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Brady gets Patriots out of trouble, adds to legacy

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Moharram 26, 1440 AH

# GULF TIMES SPORT



CRICKET

Windies crumble after Kohli, Jadeja post tons in Rajkot

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HORSE RACING

# Marid, Al Haffanah land Qatar Arabian trophies

Sheikh Abdullah's Marid won among the colts while Al Shaqab Racing's Al Haffanah triumphed among the fillies



HE Sheikh Joaan bin Hamad al-Thani (centre) lifts the trophies as His Highness Sheikh Abdullah bin Khalifa al-Thani (second from right) applauds after Al Shaqab Racing's Al Haffanah, trained by Thomas Fourcy (third from right) and ridden by Julien Auge (third from left), won the Qatar Arabian Trophy des Poulaches (Group 1 PA) at Saint Cloud, near Paris, France, yesterday.



His Highness Sheikh Abdullah bin Khalifa al-Thani (second from left) lifts the trophy as HE Sheikh Joaan bin Hamad al-Thani (right) applauds after Marid, trained by Antoine de Watragant (third from right) and ridden by Olivier Peslier (third from left), won the Qatar Arabian Trophy des Poulains (Group 1 PA) at Saint Cloud yesterday.

By A Correspondent  
Paris

Qatar's horses dominated the Arabian racing action at Saint-Cloud, near Paris, in the presence of His Highness Sheikh Abdullah bin Khalifa al-Thani and Qatar Olympic Committee president HE Sheikh Joaan bin Hamad al-Thani.

Sheikh Abdullah's Marid and Al Shaqab Racing's Al Haffanah won the two Group 1 Arabian races at Saint-Cloud, a day before the action shifts to a newly-renovated Longchamp in the French capital for the annual Qatar Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe.

The races at Saint-Cloud are held as part of the partnership between the Qatar Racing and Equestrian Club (QREC) and France Galop.

In the Qatar Arabian Trophy des Poulains (Group 1 for three-year-old colts), Marid imposed himself in the 2000m contest.

Marid, who lined up as a favourite, stayed behind for a while and despite tough performances by other runners, he accelerated under jockey Olivier Peslier to be the nearest one to the finish line in the last metres before the post.

This was the second Group 1 victory for Antoine de Watragant's ward after his summer win in the Prix Kesberoy.

The Didier Guillemin-trained Deryan came second under jockey Mickael Barzalona while the Al Shaqab Racing-owned and Thomas Fourcy-saddled Shalaa completed the frame with Qatari jockey Faleh Bughenaim in the saddle.

Sheikh Joaan presented the owner's trophy to Sheikh Abdullah, besides giving away trophies to the winning trainer and jockey.

Qatar's first victory of the day was quickly followed by yet another win, this by with Al Haffanah landing the Qatar



Olivier Peslier (right) rides His Highness Sheikh Abdullah bin Khalifa al-Thani-owned Marid to victory in the Qatar Arabian Trophy des Poulains (Group 1 PA) at Saint Cloud yesterday. PICTURES: Juhaim, Zuzanna Lupa



Julien Auge rides Al Shaqab Racing's Al Haffanah to victory in the Qatar Arabian Trophy des Poulaches (Group 1 PA) at Saint Cloud yesterday.

Arabian Trophy des Poulaches (Group 1 for three-year-old fillies).

Thomas Fourcy-schooled filly dominated throughout the 2000m run and had no issues

in landing the fillies title under jockey Julien Auge to remain unbeaten.

The F Sanchez-schooled Bayan was the runner-up under jockey Ioritz Mendizabal while

Xavier Thomas Demeaulte's ward Baseel came third under Barzalona.

After the fillies' contest, Sheikh Abdullah presented the owner's trophy to Sheikh Joaan.

## Superiority of Qatar's Arabian horses cannot be questioned, says al-Kaabi



Qatar Racing and Equestrian Club general manager Nasser bin Sherida al-Kaabi (left) at the Saint Cloud race meeting yesterday.



Al Shaqab executive director Khalifa bin Mohamed al-Attiyah.

By A Correspondent  
Paris

Qatar Racing and Equestrian Club general manager Nasser bin Sherida al-Kaabi was elated with the Qatari victories at Saint-Cloud racecourse near Paris yesterday.

"First of all, I would like to thank His Highness Sheikh Abdullah bin Khalifa al-Thani and His Excellency Sheikh Joaan bin Hamad al-Thani, President of Qatar Olympic Committee, for their presence at the races," he said. "Their presence doubled the joy of victory and added to the momentum to this prestigious meeting, which is held as one of the associated events with the Qatar Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe." He added: "Qatar's superiority in Arabian racing is the outcome of the commitment of the country's officials. Qatar is a leader in Arabian racing and the domination of Qatar's Arabians

is a natural result. Marid and Al Haffanah proved that again today and we look forward to more victories in this edition of the Qatar Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe.

"Tomorrow and on Sunday, the races will be run at the renovated ParisLongchamp after a gap of two years when they were held at Chantilly. I think this edition will have an unprecedented success, especially with the massively-anticipated and highly-coveted Group 1 Qatar Arabian World Cup and the Group 1 Qatar Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe, which will see 19 of the top Thoroughbreds from across the world."

**MARID, AL HAFFANAH CONFIRMED QATAR'S SUPERIORITY: AL-ATTIYAH**  
Al Shaqab executive director Khalifa bin Mohamed al-Attiyah expressed his happiness with the victories at Saint-Cloud yesterday. "The presence of His Highness

Sheikh Abdullah bin Khalifa al-Thani and His Excellency Sheikh Joaan bin Hamad al-Thani today demonstrates the considerable support we receive in the events where we compete overseas," he said.

"The joy is doubled when victories come as well. Today, His Highness Sheikh Abdullah bin Khalifa al-Thani-owned Marid confirmed that he was the best when he won the Group 1 Qatar Arabian Trophy des Poulains and so did the Al Shaqab Racing-owned Al Haffanah in the Gr 1 Qatar Arabian Trophy des Poulaches.

"It also demonstrates Qatar's excellence and domination over Arabian racing worldwide. Al Haffanah is a filly of Amer out of Al Nachmiya and the latter was the one who landed the first victory ever for His Excellency Sheikh Joaan bin Hamad al-Thani. We, therefore, are hopeful to continue the same tradition and excellence in the coming races."

TOP OF THE LINE

# Qatari flag hoisted at Asian Para Games



Qatari delegation at the Asian Para Games in Jakarta. (Right) Qatari flag being hoisted.

**QNA**  
Jakarta

The Qatari flag was hoisted yesterday during a ceremony held at the Athletes village for the Asian Para Games, which are being hosted in Jakarta and will continue until October 13, with the participation of more than 3,000 athletes from 43 Asian countries across various sporting disciplines.

The flag hoisting ceremony was held in a festive atmosphere in the Indonesian capital by the

Organising Committee, while the opening ceremony will be held at the Olympic Stadium in Jakarta today.

The Qatari flag hoisting ceremony was preceded by exchange of gifts and shields between the mayor of the village and head of the Qatari mission Abdulqader al-Mutawa, followed by the flag-raising ceremony and the national anthem, in the presence of all members of the Qatari delegation.

Meanwhile, the Qatari national team increased their physical and technical preparations for this tournament in

hopes of attaining new sports achievements. The goalball team continued training led by coach Abdulqader Khadim. Athletic team also continued daily trainings.

Al-Mutawa praised the efforts made by the members of the Indonesian Organising Committee.

He expressed his satisfaction with the preparations made by the players, stressing that this edition of the games will witness strong competition, especially as a large number of the competing teams are ranked first in the world especially in the



athletic games. He added that players made great technical and physical preparations.

In the meantime, the technical meeting of the athletics

competitions will be held today in the presence of deputy head of the mission Mohamed Deheem al-Dosari, and Mohamed Suhail, the technical expert.

RALLYING

# Qatar's Abdulla has work cut out in Morocco



**By Our Correspondent**  
Erfoud, Morocco

Qatar's Adel Abdulla held third overall in the T2 category after the opening desert selective section of the 2018 Rally of Morocco yesterday.

The Nissan Patrol Y62 driver and his French navigator Jean-Michel Polato are aiming to win the FIA T2 World Championship for series production cross-country vehicles for the second time in three seasons.

But a puncture on Thursday's Prologue and a time-loss on the first of the two desert sections of yesterday's route between Fes and Erfoud pushed the QX Rally Team crew down to third in the category behind series leader Ahmed al-Shegawi and Russian rival Alexey Titov.

Moroccan action got underway with a 10km Prologue, near Fes, on Thursday afternoon to enable the overall top 10 to determine their starting positions for the first of the desert sections between Fes and Erfoud yesterday.

Al-Shegawi topped the T2 times with a run of 11min 02sec, Titov was second with a time of 11min 54sec and Abdulla clocked the third quickest time of 15min 42sec.

Abdulla said: "We were very fast in the first part and then in one corner it was very slippery and we under steered and hit the mountain and I had a flat tyre. I

had to stop and change it because the stage was twisty and there were five kilometres to the finish."

After a road liaison of 322km from Fes yesterday morning, action on the opening day in the desert took place over two timed sections of 103km and 91km before the rally caravan arrived in Erfoud – an oasis town situated in the Draa-Tafilalet region of eastern Morocco.

Al-Shegawi held the advantage through the first waypoint on the opening stage, but Abdulla and Titov were separated by just 10 seconds in the virtual standings. Al-Shegawi won the first stage by just one second from Titov, but Abdulla dropped eight minutes to his main rivals and held third place heading to the shorter second section of the stage late on Friday afternoon.

Abdulla's challenge for honours comes with the support of the Qatar Motor and Motorcycle Federation (QMMF), Ooredoo Qatar and Nissan Qatar.

Action continues with a loop stage of around 329km through the Erfoud deserts on Tuesday.

**T2 POSITIONS AFTER SS1**

1. Ahmed al-Shegawi (SAU)/Alexei Kuzmich (RUS) Toyota Land Cruiser 1hrs 52min 41sec
2. Alexey Titov (RUS)/Andrey Rusov (RUS) Ford F-150 1hrs 53min 34sec
3. Adel Abdulla (QAT)/Jean-Michel Polato (FRA) Nissan Patrol Y62 2hrs 04min 48sec

FORMULA 1

# Hamilton fastest in Suzuka practice

'(In) these new cars we're much faster than we were last year'

**Reuters**  
Suzuka, Japan

Formula One champion Lewis Hamilton was comfortably quickest in both practice sessions for the Japanese Grand Prix as the Mercedes driver piled the pressure on title rival Sebastian Vettel of Ferrari yesterday.

Briton Hamilton, fastest ahead of teammate Valtteri Bottas in first practice, lapped the 5.8-km Suzuka circuit even quicker in the later session, posting one minute, 28.217 seconds.

