# Night belongs to Barca



REUTERS/AFP, Paris

Barcelona's contrasting fortunes this season continued Tuesday as they beat the previous Champions League record for successive victories downing Inter Milan 3-0 in their Group A match for their 11th triumph in a row.

Barca's victory lifted them above AC Milan's record of 10 set back in 1992/93 and need to beat Inter next week to overhaul Aiax's all-time European competition record of 11 set in the Cup Winners Cup campaigns of 1986/87 and 87/88.

It was a red letter night for one of their former manager's Bobby Robson as he celebrated his 70th birthday with a 3-1 victory away at last season's demoralised finalists Bayer Leverkusen in the other Group A clash.

The Germans caretaker manager Thomas Horster finished with a decidedly different expression on his face than Barca counterpart Radomir Antic's in their respective maiden matches of the present

Barcelona, whose league form has been mediocre at best, lead the group by three points from Inter whose Uruguayan international striker Alvaro Recoba will be missing the return fixture after being sent off - while Newcastle have three and Bayer none.

There was a look of thunder on a former manager of Barca's bitter rivals Real Madrid as Fabio Capello's Roma side suffered another blow to their hopes of reaching the last eight going down to a freak 1-0 defeat at home to Valencia.

Like Leverkusen Roma have no points after three matches and with Valencia joining Arsenal and Ajax who drew 1-1 in London - on five points in Group B, Capello's learning of German may come in handy sooner than he thought.

Barca attacked with real verve from the first whistle and were rewarded as goals from Javier Saviola and Philip Cocu put them well clear inside the opening half

The Catalans then showed unaccustomed resilience in defence as the Italians roared back, Michael Reiziger twice clearing off the line



BTV Cricket World Cup 2003 Preliminary Round Australia vs Netherlands Live at 1:45 pm

#### ESPN Taking Guard Day 12

WC Cricket Talk Show Live at 1:00 pm **UEFA Champions League** Real Madrid vs Borussia Dortmund Repeat at 4:00 pm Sportscentre Hindi Sport News Live at 8:30 pm Follow Through Day 12

WC Cricket Programme Live at 10:00 pm **STAR Sports** Taking Guard Day 12 Live at 1:00 pm Sportsline Tonight

Sport News Live at 8:00 pm Follow Through Day 12 WC Cricket Programme Live at 10:00 pm



The Baily Star Win attractive prizes

Competition closes at 8 pm Feb 22, 2003 and draw

shortly afterwards

. Name who became AFC's team of the month in January

Rangladesh Srl Lanka

2. Who finished first in the Prof Abdur Razzak 29th National

Nasir Aminu

3. Who clinched the Pan Pacific Open tennis title? Davenport

Serena 1. Bangladesh beat <sup>|</sup> KwaZulu-Natal in their second World

Cup lead-up match by: Class...... Roll No...... 

Nigel de Jong of Ajax Amsterdam rushes towards a group of supporters after scoring the equaliser against Arsenal at Highbury on February 18.

and Carles Puyol stealing the ball from Christian Vieri as he raced

Saviola's run and cross set up Patrick Kluivert for the third on 67 minutes and the match ended on a real low note for Inter as Alvaro Recoba was sent off for a late challenge on Carles Puyol 10 minutes

Barcelona's third straight win in Group A in the second phase, and their 11th since the final round of qualifying in August, gave them a maximum nine points and took them three clear of second-placed Inter.

That run breaks the Champions League record set by AC Milan when they recorded 10 straight wins in the 1992-93 season and matches the Aiax Amsterdam record of 11 wins in European competition over two seasons of Cup Winners Cup action in 1987 and 1988.

It was a sparkling return to the competition for Barcelona and for Radomir Antic, the Serb coach who replaced Louis van Gaal at the end of January in the wake of a desperate run of domestic form

Antic, leading a side into the competition for the first time since he took Atletico Madrid to the guarter-finals in 1997, was able to watch as Barca turned in what was unarguably their best performance of the season to date.

Kluivert and Saviola were outstanding up front, their darting runs and neat flicks confusing the Inter defence all night, while Xavi ran the midfield show with elan.

Saviola fired the home the lead on seven minutes, the impish Argentine forward taking a low pass from Xavi in his stride and creating space to shoot past Francesco Toldo.

