



All your insurance. One powerful app.



PSG edge Arsenal on penalties to retain Champions League title

BUDAPEST: Paris Saint-Germain claimed back-to-back Champions League triumphs with a 4-3 shoot-out win over Arsenal following a 1-1 draw after extra time yesterday in Budapest, with Eberechi Eze and Gabriel missing from the spot.

Mikel Arteta's Premier League champions showed great resilience to take the game beyond 120 minutes, but fell to a second final defeat, 20 years after their first in Paris against Barcelona.

Luis Enrique's side became only the second besides Real Madrid to win the competition in consecutive years in the Champions League era.

PSG's first triumph was 55 years in the making, 14 of those under Qatari ownership, the second could start what they hope is an era of dominance and dynasty-building.

Enrique rebuilt the team swiftly and efficiently, removing the club's superstars and building a cohesive and committed attacking side, capable of shredding opposition with terrifying pace.

It was the Spaniard's third Champions League triumph, making him one of only five coaches to complete a hat-trick -- the first coming with Barcelona in 2015.

For a while it looked unlikely as Kai Havertz powered Arsenal ahead after six minutes but Ousmane Dembele's penalty midway through the second half took a tight game to extra time and ultimately penalties.

Arteta opted for Havertz in attack over Viktor Gyokeres, and for an hour it seemed like his calls would pay off.

Enrique selected 10 of the side which demolished Inter Milan 5-0 in last year's final as PSG finally lifted the trophy they so badly craved.

In Arsenal's only prior final German goalkeeper Jens Lehmann was sent off in the opening stages as they were defeated by Barcelona in Paris in 2006.

They got off to a far better start at the Puskas Arena, with Lehmann's compatriot Havertz firing the Gunners ahead after just six minutes.

Havertz, who scored the winning goal in Chelsea's 2021 Champions League final victory, could not believe his luck after Marquinhos's attempted clearance hit Leandro Trossard and bounced into his path.

The forward galloped into open space behind PSG's defence and towards Matvey Safonov's goal. Havertz had a tight angle to overcome but rifled a strike into the roof of the net.

It was the worst possible start for PSG against a miserly Arsenal side who had conceded just six goals on the run to the final.

Their disciplined defending kept the Parisians at bay with consummate ease, as Enrique's side controlled the ball but could not break through Arsenal's defensive bastion.

Gabriel Magalhaes made an excellent last-ditch challenge to pick Khvicha Kvaratskhelia's pocket.

The dynamic Georgian has been the tournament's best player but in the first half was not allowed room to breathe.



Paris Saint Germain's President Nasser Al-Khelaifi lifts the trophy as he celebrates with his players.



'This is even bigger', says Luis Enrique

BUDAPEST: Paris Saint-Germain coach Luis Enrique described his team's second UEFA Champions League triumph as "even bigger" than their maiden European title a year ago, after the French club edged Arsenal on penalties in a tense final yesterday.

"It is even bigger because we knew of the difficulties of playing against Arsenal, and for us as a team and a city it is incredible to win it," the Spaniard told broadcaster Canal Plus amid on-pitch celebrations at the Puskas Arena in Budapest.

PSG won 4-3 on penalties after recovering from conceding an early goal to draw 1-1 over 90 minutes and extra time.

Kai Havertz blasted English Premier League champions Arsenal into a sixth-minute lead in the Hungarian capital but PSG got a deserved equaliser when Ousmane Dembele converted a 65th-minute penalty following a foul on Khvicha Kvaratskhelia.

Kvaratskhelia later had a shot deflected onto the post as Arsenal held on for extra time and then penalties.

Nuno Mendes was the only Paris player out of five to fail to score during the shoot-out, while Eberechi Eze had already missed for Arsenal before Gabriel blasted over with their last attempt.

"I think we have deserved it over the course of the season even if the final was really close-fought," added Enrique, as PSG become the first team since Real Madrid between 2016 and 2018 to retain the Champions League trophy.

Having previously led Barcelona to the title in 2015, Enrique becomes just the fifth manager to win three European Cups, after Carlo Ancelotti, Bob Paisley, Zinedine Zidane and Pep Guardiola.

