

What to WATCH

SONY SIX
Australia v Pakistan
Second Test, Day Two
Live from 9:30am (D/N)

STAR SPORTS SELECT 1
English Premier League
Newcastle v Man City
Live from 6:30pm
Liverpool v Brighton
Live from 9:00pm

Southampton v Watford
Live from 11:30pm
New Zealand v England
Second Test, Day Three
Live from 4:00am (Sunday)

STAR SPORTS SELECT 2
Bundesliga
Bayern Munich v Leverkusen
Live from 11:30pm
SONY ESPN
Serie A

Genoa v Torino
Live from 11:00pm
TEN 2
Serie A
Brescia v Atalanta
Live from 8:00pm

Abahani, Kings up for AFC Cup

SPORTS REPORTER

With Bangladesh Premier League champions Bashundhara Kings being placed directly in the group stages of the upcoming AFC Cup, Abahani are likely to get chance to compete in the pre-qualifiers of Asia's second-tier club tournament as the second Bangladeshi outfit.

The Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) has already sent the two teams' names within the AFC's November 22 deadline.

The league champions from Bangladesh, India and Maldives, subject to fulfilling requisite criteria, get the chance to play directly in the group stages while domestic cup champions are given the opportunity in the pre-qualifying round. Abahani's name was sent because they finished as runners-up in the last league season.

According to the BFF, the AFC is likely to endorse Abahani and they will play in the pre-qualifying round. The draw of AFC Cup will be held on December 10.

Six-time league champions Abahani, who had qualified as Federation Cup champions last season, advanced to the inter-zone semifinal before losing 5-4 on

aggregate to North Korean club April 25. They had won the home leg 4-3 before losing the away leg 2-0.

But this time they have to face tough challenges.

"I think any stage of the AFC Cup will be a challenge. You are always facing the best teams from their respective country but I do feel last season give us confidence and experience and we will face every team like last season; to win," Abahani's Portuguese coach Mario Lemos said yesterday.

Lemos squad will be almost identical to last season but they have added two local and as many foreign players.

"This year we will be a better team. It's my second season with Abahani. We retained 90 per cent of the team and new local and foreign signings will have an impact," said Lemos, who is looking forward to having a good pre-season ahead of the upcoming Federation Cup.

"It's very important to get the team back in shape and to adapt new players to the way we play and our tactics. We have responsibilities in the Federation Cup because for the last 3 seasons, we have won the cup and of course we want to win it this year also," said Lemos.

Fabinho out until New Year

AFP, London

Liverpool midfielder Fabinho will be out for more than a month after suffering ankle ligament damage during this week's Champions League clash with Napoli, the club said on Friday.

The Brazilian, who has this season established himself as a first-choice pick for Jurgen Klopp's Premier League leaders, was substituted after just 18 minutes of the 1-1 draw at Anfield on Wednesday.

Liverpool have announced that the 26-year-old will play no part in their congested run of 10 games between now and the end of December.

A club statement read: "Liverpool can confirm Fabinho suffered ankle ligament damage during the Champions League encounter with Napoli in midweek."



Australia batsman Marnus Labuschagne (L) scored an unbeaten 126 while David Warner was batting on 166 at stumps on the first day of the second Test against Pakistan in Adelaide yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Warner, Labuschagne dominate Day 1

AFP, Adelaide

David Warner and Marnus Labuschagne both plundered back-to-back centuries as Australia stamped their authority on the opening day of the day-night second Test in Adelaide Friday.

At the close on a rain-interrupted day, the home team were a dominant 302 for one with the pair building an ominous 294-run partnership, leaving Pakistan with a huge battle to stay in touch.

Warner was not out 166 and Labuschagne unbeaten on 126, following on from their 154 and 185 respectively in the first Test at Brisbane. Their Adelaide partnership was the highest ever in a day-night Test.

"It's a bit surreal at the moment. It was just amazing to be out there with Davey and to just put on a really big partnership," said Labuschagne.

"Really happy. We were running hard, I love the intensity of the crease."

Warner paid tribute to the maturity of his partner, who is playing in only his 11th Test.

"Credit to Marnus for the way he came out and took the bowlers on again, he picked up where he left off at the Gabba," he said.

"We're just thrilled to get through that tonight and want to come out tomorrow and put some more runs on the board."

Pakistan need to win to square the two-match series. The odds were heavily stacked against them before the game began, having lost 13 consecutive Tests in Australia, and their chances are even slimmer now.

Over the years, taking wickets in Australia has been a challenge for Pakistan and they shuffled their bowling attack for the pink-ball Test in a bid to make the most of the conditions.

