League Cup lands in Newcastle

Stun Liverpool to end 56-year trophy drought

AFP, LONDON: Newcastle ended their 56-year trophy drought in stunning style as Dan Burn and Alexander Isak sealed a 2-1 win against Liverpool in the League Cup final on Sunday. Eddie Howe's side made

history at Wembley with a superb display that left the runaway Premier League leaders shell-shocked.

Burn put Newcastle ahead late in the first half and Isak's 27th goal in all competitions doubled their lead after the interval.

Federico Chiesa got one back in the closing seconds, but Newcastle held on for their first major silverware since the 1969 Inter-Cities Fairs Cup. That success in the predecessor to the Europa League is a relic of a bygone era, but this long-awaited triumph will be forever etched in the memories of the Newcastle fans who turned one half of Wembley into a roiling sea of black and white with their ecstatic celebrations.

It was also Newcastle's first major domestic prize dating back 70 years to the 1955 FA Cup.

Since the Magpies lifted the Inter-Cities Fairs Cup, 30 different English teams had won silverware, while Liverpool had clinched 38 major trophies in that time. But after losing the 2023



Newcastle United's players celebrate with the trophy on the pitch after the English League Cup final against Liverpool at Wembley Stadium, London on Sunday

League Cup final against Manchester United, Howe's team returned to Wembley and set the record straight at last.

Newcastle had endured five relegations to the second tier since their last trophy, with club legends like Alan Shearer, Paul Gascoigne and Malcolm MacDonald failing to win silverware in their time on Tyneside.

Aside from a brief period when Kevin Keegan's selfstyled "entertainers" challenged for the title in the 1990s, Newcastle have endured decades of underachievement and self-inflicted wounds that rendered them a laughing stock for long periods.

All that changed in 2021 when a Saudi-backed consortium completed a takeover from unpopular owner Mike Ashley and quickly hired Howe as their manager.

Thanks to Howe's astute leadership and the Saudi financial backing, Newcastle have been transformed from relegation candidates to silverware winners.

Liverpool are 23 points ahead of sixth-placed Newcastle in the league and hadn't lost to them for 17

games dating back to 2015. But Howe's men were in

no mood to be cowed by past failures. Newcastle fans unveiled a banner before kick-off urging their team to "write your name in the history books". They rose to the challenge in spectacular fashion, snapping into tackles and counter-attacking with purpose, while Liverpool were sluggish and sloppy in possession.

RESULT Liverpool 1 (Chiesa 90+4) Newcastle 2 (Burn 45.

Arsenal close gap on Liverpool after 1-0 win against Chelsea

AP, LONDON: Mikel Merino led Arsenal to a 1-0 win against Chelsea in the Premier League on Sunday.

Merino's first-half header settled the London derby at the Etihad Stadium and saw second-placed Arsenal move within 12 points of leader Liverpool.

In another all-London clash, Fulham beat Tottenham 2-0.

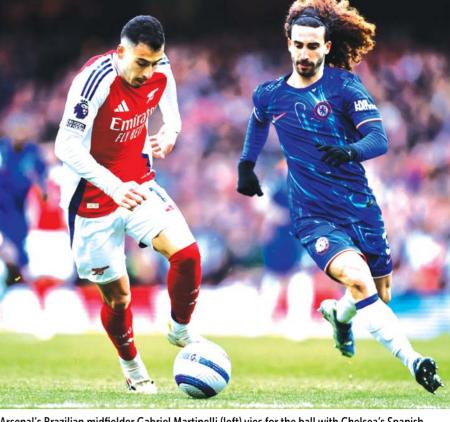
Arsenal's title hopes have faded in recent weeks, but it closed the gap on Liverpool, which was playing Newcastle in the English League Cup final later in the day.

Merino rose in the 20th minute to flick Martin Odegaard's near post corner beyond Chelsea goalkeeper Robert Sanchez. It was enough to secure a first league win for Mikel Arteta's team since February 15.

Defeat for fourth-placed Chelsea means it missed the chance to extend its one-point lead over Manchester City in fifth and boost its chance of qualifying for the Champions League next season.

Arsenal, on 58 points, is 10 clear of four time defending champion City.

Spurs blowAnother setback for Tottenham is likely to increase the pressure on coach Ange Postecoglou heading into the interna-



Arsenal's Brazilian midfielder Gabriel Martinelli (left) vies for the ball with Chelsea's Spanish defender Marc Cucurella during the English Premier League match at the Emirates Stadium in London on Sunday

ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE RESULTS Fulham 2 (Muniz 78, Sessegnon 88) Tottenham 0, Arsenal 1 (Merino 20) Chelsea 0

tional break.

Spurs, in 14th, have only won one of their last five was a 15th league defeat of

the season. Rodrigo Muniz gave Fulham the lead in the 78th at Craven Cottage and Ryan Sessegnon doubled the home team's lead 10 minutes later.