The Qatar-backed outfit won European club football's biggest prize for the first time in their history last year with a 5-0 demolition of Inter Milan in Munich.

"It is a different emotion this time, it is incredible that we have done it back to back," said captain Marquinhos, who has been at PSG since 2013.

Five trophies

"We showed how much we wanted it. The coach said right at the start of the season that it is hard to win it, but it is even harder to win it twice. That was the objective for us and that was the mentality we showed today."

The first Champions League final in a decade to go to penalties saw a team win having conceded the first goal for the first time since 2014.

"It is exceptional, it's a great night. We have worked hard this season in order to do the 'back-to-back'. It is magnificent. We are so pleased and we will savour this tonight," said Dembele, the Ballon d'Or holder whose strike on the night sees him end the season with 20 goals in total.

He will now join up with the France squad for the World Cup in North America, saying that the fitness problem which forced him off at the end of normal time was only a cramp.

PSG had already won the UEFA Super Cup, FIFA Intercontinental Cup and French Champions Trophy this season on penalties.

They end the campaign with five trophies altogether, having also won the French Ligue 1 title.

Yesterday's victory means they will begin next season by playing Europa League winners Aston Villa in the UEFA Super Cup in the Austrian city of Salzburg on August 12. — AFP

Al-Khelaifi hails historic triumph

THE PENINSULA

BUDAPEST: Paris Saint-Germain President Nasser Al-Khelaifi praised the club's European success after their back-to-back UEFA Champions League triumph, calling it a defining moment in the club's history and a milestone for French football.

"This second consecutive Champions League title is more than just a historic moment. It marks the beginning of a legend for our club, for French football, and for our city," said Al-Khelaifi.

"It is the culmination of a remarkable team effort, led by Luis Enrique, the players,

and the coaching staff. I am extremely proud of our team, of its maturity, its character, and the way it has represented Paris Saint-Germain throughout this European campaign.

"I would also like to thank Luis Campos and all the club's teams, who work behind the scenes every day to make all of this possible.

"Tonight, our thoughts go out to our fans: the 18,000 people who made the trip to Budapest, those gathered at the Parc des Princes in Paris, and all the Rouge & Bleu supporters across France and around the world. We share this title with them."

Arsenal goalkeeper David Raya saved from Achraf Hakimi's bouncing free-kick before Kvaratskhelia finally had his say.

After the winger's slick one-two with Dembele, Mosquera bundled him down in the box with a clumsy foul.

Dembele sent Raya the wrong way with a low penalty to level, with PSG fans igniting several flares in celebration. It was their 45th goal of the competition, matching the all-time record.

PSG almost set a new one when Kvaratskhelia hurtled down the left but teenager Myles Lewis-Skelly deflected

his shot against the post. Substitute Bradley Barcola fired a fine chance wide on the break before extra time, as the French side threatened frequently, a tiring Arsenal suddenly giving them too much space.

The Gunners pleaded for a penalty of their own when substitute Noni Madueke went down under pressure from Nuno Mendes, but it would have been harsh on the PSG defender whom the winger was pulling. To a shoot-out it went, with PSG confident after already claiming three trophies on penalties this season, and winning

their last five. They also took the first spot kick, and at the end in front of their own supporters.

Arsenal blinked first, with Eberechi Eze firing wide but Raya then saved from PSG's Mendes. Declan Rice drilled home to level at 2-2. After Lucas Beraldo put the Ligue 1 winners 4-3 up, Arsenal defender Gabriel was left with the fifth kick for his side and lashed it high over the crossbar to hand PSG the trophy.

