

"I'd always dreamt of being with Ferrari. I always loved Ferrari, it was my dream since I was a kid."

Ferrari's Formula 1 rider
Charles Leclerc



PSG give Lee green light for Asian Games

REUTERS

Paris St Germain (PSG) have agreed to let midfielder Lee Kang-in join up with South Korea's Asian Games squad during the group stage, the country's football association (KFA) said on Friday.

The KFA said they reached an agreement with the Ligue 1 side late on Thursday and that Lee would be released after PSG's Champions League opener at home to Borussia Dortmund on Tuesday.

Teams are under no obligation to release players for the Asian Games as the tournament falls outside FIFA's official window.

The men's soccer tournament begins on Sept. 19, with South Korea kicking off their campaign against Kuwait as they bid for a third straight gold medal. They will also face Thailand on Sept. 21 and Bahrain three days later in Group E.

Lee, 22, joined PSG from Real Mallorca in July and started their opening two league games but has been sidelined with a muscle injury since Aug. 22.



After bagging two goals and two assists in the first four matches, Mohamed Salah would want to continue his and Liverpool's good start to the season with a victory away to Wolverhampton Wanderers in today's match. Meanwhile, Manchester United would want a reversal to fortunes when they host Brighton and Hove Albion.

PHOTO: TWITTER

Booters not confident of repeating 2018 feat



SPORTS REPORTER

Despite making it to the Round of 16 of the Asian Games for the first time in 2018, Bangladesh team are seemingly not enough confident to repeat the feat in the football event of the Hangzhou Asian Games. The football event will kick off on September 19.

Bangladesh pipped Qatar and Thailand to get out of the group stage in 2018 before being beaten 4-1 by North Korea in the knock-out match.

This time Bangladesh have been pitted against hosts China, India and Myanmar with top two teams slated to advance to the Round of 16.

"I was a member of the 2018 squad, where most of the players had national team experience. This time there are many inexperienced players, who have played in age-group matches but did not get play at top level competitions. However, they are eager to prove themselves to get into the senior team, so we are looking forward to playing match by match and hope to get good results," captain Rahmat Mia said at a press conference ahead of their scheduled departure in the early hours of Saturday.

Head coach Jaiver Cabrera echoed the same sentiment and said they would take each match at a time.

"We don't want to set a target before the start of the Games but we have prepared well, we have a lot of confidence in this group. The players have been together for a long time and our main objective is to make sure we play well against Myanmar in the first match. If we get points from the first match, we will have a good opportunity to advance to the next round," said Cabrera.

Spain women continue nat'l squad boycott

AFP, Madrid

Spain's Women's World Cup-winning squad will continue to reject national team call-ups unless there are more changes at the Spanish football federation following the scandal over Luis Rubiales' unsolicited kiss, a source close to the federation said Friday.

"They are not coming," the source told AFP just hours before new coach Montse Tome was set to announce her squad on Friday for the Nations League matches against Sweden and Switzerland on September 22 and 26.

Spanish football has been in turmoil since Rubiales forcibly kissed midfielder Jenni Hermoso on the lips in front of the world's media after Spain defeated England in the Women's World Cup final on August 20 in Australia.

A letter signed by 81 Spain players, including the 23 world champions, was released last month stating they would not play for the national team without significant changes at the head of the federation.

Since then Rubiales has resigned and the football federation sacked their controversial coach Jorge Vilda, named Tome in his stead and pledged further internal reforms. Tome was Vilda's former assistant manager.

Spanish media said the players would later on Friday release a statement outlining the changes that they still expect to see before they return to the pitch.

Manchester United, Chelsea seek reset

AFP, Manchester

Manchester United and Chelsea are under pressure to get back on track as the Premier League returns from an international break, while Manchester City aim to maintain their perfect start to the season.

Tottenham, Liverpool and Arsenal are also in impressive form with 10 points from a possible 12 – each with the chance to climb to the top of the table if champions City stumble against in-form West Ham at the London Stadium.

Here are three talking points ahead of this weekend's action:

Brighton to deepen Man Utd crisis?

Defeats to Tottenham and Arsenal have already left Manchester United six points off the top of the table, dampening hopes of a first Premier League title challenge since 2013.

Brighton won at Old Trafford for the first time in their history last season but it would not be a shock should the Seagulls emerge victorious again.

United struggled in home victories over Wolves and Nottingham Forest last month and face a step up in class against Roberto De Zerbi's men.

Brighton have shrugged off the sale of some of their prized assets to win three of their first four games and have scored more Premier League goals than any other club.

