

JUVE FACE CHELSEA as United seek revenge

AGENCIES

Recovering Serie A giant Juventus will face European champion, Chelsea, while a struggling Manchester United will eye revenge for last season's Europa League final defeat when they go up against Spain's Villarreal on Wednesday.

For United, it will be a chance at redemption as they will be in desperate need of a win to avoid another European embarrassment and ease the rising pressure on Ole Gunnar Solskjaer.

The Yellow Submarine emerged 11-10 winners from a marathon penalty shootout when the sides last met in the Europa League final in May to win their first ever major trophy.

Defeat extended Solskjaer's wait for silverware as United boss since taking charge in December 2019, but goalkeeper David de Gea was the fall guy in Gdansk.

The Spanish international's failure to stop a single Villarreal penalty was compounded when he was the only player from the 22 on both sides to fail to score from the spot.

Solskjaer's men have lost three of their past four games despite adding Cristiano Ronaldo and



an unconvincing one and was only their second win in six league games. Hence, it is likely that the Bianconeri defense will face a sterner test from Romelu Lukaku and the Chelsea attack in the Group H match.

Chelsea, on the other hand, will look to bounce back from its Premier League defeat against Manchester City at the weekend.

Chelsea striker Lukaku, who scored four in seven outings for the Blues since returning to the club this season, hardly got a look in apart from one effort that was disallowed for offside in their loss against City.

For Barcelona, it will be important that they build on their recent positive result -- a 3-0 home win over Levante on Sunday -- when they travel to Lisbon to face Benfica.

With Bayern favourites to top the group, Benfica look like being Barca's biggest challengers for second spot and Koeman said it was crucial to get a positive result against the Portuguese side, where he spent one season as coach.

Barca were beaten 3-0 at home by Bayern Munich in their opening Group E game and drew their next two LaLiga matches with Granada and Cadiz before bouncing back against Levante.

Jadon Sancho to a squad already rich in attacking talent.

The excitement generated by Ronaldo's return to Old Trafford has only intensified the scrutiny on Solskjaer to deliver in his third full season in charge.

But his Champions League record of seven defeats in 11 games does not make for pretty reading.

The English giants only dropped into the Europa League last season after crashing out at the group stages.

And anything less than revenge against Villarreal would leave them in severe danger of doing the same again after losing their group opener to Swiss side Young Boys.

Meanwhile, Juventus' problems deepened as key forwards Paulo Dybala and Alvaro Morata will miss Juventus' next two games, against Chelsea and Torino, after picking up injuries in a Serie A win over Sampdoria.

Juventus' 3-2 win over Sampdoria on Sunday was rather

Mushfiqur finds winning form

SPORTS REPORTER



Mushfiqur Rahim got back among the runs following a dismal run of matches during the T20I series against New Zealand at home, propelling Bangladesh A to a convincing six-wicket win with an unbeaten 91-ball 70 in the first of three one-dayers against the High Performance side at Chattogram yesterday.

Tanzid Hasan's 81 off 93 deliveries, laced with six fours and two sixes, had seen the HP team make a bright start before Mosaddek Hossain's four-wicket haul pegged them back and restricted to 247 all-out.

After the exchange, Nazmul Hossain Shanto struck a quickfire 18-ball 27 at the top before Imrul Kayes came to the crease and took control of the chase during an 81-ball 60. Mushfiqur then carried his side across the line.

"At one point, it appeared that they were going to reach over 300 but our bowlers fought back. Still, batting was not that easy. While the new ball came

onto the bat more often than not, it got a bit slower as the ball got older," Imrul said of his knock and the 59-run partnership Mushfiqur.

Mushfiqur had worked with his mentor Nazmul Abedin Fahim before the one-dayers and his focus would have been to find his mojo ahead of the upcoming T20 World Cup.

"Batting on Mirpur pitches [against New Zealand] was difficult for all batsmen. Since Mushfiqur is preparing for the World Cup, the pitch today was good enough to get some good practice. He carried the innings and led us to victory," Imrul said.

Local coach Nurul Abedin Nannu, who is in charge of the Bangladesh A side for the three games, remarked about Mushfiqur's fluency during an innings laced with six fours and a six. Initially biding his time and scoring nine runs from 29 deliveries, a slogsweep over mid-wicket sent him on his way and he never lost momentum.

"Mushfiqur looked very fluent during his knock. There were no signs of any struggles. He is a naturally gifted player and he played with his natural flair," Nurul said about the knock.



Spectators witness a colourful rowing competition on the Buriganga river yesterday afternoon, marking the 75th birthday of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. Organised by the Ministry of Shipping and BIWTA, the event was inaugurated by State Minister for Youth and Sports, Zahid Ahsan Russel, in presence of ministers, members of parliament and mayors of both city corporations of Dhaka.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Nine spots confirmed before elections

SPORTS REPORTER



The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) elections are scheduled to take place on October 6 but they will mean little for at least seven individuals set to be uncontested in category 1 and the district and division category.

