



Nigeria's players celebrate after winning the Africa Cup of Nations third place soccer match between Nigeria and Tunisia at Al Salam Stadium in Cairo, Egypt on July 17. (AP)

### Ighalo goal gives Nigeria third-place playoff win

Odion Ighalo's early goal gave Nigeria a 1-0 win over Tunisia in their third-place playoff at the Africa Cup of Nations on Wednesday. The 30-year-old forward, who is the tournament's top scorer with

five goals, was gifted an easy tap-in following a Tunisian defensive mix-up at the Al Salam Stadium. Jamilu Collins' cross from the left was poorly parried by goalkeeper Moez Ben Cherifa against

the legs of defender Yassine Meriah, who tried to stop it from going over the line before Ighalo pounced to give Nigeria a third-minute lead. It proved a costly blunder for

Tunisia, who lost Sunday's semifinal in extra-time to Senegal in similar circumstances. Ben Cherifa attempted to make up for his error with some good saves in the second half, first deny-

ing Samuel Chukwueze's left-footed shot just after the hour mark before saving two efforts from substitute Samuel Kalu in stoppage time. Nigeria, who dominated the

game, have won the bronze medal at eight different Cup of Nations' tournaments. Algeria play Senegal in the Cup of Nations final in Cairo on Friday. (RTRS)

### Roma sign Mancini

Juve 'complete'  
De Ligt signing

TURIN, July 18, (Agencies): Juventus announced the signing of Dutch teenager Matthijs de Ligt from Ajax Amsterdam on Thursday, having secured one of the most sought-after young players in world soccer for 75 million euros (\$84.25 million).

The 19-year-old Netherlands international, who captained his former club in their thrilling run to the Champions League semifinals last season, has signed a five-year deal with the Serie A champions.

"It's the news all Bianconeri fans have been waiting to hear all summer: Matthijs de Ligt is officially a Juventus player!" the club said in a statement on their website <https://www.juventus.com/en/news/news/2019/de-ligt-is-bianconero.php>.

The contract includes a buyout clause of 150 million euros that will be activated in its third year, broadcaster Sky Italy reported on Wednesday.

De Ligt becomes one of the most expensive defenders in the world, with his national team captain Virgil van Dijk top of the list following his move to Liverpool from Southampton for 75 million pounds (\$94 million) in 2018.

### SOCCER

After breaking into the Ajax first team aged 17 in 2016, De Ligt established himself as a regular starter over the following season and soon became the most coveted defender in Europe due to his strength, anticipation and ability on the ball.

He played 90 minutes in 17 of Ajax's 18 Champions League matches last season, scoring three times in a run which culminated in a semifinal defeat to Premier League side Tottenham Hotspur on away goals.

De Ligt did win the Eredivisie title and Dutch Cup in his final campaign at Ajax, alongside team mate Frenkie de Jong, who has since joined Barcelona.

Spanish media reported that De Ligt had also been courted by the Catalans, but the player's agent Mino Raiola said at Juventus' headquarters on Wednesday that the Italian club were always the preferred destination.

"It's not a question of who wanted him most, but Juve are the best team for him. For a defender it is important to come to Italy," Raiola told reporters.

"If you are to become the greatest in the world, it is a necessary stage.

"He's the number one among the youngsters. He's like (Pavel) Nedved, maybe more than him, for his mentality and he's like Zlatan (Ibrahimovic) for his ambition. He has it all."

De Ligt had told Netherlands' NOS television in June that Juventus forward Cristiano Ronaldo asked him to join the Turin-based club at the end of the Nations League final after Portugal beat The Netherlands 1-0.

AS Roma have signed Italy defender Gianluca Mancini from Atalanta in a deal that could be worth up to 23 million euros (\$25.82 million), the Rome-based Serie A club said <https://www.asroma.com/en/news/2019/7/mancini-completes-roma-move>.

Roma will sign Mancini on an initial one-year loan deal for a fee of 2 million euros but subsequently have to make the 23-year-old's move permanent for an additional 13 million euros.

# Atlanta United halt skid in style



Vancouver Whitecaps' Derek Cornelius (top), and New England Revolution's Juan Caicedo (below), chase the ball during the first half of an MLS soccer match on July 17 in Foxborough, Mass. The Revolution won 4-0. (AP)



Arsenal's Joe Willock (left), is defended by Bayern Munich's Ryan Johansson during the first half of an International Champions Cup soccer match on July 17 in Carson, Calif. (AP)

### Arsenal strike late to beat Bayern

Eddie Nketiah scored a late goal for Arsenal to beat Bayern Munich 2-1 in their opening clash of the International Champions Cup at Dignity Health Sports Park in Carson, California on Wednesday.

After a scoreless first half, the Gunners took the lead in the 49th minute when Bayern left back Louis Pozanski steered the ball into his own net.

The German champions, however, were back on level terms in the 71st minute when Robert Lewandowski nodded home Serge Gnabry's cross.

Both teams had chances to take control late before Arsenal's Tyreece John-Jules won possession and provided a nice cross to Nketiah to score the winner with two minutes remaining.

The International Champions Cup features 12 teams playing friendly matches in venues in North America, Europe and Asia.

Meanwhile, Manchester City will strive to unlock the full potential of Germany international Leroy Sané but can only develop players happy to be with the Premier League champions, manager Pep Guardiola said.

The 23-year-old winger has long been linked with a switch to German giants Bayern Munich. He has been

offered a contract extension at City but is yet to sign, having struggled to hold down a regular starting spot last season.

