

Everton held by Watford

● Lucas Digne rescues point for Everton after Watford's crazy five minutes

● Silva has last laugh as Everton escape against former club Watford

AFP | Liverpool

Marco Silva had the last laugh against his former club Watford as Everton defender Lucas Digne's last-gasp free-kick rescued a dramatic 2-2 draw at Goodison Park on Monday.

Everton manager Silva was facing Watford for the first time since his acrimonious departure from Vicarage Road in January.

The 41-year-old was sacked by Watford after less than a year in charge, with the club's owners blaming Everton's interest in the Portuguese coach for distracting him from his job.

Convinced he treated them disrespectfully by showing interest in Everton, the Watford fans who travelled to Goodison Park waved inflatable snakes and directed abusive chants at Silva.

With just seconds to go, it seemed Silva would be bitten



Lucas Digne (left) scores Everton's injury-time equaliser against Watford

by his old employers.

Everton's Richarlison, signed from Watford by Silva, put the hosts ahead in the first half.

Seamus Coleman's own goal drew Watford level after the break and Abdoulaye Doucoure's header put them in front before Everton midfielder Gylfi Sigurdsson had a penalty saved by Ben Foster.

But Digne came to Silva's rescue in the sixth minute of stoppage-time to deny Watford the revenge they so badly wanted.

Insisting he didn't care about silencing the Watford taunts, Silva said: "Of course not. I

didn't see anything. It's not important to me. What I can control is my players.

"It's a difficult match to talk about. We lost our focus completely for their goals."

Eventually hired by Everton in May, Silva summed up the difficult nature of his Watford exit last week when he made it clear he was unsentimental about facing his old club.

Watford are still waiting for the Premier League to settle their complaint against Everton for the alleged illegal approach for Silva.

And the Silva feud threatened to spill onto the pitch after Watford captain Troy Deeney last week said he would "smash" Richarlison for leaving the Hornets.

Richarlison strikes

Yet it was Richarlison who did the early damage as the Brazil forward put Everton ahead in the 15th minute with his eighth goal in 14 Premier League appearances -- three more than he managed in 38 games for Watford last season.

Watford were left frustrated by the goal as they appealed in vain for offside against Theo Walcott during a move that ended with Andre Gomes crossing for Richarlison to stroke a cool finish past Ben Foster.

Some players opt not to celebrate when they score against their former teams.

But in keeping with the fractious mood, Richarlison, who had been targeted by some crunching Watford tackles, had no qualms about sprinting away in jubilation.

Roberto Pereyra squandered a good chance to equalise when the Watford forward headed wide from Ken Sema's cross.

Pereyra curled a free-kick just wide and Deeney saw his strike saved by Jordan Pickford after the interval.



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Stop being late and prove your value, Rivaldo urges Dembele

Reuters | Barcelona

Barcelona winger Ousmane Dembele needs to improve his attitude and focus on being more professional even if he does want to leave the La Liga leaders, the club's former championship winning player Rivaldo has said.

Dembele, who joined Barcelona in August 2017 for 105 million euros (\$119.45 million), suffered injury problems in his first year and this season has been criticised for his behaviour, including turning up late to training and events.

Media reports have linked the 21-year-old with a move away from the Nou Camp during next month's transfer window.

Brazilian Rivaldo, who played for Barca for five years from 1997 and is regarded as one of the most skilful attackers of his generation, said there was no doubting the Frenchman's talents.

Dembele has only scored 12 goals for Barca but several of those have been important strikes in the league, the Spanish Super Cup and the Champions League.

"Ousmane Dembele's situation at Barcelona is upsetting because he's already shown that he can play very well, score goals and be an important member of the team," Rivaldo, who won the World Cup with Brazil in 2002, told Betfair.

"He just needs to focus on being a little more professional and to stop being late for training sessions.

"This is not the correct mentality for someone potentially trying to leave Barcelona. It's always strange to hear that someone might want to leave a big club in this way.

"If he wants to leave, he must prove his value by playing well and not missing training sessions to recover his credibility as a professional. That will generate interest from other clubs. If he doesn't change, he is hurting himself more than the club."



Shaikh Mohamed bin Duaij Al Khalifa, President of Bahrain Sport for Disabilities, Shaikh Abdul Aziz Bin Mubarak Al Khalifa, Vice President of Bahrain Tennis Federation and Khamis Al Muqla, President of the Bahrain Tennis Club attend a meeting on Monday at the Bahrain Sports Federation for Disabilities to discuss about launch wheelchair Tennis in the Kingdom of Bahrain

Guardiola praises 'incredible' Sterling

AFP | London

Pep Guardiola has praised Manchester City star Raheem Sterling for refusing to be intimidated by the menace of racism in football. Sterling endured alleged racial abuse from a Chelsea fan during City's 2-0 defeat at Stamford Bridge on Saturday.