Fulham is eighth and four points behind Chelsea in the race for a Champions

T20I: New Zealand beat Pakistan by 9 wkts

AP. CHRISTCHURCH: A from 17. Tim Robinson was new era for Pakistan white 18 not out and took two ball cricket got off to a rough start Sunday with a nine wicket loss to New Zealand in the first of five Twenty20 internationals.

First time captain Salman Ali Agha led a new look team into the match which followed Pakistan's poor performance at home in the 50-overs Champions Trophy and began its buildup to the 2026 T20 World Cup.

The Pakistan batting crumbled against the New Zealand pace attack and the tourists were all out for 91 in 18.4 overs, its fifth-lowest total in T20 internationals.

New Zealand easily ran down that total, reaching 92-1 from 10.1 overs with Tim Seifert making 44 from 29 balls and Finn Allen 29 Tuesday.

runs from the first ball of the 11th over to complete the win.

Pakistan was in trouble from the start with the new opening pair of Mohammad Haris and Hasan Nawaz, stepping in for the veterans Mohammad Rizwan and Babar Azam, both dismissed without scoring in the first eight balls of the match.

A fully fit Kyle Jamieson took 3-8 and Jacob Duffy 4-14 as Pakistan stumbled to 14-4 at the end of the six over powerplay. Jamieson and Duffy produced pace, bounce and swing on a brownish pitch at Hagley Oval and the Pakistan batters had no early response.

The second match is at Dunedin, New Zealand on

Mbappe scores twice for Real Madrid, betters Ronaldo's debut season tally

AP, BARCELONA: After a slow start to his Real Madrid career, Kylian Mbappe has already surpassed one of the club greats.

Mbappe scored twice in Madrid's 2-1 comeback win over Villarreal on Saturday to take his tally to 31 goals in all competitions this season — one more than Brazil striker Ronaldo managed in his first campaign at the club. It also helped Madrid open up a three-point lead atop the Spanish league over Barcelona, which has played two games less.

Long gone are the scoring troubles Mbappé endured in his first months at

Having surpassed Ronaldo's tally from 2002-03, the former Paris Saint-Ger-



Real Madrid's French forward Kylian Mbappe (left) celebrates after scoring their second goal during the Spanish League match against Villarreal CF at La Ceramica Stadium in Vila-real

in on the 33 goals that Cristiano Ronaldo scored in his first season with Madrid in

"They are legends who marked eras with the club," Mbappé said about the two Ronaldos. "If I score more goals than Ronaldo and main player is now closing Cristiano it doesn't mean Liga tally to 20 goals, only

that I am better, just that my first season is better. Scoring goals is important, but it is even more so if we win La Liga, the Champions League and the

Copa del Rey." His double at fifth-placed Villarreal took Mbappe's La

one fewer than Barcelona's Robert Lewandowski in the domestic competition.

Carlo Ancelotti Vinícius Júnior and Antonio Rudiger on the bench until the final half hour with Luka Modric going on shortly after - as the Madrid coach rotated his lineup three days after its grueling Champions League victory over Atletico Madrid that went to a penalty shootout.

LA LIGA RESULTS Valladolid 0 Celta Vigo 1 (Alonso 83-pen), Mallorca 2 (Asano 65, Muriqi 90+7pen) Espanyol 1 (Muriqi 53-og), Villarreal 1 (Foyth 7) Real Madrid 2 (Mbappe 17, 23), Girona 1 (Stuani 64) Valencia 1 (Diego

"Support system (for fitness) from

the field."

the team's point of view wasn't

tough. Convincing my mom what I was doing was way

harder. She was very dis-

appointed in the fact that I

wasn't eating any parathas

and I was looking weak on

"And I was like, you know

what, there are people who

that

sportspopup

Shi, Se-young win All England Open titles BIRMINGHAM: Olympic women's badminton champion An Se-young came from behind to beat China's Wang Zhiyi 13-21, 21-18, 21-18 in a classic All England Open final on Sunday as top seed Shi Yuqi lifted the men's crown. Earlier, China's men's world No. 1 Shi delivered a composed performance to see off Taiwan's Lee Chia-hao 21-17, 21-19, also collecting his second All England crown. Lee, ranked 22nd, was quickly out of the blocks and opened up a three-point lead, but Shi reeled off six straight points to lead 9-6 and never relinquished his advantage. "It's been seven years," said Shi. "A lot has happened during these seven years, ups and downs. I've been to a few semi-finals and didn't make it in the end. "After these seven years I'm delighted I could win it again."