"The club made him an offer last year... I have said many times, we want people happy to be here," Guardiola told a news conference after City defeated West Ham United 4-1 in their Premier League Asia Trophy clash in Nanjing.

Sane, whose contract expires in 2021, provided an assist in the match to earn praise from Guardiola who said City could still improve the 2017-18 PFA Young Player of the Year.

"We are going to help him be the best, we know his potential and what level he is. He has a special quality that is difficult to find around the world," Guardiola added.

"He knows, they all know... how difficult it is to play (regularly), because of the quality we have.

"But at the same time, I spoke to the club 10 times (to say) I want people here to be happy. If they don't want, they go. The desire to have him... is always there."

City start their title defence away at West Ham on Aug 10. (RTRS)

Revolution extend unbeaten streak to nine

ATLANTA, July 18, (AP): Josef Martinez scored his 14th and 15th goals of the season and Atlanta United beat the 10-man Houston Dynamo 5-0 on Wednesday night.

Atlanta (10-8-3) snapped a three-game winless run. Houston (8-9-3) have just one win on the road this season.

Atlanta scored two minutes apart to take a 2-0 lead in the 29th minute. Darlington Nagbe scored his first goal for Atlanta by redirecting Julian Gressel's cross at the penalty spot. Brandon Vázquez added his second goal of the year by heading in a deflected pass.

Martínez made it 3-0 in the 60th,

### SOCCER

netting a goal in his sixth straight game. He added another in the 79th. Gressel capped the scoring in the 88th.

Houston played a man down nearly the entire match after Alberth Elis was given a second yellow card for contact with a referee.

### Revolution 4, Whitecaps 0

In Foxborough, Mass, Diego Fagundez, Carles Gil and Teal Bunbury scored during a late eight-minute stretch in New England's victory over Vancouver.

New England (7-8-6) extended their undefeated streak to nine matches — the club's longest stretch without a defeat since the start of the 2015 season. Vancouver (4-10-8) fell for the fourth consecutive game.

Gustavo Bou highlighted the first half with a one-touch finish of a corner kick in his MLS debut. Fagundez made it 2-0 in the 82nd minute by heading home Cristian Penilla's cross for his first goal of the season. It moved him into a tie for second on New England's career goals list. Gil scored four minutes, and Bunbury completed the rout with his seventh goal in eight games.

### Toronto FC 3, Red Bulls 1

In Toronto, Jozy Altidore, Alejandro Pozuelo and Ashton Morgan scored to help Toronto FC beat New York.

Altidore opened the scoring in the sixth minute, back-heeling



Toronto FC defender Laurent Ciman (top left), and New York Red Bulls midfielder Aaron Long vie for a head ball as Red Bulls defender Michael Murillo (62) and Toronto FC's Omar Gonzalez watch during the first half of an MLS soccer match on July 17 in Toronto. (AP)

Tsubasa Endoh's cross low off the goalpost. He has seven goals in 11 games this season. Pozuelo made it 2-0 from the penalty spot in the 26th minute after Kemar Lawrence brought down Richie Laryea.

Tom Barlow scored for New York in the 63rd minute, and Morgan capped the scoring in the 72nd with his second goal in 123 regular-season games. Toronto (8-5) is 3-1-1 in their last five. New York dropped to 9-8-4.

### Crew 2, Fire 2

In Bridgeview, Ridgeview, Ill, Romario Williams scored on a header in the 90th minute, shortly after entering as a second-half substitute, and Columbus tied Chicago.

Columbus (5-14-3) snapped a five-game losing streak, but have just one win in their last 16 matches.

Djordje Mihailovic opened the scoring for Chicago (5-9-8) in the 28th minute, settling a pass with his chest and one-touching it past goalkeeper Joe Bendik. C.J. Sapong gave Chicago a 2-1 lead in the 63rd when a deflected pass fell to his feet for a close-range shot between the legs of Bendik. Gyasi Zardes tied it at 1 in the 47th for Columbus with a redirection of Luis Argudo's pass along the 6-yard box.

## Celtic ease into 2nd round

GLASGOW, Scotland, July 18, (AP): Celtic eased through the Champions League's first qualifying round by beating Sarajevo 2-1 to complete a 5-2 aggregate win.

The 1967 European Cup winner got goals in each half from Ryan Christie and Callum McGregor, and will next play Nomme Kalju of Estonia.

Sutjeska of Montenegro scored deep into stoppage time to level the aggregate score at 2-2 against Slovan Bratislava and force extra-time, then later won a penalty shootout 3-2. Goalkeeper Vladan Giljen saved two spot kicks from the visiting Slovakian side.

With two goals in the final 10 minutes, BATE Borisov of Belarus won

2-1 at Piast Gliwice of Poland to advance 3-2 on aggregate.

Romania's CFR Cluj rallied from a 2-0 aggregate deficit against Astana to win 3-1 on the night and 3-2 overall.

Dundalk of Ireland won a penalty shootout 5-4 at Riga after two goalless games.

Also advancing were Ferencvaros of Hungary, Slovenia's Maribor, AIK of Sweden, Qarabag of Azerbaijan, and Norway's Rosenborg.

The second qualifying round will be played on July 23-24 and 30-31.

Before those games, UEFA will make pairings for the third qualifying round Monday when teams including Ajax, a semifinalist last season, Porto and Dynamo Kiev enter the draw.