

Neymar misses PSG game after Brazil duty



Brazil's Neymar takes a penalty to score against Peru

AFP | Brazilia

Neymar will sit out Paris Saint-Germain's Ligue 1 game away at Nimes yesterday, hot on the heels of his starring role on international duty for Brazil.

The world's most expensive player scored a hat-trick for his country in a 4-2 win in Peru in 2022 World Cup qualifying.

That match in Lima did not finish until the early hours of Wednesday, European time, and the quick turnaround means he will play no part for his club this weekend.

Instead Paris coach Thomas Tuchel will keep the Brazilian fresh for the Champions League clash at home to Manchester United next Tuesday.

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Angel Di Maria and Marquinhos are suspended, while Marco Verratti and Mauro Icardi are among those miss-

YOU KNOW WHAT

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ing due to injury.

Midfielder Danilo Pereira must wait for his debut after arriving on loan from Porto -- he is isolating after coming into contact with Cristiano Ronaldo, who tested positive for Covid-19, while on international duty with Portugal.

However, fellow new arrivals Rafinha and Moise Kean could play, and Kylian Mbappe is in the squad despite playing for France in Croatia on Wednesday evening.

Maguire will bounce back after setbacks: Solskjaer

Manchester United's Harry Maguire has endured a torrid season on and off the pitch

● Maguire was given a suspended 21-month sentence for a range of charges when on holiday in Mykonos

● On Wednesday he was sent off during England's 1-0 loss to Denmark in the Nations League

AFP | London

Ole Gunnar Solskjaer says Harry Maguire will "bounce back" after his torrid start to the season but could miss Saturday's Premier League trip to Newcastle through injury.

The 27-year-old -- the world's most expensive defender -- has struggled for Manchester United since a well-documented Greek court case in August.

Maguire was given a suspended 21-month sentence for a range of charges, including assaulting a police officer, when on holiday in Mykonos. However, that sentence has been nullified until an appeal and a retrial in a higher court.

On Wednesday he was sent off during England's 1-0 loss to Denmark in the Nations League -- just days after helping Gareth Southgate's team to victory



Manager Ole Gunnar Solskjaer (C) of Manchester United celebrate with Harry Maguire (R) during a match (file photo)

against Belgium.

"When Harry is part of the England team that beats number-one ranked Belgium, that's just a normal day and then you get the headlines when you get the sending-off," said Solskjaer.

"That's just football for you. There's so many ups and downs that we have got to deal with it, individually and as a group.

"Harry's got great resilience. I know he'll bounce back. I'll know that he wants to play, he wants to just work his way out of the last couple of games that he's been criticised (for)."

The United boss said at his pre-match press conference that Maguire had picked up an injury against Denmark and would have a fitness test yes-

today.

United head to Newcastle looking to react to the 6-1 humbling at home to Tottenham before the international break.

"It's one of those things that you have to get over as soon as you can and move on," Solskjaer said. "We know any little chance from outside... you want to create a division.

"I think Bruno (Fernandes) spoke really well the other day about how we are united, we have to stay together. We can't listen to everyone outside. We've got to just get on with it."

Solskjaer, speaking for the first time since the club brought in Edinson Cavani, Facundo Pellistri and Alex Telles on transfer deadline day, said he was look-

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OLE GUNNAR SOLSKJAER

ing forward to integrating the new players.

However, Cavani is yet to join the squad because he is in quarantine and will miss the trip to St. James' Park.

During the international break Paul Pogba once again sparked speculation about his Old Trafford future by saying it was a "dream" to play for Real Madrid one day but Solskjaer was relaxed about the situation.

"Paul's our player, he's going to be here for another two years and I'm sure Paul is focused on doing his best for us and we want to see the best of Paul," he said.

The United boss was also asked about "Project Big Picture", a radical plan to restructure English football backed by United and Liverpool, which was rejected by Premier League clubs this week.

Vietnam cancels 2020 F1 race due to COVID-19 pandemic

AFP | Hanoi

Vietnam's 2020 Formula One Grand Prix has been cancelled, organisers said yesterday, but there was no word on whether the race would take place next year.

Planned for early April, the Grand Prix in Hanoi was set to be the third race of the season and the first ever held in the communist nation.

But after Shanghai and Melbourne were axed as the coronavirus began to spread across the globe, Vietnam's event was also postponed -- throwing the season into chaos.

The announcement from local organisers confirmed the race would not be rescheduled for later in the year.

"We are unable to welcome the most exciting and prestigious motorsport series on the planet to Vietnam in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic," said Le Ngoc Chi, CEO of the Vietnam Grand Prix Corporation.

"This was a very difficult decision for all of us to make but ultimately it was the only solution after carefully reviewing all safety criteria as well as the efficiency under current conditions."

Last year Vietnam signed a 10-year deal with Formula One to host an event state media said would cost the country \$60



A general view of the Hanoi street track

YOU KNOW WHAT

The total number of races was cut to 17 from the record 22 originally envisaged, with Vietnam becoming the 13th race from the original calendar to be axed this year

million per year.

The fee has been picked up in

full by the country's largest private conglomerate, VinGroup, which is hoping to dazzle with a night race on a street track, as the sport attempts to reach new markets in Southeast Asia.

Vietnam is keen for the glamour of motorsport to reflect the country's economic lift-off and help reshape Hanoi's image as a staid communist capital.

They insisted the 5.565-kilometre track in Hanoi had been ready ahead of schedule.

The country has already gained plaudits this year for its handling of the coronavirus, with just 1,124 recorded cases -- and there has been no community transmission of the virus for more than a month.

'Because he never beat me': Mourinho aims dig at Wenger after book snub

AFP | London

Ole Gunnar Solskjaer says Harry Maguire will "bounce back" after his torrid start to the season but could miss Saturday's Premier League trip to Newcastle through injury.

"Because he never beat me," Mourinho told reporters yesterday.

Wenger's autobiography -- "My Life in Red and White" -- looks back over his 22 years in charge of Arsenal between 1996-2018 but there was no mention of his touchline duels with Mourinho, whose Chelsea side dethroned the Frenchman's Invincibles in 2004-05.

The rivalry came to a head in 2014 when they physically clashed on the touchline during a Premier League meeting at Stamford Bridge.

It took Wenger 14 attempts to beat the Portuguese coach who once branded him a "specialist in failure", and in the end could only muster two wins in 19 matches.

"You are not going to do a chapter about 12 or 14 matches and never win one so why should he speak about me in his book? A book is a thing to make you happy, make you proud so I perfectly understand the situation," said Mourinho.

Ahead of Tottenham's London derby against West Ham United on Sunday, Mourinho



Jose Mourinho (R) walks off with Arsene Wenger after a match (file photo)

14

attempts were required for Arsene Wenger to beat Jose Mourinho

said Gareth Bale is fit and available to make his second debut for the club.

Bale secured a return to north London from Real Madrid on loan last month but was rested during the international break to rebuild his fitness levels.

"I am not going to tell you if he is going to play (on Sunday),"

Mourinho said. "What I can tell you is that he is working very well, he is working in the way he was not able to do for a long time."

Mourinho also took the opportunity to praise chairman Daniel Levy for pulling off an "amazing" transfer window for the club.

Apart from Bale, Spurs also brought in Sergio Reguillon from Real Madrid along with Matt Doherty, Pierre Emile-Højbjerg, Joe Hart and Carlos Vinicius.

"I can only publicly thank them for what they gave to the team. And now (it) is for me, my staff and the players to answer in a positive way and have a good season," said Mourinho.