—AFP



RECENT CHAMPIONS

- 2026: Paris Saint-Germain (FRA)
- 2025: Paris Saint-Germain (FRA)
- 2024: Real Madrid (ESP)
- 2023: Manchester City (ENG)
- 2022: Real Madrid (ESP)
- 2021: Chelsea (ENG)
- 2020: Bayern Munich (GER)
- 2019: Liverpool (ENG)
- 2018: Real Madrid (ESP)
- 2017: Real Madrid (ESP)
- 2016: Real Madrid (ESP)
- 2015: Barcelona (ESP)
- 2014: Real Madrid (ESP)
- 2013: Bayern Munich (GER)
- 2012: Chelsea (ENG)
- 2011: Barcelona (ESP)
- 2010: Inter Milan (ITA)
- 2009: Barcelona (ESP)
- 2008: Manchester United (ENG)
- 2007: AC Milan (ITA)

The French champions appealed for a penalty when Bukayo Saka bungled an attempted clearance and the ball hit both his arms, but referee Daniel Siebert was unmoved.

Fighting back

PSG were reduced to frustrated pot-shots from distance and after the break moved the ball quicker to try and destabilise Arsenal's rearguard.



Paris Saint-Germain's Marquinhos lifts the trophy next to his teammates as they celebrate after winning the UEFA Champions League final in Budapest.

Liverpool sack Slot after disastrous Premier League title defence

LONDON: Liverpool sacked manager Arne Slot yesterday, saying the club were seeking a "change of direction", after a disastrous defence of their Premier League title.

The Reds finished fifth in the table, 25 points behind champions Arsenal, despite spending a Premier League record of nearly £450m (\$605m) on new players in one transfer window last year.

Outgoing Bournemouth boss Andoni Iraola is the front-runner after leading the Cherries into Europe for the first time in the club's history.

Just over a year ago Slot was heralded as a hero after taking on the daunting role of succeeding Jurgen Klopp and leading Liverpool to a record-equalling 20th English top-flight title in his debut season in charge.

Yet fans turned on the Dutchman this season after a

series of lacklustre performances.

There was also sign of dressing room disharmony, most notably from Mohamed Salah who called for a return to "heavy metal football" in an explosive social media post, referring to Klopp's high energy style of play.

Salah's comments were liked by multiple members of the current squad.

Despite their troubles, it had been reported that Slot would be handed a stay of execution after securing Champions League qualification.

However, the club's owners, the American-based Fenway Sports Group, have succumbed to fan pressure to axe the former Feyenoord boss.

"We have collectively come to the conclusion that change is necessary in order for the club to keep moving forward. Again, it must be stressed that

The Reds finished fifth in the table, 25 points behind champions Arsenal, despite spending a Premier League record of nearly £450m (\$605m) on new players in one transfer window last year.

this is not a decision which has been reached lightly, anything but," the club said in a statement.

"The conclusion we have come to is built on a belief that the team's trajectory is best addressed through a change of direction. That does not diminish the work Arne has done here, or the respect we have for him. Nor is it a reflection of his talents. Rather, it is indicative of the need for a different approach.



Arne Slot

"Arne leaves with our gratitude, with a Premier League title to his name, and with the knowledge that he and his family will always be welcomed back at Anfield."

Liverpool added that "the

process to appoint a successor is under way." Many fans were keen for the return of Xabi Alonso to Anfield, but the club's former midfielder will instead take charge of Chelsea next season.

Iraola's stock is high after an 18-game unbeaten league run to finish the campaign in sixth, just three points behind Liverpool despite vastly inferior resources.

The Spaniard also worked together with Liverpool sporting director Richard Hughes, who previously held a similar role at Bournemouth.

Slot ultimately paid for failing to get a return on Liverpool's huge investment last summer.

British transfer record signing Alexander Isak was beset by fitness problems, while Florian Wirtz struggled with the transition to the Premier League after a £100m move from Bayer Leverkusen.

Slot, though, also had to deal with emotional turmoil caused by the death of forward Diogo Jota in a car accident in July. — AFP



Raul Fernandez celebrates his sprint race win.

Fernandez usurps favourites in Italian MotoGP sprint race

SCARPERIA E SAN PIERO: Spain's Raul Fernandez sped to a surprise win ahead of favourites Jorge Martin and Fabio Di Giannantonio in the Italian MotoGP sprint race at Mugello yesterday.

