

Shahr Khodro Fail to Beat Shabab Al-Ahli in ACL



TEHRAN (Tasnim) – Shabab Al-Ahli of the UAE edged past Iranian football team Shahr Khodro 1-0 in Group B of the AFC Champions League.

Harib Abdalla Suhail scored from close range in the 75th minute.

Shahr Khodro could have leveled the match but Amin Ghaseminejad's header hit the bar in the injury time.

The two sides will play each other again on Thursday at the same stadium with another defeat spelling exit for Shahr Khodro.

In another group match, Saudi Arabia's Al Hilal earned a late 2-1 win over Uzbekistan's Pakhtakor.

Shahr Khodro sits fourth in the table without any point and Al-Hilal almost advanced to Round of 16 with nine points out of three matches.

Pakhtakor and Al Ahli sit second and third with six and three points, respectively.

Messi Joins Exclusive Club of Sporting Billionaires



Barcelona's Argentinian forward Lionel Messi smiles during a friendly football match between FC Barcelona and Nastic at the Johan Cruyff stadium in Sant Joan Despi, near Barcelona, on Sept 12, 2020.

BARCELONA (Dispatches) - Lionel Messi may have had to stay put at Barcelona but the Argentine legend did succeed in joining one new club this year -- the one reserved for sporting billionaires, according to Forbes magazine.

The Argentine striker's career earnings of over one billion dollars (840 million euros) places the six-time Ballon d'Or winner in a group of mega-wealthy sports figures containing just Tiger Woods, Floyd Mayweather and his great rival on the pitch, Cristiano Ronaldo.

Forbes said that in 2020 Messi was the best paid footballer in the world with an income of \$126 million from his Barca salary (\$92 million for the 2020/2021 season) and \$34 million from sponsors and other sources.

The 33-year-old knocked Juve-

tus forward Ronaldo (\$117 million) off the top of the football salary chart with Paris Saint-Germain's Neymar (\$96 million) in third place.

Forbes' top 10 earning players made a combined \$570 million this season, a jump of 11 percent despite the disruption caused by the coronavirus pandemic to European leagues and the global economy.

Michael Jordan is also in the billionaire's club but the basketball legend's fortune has largely come after retirement through his longstanding contract with Nike and acquisition of NBA franchise Charlotte Hornets.

Messi remains at Barcelona this season after conceding defeat in his attempt to leave without triggering his 700-million euro release.

Yates Holds Off Thomas to Win Tirreno-Adriatico

SAN BENEDETTO DEL TRONTO, Italy (Reuters) — Simon Yates held off a final-stage challenge from Geraint Thomas to win the eight-day Tirreno-Adriatico race Monday and set himself up as one of the favorites for the Giro d'Italia.

In the concluding 10-kilometer (6.2-mile) individual time trial, Thomas finished 22 seconds ahead of Yates but that wasn't enough for the 2018 Tour de France champion to overcome the 39-second deficit he opened the day with.

Yates, a British rider with the Mitchelton-Scott team who won the 2018 Spanish Vuelta, finished 17 seconds ahead of Thomas in



the overall standings.

Rafal Majka dropped from second to third overall, 29 seconds behind.

Italian champion Filippo Ganna, a teammate of Thomas' with Ineos, won the time trial in just under 11 minutes. Victor Campenaerts fin-

ished second, 18 seconds behind, and Rohan Dennis was third, 26 seconds behind.

Thomas finished fourth in the time trial, 28 seconds behind Ganna, while Yates was 18th, 50 seconds behind.

The entirely flat time trial started and ended in San Benedetto Del Tronto along the Adriatic coast.

Yates and Thomas are expected to be among the favorites for the Giro d'Italia next month.

Four-time Tour champion Chris Froome, who was dropped from Ineos' Tour team this year, finished more than an hour behind Yates in the overall standings.

