

# SPORTS

## sports

### David de Gea signs new deal at Man Utd

AFP | London

David de Gea has signed a new long-term contract with Manchester United, the Premier League club announced yesterday, ending months of speculation over his future.

"David de Gea has signed a new long-term contract with Manchester United, keeping him at the club until at least June 2023,"

United said on their official website. "There is an option to extend for a further year."



David de Gea

De Gea joined United from Atletico Madrid in 2011 and has made 367 appearances for the club.

"It has been a privilege to spend eight years at this great club and the opportunity to continue my career at Manchester United is a genuine honour," said the 28-year-old.

## Marseille stun struggling Monaco

Marseille battled back from 2-0 down to beat AS Monaco 4-3

AFP | Paris

Marseille came back from two goals down to beat winless Monaco 4-3 in a Ligue 1 thriller in the principality on Sunday as close-season signing Dario Benedetto scored twice.

Andre Villas-Boas' side climbed to fourth in the early table after recovering from falling 2-0 behind to Wissam Ben Yedder's double in the first half an hour.

"It's four goals away from home, it's good. And with the victories, confidence is coming back," Dimitri Payet, who scored Marseille's third goal, told Canal+.

Monaco, who only narrowly avoided relegation last term, remain second-bottom with just two points from their opening five matches and have already conceded 14 goals.

The pressure is once again mounting on coach Leonardo Jardim, who was sacked early last season before returning after an ill-fated spell in charge from Thierry Henry.

Marseille are now only two points adrift of reigning champions and leaders Paris Saint-Germain, and behind Rennes and Nantes on goal difference.

"Maybe we've dared to play a little more," added Payet. "In

the last quarter of an hour we suffered too. It's not always nice to watch, but you have to know how to be efficient."

Monaco grabbed the lead in the 17th minute after Bouna Sarr inadvertently handled a ball over the top towards Islam Slimani, with Ben Yedder stepping up to slam home the penalty and score his second goal for the club since joining from Sevilla.

Ben Yedder wasted little time in netting his third, latching onto Slimani's perfectly-weighted through ball nine minutes later, before slotting into an empty net after his initial effort was kept out by Marseille goalkeeper Steve Mandanda.

But the away team hit back as Argentinian striker Benedetto scored for the third straight game.

They were level three min-



**Dario Benedetto has now scored four goals in five Ligue 1 appearances**



Olympique de Marseille's Argentine forward Dario Benedetto (L) celebrates with teammates after scoring a goal

utes before the break, as Valere Germain ended a seven-match goal drought with a back-post diving header.

### More misery for Monaco

Monaco's defensive woes continued and they fell behind just after the hour mark when some sloppy play in midfield allowed Payet to advance and drill an excellent long-range strike into the bottom corner.

Benedetto, who signed for Marseille from Boca Juniors last month, piled further misery

onto Monaco by powering home his side's fourth goal midway through the second half.

Keita Balde came off the bench to pull one back for the hosts with 15 minutes to play, and seconds later Mandanda denied Balde and Slimani in quick succession to prevent Monaco from levelling.

But Marseille closed out their most impressive victory under Villas-Boas with relative com- fort in the final moments.

Earlier on Sunday, Christian Gourcuff's Nantes moved into

third as Kalifa Coulibaly's goal secured a 1-0 win over Reims, while Saint-Etienne came back from two goals down to draw 2-2 with Toulouse.

Neymar scored a spectacular overhead kick in injury time on Saturday to snatch PSG a 1-0 win over Strasbourg, despite being relentlessly booed by his team's fans at the Parc des Princes after failing to force a close-season return to Barcelona.

Benedetto has now scored four goals in five Ligue 1 appearances

## Root plots Ashes success Down Under after series draw

AFP | London

Captain Joe Root put the focus firmly on winning the Ashes in Australia after England levelled their home series on Sunday, saying he was "desperate" to take the team forward.

England won at The Oval by 135 runs in the fifth and final Ashes Test to tie the series at 2-2, ending their historic World Cup-winning season on a high.

It meant the series finished in a draw for the first time since 1972, although holders Australia retain the urn.

Root described the summer as "a huge success for English cricket" after their World Cup triumph in July.

He said the foundations were in place for England to build on, praising Rory Burns for his contributions at the top of the order and paceman Jofra Archer, who only made his Test debut last month.

"Throughout the whole series we've shown a lot of character," said Root, who described 2-2 as a fair result.

"At times we've been out-skilled... but we've always fought very hard and that's a very pleasing thing," he said.

"Hopefully that will be a massive stepping stone and starting point for us to really kick on as a team now."

The Ashes will next take



England captain Joe Root celebrates after taking a wicket

**At times we've been out-skilled... but we've always fought very hard and that's a very pleasing thing**

JOE ROOT

place in Australia in 2021-22 and Root said he was "in it for the long haul".

"I'm desperate to take this team forward," said the skipper.

"I'm in a very privileged position to be captain of the Test team and I'll do everything I can to get us very well prepared

for going down there and hopefully doing something very special."

Root said the performance in the fifth Test was a "blueprint" of how he wanted his team to play but there was still room for improvement.

"You look at this week in particular," he said. "It looks as like we just started to really get to grips with Test cricket after a very long period of one-day cricket."

"We've got a period now and an opportunity in the next two-and-a-half years to really push and do everything we can to prepare extremely well for that tour of Australia so that's going to be a huge focus for me and I like to hope for English cricket."

## Watford battle back to salvage draw against Arsenal

AFP | London

Arsenal squandered a two-goal lead as Watford hit back to draw 2-2 in new manager Quique Sanchez Flores's first game of his second stint in charge at Vicarage Road on Sunday.

Flores's return following the dismissal of Javi Gracia after four games of the Premier League season seemed to be going flat as Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang struck twice in the first half.

But Tom Cleverley halved the deficit in the 53rd minute after some dreadful Arsenal carelessness and Watford were rewarded for a much-improved display when substitute Roberto Pereyra converted an 81st-minute penalty awarded after he was



Watford's Roberto Pereyra celebrates scoring their second goal with Abdoulaye Doucoure

brought down by David Luiz.

Watford came agonisingly close to winning it with Gerard Deulofeu curling just wide and then Abdoulaye Doucoure having stoppage-time shot saved

by Bernd Leno after a counter-attack.

Victory would have put Arsenal into third place but they ended the day seventh in a cluster of clubs on eight points.

## Paine proud of Australia despite defeat

AFP | London

Australia captain Tim Paine said it was mission accomplished even though his team lost the fifth and final Ashes Test against England on Sunday to draw the series 2-2.

Paine said Australia, who won at Edgbaston and Old Trafford but lost agonisingly to a Ben Stokes-inspired England at Headingley, had achieved their main objective in retaining the urn.



Tim Paine plants a kiss on the Ashes urn

"We're taking the urn home so that's certainly what we came to do," he said. "We're thrilled by that, a little disappointed by this game obviously,

puts a bit of a dampener on it."

"We can be really proud of the way we've come over here, which is a challenging place for Australians to come and play and win," he added.

"To win two Test matches pretty convincingly, should have won a third (at Headingley) -- let that slip no doubt."

Paine said winning the first Test at Edgbaston, where Australia triumphed by 251 runs, had been crucial for his side's confidence.