That was 0.833 seconds quicker than Vettel, who improved from fifth in the morning to third quickest in the second session but had no answer to Hamilton's pace.

"I really didn't know where we were going to stand alongside the Red Bulls and the Ferraris," the 33-year-old Briton said after the session. "But I just came here with the mindset, 'Okay I know where I want to get the car.'"

A little over half an hour into the 90-minute session, he had let out a whoop of delight over



Mercedes driver Lewis Hamilton competes during the second practice session for the Japanese Grand Prix at Suzuka yesterday. (AFP)

the team radio: "This track is awesome, I'm having the best day."

"(In) these new cars we're much faster than we were last year," he said explaining his radio transmission.

"...they don't make tracks like this anymore."

Bottas, second again in the afternoon, could get no closer

than 0.461 seconds of the Briton's best.

Hamilton, winner of five of the last six races, leads Vettel by 50 points in the standings with four races left after Japan.

**FADING HOPES**

Vettel hoped the Suzuka circuit would suit his car better than the last two races in Singapore

and Russia to ignite his fading title hopes but on yesterday's evidence the Mercedes pair will be hard to beat.

Vettel's afternoon effort, while quicker than his best attempt in the first 90 minutes, was still slower than Hamilton's morning benchmark, which the Briton had set on the less grippy soft tyres.

"Time will tell, I don't know," said the 31-year-old Vettel when asked if he thought the deficit to Hamilton could be bridged.

"We couldn't do that today but it doesn't matter what they do, we look at ourselves and try to get the best from our package."

Max Verstappen, sixth in the morning, was fourth fastest for Red Bull ahead of Ferrari's Kimi Raikkonen. Verstappen's team mate Daniel Ricciardo was sixth fastest in the afternoon after being third in the morning.

Esteban Ocon stayed seventh, the Frenchman once again the best-of-the-rest in his Force India, and Romain Grosjean was again eighth.

Marcus Ericsson was ninth for Sauber ahead of Kiwi Brendon Hartley, who improved from 17th in the morning to round out the top 10.

Briton Lando Norris, set to make his Formula One debut next season with McLaren, stood in for departing Stoffel Vandoorne in the morning and ended bottom of the timesheets in 20th.

The Belgian returned to the car in the afternoon but could do no better, once again propping up the order.

HORSE RACING

# Riding legend Dettori intent on riding into 50s

**AFP**  
London

Racing legend Frankie Dettori will not be hanging up his riding boots if he wins a sixth Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe tomorrow, he told the Daily Mail, saying he intends to carry on into his 50s.

The exuberant 47-year-old Italian – whose public persona has proved a crucial draw in attracting crowds to the sport over the past three decades – described Enable, the defending champion he will ride tomorrow, as a "once-in-a-lifetime horse".

However, Dettori admits while rumours of his retiring earlier in the year were unfounded, he will no longer ride at run-of-the-



mill tracks in order to prolong his career.

"Those rumours took me by surprise," he said. "Retiring Derby day? That's a bit silly,

isn't it?"

"I'll be 50 in 26 months' time. If I can, I will carry on another five years. I don't want to retire," Dettori, who credits close

friend and trainer of Enable, John Gosden, as having given him a new lease of life after he served a six-month ban for failing a doping test in 2012, says he needs to feel the buzz of the big race days to get the adrenaline pumping.

"I can't get a buzz by going around Windsor on a Monday any more," said Dettori, who famously rode all seven winners on the card at British Champions Day at Ascot in 1996.

"But on Fridays and Saturdays, in front of a big crowd, I come alive."

"It's the way I am and after 31 years, that's the way my mind works."

"The everyday stuff doesn't turn me on any more."

"I am cutting the risk of getting hurt and am more enthusiastic when there is something

there to be chased. It keeps me mentally fresh."

Dettori, who believes fellow English raider Sea of Class represents the biggest threat to winning tomorrow, said even his wife Catherine has had to take second place to Enable.

"I actually told my wife that I love Enable more than her and she just nodded," said Dettori.

"She believes that as well! Without doubt she is the best filly I have ridden and she could write history on Sunday."

"Even in my long career she is a once-in-a-lifetime horse. To win the Arc for a second time on Enable would be pretty special."

"When she gets to the races, the adrenaline kicks in, the blood starts pumping and the heart starts beating. She grows a foot and all she wants to do is run like a wild horse!"

MOTOGP

# Dovizioso quickest in Thai practice, Lorenzo crashes

**AFP**  
Buriram, Thailand

Andrea Dovizioso sped to the fastest lap in practice for the inaugural Thailand MotoGP yesterday as his Ducati teammate Jorge Lorenzo was passed fit for the weekend despite a heavy crash.

Dovizioso led the second session with a lap of 1min 31.090sec, 0.031 ahead of Movistar Yamaha rider Maverick Vinales who had topped the morning timesheets.

Still, he said he was not totally comfortable with the track, which is new to the season.

"The first part of the track for sure is good for our bike, but the second part we are struggling a lot," Dovizioso said.

Repsol Honda's Marc Marquez, who leads Dovizioso by 72 points as he closes in on a fifth MotoGP world title, was fourth quickest in the afternoon session.

But much attention focused on the nasty spill by Lorenzo, who was already dealing with a foot injury sustained in Aragon last month.

He was cleared to race Thursday but told reporters he was still in pain and could be seen limping.

About halfway through the second practice Lorenzo crashed, tumbling across the track as his bike broke into pieces, temporarily stopping the session.

MotoGP tweeted afterwards that Lorenzo was undergoing further medical examinations but "has been declared fit" to race following his accident.

However he told reporters late yesterday that he was scared during the crash, which he blamed on a mechanical problem.



He also said he was still not certain he would be able to compete because of ongoing pain.

"If you ask me now I would say no," he said. "But I don't want to say something too quickly so I will wait tonight (to see) how I feel tomorrow morning."

Thailand is hosting its first MotoGP in Buriram, a sleepy town several hours' drive from the Thai capital Bangkok.

The Chang International Circuit in Buriram is about 4.4 kilometres long and was first tested by riders in February, but many worried about weather conditions, particularly the heat.

Michelin motorsport said it used data about the track from the test to bring tyres constructed to contend with high temperatures and also slick conditions if it rains.

"Yes it's hot but not extremely hot," Marquez said when asked if heat was a factor.

SPOTLIGHT

# McGregor returns to face Nurmagomedov

AFP  
Las Vegas

Conor McGregor makes a long-awaited return to the mixed martial arts octagon today, facing off against unbeaten lightweight champion Khabib Nurmagomedov in a money-spinning grudge match tipped to break pay-per-view records.

Trash-talking Irish star McGregor was one of the highest earners in the sporting world in 2017 after pocketing around \$100m from his cross-combat boxing bout against Floyd Mayweather, which ended in defeat.

Now the 30-year-old former UFC champion is set for another hefty payday when he faces Nurmagomedov at the T-Mobile



Conor McGregor

Arena in Las Vegas on Saturday in what will be his first MMA bout since November 2016.

Bookmakers have installed Nurmagomedov as favourite to

retain his UFC crown, pointing to the Russian's formidable record. Nurmagomedov has won all 26 of his fights, and so far in his career has not lost a single round.

Taking on the powerful champion from Dagestan in his comeback fight represents a colossal gamble by McGregor.

But the drumbeat for a showdown between the outspoken former plumber from Dublin and Nurmagomedov intensified earlier this year when McGregor was at the centre of an extraordinary melee in New York in April.

McGregor and his entourage reportedly sought to confront Nurmagomedov following a press conference at the Barclays Center, claiming the Russian had intimidated one of the Irish fighter's friends, Artem Lobov.

McGregor was filmed hurling a

dolly through a window of a bus carrying Nurmagomedov and other fighters as it moved through a loading dock at the venue. The former champion was later given five days community service and ordered to undergo treatment for anger management.

With that violent encounter offering UFC chiefs a built-in marketing campaign, it was only a matter of time before a fight between McGregor and Nurmagomedov was inked.

While it remains to be seen if McGregor's two-year layoff has left a residue of rust on his fighting skills, the Irishman has been back to his usual brash self on the promotional trail, mixing lurid insults with threats of violence.

"It's good to be back doing what I love to do, competing in front of my fans," McGregor said.

## Frozen by IOC, boxing in danger of Olympic KO

**Buenos Aires:** The International Olympic Committee said yesterday that it has frozen relations with the International Boxing Association (AIBA) and refused to accredit interim president, Gafur Rakhimov, for the Youth Olympics.

The IOC executive board, meeting in Buenos Aires ahead of the start of the youth games, which include boxing, issued a statement to AFP, saying they were "freezing contacts".

"The IOC is freezing all contacts with AIBA, except the ones on the working level which are necessary to implement the respective IOC decisions - for this reason Rakhimov will not be accredited for the Youth Olympic Games," they said.

This is only the latest statement in a week in which the IOC has made clear that it is prepared to kick the AIBA out of the Olympic movement and remove boxing from the 2020 Tokyo Games if "governance problems" were not resolved.

On Wednesday, the IOC said "these include the circumstances of the establishment of the election list."

The IOC did not mention any names, but Rakhimov, who has been linked to organized crime by the US Treasury Department, appears to be a problem.

In February, the IOC said they were worried by the nomination of the Uzbek businessman for the AIBA's interim presidency, which he still took over. That position is set to be confirmed at the AIBA congress in Moscow on November 2-3. Rakhimov faced a challenger, Serik Konakbayev, a Kazakh who won an Olympic silver medal, in Moscow, in 1980 for the USSR.

But on Wednesday, AIBA announced that Rakhimov is now the only candidate for the presidency. Since the AIBA constitution specifies that if there is only one candidate, there is no vote, Rakhimov will become president.

CRICKET

# W Indies crumble after Kohli, Jadeja post tons in Rajkot

Tourists tottering at 94 for six at stumps, trailing India by 555 runs in first Test

AFP  
Rajkot

Indian bowlers rattled the West Indies first-innings reply after Ravindra Jadeja smashed his maiden international century as the hosts got a firm grip over the first Test yesterday.

The tourists were tottering at 94 for six at stumps, trailing India by 555 runs in their first innings on day two in Rajkot. Roston Chase, on 27, and Keemo Paul, on 13, were batting at close of play.

But it was the Indian batting that made the world's top side so dominant as they posted their highest total against the West Indies after declaring on 649-9 at tea. Skipper Virat Kohli hit a landmark ton, top-scoring with 139.

Fast bowler Mohamed Shami then struck early to get the two West Indian openers back in the pavilion for seven runs including stand-in-skipper Kraigg Brathwaite for two.

But Jadeja remained the star of the day after making an unbeaten 100. The left-handed batsman stuck around with the lower-order to demolish a toothless West Indian attack.

