

## BIG PHIL EXPRESSES SYMPATHY AFTER FEASTING ON 'BEEF BALL'

**HONG KONG:** Eastern Sports Club coach Chan Yuen-ting was comforted by her opposite number Luiz Felipe Scolari after her Asian Champions League debut at Chinese powerhouse Guangzhou Evergrande ended in a nightmarish 7-0 defeat.

The 28-year-old Chan, affectionately nicknamed "Aw Yuen", which translates as beef ball, became the first woman to guide a men's team in a top-flight continental competition when she led the Hong Kong champions out at the Tianhe Stadium on Wednesday.

Her dreams of giving the 2002 World Cup-winning Brazil coach a run for his money soon turned to dust when full-back Wong Tsz-ho was sent off for a handball within the first four minutes and Ricardo Goulart slotted home from the resultant penalty.

Eastern were run ragged by a relentless

Guangzhou and found themselves trailing 3-0 and reduced to nine men after Wong Chi-chung was sent off for a second yellow card offence in the 34th minute. The home side added four more goals in the second half.

Scolari, who embraced Chan after the game, said the red cards had distorted the nature of the contest.

"I comforted her and told her this match cannot be a real evidence for your ability," he was quoted as saying by the South China Morning Post.

"This is quite different when within such a short time you have two red cards like this—you can't take it seriously."

Chan agreed that losing two players had sealed her team's fate and said Eastern would need to adapt quickly to life in the region's elite competition with five more Group G matches still to play.

"We have learned a very valuable lesson today," she added. "Of course losing the game is a very big disappointment, but we learned we need to adjust our mentality as soon as possible."

"After the (first) red card everything changed, all our tactics and plans had to be changed. And in a competition like this the pace is quite different from that we encounter in Hong Kong... it's our debut and naturally we'll make mistakes."

Eastern had earlier refunded fans who planned to travel to China for the game after informing them that they would not be able to attend, citing "internal problems" for the situation.

The Hong Kong club's next match in the competition is a home game against Japan's Kawasaki Frontale on March 1. Korea's Suwon Samsung Bluewings are the other side in the group. — Reuters

NHL

# DUCKS END BOSTON'S 4-GAME WINNING STREAK

**ANAHEIM:** Rickard Rakell broke a tie with his second goal with 2:34 to play, helping the Anaheim Ducks end Boston's four-game winning streak under new coach Bruce Cassidy with a 5-3 victory over the Bruins on Wednesday night. Rakell also scored in the second period for the Ducks and has 24 goals in his outstanding season. Ondrej Kase, Josh Manson and Andrew Cogliano also scored for Anaheim, and Jonathan Bernier made 26 saves in his first victory since Jan. 23. Frank Vatrano scored the tying goal in the third period for the Bruins, who hadn't lost since Cassidy replaced Claude Julien on Feb. 7. Defensemen Brandon Carlo and Zdeno Chara scored early goals, and Tuukka Rask stopped 20 shots. Anaheim beat Boston for the seventh straight time.



**ANAHEIM:** Andrew Cogliano #7 of the Anaheim Ducks chases Adam McQuaid #54 of the Boston Bruins during the third period of a game at Honda Center on Wednesday in Anaheim, California. — AFP

**OILERS 4, FLORIDA 3**  
Kris Russell's goal with 7:58 left was his first in more than a year and lifted Edmonton over Florida to end the Panthers' five-game winning streak. Russell's goal was his first since Feb. 11, 2016, when he played for Calgary. He went goalless in his first 48 games with the Oilers. Fellow defenseman Oscar Klefbom also scored for Edmonton, as did forwards Zack Kassian and Ryan Nugent-Hopkins. Connor McDavid, who came into the night leading the NHL scoring race, had an assist on Russell's goal. Aleksander Barkov, Colton Sceviour and Jonathan Marchessault scored for Florida. Keith Yandle had two assists for the Panthers, giving him 400 points for his career. Cam Talbot stopped 31 shots for the Oilers, who have won their last eight games at Florida - last losing on the Panthers' ice in 2002. James Reimer made 31 saves for the Panthers, who just completed a 5-0-0 road trip.

