



**LONDON:** A combination of pictures created in London on September 8, 2016 shows Manchester United's Portuguese manager Jose Mourinho (L) shouting on the touchline during the pre-season friendly football match between Wigan Athletic and Manchester United at the DW stadium in Wigan, northwest England, on July 16, 2016 and Manchester City's Spanish manager Pep Guardiola (R) gesturing from the touchline during the English Premier League football match between Manchester City and Sunderland at the Etihad Stadium in Manchester, north west England, on August 13, 2016. — AFP

# PEP AND JOSE RESUME HOSTILITIES IN DERBY

**MANCHESTER:** Manchester United manager Jose Mourinho and his Manchester City adversary Pep Guardiola rekindle a rivalry 20 years in the making in this weekend's hotly anticipated Manchester derby. Friends who became foes, Mourinho and Guardiola represent opposite ends of football's ideological spectrum and their ongoing grudge match has shaped the game's recent history. It is three years since they last shared a touchline and tomorrow's clash at Old Trafford marks the resumption of a duel that could determine the outcome of the Premier League title race.

"He (Guardiola) left Barcelona for a number of reasons," former Liverpool defender Jamie Carragher wrote in the Daily Mail when Mourinho was appointed by United in May. "But one of them, I'm sure, is the continual baiting to which he was subjected by Mourinho in the media. 'It is inevitable, at some point, that theme will return. Guardiola must be thinking: 'Oh no, not him again.'"

Though renowned for their different demeanors, the pragmatic Mourinho, 53, and the idealistic Guardiola, 45, have both shown a capacity for ruthlessness in their early days in Manchester. Mourinho has sidelined experienced German midfielder Bastian Schweinsteiger, while Guardiola's benching of Joe Hart forced the popular goalkeeper to leave City for Torino.

Both men have also delivered impressive initial results, leaving their

clubs neck-and-neck on nine points-along with Chelsea-after the first three games of the season. It is two decades since their paths first crossed at Barcelona in the mid-1990s, when Guardiola was captain and Mourinho worked as an assistant to Bobby Robson and Louis van Gaal. The pair became close, but they found themselves in opposition at Camp Nou in 2008 when Barcelona went in search of a successor to Frank Rijkaard as manager.

Despite Mourinho's stellar achievements with Porto and Chelsea, he was overlooked in favour of the inexperienced Guardiola. The Portuguese exacted sweet revenge two years later when Inter Milan knocked defending champions Barca out of the Champions League. In an iconic image, Mourinho raced across the Camp Nou pitch in celebration, his right hand provocatively raised in the air.

## 'Spineless coward'

Mourinho's appointment by Real Madrid that year brought him into regular confrontation with Guardiola. Mourinho's first Clásico ended in a humiliating 5-0 defeat and during a sequence of four encounters in two weeks later that season, the rivalry between the men turned ugly. In the build-up to their Champions League semi-final, Mourinho's acerbic comments prompted an angry, foul-mouthed response from the usually placid Guardiola.

That year's Spanish Super Cup wit-

nessed a new low in the relationship between the clubs as Mourinho poked Guardiola's assistant Tito Vilanova in the eye during a touchline shoving match. They last met in 2013 when Guardiola's Bayern Munich edged Mourinho's Chelsea on penalties in the UEFA Super Cup. Ahead of the current campaign, both managers were at pains to play down the significance of their rivalry. "In the Premier League, if I focus on him and Manchester City, and he on me and Manchester United, someone else is going to win the league," Mourinho said.

Guardiola said managers like Mourinho pushed him to "reach another level". But the gloves will come off when the referee's whistle sounds at Old Trafford tomorrow, if not in the pair's pre-match press conferences the day before. The presence of the swaggering Zlatan Ibrahimovic in United's forward line only adds spice to the blend. Ibrahimovic, who has scored four goals in four games for United since joining from Paris Saint-Germain, has played for both men and has very different opinions about each of them. Ibrahimovic played under Mourinho for only one season at Inter, winning the 2008-09 Italian title, but described him as someone "I was basically willing to die for". He branded Guardiola, who sidelined him at Barcelona the following season, a "spineless coward". Manchester is about to find out whether the city is big enough for both of them. — AFP

## 5 CLASSIC SHOWCASES OF THE MANCHESTER DERBY

**MANCHESTER:** Manchester United welcome Manchester City to Old Trafford on Saturday in a derby match that sees opposing managers Jose Mourinho and Pep Guardiola renew their sulphurous rivalry. AFP Sport highlights five matches that explain the story of the 135-year-old relationship between the cross-town rivals.

### United 1-3 City, Division One, March 1968

With 10 games of the season remaining, United were second in the table and City third, while both teams had games in hand on leaders Leeds United. George Best found the net for United, but City claimed victory courtesy of goals from Colin Bell, George Heslop and Francis Lee. Both teams were in contention on the final day. City took the title thanks to a 4-3 win at Newcastle United, condemning United to a runners-up spot. But United's season ended in glory as a 4-1 win over Benfica saw Matt Busby's men become England's first European Cup winners, 10 years on from the Munich air disaster in which eight of the team died.

### United 0-1 City, Division One, April 1974

Scottish striker Denis Law left United in 1973 having scored 237 goals, which makes him the club's third-highest all-time scorer. But few goals were as resonant as the one he scored against United for City in 1974. United were desperate for victory in their battle to avoid relegation, but with nine minutes remaining and the score 0-0, Law's instinctive back-heel gave City victory. Results elsewhere meant United would have gone down regardless of the result at Old Trafford. But Law was distraught. He was immediately substituted and did not kick a ball again in league football.

### City 5-1 United, Division One, September 1989

Alex Ferguson was entering his third full season as United manager and having seen his side finish the previous campaign in 11th place, he looked no closer to ending their 22-year wait for the title. The 1989-90 season's first derby at Maine Road was to prove a personal horror show for the Scot as David Oldfield inspired promoted City to their biggest derby win since 1955. But United ended the season as FA Cup winners, buying Ferguson valuable time, and it would be 13 years before they next tasted defeat in the derby.

### United 5-0 City, Premier League, November 1994

Having ended their long wait for the English title in 1993, United followed it up with a league and FA Cup double in 1994. The derby at Old Trafford later that year reflected the gulf that had opened up between the two Manchester teams. Russia winger Andrei Kanchelskis scored a hat-trick and there were also goals for Eric Cantona and future City manager Mark Hughes as United returned to winning ways after a humiliating 4-0 defeat by Barcelona in the Champions League.

### United 1-6 City, Premier League, December 2011

Ferguson dismissed City as the "noisy neighbors" following their acquisition by the mega-rich Abu Dhabi United Group in August 2008. But he could no longer dismiss the racket being made across town following this galling reverse at Old Trafford. Mario Balotelli's brace put City in control, the controversy-prone Italian famously revealing a T-shirt that read "WHY ALWAYS ME?" after opening the scoring in the 22nd minute. But it was Jonny Evans's dismissal early in the second half that proved decisive. Sergio Aguero, David Silva and Edin Dzeko, who scored twice, hammered home the visitors' numerical advantage. It was United's heaviest home defeat in 66 years and Ferguson called it his "worst ever day". Five months later, City pipped United to the title—their first since 1968 — on goal difference after Aguero's injury-time strike secured a heart-stopping 3-2 home win over Queens Park Rangers on the season's final day. — AFP