The Aprilia-Trackhouse rider finished over a second ahead of former world champion and fellow Spaniard Martin at Mugello, claiming his second win in motorcycling's premier class of racing.

Fabio Di Giannantonio, who was fastest in all three practice sessions but started seventh on the grid, was over three seconds back in third.

Fernandez had to battle through the first qualifying session to have a shot at the top grid positions and he impressed again from the front row, where he was sandwiched between Bezzecchi and Martin.

Second on the grid was Fernandez's best ever starting position and he then gambled with a medium rear tyre while the rest of the riders opted for a soft on a hot day in Tuscany.

It was a gamble which paid off as he quickly tore ahead of Bezzecchi, who had qualified in pole position with a track record lap time, with only Martin able to stay anywhere near him.

"I'm super happy, I'm speechless... I've felt great since yesterday (Friday), so I want to thank the team a lot," said Fernandez.

"I tried (the medium) and it worked, so that's great. We'll try to win again tomorrow."

Bezzecchi ended up finishing a disappointing fourth and the Aprilia rider is now 12 points in front of his teammate Martin ahead of today's Grand Prix.

Martin broke a record of his own by reaching the fastest speed ever clocked at Mugello with an astonishing 368.6 kilometres per hour (229 miles per hour), around 2 kph more than the previous quickest mark set by Brad Binder and Pol Espargaro. — AFP



Vingegaard on verge of Giro glory after powering to penultimate stage

Team Visma Lease a Bike Danish rider Jonas Vingegaard wearing the overall leader's pink jersey celebrates as he crossing the finish line to win in the 20th stage of the Giro d'Italia 2026 yesterday. A gentle ride around Rome today is all that stands in the way of Vingegaard's first Giro victory, with a showdown with Tadej Pogacar in the Tour de France coming up in July. — AFP

Gauff French Open title defence ends as Sabalenka, Osaka set up last-16 clash

PARIS: Reigning champion Coco Gauff's French Open title defence came to an end in the third round yesterday as top seed Aryna Sabalenka and Naomi Osaka both won to set up a blockbuster last-16 clash.

Gauff went down 4-6, 7-6 (7/1), 6-4 to Austrian 28th seed Anastasia Potapova as the top seeds continued to fall in the opening week at Roland Garros.

The 22-year-old fourth seed had been a break up in the deciding set before Potapova put together a run of five games for the loss of just one to condemn Gauff to her earliest Roland Garros exit since her debut in Paris six years ago.

The two-time major winner insisted being the reigning champion had not affected her play, unlike in 2024 when she was defending her title in New York.

"I think at the US Open it did a lot more but honestly this time it didn't. I wasn't really nervous," Gauff said.

"That's what's more frustrating because I felt like I learned a lot from that US Open experience and I'm a better player since then and I just don't think I portrayed that today."

In a match defined by breaks of serve, Gauff conceded the crucial

Aryna Sabalenka serves to Australia's Daria Kasatkina.



10th game of the final set despite being 30-0 up behind her own delivery with a double fault sandwiched between two booming Potapova winners, before a powerful return on her second serve forced her to hit long and bid adieu to the French capital.

It was a third win for Potapova against Gauff -- in their first meeting since 2023 -- but she said it was a "top three (career victory) for sure".

Sixth seed Amanda Anisimova also departed as the American fell in a third-set tie-break to France's Diane Parry.

Earlier, Sabalenka beat Australia's Daria Kasatkina 6-0, 7-5 in just 76 minutes to stamp her ticket

to the fourth round. After racing through the first set, Sabalenka went an early break down to her 53rd-ranked opponent before battling back.

The Belarusian world number set up a meeting with her fellow quadruple major winner, Osaka.

Sabalenka and Osaka, both 28, have won two Australian Opens and two US Opens apiece.

Sabalenka has beaten Osaka twice this season, but Osaka won their only meeting at a major -- at the same stage in the 2018 US Open, the first of her major titles.

The Japanese 16th seed battled past American 18-year-old Iva Jovic 7-6 (7/5), 6-7 (3/7), 6-4 to progress.

