

Sports

Southampton mark a new era by thrashing Brentford

Southampton pull further clear of relegation zone

SOUTHAMPTON: Southampton got Serbian businessman Dragan Solak's reign as owner off to a flying start with a 4-1 thrashing of Brentford on Tuesday to pull further clear of the relegation zone. Another season in the top-flight looks safe for the Saints as they moved above Brentford into 11th, 13 points clear of the bottom three.

Southampton's new ownership group Sport Republic was founded by Rasmus Ankersen, who recently stepped down as Brentford co-director of football. Ankersen helped lead the Bees back to the top flight for the first time in 74 years. But it in Southampton's first home game since the reported £100 million (\$135 million) takeover went through, it was a night to forget for the Brentford.

"They (the owners) saw a good game today and a deserved three points," said Southampton boss Ralph Hasenhuttl after his side scored four goals at home for the first time in a Premier League game since 2017. "It's not very often that injury time plays out and we feel comfortable because sometimes it's tight here. Today we had a fantastic performance." Jan Bednarek's

header opened the scoring after just five minutes as he got on the end of James Ward-Prowse's corner.

Thomas Frank's men fought back to level on 23 minutes courtesy of a fine volley from Vitaly Janelt. But Southampton quickly restored their advantage when Ibrahima Diallo's fierce shot from the edge of the box came back off the post and rebounded into his own net off Brentford goalkeeper Alvaro Fernandez. Armando Broja made the game safe after the break when the Chelsea loanee raced clear from halfway before calmly slotting into the bottom-right corner.

Che Adams then came off the bench to round off a fine night for the hosts as he latched onto a simple long ball and chipped the onrushing Fernandez. A sixth consecutive away league game without a win leaves Brentford still in 13th. "Fair play to Southampton but my job is to look at my team's performance," said Frank. "If we are not playing every second of every Premier League match 100 percent then we are not getting anything out of it." — AFP



SOUTHAMPTON: Southampton's English midfielder Che Adams (right) scores his team's fourth goal during the English Premier League football match between Southampton and Brentford at St Mary's Stadium in Southampton, southern England on January 11, 2022. — AFP



KUWAIT: Kuwait's Dieumerci Mbokani #70 (left) vies for the ball against Al-Arabi's defense in the two teams' Kuwait Premier League match at Kuwait Sports Club Stadium on Tuesday. — KUNA

Arabi stun Kuwait to give league lead back to Kazma

By Ahmad Jabr

KUWAIT: Al-Arabi beat Kuwait on Tuesday to reignite competition at the top of the ladder of Kuwait Premier League as Kazma regained the lead with a win against red-hot Salmiya. Kuwait appeared to be in cruise control after regaining the top spot in the standings last week with three wins in their past four games. The hosts were heavy favorites coming to their match against an Arabi team that had struggled to stay in the top five for most of the season, but Alaa Al-Dali's goal in the 53rd minute was enough for the visitors to emerge victorious. The 1-0 win gives titleholders Al-Arabi 17 points at the end of Week 9 and keeps their hopes for a repeat alive.

In the meantime, Kazma capitalized with a 3-1 victory that put them back on top with 20 points; one point ahead of Kuwait, while Salmiya - whose three-game winning streak was snapped - sank down to fifth place with 17 points and trailing Arabi on goal difference. Ahmad Arsan scored for Kazma in the 30th and 55th minute, while Salmiya's goal came 20 minutes before the final whistle through Fahad Al-Rashidi.

Qadsia meanwhile continued their strong performance following their big win against Kazma last week and climbed back to third place with 19 points after their 1-0 win against Al-Nasr who now sit in sixth place with nine points. Kuwaiti international Bader Al-Mutawaa scored Qadsia's goal in the match held at the team's Mohammad Al-Hamad Stadium on Monday. With this goal, Mutawaa, who celebrated his 37th birthday on the same day, became the highest scorer in Kuwait football competitions' history with 211 goals, breaking Syrian international Feras Al-Khateeb's previous record of 210 goals. Kuwait Football Association is expected to announce the schedule for the second part of the season at a later date.

Fulham hit Reading for seven to reignite promotion push

LONDON: Fulham moved back into second place in the Championship by humiliating relegation-threatened Reading 7-0 on Tuesday. It is the second time this season Marco Silva's men have won 7-0 on the road having inflicted the same scoreline on promotion rivals Blackburn in November. The visitors

led 2-0 at the break through Harry Wilson's strike and an Aleksandar Mitrovic penalty. Fulham proved rampant in the second period, as Reading collapsed, with further goals from Wilson, Kenny Tete, Neeskens Kebano, Tosin Adarabioyo and Mitrovic.

