



Juventus' Portuguese forward Cristiano Ronaldo (L) vies for the ball with Lyon's French midfielder Lucas Tousart (C) and Brazilian defender Marcal (R)

## Sarri says he is struggling to impose his style on Juventus

Reuters | Lyon, France

Juventus coach Maurizio Sarri is struggling to impose his style of play on the Turin side and his frustration came out into the open again after a poor performance in their Champions League defeat to Olympique Lyonnais on Wednesday.

In comments that could be viewed as refreshingly honest or a risky public criticism of his players, the chain-smoking 61-year-old said that his team were struggling to grasp the concept of passing the ball around quickly -- a style dubbed "Sarri-ball" by his admirers.

"I am having a lot of difficulty in getting across the idea of moving the ball quickly to this team," said an exasperated Sarri.

"In training, the ball moves around at 200 kilometres an hour but the strange thing is that doesn't happen in matches. In training, we work twice as fast as we did tonight," he added after the 1-0 defeat in the round of 16 first leg.

Juventus, Italy's most successful team domestically, have traditionally been a side

who have won trophies without worrying about how they do it.

Before Sarri -- who earned his reputation during a three-year stint at Napoli -- was appointed in the summer, they had spent five seasons under the more pragmatic Massimiliano Allegri, who repeatedly stressed the importance of



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MAURIZIO SARRI

"administering the match".

Having won the Serie A title in every season under Allegri to extend their run to eight successive titles, Juventus decided they needed more flamboyance and turned to Sarri who likes his

teams to weave intricate, passing patterns at high speed through opposing defences.

However, old habits die hard and Sarri has often observed that his team drop back to defend on the edge of their penalty area in the style of the more cautious Allegri.

Juventus have shown flashes of what Sarri wants and still lead Serie A by one point but a lot of their possession has been sterile and, in Serie A, they have scored fewer goals than at the same stage last season -- 48 against 53.

## 'It's not over,' Guardiola warns City

AFP | Madrid

Pep Guardiola warned his Manchester City players that Real Madrid are more than capable of a Champions League fightback after a historic 2-1 last 16, first leg win for the English champions at the Santiago Bernabeu.

City struck twice in the final 12 minutes through Gabriel Jesus and a Kevin De Bruyne penalty to beat the 13-time European champions for the first time in their history.

Madrid will also be without captain Sergio Ramos for the second leg after he was sent off late on for bringing down Jesus, but Guardiola is wary of Madrid's history of comebacks in the Champions League.

"It's just the first part, it's not three points. If one team can overcome this situation, for experience, for everything, it is this club, but of course it is a good result," Guardiola told BT Sport.

"I am so proud of course but it is just the first step, we have another game, it is not over. So be calm, enjoy it, enjoy the



Real Madrid's Spanish defender Sergio Ramos (L) vies with Manchester City's Belgian midfielder Kevin De Bruyne

moment. Have a good dinner, good regeneration, on Sunday we have a final, keep going in the Premier League and prepare the second game against Madrid."

Guardiola again sprung a surprise on a big Champions League night with his team selection as Raheem Sterling, Sergio Aguero, David Silva and Fernandinho were left on the bench.

# Action-packed nine-race card set for today at REHC

TDT | Manama

Rashid Equestrian and Horseracing Club (REHC) hosts a packed nine-race card today, headlined by the Bahrain National Gas Company (Banagas) Cup.

The ninth and final race of the day will be over eight furlongs and it carries a BD5,000 total prize. It is set to feature 13 imported horses rated zero to 95, with all aged three years old and up.

Several top owners are set to be represented in the event, such as Victorious, Al Mohamediya Racing and Al Afoo Racing Stable, to name a few; as well as leading trainers like Hesham Al Haddad, Alan Smith and Yousif Taher, among others.

Meanwhile, five other races are each set to offer a Bank of Bahrain and Kuwait Cup, including races one through four as well as the day's sixth race.

