



Ryan Giggs of Manchester (c) lifts the Premier League trophy.

Man Utd Clinch Premier League Title

Manchester United manager Sir Alex Ferguson has set his sights on the Champions League final after clinching his 10th league title.

According to BBC, United won their 17th title with a 2-0 win at Wigan Athletic as Chelsea, their opponents in Moscow on 21 May, could only draw 1-1 at home to Bolton.

"We are bouncing into that final now," Ferguson said. "If we'd lost the title it would have been different."

"If this team goes on now and wins the European Cup, it will be my best ever."

United carved out their Premier League victory with a hard-fought victory against Steve Bruce's side, the goals coming from Cristiano Ronaldo via the penalty spot and Ryan Giggs on the day he equaled Sir Bobby Charlton's

club record of 758 appearances for United.

And Giggs said he was confident United could go on to win Ferguson a second European Cup to add to the one the team won in 1999.

"We have a really solid base here, starting with the likes of Edwin van der Sar and Rio Ferdinand at the back, plus players who can damage teams and score goals."

"Next week we'll be ready for Moscow. We need to make the most of the occasion as they don't come around very often and hopefully we'll win the Champions League."

Ferguson said that it was fitting that Giggs scored the goal that put the seal on the title and allowed the celebrations to get under way at the JJB Stadium.

"It was a tough one all right. For most of

the game we played well but there were some nervous moments," Ferguson said.

"I was pleased with that second goal. It makes it 10 title medals today for Ryan Giggs this is fantastic."

Wigan manager Steve Bruce, a former team-mate of Giggs, said the Welshman's goal had provided a fitting ending to United's Premier League campaign.

"I was fortunate to play on his debut, when he scored," Bruce said. "He has equaled the record and he is just a great, great player. He epitomizes what Manchester United is about."

Giggs added, "I think we deserved to win the title this season. Trophies mean a lot to me. It was always going to be a bit nervous for us until we got the second goal."

German Open Victory For Safina

Dinara Safina has won the German Open women's singles final beating Elena Dementieva over three sets.

The Russian, seeded 13th, recovered from a sluggish start to edge out her seventh seeded compatriot 3-6-6-2-6-2.

Safina, who beat world number one Justine Henin and Serena Williams en route to the final, was erratic in the first set, AFP wrote.

However the 22-year-old came back strongly in the second and broke twice in the decider.

She sealed the win when Dementieva netted a backhand on the first match point.

Dementieva had beaten world number two Ana Ivanovic in straight sets in their semifinal on Saturday.

And the 26-year-old produced the kind of commanding game in the early stages that had been too much for the defending champion. Safina, with a reputation for letting her fiery temper show on court, was broken three times in the first set and her tennis racquet was the victim as she unleashed her temper in frustration after going 4-2 down.

But she recovered her composure in the second set to break her opponent three times, taking the second with a stunning ace as she improved her game dramatically.

And she showed no mercy in the third to claim the title, which moves her up to 14th in the WTA rankings, while Dementieva rises to seventh.



Dinara Safina

Bradley Grabs WBC Crown

Timothy Bradley knocked down Junior Witter in the sixth round on the way to winning the WBC light-welterweight title Saturday night on a split decision.

The unbeaten American, who had never fought as a pro outside of California, will take home the belt after his big punches overcame a 10-year age gap against the experienced British fighter whose only previous loss in 39 fights was eight years ago, Reuters reported.

Bradley's big right hand was always a danger to the 34-year-old champion who constantly switched to his left but was unable to unload enough powerful shots to worry the American, who is now 22-0. Witter, making his third defense, is 36-2-2.

Two of the judges scored the fight 114-113 and 115-113 in Bradley's favor and the third gave it 115-112 to Witter, whose chances of a showdown with former world champion Ricky Hatton now appear to have gone.

"I trained hard and I worked hard my whole life to get to this point," Bradley said. "I have been watching videos of him for years. I've studied every fighter from 140 pounds to 147. I always do my homework and I saw that he was getting hit by right hands all the time."

"The whole time he just kept talking about Ricky Hatton. And if you have your mind set on something else you're not really ready for the big show that's ahead. He trained hard for me but his mind was on Ricky Hatton. I love Hatton's style, he's a great champion. I'll let my promoters handle all of that."

Ricco Ahead In Second Giro Stage

Italian Riccardo Ricco of the Saunier Duval team threw down the gauntlet to his rivals for the Giro d'Italia's pink jersey by sprinting home in stage two.

He upped the tempo late on, overhauling Danilo Di Luca and Davide Rebellin on the uphill sprint finish in Agrigento, BBC reported.