Younousse, Tijan storm into Ostrava Elite16 semis

Qatar's beach volleyball stars Cherif Younousse and Ahmed Tijan advanced to the semi-finals of the Ostrava Elite16 in the Czech Republic after recording two impressive victories yesterday. The Tokyo Olympic bronze medalists first defeated Sweden's Jacob Hörling Nilsson and Elmer Andersson 21-19, 21-18 in the Round of 16 before overcoming Argentina's Nicolas Capogrosso and Tomas Capogrosso in a hard-fought quarter-final. After dropping the opening set 19-21, the Qatari duo bounced back to win the next two sets 21-15, 21-19 and secure their place in the last four. The duo will face Sweden's Olympic champions David Ahman and Jonatan Hellvig in today's semi-final.



Pakistan outspin Australia as Minhas makes history

RAWALPINDI: Pakistan out-spun Australia by five wickets in the first one-day international in Rawalpindi with spinner Arafat Minhas becoming the first home bowler to take five wickets on ODI debut yesterday.

Minhas finished with 5-32 as an under-strength Australia were bowled out for 200 in 44.1 overs before Pakistan chased down the target in 42.3 overs for a memorable win in their 1,000 ODI.

Babar Azam notched a 94-ball 69 while Ghazi Ghori hit an impressive 92-ball 65 as Australia's inexperienced spinners failed to match Pakistan slow bowlers on a dry spin-assisting Pindi Stadium pitch.

Azam and Ghori added 127 runs for the third wicket after Sahibzada Farhan (28) and Maaz Sadaqat (eight) fell with the score at 49.

Azam hit four boundaries and a six while Ghori's knock had eight hits to the rope before both falling to



Arafat Minhas

pacer Nathan Ellis, but with just 16 to win that did not hurt Pakistan.

Minhas smashed a six to complete the victory. Australia are missing a host of key players including regular skipper Pat Cummins, Mitchell Starc and Josh Hazlewood alongside opener Travis Head. Australia, sent in to bat, saw Matthew Renshaw hitting a career best 63-ball 61 and opener Matthew Short scoring a 76-ball 55

amidst a spin assault with eight wickets going to slow bowlers.

It was Abrar (2-44) who broke the opening stand of 34 with the wicket of Alex Carey for 19, before Minhas destroyed the batting with guile and accuracy.

Minhas had stand-in skipper Josh Inglis (13) and Marnus Labuschagne (nought) in his fourth over before getting Cameron Green for a third ball duck in his next.

At 68-4 Australia were in a spot of bother, but Short and Renshaw fought hard through a fifth wicket stand of 55 before Minhas broke the stand, getting Short stumped.

Abrar returned for his second spell to dismiss Renshaw while Arafat completed his five-wicket haul by Nathan Ellis for eight.

Short hit six boundaries in his fourth ODI half century while Renshaw's knock had five boundaries and a six. — AFP

Davies in Canada World Cup squad despite injury

TORONTO: Alphonso Davies and Jonathan David were the star names in Canada's World Cup squad as coach Jesse Marsch unveiled the co-host's 26-man roster on Friday.

Bayern Munich defender Davies was deemed sufficiently fit for inclusion despite battling a hamstring injury, while Juventus forward David leads the line for a side that has never won a World Cup game but has shot up the FIFA rankings in recent years.

Other key names included were Porto playmaker Stephen Eustaquio, box-to-box Sassuolo midfielder Ismael Kone, Villarreal duo Tajon Buchanan and Tani Oluwaseyi, and Southampton attacker Cyle Larin.

Also named despite injury doubts were Norwich midfielder Ali Ahmed (hamstring) and Promise David (hip), a striker for Belgium's Union SG.

Each player's name was unveiled and displayed on banners displayed on Toronto's famous CN Tower.

"It is an honor to name our squad for a World Cup on home soil," said Canada's American coach Jesse Marsch.

"These players reflect the many communities, cultures, and journeys that make up this country.

"They are determined, fearless, and proud to wear Canada across their chest. We look forward to uniting Canadians this summer, and we invite everyone to be part of this journey with us." — AFP