Vieri had a couple of halfchances blocked by Barca keeper Roberto Bonano before the home side doubled the lead on 29 min-

Xavi swung over a corner from the right and although Toldo managed to stop a stinging Kluivert drive. Cocu was first on to the loose hall to blast in the second Inter took charge for the remain-

der of the half but despite a couple of close calls the Barca defence held out to go into the break with their lead intact. Marc Overmars twice forced

good saves from Toldo as Barcelona started the second half as they had the first and Cocu saw his header from a right-wing corner strike a post around the hour mark. A few minutes later Saviola

skipped round Fabio Cannavaro and crossed for Kluivert to finish from an acute angle and Barca's win was all but secure.

Inter were still pushing forward at every opportunity but they rarely threatened Bonano's goal and when Recoba saw red for a wild challenge on Puyol on 80 minutes the game was up.

Antic praised his team's "perfect" performance.

"It was a great game in every respect," the Serbian-born coach told reporters after the match. "The team played perfectly and all that is left for me is to congratulate the players on a great performance.

"It gives me huge satisfaction to have been involved as coach in this game because it is a long time since Barcelona have played with such confidence. A victory like this one is worth more than three points."

Inter coach Hector Cuper admitted that his side had been unable to deal with Barcelona's attacking duo. "Saviola and Kluivert turned the game and we couldn't cope with

their speed and movement up front, "Once we went 2-0 down it became even more difficult for us. especially as Barca continued to

play so well. And in the end it was a very tough result for us. But the Inter coach was keen to more punishment on their hosts with stress the defeat had not ended his a fine Lua Lua vollev from a Laurent side's hopes of finishing top of the

"We've won two games and lost one and I don't think that means we are in a drastic situation.

'The group is still wide open and with three games to go we have every chance of winning it." With nine points from three

games Barcelona will almost certainly make the last eight and despite Tuesday's heavy defeat Inter remain decently placed with six points, three clear of third-placed Newcastle United. Two goals from reserve striker

Shola Ameobi helped Newcastle to a much-needed. Newcastle scored their first

points in the second phase with perfect timing, keeping alive their chances of advancing from Group A on manager Bobby Robson's 70th

"The three points were the only present I wanted," said Robson. "If we had lost here, it would probably have been over for us.'

Last season's finalists

Thomas Hoerster, who replaced Toppmoeller as coach on a caretaker basis, took over after the team suffered their fifth consecutive Bundesliga defeat at the weekend to drop to 15th in the 18-strong league -- iust one spot above the relegation zone. "The regional league and the

Champions League are two different worlds," said Hoerster, who previously coached Leverkusen's under-21 side, playing in the amateur regional league. "We asked for that first goal and

instructions and the players will have to follow them." A resilient Ajax side held Arsenal landing a blow for the English champions' drive for a place in the last eight of the Champions League.

then we kept making costly mis-

takes," he added. "I will give clear

A fifth-minute strike by Sylvain Wiltord was cancelled out by Nigel de Jong's equaliser 12 minutes later and despite long periods of intense



IT FELT THAT GOOD! Barcelona's Dutch striker Patrick Kluivert is delighted after scoring the third for his team against Inter Milan at the Camp Nou stadium in Barcelona, on February 18.

Leverkusen, who face a battle against relegation in the Bundesliga and who sacked coach Klaus Toppmoeller on Sunday, have no points from three games and are virtually eliminated. Barcelona head the group on nine points with Inter

Ameobi headed home from close range on five minutes from a cross by fellow striker Lomana Lua Lua and was on target again 11 minutes later, exploiting a blunder from Brazilian defender Cris before beating defender Thomas Kleine to double the advantage with a low drive from the edge of the box.

"Ameobi helped us to a perfect start," said Robson. "After 16 minutes the game was practically decided.

Leverkusen woke from a sluggish start when Brazilian striker Franca collected a Jan Simak pass iust outside the area to flick the ball over Newcastle goalkeeper Shav Given and bring the home side back into the game in the 26th minute.

But Newcastle, without suspended first-choice strikers Alan Shearer and Craig Bellamy, inflicted

Robert cross in the 32nd minute

pressure the Gunners were unable to claim a winner that would have put them in pole position to advance to the knock-out phase of the competition.

Ajax boss Ronald Koeman believed that if Aiax attacked as well as they defended they might well go one better against Arsenal next week, particularly if South African youngster Steven Pienaar neutralised Patrick Vieira again.

