

EUROPEAN SCENE

Football

AFP, Paris

Ronaldo scored his first hat-trick in a Real Madrid shirt as he helped to propel his side into first place in Spain and Juventus accelerated into top spot in Italy after crushing Inter Milan 3-0.

Primera Liga

Real were merciless in thrashing Alaves 5-1 on Saturday, with Ronaldo finally showing the form which landed Brazil last year's World Cup.

He bamboozled defenders and threaded his second goal through Alaves goalkeeper Richard Dutruel's legs.

"I'm very happy, but the team had the chances to score even more goals," said the Brazilian.

Raul scored the other two goals, taking his total for the club to 208 goals, overtaking Hugo Sanchez to become the fourth highest scorer in Real history.

At just 25 years old, Raul could surely better Ferenc Puskas' total of 236 goals and could even approach the 290 of Santillana or the 307 goals scored by Alfredo Di Stefano.

Real's one-point advantage over long-time leaders Real Sociedad was left intact after the latter slumped to a 3-0 defeat at Valladolid on Sunday.

Uruguayan striker Nico Olivera scored in the second and eighth minutes and Oscar struck in the 21st minute to clinch victory.

Nedved and a late third from Mauro Camoranesi gave Juventus a resounding victory.

The match is considered more important than the Milan or Rome derbies because of the great rivalry between the two clubs - Juventus and Inter are also the two best supported teams in Italy.

Juventus' home victory gives them 51 points from 23 matches, three more than Inter who at the start of play shared top spot with the reigning champions.

Nedved said beating Inter made up for Tuesday's disappointing 3-0 Champions League defeat at home to Manchester United.

"We wanted to give something back to the fans by putting on a good show," he said.

"This squad does not like losing and we showed great character tonight.

"It was an important result for us and psychologically could have a bearing on the championship."

Filippo Inzaghi scored twice for third-placed AC Milan who lost ground in the title race after being held to a 3-3 draw at home to Atalanta.

Midfielder defender Gennaro Gattuso refused to blame Milan's defence for conceding three soft goals.

"We all have to take responsibility; it's not just down to the defence," said the Italian international.

"From the backline right through to the strikers, we are all to blame."

Italian football league table after Sunday's matches (played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, goals against, points):

Table with 5 columns: Team, Played, Won, Drawn, Lost, Goals For, Goals Against, Points. Includes teams like Inter, Milan, Lazio, etc.

Bundesliga

Bayern Munich maintained their ten-point lead in the Bundesliga as Michael Ballack scored twice in a 2-0 victory at Energie Cottbus on Saturday.

It was Ballack's perfect response to his 20,000-euro (dollar) fine for criticising coach Ottmar Hitzfeld's tactics.

Ballack found the target with a 33rd minute header from Bixente Lizarazu's cross and a 58th minute shot following Giovane Elber's headed flick-on.

Hitzfeld moved to rebuild bridges, calling Ballack the "player of the day".

Second-placed Borussia Dortmund had a lacklustre 2-0 home win over mid-table Hansa Rostock.

"We had to work hard for the victory," said Dortmund coach Matthias Sammer.

German football league table after Sunday's matches (played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, against):

Table with 5 columns: Team, Played, Won, Drawn, Lost, Goals For, Goals Against, Points. Includes teams like Bayern, Dortmund, Stuttgart, etc.

Ligue 1

Monaco took over top spot in the French league on Saturday with an impressive 3-1 victory over Lille while Marseille were held to a goalless draw at Strasbourg.

Monaco and Marseille each have 52 points but the side coached by Didier Deschamps dislodged their southern rivals on goal difference.

French league table after Sunday's match (played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, against, points):

Table with 5 columns: Team, Played, Won, Drawn, Lost, Goals For, Goals Against, Points. Includes teams like Monaco, Marseille, Lyon, etc.



SEASON'S FIRST CHAMPAGNE MOMENT: The Liverpool squad is showered in champagne as they celebrate winning the Worthington Cup (English League Cup) at the Millennium stadium in Cardiff on March 2.

Liverpool League Cup kings

Football

AFP, Cardiff

Goals from England duo Steven Gerrard and Michael Owen and a superb display by goalkeeper Jerzy Dudek gave Liverpool a record seventh League Cup victory at the expense of Manchester United here on Sunday.

Gerrard's first-half strike and a clinical shot from Owen five minutes from the end secured what was ultimately a deserved victory for Gerard Houllier's side.

"This atmosphere reminds a bit of Dortmund when we won the 2001 UEFA Cup," said a beaming Houllier as his players sang the club's anthem "You'll Never Walk Alone" on the pitch.

"It is a special bond between the fans and the team which is why I wanted the players out here.

