

Esteghlal moves up to second

Tehran Times Sports Desk
TEHRAN — Esteghlal football team beat Shahin of Bushehr and moved up to the second place in the Iran Professional League (IPL) on Monday.

In the match played at the Azadi

Stadium in front of 20,000 people, Esteghlal defeated Shahin of Bushehr 2-1 after four games without a win.

Reza Enayati gave Esteghlal a lead three minutes into the second half. Shahin keeper Hassan Ro-



shangar failed to save Arash Borhani's shot and Enayati scored in front of the goal.

Arash Borhani doubled Esteghlal on the scoreboard in the 57th minute thanks to a perfect through-ball from captain Farhad Majidi.

Mohammad Ahmad-Pouri reduced Shahin's deficit in the 65th minute, taking advantage of Esteghlal defenders' negligence inside the area and opened the goal.

"I congratulated Shahin for their good performance against Esteghlal.

We did not play good in the first half but did well in the second half and took advantage of our chances," Esteghlal coach Samad Marfavi said.

Esteghlal moved up to second place with 27 points behind Sepahan with 28 points.

NEWS IN BRIEF



Jamie McMurray takes Talladega to end 86-race skid



TALLADEGA, Ala. — NASCAR stopped the bumping, at least for a while.

There was nothing that could be done about the blocking.

In the end, Sunday looked like most every other event at Talladega Superspeedway:

There was a surprise winner, two harrowing accidents, angry drivers and a frustrated fans over a vanilla race at NASCAR's most spectacular track.

And oh, by the way, Jimmie Johnson likely sealed his record fourth-consecutive championship.

"I was so concerned about this race," the three-time defending champion admitted.

(Source: AP)

Poults joy at well-timed win



Ian Poulter acknowledged his victory at the Singapore Open could not have come at a better time with the race for Ryder Cup points having now started.

The 33-year-old Englishman clinched his first title since the Dunlop Phoenix Tournament Japan back in November 2007 as he held off China's Liang Wen-chong to win by one stroke at Sentosa Golf Club over the weekend.

His eighth European Tour success gave a welcome early boost to his bid to qualify for a third Ryder Cup appearance as he climbed to fourth in the standings.

(Source: Skysports)

Lampard ready for United



Frank Lampard is relishing next weekend's Super Sunday clash with Manchester United.

The Premier League's top two clash at Stamford Bridge on Sunday with Chelsea taking a two-point lead into the game.

And despite having a midweek UEFA Champions League clash with Atletico Madrid to come, Lampard cannot help looking towards the weekend.

"I don't think anyone will need to work hard to get up for the United game, we all know it is coming. We'll try and put some space between us and them at the top," said Lampard.

(Source: Skysport)

Williams confirm Barrichello



Williams have confirmed that Rubens Barrichello will join them for the 2010 Formula One season alongside rookie Nico Hulkenberg.

The announcement, which has been widely anticipated in recent weeks,

sees the pair replace Nico Rosberg - who is expected to take Barrichello's seat at Brawn GP - and Kazuki Nakajima.

Barrichello, who turns 38 in May, is now the most experienced driver in Formula One history, having made 284 starts in a career stretching back to 1993.

He has enjoyed something of a career revival alongside World Champion Jenson Button at Brawn this season, winning his first races in five seasons and finishing third in the drivers' standings.

(source :AFP)

Paykan faces Belchatow in Club World Volleyball Championship

Tehran Times Sports Desk
TEHRAN — Iran's Paykan is to play PGE Skra Belchatow of Poland on Wednesday in the 2009 FIVB Men's Club World Volleyball Championship.

The competition that comprises 8 teams playing in two pools will be the first at the world level since Italy organized the last edition in Treviso in 1992, but this time there is one interesting new rule which is the Golden Formula to be applied for the first time in FIVB competition. The new rule requires that the first attack for each team after the opponent service begins from the back row in an attempt to produce longer rallies to give the fans greater excitement, according to FIVB.

