



Inter Milan striker Christian Vieri (front) going over some mini-hurdles during a training session at Appiano Gentile yesterday

PHOTO: INTERNET

# Barcelona v Juventus Barca in no mood for mercy



AFP, Barcelona

Barcelona's domestic form may have been indifferent this season but in Europe they have gone unbeaten for 15 games and they are looking to add to their tally with a victory over Juventus in their Champions League quarter-final, second-leg on Tuesday.

After a 1-1 draw in the Stadio Delle Alpe two weeks ago, a win over La Vecchia Signora - Juventus' nickname is The Old Lady - in the Catalan citadel of the Nou Camp will see Barca into the semi-finals of the Champions League for the third time in the last four seasons.

"The only thing I am interested in is the Champions League now," admitted Barca coach Radomir Antic on Sunday.

Barca face finishing in the bottom half of the Spanish first division for the first time since 1942 but showed they could still compete with the best when they held Real Madrid to a 1-1 draw on Saturday.

The encounter could be the first of three between the eternal rivals in the coming weeks because if Barca overcome Juventus there is a good chance that they will face the European champions in the Champions League semi-finals again, a repeat of what happened 12 months ago.

"My team rose to the occasion in the Bernabeu and that's given a big boost to our morale before facing Juventus," added Antic, after the game in which many thought they were the better side.

Antic was expected to rest several key players ahead of the clash with the Italians but chose to put out his best

against Madrid and they fortunately came through unscathed.

Against Juventus, Antic will have to adjust his back four from that which held firm against Madrid, apart from one early lapse which allowed Ronaldo to score.

Gabri Garcia is suspended which means that Carles Puyol will move over to right back and Swedish veteran Patrick Andersson is expected to come into the centre of the defence.

Argentine left back Juan Pablo Sorin is cup-tied which should open the door for Micheal Reiziger to make a rare start.

However, after the success of Barca's attacking tactics against Madrid, Antic is not expected to change his offensive formation unless he brings in Javier Saviola for Marc Overmars.

Juventus though are not going to be overawed in the Nou Camp despite the fact that the odds are against them.

Like Barca, the Italians are going into the match on a high after beating AS Roma 2-1 on Saturday, both goals coming from Alessandro Del Piero.

The victory gave Juventus a six point lead at the top of Serie A.

"We go to Barcelona with plenty of faith because our strikers are rediscovering their form, and not only Del Piero," said Juventus coach Marcello Lippi.

"I am confident we can score there, and if we get the first goal it will really open up the tie," added Lippi.

Unlike his Barcelona counterpart, Lippi is not likely to know who he is going to thrust into battle until the last minute.

Juventus will be without French international David Trezeguet, after he was ruled out on the eve of the game with a shoulder injury.

Central defender Mark Iuliano has a

hroat infection and is doubtful for the Nou Camp clash and there are concerns over the fitness of Pavel Nedved after the Czech midfielder took a heavy tackle against Roma and limped off during the second half.

PROBABLE TEAMS

Barcelona: 1-Roberto Bonano; 5-Carles Puyol, 3-Frank de Boer, 4-Patrik Andersson, 2-Michael Reiziger; 11-Marc Overmars, 6-Xavi, 31-Thiago Motta, 21-Luis Enrique; 7-Javier Saviola, 9-Patrick Kluivert.

Juventus: 1-Gianluigi Buffon; 21-Lilian Thuram, 2-Ciro Ferrara, 4-Paolo Montero, 19-Gianluca Zambrotta; 16-Mauro Camoranesi, 3-Alessio Tacchinardi, 26-Edgar Davids, 11-Pavel Nedved; 10-Alessandro Del Piero, 18-Marco Di Vaio.

Referee: Graham Poll (England)



RADOMIR ANTIC



MARCELLO LIPPI

## Cole in trouble

AFP, London

Joe Cole is expected to be disciplined by the English Football Association following a reported fracas in the tunnel following their 1-0 defeat against Bolton at the weekend.

Police have said they will be notifying the FA with a report of what went on at the end of the match and have not ruled out charging the Hammers captain over "a number of incidents."

The FA say they will not comment until they have seen reports from both the police and the match officials.

According to police, Cole was seen "apparently punching" Bolton defender Bernard Mendy and "kicking out and damaging the tunnel."

Cole's team-mate Rufus Brevett is also being investigated for his part in the fracas after a stormy match in which Ian Pearce was sent off.

The FA said they would not make any decisions until Tuesday at the earliest, adding: "Obviously we must wait for all the match officials' reports and any additional reports which may or may not be forwarded to the FA."

Bolton moved six points clear of the Hammers after their victory which left Glenn Roeder's men hanging on to their top-flight status by a thread.

# Ligue 1 Monaco alone atop



AFP, Paris

Monaco went back to the top of the French championship on Sunday with a 2-0 win over Strasbourg making the most of defending champions Lyon's failure to beat struggling Lille on Saturday.