Veteran seamer Mohammad Abbas, who tormented Australia when he took 17 wickets in two Tests in the UAE last October, returned in place of Imran Khan while 16-year-old pace sensation Naseem Shah was rested.

That handed a debut to 19-year-old medium-fast right-arter Muhammad Musa, but, like in the first Test at Brisbane, none of them could tame Warner and Labuschagne, with the ball hardly doing anything under the lights to trouble them.

After Australian skipper Tim Paine won the toss and chose to bat, Pakistan had a flicker of hope when Joe Burns was out for four, but a stubborn Warner and Labuschagne dug in and they went to tea at 70 for one.

SCORES IN BRIEF
AUSTRALIA: First innings 302 for 1 (Warner 166 not out, Labuschagne 126 not out; Afridi 1-48)

Volleyball team ousted from SA Games

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh women's volleyball team made their exit from the South Asian (SA) Games after suffering a second consecutive defeat at the hands of the mighty India in Kathmandu, Nepal yesterday.

The girls in red and green, who succumbed to a straight 3-0 sets defeat to hosts Nepal in their opening match, also suffered a 8-25, 11-25 and 09-25 sets defeat to mighty India in their second and final Group A second at Cover Hall, Tripureshwor ahead of the official opening of the 13th edition of the regional multi-sports extravaganza tomorrow.

Arsenal sack Emery

AFP, London

Unai Emery was sacked as Arsenal manager on Friday after less than two years in charge and with the club without a win in seven games, their worst run since 1992.

The 48-year-old Spaniard was fired following the 2-1 home defeat to Eintracht Frankfurt in Thursday's Europa League match.

His assistant Freddie Ljungberg takes over as interim manager during the search for a permanent replacement.

Arsenal fans had demanded "decisive action" from directors with the club's run of five draws and two defeats just one match off equalling George Graham's run of eight without a win in 1992.

Club directors responded by axing the man appointed in May 2018 to revive a club stagnating after two decades under Frenchman Arsene Wenger.

"We announce today that the decision

has been taken to part company with our head coach Unai Emery and his coaching team," read the statement.

"We have asked Freddie Ljungberg to take responsibility for the first team as interim head coach."

"The search for a new head coach is underway and we will make a further announcement when that process is complete."

Ljungberg will be the first Swedish manager to take charge of a Premier League game since Sven-Goran Eriksson, whose last game in the competition came in May 2008 in charge of Manchester City.

Among those in the mix for the permanent job include former Gunners star Mikel Arteta, Pep Guardiola's assistant at champions Manchester City, ex-Juventus handler Massimiliano Allegri -- Sky Sports reported there had been contact between the two parties -- and Portuguese manager Nuno Espirito Santo, who is at Wolves.

Napoli's coach Carlo Ancelotti is another name that has entered the reckoning but Nuno is the early bookies favourite at 11/10.



Astana stun Man United

AFP, Paris

Roma's Lorenzo Pellegrini was hit by coins as the Italian club kept their Europa League last 32 hopes alive with a 3-0 victory at Istanbul Basaksehir on Thursday

as Kazakh champions Astana fought back to surprise a youthful Manchester United 2-1.

Attacking midfielder Pellegrini had his head bandaged after he was struck by multiple coins with an hour of the game played after Jordan Veretout, Justin Kluivert and Edin Dzeko had claimed the advantage for the Serie A outfit in Turkey.

The visitors remain in contention for a knock-out spot and sit behind leaders Borussia Moenchengladbach, who beat Austrians Wolfsberg 1-0, on goal difference with the Turkish side a point behind on seven.

Earlier, captain Jesse Lingard opened the scoring for United, who had already reached the last 32, before Dmitri Shomko equalised for the home side.

Di'Shon Bernard, 19, then put through his own goal to hand Astana victory over a United side whose average age was just 22.

United boss Ole Gunnar Solskjaer made 11 changes from Sunday's draw with Sheffield United by handing senior debuts to teenagers Ethan Laird, Dylan Levitt and Bernard as well as naming cancer survivor Max Taylor on the bench.

Solskjaer said some of the youngsters on show put their hands up to feature against Alkmaar in the final round of group matches on December 12.

"At times we were excellent but there were spells when we let them push us back. That cost us in the end," he said.

"These boys have learnt a lot and have given me food for thought. I'm very pleased with many of them."

Shomko, meanwhile, told UEFA, com the result will live in his memory.

Japan midfielder Daichi Kamada scored a second-half double for Eintracht after captain Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang had opened the scoring in first half injury time for Arsenal inside a half-full Emirates Stadium.

Aubameyang struck home just before the half-time whistle with a low effort for his ninth goal in 14 matches.

