

KOTC shooting  
tourney concludes

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Kuwaiti runners  
win gold, silver  
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LONDON: Manchester City's Argentinian goalkeeper Willy Caballero (R) leaps as Chelsea's Spanish midfielder Pedro (L) goes through but is ruled off-side during the English FA Cup fifth round football match between Chelsea and Manchester City at Stamford Bridge in London yesterday. — AFP

## CHELSEA PUNISH PELLEGRINI'S SELECTION GAMBLE

LONDON: Chelsea punished Manuel Pellegrini's controversial decision to field a remarkably inexperienced team as Eden Hazard inspired a 5-1 demolition of Manchester City in the FA Cup fifth round yesterday.

With City due to make the long flight to the Ukraine on Monday ahead of their Champions League last 16 first leg tie at Dynamo Kiev on Wednesday, Pellegrini had pleaded with the FA not to bow to demands from television networks to move the Chelsea game from its original Saturday date. But Pellegrini's request was ignored and, concerned that injury-hit City were in danger of being stretched to breaking point, the Chilean boss prioritised European success and next weekend's League Cup final against Liverpool, admitting that he didn't consider the Stamford Bridge showdown "a real

game". Pellegrini had warned fans they wouldn't get value for money because he would rest stars like Sergio Aguero and Yaya Toure and he was true to his word as he fielded an unrecognisable starting line-up featuring six teenagers, five of whom were making their full debuts.

In contrast, Guus Hiddink, with the luxury of having played in the Champions League already this week, named his strongest available side and it was men against boys as they swept into the quarter-finals thanks to a pair of assists and a goal from Hazard.

Diego Costa put Chelsea ahead and, although David Faupala equalised for the visitors, second half goals from Willian, Gary Cahill, Hazard and Bertrand Traore handed City a third successive defeat.

Pellegrini will face accusations of disrespect-

ing the FA Cup, but he won't care about that if City can take a step towards the Champions League quarter-finals and win the League Cup this week. French forward Faupala was one of City's debutants and the 18-year-old showed no signs of being overawed when he left two defenders trailing in his wake before testing Blues goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois. After a slow start, Chelsea threatened when Pedro's clipped shot bounced to safety off the far post.

### INCISIVE

City were competing well but Hiddink's side broke the deadlock in the 35th minute. Cesc Fabregas was the instigator with a deft flick that picked out Hazard's run and the Belgian hooked a fine cross into the six yard box, where Costa dived forward to head past Willy Caballero for

his 13th goal of the season. But City's youngsters showed a composure that belied their lack of experience as they hit back two minutes later. Spanish midfielder Manu Garcia clipped a pass through for Kelechi Iheanacho, who got to the byline before crossing low for Faupala to poke home from close-range.

City's youthful enthusiasm overflowed as they celebrated in front of Chelsea's supporters, some of whom responded by throwing coins in an ugly echo of the incident that saw West Brom's Chris Brunt pelted by his own fans 24 hours earlier.

Hiddink had won all six of his FA Cup ties in his two spells as Chelsea's caretaker, a run that included leading the club to the trophy in 2009. And Chelsea were back on course to extend that run in the 48th minute when Brazil winger

Willian launched an incisive raid, picking out Hazard before racing past City's statuesque defence to meet the Belgian's return pass with an angled finish into the far corner.

Just five minutes later, Chelsea booked their quarter-final place as City were let down by their few senior players.

Fernando only half cleared to the edge of the area, where Cahill's drive was straight at Caballero but still squirmed under the goalkeeper and into the net. Hazard capped one of his few impressive performances this season when he curled a free-kick past Caballero in the 66th minute. Caballero saved Oscar's 74th minute penalty after Martin Demichelis barged into Traore, but Traore completed the rout in the 89th minute when his back header looped in at the far post. — AFP

## HAMMERS DOWN BLACKBURN 5-1

LONDON: Nigeria's Emmanuel Emenike and France's Dimitri Payet both scored twice as West Ham came from a goal behind to book their place in the FA Cup quarter-finals with a 5-1 win at second-tier strugglers Blackburn Rovers yesterday. Rovers took the lead through Ben Marshall in the 20th minute but it only took visitors West Ham six minutes to draw level courtesy of Victor Moses's equaliser.

And before half-time West Ham, bidding to reach their first FA Cup final since losing the 2006 showpiece match to Liverpool, were in front through Payet.

