

What to WATCH

DAY'S EVENT

T SPORTS & GTV

ICC T20I Men's World Cup 2021

England vs Sri Lanka

Live from 08:00 pm

T SPORTS

La Liga

Levante vs Granada

Live from 01:00 am (Tuesday)

NCL (Day-2)

Dhaka vs Khulna, SICS Academy

Rangpur vs Sylhet, SICS

Chattogram vs Dhaka Metro, BKSP

Rajshahi vs Barishal, Cox's Bazar



Argentines celebrate MARADONA'S 61ST BIRTHDAY

AFP, Rosario

Members of the "Maradonian Church" in Argentina came together Saturday in worshipful celebration of the memory of beloved football idol Diego Maradona, on what would have been his 61st birthday, just weeks before the first anniversary of his death.

Chanting "Ma-ra-do...Ma-ra-do...", these devoted fans of player No. 10 convened in the city of Rosario, the home of a distinctly unusual fan club which, since the 1990s, has venerated the World Cup champion as a god.

The emotional get-together -- more than a few tears were shed -- has been an annual event in tribute to the man many consider the greatest footballer ever.

But this was the first to be held since last November 25, when Maradona, then aged just 60, was felled by a heart attack.

"I think this is the greatest Maradonian movement in the world," Alejandro Veron, one of its founders, told AFP. The "church" claims thousands of "faithful" in more than 50 countries.



TRIBUTES AND TEARS

Between the tributes and the tears, fans told and retold favourite stories about the "Golden Boy" and frequently broke into the traditional chants of Argentine supporters.

They also staged reconstitutions of some of Maradona's most famous goals.

Maradona died while recuperating in Buenos Aires from brain surgery last November for a subdural hematoma.

"Many people realised they loved Diego only after the 25th of November," said Veron.

"But they can get on the train too. There's

room for everyone."

'HE HUGGED ME'

Veron recalled the day he met the superstar and told him about the "church" founded in his honour.

"He hugged me and said thank you," Veron said, his voice shaking with emotion.

"Diego IS football," he added, "he is our best ambassador in the world, a voice for those who have none."

The celebration in Rosario was one of several being held across Argentina on Saturday in Maradona's memory. Football matches were organised in his honour, with a special homage being paid at the 10th minute of each professional match.

The main event was an afternoon match at the Buenos Aires stadium now bearing his name, home to the Argentinos Juniors, Maradona's first club.

Some of the stars from Argentina's World Cup winning championship teams of 1978 and 1986 -- Maradona played on the latter -- participated in the match.

Solskjaer's tweaks pay off

AFP, London

Premier League

Ole Gunnar Solskjaer took Manchester United south to play Tottenham with his job on the line but lives to fight another day after his decisions paid off handsomely in a 3-0 win.

The pressure on the Norwegian was intense after last week's 5-0 horror show against Liverpool, in which Jurgen Klopp's men embarrassed their historic rivals.

United travelled to London for Saturday's game after taking just one point from a possible 12 to fall well off the pace in the Premier League.

Here is a look at three talking points after the win against Spurs lifted United back within touching distance of the top four.

VETERAN STRIKE FORCE

Solskjaer chose to pair Cristiano Ronaldo and Edinson Cavani up front at the Tottenham Hotspur Stadium, selecting a

STEADY VARANE

United's defending at home against Liverpool was catastrophic, summed up by an incident in which Harry Maguire and Luke Shaw collided in the lead-up to Liverpool's second goal.

Solskjaer chose to bring back France defender Raphael Varane against Spurs for his first game for the club since October 2, switching to a central back three, with Shaw and Aaron Wan-Bissaka pushing forward.

"Raphael Varane is a top player," Solskjaer told the BBC. "He reads the game well. He's quick and so experienced. To get him back is massive for us."

United looked calm and assured at the back and goalkeeper David de Gea did not have a single save to make as they recorded just their second clean sheet of the season in all competitions.

'MAN OF THE MATCH' MCTOMINAY

Ronaldo was named man of the match after he scored one goal and created another



strike force with a combined age of 70. It was the first time they had started together.

Young guns Marcus Rashford and Mason Greenwood were sacrificed to make way for the veteran double act, potentially depriving United of thrust down the flanks.

But Ronaldo and Cavani both got on the scoresheet and proved a constant headache for the Spurs defence.

Solskjaer said it was the oldest team he had picked for United, adding he had decided it was time to bank on experience.

"The old men led from the front," he told Sky Sports. "They play well together. They have loads of respect for each other. The work-rate and quality they put in is second to none."

for Cavani but Solskjaer said Scotland midfielder Scott McTominay was his pick as the standout player.

McTominay and Fred were bypassed by Liverpool's quicksilver attackers last week but established control in London as part of a midfield four and provided a platform for the men up front.

"Man of the match for me, by a mile," said the United boss.

"That's the Scott we have seen a few times before. He's had his injury, he's had his operation (on a groin injury) this season but today I thought he was absolutely brilliant."

"He won his tackles, drove forward, kept the ball simple, switched play, headed away a few set-plays. So, absolutely top."

Warne blasts Australia's team selection

REUTERS

Former spinner Shane Warne has questioned the inclusion of Steve Smith in Australia's line-up at the Twenty20 World Cup in a scathing assessment of the country's loss against England on Saturday.