"Obviously after nine years of international cricket I am scoring a hundred, so it is a special moment," Jadeja, who made his international debut in 2009 and played his first Test in 2012, said.

"Whenever I reached 70-80 in the past I thought about my hundred, but threw my wicket away. I have made big hundreds in the domestic circuit, so I thought I can get hundreds in the international level too."

Jadeja - playing his 38th Test - also got a wicket after sending back Sunil Ambris, who had scored 114 not out in his side's only tour game last week, for 12.

The all-rounder though had a near-miss moment on the field when he playfully waited to run out Shimron Hetmyer who was scampering back to reach the non-striker's end.

Jadeja though hit the stumps with the batsman well short of the crease but his teasing act tested the nerves of the Indian fielders including Kohli.

"Both batsmen were at the same end, so I thought I could easily hit the stumps. I was just walking at the stumps, and I didn't think he (Hetmyer) will start running," Jadeja said with a smile.

"I can't think what would have happened if I hadn't hit the stumps, but then I threw it and luckily it hit the stumps."

Earlier Kohli became the quickest batsman to reach 24 Test centuries since the great



India's Ravindra Jadeja celebrates after reaching his first Test century against the West Indies in Rajkot yesterday.



Indian cricket captain Virat Kohli celebrates after hitting his 24th Test century.

Donald Bradman in the morning session.

Kohli put together 133 runs for the fifth wicket with overnight partner Rishabh Pant, who made a quickfire 92.

Kohli, who started on his overnight score of 72, got to his hundred in his 123rd innings with a boundary off leg-spinner Devendra Bishoo. Bradman took just 66 innings to achieve the

same feat.

India rammed home the advantage after 18-year-old opener Prithvi Shaw made 134 on day one to become their youngest batsman to score a century on debut.

The left-handed wicketkeeper-batsman Pant brought the morning alive with his attacking cricket as he hit eight fours and four sixes during his 84-ball

blitz to flatten West Indies.

### Scoreboard

| India                        |     |
|------------------------------|-----|
| P. Shaw c & b Bishoo         | 134 |
| L. Rahul lbw b Gabriel       | 0   |
| C. Pujara c Dowrich b Lewis  | 86  |
| V. Kohli c Bishoo b Lewis    | 139 |
| A. Rahane c Dowrich b Chase  | 41  |
| R. Pant c Paul b Bishoo      | 92  |
| R. Jadeja not out            | 100 |
| R. Ashwin c Dowrich b Bishoo | 7   |

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| K. Yadav lbw b Bishoo  | 12  |
| U. Yadav c Lewis b Brathwaite  | 22  |
| M. Shami not out   | 2   |
| <b>Extras</b> (b9, lb1, nb4)   | 14  |
| <b>Total</b> (9 wkts dec, 149.5 overs)   | 649 |
| <b>Fall of wickets:</b> 1-3 (Rahul), 2-209 (Pujara), 3-232 (Shaw), 4-337 (Rahane), 5-470 (Pant), 6-534 (Kohli), 7-545 (Ashwin), 8-571 (K. Yadav), 9-626 (U. Yadav) |     |
| <b>Bowling:</b> Gabriel 21-1-84-1 (nb2), Paul 15-1-61-0 (nb2), Lewis 20-0-93-2, Bishoo 54-3-217-4, Chase 26-1-137-1, Brathwaite 13.5-1-47-1                        |     |

### West Indies

|   |    |
|---|----|
| K. Brathwaite b Shami   | 2  |
| K. Powell lbw b Shami   | 1  |
| S. Hope b Ashwin  | 10 |
| S. Hetmyer run out (Jadeja)   | 10 |
| S. Ambris c Rahane b Jadeja   | 12 |
| R. Chase not out  | 27 |
| S. Dowrich b K. Yadav   | 10 |
| K. Paul not out   | 13 |
| <b>Extras</b> (b8, lb1)   | 9  |
| <b>Total</b> (6 wickets, 29 overs)  | 94 |
| <b>To bat:</b> D. Bishoo, S. Lewis, S. Gabriel  |    |
| <b>Fall of wickets:</b> 1-2 (Brathwaite), 2-7 (Shami), 3-21 (Hope), 4-32 (Hetmyer), 5-49 (Ambris), 6-74 (Dowrich) |    |
| <b>Bowling:</b> Shami 6-2-11-2, U. Yadav 7-1-14-0, Ashwin 7-0-32-1, Jadeja 5-1-9-1, U. Yadav 4-1-19-1             |    |
| <b>Toss:</b> India  |    |
| <b>Umpires:</b> Ian Gould (ENG), Nigel Llong (ENG)  |    |
| <b>TV umpire:</b> Bruce Oxenford (AUS)  |    |
| <b>Match Referee:</b> Chris Broad (ENG)   |    |

FOCUS

## Warne backs 'Bodyline' skipper, slams Steve Waugh



A file photo taken on January 29, 2002 shows Australian spinner Shane Warne (L) and captain Steve Waugh celebrating taking the wicket of New Zealand batsman Chris Cairns during an ODI match played at the MCG.

AFP  
Sydney

Australian great Shane Warne has endorsed one of the most controversial figures in cricketing history, while also renewing his decades-old feud with former captain Steve Waugh.

Warne, Test cricket's second-most prolific wicket-taker with 708 scalps, revealed his admiration for Douglas Jardine, who led England's "Bodyline" tour, in his new book "No Spin" published this week. Warne said he believed Jardine was among the best captains ever to have played the game.

"Douglas Jardine, of course, for what he achieved against Bradman and having the courage to change the game's parameters," Warne wrote.

Jardine, an upper class Englishman, is generally regarded as a villain in Australian cricketing circles.

His tactics of instructing fast bowlers, led by Harold Larwood, to aim at batsmen's bodies - in a bid to curb run machine Donald Bradman - provoked anger amongst the host nation at the time.

Jardine's tactics worked and England won the series 4-1 but

Australians regarded it as unsporting and it strained relations between the two nations.

He was mercilessly hounded by Sydney crowds, including a famous taunt "leave those flies alone Jardine, they're the only friends you've got".

But Warne, who called for Australia to use Bodyline fast-ball tactics against England last year, backed the captain.

He also criticised his former captain Steve Waugh in his book, calling him "selfish".

Warne said he was disappointed when Waugh dropped him in the fourth Test in Antigua in the West Indies in 1999.

"I lost a bit of respect for him after that. I believe he should have backed me - as I always believe the art of captaincy is to support your players and back them every time."

"This gains the respect from the players and makes them play for you. He didn't, it's history, but I never found it easy with him after that." He accused Waugh of being more focused on his average than the team's result.

"Steve Waugh was the most selfish player I ever played with and was only worried about averaging 50," he added.

"It was about a lack of loyalty. Pretty childish, I know, but that's the way it was."

## Finch named Australia's T20 captain

**Melbourne:** Top order batsman Aaron Finch has been confirmed as Australia's captain for the three-match Twenty20 series against Pakistan in the United Arab Emirates later this month. The captaincy completes a superb week for the aggressive right hander, who is in line to make his Test debut against Pakistan in Dubai tomorrow after coach Justin Langer said he was a certainty to play. The 31-year-old Finch has previously captained the side in Twenty20 internationals but was replaced in 2016 as Australia consolidated Steve Smith's leadership across all three formats.

Smith is currently serving a 12-month suspension for his role in a ball tampering scandal during a test match against South Africa. All-rounder Mitch Marsh and wicketkeeper Alex Carey will serve as Finch's vice-captains. "Aaron has already captained Australia in the recent T20s we played in Zimbabwe, and I've been extremely impressed with his impact on the test squad over here in the UAE," Langer said in a statement on Friday. "We know he's an exceptional player, and he's arguably the most in form T20 player in the world at the moment."



## RUGBY

## Pain will pay off for Wallabies, says Cheika

Reuters  
Buenos Aires

Australia coach **Michael Cheika** has called on his side to channel the pain from a woeful Rugby Championship campaign and unleash their frustrations on Argentina in Salta today.

The Wallabies have won only one of their five matches in the tournament so far and need a victory over the Pumas to avoid being left with the wooden spoon for the first time since Argentina started competing against the southern hemisphere's elite in 2012.

Cheika said the Wallabies, who



have scored only 10 tries, fewer than any of their rivals, would stay true to their principles and was confident the points would come.

"We don't need it, we'll get it," Cheika said when asked if he needed a win to validate the hard work. "We're very, very sure about what we need to do. You stay true to what you believe and it will happen on the field.

"You can't look to go and crawl in a hole when you're under the pump. You've got to make sure when there is a challenge there you step up and you take it." With the Rugby World Cup less than a year away, Cheika said the Wallabies would emerge stronger from their current struggles. "Some

of the pain we are going through this year is going to pay for us later on, I promise you," he told reporters.

"What we are going through, a tough time, is going to make our players, and our people in the squad as a whole, tougher and ready for battle.

"And there's no bigger battle than coming to Argentina and playing over here.

"It is always tough. We need to take some of the pain we have felt over this season and use it in the right way." Australia have made two changes to the team that lost to South Africa last weekend, bringing back Bernard Foley at flyhalf and Kurtley Beale shifting to inside centre.

## SPOTLIGHT

## Springboks skipper expecting backlash from All Blacks

Reuters  
Pretoria

South Africa expect an all-out assault from world champions New Zealand when the two countries meet in their Rugby Championship Test today, home captain **Siya Kolisi** said.

After a surprise away win in New Zealand last month, Kolisi is awaiting a backlash in the last match for both teams in this year's southern hemisphere competition.

"Obviously the All Blacks have already won the Rugby Championship, but we have heard them speaking of the fact that they are coming here with a real desire to win this one," Kolisi told a news conference in Pretoria.

South Africa's 36-34 win in Wellington was only the fourth time the Kiwis have lost since

they won the 2015 World Cup.

"We can all see that this is a game that is very important to them and where they will be looking to get their revenge. We're aware of what to expect and how physical it will be."

For South Africa to pull off a rare back-to-back triumph over the All Blacks, Kolisi said they would need to replicate the successful ingredients of the last meeting between the two rugby superpowers.

"The most important thing is to have the same intensity of Wellington, or even greater," he said. "Our focus for that game was really just to produce the best performance we possibly could without worrying too much about the score.

"We know they are going to take it up a notch, they've made that clear. From the word go, we must be ready, and ensure that our all-round game is on point," the Boks captain added.

## GOLF

## Mickelson's low expectations lead to 65 at Safeway

'I AM TRYING TO SAVE EVERY OUNCE OF ENERGY FOR THE COURSE'

AFP  
San Francisco

Phil Mickelson says he's pleased with his opening round of the 2018-19 PGA season, but warned people not to read too much into his seven-under 65 at the Safeway Open on Thursday.

