points, trailing third placed Valencia

only on goal difference. The reigning

champions won 4-2 at Barcelona on

anticipating their first win in seven

games following Raul Molina's 56th

stuck to the bottom of the Spanish

First Division with just 11 points to

their name, despite drawing 1-1 at

Spain's oldest club, without a win

in seven games, are seven points

adrift of their nearest rivals

Espanyol, who drew 0-0 at

points out of a possible 12 since the

arrival of former Spanish national

coach Javier Clemente, although

they have won few friends by

employing the dour defensive style

frequently favoured by Clemente

when he is coaching teams in trou-

Vallecano, one place and one point

above Espanyol, lost 1-0 at home to

Valladolid, the Madrid side suc-

cumbing to a ninth minute goal by

Betis got three points to revive

their challenge for a place in Europe

next season with a 1-0 win at Racing

Santander despite Betis being

obliged to defend for much of the

"A draw would have been a fair

Joaquin Sanchez got the late

result," acknowledged Betis coach

decider for Betis two minutes into

injury time, heading home an

TOP SIX

Spanish football league table after

Oscar Gonzalez.

Victor Fernandez.

Assunção free kick.

Fellow strugglers Rayo

Espanyol have now taken seven

strike on the counter-attack.

Recreativo had perhaps been

Recreativo Huelva remain firmly

Saturday.

Real Mallorca.



Lazio striker Claudio Lopez (R) scoring past a despairing Udinese's goalkeeper Morgan De at Rome on January 19

Serie A

Milan stay ahead



AFP, Milan

League leaders AC Milan showed their fighting spirit by coming from behind to edge Piacenza 2-1 at the San Siro on Sunday to keep their

place at the top of the table in Italy. Milan, chasing their 17th championship, have 39 points from 17 matches, three more than Lazio who leapfrogged Inter Milan into second spot on goal difference after beating Udinese by the same scoreline at the Stadio Olimpico.

Inter Milan meanwhile saw their title hopes suffer a major setback after being crushed 4-1 at Perugia.

In Sunday's late match, French striker David Trezeguet scored a hat-trick as title-holders Juventus thumped Chievo 4-1 to move to within a point of Inter.

Alessandro Del Piero scored the other goal with a 20th minute penalty but missed another early in the second-half.

Trezeguet completed his treble four minutes from time with a penalty of his own. Rather than risk further embarrasment. Del Piero decided not to take it and passed the responsibility to the France international who made no mistake from 12 yards.

Federico Cossato scored a consolation goal for Chievo who had German striker Oliver Bierhoff sent off 14 minutes from time.

Milan coach Carlo Ancelotti was a relieved man when the final whistle blew having watched his side struggle for long periods against a spirited Piacenza who have won just once away from home all season.

"It wasn't pretty but we raised our performance in the second-half despite going a goal down," he said.

"We needed to dig deep as Piacenza were dangerous on the counter-attack and worked very hard to close us down, that's why our football wasn't spectacular."

Piacenza stunned Milan by taking the lead early in the secondhalf when unmarked defender Sergei Gurenko drilled a low shot beyond Brazilian goalkeeper Dida.

But the visitors' lead lasted just two minutes as Andrea Pirlo coolly converted a penalty awarded Filippo Inzaghi was scythed down in

Pirlo turned provider to set up the decisive goal in the 69th minute, carving his way through several tackles to set up World Cup winner Rivaldo whose low, fizzing drive whistled past Paolo Orlandoni from

TOP SCORERS

Leading scorers in the Italian football league after the weekend's matches:

13 - Christian Vieri (Inter

11 - Francesco Totti (AS Roma),

Alessandro Del Piero (Ĵuventus) 10 - Claudio Lopez (Lazio) 9 - Adrian Mutu (Parma)

8 - Julio Cruz (Bologna), Antonio Di Natale (Empoli), Filippo Inzaghi (AC Milan), Adriano

7 - Andrea Pirlo (AC Milan) 6 - Tommaso Rocchi (Empoli), Bernardo Corradi (Lazio), Roberto Baggio (Brescia), Alvaro Recoba

Lazio had trouble shaking off a stubborn Udinese side, but held on to take three precious points thanks to Stefano Fiore's winner in first-half stoppage-time.

The former Italy international was superbly picked out by Argentine Claudio Lopez before tucking home with his trusty left

Lopez had given Lazio an early lead before Roberto Muzzi levelled the scores for the visitors.

Inter, who lost the title last season on the final day of the campaign, fell behind in the ninth minute when South American defender Ivan Cordoba was judged to have used his arm to block Giovanni Tedesco's goalbound header.

