

What to WATCH

TEN 1
UEFA Europa League
Lyon vs Rangers
Live from 11:45 pm

TEN 2
UEFA Europa League
Napoli vs Leicester

Live from 11:45 pm
West Ham vs Dinamo Zagreb
Live from 02:00 am (Friday)

SONY SIX
UEFA Europa League
Real Sociedad vs PSV
Live from 11:45 pm

Lazio vs Galatasaray
Live from 02:00 am (Friday)

The Ashes
Australia vs England
1st Test, Day 3
Live from 06:00 am (Friday)

T SPORTS

Banglabandhu Gold Cup U17
Rajshahi Division vs Sylhet Division
Live from 12:30 pm

Bangamata Gold Cup U17
Mymensingh Division vs Rangpur Division
Live from 02:30 pm

'No team will want to draw Ajax in CL'

REUTERS, Amsterdam

Ajax Amsterdam coach Erik ten Hag said no team will enjoy being drawn against them in the Champions League round of 16 when the pairings are announced on Monday after the Dutch club won all six of their group stage matches.

Ajax completed a clean sweep of Group C with a 4-2 home win over Sporting Lisbon on Tuesday, with Sebastian Haller becoming only the second player after Cristiano Ronaldo (2017/18) to score in all six group games.

With Liverpool also winning six out of six in their group this campaign, the number of teams to have achieved the feat stands at nine, UEFA said. "It is already difficult to win one match, let alone six

in a row," said Ten Hag, who added that he would not watch the draw for the next round.

"We'll see what comes out. You also know in advance that it will be tough, but we have gained confidence. "We know we can achieve something. No team will enjoy being drawn against Ajax. But we also know that we have to be very good to go to the next round."

Haller, who scored 10 goals in the group, said he was proud of the team's performances. "Of course I feel great, but mainly because of the 18 points from six games," said the French-born Ivory Coast international.



ATLETICO THROUGH AS MILAN CRASH OUT

AFP, Paris

Atletico Madrid won a bad-tempered game in Porto on Tuesday to qualify for the last 16 of the Champions League as Liverpool and Ajax both completed the group stage with 100 percent records.

Diego Simeone's Atletico, who lost to Real Madrid in the 2014 and 2016 finals, needed to beat Porto in Portugal to advance to the knockout phase and they duly triumphed 3-1 in a game which featured three red cards.

Atletico finish second in Group B, a huge 11 points behind group winners Liverpool, who made it six wins out of six in Europe this season by beating AC Milan 2-1 at San Siro despite fielding a virtual reserve side.

Milan had to win to stand a chance of going through and they went ahead midway through the first half through Fikayo Tomori.

Mohamed Salah did start for the visitors and he equalised in the 36th minute before Divock Origi -- who scored a stoppage-time winner in the Premier League at the weekend -- made it 2-1 10 minutes into the second half, heading in after Sadio Mane's shot was saved.

Milan finish bottom of the group in their first Champions League campaign since 2013-14, with Porto parachuting into the Europa League.



REAL MADRID TOP GROUP

Elsewhere, Real Madrid secured top spot in Group D with a 2-0 defeat of Inter Milan at the Santiago Bernabeu.

Both sides had already qualified for the last 16 and Real just needed a draw to top the group. They went ahead through an early Toni Kroos

strike, and Inter had Nicolò Barella sent off just after the hour mark before substitute Marco Asensio sealed Real's victory with a stupendous strike.

"Our objective is to go all the way, not just reach the last 16," said Real coach Carlo Ancelotti.

Moldovan debutants Sheriff Tiraspol had already secured third place before Boban Nikolov's injury-time goal earned them a 1-1 draw at bottom side Shakhtar Donetsk, for whom Fernando had opened the scoring.

MBAPPE, MESSI DOUBLES

Earlier Manchester City, having already clinched first place in Group A, lost 2-1 at RB Leipzig, with Dominik Szoboszlai and Andre Silva on target for the Germans in their first game since sacking coach Jesse Marsch.

Riyad Mahrez pulled one back for City, who had Kyle Walker sent off late on as Leipzig took third place.

Paris Saint-Germain, who finish second in the group, crushed Club Brugge 4-1 with Kylian Mbappe and Lionel Messi both scoring twice.

Mbappe's goals both came inside the first seven minutes and he then set up Messi's first goal, with the Argentinian adding a penalty as he moved on to five Champions League goals in five appearances this season.

AUSTRALIAN OPEN Djokovic on entry list, no Serena

AFP, Melbourne

Men's world number one Novak Djokovic was named among the entries for the Australian Open on Wednesday, following intense speculation about his vaccination status, but women's great Serena Williams was missing.

