

# Guardiola thanks Alvarez for 'massive' contribution ahead of Atletico move

● **Julian Alvarez joins Atletico Madrid in deal worth up to 95 million euros**

AFP | Manchester

Pep Guardiola hailed the impact made by Julian Alvarez in two seasons at Manchester City with the Argentine set to join Atletico Madrid in a deal worth up to 95 million euros (£81 million, \$104 million). The 24-year-old cost City just £14 million when he signed from

River Plate and has since enjoyed a meteoric rise, helping Argentina to World Cup and Copa America glory, as well as winning two Premier League titles and the Champions League at club level.

Alvarez scored 36 times in 103 appearances for the English champions, but often found himself still squeezed out of Guardiola's preferred line-up by the presence of Norwegian striker Erling Haaland.

"He has been two years here, we won everything together and his contribution has been massive," said Guardiola ahead of his side's return to action in the Community Shield against Manchester United on Saturday.

"He wanted to leave. He wanted a new challenge. Atletico Madrid is a top club in Spain... was a joy to work with him and hopefully he can find what he is looking for."

Guardiola's own future re-

**YOU KNOW WHAT**

Julian Alvarez, who cost Manchester City just £14 million from River Plate, leaves after helping the club win multiple titles, including their first-ever Champions League

mains a source of speculation as the Catalan enters the final year of his contract at the Etihad.

The 53-year-old has won six Premier League titles, City's first Champions League, as well as four League Cups and two FA Cups during his eight seasons in

Manchester.

Guardiola refused to be drawn on whether he would be interested in taking charge of the England national team at the end of the season but said he feels refreshed and excited as City aim to win the Premier League for a record-extending fifth consecutive year.

"I have to decide what I want to do with my life. If I want to continue here, I want to take a break, I want to be training national teams or not, so many things," he added on his future.

"When you arrive to the competition then my energy can rise again, so I'm fully I would say excited for the season because I see things that I like and then we'll see.

"It's a new challenge. We break the record last season (of winning four consecutive Premier League titles) and now we'll see what is the ambition of ourselves."



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PEP GUARDIOLA

## US top-seed Gauff ousts Wang, Azarenka advances at Toronto

AFP | Toronto

US top-seed Coco Gauff advanced to the third round of the WTA Toronto Masters on Thursday with a 6-4, 6-4 victory over China's Wang Yafan.

In her first match since being ousted from the Paris Olympics by Croatian Donna Vekic, the 20-year-old American fired six aces and connected on 60 percent of her first serves to dispatch Wang in 88 minutes.

"It was difficult," Gauff said. "I think I made more errors than I'm used to but overall I think I was building the points the correct way. I just have to do better making those last two balls.

"Overall, I'm happy with how I played."

Up next for the reigning US Open champion will be Russian 14th seed Diana Shnaider, who rallied to defeat Poland's Magdalena Frech 2-6, 6-3, 7-6 (7/5).

World number two Gauff is making the transition to hardcourts after a run to the fourth round at Wimbledon and an Olympic stint on clay at Roland Garros.



US top seed Coco Gauff in action against China's Wang Yafan

"It would be special to win here, especially I'm trying to get my groove on hardcourt," Gauff said. "I'm not expecting much but I'm just trying to play some good tennis."

Gauff, a semi-finalist at this year's Australian and French Opens, has won six of her seven career WTA titles on hardcourts, the most recent at Auckland in January. Her lone exception is a clay crown at Italy in 2021.

Two-time reigning Australian Open champion Aryna Sabalenka advanced as well, eliminating China's Yuan Yue 6-2, 6-2 in 81 minutes.

Next in the world number three's path is Britain's 33rd ranked Katie Boulter, who advanced when 13th seed Beatriz Haddad Maia retired from their match after only two games with a lower back injury.

US seventh seed Madison

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Keys retired with a left thigh injury down 3-0 in the third set against compatriot Peyton Stearns.

Latvian fourth seed Jelena Ostapenko rallied to beat Spain's Paula Badosa, last week's WTA Washington winner, by 3-6, 7-6 (7/3), 6-2. Up next for the world number 11 is US lucky loser Taylor Townsend.

Russian sixth seed Liudmila Samsonova reached the round of 16 by ousting Japan's Moyuka Uchijima 6-4, 6-2 while Ukraine's 11th-seeded Marta Kostyuk eliminated compatriot Elina Svitolina 6-2, 2-6, 6-2.

## Sinner starts Canadian ATP repeat bid with Montreal win

AFP | Montreal

Jannik Sinner bolted out of the blocks in his first ATP match since Wimbledon with the defending champion defeating Borna Coric 6-2, 6-4 on Thursday at the Montreal Masters.

The Italian world number one last competed in the All-England Club quarter-finals a month ago, where he was treated for illness in a loss to Daniil Medvedev.

Sinner missed the Olympics due to tonsillitis and arrived a week ago in Canada to get accustomed to match play again.

It has worked well as he and Briton Jack Draper have reached the doubles quarter-finals.

"Playing doubles helped to get the match feeling back," Sinner said after his 96 minute-defeat of Croat Coric. "I'm hitting the ball quite cleanly, trying to get better each day."

The 22-year-old Australian Open champion called his singles start "positive."

"I'm very happy with the performance," he said. "The match felt closer than the score. I had to save a break point in the second set -- if he had made it, the match could



Jannik Sinner

have potentially changed.

"I had a good mindset today. I'll try to keep that going."

German second seed Alexander Zverev dominated in advancing to the third round as a trio of other seeds went down to defeat.

Zverev crushed Australian Jordan Thompson 6-1, 6-1 after overcoming the challenging switch from Paris Olympic clay to fast North American hardcourt.

The 2017 champion in Canada took a victory as third seed Medvedev, eighth seed Stefanos Tsitsipas and 10th seed Tommy Paul all lost.

## Ten-man Miami edge Toronto 4-3 to advance in Leagues Cup

AFP | Miami

Matias Rojas scored twice and 10-man defending champion Inter Miami edged Toronto FC 4-3 in a Leagues Cup knockout stage opener on Thursday.

The hosts advanced to the last 16 against the winner of a Friday match between Sporting Kansas City and reigning MLS champion Columbus Crew.

Paraguayan midfielder Rojas opened the scoring in the third minute for Miami and compatriot Diego Gomez gave Inter a 2-0 lead in the 11th minute.

Italian striker Lorenzo Insigne converted a penalty kick for Toronto in the 15th minute, but Luis Suarez answered for Miami in the 20th minute, with the Uruguayan forward giving the



Matias Rojas of Inter Miami (R) celebrates a goal with teammates

hosts a 3-1 edge.

Inter Miami lost defender Hector Martinez to a red card in the 28th minute and the Canadian side had more than an

hour to chase the tying goals with a man advantage.

Insigne struck again from the spot in the 41st minute to lift Toronto within 3-2 at half-time.

Rojas struck again in the 59th minute, with Spanish defender Jordi Alba picking up his fourth assist of the contest as Miami stretched the lead to 4-2.

Toronto pulled within the final margin on an own goal by Miami defender Noah Allen in the 79th minute, but the visitors could not manage an equalizer.

Inter Miami, this season's overall MLS leader, beat Toronto 3-1 on July 17 in an MLS regular-season contest.

In fact, Inter Miami was a winner even before the match.

Florida Governor Ron DeSantis announced an \$8 million grant was being awarded to Miami-Dade County to construct a roadway around the new Inter Miami stadium being built near Miami International Airport.

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