

TSPORTS

Sri Lanka vs West Indies
2nd Test, Day 3
Live from 10:30 am
Abu Dhabi T10
Bangla Tigers vs Deccan

Gladiators

Live from 08:00 pm
Chennai Braves vs Delhi
Bulls
Live from 10:00 pm
La Liga

Real Madrid vs Athletic

Bilbao
Live from 02:00 am
(Thursday)
STAR SPORTS HD 2

Watford vs Chelsea

Live from 1:30 am (Thursday)
VH1
Serie A
Inter Milan vs Spezia
Live from 11:30 pm
Genoa vs AC Milan
Live from 1:45 am (Thursday)



LEWANDOWSKI 'deserves award for 2020'

AGENCIES

Lionel Messi has said he believes Robert Lewandowski should be retrospectively awarded the 2020 Ballon d'Or as he praised the Bayern Munich striker in his acceptance speech for the 2021 honour on Monday.

Messi was crowned the 2021 Ballon d'Or winner at a ceremony in Paris, claiming the trophy for the seventh time in his career.

But the Paris Saint-Germain star admits he had tough competition in the form of Lewandowski this year as he gave a special mention to the Poland international.

"I would like to mention Robert Lewandowski, it's been a real honour to compete with you," Messi said after collecting the trophy.

"Everyone knows and we agree that you were the winner last year."

"I think France Football should award you your 2020 Ballon d'Or - you deserve it and you should



have it at home."

He added: "I think Robert Lewandowski had a great year. Year after year, he improves and shows the excellent striker he is, as well as his ability to score goals."

"This year he was awarded as the top scorer. Of course he can certainly aspire to that level next year, thanks to his way of being on the pitch. And in addition, he plays for a big club."

Lewandowski was largely seen as the favourite to win the Ballon d'Or in 2020 because of his goal scoring exploits for Bundesliga champions Bayern.

But the award was cancelled that year because of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Schick's Euro stunner in FIFA shortlist

REUTERS

FIFA have announced an 11-player shortlist for this year's Puskas Award, with Patrik Schick's goal against Scotland at Euro 2020 among the nominees.

Czech forward Schick beat goalkeeper David Marshall with one of the most remarkable goals in European Championship history, a stunning 45-metre strike from just inside the halfway line as his team beat Scotland 2-0.

Schick's effort was subsequently voted goal of the tournament.

Tottenham Hotspur forward Son Heung-min won the award in 2020 for his solo effort against Burnley in the Premier League in which he ran nearly the length of the pitch, dribbling past several Burnley defenders before scoring.



Manchester City's Caroline Weir makes a second consecutive appearance in the shortlist, courtesy of a deft chip from the edge of the box in an FA Women's Super League derby match against Manchester United.

Premier League players Erik Lamela and Riyad Mahrez are also on the list.

Lamela scored with a rabona against Arsenal in a North London derby and Mahrez was recognised for his solo effort against Zimbabwe while on international duty with Algeria. The winner will be selected by an international jury comprised of former footballers and select fans from across the globe. The winner will be announced on Jan. 17.



Bangladesh Police FC's Denilson Roldao manouevres the ball past a Chattogram Abahani player during their Riviera Independence Cup fixture in Kamalapur yesterday.

PHOTO: BFF

Thankgod for Ctg Abahani

SPORTS REPORTER



Former champions C h a t t o g r a m Abahani

came from behind to play out a 1-1 draw against Bangladesh Police FC in a Group D encounter of the Riviera Independence Cup at the Birsreshtha Shaheed Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Kamalapur yesterday.

Abahani's Nigerian forward Ebimobowei Thankgod cancelled out a 48th-minute lead from Police's Brazilian Denilson Roldao in the 50th minute to snatch a valuable point for the 2016 champions.

Even though Chattogram Abahani could not form a strong squad like last season as all national players left the club, the current brigade of Maruful Haque were good enough to hold Rumanian tactician Aristica Ciobă's rejuvenated Bangladesh Police side.