The visitors were incensed by the decision, saying the ball struck Cordoba on the chest, but after consulting with his assistant the referee stuck to his decision and pointed to the spot.

Brazilian Jose Ze Maria rattled the spot-kick high into the top corner past Francesco Toldo.

The Umbrians doubled their lead through Greek striker Zisis Vryzas whose near post header slipped through Toldo's grasp.

Inter's hopes of a comeback were killed off when Massimiliano Fusani's right-footer found the bottom corner and Vryzas piled further misery on Hector Cuper's Miccoli's cut-back

Christian Vieri scored a late consolation goal from the penalty spot for Inter who also had Luigi Di Biagio sent off.

However Vryzas, who exposed Inter's defence on many occasions, refused to rule out Inter for the

Gambler Owen?

AFP. London

England striker Michael Owen wil not face a Football Association probe following newspaper allegations on Sunday that he bet heavily on matches involving Premiership

Britain's Sunday Mirror tabloid accused Liverpool forward Owen of setting up accounts in the name of his father Terry and betting more than two million pounds (3.2 million dollars) on both football and horse

But on Sunday, Owen said: " have done nothing wrong and I can' understand why people think should have.

"I can't believe some of the hurtful allegations that have been thrown at me, especially as they are so inaccurate.

The Sunday Mirrror said Owen had bet on matches involving both Chelsea and Manchester United. But there was no suggestion that Owen had wagered money on Liverpool.

FA rules ban players from betting on games in which they can have a direct influence but do not prevent them from gambling on other matches.

"Michael Owen will not face any investigation from the FA with regard to reports surrounding betting on football in a Sunday newspaper," FA spokesman Adrian Revington said

"The rules regarding betting on football prevent any players from placing bets on fixtures involving them directly."

Meanwhile horse race owner Owen said he would still continue his involvement in that sport.

"This publicity will not stop my love for horses. They are my main hobby outside of football.

"My girlfriend Louise and I are expecting our first baby soon and this and our new home - complete with stables - will keep me more than occupied in the future," the 23vear-old said.

A spokesperson for Owen added: "In regard to the allegations in a Sunday newspaper, Michael's father Terry has confirmed he opened an offshore betting account two or three years ago and has also used this to place bets for friends and family, occasionally including

"Michael's gambling losses probably total around 30-40,000 pounds (48-64,000 dollars) over the last couple of years. "Although the sums represent a

tiny percentage of his earnings, Michael and his family know how important even 100 pounds (106 dollars) is to a normal household.

"It was not long ago that their family of seven lived together in a tiny house in a north Wales village."

Former Republic of Ireland international Tony Cascarino has said one England player wrote out a cheque for 30.000 pounds (48.000 dollars) in order to cover his World Cup card-school debts. Owen had denied he was that

But Cascarino's comments have led to a series of stories in the British press about footballers' extravagant gambling habits with the previously unblemished Owen the latest to have his reputation called into auestion.

Primera Liga

Madrid honours shared

Football

Demetrio Albertini's first league goal for Atletico Madrid, a free kick two minutes into injury time, earned a 2-2 draw at local rivals Real Madrid on Sunday

The outcome of the thrilling game, in which Real's six-game winning streak came to an end and both sides ended the night with 10 men, meant that Real lost ground on league leaders Real Sociedad.

Sociedad have 40 points from 18 games while the European and world club champions are now three

TOP SCORERS Leading scorers in the Spanish

league after the weekend's

12 - Roy Makaay (Deportivo La Coruna) 10 - Darko Kovacevic (Real Sociedad), Nihat Kahveci (Real Sociedad), Patrick Kluivert (Bar-

matches:

celona), Walter Pandiani (Real Mallorca) 9 - Ismael Urzaiz (Athletic Bilbao), Fernando Torres (Atletico

Madrid) Raul Gonzalez (Real Madrid), Julio Alvarez (Rayo

7 - Kiki Musampa (Malaga), Ronaldo (Real Madrid), John Carew (Valencia), Raul Molina (Recreativo Huelva), Luis Figo (Real Madrid)

Vallecano)

Javi Moreno got Atletico off to a dream start with a penalty just 11 minutes into the game after Roberto Carlos fouled Jose Mari. Real were dealt a further blow

two minutes later when Spanish international Ivan Helguera got his marching orders for hacking Javi Moreno with a two-footed flying Former World Player of the Year

Luis Figo got Real back into the game after 32 minutes when he robbed Jose Antonio Garcia Calvo in front of the Atletico goal and slotted the ball past the visitors' keeper Mono Burgos

Real's second strike as well, giving away the penalty which Figo converted two minutes before the break by ploughing into Roberto Carlos.

The Spanish international defender's miserable day was completed when he was sent off after 62 minutes for picking up his second yellow card.