Liquigas rider Franco Pellizzotti came fourth but took the overall lead from American Christian Vandeveldel who had led after Saturday's time trial. Charly Wegelius led home the British contingent in a lowly 64th position.

He was 54 seconds behind the winner, while David Millar crossed the line in 102nd, two minutes, four seconds off Ricco.

Geraint Thomas, Steven Cummings, Mark Cavendish and Bradley Wiggins were even further off the pace, Wiggins finishing 11:40 off the leader in 158th spot.

Meanwhile, on a poor day for the Slipstream outfit, American David Zabriskie was forced out of the Giro d'Italia after a crash between Cefalu and Agrigento. "It's great to have the jersey but I want to wear it in Milan as well. That's my big objective," Pellizzotti said.

"We did a great team time trial yesterday and so I knew I could get the jersey. It was a tough stage because there was a lot of climbing and the finish caused some gaps."



Riccardo Ricco

News in Brief

Iran 2nd at Turkey Taekwondo

The Iranian side finished runner-up at the World Junior Taekwondo Championships events in Izmir, Turkey.

Iranian contenders snatched two golds and a silver medal to take the second spot on the table in the seventh round of World Taekwondo events, Press TV reported.

The winning South Korean side picked up 96 points to win the title, ahead of the Iranian contestants who picked up 56 points.

Some 900 sportsmen from 87 countries are competing in the event.

The technique committee of the competition has picked Iran's Behzad Ilkhanisar as the most technically efficient contestant.

Mohammadi Secures Olympic Berth

Iranian Greco-Roman wrestler Ali Mohammadi has booked an Olympic berth in Rome, Italy.

The 66-kg weight class wrestler lost to his Russian rival in the final game and secured the silver medal.

Greco-Roman Olympics Qualifying Tournament No. 1 was held in Rome, Italy, from May 10 to 11, MNA reported.

The top four wrestlers in each weight class qualified for Olympics, set for August 12-21 in Beijing, China.

Hamid Bavafa in 60-kg class, Ali Mohammadi in 66-kg and Farshad Alizadeh in 74-kg represented Iran in the tournament.

The second and final Olympic qualifier for Greco-Roman is scheduled from May 24 to 25 in Serbia.

Syria Down Oman

Syria gave new coach Mohammed Kwaid a win in his first game in charge of the national team as they defeated Oman 2-1 in Damascus.

Kwaid is also the coach of Syrian powerhouse Al Karama and Al Karama striker Ziad Chabo got both goals.

According to goal.com, Oman moved ahead after 11 minutes as Syria defender Raafat Mohamed put into his own net.

Chabo missed a chance to equalize from the spot with a penalty but redeemed himself by pulling Syria level after 55 minutes.

The striker struck again 15 minutes from time to give Kwaid a winning start.

Both nations are preparing for a series of 2010 World Cup qualifiers in June.

Oman faces Japan on June 2 while Syria battle with Kuwait.



Italian Open for Hennie

Hennie Otto won his first European Tour title by shooting a 3-under 69 Sunday to hold off Oliver Wilson by one stroke at the Italian Open.

The South African had four birdies and a bogey at Castello di Tolcinasco Golf and Country Club to finish at 25-under 263. Wilson, an Englishman, shot an 8-under 64, the best round of the day, AP reported.

"It's great to win at last," said Otto, who failed to defend a five-shot advantage going into the final round of the Madeira Islands Open in March. "I have been working very hard on my putting and I don't think I've ever held more long putts than I did this week."

Robert Karlsson, who shot a course-record 61 Friday, had a 5-under 67 to finish third, two shots behind.

"It was a good try, I suppose, but I haven't really played that well over the weekend and that is why I have come up a bit short," the Swede said.

Two-time major champion John Daly (67) finished 12 shots behind at 275.



Jazz Beat Lakers

Utah played its toughest defense of the playoffs and pulled out a 123-115 victory on Sunday, tying the Western Conference semifinals 2-2.

According to AP, Jazz held the Lakers to two field goals in overtime and went 9-for-9 from the foul line while outscoring the Lakers 15-7.

"We never have any doubts in our confidence," said Utah's Andrei Kirilenko, who blocked Bryant twice in overtime and converted a three-point play with 35 seconds remaining to help the Jazz pull away.

After opening the series with two losses in Los Angeles, the Jazz came home and answered with two wins to make it a best-of-three series, starting Wednesday at the Staples Center. Game 6 will be on Friday back in Salt Lake City, where the Jazz are 4-1 in the playoffs.