Bangladesh Police, who fielded all four foreign recruits from Brazil, Germany and Afghanistan, looked much better from the beginning against a depleted Chattogram Abahani side but they were not lucky

to leave the field with a victory over the Sky Blues, who played with three foreign recruits.

Police could have taken the lead in the very first minute when Afghan forward Amiruddin Sharifi ran into the box from the right flank to cut it back for Amirul Islam, who however surprised all to tap it wide from in front of open net. Then national discard Mathews Bablu, after being

KINGS EASE PAST NAVY

Defending champions Bashundhara Kings thrashed Bangladesh Navy Football Club 6-0 in the day's second clash, which saw some 16 current and former national players pitted against each other. The foreign recruits of Kings, though, made the difference against Navy, who were playing without foreigners.

Former Bosnian international Stojan Vranjes scored twice while Brazilians Jonathan Fernandes, Robson Robinho and Nigerian-born Bangladeshi striker Eleta Kingsley scored a goal apiece for the defending champions. The last goal conceded by Navy was an own goal.

set up by Denilson, was denied brilliantly by defender Shawkat Russel in the 13th minute.

Police kept pressing to break the deadlock, with Sharifi coming close in the 24th minute but his placing shot at post narrowly missed the target.

Police kept mounting pressure on Chattogram Abahani and broke the deadlock three minutes into the second half when Bablu ran down the left to drive a shot only to be parried by goalkeeper Mohammad Nehal but the ball fell to Denilson, who mustered a powerful shot to the upper corner of the net.

However, Police could hold the lead for only two minutes as Rashed Alam handled the ball inside the box and Thankgod stepped up to convert the resulting spot-kick.

Maruf soon brought a couple of changes in midfield to battle equal with Police, who could hardly make any room in the second half except for a dying minute-attempt when Sharifi, availing a long ball, raced into the box to drive a low shot only to be thwarted by goalkeeper Azad in the 89th minute.

Domestic chores put Burundian on track to success

REUTERS, Nairobi

For 19-year-old Burundian Adelphine Nimpasha, regularly carrying more than twice her own weight in rice on her father's bicycle proved to be excellent - albeit unusual - preparation for becoming a professional cyclist.

On Sunday, Nimpasha came sixth in Africa's first international women's cycling competition after a fall cost her the lead she had held for most of the way.

"I didn't give up but rose up, took my bicycle, and proceeded to finish the race," said Nimpasha, who finished in the top three in national competitions in Egypt and Nigeria before the latest competition, held in her home country.

Her determination earned her the road cycling "combativity" award. Two Kenyans and a Ugandan won the top three prizes.

Cycling is gaining popularity as a



sport in Burundi, where bicycles are already an essential part of life for many. But resources are limited.

"The bicycles are not... suitable. There is also a financial problem - organising training requires huge financial means to accommodate and feed participants for three or four months," said Prosper

She hopes to be an internationally celebrated athlete like Francine Niyonsaba, the Burundian runner who won silver in the 2016 Rio Olympics and broke a 2,000-metre world record in September this year.

"Now I want to become for cycling what Niyonsaba is for athletics."

Ronaldo takes a dig at Pascal Ferre

REUTERS

Cristiano Ronaldo has hit back at comments made by Ballon d'Or organiser Pascal Ferre, saying the editor-in-chief of France Football "lied" about his rivalry with Lionel Messi.

Ferre told the New York Times on Friday that Manchester United forward Ronaldo's sole ambition was to retire with more of the awards for the world's best player than Messi.

"Pascal Ferre lied, he used my name to promote himself and to promote the publication he works for," Ronaldo, who has won the award five times, said in an Instagram post on Monday.



"It is unacceptable that the person responsible for awarding such a prestigious prize could lie in this way, in absolute disrespect for someone who has always respected France Football and the Ballon d'Or."

France Football did not immediately respond to an emailed request for comment on Ronaldo's post. "I always win for myself and for the clubs I represent, I win for myself and for those who love me. I don't win against someone," added the Portugal forward. "The biggest ambition of my career is to leave my name written in golden letters in the history of world football."