Messi hat-trick fires Barcelona to victory over PSV

Debutante's goal was worthy of deciding any match but this was Messi's night

It was exactly 23 weeks ago that Roma confirmed itself as a Champions League outsider when Francesco Totti was sent off for a second caution.

Perhaps most importantly, this victory meant that they are strong enough to keep track of the push for the top four of the competition.

Just as Europe’s best teams are at the moment, Roma’s fans were at the Camp Nou singing “Totti, Totti, Totti.”

Perhaps it was this last detail that made it different from last year. Then, the Italian club might have been close to winning, but it was not the same. It’s a different environment, a different league, and a different season.

It was a night for those who had been waiting for the moment of victory, and a night for those who had been waiting for the return of the best player in the world.

And so Messi did what he does best, scoring two goals in the first half and adding a third in the second, to give Barcelona a 3-0 lead at halftime.

PSV’s coach Mark van Bommel knows that his team has to do better in the second half if they want to get back into the game.

The Italian club had a comfortable lead at halftime, and the second half was no different.

Messi was the star once again, scoring his third goal of the night, and Barcelona looked like the team that everyone expects them to be.

It was a night of celebration for the Barcelona fans, and a night of disappointment for the PSV supporters.

But the joy and the pain were two sides of the same coin, and everyone knew that the game was far from over.

In the end, it was Messi who decided the night, scoring a hat-trick that put Barcelona on the brink of the Champions League final.

It was a night to remember, and a night that will be talked about for years to come.
Focus on Ronaldo as Juventus hope to get money's worth

Ronalo is a predator, a throw-back number nine, that limits his exertions to the penalty box, with the caveat he can still run fast, jump high and shoot with the kind of accuracy he displayed on a number of occasions.

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The real pressure, however, will come in the hat-trick against the same opposition, Lionel Messi told Catalunya Radio earlier this week. The match was a memorable moment in his career, scoring in every game but one en route to the 2015 Champions League final.

There is merit and romance in Messi scoring in every game but one en route to the 2015 Champions League final.

Ronaldo has not scored against Atletico Madrid in 2016 and 2017, the first time in five appearances against them since 2011. The last time Ronaldo scored against Atletico was on the way to the 2014 Champions League trophy.

Messi is in no doubt about the direction Real Madrid is heading. "The club’s pursuit of a first Champions League success since 2014 has been an obsession and Ronaldo is supposed to be the last piece in the puzzle."
Manchester
Silva’s step into De Bruyne breach as Bale poised for namesake David Silva.

wealth of options on offer to Guardiola his second season at the Premier League of De Bruyne, Silva, Leroy Sane and Ra-
egles despite City’s success last season.

and the talk now is of a team more balanced, more united even, without Ronaldo.
Forget the Crucible, China builds new ‘home for snooker’

Tiger Woods has said he needs to lower his standards to compete at the top level.

So far, Woods’ performances have been inconsistent, with some high finishes and some disappointing results. He has admitted to having some back problems, which have affected his play in recent years. He has been working hard on his game, and some believe he could still win a major championship. However, it remains to be seen if he can get back to the level he was at before his back problems started to affect his game. It will be interesting to see how he performs in the future.
Aaron Hill of D'Backs was the last major-leaguer to have two cycles in a season.

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**MLB**

**Yelich collects 2nd cycle of season in Brewers victory**

Christian Yelich became the fifth major-leaguer to hit two cycles in the same season, leading the Milwaukee Brewers to a 6-0 victory over the visiting Cincinnati Reds.

Yelich, who also had a single, a double, his ninth home run, a walk, and four RBIs, matched Babe Herman (1931 Brooklyn Robins) and Harry Heilmann (1919 Detroit Tigers) for the most cycles twice in the same season, leading the Milwaukee Brewers to an 8-0 victory over the visiting Cincinnati Reds.

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**BASKETBALL**

**Lithuania, Greece, Germany lead first six to book World Cup tickets**

Lithuania, Greece, Germany, and Israel qualified for the 2023 FIBA Basketball World Cup on Tuesday.

The fourth window of the qualification tournament, which started last month, will continue in August and September.

Lithuania became the ninth team to confirm their spot in the third round, but they would like to thank the group stage and qualify for the World Cup, which will take place from August 25-September 10, 2023.

Lithuania leads Group F, with a 5-0 record, and the team's 8-0 victory over Germany was its fourth clean sheet of the qualifying group.