"I was just surprised at some of the shots I hit," the left-handed American said. "Today was an anomaly. Don't let the good round fool you. I am not at my best."

Mickelson came into the tournament at the Silverado Resort and Spa fresh off a disappointing appearance at the Ryder Cup where he went 0-2 as the Americans suffered a devastating defeat to Team Europe.

"I am tired and fatigued," he admitted. "I am trying to save every ounce of energy for the course."

He took advantage of the birdie-friendly Napa, California, course to sit in third place, two strokes back of the leader Sepp Straka.

Mickelson rolled in six-straight birdies beginning at the par-five No. 9 and said he had no inkling when he got up in the morning he would play so well.

"I had one of my worst warm-ups of the year," he said. "But you throw on one of these shirts and you can dance and hit fairways, awesome."

Austria's Straka fired a nine-under 63 while American Chris Wright is alone in second after shooting a 64.

Brandt Snedeker and Mackenzie Hughes were part of a group of eight players who shot six-under 66. Over 100 players in the 143-man field finished under par on Thursday.

Most of the game's biggest names are taking time off after the rigors of the FedEx Cup playoffs and won't return until January.

This opens the door for a collection of Web.com Tour graduates to try and cement their status on the main tour.

Mickelson said he felt like he "wasted his time" trying to battle the narrow fairways and deep rough at the Ryder Cup in France, where Team Europe triumphed 17.5-10.5.

"They had brutal rough, it was almost unplayable and it is not the way I play," Mickelson said. "Here I can miss some fairways and it is playable."

"I am 48-years old, and I am not going to play tournaments with rough like that anymore. It is a waste of my time.

"I am going to play courses that are playable and I can play aggressive, attacking, and birdie-style golf."

There were reports of some infighting among the Americans on the Ryder Cup team in France, but Mickelson said he didn't notice it.



Phil Mickelson plays his shot on the 18th hole during round one of the Safeway Open at the North Course of the Silverado Resort and Spa on Thursday in Napa, California.

## Mickelson says he's done with 'brutal' rough

**Napa, California:** Phil Mickelson failed to record a single point for the United States in their lopsided Ryder Cup defeat to Europe last weekend and the American says he no longer has any interest in playing courses that feature "brutal rough". In his 12th Ryder Cup appearance, Mickelson was restricted to only two matches at Le Golf National in Paris. He partnered Bryson DeChambeau to a foursome's defeat on

the opening day and was not seen again until the Sunday singles, where he lost to British Open champion Francesco Molinari. It was the first time he failed to contribute even a half-point to the United States' cause as the visitors relinquished the Cup after a 17 1/2 to 10 1/2 defeat. Mickelson was clearly not a fan of the course.

"I'm 48, I'm not going to play tournaments with rough like

that anymore. It's a waste of my time," Mickelson told reporters on Thursday at the Safeway Open in Napa, California. "I'm going to play courses that are playable, and I can play aggressive, attacking, make lots of birdies type of golf I like to play. The fairways were 14 to 16 yards wide. The fact is they had brutal rough, almost unplayable and that's not the way I play," he added. "I don't play like that." While there were

reports that American team mates Brooks Koepka and Dustin Johnson had clashed after the defeat, Mickelson said there had been no disharmony in the US camp.

"We had one of the best weeks as far as team mates and working together," he said. "I don't know what to say, I didn't see any of that stuff happen — I only saw one of the best weeks and team unity that we've had in a long time."

the LPGA said in a tweet.

## HATTON ONE OFF

**Glasgow:** Tyrrell Hatton kept in contention for a third successive Alfred Dunhill Links Championship title yesterday after reaching the halfway stage one shot off joint leaders Lucas Bjerregaard and Andrea Pavan.

The Englishman carded a 66 at calm Carnoustie to join Austrian Matthias Schwab and Australian overnight joint-leader Marcus Fraser in a group of three at eight under in the pro-am event played on three courses.

"It's been a good couple of

days," said Hatton, who helped Europe to Ryder Cup success last week in France.

"There's still two days to go but I'm looking forward to playing St. Andrews tomorrow...I'll hopefully have a good weekend."

Hatton said he had also spoken on the telephone to the female spectator who was hit on the head on Thursday by his wayward strike at the 15th hole at Kingsbarns.

"She's going to be in St. Andrews tomorrow, so I'll see her," he added. "Obviously the positives are that she's fine and she's able to enjoy the golf for the rest of the week."

## TENNIS

## Emotional Osaka apologises to beaten Beijing opponent

AFP  
Beijing

US Open champion Naomi Osaka said that she apologised to beaten opponent Zhang Shuai for her emotional behaviour in their roller-coaster China Open quarter-final yesterday.

The 20-year-old Japanese fought back tears — and rescued a match that was slipping away from her — to defeat the unseeded home hope 3-6, 6-4, 7-5 to reach the Beijing semi-finals.

Osaka, who looked glum even in victory and had flung her racket around during the match, embraced Zhang at the end.

"I was basically apologising because I feel like today I was more emotional than what I normally am trying to be like," said the world number six.

"The match itself was very draining. I feel like we both

fought as hard as we could."

Asked at the post-match press conference — where she again looked unhappy — why she had had tears in her eyes on court, she replied curtly: "Because it was a hard match. That's basically why."

Osaka faces Latvia's unseeded Anastasija Sevastova in today's semi-finals on Beijing's outdoor hard courts.

Men's top seed Juan Martin del Potro had no such trouble, bulldozing his way into the semi-finals with a 6-3, 6-0 demolition of Filip Krajinovic of Serbia.

The towering Argentine, enjoying one of the best seasons of his injury-blighted career, will meet in-form Italian Fabio Fognini in what promises to be a far tougher test.

Fourth seed Fognini continued his march towards a fourth title of the season with a 6-4, 6-4 victory over Marton Fucsovics of Hungary.

## Nishikori passes Greek test to reach Tokyo semis

**Tokyo:** Local favourite Kei Nishikori thrashed fifth seed Stefanos Tsitsipas 6-3, 6-3 to reach the Japan Open semi-finals yesterday, edging him closer to a third Tokyo title. Third seed Nishikori, who won the last of his 11 career titles in Memphis two years ago, made light of the danger posed by the young Greek with a ruthless victory in just 82 minutes. The 2012 and 2014 Japan Open winner will have to get past Richard Gasquet to advance to the final for a third time after the Frenchman upset second seed Kevin Anderson 7-6 (8/6), 7-6 (7/4) in the late match. Nishikori broke Tsitsipas for a second time to nudge ahead 4-3 before closing out the first set with an acrobatic backhand volley.

The world number 12 quickly took a 4-1 lead in the second as

the potential threat of a swash-buckling opponent ranked only three places below him never materialised.

Having failed with his first two match points, it was third time lucky for Nishikori, who delivered the coup de grace by whipping a forehand past a deflated Tsitsipas to the delight of a sellout crowd.

"I played well from start to finish," said Nishikori, a former US Open runner-up who reached New York semi-finals last month.

"I was returning well, which meant I could serve relaxed," added the 28-year-old, who is chasing a first title since recovering from a lengthy wrist injury.

"I was picking the ball up early, seeing it big and being aggressive. Hopefully now I can go even further."

NFL

# Brady gets Patriots out of trouble, adds to legacy

Quarterback completes 500 touchdown passes, a mark reached previously by only Peyton Manning and Brett Favre

By Matt Vautour  
MassLive.com (TNS)

Being as good as Tom Brady has been for as long as he has, milestones are naturally going to come regularly for the New England Patriots quarterback.

So while his 34-yard touchdown pass in the fourth quarter was statistically significant in the course of his career, in the midst of Thursday win over Indianapolis and the 2018 season, it's tangible importance was more important than its effect on his legacy.

In the fourth quarter, Indianapolis was making a push. The Colts had already cut its deficit from 24-3 to 24-17. It wasn't quite a nail-biter yet, but it was going in that direction with plenty of time left. A game that once seemed destined to include playing time for backups, now had some unwelcome anxious moments.

The Colts' uprising featured a pair of interceptions that ended promising Patriot drives that might have sealed the 38-24 win much sooner. While those picks land on Brady's stat line, the failings belonged more to the intended receivers than him as Chris Hogan and Rob Gronkowski each mishandled well-thrown balls that turned into interceptions deep in Colts territory.

Following the second one, the energized Colts responded with an 80-yard touchdown drive to get within one score with 12:48 remaining.

While everyone in the stands started to get nervous, Brady looked as poised as he has all year as he took over on his own 25. With Sony Michel runs mixed in, Brady zipped the ball to four different receivers as they moved 41 yards in five plays.

The offensive line gets credit for giving Brady time on first



New England Patriots quarterback Tom Brady (centre) scores a touchdown during the NFL game against the Indianapolis Colts at Gillette Stadium in Foxborough, Massachusetts, on Thursday. (USA TODAY Sports)

and 10 from the 34. He had seven seconds from when he took the snap to when he released the ball. That's an eternity in the pocket. Many quarterbacks would have released the ball too fast, fearing the consequences of holding it too long. But Brady waited, trusting somebody would get open.

There were two defenders near Josh Gordon who cut back to the left side of the end zone. At that point the receiver was improvising, but Brady recognized where he was going and got it to him for a touchdown,

eroded any Colts hopes of a comeback.

"We made eye contact, he threw it up there and it was a perfect ball," Gordon said. "So, I had to try to make a play on it, and that was pretty much it."

The play came almost exactly 17 years since Brady hit Terry Glenn for his first touchdown pass on Oct. 14, 2001. Since then he's completed 500 touchdown passes, a mark reached previously by only Peyton Manning and Brett Favre. Gordon became the 71st player to catch a TD pass from Brady, the most receiver

one passer has ever thrown touchdowns to.

"That's a lot of touchdown passes to a lot of different guys, too. There's no quarterback I'd rather have than Tom Brady," coach Bill Belichick said. "He does a great job week-in and week-out, year-in and year-out, all of the situations. He does a great job."

But at the time it was a one touchdown drive for a team that needed one. The offense, which hasn't been consistently sharp all season yet, was good when it needed to be, helping Brady

reach one more milestone, his 226th win, tying him with long-time teammate and Thursday night opponent Adam Vinatieri for most by a player in franchise history.

Brady was already looking ahead.

"I think we have more in us, and I think that's what we're looking at," said Brady, who finished with 34-of-44 for 341 yards and three touchdowns. "So, we've got a lot of room to grow, and we need to make a lot of improvements in a short period of time."

MLB

# Ryu powers Dodgers past Braves to win NL series opener

AFP  
Los Angeles

South Korean pitcher **Ryu Hyun-Jin** pitched seven stellar innings and the Los Angeles Dodgers blasted three home runs to rout the Atlanta Braves 6-0 in the opening game of their NL playoff series on Thursday.

