

FIFA Fines Argentina Over Islands Banner



The move by football's governing body marked the second time this month.

BUENOS AIRES (FIFA) - Argentine national hoisting a flag, which asserted the country's sovereignty over the Malvinas Islands, during a June clash has invited the country's

football body FIFA's fine and reprimand.

The June 7 friendly against Slovenia in the run-up to 2014 World Cup saw Argentinean footballers

displaying a banner reading, "Las Malvinas Son Argentinas (The Malvinas are Argentinian)" before the game.

Consequently, FIFA's Disciplinary

Committee imposed a fine of 30,000 Swiss francs (USD 33,000) on the Argentinean football association and found the gesture in breach of regulations on "political action" at games.

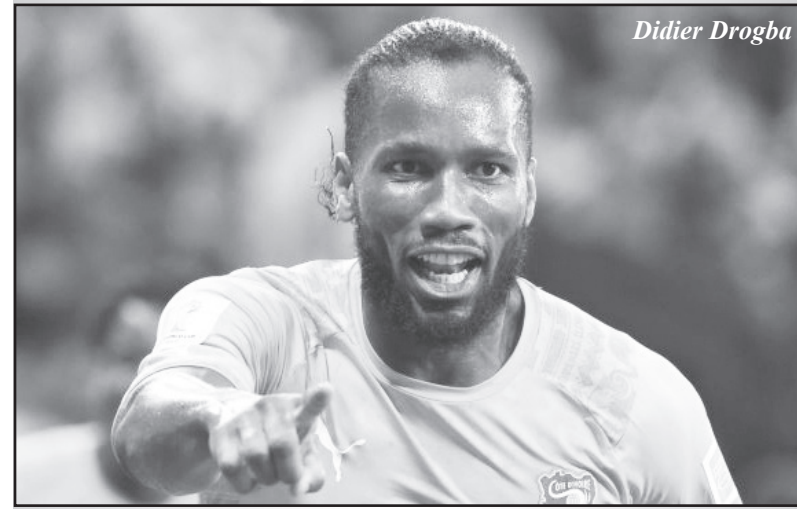
Argentina and Britain fought a 74-day-long war in 1982 over the islands. The conflict ended with the British side claiming victory.

Located about 480 kilometers (300 miles) off Argentina's coast, the Malvinas Islands have been declared part of the British overseas territories since the UK established its colonial rule on the territories in 1833.

Britain argues that it is up to the islands to decide. But Argentina says the English-speaking islanders are an implanted population kept stagnant for the purpose of occupying the territory.

The move by football's governing body marked the second time this month, it has fined the Argentinean football association. A 300,000 Swiss francs (USD 340,000) fine was ordered for failing to bring Argentina players to pre-match news conferences at the World Cup.

Chelsea Announces Drogba Return



Didier Drogba

LONDON (Goal) - Chelsea has announced return to the club of stellar Didier Drogba, who is credited with netting the side's most important goal.

The club said the Ivorian is back for a one-year contract, with the star himself saying he had a hard time saying no to the giants' great manager Jose Mourinho.

Drogba told the club website, "It was an easy decision. I couldn't turn down the opportunity to work with Jose again."

"Everyone knows the special relationship I have with this club and it has always felt like home to me. My desire to win is still the same and I look forward to the opportunity to help this team."

"I am excited for this next chapter of my career," added Drogba.

The 36-year-old sports a 157-goal legacy with the club, which includes his equalizer and winner against Bayern Munich in the 2012 Champions League final.

Up for grabs after the last-season expiration of his contract with Galatasaray, the Ivorian has been tapped by media as a future assistant to Mourinho.

Prior to the Friday announcement, Mourinho had said, "We want to win matches and win titles and Didier is one of the best strikers in Europe. He is still very adapted to the needs of the Premier League and we are thinking about it in a non-emotional way."

Monaco Mounts Comeback To Reach Gstaad Final



Argentina's Juan Monaco

GSTAAD (AFP) - Argentine Juan Monaco claimed a place in his first final in almost a year on Saturday as he defeated Robin Haase 6-3, 7-6 (7/4) at the Swiss Open, setting up a showdown with Spain's Pablo Andujar.

Monaco, whose ranking has plummeted to 105 after a series of injuries going back to late 2013, recovered from breaks down in both sets to claim victory over Dutch seventh seed Haase, a losing finalist here a year ago to Mikhail Youzhny.

It will be a first-ever meeting for Monaco in the final against world number 71 Andujar, who profited from seven double-faults off the racquet of fourth seed Fernando Verdasco in a 6-3, 6-7 (2/7), 6-1 upset.

Verdasco, treated for a shoulder

problem after losing the opening set, broke in the second set as his opponent served for a straight-sets win.

Verdasco then stayed alive by claiming the second set in a tie-break before collapsing in the third to exit as his serve was broken seven times.

Earlier, the 30-year-old Monaco went through to his first final since Kitzbuehel 51 weeks ago after playing his first semi-final of 2014.

The South American has been bothered by three different injuries this season -- his back, wrist and foot.

His victory took his 2014 record to 13-14 and 5-1 at this alpine village whose clay stands 1,050m above sea level.

