

Sports

Mourinho makes instant impact as Tottenham beat West Ham

We have to make the right decision for the club: Mourinho

LONDON: Jose Mourinho delivered Tottenham's first away win in the Premier League since January in his first game in charge with a 3-2 win at West Ham to catapult Spurs up to sixth. Son Heung-min, Lucas Moura and Harry Kane got the goals as Mourinho made an instant impact after replacing the sacked Mauricio Pochettino on Wednesday.

A much-needed three points will help to endear Mourinho to a skeptical Spurs support who were sad to see Pochettino's five-and-a-half year spell in charge of the club end just six months after leading the club to a first ever Champions League final.

There was no love lost between Mourinho's Chelsea sides and Tottenham in the past, but his arrival had the desired impact for Spurs chairman Daniel Levy, even if a West Ham team devoid of confidence made for perfect opponents.

Mourinho followed Pochettino's example in leaving out Christian Eriksen with the Dane one of a number of Spurs players into the final months of his contract and showing no signs of agreeing a new deal.

"We have to make the right decision for the club," Mourinho said on Eriksen's future before kick-off, but his decision to field a front four of Dele Alli with Son, Moura and Kane worked. Kane had smashed the ball past beleaguered West Ham goalkeeper Roberto after just three minutes from Alli's pass but was denied by the offside flag.

An injury to first-choice stopper Lukasz Fabianski has coincided with a run of eight games without a win for West Ham with a string of errors from Roberto spreading a lack of confidence throughout the team.

The Spaniard could have done better when Tottenham did open the scoring nine minutes before half-time when another through ball from Alli found Son, whose shot had too much power for the hapless 'keeper.

However, Roberto was blameless for Spurs' second seven minutes later when a lovely flick from Alli sent Son racing down the left and his inch-perfect cross was met by Moura at the back post. The same two players should have combined for the visitors' third just two minutes into the second half when Son sent Moura clean through on goal, but the Brazilian dragged his shot wide to the despair of Mourinho, who sank to his knees on the touchline.

Tottenham's celebrations were only put on hold for another two minutes as Serge Aurier's cross picked out Kane to head home and become the third highest goalscorer in Spurs' history with 175. The England captain was furious at himself for not adding another on the hour mark as he dallied with just Roberto to beat and was dispossessed by a last-ditch challenge from Issa Diop.

Michail Antonio pulled a goal back for the hosts 17 minutes from time, but by the time Angelo Ogbonna scored West Ham's second six minutes into stoppage time it was too little, too late.

West Ham manager Manuel Pellegrini now waits to see if he faces a similar fate to Pochettino. The Hammers were expected to challenge for European qualification in the Chilean's second season but instead are 16th and in danger of falling even closer towards the relegation zone by the end of the weekend. — AFP



LONDON: West Ham United's Scottish midfielder Robert Snodgrass (R) clashes with Tottenham Hotspur's English striker Harry Kane during the English Premier League football match between West Ham United and Tottenham Hotspur at The London Stadium, in east London yesterday. — AFP

Walker stretched off as Celtics fall in Denver

DENVER: Nikola Jokic scored 18 points, collected a season-best 16 rebounds and also had 10 assists and three steals during his third triple-double of the season to lead the Denver Nuggets to a 106-102 victory over the visiting Boston Celtics on Friday night. The game was marred by a scary incident that led to Boston guard Kemba Walker being taken off the court on a stretcher with 3:13 left in the second quarter. The Celtics later announced that Walker was diagnosed with "concussion-like symptoms" and was sent to a local hospital for further evaluation. Denver's Jamal Murray recorded a team-high 22 points to go with six rebounds and five assists as the Nuggets won their fourth straight game and eighth in the past nine. Will Barton added 15 points, and Paul Millsap contributed 14 points and 10 rebounds. Jaylen Brown had 22 points and 10 rebounds, and Jayson Tatum added 16 points for the Celtics, who have lost three of their past four games following a 10-game winning streak.

