

SPORT

WHAT TO WATCH

GTV & STAR SPORTS 1 HD
IPL
Hyderabad vs Chennai
Live from 8:00 pm
TEN 1
UEFA Europa League
Real Sociedad vs Monaco
Live from 10:45 pm

TEN 2
UEFA Europa League
Legia vs Leicester City
Live from 10:45 pm
Celtic vs Bayer Leverkusen
Live from 1:00 am (Friday)
TEN 3
UEFA Europa League

Olympique Marseille vs Galatasaray
Live from 1:00 am (Friday)
SONY SIX
UEFA Europa League
West Ham vs Rapid Vienna
Live from 1:00 am (Friday)



Sheriff Tiraspol players shocked the football world on Tuesday night, beating record 13-time champions Real Madrid 2-1 in a group fixture of the Champions League in Madrid. Sebastian Thill, who has a tattoo of himself dreaming of playing in the Champions League, smashed in the winner in the 89th minute. (Bottom) Meanwhile, seven-time champions AC Milan suffered a 2-1 defeat at home against Atletico Madrid, thanks to Luis Suarez's stoppage-time winner.

PHOTO: AFP/REUTERS/TWITTER

'WE ALL WENT CRAZY'

AFP, Madrid

Sheriff Tiraspol said they had not been overawed on their first trip to the mighty Real Madrid -- and proved it by winning 2-1 late on in one of the biggest upsets in Champions League history.

With all the talk of a European Super League for the elite, the minnows from the Moldovan league gave a timely reminder of the appeal of open competition.

"We came here to win," said Frank Castaneda, the Sheriff



captain. "We didn't just come here to sit around. We know how good our players are and luckily for us Madrid weren't able to take their chances -- and we took ours."

For Sheriff this was only a second match in the Champions League group stage and the estimated value of their entire squad is 12 million euros, about the same as the annual salary of Madrid defender David Alaba.



Real dominated but Sheriff scored two excellent goals and had a third disallowed for offside, and now has six points out of six.

Sebastian Thill, who has a tattoo of himself dreaming of playing in the Champions League, smashed in the winner in the 89th minute.

"It's the best and most important goal of my career, that's for sure," Thill said.

"The side were so brave with how we played and luckily enough I was able to score a bit of a stunner."

Florentino Perez, the Real Madrid president, has said he struggled to get interested in Champions League group games and he might have wished he had missed this one.

Perez is one of the staunchest advocates of the aborted European Super League. But on the same day

UEFA agreed to drop sanctions against the 12 clubs involved in the project, Sheriff reminded everyone that it's not just about the perceived big boys.

The Super League was intended to put an end to seemingly unbalanced match-ups like these -- and the occasional shock that comes with them -- leaving a competition only for a self-selected elite.

"It's football, we had 20 shots or more and we scored one, they had two shots, scored both," Real's Casemiro told Movistar+.

"We have to pay more attention, especially defensively. We started well, we had total control of the game, we had opportunities to get ahead, but they scored a great goal at the end."

The romance of Sheriff's success is questionable given the club is owned by a conglomerate, called Sheriff, which effectively runs the pro-Russian separatist state of Transnistria, where the football club is based.

Yet it is hard to begrudge players like Thill their moment of glory. "After this match we all went crazy. There are a lot of foreigners in the club, we come from all types of countries. It's our strength," said Thill, who last season was playing on loan at FC Tambov in Russia, a club that was dissolved in May and had to declare itself bankrupt.

For Real Madrid, the path to the last 16 is still open, which points to the real weakness of the current Champions League: the format, not the teams involved.

The biggest clubs rarely fail to get through to the last 16 and a few shock results can easily be absorbed.

"We've missed out on three points and the group is wide open. We need to win our next game," said Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti, adding: "It's small details that cost us this game."

Real have been scoring plenty of goals and playing an exciting style of football since Ancelotti's return but he has complained about the defence, which was again caught napping.

Messi rises to the occasion

AFP, Paris



It was the moment the fans had really been waiting for ever since Lionel Messi was unveiled as a Paris Saint-Germain player nearly two months ago.

The Argentine had featured only fleetingly for his new club and had not scored a goal, but he chose his moment to get off the mark in Tuesday's heavyweight Champions League clash with Manchester City.

It was a trademark strike by the Argentine that put PSG 2-0 up against Pep Guardiola's side in the 74th minute, securing a victory that sends out a message to the rest of Europe, even this early in the season.

The six-time Ballon d'Or winner was having a quiet evening until he collected possession just inside the City half near the right touchline and scampered towards goal. He held off Aymeric Laporte and played a one-two with Kylian Mbappe before sending a shot high into the net from just outside the box.

Guardiola -- who has been on the receiving end of Messi's magic before against Barcelona with Bayern Munich and with City -- called his former pupil "unstoppable". "I don't usually celebrate goals, but that one I did," said PSG coach Mauricio Pochettino, who came up against Messi as coach of Espanyol.



"I have seen him score plenty of times before when I was on the opposition bench, so for once I was on the right hand and could celebrate."

Messi left Barcelona as their all-time top scorer with 672 goals in 778 appearances, a record tally for one club.

Now he is up and running in Paris and the crowd at the Parc des Princes, who will not forget their evening, will hope it was just the first of many. "It is true that I was becoming desperate to get my first goal," Messi, who was making just his fourth appearance for Pochettino's side, told Canal Plus.

The 34-year-old came to Paris with his sights firmly set on winning the Champions League, a trophy he last won with Barcelona in 2015.