Apart from that, BCB media committee chairman Jalal Younus is set to be nominated for one of the two posts in the National Sports Council (NSC) quota alongside Ahmed Sazzadul Alam Bobby, which means a total of nine directors have already been finalised before the elections.

That leaves 16 posts -- three from the district and division category, 12 from the club category, and one from category 3 -- to be contested in the upcoming elections.

Although president Nazmul Hassan has not announced a panel for the upcoming elections, all seven directors that are set to be re-elected uncontested are from the current board -- Akram Khan and AJM Nasir Uddin from Chattogram division, Shafiqul Alam Chowdhury Nadel from Sylhet, Sheikh Sohel and Kazi Inam Ahmed from Khulna, Alamgir Khan Alo from Barishal and Anwarul Islam from Rangpur.

There will be a tough fight in category one for the three posts, two of which are from the Dhaka division. There will be a tough fight between former captain and director Naimur Rahman Durjoy, Ashfaul Islam Tito, Tanvir Ahmed Tito and Khaled Hossain for those two posts.

Another former national captain, Khaled Mashud, is set to challenge former director Shafiqul Alam from the Rajshahi division. On the other hand, there will be keen eyes on the club category, where a total of 17 nominations have been collected for 12 posts.

In category-3, veteran coach Nazmul Abedeen Fahim will contest another former captain and influential director, Khaled Mahmud Sujon, for the lone post.

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'A legendary run: preserved'

Emma Raducanu's outfit from her victorious U.S. Open campaign will be displayed at the Tennis Hall of Fame after the 18-year-old Briton became the first qualifier to win a Grand Slam. Raducanu defeated Canada's Leylah Fernandez in the Flushing Meadows final earlier this month to become the first British woman to win a major singles title for 44 years, climbing 128 places to 22nd spot in the world rankings after her victory. "A legendary run: preserved," tweeted the Tennis Hall of Fame on Monday. "Thank you, @EmmaRaducanu, for donating your memorable #USOpen outfit to the IITF collection!"



Members of the United States team and their significant others celebrate after defeating Team Europe 19 to 9 to win the 43rd Ryder Cup at Whistling Straits in Kohler, Wisconsin on Monday. The US team, led by a new generation of golfers, reclaimed the trophy to herald what could be an era of domination by the Americans at the biennial competition.

PHOTO: REUTERS



NEWS IN BRIEF



Bangladesh national football team coach Oscar Bruzon leads the players into the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport yesterday afternoon ahead of their departure for Maldives, where the team will participate in the SAFF Championship starting on October 1. Bangladesh will take on Sri Lanka in one of the two matches on the opening day of the five-team tournament, slated to finish on October 16.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Messi headlines Argentina squad

Lionel Messi headlines the Argentina squad for three South American World Cup qualifiers in October announced on Monday. The Argentines are away to Paraguay on October 7 before hosting Uruguay three days later and wrapping up against Peru on

October 14, also in Buenos Aires. Argentina, with 18 points, are second in the standings behind Brazil, who have amassed 24 points in eight matches. Three Premier League players -- Aston Villa goalkeeper Emiliano Martinez and Tottenham pair Giovani Lo Celso and Cristian Romero -- are in the Argentina squad even though the country is on Britain's coronavirus travel red list.

Former England World Cup winner Hunt passes away

Former England World Cup winner Roger Hunt died at the age of 83 on Monday following a long illness, his former club Liverpool said. Hunt, who scored three goals during England's victorious World Cup campaign on home soil in 1966, was also Liverpool's record scorer with 285 goals in 492 appearances until Ian Rush broke the record in 1992. Under Bill Shankly, Hunt helped Liverpool win two league titles and their first FA Cup trophy in 1964-65 when he scored in the final against Leeds United. The striker's tally of 244 league goals is still a club record.

Inzamam undergoes angioplasty

Former Pakistan skipper and legendary batter Inzamam-ul-Haq has been hospitalised in Lahore after suffering a heart attack on Monday night. Inzy, 51, underwent an emergency angioplasty. His agent has informed the media that Inzamam's condition is now stable but he remains under observation. Shot to global prominence in the 1992 World Cup, Inzy became Pakistan's highest run-getter in ODI cricket with 11701 runs in 375 matches. In Tests, he has 8829 runs in 119 matches. He has worked as the chief selector in the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) from 2016 to 2019, and has also coached Afghanistan.

Italy to face Argentina in 2022 'Finalissima'

REUTERS

European Championship winners Italy will face Copa America winners Argentina in June 2022, the football governing bodies of Europe and South America said on Tuesday. "The agreement reached by the two organisations currently covers three editions of this match between the respective continental winners," UEFA said in a statement. No venue or competition title name was given for the match but a source told Reuters the game has been given the working title of the 'Finalissima'.