

A rested Ronaldo could be dangerous for Ajax in 2nd leg

Solskjaer hopes for another Camp Nou comeback

NFL Roundup

Pats sign Jenkins

WR Shepard gets 'hefty' extension

WASHINGTON, April 15, (RTS): The New York Giants are finalizing a four-year, \$41 million contract extension with wide receiver Sterling Shepard, NFL Network reported Wednesday.

The deal includes \$21.3 million in guaranteed money, according to ESPN.

Shepard, a second-round pick out of Oklahoma in 2016, set career highs last season with 66 catches for 872 yards. He has started 42 of his 43 games with the Giants, catching 190 passes for 2,286 yards and 14 touchdowns.



Shepard

The Giants also re-signed wide receiver Russell Shepard (no relation), who confirmed the news on social media.

Meanwhile, the Giants hosted former New York Jets cornerback Morris Claiborne and former Los Angeles Chargers defensive tackle Corey Liuget on free agent visits, ESPN reported.

A former first-round pick of the Dallas Cowboys, the 29-year-old Claiborne started 30 games over the last two seasons for the Jets, breaking up 22 passes and making three interceptions.

Liuget, 29, was released by the Chargers earlier this offseason. He has 24 career sacks since being drafted in the first round in 2011, though just three since 2015. He missed 10 games last season due to a suspension and a knee injury.

Projected top-five NFL draft pick Nick Bosa admitted in an interview with ESPN that he has scrubbed his Twitter account clean of anything that could be considered political.

Bosa, a former Ohio State defensive end, frequently had tweeted his support for President Donald Trump, and he also criticized former San Francisco 49ers quarterback-turned-social activist Colin Kaepernick.

However, knowing he could wind up in a liberal city, such as San Francisco, where the 49ers hold the No. 2 pick, he chose to clean the slate.

At least three more quarterbacks reportedly are visiting this week with the Washington Redskins, who hold the No. 15 pick in this month's draft.

NFL Network said Duke's Daniel Jones, Ohio State's Dwayne Haskins and Northwestern's Clayton Thorson all have meetings scheduled with the Redskins, who have already hosted Missouri's Drew Lock and Auburn's Jarrett Stidham.

Jones will visit Wednesday night and Thursday, Thorson meets with the team Wednesday, and Haskins is due sometime this week, according to NFL Network. West Virginia's Will Grier is also expected at Redskins Park in the coming days, according to NBC Sports Washington.

Free agent tight end Pats Seferian-Jenkins signed a contract with the New England Patriots. Terms were not announced, but multiple outlets reported it's a one-year deal for the veteran minimum.

The team also confirmed the re-signing of kicker Stephen Gostkowski.

Meanwhile, ESPN reported the Patriots brought in former Broncos and Texans wide receiver Demaryius Thomas and former Jaguars running back T.J. Yeldon for free agent visits.

The Jets signed former Alliance of American Football quarterback Brandon Silvers, the team announced.

Silvers, 24, started three games for the Memphis Express and passed for 777 yards, four touchdowns and one interception. In four seasons at Troy from 2014-17, Silvers passed for 10,677 yards with 71 TDs and 29 picks.

The Buffalo Bills signed former Lions and 49ers defensive end Eli Harold to a one-year deal.

Harold, 25, had a career-high four sacks along with five quarterback hits in 13 games as a reserve last season for the Lions, who acquired him from the 49ers late in training camp.

LONDON, April 15, (AP): Ole Gunnar Solskjaer knows all about overturning Champions League deficits at the Camp Nou.

Twenty years after scoring a last-gasp winner there for Manchester United in the final against Bayern Munich, Solskjaer will be back in Barcelona's stadium on Tuesday looking to mastermind an unlikely comeback for the English team from the touchline.

United arguably have the toughest task of the eight quarter-finalists heading into the second legs this week, having lost 1-0 to Lionel Messi's Barcelona at Old Trafford.

Yet that was the score line facing United in 1999 after Mario Basler put Bayern in front in the sixth minute in what proved to be one of the most dramatic soccer matches in a generation.

United engineered the turnaround with two goals in injury time — the first from Teddy Sheringham, and the second from Solskjaer with one of the last kicks of the game.