Erik ten Hag will be hoping new signings Sofyan Amrabat and Rasmus Hojlund can give United a much-needed lift.



Hojlund impressed as a substitute on his debut at Arsenal before the international break, while Amrabat is yet to feature after signing on loan from Fiorentina on deadline day.

Money can't buy Chelsea goals

Despite leading the Premier League again when it came to money spent in the transfer window, Chelsea have won just one of Mauricio Pochettino's first four league games in charge.

The Blues have splashed out more than £1 billion (\$1.25 billion) on new players in three windows under the ownership of a consortium fronted by Todd Boehly.

Yet they still suffered from a familiar lack of cutting edge in their 1-0 defeat at home to Forest two weeks ago.

Chastened by their worst Premier League season for decades in 2022/23, Chelsea insist they are playing the long game, with huge fees bet on promising

youngsters becoming stars of the future.

But failure to beat a Bournemouth side yet to taste victory in the league under Andoni Iraola on Sunday will have alarm bells ringing at Stamford Bridge.

Newcastle suffer slow start

Newcastle will return to the Champions League for the first time in 20 years next week, but after a rapid rise fuelled by Saudi cash, the Magpies are suffering something of a reality check.

Eddie Howe's men have lost three of their opening four games, seriously undermining any title aspirations.

Howe can point to a tough run of fixtures as mitigation for the slow start.

But after consecutive defeats to City, Liverpool and Brighton, he needs a return to winning ways against Brentford this weekend to restore a sense of calm before jetting off to face AC Milan in the Champions League on Tuesday.

Derby day puts Milan giants in spotlight

AFP, Milan

Italy's Milan giants face off in Saturday's local derby which pits Serie A's form teams against one another in a match which will give an early indication of their title credentials.

The San Siro will host a rematch of last season's Champions League semi-final, a fixture that promises similar fireworks to the two blockbuster clashes in May which went Inter Milan's way.

Inter and AC Milan are locked on nine points at the top of the table after perfect starts from both in which summer signings have made an immediate impact.

Simone Inzaghi's Inter have scored eight times without conceding in their opening three matches thanks to a strike partnership between Lautaro Martinez and new arrival Marcus Thuram which has brought seven goals.

Milan meanwhile have a trio of new signings thrilling fans alongside their established stars, with Tijjani Reijnders and Chelsea old boys Ruben Loftus-Cheek and Cristian Pulisic hitting the ground running.

Stefano Pioli has Milan playing an entertaining, fluid style of football boosted by Pulisic's presence on the right wing, which has freed up star man Rafael Leao and given increased service to four-goal Olivier Giroud who should start despite picking up an ankle knock on international duty.

"We've started really well and I know that we'll do all we can," USA forward Pulisic told the Gazzetta Dello Sport.

"We're hopeful for the Scudetto, we've got good players and a great mix of talent. We can win."



Inter have, Thuram aside, a similar starting XI to the one which lost to Manchester City in Istanbul in June but have quality back up in the likes of Juan Cuadrado and Davide Frattesi.

Midfielder Frattesi hasn't started since

arriving from Sassuolo but impressed for Italy with a brace against Ukraine on Tuesday night, putting pressure on Inzaghi to pick the 22-year-old.

Juventus, two points behind the Milan duo, kick off the weekend's action at home to Lazio rocked by Paul Pogba's provisional suspension for a doping violation.

France star Pogba has a potential four-year ban hanging over his head for elevated levels of testosterone after being tested following a match in which he didn't even play.

On Thursday a source told AFP that midfielder Pogba has requested examination of the 'B' sample taken during the doping test, and a positive result would reportedly put the 30-year-old at risk of having his contract terminated by Juve.

It is yet another destabilising scandal for Juve, who were docked 10 points last season for alleged illicit transfer activity and await a potential, related criminal trial for fraud.

A tough week for Juve, who are not accused of any wrongdoing in Pogba's doping violation, got worse with reports that next week's board meeting will confirm a 115 million-euro loss for last season.

Juve are also being sued by Italy defender Leonardo Bonucci who confirmed on Thursday legal action over how he was frozen out by Juve, in a manner he considers "humiliating" and against professional football's collective bargaining agreement.



PHOTO: TWITTER

After a historic debut with the Spanish national team last week, 16-year-old Lamine Yamal was back in training for Barcelona as the action shifts to club football. The youngster would like to make an impact as Barcelona, sitting third on the points table behind Real Madrid and Girona, host Real Betis tonight.