James' Stunner Helps Clinical Chelsea Sink Brighton

BRIGHTON, England (Dispatches) - Chelsea got their Premier League campaign on track after 20-year-old right back Reece James helped them to a 3-1 win at Brighton & Hove Albion with a spectacular goal on Monday.

New signings Timo Werner and Kai Havertz made their debuts up front after the German internationals joined Frank Lampard's side from the Bundesliga during the close season.

But it was James who gave the visitors a 2-1 lead with a thunderbolt into the top corner from 25 meters before a deflected shot by central defender Kurt Zouma sealed the points.

"It was a hard game after 1-1 but then Reece scored an amazing goal. We are very happy that we won today," said Werner. "We had a lot of players not in the rhythm now but I think we will get better and better when we play more games together."

Pandemic Batters Market for Brazilian Football Transfers



Reigning Brazilian champions Flamengo (red and black) in action against Atletico Mineiro

BRASILIA (Dispatches) - Brazil exports more footballers than any other country, but the coronavirus pandemic has caused a plunge in international transfers, hitting the finances of clubs that depend on lucra-

tive deals for their young talent.

The number of Brazilian footballers transferred to foreign clubs fell 62 percent during the European summer transfer window this year, according to an AFP count based

on data from the website Transfermarkt.

From June 1 to September 8 last year, 194 players at Brazilian clubs left to play abroad, either on loan or transferred, according to the site.

This year, the number was just 74.

"The transfer market has slowed. Clubs are trying not to spend as much because everyone's financial situation is complicated," said ESPN commentator Gustavo Hofman.

Brazil leads the world with 2,742 footballers playing abroad, ahead of Argentina (2,330) and France (1,740), according to a May report by the International Centre for Sports Studies, in Switzerland.

In the country of Pele and Neymar, transfers typically generate around one-fourth of clubs' income, second only to TV rights as a revenue source.

Dortmund Thrash 10-Man Duisburg in German Cup

BERLIN (Dispatches) -- Borussia Dortmund progressed into the second round of the German Cup after moving 5-0 past third division outfit Duisburg on Monday.

The "BVB" smoothed the way for their win with three first-half goals, while Dominic Volkmer's red card before half-time left Duisburg hopeless.

The lower league side had the worst possible start on home soil as Maximilian Sauer's handball allowed Jadon Sancho to break the deadlock from the spot with just 14 minutes played.

Dortmund gained momentum and pinned Duisburg in their territory before Thorgan Hazard's back-heel pass found youngster Jude Bellingham, who made no mistake to make it 2-0 from inside the box in the 30th minute.

Eight minutes later, things went from bad to worse for Duisburg as Volkmer felled Erling Haaland as the last man to receive his marching orders.

Haaland remained center stage as he drilled the subsequent free-kick from the edge of the box into the top-left

corner to make it 3-0.

Duisburg tried to keep pace but the "BVB" continued their relentless march, as Giovanni Reyna's deflected free-kick left goalkeeper Leo Weinkauf helpless five minutes into the second half.

Lucien Favre then brought on Marco Reus for his return after a long injury lay-off, and the German international paid back his trust seconds later, beating Weinkauf following a free-kick at the hour mark.

Dortmund remained in full control of proceedings and should have added a sixth goal, but Julian Brandt lacked accuracy in the closing period.

"The game was in fact over after my team saw a straight red card. However, my team tried their best to avoid a worse defeat," Duisburg head coach Torsten Lieberknecht said.

Elsewhere, fourth division Rot-Weiss Essen caused a surprise by knocking out newly-promoted Bundesliga side Arminia Bielefeld thanks to a first-half goal from Simon Engelmann.

Renault in Talks With FIA Over Alonso 2020 Test

PARIS (Dispatches) - The French car manufacturer's increased competitiveness this year has led to growing interest from Alonso in the team's progress, and a belief that his return next year could deliver more than originally hoped.

In an exclusive interview with Motorsport.com, Renault team principal Cyril Abiteboul said that Alonso's hunger had ramped up the team's desire to get him out in its current car.

However, an F1 outing has been ruled out.