Ryu, who was making his first playoff start in four years, struck out eight batters and allowed no walks for the Dodgers, who now take a 1-0 series lead into game two Friday at Dodger Stadium.

Ace pitcher Clayton Kershaw is expected to start game two of the best-of-five series against the Braves' Anibal Sanchez.

The 31-year-old Ryu missed over three months of the season with a groin strain. He came back in mid August to post a 1.88 ERA in 52 2/3 innings.

The Dodgers explosive batting order didn't skip a beat from the regular season. They set franchise and National League record by hitting 235 homers during the regular season.

"I don't really feel like there's anyone on this team that's going up there trying to hit a home run," said Max Muncy, who had a three-run homer in the second inning.

"It's just a result of us having a good approach and good at-bats. I feel like a lot of the home runs we've had have come off of long at-bats, working the counts and wearing the pitcher down."

Atlanta have lost eight straight series openers in the playoffs and haven't won a game one since 2001.

Elsewhere, Mike Moustakas belted a walk-off single in the 10th inning Thursday to lift the

Milwaukee Brewers to a 3-2 victory over the Colorado Rockies in the first game of their series.

RALLY CUT SHORT

Before ecstatic home fans, the Brewers thwarted a rally bid from the Rockies, who erased a two-run deficit in the top of the ninth inning.

Christian Yelich led off the bottom of the 10th with a walk, reached second on a wild pitch and advanced to third on a fielders' choice.

With two outs, Moustakas came to the plate and lined a base hit to right field to score Yelich and give the Brewers a 1-0 lead in the best-of-five series. They host game two on Friday.

"Look, Moose has been in those spots," manager Craig Counsell said. "It's something that you try to not make the situation too big, and he did a great job of it and finally got a pitch to it."

Yelich had put the Brewers up with a two-run homer in the third.

"You're just trying to slow the situation down, find a way to get on and make something happen," Yelich said. "And Moose was able to come through there at the end with the huge hit."

Milwaukee's pitchers took a one-hit shutout into the ninth inning, but then things got away from closing pitcher Jeremy Jeffress.

Colorado pinch hitter Gerardo Parra led off with a single and Matt Holliday added a single up the middle. A single from Charlie Blackmon allowed Parra to score.

With runners on first and second, DJ LeMahieu hit a grounder that eluded shortstop Orlando Arcia and Nolan Arenado produced a sacrifice fly that knotted the score at 2-2.



NHL

# Dallas stars with a 3-0 victory over visiting Coyotes

Reuters  
New York

Dallas scored three times over a 1-minute, 36-second span of the second period, and Ben Bishop turned away 30 shots for the 25th shutout of his career as the Stars beat the visiting Arizona Coyotes 3-0 on Thursday in the season-opening game for both teams.

The win granted new Stars coach Jim Montgomery success in his NHL coaching debut.

Devin Shore scored the first goal of the season for the Stars. He skated to the crease on a shot by Radek Faksa, found the loose puck on the rebound, kicked it to his stick and lifted it past Coyotes goaltender Antti Raanta for a 1-0 Dallas lead. Connor Carrick also got an assist on the score, which came at the 4:21 mark of the second period.

It took just 28 seconds for Dallas to add to its lead. Alexander Radulov sped down the ice after a clearing pass from Carrick and an assist by Jamie Benn before switching around a defender to his backhand and pushing the puck between Raanta's pads over the line.

John Klingberg capped the surge when he swallowed up a pinpoint pass from Esa Lindell, sped into the Coyotes' zone and ripped a wrist shot past Raanta to make it 3-0. Benn garnered his second assist of the game on the

scoring play.

Montgomery was hired on May 4 after he spent the past five seasons at the University of Denver, where his teams advanced to the NCAA tournament all five years and won the national championship in 2017. Montgomery took over in Dallas from Ken Hitchcock, who retired.

The Coyotes, who outshot Dallas 30-25, have now lost their past 11 games at American Airlines Center (0-8-3) since a 4-1 win on Feb. 7, 2012.

The Stars will continue their four-game homestand to open the season when they host the Winnipeg Jets on Saturday. It's the first time the franchise will open a campaign with four consecutive home games since 1975-76, when the club was the Minnesota North Stars.

Meanwhile, the Coyotes will head home to host the Anaheim Ducks, also today.

RESULTS

|              |     |            |
|--------------|-----|------------|
| Boston       | 4-0 | Buffalo    |
| Pittsburgh   | 7-6 | Washington |
| NY Islanders | 2-1 | Carolina   |
| Nashville    | 3-2 | NY Rangers |
| Chicago      | 4-3 | Ottawa     |
| Columbus     | 3-2 | Detroit    |
| Winnipeg     | 5-1 | St. Louis  |
| Dallas       | 3-0 | Arizona    |
| Colorado     | 4-1 | Minnesota  |
| Philadelphia | 5-2 | Las Vegas  |

NBA

# Kings lose to Lakers, but get some valuable court time

By Noel Harris  
The Sacramento Bee (TNS)

The Kings are focused on developing their young players this preseason. That was evident Thursday night during a 128-123 loss to the Los Angeles Lakers at Staples Center.

Both of the Kings' rookies played well and served as anchors for some inexperienced lineups.

After going for just seven points and two rebounds in Monday's victory over Phoenix, Marvin Bagley III had a double-double (19 points, 10 rebounds) to go with two assists and a block.

He said after the game that he's trying to continue learning how to play in the NBA.

"Once I get out there and play, it's the same basketball I've been playing my whole life," he said. "It's just at a higher level now."

Coach Dave Joerger acknowledged trying to get Bagley more involved.

"I was trying to get it to him," Joerger said. "I probably could have done a better job, but we were playing on the pick-and-roll player pretty well and giving them some problems. I should have gotten him the ball down the stretch."

Harry Giles III finished with 14 points and seven rebounds, but was one of three players who fouled out. Sacramento was



LeBron James (foreground, right) of the Los Angeles Lakers scores a basket against Marvin Bagley III (foreground, left) of the Sacramento Kings during the NBA game in Los Angeles on Thursday. (AFP)

whistled for 44 fouls, resulting in the Lakers shooting 55 free throws and making 40 (72.7 percent).

"I just have to learn to contain my fouls," he said. "A lot of it was just me being aggressive. It's just stuff that I'll learn from being a rookie."

Skal Labissiere fouled out with 8:04 left in the third quarter and Ben McLemore was also disqualified in the period. Losing players to fouls helped give

coach Dave Joerger a chance to give guys at the end of the bench some quality minutes.

Cameron Reynolds, who played nearly three minutes in the first quarter, was joined by fellow camp invitees Jamel Artis and Kalin Lucas, as well as two-way player Wenyen Gabriel. The three invitees will likely spend time with the Kings' NBA G League affiliate in Stockton. They played in a lineup that ro-

tated Bagley and Giles.

Reynolds logged the most time with 20 minutes, Artis was the top scorer with eight points and Lucas had five assists. They played through most of the second half while the Lakers were still playing at least three of their starters.

The Kings have a two-way contract available to use, but Joerger wouldn't call the added minutes for those players an au-

dition for that spot.

"I don't look at it that way," he said. "I was just trying to get minutes off of our other guys. Coming into the game (in Seattle), we are going to be short-handed already."

Bogdan Bogdanovic and Kosta Koufos didn't play Thursday and will be out when the Kings meet the Golden State Warriors in Seattle's first NBA game in 10 years. The SuperSonics left after the 2007-08 season to become the Oklahoma City Thunder.

The Kings also had three other players miss Thursday's game: Nemanja Bjelica, Yogi Ferrell and Iman Shumpert. All are considered day-to-day.

De'Aaron Fox had 18 points in 18 minutes for the Kings, who fell to 1-1 this preseason. The second-year guard scored 15 in the opening period, hitting 6 of 7 overall, including 3 of 4 from 3-point range. He also had two steals and five assists, including one on a lob to Giles near the end of the quarter. He added his fourth 3-pointer of the game in the second quarter before sitting for good with 2:46 left in the half.

Three of the Lakers' starters logged significant minutes in the victory, including Brandon Ingram, who finished with a game-high 31 points. He also had nine rebounds and three steals in 35 minutes.

LeBron James played just 16 minutes and finished with 18 points for the Lakers (1-2).

## LIGUE 1

# Neymar on form, but Di Maria key cog for Tuchel's PSG

The 30-year-old has scored six times in 11 appearances so far this season and is full of praise for manager Tuchel

AFP  
Paris

Neymar may have grabbed the headlines with a hat-trick as Paris Saint-Germain thrashed Red Star Belgrade in their midweek Champions League match, but Angel Di Maria is proving vital to the French giants' strong start to the season.

The 6-1 hammering of Red Star at the Parc des Princes on Wednesday was already the second time this term that all of Di Maria, Neymar, Edinson Cavani and Kylian Mbappe have scored in a game. That only happened twice in the entirety of last season, when the Argentinian was often overlooked by former coach Unai Emery for the biggest matches.

The attacking trio dubbed 'MCN' last year has become a four-pronged front line under new boss Thomas Tuchel, with Di Maria starting both of PSG's Champions League games so far, having failed to even complete 90 minutes once in the competition in 2017/18.

"It's a gift to work with a player like Angel, he's a great professional, who works hard in training, can play in multiple positions, at a top level and is totally reliable," gushed Tuchel.

The 30-year-old Di Maria has scored six times in 11 appearances so far this

season and is full of praise for German Tuchel.

"He made me understand that he was counting on me," Di Maria said. "Tuchel brings something new, he's a more aggressive coach who likes the team to play with high pressing. He came here to win the Champions League, it can be a great year for us."

With their Group C campaign in Europe back on track after an opening 3-2 defeat at Liverpool, PSG host Lyon as they return to domestic matters tomorrow. The club's priorities clearly lie with the Champions League as they bid to reach the final for the first time despite the heavy Qatari investment, but after eight straight wins, a sixth Ligue 1 title in seven years already looks a formality.

Lyon were expected to be their closest challengers this season, but are 10 points off the pace, while last year's runners-up Monaco are languishing in the relegation play-off place. Bruno Genesio's Lyon claimed a stunning 2-1 win over PSG in January, but have lost on their last seven visits to the capital.

Monaco's dreadful season took another turn for the worse in midweek as they slipped to a one-sided 3-0 Champions League loss at Borussia Dortmund. Leonardo Jardim's outfit are now a tame imitation of the one that claimed the French title in 2017, and have managed only six points from their first eight league games.