Warne criticised team selection after Australia fell to an eight-wicket loss after England chased down 125.

"Disappointing selection from Australia leaving (Mitch) Marsh out & (Glenn) Maxwell batting in the power play (he should always come in after power play)," he wrote on Twitter. "(Marcus) Stoinis should have gone in. Poor strategy & tactics from the Aussies. I love Smith but he shouldn't be in the T/20 team. Marsh has to be."

Former test captain Smith is widely viewed as one of the leading batsmen in the longer version of the game but struggled against England in Dubai, scoring one run off five balls.

Warne praised Eoin Morgan's team, who now sit on top of Group 1 in the 12-team Super 12 with six points from their opening three matches. The top two teams from each of the two six-nation groups advance to the semifinals. Pakistan currently lead Group 2 ahead of Afghanistan.

"Proper T/20 cricket that from England! Australia will hopefully learn how they need to play after that smashing they copped from the Poms. Pakistan & England are showing how to play T/20 cricket. Australia need to change their thinking re style of play plus the team."

Mominul, Mahmudul drive Chattogram

SPORTS REPORTER

NCL

With Bangladesh set to commence their new cycle of the World Test Championship (WTC) later this month through the two home Tests against Pakistan, the ongoing National Cricket League (NCL) was supposed to help the cricketers, especially the national Test players, get into the groove in the longer version.

And Test skipper Mominul Haque, who is also leading Chattogram Division in the NCL, smashed a ton against Dhaka Metropolis in Savar yesterday. The commanding 141-ball 103, laced with 11 boundaries, is ought to give the left-hander much-needed confidence and hopes for helping Bangladesh fare better in the next cycle of the (WTC) after finishing the previous season at the bottom of the table with no wins from seven games.

Aside from Mominul, young right-handed batter Mahmudul Hasan Joy also scored a century as Chattogram finished the day in a dominating position with 316

for four after electing to bat.

However, Mahmudul, unlike skipper Mominul, was a bit more cautious, scoring 112 off 195 deliveries with nine boundaries.

The duo of Mahmudul and Mominul strung together a 208-run third-wicket stand after Chattogram openers -- Parvez Hossain Emon (44 off 96) and Pinak Ghosh (43 off 83) -- had provided their side with a convincing start.

However, Dhaka Metro got some momentum back in the latter part of the day as Abu Hider and Rakibul Hasan removed Mominul and Mahmudul respectively in successive overs just a few overs before umpires called stumps.

Mominul and Mahmudul were not the only centurions on the day as Sohag Gazi's blistering ton helped Barishal Division amass 360 for seven against Rajshahi Division at the Sheikh Kamal International Cricket Stadium Academy Ground in Cox's Bazar. Gazi, known for his quick run-scoring abilities in the domestic circuit, tore apart the Rajshahi bowling line-up as he smashed a total of 10 maximums and

five boundaries during his fiery 95-ball 113. And Shamsul Islam's unbeaten 56 and fifties from Mohammad Ashraful (50 off 108) and Fazle Mahmud (70 off 59) at the top meant Barishal ended with a commendable total on the board.

Meanwhile, at the Sylhet International Cricket Stadium Academy Ground, unbeaten fifties from Nahidul Islam and Mehedi Hasan Miraz helped Khulna Division recover from an early slump to score 231 for six against Dhaka Division before stumps. Nahidul remained unbeaten on 77 while Miraz scored 51 not out. For Dhaka, spinner Namul Islam and pacer Anamul Haque scalped two wickets each.

In the other game in Sylhet, pacer Robiul Haque scalped four while Mukidul Islam and spinner Sohrawordi Shuvo took three wickets each to help Rangpur Division bundle out Sylhet Division for a meagre 113 in just 51 overs.

Rangpur openers Myshukur Rahaman and Jahid Javed scored unbeaten 46 and 29 respectively, helping their side end the day with 82 for no loss.



Khazri scores 68-metre goal

AFP, Paris

Tunisia international Wahbi Khazri scored from well inside his own half as Saint-Etienne drew 1-1 at fellow Ligue 1 strugglers Metz on Saturday.

Farid Boulaya drilled in a long-range free-kick to give Metz an early lead, but his goal was upstaged minutes later by Khazri's memorable strike, measured at 68 metres according to Opta.

Khazri dribbled upfield after retrieving the ball inside his own penalty area and hammered it over the backpedalling Alexandre Oukidja for his fourth goal in as many games, and seventh of the season.

"I've tried it a lot, sometimes they make fun of me, but when it comes off it's good. It's good for the team above all," Khazri told Prime Video.

"I took the ball forward and I didn't have too many options, I had a go and pulled it off."

Saint-Etienne have drawn three of their past four matches but remain bottom of the table and without a win through 12 games of the season. Metz are just one point above them in 18th place.

Lyon bounced back from a tough loss at Nice last weekend by beating second-placed Lens 2-1 to climb to within a point of the top three.

Karl Toko Ekambi scored a penalty and Houssem Aouar added a second for the hosts before half-time. Arnaud Kalimuendo pulled a goal back for Lens, who lost for the second time in three games.

Lens trail leaders Paris Saint-Germain by 10 points following their 2-1 defeat against PSG.