Kolkata Knight Riders pick Sakariya as replacement for Umran Malik

KOLKATA: Kolkata Knight Riders has picked Chetan Sakariya as a replacement for medium pacer Umran Malik for the upcoming edition of the Indian Premier League (IPL). Malik has been ruled out of the season due to an injury. Sakariya has represented India in an ODI and two T20Is and has played 19 IPL games, scalping 20 wickets. Sakariya, a left-arm medium pacer, joins KKR for Rs 75 lakh.

Nair looks to carry forward domestic success in IPL

NEW DELHI: After a dazzling show in domestic cricket where he excelled in different formats, premier batter Karun Nair wants to carry his spectacular form into the IPL season and help his side the break the title jinx. A vital cog in Vidarbha's wheel, Nair has been in ravishing form in domestic cricket. "I am really happy to back at the Delhi Capitals, I am excited to join the side and to play with everyone. I will treat the game as important as the last one. I didn't change much at all, I just trusted the process and kept it going throughout the tournament and that's what was planned for this season," Nair said during an interaction with media. "I will find my process, my rhythm as soon as I can and I will like to start well early and will try to get better as the tournament goes on. The only thing that I have done is playing according to the situation, added a few shots and built the confidence to execute them when needed. I also now try to stay relaxed," he added. Nair was full of praise for DC's new skipper Axar Patel.

Early wickets of Shafali, Lanning turned the match for us: MI coach Edwards

MUMBAI: Mumbai Indians head coach Charlotte Edwards said the early wickets of Delhi Capitals' skipper Meg Lanning and opener Shafali Verma helped her team win the Women's Premier League final, here. Lanning (13) and Shafali (4) departed with just 17 runs on the board as DC ended up at 141 for nine while chasing 150. "150, we knew we were a little bit light, but in a final, it's always worth a little bit more. Shafali didn't come out like she normally does, and I knew straightaway that potentially we were in with a chance, because if we could get her wicket," Edwards said. Edwards said the Capitals were a bit cagey in their chase, and it made things easier for her side. "It probably fell in our hands a little bit that we were a bit short, and potentially they went about it a bit slower than they normally do. "The opening partnership of Lanning and" Shafali has been our curse over the last few years, if I'm honest, so I was really pleased to see the back of those two batters early. It was a real team performance," she added.

Real Madrid will never play with under 72 hours rest again: Ancelotti VILA-REAL (Spain): Real Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti

said Saturday his team will not play another football game after fewer than 72 hours of rest. Los Blancos beat Atletico Madrid on Wednesday night in the Champions League on penalties and then earned a 2-1 win at Villarreal on Saturday, with the game kicking off at 1630 GMT. "I think today is the last time we will play a game before 72 hours (of rest)," Ancelotti told reporters. "We will never play another game (without) 72 hours of rest." "We asked La Liga twice to change the time of the game and they did not do anything, this is the last time." World football governing body FIFA recommends at least 72 hours between matches in order to protect the health of the players.

I don't want to go to room, sit alone and sulk: Kohli bats for family on tours

PTI, BENGALURU: Star batter Virat Kohli supported the presence of players' families on tours, saying he would always prefer having personal support around him to deal with tough and intense days on the field, instead of sulking alone in his hotel

A BCCI directive which was issued after India's 1-3 Test series defeat against Australia had curtailed the family time of players for no longer than 14 days on tours exceeding 45 days.

The wife, children or girlfriends of players could be with them for a maximum of one week on shorter tours.

Kohli, Ravindra Jadeja and Mohammed Shami had their families in Dubai during the recently-concluded Champions Trophy but they did not stay at the team hotel. The expense of the families' stay was

borne by the players and not the BCCI. "The role of family is very difficult to explain to people how grounding it is to just come back to your family every time you have something which is intense, which happens on the outside," said Kohli during RCB's Innovation Lab summit which concluded here.

"I don't think people have an under-

standing of what value it brings." Kohli said having the family around would help a player to recover from onfield disappointments that much quicker.

The role of family is very difficult to explain to people how grounding it is to just come back to your family every time you have something which is intense, which happens on the outside. Having the family around would help a player to recover from on-field disappointments that much quicker. I don't want to go to my room and just sit alone and sulk. I want to be able to be normal. Then you can really treat your game as something that is a responsibility - Virat Kohli

"I don't want to go to my room and just sit alone and sulk. I want to be able to be normal. Then you can really treat your game as something that is a responsibil-

"Not in a vague sense, but in a very real way that you finish your commitment and then you come back to your house, you're with family, and absolutely normalcy in your house and normal family life goes

me, that is absolutely a

of immense pleasure. I won't miss any lighting his strong bond with the family. opportunities to go out and spend time with my family whenever I can," said Kohli. The 36-year-old was "disappointed" because people with no real connection with such issues have been involved in such discussions. "I feel quite disappointed about that because it's like people who have no control over what's going on are brought into conversations and put out at the forefront of that 'oh, maybe they need to be kept away'. "And if you ask any player, do you want your family to be around you all the time? You'll be like, yes,"