The 24-year-old was targeted by the supporter while he was standing near fans on the touchline.

Sterling appeared to laugh off the shocking incident at the time, but the abuse has drawn widespread condemnation amid fears the sport is being dragged back to the dark ages of the 1970s and 1980s when racism was rife.

The England winger later accused the media of fuelling racism in the way it reports certain stories about black players.

And former England assistant coach Gary Neville revealed this week that Sterling complained during Euro 2016 of constant criticism from fans that carried racist undertones.

Speaking for the first time since the Chelsea incident, City manager Guardiola backed Sterling and hailed his decision to speak out on the controversy.

"I was concerned with what happened but he made a statement on Instagram and was quite clear about his thoughts," Guardiola told reporters yesterday.

"He's an incredible person, an incredible human being.

"It's tough in the 21st century to still be in this position, to have problems with diversity. We have to be better, everyone."

Guardiola believes racism is a deep problem in society, not just football, and insisted more must be done to combat it.

"It's everywhere, racism is everywhere. People focus on foot-

ball but it's not just in football. You'd think in football we'd be safe but racism is everywhere," he said.

"What happens today - how we treat immigrants and refugees, when once in our lives our grandfathers were refugees. It's everywhere. That's why we have to fight every day.

"We have to fight for human rights to make a better society for the future. Today it's dangerous, not just in England, all across Europe.

"The message for the politicians is for them to be tough on human rights and we have to defend democracy in the best way."

Former Barcelona and Bayern Munich boss Guardiola also pointed out the media has a crucial role to play in keeping racism in check. "Today the real power is the media, not politicians, not the governments. It's the media," he said.

The Metropolitan Police have launched an investigation into the Stamford Bridge incident, while Chelsea have suspended four supporters.

18 activities confirmed for National Day event

TDT | Manama

The Kingdom of Bahrain is all set to celebrate the National Day and His Majesty's accession day with a set of sports activities over the coming weekend.

Sixteen national sports federations will be organizing 18 events to celebrate this national occasion in cooperation with the Bahrain Olympic Committee.

The Fencing Federation will have the National Fencing Day Championship, while similar events will be brought by other national federations, including mixed martial arts, gymnastics, weightlifting, table tennis and sports for people of determination.

Shaikha Hayat named Arab federation vice president

TDT | Manama

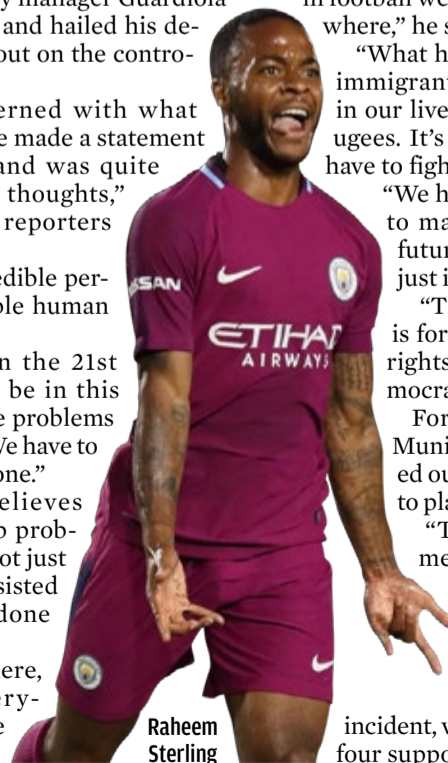
Shaikha Hayat bint Abdulaziz Al Khalifa, board member of the Bahrain Olympic Committee (BOC), President of the Arab Table Tennis Federations and member of the Executive Office of the federation, was elected vice-president of the Union of Arab Federations' executive office recently.

Shaikha Hayat was greeted on this decision by Supreme Council for Youth and Sports assistant secretary general and BOC secretary general Abdulrahman Askar expressed sincere congratulations on this occasion.

He stressed that Shaikha Hayat is worthy of this position due to her competence and sincerity in working throughout the years of her work in the field of sports at the regional, continental and international levels, and for her achievements in various posts she has occupied over the past years.



Ousmane Dembele



Raheem Sterling