During his four months as United manager, the former Norway striker has made a point of reminiscing about the old days at the club, when no deficit felt insurmountable. Comebacks and late goals were a regular thing under his then-manager and mentor, Alex Ferguson.

So it didn't come as a surprise that, straight after the first leg, Solskjaer was buoyant about United's chances of advancing, saying with that 1999 final no doubt in mind: "We've scored goals at the Nou Camp before from corners and crosses ... we can do it, no



In this April 10 file photo, Juventus forward Cristiano Ronaldo (front), duels for the ball with Ajax's Joel Veltman during the Champions League quarter-final, first leg, soccer match between Ajax and Juventus at the Johan Cruyff Arena in Amsterdam, Netherlands. (AP)

doubt about it."

United have beaten Juventus and Paris Saint-Germain away in this season's Champions League, but Solskjaer said getting past Barcelona would be a "greater achievement."

Not helping United's cause is the six-day turnaround between the games. While Barcelona fielded a reserve side in its Spanish league match on Saturday, Solskjaer couldn't afford to rest too many of his first-team players for the match against West Ham in the Premier League the same day. United

are still fighting to finish in the top four, while Barcelona are close to wrapping up another Spanish league title.

But there is one bizarre statistic that will be giving United fans hope as they make their way to Spain.

Messi, to many the greatest soccer player ever, hasn't scored in his last 12 games at the quarterfinal stage — stretching back to 2013.

Juventus vs Ajax (1-1 on aggregate) Juventus had the luxury of resting most of their regular players at the

weekend. Ajax didn't, and may have paid a costly price.

For the 2-1 loss at SPAL in Serie A on Saturday, Juventus had just two players in their starting lineup that began the 1-1 draw in Amsterdam. Cristiano Ronaldo wasn't even on the bench.

Barcelona vs Man Utd beIN SPORTS

1HD, 11HD

22:00 local

Juventus vs Ajax beIN SPORTS 2HD,

12HD

22:00 local

Man City vs Tottenham beIN SPORTS

1HD, 11HD

22:00 local (Wednesday)

Porto vs Liverpool beIN SPORTS 2HD,

12HD

22:00 local (Wednesday)

Ahead of Tuesday's game, Ajax had nine of their starting XI from the first leg in the 6-2 victory over Excelsior. One of them, star midfielder Frenkie de Jong, limped off with a hamstring problem in the first half.

Ronaldo was rested before the second leg of the round of 16. He scored a hat trick against Atletico Madrid to see Juventus overturn a first-leg deficit.

Manchester City vs Tottenham (0-1 on aggregate)

Is City's underwhelming record in the Champions League going to continue?

One appearance in the semifinals is a poor return considering the huge

investment in the team by the club's Abu Dhabi ownership since 2008, and City is struggling again to make it that far.

Without an away goal from the first leg, City will be in trouble should Tottenham score in the second leg at Etihad Stadium on Wednesday. Tottenham are without the injured Harry Kane, but has still managed to have good results whenever the striker has been out in recent seasons.

City could be without holding midfielder Fernandinho, who missed the 3-1 win against Crystal Palace in the Premier League on Sunday through injury.

Tottenham have never reached the semifinals of the Champions League. **Porto vs Liverpool (0-2 on aggregate)**

Mohamed Salah looks back to his best after brilliant goals in successive weeks in the Premier League — against Southampton and then against Chelsea on Sunday — but he might count himself fortunate to be playing the second leg against Porto on Wednesday.

Match officials missed Salah's studs-first lunge on Danilo near the end of the first leg at Anfield, which could easily have resulted in a red card and suspension.

Instead, Liverpool have their front three of Salah, Roberto Firmino and Sadio Mane intact for the trip to Portugal. The last time the teams met in the Estadio do Dragao, Liverpool won 5-0 in the first leg of the round of 16, with that trio scoring all the goals.

Porto captain Hector Herrera is back from suspension for the hosts, as is center back Pepe.