Figo should have completed his hat-trick nine minutes before the

However his weak second penalty, after Roberto Carlos had been tripped by Carlos Aguilera, was blocked by Burgos.

Sociedad extended their unbeaten streak to 18 games on Saturday with a 1-0 win over Celta Vigo, Francisco De Pedro finding the net from the edge of the area after 65 minutes, the ball also skimming off the knees of Celta goalkeeper Pablo Cavallero.

Deportivo La Coruna kept pace with the top three Spanish First Division sides by beating Athletic Bilbao 2-1 on Sunday. However, the 2000 Spanish

champions made hade work of beating their Basque visitors and their winner six minutes from time came thanks to Athletic defender Aitor Karanka turning the ball into his own net.

In a goalmouth melee following an Alberto Luque corner, the ball bounced off the thigh of the luckless former Spanish international.

Athletic took the lead three minutes after the break through Santi Ezquerro.

Deportivo then equalised two minutes later when 40 year-old Donato, the oldest professional in Spanish football, defied his years and leapt high above the Athletic defence to head home his first goal of the season. "Athletic changed their system at

price for still being involved in three competitions as, at times, we looked a lot less lively around the pitch compared to Athletic," said Deportivo coach Javier Irureta. "That was probably our best game away from home this season,"

half time, and that certainly had us

worried. We seem to be playing the

said Athletic coach Jupp Heynckes, trying to salvage something positive from the defeat. Deportivo are fourth in the

Sunday's matches (played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, goals against, points): Sociedad 18 11 7 0 34 20 40 Real 18 10 7 1 39 18 37 18 9 5 4 31 16 32 Valencia

Deportivo 18 9 5 4 26 21 32 18 8 6 4 29 21 30 18 8 3 7 20 18 27

SIENH

Real Madrid superstar Luis Figo (L) battles with Atletico Madrid's Garcia Calvo (R) in Madrid on January 19.

ment store

25 Gorilla

trans-

portation

stones

verse

100

store

pilgrim

taste

center

53 William

"Xanadu'

musicians

41 Shoe-

34 Mrs.

May birth-

26 Sci-fi

28

Premiership

Football

AFP, London

Thierry Henry's hat-trick saw champions Arsenal re-establish a five point lead at the top of the Premiership with a 3-1 victory over West Ham which returned the visitors to the bottom of the table here at Highbury on Sunday. In the day's other match Fulham

midfielder Sean Davis' 39th minute goal gave the Cottagers a 1-0 win over Middlesbrough that lifted Jean Tigana's team to 15th in the table eight points clear of the relegation Middlesbrough stayed in 12th

At Highbury, the build-up to both of Henry's first two goals was controversial with West Ham reduced to 10 men for over an hour after Steve Lomas was sent off for the penalty that led to Henry's opener.

Nevertheless the Hammers were level five minutes before time against their London rivals after Edu's poor backpass let in Jermain A rare headed goal by France

forward Henry, 19 minutes from time, made it 2-1 although West Ham furiously protested that Dennis Bergkamp had fouled Lee Bowyer in the build-up. But there was no dispute about

Hammers defence four minutes from Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger told Sky Sports afterwards that his team had eased up when

the third as Henry outpaced the tiring

Lomas was dimissed. "When it was 11 against 10, subconsciously we lost a bit of sharpness and they scored from the only chance they

"But in the second half it was just a question of patience.

The Gunners' French boss was delighted with the second goal. 'Thierry can be great in the air,' Wenger added.

Looking ahead, Wenger denied the championship was now a twohorse race between Arsenal and second-placed Manchester United. 'We're too far from the end to say that. Manchester United have some

difficult fixtures and we have some difficult fixtures. But we are in a good West Ham manager Glenn

Henry too hot to handle but could not hide his anger with the decisions that led led to Henry's first

two goals

'Pires didn't need any excuse to fall down. It was only the slightest of touches," Roeder said. "And then we got the double-whammy of the sending off. Roeder, turning to Henry's sec-

ond when Dennis Bergkamp appeared to lash out at Bowyer before providing a pinpoint cross, added: "Again the referee has made



PHOTO: AFF

Thierry Henry (L) jumps to head in his second goal against West Ham at Highbury on January 19.