MAVERICKS 143, CAVALIERS 101

Luka Doncic collected 30 points and 14 assists as Dallas recorded a sweep of its four-game homestand with a convincing victory over Cleveland. Doncic, who shot 11 of 18 from the floor before sitting out the fourth quarter, became the eighth Mavericks player to score 30-plus points in three straight games. The last to accomplish the feat was Dirk Nowitzki (2010), who received a standing ovation after being shown on the Jumbotron during the first quarter. Nowitzki saw quite a performance from the home team, which surpassed 140 points for the second consecutive game. Justin Jackson had 19 points and Kristaps Porzingis scored 17 and added four blocks while playing in his 200th career game.

CLIPPERS 122, ROCKETS 119

Kawhi Leonard hit a go-ahead jumper with 15.4 seconds, lifting host Los Angeles over Houston in a thriller. Clippers guard Lou Williams scored all 26 of his points in the second half. Leonard finished with 24 points and six rebounds while Paul George had 19 points, eight rebounds and seven assists for the Clippers, who won their fourth in a row. James Harden had 37 points, 12 assists and eight rebounds for the Rockets, who dropped their second straight after an eight-game winning streak. Russell Westbrook scored 22 points, and Clint Capela had 17 points and 19 rebounds.

LAKERS 130, THUNDER 127

Anthony Davis scored 33 points, including his first career four-point play late in the fourth quarter, and LeBron James added 23 points and 14 assists as visiting Los Angeles held off Oklahoma City. It was the Lakers' second victory over the Thunder in a span of three days, as they earned a tightly contested 112-107 decision Tuesday at Los Angeles. Kentavious Caldwell-Pope scored 17 points, and Danny Green added 14 as the Lakers won their sixth consecutive game and earned a 13th victory in their past 14 contests.

76ERS 115, SPURS 104

Tobias Harris scored 26 points while Joel Embiid



DALLAS: Jordan Clarkson #8 of the Cleveland Cavaliers at American Airlines Center in Dallas, Texas. — AFP

added 21 points and 14 rebounds to lift host Philadelphia past slumping San Antonio. Al Horford scored 18 points and Furkan Korkmaz had 17 to carry the Sixers to their third win in a row. Ben Simmons completed a triple-double with 10 points, 10 rebounds and 13 assists for Philadelphia, which improved to 6-0 at home. DeMar DeRozan paced the Spurs with 29 points while Rudy Gay added 22. The reeling Spurs fell to 5-11 overall and suffered their eighth consecutive loss, the longest since head coach Gregg Popovich took over in 1996-97.

JAZZ 113, WARRIORS 109

Mike Conley and Bogdan Bogdanovic combined for 10 points in a 16-2, second-quarter burst that ultimately helped propel host Utah over pesky Golden State in Salt Lake City. In winning a second straight game, the Jazz led by as many as 21 points early in the fourth quarter before the Warriors made an improbable late run that defied a fourth game in six nights on the road. Donovan Mitchell finished with 30 points, Conley 27 and Bogdanovic 17 for the Jazz. With Draymond Green missing his second straight game with a sore heel, Golden State suited up just eight players, and seven of them scored in double figures.

Wizards 125, Hornets 118

Bradley Beal had 30 points and 12 assists, and Washington rallied to defeat visiting Charlotte. The Wizards overcame a 13-point fourth-quarter deficit to win consecutive games for the first time this season. It was Beal's fifth-straight game with 30-or-more points, extending his career high. Thomas Bryant added 21 points and 11 rebounds while Davis Bertans (20 points) tied his career high with six 3-pointers.

PISTONS 128, HAWKS 103

Blake Griffin scored 24 points and host Detroit had its highest scoring first half in 36 years while snapping a five-

game losing streak as it pummeled Atlanta. Andre Drummond had 23 points and 15 rebounds in 27 minutes, and Bruce Brown supplied 14 points, seven assists and three steals while limiting Hawks star Trae Young to nine points on 3-for-12 shooting. Young poured in 38 points against the Pistons in the Hawks' season opener, a 117-100 Atlanta victory. Markieff Morris had 13 points, Langston Galloway tossed in 12 and Derrick Rose and Christian Wood added 11 apiece for Detroit. The Pistons shot 59.8 percent overall and made half of their 34 3-point tries.