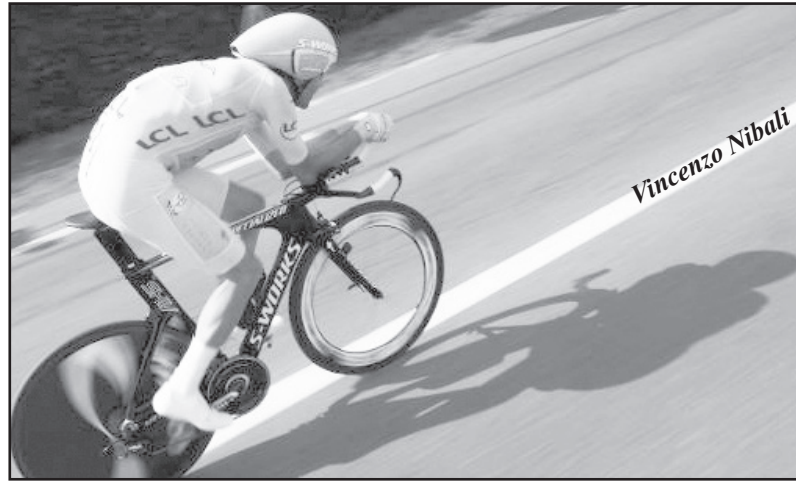
Nibali Secures Tour de France Victory

PARIS (Eurosport) - Italian rider Vincenzo Nibali secured Tour de France victory as Germany's Tony Martin dominated the penultimate 20th stage time trial and the host nation celebrated podium success.

Barring a final stage catastrophe on Sunday, Astana rider Nibali is assured of winning his first Tour title on the Champs Elysees as he takes an impressive 7min 52sec lead to Paris.

It is the first Tour victory by an Italian since Marco Pantani in 1998.

But for the rider nicknamed "The Shark" his achievement was taking time to sink in.



"I haven't even thought about it yet, I've always thought about giving

my maximum and not about what I might achieve or records or

entering into Tour history," he said.

"I just thought about getting to the end of each stage and getting on my bike because that's what I like the most."

Three-time world time trial champion Martin was peerless in his speciality as he finished a huge 1min 39sec ahead of the rest, clocking an impressive time of 1hr 06:21.

Dutch time trial champion Tom Dumoulin was second with Czech Jan Barta third at 1:47, ahead of Nibali who was fourth at 1:58. It was Martin's second stage win of the Tour and the third for his OPQS team.

Inter Milan Beats Real Madrid on Penalty Kicks

BERKELEY (Goal) - Mauro Icardi drove the winner past diving goalkeeper Jesus Fdez in the fifth round of penalty kicks to lift Inter Milan past Real Madrid after they tied 1-1 in an International Champions Cup match.

Icardi also converted a penalty kick in the 68th minute to tie it. Referee Ricardo Salazar awarded the penalty kick after Inter newcomer Nemanja Vidic went down in the box on a challenge by Sobrino.

"We played well today," Inter manager Walter Mazzarri said. "We have young guys and we started a new cycle. Obviously, we're not going to be happy just participating (in the tournament). We're looking to obtain results."

Gareth Bale scored for Real Madrid

in the 10th minute, unleashing a strike into the top left corner of the net from about 25 yards out. The Welsh star also bounced a header off the crossbar less than three minutes into the match and nearly converted a direct free kick in the 30th minute

A sellout crowd of 62,583 fans watched the testy match at Memorial Stadium on the University of California campus. The contest featured four bookings and a shoving match broke out after a hard challenge from Real Madrid's Raul de Tomas in the 48th minute.

The eight-club Guinness International Champions Cup will continue at various stadiums throughout North America until Aug. 4



Real Madrid's Gareth Bale, right, celebrates after scoring a goal against Inter Milan in the first round of the Guinness International Champions Cup.

Harvick Grabs Pole With Big Run at IMS



Kevin Harvick, left, is congratulated by Kurt Busch after winning the pole.

INDIANAPOLIS (AFP) - The season-long rivalry between Hendrick Motorsports and Team Penske heads into the Brickyard 400 at Indianapolis Motor Speedway, where Kevin Harvick will try

to crash their party.

Harvick, Jeff Gordon and Brad Keselowski swept the top three spots in qualifying, setting up what could be a showdown between the most dominant

teams so far this season.

Harvick, who picked up his fourth pole of the season Sunday, already has two wins this season but was in the mix for several other victories with his new Stewart-Haas Racing team. Gordon is the Sprint Cup points leader and has been a model of consistency all year for Hendrick Motorsports, and Penske has gotten three wins from Keselowski.

Keselowski, third in the standings behind Hendrick drivers Gordon and Dale Earnhardt Jr., didn't think Saturday was a true indicator of how the Brickyard - or the rest of the season - will play out.

"When you think you really understand what's going on, you never know what somebody else has in their hand - much like if you were playing a game of poker," Keselowski said. "We think

that we have the two strongest hands with Penske and Hendrick, and certainly that's been the case to this date in the season, but you just don't know what's out there."

Kevin Love Withdraws From Team USA

LOS ANGELES (AFP) - Kevin Love still doesn't know where he will play next season, his NBA future hanging in the air while a seldom-used league rule complicates a potential trade to Cleveland.

The only thing certain from a basketball standpoint for Love is that he won't be playing for Team USA this summer.

Love had to withdraw from Team USA's roster while the Minnesota Timberwolves field offers for their three-time All-Star, a process that was extended when Cavaliers rookie Andrew Wiggins signed his contract this week.

Love is the latest All-Star to pull out of Team USA, which begins its training camp in Las Vegas next week to prepare for the FIBA World Cup in Spain. In recent weeks the Americans have lost Blake Griffin, LaMarcus Aldridge and NBA Finals MVP Kawhi Leonard. They have 18 players remaining and will choose 12 for the World Cup of Basketball roster.

Love, who won gold medals at the 2012 Olympics and 2010 world championship and was one of the first players to commit to play this summer, told USA Basketball chairman Jerry Colangelo that he would be unavailable for training camp that starts Monday.