The Serbian had cast doubt on whether he would defend his Melbourne title next month, refusing to reveal whether he was inoculated against coronavirus, a requirement to play.

But after being named on Tuesday as part of the Serbia team for January's ATP Cup in Sydney that will precede the opening major of the year, he was also listed for the Grand Slam.

Williams, who is marooned on 23 Grand Slam titles -- one short of the all-time record held by Margaret Court -- had been expected to play, but she is not fully fit. The American superstar turned 40 in September and may have played her last Australian Open.

Williams said she had withdrawn following advice from her medical team. "While this is never an easy decision to make, I am not where I need to be physically to compete," she said.

Kings drag Police thru to last eight

SPORTS REPORTER



The quarter finals line-up of Riviera Independence Cup was decided after Bashundhara Kings handed a 3-0 defeat to Chattogram Abahani at Birshreshtha Shaheed Mostafa Kamal Stadium yesterday.

Kings emerged Group D champions with maximum nine points from three outings, which meant that Bangladesh Police finished as group runners-up, by virtue of superior goal difference than Abahani and Bangladesh Navy, after playing a 1-1 draw against Navy in the day's first match.

Having confirmed the quarterfinal berth in the previous match, Spanish coach Oscar Bruzon brought eight changes in the Kings eleven.

Even though Kings lacked intensity upfront with a depleted side, Brazilian Robson Da Silva broke the deadlock in the 22nd minute with a drive from top of the box before Rubel Mia failed to place a shot on the open net in the 26th minute to deprive Abahani an equaliser.

Abahani's Nigerian duo Kehinde Yisa Anifowose and Ebimobowe Thankgod came close to striking one minute before the break but Anifowose squandered the opportunity, which could have taken Abahani ahead of Police in terms of greater goal number of goals scored.

After resumption, Kings strengthened their attack with Mahbubur Rahman Sufil, M o h a m m a d Ibrahim and Matin Mia in the second half.

However, Sufil squandered an opportunity despite getting the opponent goalkeeper and afterwards, Abahani goalkeeper Azad Hossain was sent off in 80th minute as he picked up the ball from the

feet of Bosnian striker Stojan Vranjes outside the box.

And following the marching order, Abahani conceded two quick goals. Ibrahim tapped in to double the margin after substitute goalkeeper Saiful Islam stopped a free-kick from Stojan while



Matin wrapped up victory by dribbling past goalkeeper in the 89th minute to ensure that Kings maintain all-win record before their quarterfinal clash against Sheikh Jamal DC on December 12.

In the day's first match, after a barren first half, Police broke the deadlock against national players-studded Bangladesh Navy with MS Bablu beating goalkeeper Shahedul Alam with a low drive outside the box.

However, Police could hold the lead for only 21 minutes as the former national winger Zahid Hossain, coming on as a substitute, mustered a low free-kick from the left which reached home through the legs of Police defenders.

Both Police and Navy aimed for a spot at quarterfinals with an outright win but they had to be content with a stalemate.



The Bangladesh Football Federation yesterday accorded a reception to Swadhin Bangla Football Team in presence of 14 footballers and two officials of that team that played a tremendous role in creating public opinion and raise fund during the war of independence. The team's captain Jakaria Pintu, vice-captain Protap Shankar Hazra, team manager Tanvir Mazhar Tanna and Kazi Salahuddin, member of that team and current president of BFF, were among others, present at the event. Zahid Ahsan Russel, the state minister for youth and sports, also graced the occasion.

PHOTO: BFF

Raikkonen 'wouldn't change a thing'

AFP, Jeddah

While all eyes in Abu Dhabi will be on the headline drama of the title fight between Lewis Hamilton and Max Verstappen this weekend, another world champion will be making his final appearance in a Formula One car.

Twenty years after making his F1 debut for Sauber at the 2001 Australian Grand Prix, Finnish driver Kimi Raikkonen will start his 349th and final race on Sunday but he says he "wouldn't change a thing" and has

no regrets about stepping away.

"F1 takes up a lot of time but it has never been the main thing for me," the 2007 world champion told AFP.

"My life has always been outside. There are other more important things for me than F1. Today my schedule affects my whole family so I am looking forward to the day I have nothing planned and can do what they want."

Raikkonen also admits that he has not always been the best listener over the course of his career as he forged his own path.

"I think I was given a lot of advice but didn't listen. I always felt you had to live your life in the best way for yourself and not for others.

"At work, if I had an option, I wouldn't do most of what I'm asked, but with your life, how you live your life... you live it for yourself. If you try to live it as someone else wants, you might do it for a year or two but it will not end up very nicely.

"I'm happy I lived my way. Good or bad, I can live with it because it's my decisions.

"I wouldn't change a thing."

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