

Blues trio try their hand at local hawker food

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Local football fans are eagerly awaiting the prospect of seeing the reigning English Premier League champions in action at the National Stadium next month.

Yesterday, Chelsea went a step further to whet the fans' appetite ahead of their appearance at the inaugural International Champions Cup (ICC) Singapore friendly tournament.

The Blues released a light-hearted video clip on their official website yesterday, featuring defensive trio Gary Cahill, David Luiz and Nathan Ake battling it out in a cook-off.

Under the guidance of Toh Kok Sum, head chef of north London restaurant, Singapore Garden, the players tried to cook a local hawker favourite – char kway teow.

The subsequent cook-off was filled with laughter and banter as the players poked fun at one another.

Ex-Chelsea goalkeeper and current assistant coach Carlo Cudicini, who was invited as a special guest judge, declared Ake's dish the winner.

Toh opted instead for Luiz's dish as his favourite.

Upon gaining Toh's approval, Luiz proclaimed his love for Singapore and hugged the chef.

Luiz and his Chelsea team-mates are scheduled to be in Singapore for the July 25-29 ICC Singapore friendly tournament, alongside German Bundesliga champions Bayern Munich and Italian Serie A side Inter Milan.

Tickets for the event range between \$40 to \$188, and are available at Sports Hub Tix.

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Chelsea defenders Gary Cahill, David Luiz and Nathan Ake (L to R) frying char kway teow, under the guidance of north London restaurant Singapore Garden's head chef, Toh Kok Sum. PHOTO: FACEBOOK/ CHELSEA

RECORD CHELSEA BID FOR SANDRO

Blues on the brink of sealing £61m move for Juventus left-back and £35m transfer for Bakayoko

LONDON • Chelsea are on the verge of agreeing a £61 million (\$107 million) deal for Alex Sandro with Juventus that would make the left-back the most expensive defender in the world.

The Premier League champions would also break their transfer record, set when they signed Fernando Torres for £50 million from Liverpool in 2011.

The fee would eclipse the £50 million that Chelsea received when they sold David Luiz to Paris Saint-Germain three years ago.

Sandro, 26, indicated to Juventus on Sunday that he was keen to move to London after the Italian champions attempted to persuade him to stay.

Juventus have offered the Brazilian international an improvement on his £75,000-a-week deal, which runs until 2022, but are unlikely to

keep him against his wishes.

He can expect to be paid at least twice his present wage by Chelsea, who have met the asking price set by Juventus.

The Blues hope to be able to agree terms with Sandro this week, and he would be expected to become the first-choice left-back ahead of Spaniard Marcos Alonso, who was superb in his first season at the club.

Sandro's signing would be significant in manager Antonio Conte's plans to shape his squad for the additional demands of the Champions League next season.

The BBC also reported yesterday that the club are also close to signing midfielder Tiemoue Bakayoko from French champions Monaco after agreeing a £35 million deal.

Talks over personal terms with the 22-year-old, who was a member of the Monaco squad that reached the Champions League semi-finals last season, should be completed this week.

Willy Caballero, a free agent after being released by Manchester City, has passed a medical examination,



Juventus left-back Alex Sandro looks set to be the world's most expensive defender should his proposed move go ahead.

and the goalkeeper is expected to be back-up for Thibaut Courtois.

Chelsea are also expected to step up their interest in centre-back Virgil van Dijk and Everton striker Romelu Lukaku, who could cost a combined £170 million.

They hope to persuade Southampton to change their mind and allow van Dijk to leave.

Southampton have insisted that they do not need to sell the Dutch defender, who has five years left on his deal, and reported Liverpool to the Premier League for an alleged illegal approach last month.

Chelsea will raise some of the money through player sales. Goalkeeper Asmir Begovic has agreed to join Bournemouth for £10 million, forward Bertrand Traore is on the verge of a £16 million move to

Lyon and midfielder Nemanja Matic, defender Nathan Ake and striker Diego Costa could all leave.

According to The Guardian, Jose Mourinho is intent on signing Matic for around £40 million, with Manchester United hopeful of completing the transfer this week.

The 28-year-old is understood to have agreed personal terms with United and the two clubs have agreed his price.

Matic, who will earn around £155,000-a-week, is expected to take a medical examination in the coming days, though the death of Mourinho's father, Felix, on Sunday may slow the deal.

The manager is in Portugal for the funeral, but Matic is expected to become a United player before the club travel to the United States for a pre-season tour on July 9.

When in charge at Chelsea, Mourinho signed the Serb for £21 million in January 2014.

The Portuguese wants Matic as the replacement for Michael Carrick, who has signed a new one-year contract, but will be 36 next month. THE TIMES, LONDON

CHELSEA'S MOST EXPENSIVE SIGNINGS

- £50m Fernando Torres (Liverpool, 2011)
- £33m Michy Batshuayi (Marseille, 2016)
- £32m N'Golo Kante (Leicester City, 2016)
- Diego Costa (Atletico Madrid, 2014)
- Eden Hazard (Lille, 2012)

WORLD'S MOST EXPENSIVE DEFENDERS

- £50m David Luiz (Chelsea to Paris Saint-Germain, 2014)
- £47.5m John Stones (Everton to Manchester City, 2016)
- £42m Eliaquim Mangala (Porto to Manchester City, 2014)
- £33m Thiago Silva (AC Milan to Paris Saint-Germain, 2012)



Cameroun forward Vincent Aboubakar scoring his country's consolation goal against world champions Germany. Joachim Low's side will face Mexico in the Confederations Cup semi-final on Thursday. PHOTO: AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Ton-up Low will not rest on laurels ahead of Mexico test

SOCHI • Germany's manager Joachim Low said he is looking forward to facing Mexico on Thursday in the Confederations Cup semi-finals after the world champions pipped Chile to top spot in Group B.

The Germans play Mexico in Sochi for a place in Sunday's final in St Petersburg, while Chile meet Portugal in the other last-four clash tomorrow in Kazan.

"Mexico is going to be a tough

game, they are a very flexible team with very good players," said Low, who became the first head coach to achieve 100 international wins. "We don't often play Central American sides so that will be interesting, but we need to be on our guard."

Timo Werner, 21, netted twice in the 3-1 win over 10-man Cameroon which saw them finish two points clear of Chile, who rallied for a 1-1 draw with Australia in Moscow.

After Kerem Demirbay opened the scoring, Werner struck either side of Vincent Aboubakar's consolation effort on 78 minutes.

But the match was marred by controversy when Cameroon had Ernest Mabouka sent off on 64 minutes for a poor tackle on Emre Can.

It began with a case of mistaken identity halfway through the second half – which video replays were meant to eradicate – and left the

Cameroun players and coaching staff bemused and irritated.

Sebastien Siani was dismissed for a foul on Can after referee Wilmar Roldan inspected a pitch-side monitor. It then took furious protests from the Cameroon players, including Siani sarcastically applauding Roldan, for the Colombian to check the monitor again and discover he had sent off the wrong player.

Siani was called back and

Mabouka was correctly sent off.

"It's a foul, fair enough, but both players had their legs high. I don't understand why only my player received a red card," said Cameroon coach Hugo Broos.

Low, who in his 150th match in charge of Germany, maintained his impressive record of reaching the semi-finals of every tournament over the last decade. He praised his inexperienced side for overcoming

Cameroun, but Broos lashed out at tournament organisers in Russia with just a year to go before the country stages the World Cup.

"On three different occasions, we had to start our session an hour late because we were stuck in traffic," said Broos. "That must be sorted out because when the World Cup is here, teams should not be stuck in traffic."

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