who wins this group.

"Those are a big three points," said

Suarez. "When you're the number nine, you always try to help the team with goals and assists. Sometimes it doesn't work, but I always work hard. Don't give up in difficult times."

Conte added: "This leaves a bitter taste because we deserved a lot more than we got. But congratulations to Barça, their stars (Suarez and Messi) changed the face of the match."

For Ernesto Valverde's team, a hard-fought victory, combined with Messi's return, will come as a welcome boost to morale and momentum after consecutive victories in La Liga steadied the ship following a bumpy start.

While they had their star striker back for only his second start of the season, Inter were without theirs, Romelu Lukaku ruled out with a thigh strain.

TDS advance to quarters

SPORTS REPORTER

The Daily Star (TDS) qualified for the last eight of the Kool-BSJA Media Cup after playing out a tempestuous 1-1 draw against Kaler Kantha at the BFF artificial turf yesterday.

Spurred on by the presence of their very own Zinedine Zidane -- sports editor Bishwajit Roy -- TDS got off to a fantastic start. Just minutes into the game, the majestic Samama Rahman was fouled 10 yards into the opposition half and hammered home the resulting free-kick.

Kaler Kantha came close to equalising, but goalkeeper Osama Rahman, who missed the opening match as he could not wake up on time, kept them at bay.

The promising Nabid Yeasin nearly carved out another for TDS, nutmegging a helpless last defender on the edge of the box before feeding the glory-hunting Mazhar Uddin, who was parked in front of the opposition keeper as usual, with the goal gaping.

Unfortunately, Mazhar -- who was presumably already thinking up his next Facebook post as the ball rolled towards him -- swung too late and only hit air. He would get another chance late on after another sublime solo run from centre-back Samama, but again Mazhar, one-on-one, floundered and shot wide.

Orchid Chakma and Sakeb Subhan did well at the back alongside the experienced Fazlur Rahman, but TDS, who subbed on goalkeeper Rumman Kalam, conceded with three minutes to go to set up a nervy ending.

Sheikh Mehedi Morshed and Abdullah Al Mehedi also stepped up, playing crucial roles in midfield.

Agarwal, Rohit put India in command

AFP, Visakhapatnam

Opening batsman Mayank Agarwal completed a double century Thursday as India put South Africa's bowlers to the sword in the first Test.

Agarwal made 215 out of India's 502 for seven declared in Visakhapatnam.

South Africa then lost cheap wickets before the second day ended, reaching 39 for three at the close, with Ravichandran Ashwin leading a spin rout.

Ashwin bowled Aiden Markram for five and Theunis de Bruyn caught behind for four. Nightwatchman Dane Piedt was bowled middle stump by Ravindra without scoring. Opener Dean Elgar, on 27, and Temba Bavuma, on two, were at the crease, with their side needing another 264 to avoid a follow-on.

The word 'finally' makes a difference, but I am happy with the way I played. I'm extremely happy. It's a feeling that I really can't describe. It's my first hundred, and to make it a double.

MAYANK AGARWAL
India opener



The 28-year-old Agarwal put on a record 317-run opening stand with opening partner Rohit Sharma to set the tone for India's dominance.

He smashed six sixes and 23 fours in a 371-ball knock.

Agarwal eventually fell to part-time spinner Elgar.

Sharma fell for 176, stumped off Keshav Maharaj before lunch.

India then suffered two quick blows. Cheteshwar Pujara went for six and skipper Virat Kohli for 20.

Debutant spinner Senuran Muthusamy had Kohli caught and bowled as his maiden Test wicket.

Maharaj took three wickets from 55 overs of left-arm spin.

SCORES IN BRIEF

INDIA: First innings 502 for 7 decl (Agarwal 215, Sharma 176; Maharaj 2-189)

SOUTH AFRICA: First innings 39 for 3 (Elgar 27 not out 27; Ashwin 2-9)



Dina Asher-Smith ended Britain's 36-year wait for a short sprint title at the World Championships on Wednesday as she dominated a 200m field depleted by injuries and withdrawals to claim gold in 21.88 seconds in Doha.

PHOTO: AFP

Pogba left out of France squad

AFP, Paris

Paul Pogba was left out of the France squad named yesterday for their upcoming Euro 2020 qualifiers against Iceland and Turkey, but N'Golo Kante and Kylian Mbappe both return.

Pogba is currently struggling with a foot problem and was not named in Manchester United's squad to play AZ Alkmaar in the Europa League on Thursday.

Kante has had an injury-hit start to the season and did not feature in France's home wins over Albania and Andorra last month, while Mbappe has only just returned from a hamstring injury.



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