Kamada's equaliser came 10 minutes later as he curled a tidy shot past Emiliano Martinez before adding his second on 64 minutes with a drive from outside the box to inflict a first home defeat of the campaign on Emery's men.

The Gunners are still on course for a last 32 place if they draw with Standard Liege on December 12.



Astana's Dmitri Shomko (L) scores the equalising goal against Manchester United during their Europa League encounter at Astana Arena on Thursday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Juve, Inter return to duel at the top

AFP, Milan

Juventus and Inter Milan return to their duel at the top of Serie A after midweek European successes, with Napoli carrying the momentum of a 1-1 draw at Liverpool as they look to snap a seven-game winless run and climb up the table.

Serie A leaders Juventus are at home to 14th-placed Sassuolo on Saturday after ensuring they will finish top of their Champions League group with a 1-0 win over Atletico Madrid in Turin.

The eight-time reigning Serie A champions are unbeaten this season and are one point ahead of Inter Milan, who kept their European ambitions burning with a 3-1 win at Slavia Prague.

Juventus have a perfect home record against Sassuolo with six wins in as many games.

"Right now, we are only showing flashes of what we feel we can achieve and we would like to show more consistently," said Juve coach Maurizio Sarri.

Cristiano Ronaldo has returned after a slight knee problem, giving Sarri a selection dilemma with Paulo Dybala and Gonzalo Higuain in top form.

Veteran goalkeeper Gianluigi Buffon, 41, could start in place of Wojciech Szczesny, as he looks to close in on Paolo Maldini's record for Serie A appearances.

Antonio Conte's Inter have a chance to keep the momentum going as they host lowly SPAL, who have never won in the San Siro.

But Conte sees the side from Emilia-Romagna, who are second-bottom of the league, as "another test" as they build towards their Champions League clash with Barcelona.

Carlo Ancelotti's Napoli host Bologna after a 1-1 draw at Anfield left them well-placed to reach the knockout stages of the Champions League.

The Italians had travelled to Merseyside in disarray with Ancelotti seemingly on the brink of being sacked after a slump to seventh in Serie A.

President Aurelio De Laurentiis has also threatened to sell the entire squad and take

ONE TO WATCH

Dries Mertens scored for Napoli at Liverpool to bring his tally to 117 goals for the south-ers, just four goals off Slovak Marek Hamsik's all-time club record of 121. The Belgian striker has a good opportunity at the weekend against Bologna, a team he has got 11 goals past in nine Serie A matches, more than against any other opponent.

KEY STATS

- 644 - Juventus goalkeeper Gianluigi Buffon's Serie A appearances, three short of AC Milan legend Paolo Maldini's record
- 31 - Atalanta have scored the most goals in Serie A after 13 matches
- 18 - Inter Milan's unbeaten run against SPAL
- 7 - Napoli's games without a win in all competitions
- 4 - Cagliari goalkeeper Robin Olsen's ban after being sent of for fighting with Lecce's Gianluca Lapadula in their last game
- 1 - Juventus's lead on Inter at the top of the table

legal action against the players after they refused his orders to be confined to a week-long training camp earlier this month.

But Ancelotti declared that "coming out of Anfield alive," had pleased De Laurentiis and boosted morale.

"We are united and there is determination on the part of everyone to return and demonstrate our potential," said Ancelotti.

Napoli have taken just four points from their last five league games, but have won their last five home games against 15th-placed Bologna.

Lazio will be looking to hold third place at home against Udinese, at the expense of Cagliari, two points behind in fourth, who host Sampdoria on Monday.

Benazir elected SACC president

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Chess Federation president and Rapid Action Battalion (RAB) director general Benazir Ahmed was elected as president of the newly formed eight-member South Asian Chess Council (SACC) at a city hotel yesterday.

The council also approved their constitution at its congress in the presence of FIDE vice president GM Nigel Short, FIDE president's advisor Berik Balgabaev, FIDE Zone-3.2 president, BCF general secretary Syed Shahab Uddin Shamim and others.

Indian international arbiter Dharmendra Kumar and the vice president of the Nepal Chess Association, Ram Thapa, were elected as deputy presidents while the Sri Lanka Chess Federation's delegate G. Luxman Wijesuria was elected as general secretary and the Bhutan Chess Federation president Lekey Dorji was elected as treasurer.

Three elected executive committee members are: Senator Kalsoom Parveen of Pakistan, Hussain Shiyani of Maldives and Gulam Ali Malak Zad of Afghanistan. Meanwhile, Arun Muthusamy of England was appointed as chief executive director, said a press release yesterday.