

Klopp plans intense training before final

● Jürgen Klopp plans to put his players through a pre-season style training schedule to prepare for the Champions League final

Reuters | London

Jürgen Klopp says he will fill the three-week gap before the Champions League final against Tottenham Hotspur by putting his Liverpool players through a two-week "pre-season".

The two Premier League clubs played their final domestic games of the season on Sunday and are in the unusual position of having a lengthy wait for the June 1 clash in Madrid.

Klopp has given his team a few days off to recover from a gruelling Premier League campaign in which they pushed Manchester City to the final day in the title race, eventually losing out by one point.

They will reconvene next week to prepare for the show-piece meeting at Atletico Madrid's Wanda Metropolitano Stadium.



Virgil van Dijk (right) looks on in wonder as Jürgen Klopp and Mohamed Salah sings 'You'll Never Walk Alone' in front of the Kop after their victory over Barcelona (file photo)

"We have to do a couple of things in preparation for the Champions League, media stuff," Klopp told the club's website.

"We have to do that, then the boys will have a couple of days off and then we have two proper weeks as a pre-season for the Champions League final.

"We will do that, we will play that, (hopefully) win it, come home and then the people get

what they deserve." Liverpool, who defeated Barcelona to reach their second consecutive Champions League final, are bidding for their sixth European Cup, which would be their first piece of silverware under Klopp.

Tottenham, who produced a superb comeback to beat Ajax Amsterdam in the semi-final and reach their first Cham-

pions League final, will hope to use the gap to their advantage with top striker Harry Kane recovering from an ankle injury.

Manager Mauricio Pochettino, also seeking his first silverware after five years at Tottenham, said at the weekend after they clinched a top-four spot with a 2-2 draw at home to Everton that he would not put his players through a pre-season regime.

Rain keeps Federer waiting in Rome

AFP | Rome

Roger Federer was among dozens of players kept off court by rain on a chilly Wednesday at the Italian Open as organisers refused to provide refunds in case of a total washout.

The policy promises to create ill-will after officials last weekend doubled the price of Wednesday tickets after Federer's late decision to play in Rome.

"If a session is postponed or cancelled due to weather or acts beyond our control, the Tournament Committee will attempt to accommodate the ticket holder at a subsequent session," the website statement read.

"In the event of rain during play the Committee will determine whether a session is completed. However, no refunds will be given."

The Swiss icon last appeared at the Foro Italico in the 2016 third round, losing to Dominic Thiem.

He was due to begin yesterday against Portugal's Joao Sousa.

Federer, a four-time finalist in Rome, returns to Italy after skipping the clay season for the last two years in order to concentrate on his grass game.

Once he announced his decision to come to Italy after losing a Madrid quarter-final



Switzerland's Roger Federer waves after losing to Austria's Dominic Thiem (file photo)

last week to Thiem, Rome organisers quickly hiked prices to the equivalent range of 96 to 212 dollars.

"We want to reward fans who had bought tickets before they knew Federer would play," the Italian Tennis Federation explained.

When informed of the decision on Tuesday during a media event, Federer did not seem particularly impressed.

"I heard some fans clearly were not happy about it. That's obviously disappointing to hear," the 20-time Grand Slam champion said.

"They made it in a way like they rewarded the fans who bought tickets earlier, which is sort of strange, but okay.

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