Blackburn were reduced to 10 men early in the second half when Chris Taylor was sent off for a second bookable offence. Emenike secured victory for the Hammers by making it 3-1 in the 64th minute at Ewood Park before scoring his second five minutes from time. The forward, on loan from Turkish side Fenerbahce, twice almost had a hat-trick on his first West Ham start, a shot coming back off the post before another effort was ruled out for offside in stoppage time. But in the second minute of added-on time, the influential Payet weaved his way through the Rovers' defence before shooting home to make it 5-1. Blackburn, faltering towards the bottom of the Championship, went ahead when, after Elliot Bennett's corner was cleared, full-back Marshall cut back on his left foot and found the bottom corner with a well-struck shot. But it did not take long for West Ham to draw level when Nigeria winger Victor Moses let fly from 20 yards out as the Rovers defence backed off.

And in the 36th minute the Hammers took the lead when French playmaker Payet's 25-yard curling free-kick went up and over Blackburn's defensive wall before beating the outstretched right hand of Rovers goalkeeper Jason Steele. At 2-1 the match was still in the balance, but Emenike put the tie beyond Rovers' reach when, after Steele had denied Michail Antonio, Moses fed Cheikhou Kouyate, whose ball across the box gave the striker an easy close-range finish. West Ham had to play the final 15 minutes a man down after Mali midfielder Kouyate was shown a straight red card for a foul just outside the box on Adam Henley.

But it made little difference, Emenike scoring his second goal and West Ham's fourth five minutes from time after more good work by Payet. — AFP

## PALACE KNOCK SPURS OUT OF FA CUP

LONDON: A rare goal by Martin Kelly earned Crystal Palace a 1-0 win away to Tottenham Hotspur yesterday and a place in the FA Cup quarter-finals.

The South Londoners are now hoping to reach their first FA Cup final since 1990, when they were beaten by Manchester United in a replay.

Kelly's goal—his first since netting for Liverpool at Chelsea in November 2011 — also ended Tottenham's hopes of a league and domestic cup double.

Mauricio Pochettino's side are currently second in the Premier League but whatever happens now they will not be emulating Spurs' celebrated Double-winning squad of 1961. Palace manager Alan Pardew will be hoping it can be third time lucky for him in the FA Cup as he played for Palace in the 1990 final and was the West Ham manager when they lost to Liverpool in the 2006 showpiece match.

The White Hart Lane return of former Tottenham man Emmanuel Adebayor turned out to be disappointing.

The Togo striker, having sauntered out behind his Palace team-mates, was booed by many home fans before kick-off and throughout the game but did not look like scoring. North London side Tottenham almost scored in the third minute when Dele Alli's header at the back post from a corner was blocked on the line by Yohan Cabaye and Josh Onomah nodded the rebound over.

Palace felt they should have had a penalty when Jordan Mutch's volley hit Nabil Bentaleb on an arm but referee Craig Pawson disagreed.

Kyle Walker and then Adebayor were hurt as tackles began to fly in from both



LONDON: Crystal Palace's English striker Connor Wickham vies with Tottenham Hotspur's English defender Danny Rose (L) during the FA cup fifth round football match between Tottenham Hotspur and Crystal Palace at White Hart Lane in London yesterday. Crystal Palace won the game 1-0. — AFP

sides. Both men recovered with Walker then sending a header over Michel Vorm, his own goalkeeper, who was just able to claw it away before it crossed the line.

The free-kick count continued to mount, with Palace conceding most of them. The

visitors almost took the lead when Scott Dann took down a high ball and played Joe Ledley in but Vorm dived bravely at the Welshman's feet to save.

Spurs' reply was another near miss from Alli, who saw his low shot hit the far post,

rebound across the goal on to the other upright and be cleared before a team-mate could pounce. Onomah flashed a snapshot across goal but Spurs continued to look vulnerable at the other end. A chance finally came Adebayor's way but Eric Dier was across swiftly to block.

### POWERFUL SHOT

Palace goalkeeper Wayne Hennessey had to make a diving save to keep out Harry Kane's long-range free-kick and the visitors took the lead in stoppage-time through Kelly.

Wilfried Zaha teed up the defender on the right of the box and his drive was too powerful for Vorm at his near post.

Spurs replaced Mousa Dembele with Christian Eriksen at the break and it wasn't long before Hennessey had to dive to deny Kane once more. It then needed Kelly's intervention on the line to stop Onomah converting Kane's flick across goal.

Alli, having barged Cabaye into advertising hoardings to send tempers flaring again, fired just wide from 25 yards as Spurs pressed for an equaliser. Eriksen was next to have a go but Hennessey saved.

Cabaye was booked for tripping Danny Rose before Palace sent on fit-again winger Yannick Bolasie in place of Adebayor, who had only occasionally been in the game.

Connor Wickham went on a dangerous run that saw his shot blocked as Palace pressed for a clinching second goal.

Wickham did convert Bolasie's cross with four minutes remaining but the goal was ruled out for offside. Kane saw a header blocked by a scrum of Palace bodies in front of their goal seconds before referee Pawson blew for time. — AFP