Houllier said the relief was enormous after Thursday's victory over Auxerre to reach the UEFA Cup quarter-finals and then this first trophy for two years.

"It was a difficult week," he said, before paying tribute to his goalkeeper. "We have beaten a good Manchester United. Jerzy was the hero of the game at times.

"The team will probably get some relief from this. I think we can go well in the Premiership now."

Gerrard, whose shot took a deflection off David Beckham's shin, said his goal had come at a vital time.

"That settled us down as we had been a bit slow out of the blocks and the United midfield were running things," he said.

Owen said it was great to have given the fans something to smile about after fading in the Premiership and being knocked out of the Champions League and

the FA Cup. "We've taken a bit of stick but this is worth it and gives us something to build on.

But Liverpool also needed a string of saves from Dudek to secure a trophy that will offer Houllier's side some consolation after the collapse of their Premiership and Champions League campaigns at the end of last year.

"Gerard Houllier told me before the match that I would go from villain to hero and that he believed in me... but this is scarcely credible," said the Polish international.

"I am just so satisfied at this and for the rest of the team as we have taken some flak," he added.

With Arsenal looking increasingly unassailable in the league after Sunday's win over Charlton, United's hopes of avoiding a second successive season without any silverware now rest on winning the Champions League.

After a scrappy opening period, United came agonisingly close to taking the lead in the 22nd minute after the Liverpool defence accorded Paul Scholes the time and space to turn 40 yards out.

Scholes fed Ryan Giggs whose low cross passed through the legs of Jamie Carragher and onto the outstretched boot of Ruud van Nistelrooy, whose contact sent the ball spinning an inch to the right of Dudek's upright.

Liverpool's fans had to wait until ten minutes before the break to see their team mount a meaningful threat.

Gerrard was the architect of a counterattack that finished with Owen skipping round his England team-mate Rio Ferdinand with embarrassing ease inside the box.

The ball ran away from Owen on that occasion but his flash of menace galvanised Liverpool into

a spell of pressure which yielded a goal six minutes from the break.

Picking up a short pass from Danny Murphy on the left of the United area, Gerrard had time to lift his head and unleash a shot that, with the help of a deflection from the belatedly arrived Beckham, looped up and over Fabien Barthez.

Despite their brief spell of pressure, Liverpool barely equalised after Dudek had beaten out Juan Sebastian Veron's fierce drive a minute before the break.

"I was at the right place at the right time thankfully," said the Swiss defender, who performed a similar service two seasons ago in the FA Cup final win over Arsenal.

"I have never scored for Liverpool so it was great to save a few going in as that is my primary job," he added.

But it was Liverpool who came out looking the sharper for the break and it took well-timed interventions from Wes Brown and Roy Keane to deny, respectively, Owen and Emile Heskey.

Murphy then tested Barthez with a first time shot from Heskey's layoff.

At the other end, van Nistelrooy's sharp turn and shot drew a good stop from Dudek.

With the United back line pushing forward, the danger of being caught on the break became increased and Liverpool took advantage of United's stretched defences to kill the match four minutes from the end.

Silvestre carelessly lost possession on the half-way line, leaving Dietmar Hamman with the simple task of sending Owen sprinting away from Ferdinand to slot a low shot past the helpless Barthez.

Sarwan the best

the pitch and lay there motionless for nearly ten minutes while he was examined by a doctor and paramedics, who had sprinted to his aid.

Eventually, he was carefully lifted onto a stretcher, covered in a blanket and wheeled off to a waiting ambulance that sped him to hospital.

Once there, according to team manager Ricky Skerritt, he was clinically examined by a neurologist, had several X-rays taken from different angles and two stitches inserted into a small cut above his left eye.

His involvement in the contest seemed surely over but the X-rays showed no serious damage and the specialist was convinced he was "medically fine". Fully conscious and anxious to resume his innings, he returned.

When he arrived in the team's dressing room, the West Indies were six wickets down and Shivnarine Chanderpaul and Vasebert Drakes were trying to stem the advance towards defeat with a dogged partnership.

Within half-hour, Chanderpaul hoisted a catch to long on after topscoring with 65 and Sarwan re-entered the battle to a standing ovation from around the stadium that echoed from the nearby Table Mountain.

He even chose a cap instead of a helmet, only replacing one with the other after a couple of overs.

It seemed a futile, if bold, gesture at the time for the West Indies were 169 for seven, still 60 away from their winning target with only 7.5 overs remaining and the Nos. 9, 10 and 11 fast bowlers to help him.

In quick time, the neat, 22-year-old Guyanese changed the course of the match, stroking two sixes and two fours in adding 37 off 19 balls as the tension grew. His unbeaten 47 would prove insufficient and Sarwan had to return to teammates inspired by his daring but distressed by the result. No one was more upset than Sarwan himself.