TOP SCORERS

"They are a great team and one

AS Roma's troubles continued

defeat does not mean they are out

of it. There's still lots to play for," he

after losing 2-1 at strugglers Atalanta and had Brazilian

midfielder Emerson and coach

Fabio Capello sent off in the first-

bookable offences while Capello

thought a yellow card should have

been shown when Marco

Delvecchio was fouled, but I never

In Sunday's other matches,

Modena drew 0-0 at home to

Brescia while Torino's tie against

bottom club Como also ended

their relegation fears by beating

Bologna 1-0 at home for only their

secured a comfortable 2-0 victory

over Tuscan side Empoli at a foggy

TOP SIX

Italian football league table after

Juventus 17 10 5 2 32 13 35

Chievo 17 10 2 5 28 17 32 Bologna 17 7 6 4 19 14 27

17 12 3 2 34 11 39

17 10 6 1 33 16 36 17 11 3 3 34 20 36

third victory of the season.

Ennio Tardini stadium.

Inter

On Saturday Reggina eased

Elsewhere on Saturday, Parma

opened my mouth," Capello said.

was banished for dissent.

Emerson saw red for two

"I was on my feet because I

Leading scorers in the English Premiership after Sunday's

17 - Thierry Henry (Arsenal) 15 - James Beattie (Southampton)

14 - Alan Shearer (Newcastle) 10 - Nicolas Anelka (Manchester City), Robbie Keane (Tottenham)

9 - Harry Kewell (Leeds), Michael Owen (Liverpool), Ruud van Nistelrooy (Manchester United), Gianfranco Zola (Chelsea)

8 - Jason Euell (Charlton), Tomasz Radzinski (Everton), Paul Scholes (Manchester United)

poor decision. Bergkamp has

clearly put his hand in Lee Bowyer's

Arsenal took the lead in the 14th minute although Lomas appeared to make minimal contact with Pires as the France winger went down in the penalty area.

However. Dean awarded a penalty and also produced a red card, ruling that Northern Ireland international Lomas had denied Pires a clear goalscoring chance. Henry had missed three of his

previous four penalties but made no mistake this time He should have put the Gunners 2-0 up when West Ham's Scotland international Christian Dailly's poor header fell at his feet.

But England keeper David James, who was to prevent an even worse scoreline for the Hammers, got down well to save before again reacting smartly to push away Bergkamp's low strike in the 32nd minute after Henry had once again

However, despite being in total command, Arsenal then gifted their visitors an equaliser five minutes

Brazilian World Cup winner Edu,

playing in place of injured Arsenal captain Patrick Vieira, sold England number one keeper David Seaman hopelessly short with an under-hit backpass Defoe nipped in and his first-time shot gave Seaman no chance. After

before half-time.

the break, Arsenal continued to press forward. James produced heroics in the 63rd minute when, after losing the ball in a goalmouth scramble, he recovered to save bravely at the feet

of England centre-back Martin

Keown West Ham eventually conceded a second goal and again there were questions marks over the build up. Bergkamp, who had his back to

Bowyer, appeared to elbow the England midfielder in the face. Bowyer went down but play continued and from Bergkamp's cross a rare Henry header put Arsenal 2-1 up in the 71st minute.

Arsenal put the finishing touch to their day when Pires' pass left Henry clean through to steer the ball past the advancing James for his and Arsenal's third goal.

TOP SIX English Premiership table after

Sunday's matches (played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, goals against, 24 16 4 4 52 25 52

14 5 5 40 24 47 23 13 3 7 39 31 42 11 8 5 41 23 41 Man Utd24 Newcastle Chelsea 24 6 7 30 29 39 Tottenham 24 11 5 8 35 34 38

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer **ACROSS** 42 Swindles

4 Exploit

5 Itinerant

band

lesson

7 Examine

grammar 8 Line-

9 Catty

10 Options

11 Portent

12 CEO's

tions"

18 "20

6 Dance

44 USC rival Antitoxin 6 Twitches 46 Descendant of the cocktail shawm 50 Stick 13 Asian 52 Noncapital city 14 Hush-

purchase

person

54 One

15 Wrong involved in a con 16 Flight (Pref.) iob? 17 Little 55 Flourdemons coat 19 Brewery 56 Conse vat quence 20 Siamese 57 Timid

money

offerer

22 Prior

24 Pit stop DOWN fluid 1 Paddock 27 Derma papa tologist's 2 Eastern case potentate 29 Some-

where out there 32 Current 35 Honey drink 36 Incensed 37 "Cootie" piece 38 What they

say about

category 21 Abzug trademar 42 Mecca 23 Fore-43 Leading Solution time: 27 mins 45 Official 47 They have 48 Licentious 49 Storm

30 Corroded Pat. Off. 33 Tribute in McKinley 39 Closer to EIMACUQ

CDZN K JODJFNW K W Q TMEEITN COKC UNKAAQ BIMAG

D W

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: WHEN A SEED BEGINS TO GROW INTO A PLANT IN BERLIN OR POTSDAM, HAS IT "GERMANATED"?

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: E equals P The Cryptoquip is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for

another. If you think that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.