Pool A comprises the European champions League Champions Trentino Betlic, the 1st best European team in CEV Ranking Zenit Kazan, the Norceca representatives Plataneros de



Corozal of Puerto Rico and the African champions Zamalek.

Pool B features the second best European team PGE Skra Belchatow of Poland, the Asian club Championship winners Paykan of Iran, the South American Champions Cimed of Brazil and the organizer Al Arabi Doha of Qatar.

Each pool plays in a round robin format where the first and second of each pool qualify to the semifinal. The first of pool A plays second of pool B, while the first of pool B meets the second of pool A as the winners meet to determine the World club champions.

The 2009 Men's Club World Championship will be held at the Aspire Zone indoor hall in Doha, Qatar, from November 3 to 8.

Iran to play Uruguay in FIFA U-17 World Cup

Tehran Times Sports Desk



TEHRAN — Iran will play Uruguay in the second round of the FIFA U-17 World Cup in Nigeria on Thursday.

Iran finished top of Group C after beating Gambia and the Netherlands and a draw against Colombia. The team will play Uruguay which has finished third in Group F.

"We have a difficult job in the knockout stage against Uruguay. They play like Colombia, but we are going to beat them to advance to the quarterfinals," Iran U-17 coach Ali Dustimehr said.

The 13th edition of the FIFA U-17 World Cup kicked off on October 24 and will be finished on November 15. Matches will be played in nine cities across Nigeria.

Iranian athletes win gold in Asian Indoor Games

Tehran Times Sports Desk

HANOI — Iranian athletes claimed three gold medals in the 2009 Asian Indoor Games in Vietnam on Monday.

Sajjad Moradi won gold in the 800 meter event, clocking 1:47.48 minutes. Mostafa Dalirian also bagged a gold medal in Kurash.

Ebrahim Nikfar claimed a gold medal in the shot put with a 19.66 meter throw.

Leila Rajabi, the Iranian woman athlete, had previously won the gold in the shot put.

Iran has participated in the event with 131 athletes in 16 events. A total of 4,500 athletes from more than 40 countries have taken part in the event which started on October 30 and continues to November 8.



Drogba relishing rivalry

Didier Drogba is hoping to beat Fernando Torres in the Premier League scoring charts after being hailed as the best striker in the world by Chelsea team-mate Frank Lampard.

Drogba netted his ninth league goal of the season in the 4-0 demolition of ten-man Bolton on Saturday but he remains one behind Torres after the Liverpool striker also found the target against Fulham.

The Ivorian's best campaign to date has been 2006/7, when he won the golden boot with 20 league goals and ended with 33 in all competitions.

He is determined to beat that tally this time round and thinks the rivalry with Torres will spur him on to achieve greater success.

"It's nice to have this competition with Torres to finish top scorer. It's always a good challenge to be part of," Drogba told the Evening Standard.

Target

"Three seasons ago I was in a race against Benni McCarthy and Cristiano Ronaldo and I managed to come out on top.

"It's a big challenge for me to finish ahead of Torres this season and gives me the desire to do more for my team."

Drogba insists it is more important for the team to do well and he is confident his partnership with Nicolas Anelka will continue to pay dividends.

"I really feel good about the way the season is going for Chelsea.



The key thing is we are playing with two strikers up front and I have a lot of support," he said.

"The way we pass the ball is really good, we have really improved and that is what has made the difference.

"I would like to beat my best-ever total for Chelsea of 33 goals but it's a target as long as we keep winning games, stay top of the league and win the title at the end of the season."

Drogba's magnificent start to the season has prompted Lampard to declare that he is the finest centre-forward on the planet.

The Blues midfielder believes Drogba has more strings to his bow than any of his rivals for the golden boot, including Torres "Who knows who will score more? They are both top strikers but, for me, Didier is the best in the world because of his all-round game and the form he is in," said Lampard.

"Everyone talks about his power but maybe they don't give him the credit he deserves for his finishing. His finishing at times is different class, with his head or with his foot. He is the best striker I have ever played with."