"I don't like to lose," he said afterwards. "None of us wants to lose and I am a very proud person."

ing, I had to come to the crease," he added. "Cricket is about heart. There'll be occasions when you're struck down by someone or something but you have to be man enough to fight to the bitter end."

He explained that he "basically misread" the ball that hit him.

"Once I got checked and I realised that I was okay, I decided that I wanted to come out and fight for the West Indies," he explained. "The game was very important for us.

We had to win to go into the Super Sixes and I was determined to try my best."

"It was always going to be difficult to score eight to ten runs per over in the last couple of overs with the bowlers

at the crease but I gave it a shot," he noted. "With a little luck we could have got the runs."

The situation of seeing the West Indies home in one-day internationals if not the blow to the head has become all too familiar for Sarwan in the past few months.

In the series of seven in India last November, in which he scored 436 runs at an average of 109 and a strike rate of 84.66, his last ball four won the first match.

His unbeaten 99, off 104 balls, helped boost the total to 324 for four in the fourth match but did not ensure a West Indies victory. In the decisive victory in the last match, he scored 83 off 101 balls, setting the stage of Marlon Samuels' breathtaking, unbeaten 108 off 75 balls.

He has again been the leading batsman for the West Indies in the World Cup.

His 32 off 15 balls and his grand, unbeaten finale of 63 off 28 balls with Ricardo Powell powered the total to a match-winning 278 for five against South Africa.

placement.

At the start of the World Cup, he had an average of 51.04 and a strike-rate of 79.4 in 29 One-Day Internationals. He has boosted that with a present average of 101 at a strike rate of 95.87 after five matches.

Skerritt said Sunday Sarwan was understandably nursing "a slight headache" but was in good spirits.

He'll have further neurological tests in Kimberley tomorrow prior to Tuesday's match against Kenya, but to be sure that he can continue the consistent scoring that, in the opinion of at least one highly respected former West Indies player, makes him the best West Indies batsman at present.

Tail-up Kenya hope

FROM PAGE 16

step is the semifinals." Patil said it was important for his players not to let up against West Indies just because they were already through to the second round.

Victory would not only give them an extra point to carry through, but would also ensure they finish top of Pool B.

"Every game is very important for us. We're saying to ourselves that we haven't qualified so there's no complacency," Patil said.

LINE-UPS

KENYA (from): Steve Tikolo (captain), Maurice Odumbe, Asif Karim, Alpeh Vadher, Ravindu

Shah, Hitesh Modi, Brijal Patel, Martin Suji, Tony Suji, Thomas Odoyo, Kennedy Otieno, Joseph Angara, Peter Ongondo, David Obuya, Collins Obuya.

WEST INDIES (from): Carl Hooper (captain), Ridley Jacobs, Shivnarine Chanderpaul, Pedro Collins, Corey Collymore, Mervyn Dillon, Vasebert Drakes, Chris Gayle, Marlon Samuels, Wavell Hinds, Brian Lara, Jermaine Lawson, Nixon McLean, Ricardo Powell, Ramnaresh Sarwan.

Umpires: David Shepherd (Eng) and Simon Taufel (Aus)

TV umpire: Kevan Barbour (Zim) Match referee: Mike Procter (RSA)

Table with 3 columns: Date, Match, Result. Includes dates from Nov 24 2002 to Dec 8 2002 and results like beat India by 135 runs, lost to India by 3 wickets, etc.

Table with 3 columns: Date, Match, Result. Includes dates from Sept 17 2002 to Feb 29 1996 and results like West Indies won by 29 runs, West Indies won by 7 wickets, etc.

Dutch win 'battle

FROM PAGE 16

milestone reaching his ton off 127 balls before van Noortwijk, in at number three, notched up his three figures off 111 balls.

Kloppenburg hit six fours and four huge sixes before he was finally out for 121, caught by Melt van Schoor off Gerrie Snyman off the last ball of the 44th over.

The run riot, in a match which was a re-run of the 2001 ICC Trophy final in Toronto which the Dutch won off the last ball, also made up for the absence of veteran skipper Roland Lefebrve who was ruled out of what would have been his last one-day match because of a hamstring injury.

Opening bowler Rudi van Vuuren had given Namibia a promising start when he clean-bowled Edgar Schiferli for 10 with the score at 25 in the sixth over, but from then on it was all one-way traffic.

Van Vuuren, who was hit for 92 off his 10 overs against Australia last week, finished with 1-63 while Louis Burger picked up a couple of late wickets to end with 2-49 off ten overs.

