

Manchester derby offers chance to salve wounds, Isak prepares for Liverpool bow

City and United face off in a high-stakes derby, with both teams seeking to turn their seasons around after disappointing starts

● Manchester derby pits struggling giants together

● Postecoglou back as Forest manager

● Forest face Arsenal in London clash

AFP | London

Manchester City will be desperate to avoid a third successive defeat when they face neighbours Manchester United as the Premier League returns this weekend, with Alexander Isak set for his Liverpool debut.

City boss Pep Guardiola and United manager Ruben Amorim are both under intense pressure just three games into the season while champions Liverpool boast the top division's only 100 percent record.

Elsewhere, following the international break, Ange Postecoglou is back in management with Nottingham Forest, just three months after he was sacked by Tottenham.

Here we look at three key talking points ahead of the weekend's action:

Manchester derby can heal wounds

The Manchester derby at the Etihad Stadium pits two troubled sides against each other, both of whom have just one win from three matches.

Manchester City's consecutive



Manchester United's Brazilian midfielder #18 Casemiro (L) tackles Manchester City's Norwegian striker #09 Erling Haaland (file photo)

Fixtures: Saturday (Bahrain time)
2:30 pm: Arsenal v Nottingham Forest
5pm: Bournemouth v Brighton, Crystal Palace v Sunderland, Everton v Aston Villa, Fulham v Leeds, Newcastle v Wolves,
7:30 pm: West Ham v Tottenham
10pm: Brentford v Chelsea
Sunday
4pm: Burnley v Liverpool
6:30 pm: Manchester City v Manchester United

defeats against Tottenham and Brighton have raised questions about Guardiola's expensive overhaul of his side after last season's third-place finish.

Guardiola's problems have hardly eased in the two weeks since City blew the lead at

Brighton, with Egypt forward Omar Marmoush ruled out of Sunday's derby with a knee injury.

Rayan Cherki and Mateo Kovacic remain sidelined and there are also questions over the fitness of John Stones, Rayan

Ait-Nouri, Rico Lewis, Nico O'Reilly and Abdulkodir Khusanov, who all withdrew from international duty this week.

Manchester United needed a last-gasp penalty from Bruno Fernandes after another error-strewn display against Burnley as they finally clinched their first win of the season.

That dramatic victory came after Amorim's team were beaten by Arsenal, drew with Fulham and suffered a humiliating League Cup exit at fourth-tier Grimsby.

Liverpool on hot streak

Isak says not everyone has the "whole picture" of the circumstances behind his record-breaking move to Liverpool, but Arne

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Alexander Isak, signed for a British-record £125 million, could line up alongside Mohamed Salah and Florian Wirtz in Liverpool's star-studded attack – a prospect already unsettling their Premier League rivals

Slot's vision for the former Newcastle striker will start to become clear against Burnley on Sunday.

Liverpool paid a British-record £125 million (\$169 million) to finally lure Isak to Anfield on transfer deadline day after a prolonged pursuit of the Sweden star, whose determination to push through the move antagonised Newcastle fans.

Having boldly declared his intention to create "history" at Liverpool, the 25-year-old trained with his new teammates for the first time this week and is expected to make his debut at Turf Moor.

Reds boss Slot has an embarrassment of riches in attack after a spending spree and it will be fascinating to see how he fits Isak into a forward line already featuring Mohamed Salah, Florian Wirtz, Hugo Ekitike and

Cody Gakpo.

Chasing a record 21st English crown, Liverpool are already top of the table again with three successive victories, making Isak's arrival on Merseyside a daunting proposition for their title rivals.

Postecoglou in Forest hot seat

Just three months after he was unceremoniously sacked by Tottenham, Postecoglou will be back in north London on Saturday as the Nottingham Forest boss takes charge of his new team against Arsenal.

Postecoglou was hired by Forest this week following the dismissal of Nuno Espirito Santo.

The engaging Australian's welcome return to the Premier League comes possibly tinged with a hint of schadenfreude.

Postecoglou was axed by Tottenham chairman Daniel Levy despite winning the Europa League last season to end the club's 17-year trophy drought, so it will not have escaped his attention that Levy was forced to step down from his role last week.

However, Forest's volatile owner Evangelos Marinakis could prove even more demanding to work for than Levy.

Nuno impressively steered Forest to their first European campaign for 30 years but paid the price for a deterioration of his relationship with Marinakis.

Marinakis immediately piled pressure on Postecoglou, who presided over Tottenham's worst top-flight finish since 1976/77 last season, as he claimed Forest were in a position to challenge for major trophies.

Muharraq Begin Title Defence in Style

Defending champions impress, Khaldiya snatch close 3 points

● Muharraq brush aside rivals Al Ahli

● Juninho bags a brace

● Khaldiya captain scores winner against A'ali

● Week one continues tonight

Hussain Almaskati
TDT | Manama

Defending champions Muharraq began their Nasser Bin Hamad Bahrain Premier League campaign with a comfortable 3-0 win over long-time rivals Al Ahli at Shaikh Ali Bin Mohammed Stadium. The result set an early marker for Muharraq, who are in the hunt for their 35th league title.

After the match, Muharraq head coach Nandinho stressed the importance of starting strongly. "It was important for us to win the first match. It's always vital to give confidence to



Juninho shows his Muharraq wolf tattoo after scoring

the team. We'll have six games in 25 days, so it's important to

said. "The Champions League is next and we need to be ready for that. The first match is always cagey, but after the first goal it makes things easier and opens spaces. We deserved the win, but the scoreline was harsh on Al Ahli."

Juninho at the Double

The deadlock was broken on the stroke of half-time after Al Ahli's Mehdi Sharaf was sent off for bringing down Soufiane Mahrouk at the edge of the area. Juninho stepped up to convert the penalty and hand Muharraq a deserved lead heading into the interval.

Arthur Rezende doubled the advantage shortly after the restart with a debut goal. A flowing team move carved open the Al Ahli defence, leaving the Brazilian midfielder one-on-one with Ricardo Silva, and he calmly slotted into the bottom corner.

Juninho later struck his second of the night to complete the scoring. Elliot Simoes dazed on the left flank, beating his marker with stepovers before delivering a low cross to the far post, where Juninho applied the

Jackson happy to be 'where I'm wanted' after joining Bayern

AFP | Munich

New Bayern Munich signing Nicolas Jackson said yesterday he was happy to be "where I'm wanted" after joining the German giants from Premier League club Chelsea on a season-long loan.

At his official unveiling in Munich yesterday, the 24-year-old spoke about the "tough times and difficult moments" as his loan deal

looked set to fall through days before the transfer window closed.

"In football, there can be a time when you want a change. I spoke to (sporting director) Max Eberl and the coach and they really wanted me to be here and they loved me.

"And as a player, you want to be there where people want you to be."

At Chelsea since 2023, Jackson fell down the pecking order after the summer arrivals

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