"The thing about Didier is he's a very unselfish player. A lot of things get said about him but one thing we know in the camp is he gives everything for the team. "He's had a lot of assists this year, which just shows he's not just interested in scoring goals, he's interested in working hard for the team, heading balls out of his own box. That's the beauty of him."

(Source: sky sports)

Murray : I won't judge Agassi

Andy Murray claims Andre Agassi's revelations of drug-taking will not taint his opinion of the former world number one.

Murray has made no secret of the fact that Agassi was his boyhood hero, the Scot growing up idolizing the American.

While acknowledging Agassi had made a mistake, Murray insists it will not affect his view of the eight-time Grand Slam winner and went on to add that he feels confident that tennis does not have a widespread problem with drugs.

"I don't think any of the players expected it but you've just got to move on," stated the 22-year-old.

"I loved Andre, met him numerous times. He was unbelievably nice to me. I practiced with him quite a lot.

"I guess it's something he has to deal with him himself. He's entitled to say whatever he wants and I wish him the best.

(Source :skysports)



Ronaldo scores twice in Corinthians' draw

SAO PAULO (AP) — Ronaldo scored two goals for Corinthians but 10-man Palmeiras rallied twice to earn a 2-2 draw and retain the lead in the Brazilian league on Sunday.

Palmeiras and defending champion Sao Paulo, which beat Barueri 1-0 on Saturday, have 58 points each with five rounds to go, but Palmeiras leads on goal difference.

Third-place Atletico Mineiro defeated Goias 3-2 to move within two points of the lead, while fourth-place Flamengo edged Santos 1-0 on Saturday and is four points behind Palmeiras and Sao Paulo.

Ronaldo scored his first goal with a 38th-minute penalty after Marcos, Palmeiras' veteran World Cup goalkeeper, fouled striker Jorge Henrique inside the area and was sent off.

Palmeiras equalized with a header by defender Danilo in the 51st, but Ronaldo put Corinthians ahead again in the 66th thanks to a perfect through-ball from Argentine midfielder Matias Defederico, who had also set up the move that prompted the first-half penalty.

Ronaldo calmly waited for Palmeiras' substitute goalkeeper Bruno to charge and then beat him with a low left-footed shot. The goals were Ronaldo's ninth and 10th in the Brazilian league, taking his total to 21 since returning to competitive football in March after recovering from the third serious injury of his career.

Ronaldo and Corinthians had several chances to increase the lead at Prudentao stadium, but Palmeiras took advantage of a set piece in the 85th to equalize again with a header by defender Mauricio.

Palmeiras are unbeaten against Corinthians in three years, since a 1-0 defeat in October 2006. With the draw in Presidente Prudente, Palmeiras - seeking its first Brazilian title since 1994 - narrowly avoided losing the lead in the league for the first time in 18 rounds.

Sao Paulo moved closer by beating Barueri 1-0 with a first-half goal by midfielder Jorge Wagner at Morumbi stadium on Saturday, giving the six-time champion its third straight win.

Barueri played without two regular starters who were suspended by team directors after they told local media that other clubs had offered Barueri money to beat Flamengo last Wednesday.

Also on Saturday, goalkeeper Bruno saved a penalty in each half in Flamengo's defeat of Santos in front of nearly 80,000 people at Maracana stadium. Midfielder Paulo Henrique missed both penalties for Santos, which is winless in its last five matches.

Atletico Mineiro edged Goias at Serra Dourada stadium in Goiania thanks to a 69th-minute penalty converted by the league's leading scorer Diego Tardelli, keeping alive the team's hopes of winning the championship for the first time since 1971. Atletico Mineiro won despite allowing Goias to come back from a two-goal deficit in the first half.

Internacional dropped to fifth place after losing 1-0 to Botafogo at its Beira-Rio stadium in Porto Alegre, its second defeat in a row. The victory kept Botafogo out of the relegation zone.

The top four clubs will qualify for next year's Copa Libertadores, while the bottom four will be relegated.