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**The Guardian**  
*Wednesday, September 18, 2019*

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**BETTER. We just need to keep doing what we did last period.**

"I don't look at it and think we pessimistic about their world. Everyone fluctuates. If this is the best we can be this week-end and hopefully that is good enough. If it's not then I will keep working," said Hamilton.

The 33-year-old said there was no way they were going to lose their edge to the Sabres. Buff alo did most of the work early on, scoring before the 14-minute mark of the first period. But that's as long as you're willing to do it. "You're happy or how they're doing or how they're feeling. If they're happy or not satisfied," the player said. "It's nothing if we can do the best we can to stay strong." Regarding the Blue Jackets, the player said he didn't follow the Blue Jackets too much, but he liked what he saw. He thought they were a pretty good team and they were a pretty good team that could, in his opinion, be good for the league.

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**Anthony Duclair hits re-set button, tries to make Jackets**

By Susan Jette  
*The Buffalo News*

A native of Montreal, Duclair said he wanted to make sure that he kept his focus on the task at hand. "It's tough enough to have a spot on the team. But that's as long as you're willing to do it. You're happy or not satisfied," the player said. "It's nothing if we can do the best we can to stay strong." Regarding the Blue Jackets, the player said he didn't follow the Blue Jackets too much, but he liked what he saw. He thought they were a pretty good team and they were a pretty good team that could, in his opinion, be good for the league.

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**Insurer Allianz to sign up as Olympic Games sponsor for 2021-2028**

By Peter Kovaleski  
*The Morning Call*

The insurer, who will become a top-tier sponsor, is entering the Olympic sponsorship programme alongside the Winter Games in 2022 and the Summer Games in 2024.

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**FORMULA 1**

Mercedes are over-delivering, says Hamilton

Briton won in Singapore on Sunday to go 40 points clear of Ferrari's Vettel

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**COMMENT**

WADA in last chance saloon for Russia: Tygart

The World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) will give Russia one last chance to clear its name in the fight against doping as part of the organisation's revamped programme to deal with those nations that have repeatedly failed to meet the requirements of the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) in the past.

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**WORLD SERIES**

Wardlaw scores for New York Yankees

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**INFLATION**

"SLAP IN THE FACE" Tygart says WADA's new role "is not equal to the rest of the world".

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A part of interest has been used to promote the new season's format for the National Hockey League. The new format will see the teams divided into two conferences, each consisting of four divisions, and each division will have three teams.

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Australian cricket needs Smith back, says Steve Waugh

‘You can’t lose someone of his quality and overnight and expect to replace it’

By Sports Reporter

The former Australia skipper believes his team needs Steve Smith back if they are to start winning again.

Steve Waugh believes the Australian cricket team will struggle to return to winning ways in the Ashes without Steve Smith.

Speaking in a new documentary released in Australia yesterday, Waugh said Smith was always the first person he would call if the team was struggling.

“Steve Smith is the skipper of our cricket team,” Waugh said. “There’s no one on this planet that he can’t lead. He’s that good a person and a cricketer.”

Smith was banned for nine months in 2018 after being found guilty of ball tampering.

“I hope so, you have to give them a chance to come back. I know I can do it and I’ve done it,” Smith said.

Despite this, Waugh said he was confident Smith would be back for the 2023 Ashes.

“I’m confident that he will be back soon. I think he will be back stronger and better than ever. I’m confident he will be back and be a big part of our team.”

Smith was back in Australia tugging at the heartstrings of cricket fans across the world with his tearful apology on his arrival back to Australia.

Despite this, Waugh said Australia’s Handscomb hurting after Test axing

The former first-class cricketer Tim O’Gorman, will take place in England’s two-wicket team. England will play three Tests, one One-day International and a Twenty20 International on the tour.

England will play three Tests, three One-day Internationals, and a Twenty20 International on the tour.

England’s Ben Stokes (left) and Alex Hales. (AFP)
India avoid Hong Kong upset after Dhawan's ton

India's regular captain and wicketkeeper Mahendra Singh Dhoni was ruled out of the Asia Cup due to a hand injury, but his replacement Rohit Sharma believes the team can still compete for the title.

"We are not taking that Champions Trophy moment lightly," Sharma said. "For the rest of us, we have to make sure we make the best of that situation and do our best and when you have a guy like Rohit Sharma batting at four, you can say that it's a good match."