

Ramos backs Madrid for Club glory

Sergio Ramos declares former club Real Madrid favourites for the Club World Cup

- Ramos praises Alonso's appointment
- Backs Mbappé for future Ballons d'Or
- Prefers avoiding Madrid matchup

AFP | Pasadena

Veteran Monterrey defender Sergio Ramos said Monday his former team Real Madrid must be considered favourites to win the Club World Cup. Paris Saint-Germain recently won the UEFA Champions League by thrashing Inter Milan in the

final, with Liga MX side Monterrey set to face the Italians in their opener yesterday at the Rose Bowl in Pasadena. However Ramos, now 39, believes his former club, Spanish giants Madrid, are the real team to beat. "Real Madrid are always favourites in the big competitions," Ramos told reporters ahead of the Group E clash against Inter. "Real Madrid are the best in the world, for the level the club and players have, for the mentality that's been sewn in there for so many years." Madrid have a new coach in Xabi Alonso as well as recent arrivals Trent Alexander-Arnold and Dean Huijsen. "Xabi's arrival will be interesting,

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Despite playing for Monterrey, Sergio Ramos openly tipped his former club Real Madrid to dominate the Club World Cup—and predicted Kylian Mbappe will win “four or five” Ballon d’Ors soon

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SERGIO RAMOS

Ramos. “That could help him a lot in this new era.”

Ramos said Madrid's failure to win a major trophy this season was not down to last summer's marquee signing Kylian Mbappe, whom he played with at PSG. "In the next five or 10 years, I'd wager that Kylian will take four or five Ballon d'Or awards home," said Ramos. The former Real Madrid captain departed in 2021 and said he would prefer not to face his former side in the United States. "Facing off against your old team-mates is always nice but if we won't meet that would be a lot better -- and both them and us can avoid that discomfort," he added. Madrid open their campaign in Miami today against Saudi Arabian side Al Hilal.

Sergio Ramos



Dominant Flamengo open with victory at Club World Cup

- Flamengo beat Esperance 2-0
- Set for Chelsea showdown

AFP | Philadelphia

Brazilian giants Flamengo set themselves up for a Club World Cup showdown with Chelsea by easing to a 2-0 win against Esperance of Tunisia in their opening game at the tournament on Monday. Goals either side of half time from Uruguayan international Giorgian de Arrascaeta and Luiz Araujo gave a dominant Flamen-



Flamengo's Italian midfielder #21 Jorginho controls the ball

go -- coached by former Chelsea player Filipe Luis -- a deserved victory in the Group D clash in Philadelphia. Flamengo, who qualified for the tournament as a recent winner of the Copa Libertadores, fielded a strong side featuring several Brazil internationals and gave a debut to Italy midfielder Jorginho following his recent arrival from Arsenal. Jorginho will come up against former club Chelsea when the

teams meet in their second match on Friday, with the Premier League club fresh from beating Los Angeles FC 2-0 earlier Monday. De Arrascaeta opened the scoring for the Rio de Janeiro outfit in the 17th minute at Lincoln Financial Field when he finished first time from a Luiz Araujo assist. That set off wild celebrations among the Flamengo fans, who made up the majority of the 25,797 crowd in a stadium which

can hold close to 70,000. Flamengo had chances to increase their lead while Tunisian champions Esperance created little of note before their Algerian winger Youcef Belaïli almost equalised midway through the second half. Shortly after that Flamengo scored again, as Luiz Araujo found a pocket of space in the box in the 70th minute, turned and curled a low shot into the far corner to make it 2-0.

Sabalenka apologises to Gauff for ‘unprofessional’ French Open comments

AFP | Berlin

World number one Aryna Sabalenka apologised yesterday for statements she made after losing the French Open final to Coco Gauff earlier in June. Sabalenka lost to Gauff in three sets at Roland-Garros, with the American coming back from a set down to win her first French Open title. Speaking with reporters after the loss, the 27-year-old said the match was “the worst final I’ve ever played”. “I don’t think she won the match because she played incredibly well, but because I made all those mistakes.” In an interview with Eurosport broadcast yesterday ahead



Winner US Coco Gauff (R) holds the trophy as she poses on the podium with Belarus' Aryna Sabalenka

Sabalenka's Euro-sport apology comes just days before she could face Gauff again in Berlin, setting up a high-stakes rematch with added emotional context

of this week's WTA tournament in Berlin, the Belarusian said the comments were “simply completely unprofessional of me.” “I let my emotions guide me. I absolutely regret what I said back then,” she added. Sabalenka is the number one seed in the German capital and could face second seed Gauff again in the final.

Ruba Al Omari wins bronze in Tunisia para-athletics



Ruba Al Omari and her team at the podium

- Over 500 athletes compete in Tunisia
- Event boosts global experience and exposure

TDT | Manama

Ruba Al Omari won a bronze medal in the F55 javelin competition at the Tunisia International Para Athletics Meeting, held from 16 to 18 June at the Rades Stadium. The F55 classification includes athletes with impairments affecting their lower limbs, competing in seated throwing events. The Tunisia International Para Athletics Meeting is one of the key events on the calendar for para-athletes worldwide. This year's edition saw over 500 athletes from 61 countries take part. For competitors like Al Omari,

The Tunisia International Para Athletics Meeting in Rades welcomed over 500 athletes from 61 nations, making it one of the largest para-athletics gatherings on the African continent this year

it's an opportunity to test themselves against the world's best, absorb valuable experience, and represent their nations. Bahrain's para-athletics programme continues to grow in both ambition and reach, with athletes like Al Omari at the forefront of that progress.

Filippo Inzaghi confirmed as Palermo coach after leaving promoted Pisa

AFP | London

from next month.

Filippo Inzaghi was hired yesterday by Palermo after the former World Cup winner left Pisa following their historic promotion to Serie A. In a statement, Palermo said that Inzaghi had signed a “multi-year contract” starting

According to Italian media reports, Palermo paid Pisa nearly one million euros (\$1.1 million) to take Inzaghi as the Sicilians, owned by the City Football Group which also owns Manchester City, attempt their own return to Serie A.