Spencer Dinwiddie continued to effectively fill in for injured Kyrie Irving by scoring 23 points as Brooklyn never trailed in beating visiting Sacramento. Dinwiddie started in place of Irving for the fourth straight game. Irving has been out due to right shoulder impingement and the Nets did not provide a further update on his status. Without Irving's 28.5 points per game, Dinwiddie set a career high by getting at least 20 points for the fourth straight game. He shot 8 of 15 overall, hit all seven of his free-throw attempts and handed out seven assists in helping the Nets win for the third time in four games.

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Barcelona leave it late to sneak past Leganes

MADRID: Barcelona needed a late winner from Arturo Vidal to beat bottom-club Leganes 2-1 yesterday and dig out a much-needed victory ahead of what could prove a crucial month in their season.

Vidal poked in a fortuitous goal in the 79th minute at Butarque after Luis Suarez headed home a Lionel Messi free-kick to cancel out a brilliant opener from Leganes forward Youssef En-Nesyri. Barcelona stay top of the table, three points above Real Madrid, who play later on Saturday at home to La Liga's surprise high-fliers Real Sociedad. A gritty win will also come as a relief to under-pressure coach Ernesto Valverde, whose team now turn their attention to Wednesday's crunch Champions League group game against Borussia Dortmund at Camp Nou.

A goalless draw against Slavia Prague earlier this month means Barca's qualification from Group F is no longer guaranteed. After Dortmund, they then play away at Atletico Madrid in La Liga to start a month that will include trips to Inter Milan in the Champions League and Real Sociedad in La Liga before the season's first Clasico at home to Real Madrid.

It was important therefore to avoid a slip against Leganes, playing their first game in front of their own fans since appointing Javier Aguirre as coach. The home side made the perfect start as En-Nesyri beat Gerard Pique with a wonderful early striker.

Pique has spent the international break juggling football with the Davis Cup, the revamped tennis tournament in Madrid that he is organising through his marketing company Kosmos. Doubts about the defender's focus would not have been allayed in the opening quarter of an hour. One pass from Roque Mesa was enough to set En-Nesyri free against the 32-year-old in the 12th minute. Pique jostled but was taken by surprise as En-Nesyri nipped inside and bent a shot into the far corner. Leganes might have had a second soon after and Pique would have been at fault, the defender allowing Martin Braithwaite in after failing to clear, but Oscar Rodriguez was unable to capitalise.

Crosses were a weakness for Leganes as three Barcelona headers all could have gone in. Suarez went close. Pique hit the post. Then Suarez did find the net, glancing in Messi's clipped free-kick for his ninth goal of the season. Barca's second owed much to luck but it came from another cross. Pique rose to head in but the ball missed him and cannoned off the foot of Ruben Perez. Vidal was waiting on the line to prod in. —AFP



Matches on TV (Local Timings)

ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE		
Sheffield United FC v Manchester United	beIN SPORTS	19:30
SPANISH LEAGUE		
RCD Espanyol v Getafe CF	beIN SPORTS	14:00
Osasuna v Athletic de Bilbao	beIN SPORTS	16:00
SD Eibar v Deportivo Alaves	beIN SPORTS	18:00
Villarreal CF v Celta de Vigo	beIN SPORTS	20:30
Real Valladolid v Sevilla FC	beIN SPORTS	23:00
ITALIAN CALCIO LEAGUE		
Bologna FC v Parma Calcio 1913	beIN SPORTS	14:30
AS Roma v Brescia	beIN SPORTS	17:00
Hellas Verona FC v ACF Fiorentina	beIN SPORTS	17:00
US Sassuolo Calcio v SS Lazio	beIN SPORTS	17:00
UC Sampdoria v Udinese Calcio	beIN SPORTS	20:00
US Lecce v Cagliari Calcio	beIN SPORTS	22:45

Icardi, Di Maria hand PSG victory on Neymar's latest return

PARIS: Neymar made his latest comeback from injury for Paris Saint-Germain on Friday as first-half goals by Mauro Icardi and Angel Di Maria saw the Ligue 1 leaders ease to a 2-0 win over Lille at the Parc des Princes.

The in-form Icardi opened the scoring from close range in the 17th minute with his 10th goal in PSG's last nine games, and Di Maria doubled their lead just after the half-hour mark.

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