"If we play in defence like we did tonight then we have a chance in that match but we will have to play better than we did tonight when we are in possession," Koeman said. "I enjoyed watching Pienaar

tonight," Koeman said. "For his age (20) he is playing fantastically and ne really was our best player." John Carew's bizarre goal 12 minutes from time settled a tight

contest between Valencia and The Norwegian striker picked up a pass out on the right wing and delivered what appeared to be a

cross into Roma's penalty area. But the ball sailed towards goal, catching Ivan Pelizzoli hopelessly out of position, and crept in at the near post, to the dismay of the Roma goalkeeper.

Capello said the manner of defeat was typical of Roma's sea-

SPÖRT

"Once again a piece of bad luck has cost us the match." he said.

"We didn't deserve to end up empty-handed. We were very much in it until Carew scored.'

However Capello's opposite number Rafael Benitez saw things Without a hint of a smile, Benitez

goal when he scored the late winner. "He's a striker and when he gets a sight of goal, he shoots," he said.

said he thought Carew was going for

## **RESULTS AT** A GLANCE

Collated Champions League second group phase results on

Group A In Barcelona, Spain

Barcelona (Spa) 3 (Saviola 7, Cocu 29, Kluivert 67) Inter Milan In Leverkusen, Germany Bayer Leverkusen (Ger) 1 (Franca

26) Newcastle (Eng) 3 (Ameobi 5, 16, LuaLua 32)

In London

Arsenal (Eng) 1 (Wiltord 5) Ajax (Ned) 1 (De Jong 17) In Rome

AS Roma (Ita) 0 Valencia (Spa) 1 (Carew 78)

### STANDINGS

European Champions League tables after Tuesday's second phase matches (played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, against,

Barcelona	3	3	U	U	8	2	9	
Inter Milan	3	2	0	1	7	6	6	
Newcastle	3	1	0	2	5	8	3	
Leverkusen		3	0	0	3	4	8	
(	)							

Group A

3 1 2 0 4 2

## Oh! brother

FROM PAGE 16
"When I saw him stepping out to hit (Glenn) McGrath at the very beginning, I immediately knew Saurav's time was up. Lack of concentration and lack of patience had combined.

"Besides, it appeared that Saurav's mind is not at all on cricket. He should go down at number three of four. The Indian captain should retreat immediately from the position he is holding now."

## An experience

St Martin's in Johannesburg and Potchefstroom Boys' High and we won them both.

"And to come here and watch these guys train and then for our lads to have a bowl at them is great." Batsman-keeper Justin Becker told the news agency: "We tried to get tickets for South Africa against New Zealand but couldn't. And Bulawayo (where Australia are due to play next) is some 800km away from Mutare.'

Among the other talented players in Tate's multi-racial party are left-arm leg-spinner and batsman Cuan Raath.

"I had a bowl at Darren Lehmann and he pulled it. He kept playing the same shot. But that's the trouble with indoor nets you can never get any turn!." he ioked. However, the prospect of seeing

Australia play the Netherlands here on Thursday has a particular appeal for Raath. "Tomorrow is my 16th birthday.

This is going to be some present."

## Fans behind

FROM PAGE 16 insisted so far they will travel to Bulawayo for the February 24 match against the hosts

Uniformed crowd control police sitting directly in front of the stands took no action. According to the SAPA news

agency, among the group of specta-

the armbands.

action by the two players.

plotting to kill Mugabe.

million people reportedly face food

shortages and the leader of the

tors was farmer Mike Carter who was arrested for wearing a black armband at Zimbabwe's game against Namibia. He was forced to pay a fine of around 55 dollars for "conduct likely

to cause a breach of the peace". discover the scoring touch which has Both Flower and Olonga were deserted him this season if he is to reported to the International Cricket become Liverpool's all-time highest Council (ICC) by the Zimbabwe scorer in European competition. Cricket Union after the Namibia

game, but the sport's governing body declined to take action and only asked the players not to wear There was no immediate Rush tipped Owen to break his

> chance seems to be going the wrong side of the post at the moment, Rush told the Liverpool Echo.

main opposition party faces a death "Pretty soon we'll see an avasentence after being accused of lanche of goals from him." If Owen does strike at the Abbe

# Sorry not Fergie's style

Football

AFP, Manchester

A Manchester United manager Alex Ferguson refused to apologise Tuesday for the dressing room bustup that left England captain David Beckham with a cut just above his

Ferguson tried to laugh off what he described as a "freakish inci-

Reports said 61-year-old Ferguson unleashed a tirade against Beckham after United were defeated 2-0 by Arsenal in the FA room, striking Beckham on the

However, Ferguson denied the wound was as serious as reported.

