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Brazil's Nunes pummels Rousey in UFC title fight

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NZ cruises past Bangladesh to complete sweep

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DELL GETS FIRST CAREER SO IN SHARKS' 2-0 VICTORY

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LONDON: Chelsea's Marcos Alonso, left, and Stoke City's Mame Biram Diouf battle for the ball during their English Premier League soccer match at Stamford Bridge, London, yesterday. —AP

WILLIAN POWERS CHELSEA TO RECORD-EQUALLING WIN

	Chelsea	4
	Stoke	2

LONDON: Chelsea equalled Arsenal's record of 13 consecutive Premier League wins in a season as Willian's brace inspired a 4-2 win over Stoke yesterday. Antonio Conte's side had a difficult afternoon after twice being pegged back at Stamford Bridge,

but they still managed to match Arsenal's feat in 2001-02 to ensure they enter the new year with a sizeable advantage at the top of the table.

Gary Cahill's header put Chelsea ahead at the break but Bruno Martins Indi levelled immediately after the restart before Willian restored the lead. Peter Crouch then gave Stoke a second leveller, only for Willian to pop up moments later before Diego Costa sealed the win. The leaders were able to recall France midfielder N'Golo Kante and Spain striker Costa after the suspended pair missed the 3-0 home win over Bournemouth on Boxing Day.

They went close to taking the lead as the injured Eden Hazard beat two men before seeing a shot deflected wide. Lee Grant came to Stoke's res-

cue as he brilliantly kept out a deflected Costa piledriver after he had chested down a Cesc Fabregas cross. Grant then saved again to deny Cahill from a Fabregas corner, but Stoke looked dangerous when they attacked and Charlie Adam missed a good chance, heading wide from Xherdan Shaqiri's corner. However, it was Chelsea who put the pressure on with Grant denying Costa and then Hazard on the rebound.

ANIMATED

And from Fabregas's resulting 33rd-minute corner, England defender Cahill headed home to give Conte's side the lead with his fourth goal of the season. Chelsea continued to attack with a Costa free

kick just missing the target but Stoke went on to surprise the hosts within a minute of the restart.

Adam's free kick was headed on by Crouch for Martins Indi to volley home for his first Stoke goal.

Willian drove wide for Chelsea in response as Conte got increasingly animated, while the Brazilian midfielder soon missed the target again.

But the Chelsea manager was soon looking far happier as his team regained the lead on 56 minutes. Victor Moses got the better of Erik Pieters down the right and Hazard's touch fell perfectly for Willian to score. Chelsea continued to attack with Costa driving left footed over the bar following another lay-off from Hazard.

But it was Stoke who were level again on 64

minutes as Crouch caused problems in the box before Bojan Krkic fed Mame Diouf, who crossed for Crouch to convert on the line.

They were level for less than 60 seconds though as Fabregas played in Willian to score his second of the game and fifth of the season with an emphatic finish. That again had Conte dancing with delight on the touchline as he celebrated amongst the home fans. Willian missed a chance for a hat-trick as he scuffed his shot wide while Costa missed an even better one, blazing over from Hazard's pass. But Chelsea could eventually breathe easily five minutes from time as Costa latched onto a stray Adam header before driving home left footed past Grant for his 14th goal of the campaign. —AFP



ABU DHABI: Spain's Rafael Nadal receives his trophy from Sheikh Nahyan bin Zayed al-Nahyan, Chairman of Abu Dhabi Sports Council, after defeating Belgium's David Goffin in the final match of the Mubadala World Tennis Championship 2016 in Abu Dhabi yesterday. —AFP

NADAL WINS FOURTH UAE TITLE

ABU DHABI: Rafael Nadal ended an injury-plagued 2016 on a high by lifting the Mubadala World Tennis Championship title for a fourth time yesterday.

The 30-year-old Spaniard defeated 11th-ranked Belgian David Goffin 6-4, 7-6 (7/5) after world number one Andy Murray earlier ousted Canada's Milos Raonic 6-3, 7-6 (8/6) to take third place. "I'm very happy to return to competition again. These three days have been good for me. These three days, playing at this level, are going to stand me in good stead for the rest of the season," said Nadal. Nadal's 2016 campaign had been ruined by a wrist injury that forced him out of Roland Garros after the second round and saw him miss Wimbledon.