Race number six is set to be over nine furlongs with a BD2,500 prize. It is for classes three, four and maiden horses aged three years old and up, and three of the five entered have been tipped with a chance, including Parchment, competing for Victorious, Alan Smith and Abdulrahim Jassim; Antar, representing Haitham Salah Abdullatef, Abdulla Kuwaiti and Ebrahim Nader; and Valentine, competing for Abdulla Fawzi Nass, Hesham Al Haddad and Ali Moosa.

The third and fourth races



A horse competes during last week's races at REHC

are both over a straight of five furlongs, with each carrying a BD2,000 prize.

Race four features 11 entrants, all locally bred horses aged three years old with a top weight of 56kg. Batmobile, Najim and Laheeb are with a chance.

Race three is classes three, four and maiden Arabian horses aged three and up. Six horses are in the fray, with Krayan 1706, Kuheilani Umm Zorayr 1766 and Al Saqlawy 1757 all tipped to have a chance.

The second race of the day is over seven furlongs with a

BD2,000 prize. It is for classes three, four and maiden imported horses aged three years old. Light Angel, Naseeb and Arriba Arriba are all with a chance from the field of eight to claim the win.

The day's first race is also over seven furlongs with a BD2,500 total prize. It is for locally bred horses rated zero to 45, aged three and up. Six horses are in the fray.

Also today, the fifth race is set to offer the Trowers and Hamblins Cup. Sixteen imported horses rated zero to 90 and aged

three and up have been entered, and they will be competing over a straight of six furlongs for a share of the BD3,000 prize.

Elsewhere, the seventh and eighth races are over 10 furlongs each with a BD2,000 prize apiece. Ten imported horses are entered in race seven, with Albert Finney, Tamerlane and Saajod all tipped to have a chance. In race eight, which is for classes three, four and maiden horses, another 10 are set to compete, with Macaque, Midhmaar and Bataar all considered pre-race favourites.

## Brave CF champion honoured by government in home country

TDT | Manama

Brave Combat Federation, the international Mixed Martial Arts promotion founded by HH Shaikh Khalid bin Hamad Al Khalifa, First Deputy President of the Supreme Council for Youth and Sports, Bahrain Olympic Committee President, Royal Guard Special Unit Commander, Founder of KHK MMA, and Captain of Al Khalidya Stables, keeps delivering in its core commitment of offering athletes from all around the world an international platform to achieve greatness and fulfil their potential.

The most recent example came from the Philippines, where the longest-reigning World Champion in BRAVE Combat Federation, Stephen "The Sniper" Loman was honoured by the city government of Baguio City, in recognition of his achievements in the sport of Mixed Martial Arts.

The commend, presented by city representatives, acknowledges the outstanding accomplishments of Stephen through his career and especially during the year of 2019, in which he successfully defended his world title twice (including once at home at BRAVE CF 22, in the Philippines) and his impact



Stephen Loman with Brave CF President Mohammed Shahid

in the Baguio City community, where Loman and his gym Team Lakay are both based.

A long-time veteran of BRAVE Combat Federation, being part of the very first card put together by the Bahrain-based promotion, Stephen Loman is the Bantamweight world champion in the fastest-growing MMA organization in the world since November, 2017.

Undeclared under the BRAVE CF banner, "The Sniper" has defended his world title for four times, with triumphs

overseas, including Northern Ireland, India, and Bahrain, alongside his home country of the Philippines. With 14 wins in his professional career and only two losses, Loman quickly rose through the rankings and secured a spot among the top Bantamweights in the world, regardless of promotion and affiliation.

Coming off a unanimous decision win over Louie Sanoudakis last November, at BRAVE CF 30, Stephen Loman now waits for his next BRAVE Combat Federa-

tion challenge, in which he aims to expand his title-reign record.

After starting 2020 with its debut in Slovenia, BRAVE Combat Federation is currently preparing the last details for its upcoming show in Brazil. The Bahrain-based promotion will land in the South American country on March 28th for BRAVE 35. The event will be held in the city of Balneario Camboriú and will feature 13 international fights, including the Lightweight title fight between Brazil's Cleiton "Predator" vs Sweden's Guram Kutateladze headlining the fight card.



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