**CAPITALS 4, FLYERS 1**  
Evgeny Kuznetsov scored two goals, Braden Holtby made 33 saves and Washington beat Philadelphia. Nicklas Backstrom and T.J. Oshie also scored for

the NHL-leading Capitals, who snapped a two-game losing streak. Brayden Schenn had the lone goal for the struggling Flyers, who are 2-5 in their last seven games. Michal Neuvirth stopped 25 shots for Philadelphia. — AP

SOCCER

## RANIERI WANTS MORE FROM CHAMPIONS LEAGUE 'HOLIDAY'

**SEVILLE:** Leicester City manager Claudio Ranieri believes his side can continue their "holiday" from the reality of a Premier League relegation battle in the Champions League after Jamie Vardy's away goal gave them a lifeline against Sevilla on Wednesday. Despite being thoroughly outplayed in southern Spain, Leicester emerged with just a 2-1 last 16, first leg defeat, leaving the tie finely balanced ahead of the return leg on March 14.

"The Champions League is like a holiday and the most important thing is the Premier League," said Ranieri, with Leicester perilously placed just one point above the drop zone.

"If we can do something important in the Champions League then great. "Football is great for this because the best and biggest team doesn't always win."

On top of Vardy's first goal since December, Leicester were thankful to a stunning display from goalkeeper Kasper Schmeichel as he made a string of saves, including from Joaquin Correa's first-half penalty. However, he was powerless to stop Pablo Sarabia and Correa putting Sevilla into a 2-0 lead before Vardy's reply 17 minutes from time. "The first half was very, very tough," added Ranieri. "No one wanted to receive the ball and Kasper maintained the team alive, saved the penalty, saved some shots."

"The second-half was much better, but in our good moment they scored the second goal. "We didn't give up and scored the goal which is important for three things. "It gives us strength, it gets Vardy back among the goals and it opens up the tie."

However, the Italian laughed off suggestions Leicester could now be favourites to eliminate a Sevilla side that are flying high in La Liga and have won the Europa League in each of the past three seasons. "I think we are underdogs because they are very high quality. "We will suffer in the second leg, we will try to do our best and, if we lose, it is because Sevilla make a great performance." By contrast, Sevilla were left to rue a slew of missed chances. "We were the better side, we had a lot of chances and we should have scored more because as it is the tie is still open," said forward Stefan Jovetic. And Sevilla boss Jorge Sampaoli claimed he never expected the gulf between the sides to be so great despite Leicester's struggles of late. "It is difficult to imagine such a big difference in a Champions League game," said the Argentine.

"We were dominant and we found Schmeichel in great form. If it wasn't for him, it would have been a very different story."

Yet, despite their fine form, it was a similar story for Sevilla this season as their profligacy in front of goal could come back to haunt them in three weeks' time.

"We didn't have the luck or the ruthlessness to show the difference between the sides," added Sampaoli. "We go away with a strange sensation due to their goal, but we are looking forward to the second leg and motivated to stay in Europe." — AFP

### NHL results/standings

Anaheim 5, Boston 3; Washington 4, Philadelphia 1; Edmonton 4, Florida 3.

Western Conference						EASTERN CONFERENCE							
Central Division						ATLANTIC DIVISION							
	W	L	OTL	GF	GA	PTS							
Minnesota	39	14	6	198	138	84	Montreal	32	20	8	169	155	72
Chicago	37	18	5	177	154	79	Ottawa	32	20	6	158	153	70
St. Louis	31	24	5	170	173	67	Toronto	28	20	11	186	177	67
Nashville	28	22	9	169	165	65	Florida	28	21	10	152	166	66
Winnipeg	28	29	6	184	199	62	Boston	30	24	6	162	161	66
Dallas	23	27	10	165	193	56	Tampa Bay	27	24	8	164	167	62
Colorado	16	39	3	114	192	35	Buffalo	26	24	10	147	168	62
							Detroit	24	26	10	150	178	58
PACIFIC DIVISION						METROPOLITAN DIVISION							
San Jose	35	18	7	166	144	77	Washington	40	12	7	199	127	87
Edmonton	33	20	8	176	159	74	Pittsburgh	37	14	8	207	166	82
Anaheim	32	20	10	161	157	74	Columbus	37	16	5	187	143	79
Calgary	30	26	4	159	172	64	NY Rangers	38	19	2	198	155	78
Los Angeles	29	26	4	145	146	62	NY Islanders	28	21	10	177	175	66
Vancouver	26	28	6	142	172	58	Philadelphia	28	25	7	155	183	63
Arizona	21	30	7	140	183	49	New Jersey	25	25	10	139	172	60
							Carolina	24	24	8	142	165	56

Note: Overtime losses (OTL) are worth one point in the standings and are not included in the loss column (L).