"David did not have two stitches doctor and we move on." He refused to answer any more

questions but did confirm that Beckham, who had picked up a calf strain against Arsenal as well as his post-match scar, would be fit to face . Juventus on Wednesday.

Commentators said the manager's response might not be enough for Beckham who reportedly had to be dragged off Ferguson.

The incident could yet under-



mine United's whole season, as

they bid for a treble of Premiership,

League Cup and Champions

Madrid have alerted agents to seek

who still has two and half years left

on his 90,000-pound (150,000-

dollar) a week contract, the Sun

newspaper, which broke the story,

head a simmering unease between

Ferguson and Beckham, which

Ferguson has always been

irritated by Beckham's celebrity

stretches back nearly four years.

The showdown brought to a

possible talks with the superstar,

Already AC Milan and Real

WHAT'S THERE TO APOLOGISE? Manchester United manager Sir Alex Ferguson speaks at a press conference at Old Trafford on February 18.

reported

Cup on Saturday.

He is reported to have sworn at the top of his voice before finally kicking a boot across the Old Trafford dressing room which struck Beckham's head But Ferguson refused to

describe what happened. "Whatever happens in the dress-

ing room is sacrosanct," he told reporters at a press conference ahead of Manchester's Champions League match against Italian giants Juventus on Wednesday. "There's no way I could betray

percent loyalty. It can never be anything less than that." But he agreed to answer a question about the spat because of the

the trust of the players. It's 100

publicity it had created. "(It was) an incident that was freakish. If I tried it a hundred times, a million times it wouldn't happen again. If it did I would carry on play-

Ferguson was reported to have accused Beckham of 'cocking-up as a footballer' in the four-letter tirade. A red-faced Ferguson swore at

the top of his voice before finally

kicking a boot across the dressing

is given, he believes the player is at fault for bringing the pressure on himself.

Beckham's former United teammate. Lazio defender Jaap Stam said he had experienced the Ferguson treatment at first hand. "He came in at half-time during a

match and was so angry that he

status and has grown tired of the circus surrounding him and his pop star wife Victoria. Far from blaming Celtic boss Martin O'Neill is the media for the attention Beckham

entirely - to join the re-formed Spice

## Liverpool's last FROM PAGE 16 bite at glory S Burger c Collingwood b Irani M van Schoor not out



Liverpool seek to salvage a faltering season when they take on French side Auxerre in the first leg of the UEFA Cup quarter-finals in France on Thursday.

Gerard Houllier's side fell out of contention for the Premiership title with a disastrous run of 11 games without a win and were knocked out of the FA Cup by Crystal Palace, so their season boils down to the League Cup final against Manchester United next month and Europe's second-tier club competi-

Frenchman Houllier's longstanding friendship with veteran Auxerre coach Guy Roux gives the

Roux makes Liverpool the hot favourites to reach the last eight of the competition they last won in "Liverpool are in a different world

to us," the 64-year-old told The Sun newspaper. "They are an excellent team with British spirit and French know-how, so they will be difficult to Michael Owen needs to re-

Owen has 19 goals in 40 ties, one behind the record held by lan Rush, the Anfield goalscoring hero of the 1980s who is currently coaching the

mark in emphatic style. response from the ICC on the latest "He looked very sharp for England last week, it's just that each Almost half of Zimbabwe's 14

Deschamps Stadium he will also become the first player in the club's

history to score in four successive

away ties in Europe.

Liverpool include midfielder Steven Gerrard which is a timely boost for a squad shorn of the injured Czech Vladimir Smicer. Gerrard is serving a domestic ban, but the three-game suspension does not include European ties.

But Auxerre's French international striker Djibril Cisse - a player highly coveted by Houllier - is sus-pended for the match so they will look to Zimbabwean Benjamin 'Benjani' Mwaruwari to provide firepower.

Celtic's meeting with VfB Stuttgart at Celtic Park represents the first time the Glasgow giants have remained in European competition beyond Christmas for 20 years. O'Neill must make do without

him out of both legs of the tie, and John Hartson, who is suspended. VfB Stuttgart are having an

both his prolific scorer Henrik

Larsson, whose fractured jaw rules

outstanding season in the Bundesliga, climbing to third place. O'Neill said his side had their work cut out to add the Germans to their UEFA Cup scalps of Blackburn

and Celta Vigo. "The Germans have a certain respect for us after what we have done so far. but I'm sure Celta Vigo didn't expect to go out to a team from Scotland," O'Neill told The Observer.