A team containing Messi, Mbappe and Neymar -- not to mention Angel Di Maria, who was suspended on Tuesday -- can target nothing less than victory in a competition PSG have never won.

The early signs this season have not always been promising, with PSG drawing 1-1 at Club Brugge in their first European game and facing largely limited opposition on the way to eight wins out of eight in Ligue 1.

But Messi believes his relationship with Mbappe and Neymar, the so-called 'MNM', is developing. "As we go along we are getting to know each other better," he said.

Meanwhile in Group D, Serie A champions Inter Milan remain winless in Europe this season following the 0-0 draw at Shakhtar.

In Group B, Mohamed Salah and Roberto Firmino scored twice as Liverpool hammered Porto 5-1 and Luis Suarez claimed a 97th-minute winner as Atletico Madrid edged AC Milan 2-1 in Italy.

LONG CORNER

British tennis player Emma Radacanu poses on the red carpet of the World Premiere of James Bond 007 film 'No Time to Die' at the Royal Albert Hall in west London on Tuesday. The 18-year-old Briton became the first qualifier to win a Grand Slam earlier this month when she beat fellow teenager Leylah Fernandez of Canada in straight sets in the final of the US Open.

PHOTO: REUTERS



Manny Pacquiao retires from boxing

Philippine superstar and presidential hopeful Manny Pacquiao announced Wednesday he is retiring from boxing after a glittering decades-long career in the ring, describing it as the "hardest decision" of his life.

"It is difficult for me to accept that my time for me as a boxer is over," Pacquiao, 42, who plans to run for president in the 2022 elections, said in a video message on Twitter.

"Today I am announcing my retirement." The eight-division world



champion and national hero made the announcement weeks after losing his last professional fight, against Cuban Yordenis Ugas in Las Vegas.

Pacquiao, who entered politics in 2010 as a congressman before being elected to the Senate, said last week he will make a tilt for the country's highest office.

Pacquiao, a married father of five, thanked his millions of fans around the world, and paid special tribute to his long-time trainer Freddie Roach who he described as "my family, a brother and a friend".

PCB CEO Khan resigns

Chief Executive Wasim Khan has become the third high-profile official to resign from the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) following the appointment of former captain Ramiz Raja as the new chairman of the organisation.

Confirming Khan's resignation in a brief statement, the PCB said its board of governors will meet to discuss the issue on Wednesday.

After spending a decade trying to revive international cricket, Pakistan is once again facing the prospect of being declared the game's no-go area again.

While Khan helped the board woo back some teams in the last two years, Pakistan were dealt a huge blow when New Zealand and England pulled out of their respective tours this month.

Khan did not reply to Reuters' messages requesting comment. Former PCB chairman Ehsan Mani appointed Khan as the chief executive officer of the board in 2019 on a three-year contract.

Booters hope for winning start

SPORTS REPORTER



Bangladesh had their first training session in the Maldives yesterday ahead of the SAFF Championship after the squad returned negative Covid-19 tests.

The men in red and green will take on Sri Lanka in their opening game on October 1 at 10:00pm (Bangladesh Standard Time) at the National Football Stadium in Male.

Team manager Satyajit Das confirmed that the squad had returned negative on Covid-19 tests, but that midfielder Sohel Rana was sidelined with fever, although he is expected to recover soon.

"We reached Maldives yesterday [Tuesday] and immediately took Covid tests and everyone returned negative results. We went to the training ground today [Wednesday] and the players are receiving appropriate training according to the coach's guidance," Das said.

"However, Sohel Rana has mild fever and is taking medication. We expect him to be back soon. The rest of the players are

healthy and training well and preparing for their game against Sri Lanka on Friday."

Defender Tarek Raihan Kazi was eager to get a winning start.

"We arrived in Male yesterday and finished our first practice today. The weather is very nice here. We play our first game against Sri Lanka, so we still have one training session tomorrow [today]. The team is very motivated and everyone has adjusted to the plans well. We are looking forward to the first match against Sri Lanka. It's very important that we win our first match and start with a win," said the Finland-born player.

Bangladeshis living in Maldives are thrilled at the prospect of seeing their team in action.

"An estimated one lakh Bangladeshis currently reside in Maldives. We are delighted that the SAFF tournament is being held here. For us, it's a matter of great fortune and privilege to be able to see our national team live. We hope to see Bangladesh win the SAFF championship," said one supporter.



Captain Jamal Bhuiyan and defender Topu Barman, the two most experienced players of the Bangladesh national football team, pose with the new home and away jerseys of the team during a photo session at the team hotel in the Maldives capital Male yesterday.

PHOTO: BFF

Football transfers begin tomorrow

SPORTS REPORTER

The transfer window for the upcoming football season opens tomorrow and will run up to November 25, decided a meeting of the Bangladesh Premier League sub-committee of Bangladesh Football Federation yesterday.

The meeting, chaired by Abdus Salam Murshedy, also decided that the top league will be held in six venues across the country, with each venue hosting two teams.

The meeting also came to the decision that the season will begin with Independence Cup, which will begin on November 27 and will feature 12 BPL teams alongside four invited teams.

Sayum leads in Runner Golf

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh's golfers fared a lot better in the second professional golf tournament following the Covid-induced break as 10 golfers finished with under-par scores at the end of the first day of the Runner Professional Golf Tournament at the Army Golf Club yesterday.

At the end of play on the first day which constituted two rounds, Mohammad Sayum led with a score of five-under-par (67). Jamal Hossain Mollah finished a stroke behind Sayum, tied with Mohammad Solaiman. The two-day non-ranking event offers a prize purse of Tk 500,000.