



United, City into Cup fourth round

London

Marcus Rashford fired Manchester United into the League Cup fourth round as the holders crushed Burton 4-1, while Manchester City eased through with a 2-1 win at West Bromwich Albion on Wednesday.

City and United, currently first and second in the Premier League, took contrasting routes to the last 16, where they were joined by Chelsea, Arsenal and Everton as the big guns advanced despite fielding weakened teams.

United manager Jose Mourinho made nine changes from the side that thrashed Everton on Sunday, with Rashford and Juan Mata the only survivors.

Rashford took just five minutes to open the scoring with a deft finish and the England forward struck again in the 17th minute with a powerful effort.

Burton, 19th in the Championship, were killed off in the 36th minute when Jesse Lingard's shot deflected in off Ben Turner.

Injury-ravaged United left-back Luke Shaw came on for his first appearance since April before Anthony Martial scored the fourth from Rashford's pass on the hour.

Lloyd Dyer got one back for Burton in stoppage-time.

"If you ask me could English football survive or even be better



Manchester United's English striker Marcus Rashford (L) scores his, and his team's second goal

without this competition? Maybe we would be fresher for European competition for example," Mourinho said.

"But we have this competition, we have to respect the sponsors, we have to respect the opponents and a lot of us are trying to do our best."

At the Hawthorns, City boss Pep Guardiola made eight changes from the 6-0 demolition of Watford, giving Yaya Toure his first start of the season, while Ilkay Gundogan, back from a serious knee injury, started for the first time since December.

It was from Gundogan's saved shot that Leroy Sane slotted in City's third minute opener.

But, casting a shadow over City's progress, Gundogan was forced off with a knock in the second half.

Claudio Yacob equalised for Albion with a close-range finish in the 72nd minute, only for Germany winger Sane to produce a superb curling winner five minutes later.

Michy Batshuayi's hat-trick helped Chelsea crush second tier Nottingham Forest 5-1 at Stamford Bridge.

Antonio Conte made nine changes from Sunday's 0-0 draw against Arsenal, with Eden Hazard given his first start of the season after recovering from ankle surgery.

Kenedy was starting for the first time since being sent home from Chelsea's pre-season tour of Asia in July following his offensive social media comments about China.

Batshuayi shines

His bid to get back in Conte's good books got underway when the

Brazilian winger put Chelsea ahead in the 13th minute with his first goal since March 2016.

Batshuayi's close-range finish doubled Chelsea's lead six minutes later before 20-year-old Belgian Charly Musonda smashed in his first Blues goal in the 40th minute.

Batshuayi got his second from Hazard's pass in the 53rd minute and the Belgian striker completed his treble four minutes from full-time, with Forest replying through Tendayi Darikwa in the closing moments.

A week after his 17th birthday, substitute Ethan Ampadu became the first player born this millennium to represent Chelsea.

Theo Walcott sealed Arsenal's 1-0 win over third tier Doncaster at the Emirates Stadium.

Gunners boss Arsene Wenger changed his entire line-up from the Chelsea draw, with Per Mertesacker, Alexis Sanchez and Olivier Giroud among the starters.

Sanchez set up the 25th minute opener, clipping a fine pass to Walcott, who controlled well before slotting home.

"That was hard work, credit to Doncaster. I was concerned, they looked dangerous," Wenger said.

Dominic Calvert-Lewin's double blasted Everton to a 3-0 victory over second tier Sunderland at Goodison Park. (AFP)

Federer, Nadal relish teaming up

Prague

Long-time rivals Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal will achieve a career first in Prague this weekend when they play side-by-side in the Laver Cup, a Ryder Cup golf style event featuring Team Europe against Team World.

Nadal and Federer, who are back at the top of the sport's rankings after sweeping the four Grand Slam titles in 2017, are expected to be selected by Europe team skipper Bjorn Borg to play doubles as well as singles.

It will be the two legends' first appearance on the same side of the court in a rivalry which has spanned the best part of two decades.

"I would love to play with Rafa and see that forehead do damage on the other side," said Federer, this year's Australian Open and Wimbledon champion.

"I'm sure that the crowd would go

absolutely crazy and just because of that it would just be great to play."

Joining Federer and Nadal in the Europe team are fellow top 10 players Marin Cilic, Alexander Zverev, Dominic Thiem with former number four Tomas Berdych making up the squad.

Team World, skippered by John McEnroe, features four Americans -- Frances Tiafoe, Sam Querrey, John Isner and Jack Sock as well as Australian crowd puller Nick Kyrgios and Canadian teenager Denis Shapovalov.

Tiafoe, who gave Federer a scare at the US Open, was a late call-up for Juan Martin del Potro.

The three-day tournament runs from Friday to Sunday and will feature three sets per match, the last of which is a super tie-break (10 points).

There are four matches a day -- three singles and a doubles.

Nadal, who added the US Open to his Roland Garros title earlier this month, said he may be a little ring-rusty over the weekend having taken a break following his New York triumph.

"I didn't practice here yet, of course after the US Open. After a big event you go down a little bit, you need to recover energy. I have today and tomorrow to practise hard and let's see then," said the Spaniard.

Ironically, the Laver Cup presentation took place on Wednesday in Prague's old town on the same day that tennis's flagship team event, the Davis Cup was holding its draw for the 2018 season.



German tennis player Alexander Zverev, Swiss tennis player Roger Federer and Spanish tennis player Rafael Nadal greet the audience from the stage ahead of the tennis Laver Cup