The Cottagers had not won in their five previous league matches to fall out of the top two automatic promotion places. But they leapfrogged Blackburn to move just a point behind leaders Bournemouth and with a game in hand to come. Defeat rounded off a miserable few days for Reading after they were dumped out the FA Cup by non-league Kidderminster Harriers on Saturday. The Royals remain just three points above the relegation zone. — AFP

Football and rugby rejoice as Scotland eases COVID curbs

LONDON: Football, rugby and other outdoor events in Scotland can return to full houses next week after the country's government expressed tentative hope on Tuesday that the worst of the Omicron COVID outbreak had passed. First Minister Nicola Sturgeon said a 500-person cap on outdoor events would be lifted from Monday, but that organizers would have to step up checks of attendants' vaccination status.

The decision clears the way for an Old Firm clash between Celtic and Rangers on February 2 and Scotland's Six Nations clash with England three days later to be played in front of sellout crowds. Sturgeon's pro-independence administration, which sets health policy for Scotland, has consistently taken a much tougher line on COVID restrictions than Prime Minister Boris Johnson's UK government in London.

But addressing members of the Scottish parliament in Edinburgh, Sturgeon said: "Living with the virus is what we all desperately want to do. We know that we cannot continually rely on restrictive measures to manage the virus," she said. "But equally we cannot be indifferent to the continued risks the virus poses to health and wellbeing." The Edinburgh government is still urging Scots to work from home and to limit contacts outside their households, Sturgeon said.

Along with Wales, Scotland late last month ordered sports fixtures to be played largely behind closed doors in response to a surge in infections of the new Omicron variant. Johnson's government imposed no such restriction in England, and Sturgeon said there were signs that Scotland was "starting to turn the corner" on the Omicron spike. The news has been warmly welcomed by sports authorities who feared another financial hit after the entire 2020/2021 Scottish football season and Six Nations were played without fans in the stadiums.

Scottish Premiership clubs brought forward a planned winter break by a week to minimize the disruption caused by the restrictions. "Football is not the same without supporters, and I know how much it will mean to them to be back in stadiums watching matches again," said Neil Doncaster, chief executive of the Scottish Professional Football League. "This news will also be a real financial boost for our 42 member clubs, who have faced an incredibly challenging set of circumstances since the pandemic began."

Scotland will also host France at Murrayfield in the Six Nations on February 26. The Scottish Rugby Union (SRU) had reportedly considered moving those matches to England unless the restrictions were eased. "Scottish Rugby has welcomed today's confirmation from the Scottish Government that attendance limits on outdoor events will be lifted from next week," the SRU said in a statement. "This will enable the forthcoming Guinness Six Nations matches to go ahead and we continue, as planned, to host England and France at BT Murrayfield, starting with the Calcutta Cup on Saturday 5 February." —AFP

NFL's sack spree continues; Giants fire head coach

NEW YORK: The New York Giants fired head coach Joe Judge on Tuesday, the fourth sacking of an NFL head coach since the end of the regular season last weekend. Judge was relieved of his duties after just two seasons in charge at the Giants, who finished bottom of the NFC East this season with a 4-13 record. Team president John Mara said in a statement that the Giants ownership had axed Judge after deciding the franchise needed to "move in another direction." "I said before the season started that I wanted to feel good about the direction we were headed when we played our last game of the season," Mara said.

"Unfortunately, I cannot make that statement, which is why we have made this decision." Judge, 40, was hired as Giants head coach in 2020 after stints as an assistant coach with the New England Patriots. He led the Giants to a 6-10 record in his first season, but was unable to build on that during the 2021 campaign, with his team finishing the season with six straight losses, including a 22-7 home defeat to Washington on Sunday.

Judge's dismissal comes after a round of sackings rocked the NFL on Monday, with the Miami Dolphins, Minnesota Vikings and Chicago Bears all firing their head coaches.

The Dolphins pulled the biggest surprise in sacking Brian Flores, while the Vikings dispensed with veteran coach Mike Zimmer. The Bears, meanwhile, fired Matt Nagy after the team failed to reach the playoffs once more. The Giants had signaled their readiness to wield the axe on Monday with the dismissal of general manager Dave Gettleman. — AFP

Classifieds

Hospitals & Clinics

Sabah Hospital	24812000	Kaizen center	25716707
Amiri Hospital	22450005	Rawda	22517733
Maternity Hospital	24843100	Adaliya	22517144
Mubarak Al-Kabir Hospital	25312700	Khalidiya	24848075
Chest Hospital	24849400	Kaifan	24849807
Farwaniya Hospital	24892010	Shamiya	24848913
Adan Hospital	23940620	Shuwaikh	24814507
Ibn Sina Hospital	24840300	Abdullah Salem	22549134
Al-Razi Hospital	24846000	Nuzha	22526804
Physiotherapy Hospital	24874330/9	Industrial Shuwaikh	24814764
		Qadsiya	22515088
		Dasmah	22532265
		Bneid Al-Gar	22531908

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