

Liverpool sign Argentine World Cup winner Mac Allister



Alexis Mac Allister
AFP | London

Liverpool signed Argentine World Cup winner Alexis Mac Allister from Brighton yesterday for a fee that could rise to a reported £55 million (\$69 million).

The 24-year-old is the first piece in a midfield rebuild for Liverpool, who finished a disappointing fifth in the Premier League.

"It feels amazing," said Mac Allister, who is understood to have signed a five-year deal at Anfield. "It's a dream come true. It's amazing to be here and I can't wait to get started."

"I wanted to be in from the first day of pre-season, so it's good that everything is done. I'm looking forward to meeting my teammates."

"It was a fantastic year for me -- World Cup, what we achieved with Brighton -- but now it's time to think about Liverpool and try to be a better player and a better human being every day."

Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp is seeking to bolster his midfield options after the departures of James Milner, Naby Keita and Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain.

Mahmoud triumphs in Florence endurance ride

Raed Mahmoud wins 120km ride in six hours, eight minutes and 27 seconds

● **Royal Endurance Team and KHK Stable rider praises follow-up and backing of HH Shaikh Nasser and HH Shaikh Khalid**

● **Fellow-Royal Endurance Team rider Sultan Al Rumaihi finishes as runner-up**

TDT | Manama

Royal Endurance Team and KHK Stable rider Raed Mahmoud triumphed at the Florence Endurance Championship in northern Paris, France, featuring wide participation of competitors representing many countries.

The Bahraini jockey exhibited a strong performance en route to winning first place. He outclassed a strong field of riders in the 120km race, in which 43 male and female jockeys competed.

He successfully completed the four-stage race in six hours, eight minutes and 27 seconds.



Raed Mahmoud, right, celebrates alongside his horse after his win

Commenting after the race, Mahmoud expressed his great happiness at winning first place, stressing that this achievement is the result of the support and follow-up of His Highness Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Representative of His Majesty the King for Humanitarian Works and Youth Affairs and Captain of the Royal Endurance team, and His Highness Shaikh Khalid bin Hamad Al Khalifa, First Deputy President of the Supreme Council for Youth and



Royal Endurance Team members celebrate after the race

Sports, President of the General Sports Authority, President of the Bahrain Olympic Committee and Captain of the KHK team.

Moreover, Mahmoud emphasised that the unwavering support of Their Highnesses had led to impressive results in the competition, which is highly regarded in Europe due to its fierce competition and broad participation.

He explained: "The endurance jockeys of the Kingdom of Bahrain are gearing up for

upcoming competitions with a strong belief in their capabilities, aiming to win top places and climb podiums."

Meanwhile, Mahmoud's teammate Sultan Al Rumaihi finished second, outperforming Lisa Rio of France. After the race, Al Rumaihi expressed his happiness with his result, noting that he achieved many goals and gained great experience that will contribute to accomplishing further good results in European contests.

“The endurance jockeys of the Kingdom of Bahrain are gearing up for upcoming competitions with a strong belief in their capabilities, aiming to win top places and climb podiums

RAED MAHMOUD

Messi joining MLS side Inter Miami after PSG exit

AFP | Paris

Lionel Messi on Wednesday said he will sign for Major League Soccer side Inter Miami, choosing the United States as his next destination over a Barcelona reunion or blockbuster deal to play in Saudi Arabia.

The Argentine forward, 35, has spent the last two seasons at Paris Saint-Germain, playing his final game for the club on Saturday, after moving from Barcelona in 2021, where he spent the majority of his career.

MLS and Inter Miami confirmed the news on social media, although the American league noted "work remains to finalise a formal agreement".

"I've taken the decision that I am going to Miami, I don't have (the deal) 100 percent sealed or maybe there's something left to do, but we decided to contin-



PSG's Lionel Messi walks off the winners stand during the 2022-2023 Ligue 1 championship trophy ceremony

ue our path there," Messi told Spanish newspapers Diario Sport and Mundo Deportivo.

"After winning the World Cup and not being able to go to Barca, it's time to go to MLS to live

football in a different way and enjoy my day to day life more."

Messi is a seven-time Ballon d'Or winner and is expected to earn the individual accolade once more after leading Argen-

Inter Miami, co-owned by former England international David Beckham and founded in 2018, sacked coach Phil Neville last week with the team bottom of the Eastern Conference

tina to World Cup glory in Qatar in December.

The football world was eagerly awaiting Messi's decision after PSG confirmed this week the playmaker, widely considered the best player in the history of football, was departing.

The romance of a Barcelona return and prospect of eye-watering riches in Saudi Arabia fell by the wayside as Messi opted to join MLS, with Miami a city he has holidayed in on previous occasions.

Tour champion Vingegaard pays tribute to knife attack victims after Dauphine stage win



Jonas Vingegaard celebrates as he crosses the finish line

AFP | Paris

Tour de France champion Jonas Vingegaard paid tribute to the victims of yesterday's knife attack in the French Alps after winning the fifth stage of the Criterium du Dauphine in the region.

Dane Vingegaard pulled on the leader's yellow jersey to take control before the race heads into the Alpine finale.

But his thoughts at the finish line in Salins-les-Bains were with the victims of a knife attack at Lake Annecy, 200km further south, where four children aged 22 to 36 months and two adults were stabbed by a Syrian refugee, whose motive remains unclear.

"I'm very happy with my performance. But on a day like today, with what happened in Annecy, cycling doesn't really matter," the 26-year-old said on the verge of tears.

"I'm very happy with my performance. But on a day like today, with what happened in Annecy, cycling doesn't really matter

JONAS VINGEGAARD

"My thoughts go out to all the families," the Jumbo-Visma rider, a young father, added.

Vingegaard finished over half a minute ahead of a pursuing group having made the break with 15km to go on the tough Thesy climb over 3.6km with an 8.8 percent gradient, after the 191.5km ride from Cormoranche-sur-Saone.

Vingegaard claimed his ninth win of the season to lay the groundwork for his Tour de France title defence from July 1-23.

Messi doesn't want 'pressure' of a Barca return: Xavi

AFP | London

Barcelona coach Xavi Hernandez said yesterday he understood Lionel Messi's desire to avoid the "pressure" of a return to the Catalan giants this summer.

"He hasn't had a good time in these two years (in Paris) and now he doesn't want that type of pressure," Xavi said on Twitch.

"It's a personal decision and the circumstances didn't help, but the decision is Leo's and we



Xavi Hernandez

have to respect it, he's the best in history."

Xavi said he had spoken a

lot with Messi over the past few months but he noticed "a change" over the past few days.

"Maybe he didn't see it so clearly, and you have to respect that -- many times we don't put ourselves in the shoes of others, we lack empathy and being Leo can't be an easy thing," said Xavi.

"Imagine Messi, in the focus he's got on him, he's never got calm, he has to behave perfectly, he has to be perfect on the pitch, he has to be the best in

every way."

Messi, who arrived at Barcelona as a 13-year-old and went on to become the best player in the club's history, was forced to leave in 2021 with the club's financial situation preventing them giving him a new deal.

The forward, who won the World Cup in December 2022 with Argentina, was jeered by PSG fans after the team were eliminated in the Champions League last 16 for the second year running.