SCOREBOARD Scoreboard of the World Cup Group A match between the Netherlands and Namibia at Goodyear Park on Monday:

Table with 4 columns: Bowler, Overs, M, R, W. Includes players like J Kloppenburg, E Schiferli, Kvan Noortwijk, etc.

Extras: (lb-5, w-2, nb-1) 8 Total: (All out in 46.5 overs) 250 Fall of wickets: 1-76, 2-87, 3-179, 4-209, 5-213, 6-213, 7-224, 8-237, 9-250

Table with 4 columns: Player, Runs, Balls, 4s, 6s. Includes players like L Burger, J Burger, D Kotze, S Burger, etc.

Table with 4 columns: Player, Runs, Balls, 4s, 6s. Includes players like M Karg c sub, A Burger c sub, D Kloppeburg, etc.

Table with 4 columns: Player, Runs, Balls, 4s, 6s. Includes players like Van Vuuren, Mvan Schoor, Rvan Vuuren, etc.

Results: Netherlands won by 64 runs. Man-of-the-match: K F Kloppenburg. Toss: Netherlands. Umpires: Daryl Harper (Aus), Nadeem Ghouri (Pak). TV umpire: Darrell Hair (Aus). Match referee: Gundappa Vishwanath (Ind).

Dravid no Bevan

FROM PAGE 16 "Rahul is a professional," he said. "He keeps reminding me I should stay in. He lets batsmen play around him so well."



BTV Cricket World Cup 2003 Preliminary Round Pakistan vs Zimbabwe Live at 1:45 pm

ESPN Taking Guard Day 24 WC Cricket Talk Show Live at 1:00 pm Football Focus Live at 6:30 pm Sportscentre Hindi Sport News Live at 8:30 pm Follow Through Day 24 WC Cricket Programme Live at 10:00 pm STAR Sports Taking Guard Day 24 WC Cricket Talk Show Live at 1:00 pm Sportsline Tonight Sport News Live at 8:00 pm Follow Through Day 24 WC Cricket Programme Live at 10:00 pm

Star WHIZZ KID COMPETITION 191 Tick the correct answers, post to The Daily Star. Win attractive prizes. Competition closes at 8 pm March 7, 2003 and draw shortly afterwards.

1. Who clinched the Shahjalil Bank International Rating Chess title? Lovtu Rajib Zia 2. New Zealand beat South Africa in a World Cup Group B match by: 102 runs 9 wkts 5 wkts 3. How many runs did Bangladesh score against South Africa in the World Cup Group B match? 120 108 110 4. Bangladesh lost to Canada in the World Cup Group B match? Name: Class: Roll No: School Address: Phone: (if any)

TOP SIX

Table with 5 columns: Team, Played, Won, Drawn, Lost, Goals For, Goals Against, Points. Includes teams like Arsenal, Man Utd, Newcastle, etc.

Keep it Wright

FROM PAGE 16 Wright added that he had been impressed by the way his players had responded to the various adjustments in both the batting and bowling order.

"Some of the changes have been necessitated through form," he said. "We put Sachin up to open and that has worked. It is a big plus."

Young batsman Mohammad Kaif was promoted to number four against Pakistan and responded with a confident 35 as he and Tendulkar shared in a third-wicket partnership of 100 to turn the match India's way.

"We are an older side now," added Wright. "We have played a lot of one-day cricket over the past year and have been able to win matches when Sachin has failed, and even when he has not been in the side."

"That shows this team is evolving."

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer. 1 Peruke attractive choose to 4 Jog 46 Fail 50 Fresh 3 Flip 29 Join, as a partnership 5 --- room 12 Big 52 Try to fit 6 Couturier Cassini additive 13 Hinge (on) 56 Trevi, Mike 31 "Monopoly" 14 Statute 57 Moran of 9 Fontanne's partner 33 Timon, "The Lion King" 15 Succeed 17 Change for a live 18 U.K. ref. bk. 59 Undo a brother check 21 Affix 60 Actress 16 Allow abbr. 24 Sister 61 Height of 21 Imperfection fashion? 22 Elton John/Tim Rice show 28 Whodunit writer's award 32 Leading man 34 Eviscerate 36 Un-matched 37 Cardiff's country 39 Apprehend 41 Charged bit 42 Historic period

CRYPTOQUIP F Q H T O X H G C D T X R O T C S D C I X H G Z E C H O S G E X S D H I I G D X H , F E R R Q H D Z H G C H O E S ? Yesterday's Cryptoquip: I IMAGINE THAT IF YOU STOMPED ON FERMENTED GRIPES, YOU'D END UP WITH WHINE. Today's Cryptoquip Clue: G equals R. 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 equaling an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.