But he looked in form throughout the exhibition tournament in Abu Dhabi, beating Czech Tomas Berdych in the quarter-final and Raonic in the semi-finals. "He put a lot of pressure on me," said Goffin of his first clash against the

Spaniard. "You can feel how strong he is when he is in front of you. Mentally he is very impressive and he looks really strong to start the new season." Nadal will now head to Australia for the Brisbane International, with Goffin travelling to Doha for the Qatar Open.

Wimbledon and Olympic champion Murray, who was knighted in the New Year Honours list, lost to Goffin in Friday's semi-final, his first defeat in the Belgian in six meetings.

"It was good to finish the year with a win," said the 29-year-old Scot. "I still feel like Andy Murray - that feels more normal - but I am happy with the knighthood and it is a nice way to start the new year." Murray's next stop is neighbouring Qatar for the opening week of the ATP season and two weeks out from the Australian Open, the first Grand Slam of 2017.

In the match for fifth-place in the six-man field, France's Jo-Wilfried Tsonga beat Czech Tomas Berdych 6-7 (5/7), 6-3, 10-3. —AFP

POGBA CROWNS MAN UTD LATE FIGHTBACK

	Man United	2
	Middlesbrough	1

MANCHESTER: Paul Pogba capped Manchester United's thrilling fightback as the France midfielder struck in the closing moments to seal a 2-1 victory over Middlesbrough yesterday.

Grant Leadbitter's second half goal put Middlesbrough on course for an unlikely win against Jose Mourinho's side, but brilliant late strikes from Anthony Martial and then Pogba saw United earn their fifth successive league win in the most dramatic fashion. United's gritty revival maintained their momentum heading into 2017 as they look to secure a top four finish and possibly mount a late title challenge. Middlesbrough boss Aitor Karanka was Mourinho's assistant for three years at Real Madrid and the two share a genuine friendship borne from that period between 2010 and 2013.

Their relationship was, of course, placed to one side for 90 minutes in Manchester as United were looking to go unbeaten in 12 matches, a situation Middlesbrough can only dream about as they look set for a protracted battle to beat the drop this term.

United, again missing the injured Wayne Rooney, had two early corners that amounted to nothing but it was Middlesbrough who squandered the first glorious chance just three minutes in.

Adama Traore broke through the middle and had both Stewart Downing and Alvaro Negredo free in acres of space close to the edge of the box but he opted to shoot and embarrassingly scuffed wide.

United looked to attack repeatedly early on as Antonio Valencia and Anthony Martial threatened, but they could not really trouble Victor Valdes until the 14th minute when Pogba's stunning overhead kick hit the post from close range.

Middlesbrough again showed their ability as

Traore remained in heart of the action.

He beat Daley Blind and delivered a fine cross that eventually landed at the feet of George Friend, whose drilled effort was well blocked by Marouane Fellaini.

The game hit a lull as Middlesbrough looked strong at the back and United offered little, although one left footed Henrikh Mkhitaryan effort forced Valdes into a decent low save after half an hour.

United kept pushing and were unlucky not to take the lead just before the break.

Firstly, Martial rifled an effort against the post from 30 yards before Zlatan Ibrahimovic bundled the ball home past Valdes. However, as Old Trafford celebrated, the goal was overruled as the United player was deemed to have fouled Valdes in the process of out-jumping him to score, although replays showed that

Ibrahimovic had done little wrong.

Four minutes after the interval, Ibrahimovic was denied by Valdes, who saved his close-range effort with his feet while Adam Forshaw briefly threatened at the other end. A goal was needed and few in the stadium could believe it would arrive for the visitors.

However, after 67 minutes, Leadbitter popped up to latch onto a fine Negredo knock-down header and he smashed past David De Gea. The goal kickstarted the home side as substitute Marcus Rashford started to cause trouble.

Middlesbrough seemed determined to hold on but eventually, United's dominance proved too much.

Martial swept past Valdes to equalise after 85 minutes before Pogba scored a fine header 90 seconds later to confirm the astonishing turnaround. —AFP



OLD TRAFFORD: Manchester United's Paul Pogba, right, performs a scissor kick during their English Premier League soccer match against Middlesbrough at Old Trafford, Manchester, England, yesterday. —AP