Dado Prso scored from a pass by Jerome Rothen in the 19th minute for his ninth of the season while Shabani Nonda notched the 19th goal of his campaign when he secured the three points with a right-foot shot in the 70th minute.

Both Monaco and Lyon, who could only draw 0-0 with Lille to end a six-match winning run, have 61 points with four games remaining but Didier Deschamps men are top courtesy of a better goal difference.

Marseille are fourth, a further two points back, after a 1-0 win at Lens secured by a Frank Leboeuf penalty in the 33rd minute.

On Saturday, Portuguese striker Pauleta scored a hat-trick as Bordeaux

cruised to a 6-1 win at Ajaccio on Saturday to keep them firmly on course for Champions League action next season.

TOP SCORERS

Leading scorers in the French football league after Sunday's matches:

20 - Pauleta (Bordeaux)

19 - Shabani Nonda (Monaco)

14 - Didier Drogba (Guingamp)

13 - Henri Camara (Sedan), Djibril Cisse (Auxerre)

12 - Juninho (Lyon)

11 - Kaba Diawara (Nice), Ludovic Giuly (Monaco)

10 - Sonny Anderson (Lyon), Antoine Sibierski (Lens), Peguy Luyindula (Lyon), Jean-Claude Darcheville (Bordeaux)

Pauleta put Bordeaux 1-0 ahead six minutes before the break but Bernard Diomedede pulled a goal back for the Corsican team in the 60th minute with a superb solo effort after being fed by a longball.

Just two minutes later, Bordeaux were back in the driving seat when Pauleta, fed by Savio, found himself one-on-one with Ajaccio keeper

TOP SIX

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

Monaco	34	17	10	7	55	27	61
Lyon	34	17	10	7	56	36	61
Marseille	34	17	8	9	35	29	59
Bordeaux	34	16	9	9	52	34	57
Sochaux	34	14	12	8	37	28	54
Auxerre	34	15	9	10	33	28	54

# Valencia v Inter Milan Anything can happen



REUTERS, Valencia

Valencia will be wary of the threat from an all-too-familiar foe as they attempt to keep their season alive by coming from 1-0 down in Tuesday's Champions League quarter-final return at home to Inter Milan.

Valencia looked a good bet for both domestic and European success after an effervescent start to their season but their recent form has been so flat that they are in danger of finishing the campaign with nothing.

A 1-0 defeat away to Inter in the quarter-final first leg leaves them fighting for survival in Europe, while Saturday's 1-0 setback away to Valladolid effectively put an end to their hopes of a successful defence of their domestic title.

In the circumstances, an awkward Inter side coached by Hector Cuper is probably the last team they would like to face.

Cuper led Valencia to successive Champions League finals in 2000 and 2001, establishing the side as a major European power.

The Argentine then left to join Inter Milan and he enjoyed a successful return last season, with Inter knocking Valencia out of the UEFA Cup at the quarter-final stage.

The first leg match between the two sides in Milan two weeks ago was a typical Cuper match, with Inter scoring early and then holding on for victory in a bad-tempered clash that saw David Albelda and Belozoglu Emre sent off.

"I've seen prettier games than the first leg," Valencia goalkeeper Santiago Canizares told Marca newspaper ahead of the game.

"They beat us for a reason, though, and that's because they took their chances. You can't criticise a side that's beaten you."

Looking ahead to the second leg, he added: "It's pretty clear that the tie will be decided in the Valencia penalty area."

"If we can keep a clean sheet we'll have a good chance of scoring one and taking the initiative in the tie. If we concede a goal it's going to be highly complicated."

Both sides will have to make changes from the first leg.

Valencia have Albelda suspended, while fellow midfielder Francisco Rufete is an injury doubt, meaning coach Rafa Benitez could opt to play an extra striker

alongside John Carew.

Inter have Emre ruled out after his red card in the first leg, while defenders Fabio Cannavaro and Francesco Coco and midfielder Domenico Morfeo all missed the weekend's victory at Brescia.

Cuper is likely to play Hernan Crespo



HECTOR CUPER

alongside Christian Vieri in attack on Tuesday.

Crespo came off the bench to score the injury-time winner against Brescia after they had been reduced to nine men with the dismissals of Cristiano Zanetti and Vieri.

"I think you always have to fight and

we showed at Brescia that the team is still alive," said Cuper.

"We played and won against a side that hadn't been beaten for 16 matches. I think this is very important to help us emerge from this moment of criticism. We gave a fantastic reply."

"Now we'll go to Valencia with the same morale. I always keep the Champions League and Serie A separate in my mind. We'll have to get through a very difficult match to make it to the semi-finals though."