Bucks pound Pistons in opener



Portland Trail Blazers guard Damian Lillard (0) scores against the Oklahoma City Thunder during the second half of Game 1 of a first-round NBA basketball playoff series in Portland, Ore on April 14. (AP)

Rockets too strong for Jazz

MILWAUKEE, April 15, (AP): Giannis Antetokounmpo had 24 points and 17 rebounds in just 24 minutes, and the top-seeded Milwaukee Bucks showed they were serious about making a playoff run with a 121-86 rout of the Detroit Pistons in Game 1 on Sunday night.

The MVP candidate ran and dunked all over the Pistons, who only really caught him when center Andre Drummond shoved him to the ground with both hands late in the third quarter after Antetokounmpo grabbed an offensive rebound with Detroit trailing by 41 points.

Drummond was given a flagrant 2 foul and ejected. He threw a kiss to the Fiserv Forum crowd as he was escorted off the court.

Seven Bucks players scored in double figures. Eric Bledsoe had 15 points, and Brook Lopez and Khris Middleton each added 14. George Hill scored 16 points off the bench.

Luke Kennard paced the Pistons with 21 points off the bench and

Drummond had 12 points and 12 rebounds. Reggie Jackson also had 12 points. Detroit played without forward Blake Griffin, who sat out with a left knee injury.

Rockets 122, Jazz 90



Milwaukee Bucks' Giannis Antetokounmpo (34) dunks against Detroit Pistons' Thon Maker during the second half of Game 1 of the NBA basketball first-round playoff series on April 14 in Milwaukee. The Bucks won 121-86. (AP)

In Houston, James Harden had 29 points and 10 assists to help Houston rout Utah in the opener of a best-of-five first-round playoff series.

The Rockets had a double-digit lead for most of the game, but the Jazz got within five points midway through the third quarter before Houston used a big run to pull away and sail to the victory.

Houston's starting lineup helped carry the scoring load on Sunday night, with each starter scoring at least 10 points. Eric Gordon had 17, Clint

BASKETBALL

Capela scored 16, Chris Paul added 14 and P.J. Tucker had 11.

Rudy Gobert had 22 points and 12 rebounds to lead the Jazz. Donovan Mitchell had 19 points, but did not have an assist as the Jazz went long stretches without scoring.

Game 2 is Wednesday night in Houston.

Trail Blazers 104, Thunder 99

In Portland, Ore, Damian Lillard scored 30 points and third-seeded Portland opened its playoff series against No. 6 Oklahoma City with a victory.



Houston Rockets guard James Harden (13) blocks the shot of Utah Jazz guard Donovan Mitchell (45) during the first half of Game 1 of the NBA basketball first-round playoff series on April 14 in Houston. (AP)

Enes Kanter added 20 points and a career playoff-high 18 rebounds for the Blazers, who were making their sixth straight postseason appearance. C.J. McCollum added 24 points.

Russell Westbrook had 24 points, 10 assists and 10 rebounds for his ninth career postseason triple-double. Paul George, who was a game-time decision because of a sore shoulder, added 26 points and 10 rebounds after a slow start.

Celtics 84, Pacers 74

In Boston, Kyrie Irving and Marcus

Morris each scored 20 points, and Boston rallied in the second half to beat Indiana in Game 1 of their first-round playoff series.

Jayson Tatum finished with 15 points. Al Horford added 10 points and 11 rebounds, and Gordon Hayward had 10 points. It was the first playoff game since 2017 for Irving and Hayward after each missed last year's postseason with injuries.

Game 2 is Wednesday night in Boston. The Pacers led by 11 points in the first half but had just eight points in the third quarter.

The Celtics capitalized and led by as many as 22 in the fourth. Indiana scored 29 points in the second half, and the quarter and half were both its worst of the season.

Cory Joseph had 14 points for the Pacers. Bojan Bogdanovic was the lone Pacers starter in double figures with 12 points.

Pistons forward Blake Griffin will likely miss Detroit's entire first-round playoff series against the Milwaukee Bucks due to his left knee injury, Yahoo Sports reported late Sunday evening.

Griffin has been hobbled by a sore left knee for much of the last month, missing four of the final seven regular-season games and sitting out Game 1 on Sunday, as Milwaukee pummeled Detroit 121-86 in the series opener.