"I'm sure if you asked (Felix Magath), he would not expect his team to go out to us, either." One of the favourites for the

UEFA Cup, Lazio, have a potentially treacherous tie in Rome against Polish side Wisla Krakow while Malaga, mid-table in the Spanish league, take on AEK Athens.

**FIXTURES** 

#### (All kickoff times GMT) Thursday: Hertha Berlin (Ger) Boavista (Por) (1715 GMT)

Panathinaikos (Gre) v Anderlecht (Bel) (1830 GMT), Slavia Prague (Cze) v Besiktas (Tur) (1900 GMT), Auxerre (Fra) v Liverpool (Eng) (1945 GMT), Lazio (Ita) v Wisla Krakow (Pol) (2000 GMT) Malaga (Spa) v AEK Athens (Gre) (2030 GMT), Celtic (Sco) v VfB Stuttgart (Ger) (2030 GMT), FC Porto (Por) v Denizlispor (Tur) (2100 GMT)

The Dutch star added: "He is not a man who is able to hide his emotions and he is not a manager who accepts things when he believes

they are not right. "And if I was a United fan I would be relieved to hear this story because at least it proves that Mr Ferguson is still hungry for results and success. United fans should be more worried the day they hear he no longer cares enough to get angry

or shout at the players. "The Old Trafford dressing room would not be the same place without the threat of him losing it."

But Ferguson's ballistic temper was criticised by management consultants.

"What we could be looking at here is a case of bullying. But the real difficulties arise when the bullying has been going on for some time," Tony Mellish, a Trades Union Congress health and safety expert

Gareth Hughes, a clinical psychologist, said there was nothing wrong with anger but Ferguson was wrong to have let himself get carried away.
"Management by fear is not a

great idea." he said. But League Managers Association Chief Executive John

Barnwell backed Ferguson.

"We're talking here of a manager who has had three decades in this country of proven success, and he appears to still have the desire to continue that success," Barnwell said. "From our point of view long may he continue to bring to our game

some of the most entertaining football that's ever been seen. I'd just like to remind people, talking of confidentiality, that Alex Ferguson has given his time and energy to less fortunate managers in all sorts of difficult positions time and time "He's given them his time, he's given them advice, he's physically sat down with them for long periods.

these things never get spoken "So for those people who are throwing arrows at Sir Alex we would like to remind them of all the

he's invited them up to his football

club, he's taken his team to play in

numerous testimonial matches, and

Bookmakers William Hill quoted Beckham at 4-7 to leave Manchester with Ferguson at 5-4 to

favourite to talk over the Old Trafford hot seat at 7-4, with England boss Sven Goran Eriksson at 7-2. Hills is also offering odds of 100on Beckham leaving football

# **England tested**

B Kotze Ibw b Irani R van Vuuren not out 12 Extras: (lb-5, w-6, nb-3) Total: (For nine wickets in 50 overs)

Fall of wickets: 1-12, 2-42, 3-139, 4-174, 5-174, 6-188, 7-190, 8-200, 9-200 **Bowler** 

Caddick 28 44 Anderson 33 Flintoff White 10 0 31 Vaughan 0 0 30

Result: England won by 55 runs. Man-of-the-match: AJ Burger. Toss: Namibia Umpires: Srinivas

Venkataraghavan (Ind) and Simon Taufel (Aus). TV umpire: Nadeem Ghauri (Pak). Match referee: Mike Procter

## **Funky Dutch**

FROM PAGE 16

said Miller, whose 18 Tests for Australia netted 69 wickets at 26.16. "I played for Holland in a game against Somerset before I played for Australia. I tried to stay out of coaching that time because I didn't want to

tread on any toes. But since then

I've learned a lot and I feel I have a

## lot to pass on." Blessing in

FROM PAGE 16 later they will run into good knick.

"The tracks are a little bit different here and they are probably struggling a bit to find their feet but I think they will come good eventually,' said the skipper.

after two anything about the weather," said Mashud. "I was happy with all aspects of our game especially our bowling.

When we fielded our attack bowled exceptionally well and that's a positive for us," said Mashud whose team have lost 26 of their last 28

## Bangladesh captain Khaled Mashud was happy that his team gained two points from the game