Defeat by fellow strugglers Rennes at the Stade Louis II tomorrow could see them fall into the bottom two, with the prospect of a season spent trying to get out of trouble looming. Lille had to do just that last term to escape the drop, but have started well this time around and host fourth-placed Saint-Etienne today looking to strengthen their grip on second spot, eight points behind PSG.

Tanguy Ndombele, the 21-year-old Lyon midfielder was handed his first international call-up by France coach Didier Deschamps on Thursday after backing up his strong form from last season in the early part of the current campaign.

Ndombele has never scored in Ligue 1, though, and tomorrow's match at PSG would be the perfect time to set that record straight. "He has a very good shot and should be scoring between six and 10 goals a season, given the position he's playing in and his technical skill," said Deschamps.

#### LIGUE 1 FIXTURES (ALL TIMES GMT)

**Today:** Lille v Saint-Etienne (1500), Amiens v Dijon, Angers v Strasbourg, Guingamp v Montpellier, Nimes v Reims (1800)

**Tomorrow:** Bordeaux v Nantes (1300), Marseille v Caen, Monaco v Rennes (1500), Paris Saint-Germain v Lyon (1900)



Paris Saint-Germain's Argentine midfielder Angel Di Maria celebrates after scoring against Red Star Belgrade during the UEFA Champions League football match at the Parc des Princes stadium in Paris on Wednesday. (AFP)

## EUROPA LEAGUE

## Morata earns win for Chelsea



Chelsea's Alvaro Morata (centre) in action with Vidi's Paulo Vinicius (left) and Roland Juhasz during the Europa League match at Stamford Bridge in London on Thursday night. (Reuters)

AFP  
Paris

An emotional Alvaro Morata snapped his recent goal drought to secure a 1-0 win for Chelsea over Hungarian champions Vidi in the Europa League on Thursday night, as Arsenal cruised to a 3-0 victory away to Qarabag in Azerbaijan.

Spain striker Morata, without a goal since August 18, wasted a terrific chance in the first half at Stamford Bridge but atoned with a sharp finish on 70 minutes to put Chelsea ahead. Substitute Ross Barkley also headed against the crossbar, while Kepa Arrizabalaga – the world's most expensive goalkeeper – produced an excellent save to deny Istvan Kovacs a late equaliser. Chelsea head Group L with a maximum six points with PAOK – 4-1 winners over BATE Borisov – level on three points alongside the Belarussian champions.

In Baku, Sokratis bundled in a Nacho Monreal header on four minutes, with Arsenal academy graduate Emile Smith Rowe and French youngster Matteo Guendouzi also scoring their first goals for the club. The Gunners extended their winning run to eight matches and lead Sporting Lisbon on goal difference at the top of Group E, after the Portuguese side snatched a 2-1 win in Ukraine with two late goals against Vorskla Poltava.

Celtic slumped to a 3-1 defeat against Red Bull Salzburg despite taking the lead in Austria. Odsone Edouard struck after just two minutes, but a brace

from Munas Dabbur and a goal from Japanese forward Takumi Minamoto gave Salzburg a second win in two Group B matches.

Celtic lost James Forrest to a straight red card after he upended Andreas Ulmer in the area, with Dabbur converting the resulting penalty to condemn Brendan Rodgers' side. Seven-time European champions AC Milan recovered from a goal down at home to Olympiakos to claim a 3-1 victory in Group F, as Patrick Cutrone scored twice either side of a Gonzalo Higuain effort.

Steven Gerrard's Rangers overcame Rapid Vienna 3-1 at Ibrox as Alfredo Morelos netted twice and James Tavernier scored from the spot after the hosts fell behind to a Veton Berisha effort.

#### RESULTS

**Group A:** FC Zurich (SUI) 1 (Pals-son 84) Ludogorets (BUL) 0; Bayer Leverkusen (GER) 4 (Havertz 44, Alario 49, 88, Brandt 90+2) AEK Larnaca (CYP) 2 (Trickovski 25, Raspas 90+1)

**Group B:** RB Salzburg (AUT) 3 (Dabbur 55, 73-pen, Minamoto 61) Celtic (SCO) 1 (Edouard 2); Rosenborg (NOR) 1 (Jebali 79) RB Leipzig (GER) 3 (Augustin 12, Konate 54, Cunha 61)

**Group C:** Zenit (RUS) 1 (Kokorin 80) Slavia Prague (CZE) 0; Bordeaux (FRA) 1 (Sankhare 84) FC Copenhagen (DEN) 2 (Sotiriou 42, Skov 90+2)

**Group D:** Anderlecht (BEL) 0 Dinamo Zagreb (CRO) 2 (Hajrovic 19-pen, Gokic 68); Fenerbahce (TUR) 2 (Slimani 52, 68) Spartak Trnava (SVK) 0

**Group E:** Qarabag (AZE) 0 Arsenal (ENG) 3 (Sokratis 4, Smith-Rowe 53, Guendouzi 79); Vorskla Poltava (UKR) 1 (Kulach 10) Sporting (POR) 2 (Montero 90, Cabral 90+3)

**Group F:** AC Milan (ITA) 3 (Cutrone 70, 79, Higuain 76) Olympiakos (GRE) 1 (Guerrero 14); Betis (ESP) 3 (Sanabria 57, Lo Celso 80, Tello 89) Dudelange (LUX) 0

**Group G:** Rangers (SCO) 3 (Morelone 44, 90+4, Tavernier 84-pen) Rapid Vienna (AUT) 1 (Berisha 42); Spartak Moscow (RUS) 3 (Ze Luis 34-pen, 82, Melgarejo 85) Villarreal (ESP) 3 (Toko Ekambi 13, Fornals 49, Cazorla 90+6-pen)

**Group H:** Eintracht Frankfurt (GER) 4 (Da Costa 4, 90+4, Kostic 28, Jovic 52) Lazio (ITA) 1 (Parolo 23); Apollon Limassol (CYP) 2 (Markovic 74, Zelaya 90+1) Marseille (FRA) 2 (Payet 50, Luiz Gustavo 67)

**Group I:** Sarpsborg (NOR) 3 (Mortensen 6, 63, Zachariassen 54) Genk (BEL) 1 (Trossard 49); Malmö (SWE) 2 (Erkin 53-og, Rosenberg 76-pen) Besiktas (TUR) 0

**Group J:** Standard Liege (BEL) 2 (Emond 17, Djenebo 40) Akhisar (TUR) 1 (Ayik 32); Krasnodar (RUS) 2 (Pereyra 72, Okriashvili 88) Sevilla (ESP) 1 (Kabore 43-og)

**Group K:** Astana (KAZ) 2 (Zaynutdinov 64, Tomasov 90+1) Rennes (FRA) 0; Jablonec (CZE) 2 (Hovorka 33, Travnik 81) Dynamo Kiev (UKR) 2 (Tsygankov 8, Garmash 15)

**Group L:** Chelsea (ENG) 1 (Morata 70) Vidi (HUN) 0; BATE (BLR) 1 (Crespo 61-og) PAOK (GRE) 4 (Pri-jovic 6, Leo Jaba 11, 17, Pelkas 73)

## LA LIGA

## Bale fit as Real Madrid target morale-boosting win at Alaves

AFP  
Madrid

Real Madrid coach Julen Lopetegui has confirmed Gareth Bale is fit and ready to play as Real Madrid look to end their goal drought against Alaves today. Madrid have gone three games without scoring, after their surprise Champions League loss to CSKA Moscow on Tuesday followed a draw against Atletico Madrid and defeat to Sevilla.

Bale came off at half-time against Atletico last weekend and sat out the trip to Russia in midweek after feeling discomfort in his groin. Tests, however, have shown the injury is not serious. "He's fine, he has trained well," Lopetegui said yesterday. "He detected some discomfort so he left the derby at half-time but he is ready. He is an important player, we know that."

Madrid sit level on points with leaders Barcelona in La Liga but their lack of cutting edge up front is a concern. Karim Benzema's early-season form has evaporated while injuries to Bale and Isco, as well as full-backs Marcelo and Dani Carvajal, have contributed to a lack of creativity.

Cristiano Ronaldo's absence, following his summer move to Juventus, is being more keenly felt. "This is Madrid, we have to expect the criticism," Lopetegui said. "We are confident we can overcome the problems. We have spent better times but worse times too. It seems everything is not wonderful at the moment but there are positives."

"We are joint first in the Champions League group and I have no doubt the team will pick up from where they left off in the first game against Roma. We deserved to beat CSKA but this is football."

Lopetegui said Marcelo and Carvajal could be sidelined for a "few weeks", with both players recovering from calf injuries. Nacho is likely to take over at left back while on the right, Alvaro Odriozola replaced Carvajal against CSKA and could continue.

In Spain, when Madrid or Barca do well, the other seems automatically to be doing badly and Real's defeat by CSKA was com-



Gareth Bale came off at half-time against Atletico last weekend after feeling discomfort in his groin. (AFP)

pounded by Barcelona's victory 24 hours later at Wembley. Lionel Messi is staying true to his word of an all-out assault on Europe this season. He now has five goals from two games in this year's competition. "It was important after the recent results," Messi said.

For his team, the task is now to carry the euphoria from London to the Metastalla tomorrow. Valencia held Manchester United to a goalless draw in the Champions League and are showing signs of life after beating Real Sociedad last weekend.

That was their first win in five games. Barca coach Ernesto Valverde may decide to persist with the rotation that seemed to disrupt so much of his side's rhythm last week. Ousmane Dembele and Arturo Vidal were both left out of the line-up that beat Spurs and could be given a chance to reintegrate. As much as the momentum appears to be back with Barca, the table shows them level on points with Real.

Another slip-up and the feel-good factor could instantly be lost. "Nothing has changed," Valverde said. "When you have not won some games it is difficult to react as the team has done. We have reacted."

Sevilla sit third after three wins on the bounce, a run they will be hoping to continue at home to Celta Vigo, who are without a win in four. Meanwhile, Atletico Madrid, fresh off the back of their own Champions League win over Club Brugge, host Real Betis, in a battle of fourth against fifth.

#### FIXTURES (ALL TIMES GMT)

**Today:** Girona v Eibar (1100), Getafe v Levante (1415), Alaves v Real Madrid (1630), Leganes v Rayo Vallecano (1845)

**Tomorrow:** Real Valladolid v Huesca (1000), Atletico Madrid v Real Betis (1415), Espanyol v Villarreal (1630), Sevilla v Celta Vigo (1630), Valencia v Barcelona (1845)

## Gundogan out, Sane in as Loew names Germany squad

**Berlin:** Manchester City midfielder Ilkay Gundogan was left out as Germany coach Joachim Loew named a 23-man squad for upcoming Nations League matches against the Netherlands and France.

Gundogan hobbled off clutching his hamstring in the 2-1 Champions League win at Hoffenheim in midweek.

But club-mate Leroy Sane, sensationally left at home by Loew for the World Cup, returns to the fold after pulling out of the squad for the first round of Nations Cup matches after his partner gave birth to their baby daughter.

Sane came off the bench towards the end of a 0-0 draw with France in Munich in Germany's first game in the inaugural UEFA Nations League last month, but withdrew

prior to a scheduled friendly with Peru.

Germany play the Netherlands at Amsterdam Arena on October 13 before travelling to the Stade de France for their return fixture with France three days later.

The only new face in Loew's squad is Schalke striker Mark Uth, 27. Loew, meanwhile, has kept faith with right-sided defender Jonas Hector, despite his decision to remain with Cologne in spite of their relegation to the second division.

#### GERMANY SQUAD:

**Goalkeepers:** Manuel Neuer (Bayern Munich), Marc-Andre ter Stegen (Barcelona/ESP), Kevin Trapp (Eintracht Frankfurt)

**Defenders:** Jerome Boateng (Bayern Mu-

nich), Matthias Ginter (Borussia Moenchengladbach), Jonas Hector (Cologne), Mats Hummels (Bayern Munich), Thilo Kehrer (Paris Saint-Germain/FRA), Antonio Ruediger (Chelsea/ENG), Nico Schulz (Hoffenheim), Niklas Sulele (Bayern Munich)

**Midfielders:** Julian Brandt (Leverkusen), Julian Draxler (Paris Saint Germain), Joshua Kimmich (Bayern Munich), Leon Goretzka (Bayern Munich), Kai Havertz (Leverkusen), Sebastian Rudy (Schalke 04), Toni Kroos (Real Madrid/ESP), Thomas Mueller (Bayern Munich)

**Forwards:** Leroy Sane (Manchester City/ENG), Mark Uth (Schalke 04), Marco Reus (Borussia Dortmund), Timo Werner (RB Leipzig)

SERIE A

# Ronaldo ready to play despite accusations

Leaders Juventus travel to Udine in northeastern Italy to face Udinese, who are 14th in the table

AFP  
Milan

Cristiano Ronaldo is ready to play for Juventus against Udinese this weekend despite the rape claims made against him, coach Massimiliano Allegri said yesterday as the Italian champions try to maintain their perfect start to the Serie A season. "Ronaldo is doing well, he is ready to play. His professionalism and his composure on and off the pitch are not in question," Allegri told a press conference. "He is ready to return to action tomorrow."

US police said Monday they had reopened an investigation into accusations by former American model Kathryn Mayorga that the Portuguese player raped her in a Las Vegas hotel in June 2009. Ronaldo has strenuously denied the accusations.

"I've known Cristiano for three months now and for over 15 years of his career he has shown to be a great professional both on and off the pitch," said Allegri of the 33-year-old striker who joined the club from Real Madrid for 100mn euros during the summer. "He's dedicated and he's just as dedicated to social issues, which says it all."

Juventus travel to Udine in northeastern Italy, on the border with Slovenia, to face Udinese, who are 14th in the table. Ronaldo was filmed preparing for the game on Thursday, with several Juventus players later posting a photo of a team dinner in a Turin restaurant, with a smiling Ronaldo seated between Blaise Matuidi and Federico Bernardeschi.

"It is normal that we help him during a delicate time, but he has broad enough shoulders to focus on tomorrow's game, go down onto the pitch and play well," said Allegri. Amid the storm of sponsors' concerns, and the team's share price taking a hit, Juventus are trying to focus on their quest for an eighth straight league title.

They have a maximum 21 points from seven games, six points ahead of Carlo Ancelotti's Napoli, who they beat 3-1 in Turin last weekend with Ronaldo setting up all three goals. "Tomorrow I could go with a front three of Mario Mandzukic, Paulo Dybala and Cristiano Ronaldo, or alternatively one of them could be rested," said Allegri.

The Turin giants have also won both their Champions League games including last Tuesday's match against Swiss side Young Boys, with Ronaldo watching from the stands as he was suspended for a red card against Valencia.

"Tomorrow is a match that will ask a lot of the players both physically and mentally, so we must be prepared for



Cristiano Ronaldo is doing well and will be ready to play this weekend, said Juventus coach Massimiliano Allegri yesterday. (AFP)

that," Allegri said. "(Udinese) have lost the last two matches, so we must not be complacent but make sure that we're on top of our game in order to enter the international break on a high."

Behind Juventus the battle for European places is very tight with Napoli, who are six points behind the champions in second. Just three points separate the third to eighth-placed teams. Napoli, Roma and Inter Milan also all won their Champions League games during

the week. Napoli bounced back from their defeat in Turin with a last-gasp Lorenzo Insigne goal snatching a 1-0 win over Liverpool. "It's an important victory because it shows our progression, notably on a psychological level," said Ancelotti ahead of tomorrow's game at home against Sassuolo, joint third with 13 points.

Roma travel to Empoli looking for a third straight league win days after Edin Dzeko's hat-trick inspired a 5-0 win

over Czech side Viktoria Plzen. Eusebio Di Francesco's side slumped to ninth after a four-game winless streak, and a win over lowly Empoli would propel them further up the table.

Fiorentina, third with 13 points, face a stiff test at Lazio, in seventh. Simone Inzaghi's side were stung by last week's derby defeat to Roma followed by a heavy 4-1 Europa League defeat at Eintracht Frankfurt. Inter Milan, also on 13 points, travel to SPAL with city rivals

AC Milan, 11th with a game in hand, hosting tailenders Chievo.

FIXTURES

**Today:** Cagliari v Bologna (1300), Udinese v Juventus (1600), Empoli v AS Rome (1830)  
**Tomorrow:** Genoa v Parma (1030), Atalanta v Sampdoria, Lazio v Fiorentina, AC Milan v Chievo (1300), Napoli v Sassuolo (1600), SPAL v Inter Milan (1830)

**Juventus shares drop amid Ronaldo problems as sponsors express deep 'concerns'**

Milan: US sportswear giant Nike says it is "deeply concerned" by rape allegations against star client Cristiano Ronaldo while shares in his club Juventus fell almost 10% on the Italian stock exchange yesterday. Ronaldo's coach at Juventus, Massimiliano Allegri, said the striker is "doing well" and is "ready to play" when the Turin giants travel to Udinese in Serie A today.

But the player's relationship with Nike, which is rumoured to be worth \$1bn (869mn euros), is under scrutiny after police in Las Vegas announced this week they were reopening an investigation into allegations made by a former model, Kathryn Mayorga, relating to an incident in 2009. "We are deeply concerned by the disturbing allegations and will continue to closely monitor the situation," a Nike spokesman said.

According to Forbes magazine, Ronaldo is one of only three athletes to have been given a lifetime deal with Nike, joining an elite club that also includes NBA icons LeBron James and Michael Jordan. EA Sports, for whom Ronaldo is a leading figure in their phenomenally successful FIFA video game market, also described the allegations as "concerning".

"We are closely monitoring the situation, as we expect cover athletes and ambassadors to conduct themselves in a manner that is consistent with EA's values," the group said in a statement.

Ronaldo's move from Real Madrid to Juventus in the summer gave the Italian champions a huge boost, both on and off the field, as they continue their elusive bid for a first Champions League title since 1996. On September 20, Juventus shares rose 180% to a record level of over 1.80 euros. But on Friday, almost 10% was wiped off their value with shares closing on the Milan stock exchange down 9.92% at 1.19 euros.

Juventus have so far stood behind Ronaldo, but the Italian club's reaction to the issue has angered some fans.

Portugal said Thursday Ronaldo will play no part in the country's next four internationals, but national coach Fernando Santos gave him his backing. Asked about the allegations, Santos said: "I know Cristiano very well and I fully believe his word."

PREMIER LEAGUE

# City will attack against Liverpool: Guardiola

AFP  
Manchester, United Kingdom

Manchester City manager Pep Guardiola has insisted he will stay true to his attacking beliefs when the English champions visit Liverpool tomorrow despite several defeats by the Reds last season. Guardiola saw his team beaten three times by Jurgen Klopp's men during the 2017/18 campaign, although his side did win the fourth meeting in the league at the Etihad.

But despite Liverpool's German boss having such a good record against his Catalan counterpart, Guardiola has insisted he will not adopt a markedly more defensive style when table-toppers City face the Reds, second only on goal difference, at Anfield in the Premier League tomorrow.

"We have to defend but not in the approach because it's boring and we have to be ourselves," Guardiola said. "These kind of games we have to be ourselves. If we lose then congrats to Jurgen, but we try to improve and go again," he added.

Kevin De Bruyne could be involved tomorrow after returning to training a month ahead of schedule. The Belgian star has not played this season, having injured knee ligaments on the eve of the campaign. De Bruyne was due to be sidelined for three months and, just last week, the City playmaker claimed he was targeting the first Manchester derby - in mid-November - for his comeback.

But, just eight weeks after the injury, De Bruyne is back in the squad and Guardiola will make a decision on the eve of the game whether to put him on the bench. "He made a part of the training session today (Friday), he is training with us. We



Manchester City's Spanish manager Pep Guardiola. (AFP)

will see tomorrow," explained Guardiola. Meanwhile, Jose Mourinho is desperate for something to go his way as Manchester United's season threatens to unravel but at least has the comfort of facing struggling Newcastle. United have scored just 10 goals in seven Premier League games and their blunt forward line faces a challenge to break down Rafael Benitez's defence-minded Newcastle at Old Trafford today.

Mourinho's midfielder Nemanja Matic, Paul Pogba and Marouane Fellaini are a formidable unit and well-suited for a physical battle. But the under-fire manager

might be tempted to pick somebody to pick the lock against Newcastle, perhaps turning to the likes of Juan Mata or one of his other creative link men. Fellaini said the whole dressing room is behind Mourinho but there is a growing sense the Portuguese boss is on borrowed time.

Chelsea, in third place, will attempt to stay on the coat-tails of the top two away at Southampton while fourth-placed Tottenham host Cardiff. Eden Hazard has scored six goals in his past five Premier League games but his form has papered over the cracks at Stamford Bridge, with Olivier Giroud looking toothless in front

of goal and Alvaro Morata also enduring a goal drought until Thursday's 1-0 Europa League win over Vidi.

Coach Maurizio Sarri, who has talked up Hazard as one of the best players in the world, is nevertheless dangerously reliant on the Belgian playmaker, who scored Chelsea's goal against Liverpool in last week's 1-1 draw. Tomorrow, the Blues visit struggling Southampton, lifted by their midweek League Cup victory on penalties against Everton, with French World Cup winner Giroud looking to break his duck this season.

Tottenham return to Premier League action after their Champions League hopes were severely dented by an inspired Lionel Messi in midweek. Mauricio Pochettino's men are in fourth spot on 15 points, just four behind City and Liverpool, and will fancy their chances at Wembley against lowly Cardiff.

Arsenal goalkeeper Bernd Leno will get his chance against Fulham to show why the Gunners paid around £19mn to sign him, with Petr Cech facing a spell on the sidelines after a hamstring injury.

The German goalkeeper, 26, will be in the Premier League starting line-up for the first time for Arsenal, who are on an impressive run of eight straight wins in all competitions. With 36-year-old Cech in the twilight of his career, this could be a major chance for Leno to secure the number one spot for the long-term.

FIXTURES (1400 GMT UNLESS STATED)

**Today:** Burnley v Huddersfield, Crystal Palace v Wolves, Leicester v Everton, Tottenham v Cardiff, Watford v Bournemouth, Manchester United v Newcastle (1630)  
**Tomorrow:** Fulham v Arsenal (1100), Southampton v Chelsea (1315), Liverpool v Manchester City (1530)

SPOTLIGHT

# Klopp believes Napoli loss can spur Liverpool on against Man City

AFP  
Liverpool

Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp reckons a midweek Champions League defeat by Napoli could inspire his side when they face Premier League leaders Manchester City in a top-of-the-table clash at Anfield tomorrow.

Liverpool are currently second to City on goal difference alone but, for all the praise they've received so far this season, the Merseysiders have not won in three games - a League Cup draw and Premier League loss to Chelsea followed by Wednesday's 1-0 defeat by Napoli.

But having had time to reflect on that reverse in Italy, Klopp told a pre-match news conference yesterday: "After the game it felt much more clear they deserved to win than after the analysis. Yes they (Napoli) had more chances, we didn't have a shot on target. In the last 15 minutes they had two big chances and scored a goal, they had moments more than we did. But the crowd was in a lot of moments really unhappy with the Napoli performance. We defended in a lot of moments really good."

He added: "Now we will have three days together until we play City and (we could) make



the boys aware of what was all wrong. I didn't want to lose at Napoli but, if you ask me which is the best preparation mood wise, it's losing a game. We felt it now and we don't want to have that feeling again so we will fight with all we have for a different result."

Liverpool have won their last three matches against City, including both legs of a Champions League quarter-final last season. But Klopp rejected suggestions he had some special hold over Pep Guardiola's side.

"Obviously we won the last three games against City. After none of these games you go into the dressing room and think, 'Now we've got it, now we know how to beat Manchester City', because there is no real way, no one thing that you have to do," said Klopp.

## SPOTLIGHT

# Yaqoub to carry Qatar flag at Youth Olympics opening

The 17-year-old swimmer qualified for the event on the basis of his strong performances at the Sarajevo Championships this year

By a correspondent  
Buenos Aires

Young Qatari swimmer Yaqoub al-Khulaifi has been given the honour of carrying the Qatari flag during the opening ceremony of the Youth Olympic Games here today. The 17-year-old qualified for the event on the basis of his strong performances at the Sarajevo International Swimming Championships in Bosnia and Herzegovina this year where he won the 50m butterfly gold and a silver in the 200m freestyle. He also clocked good times during the recent FINA World Cup in Doha.

Over 4,000 athletes from 206 National Olympic Committees are competing in the Youth Olympic Games being held for the third time.

Athletes representing Qatar are hurdler Awab Baro, discus thrower Ahmed al-Haj, swimmers Abdul Aziz Mohamed and Yacoub al-Khulaifi and Equestrian Mohamed al-Kashouti. In the previous participation in China, 23 athletes represented Qatar in handball, equestrian, shooting, swimming, table tennis as well as athletics. The first edition of the Games, which was held in Singapore eight years ago, saw the participation of six Qatari athletes.

Meanwhile, Argentina said it will consider a possible Olympic Games bid after completing the Youth Olympics starting in Buenos Aires, president Mauricio Macri said.

Macri, speaking at the start of an Olympic forum in the Argentine capital, said the Buenos Aires Youth Games had introduced innovations that could be implemented in other events.

The Youth Olympics are an International Olympic Committee (IOC) event and are a scaled down version of the Games, organised every four years for



Qatar athletes pose after arriving in Buenos Aires for Youth Olympic Games.



Qatari swimmer Yaqoub al-Khulaifi.

young athletes. "Obviously once this wonderful event is finished we will have the chance to start thinking about trying to organise Olympic Games," Macri said. "It is obviously much more difficult."

Seated next to IOC President Thomas Bach, Macri said the country's

current economic situation had forced organisers to find cost-effective solutions for the Youth Games.

"At a time when we are committed to reduce poverty, organising such an event of money is no longer so easy. These innovations will help to add an-

other value," Macri said. Argentina is struggling to break free from cyclical financial crises that have hit the country every decade over the past 60 years.

A \$57 billion International Monetary Fund standby financing deal, upgraded from an original \$50 billion, includes

sharper spending cuts and tax hikes aimed at wiping out the country's primary fiscal deficit, which is expected to equal 2.6 percent of gross domestic product this year. "In this moment in which we live with a lot of tensions and the need to build new bridges, sports has

a unique power to build bridges more solidly than those of steel," Macri said.

Brazilian city Rio de Janeiro hosted the first South American Olympic Games in 2016. The 2024 Olympics will be hosted by Paris while Los Angeles will stage the 2028 edition.

## QNB STARS LEAGUE

## Gharafa, Qatar SC post easy wins



Qatar SC's Samuel Eto'o (left) celebrates after scoring against Al Kharaitiyat yesterday.

By Sports Reporter  
Doha

Hosts Al Gharafa strolled to a comfortable 3-0 win over Al Arabi in QNB Stars League yesterday, while Qatar SC too had little trouble in recording a 2-0 victory against Al Kharaitiyat. Al Arabi came into the game five points clear of Gharafa in the table, but were comprehensively beaten yesterday, thanks to a wonderful first-half display by The Cheetahs.

Gharafa ended their three-match losing streak. Gharafa's goals were scored by Abdelaziz Hatem in the 13th minute, and Ahmed Alaeldin in the 40th and 45th minutes. The victory took Gharafa's tally to 10 points even though they are still seventh, two behind sixth-placed Arabi.

Hatem opened the scoring early on with a free-kick taken wide on the right. He feigned a cross, but instead curled his free-kick over the wall and into the near post with the goalkeeper caught off guard.

In the latter stages of the half, the home side was able to double their lead after a defensive mix-up led to Mehdi Taremi being brought down by Masoud Zarayi in goal. Alaeldin stepped up to convert with ease.

The final goal of the night came several minutes later when Taremi fed Alaeldin who dummed his way past two defenders

before striking from the edge of the area.

Al Arabi were able to put pressure on Al Gharafa in the second half, but were wasteful with the opportunities they had and ultimately never able to get themselves back into the game.

In the day's second match, Cameroon legend Samuel Eto'o set the tone for Qatar SC's win with a sixth minute strike. Osama Omari then made it 2-0 at the stroke of half time, which was enough for the hosts to seal three points.

A lively encounter started in blistering fashion as Qatar SC were able to score an early goal and settle the nerves. Experienced Eto'o found his range from 25 yards with a precisely-struck shot that found its way into the top right-hand corner. They were able to increase their lead on the stroke of half-time as Eto'o became provider to Syrian striker Omari who struck home in almost identical fashion.

Omari's shot from distance was unstoppable and secured a healthy half-time lead for The Kings, who took the field under new coach Sergio Batista from Argentina. Into the second half, Al Kharaitiyat quickly pressed for a comeback, but were thwarted on multiple occasions by the superb goal-keeping of Jassim Al Hail. He twice denied the away side with finger-tip saves and played a huge part in his side's much-needed victory.



Ahmed Alaeldin scored a brace in Al Gharafa's win over Al Arabi.

## PREVIEW

## Al Khor face tough task against Al Rayyan



Al Khor are at the bottom of the table with just two points.

By Sports Reporter  
Doha

Al Khor, the only team yet to register a victory in this season's QNB Stars League, face a tough task when they host Al Rayyan today. Al Khor are at the bottom of the table with two points, while Al Rayyan have 14 points from four wins and two draws.

While Al Khor badly want to move away from the danger zone, Al Rayyan cannot afford to drop points as they seek to keep pace with top teams Al Sadd and Al Duhail in that order. The Kings are also behind Al Sailiya. Despite the big difference in the table, the game will be open as both teams seek points. Al Khor had lost 0-1 to Umm Salal, whereas Al Rayyan defeated Al Shahania 1-0 in the previous round.

However, Al Khor have a game in hand as their Week 5 fixture against Al Sadd was rescheduled due to the latter's AFC Champions League commitment.

Al Khor are under new French coach Bernard Casoni after they parted ways with Tunisian Adel Sellimi and put Under-23 coach Omar Najhi in charge. Casoni began his coaching career in 1999 with Olympique Marseille.

He was also at the helm of Club Africain and Etoile du Sahel in Tunisia. The 57-year-old was a player of repute as well.

Ahead of the game, Casoni said his team has to put in an excellent show against a big team like Rayyan. "We are up against a big team, but our main goal is to win three points, especially since the competition is becoming gripping after every game. We could have won our previous match against Umm Salal," Casoni said.

"When we play against teams with great individual capabilities, we have to bring out excellent team spirit and show great tactical commitment. The team's ranking does not bother me and I do not have to worry. We have no alternative than move up the table. We have to work properly and well to get the team out of the danger zone," he added.

Al Rayyan will be aware of the fact that Al Khor are tricky opponents, especially while playing at home. So Argentinian Rodolfo Arruabarrena's men will spare no effort in pursuit of their fifth victory. Arruabarrena said his team was in good shape but expected a tough match against Al Khor. "It is important that we get full points from the game against Al Khor. We have focused on tactical aspects and the team is ready. All

matches are tough not only for Al Rayyan or Al Khor, but for all the teams. We beat Al Shahania by a single goal in the last round, but we wasted a lot of chances in the second half," the Argentine said.

In another match today, Al Shahania will lock horns with Al Ahli at the Al Arabi Stadium with both teams eager to register victory. Shahania are presently eighth with seven points and Al Ahli ninth on six points.

Both sides have two victories each to their credit. While they drew four matches, they lost twice apiece.

Interestingly, their goal difference is also same (-9). Al Shahania have scored five goals and conceded 14. On the other hand, Al Ahli have netted nine times while conceding 18 goals.

Last week, Shahania lost to Rayyan 0-1, whereas Al Ahli suffered a 1-2 defeat at the hands of reigning champions Al Duhail. The clash will also be noted for the technical confrontation between Al Ahli's Czech coach Milan Macala and his Shahania counterpart Jose Murcia from Spain.

Al Ahli may get back the services of Moroccan attacking midfielder Mohsine Moutaouli, who was missing in action in the previous round.