PROBABLE TEAMS

Valencia: 1-Santiago Canizares; 3-Anthony Reveillere, 4-Roberto Ayala, 2-Mauricio Pellegrino, 15-Amedeo Carboni; 19-Francisco Rufete, 8-Ruben Baraja, 21-Pablo Aimar, 14-Vicente; 7-John Carew, 10-Miguel Angel Angulo.

Inter: 1-Francesco Toldo; 4-Javier Zanetti, 23-Marco Materazzi, 2-Ivan Cordoba, Giovanni Pasquale; 22-Buruk Okan, 14-Luigi Di Biagio, 6-Cristiano Zanetti, 18-Stephane Dalmat; 32-Christian Vieri, 9-Hernan Crespo.

Referee: Kim Milton Nielsen (Denmark)

## Bekham, Giggs going nowhere

INTERNET, London

Sir Alex Ferguson is adamant David Beckham and Ryan Giggs will still be playing for Manchester United next season.

The United boss has slammed the latest round of speculation claiming two of his star assets could be heading for the continent in the summer and has accused Real Madrid of 'playing games' by starting rumours they were chasing Beckham.

For weeks the England captain has been linked to a multi-million pound switch to Madrid with Inter Milan said to be chasing Giggs.

However, Ferguson insists there is no truth in either claim and feels the Beckham rumours only began when United were drawn to face Real Madrid.

"I think I addressed that very well when I said it only came out when the draw was made for the quarter-finals, and we are still playing them," he said.

"Probably after the game on Wednesday it will vanish. You know what they are up to and I think it will all die after this game."

"There has certainly been no approach from Real Madrid and I can assure everyone of that. We have played the game, I am not saying that is the only reason this has come about, but it is coincidental to say the least."

"When did it arise? When we got the draw for the quarter finals."

Sir Alex is also disregarding speculation about Giggs, adding: "There was speculation last summer too and it was the same club, Inter Milan."

"This is the club which says it has no money. Do they think they are going to get a player for nothing for a start?"

## Primera Liga

# No Real difference



INTERNET, Madrid

Deportivo Coruna and Real Sociedad closed to within a point of first division leaders Real Madrid after securing comprehensive victories on Sunday.

Deportivo Coruna striker Roy Makaay brought his total of goals for the season to 24 as he netted twice in his side's 3-1 victory over Sevilla, while Sociedad striker Nihat Kahveci also grabbed a neat double as the Basque team thrashed bottom club Rayo Vallecano 5-0 at Anoeta.

Winger Javi de Pedro and midfielder Valery Karpin converted spot kicks either side of halftime to give Sociedad a comfortable 2-0 lead by the 51-minute mark. Nihat then took over by adding two well-taken strikes before substitute Tayfun Korkut weighed in with a fifth deep into injury time.

The results mean that Real Madrid, which was held to a 1-1 draw by archrival Barcelona at the Bernabeu on Saturday, leads the table on 61 points from 30 games, while Depor and Sociedad are now breathing down their neck on 60.

Deportivo's Galician neighbor Celta Vigo displaced defending champion Valencia from the final Champions League berth after their 2-0 win over struggling Osasuna thanks to two classy goals from Egyptian striker Mido.

At the other end of the table Javier Clemente's Espanyol staged a near-miraculous comeback to recover from 3-0 down at halftime to draw 3-3 at home to Athletic Bilbao and extend their unbeaten run to seven games.

Alaves, however, continued its wretched form as it slipped to a 1-0 defeat at home to Malaga after Uruguayan striker Dario Silva poked in

from close range a minute into injury time to give the Andalucians the win.

The result means that Alaves, which reached the UEFA Cup final only two

TOP SIX

Leading scorers in the Spanish league after the weekend's matches:

24 - Roy Makaay (Deportivo La Coruna)

18 - Nihat Kahveci (Real Sociedad)

17 - Darko Kovacevic (Real Sociedad)

16 - Ronaldo (Real Madrid)

12 - Patrick Kluivert (Barcelona), Walter Pandiani (Real Mallorca)

11 - Raul Gonzalez (Real Madrid), Fernando Torres (Atletico Madrid)

10 - Luis Figo (Real Madrid), Joseba Etxeberria (Athletic Bilbao), Fernando Fernandez (Real Betis), Javi Guerrero (Racing Santander), Raul Tamudo (Espanyol), Ismael Urzaiz (Athletic Bilbao)

9 - Diego Tristan (Deportivo La Coruna), Raul Molina (Recreativo Huelva), Santiago Ezquerro (Athletic Bilbao), Luis Garcia (Atletico Madrid)

8 - Julio Alvarez (Rayo Vallecano), Kiki Musampa (Malaga), John Carew (Valencia), Edu (Celta Vigo), Ruben Navarro (Alaves), Zinedine Zidane (Real Madrid), Javier Saviola (Barcelona), Samuel Eto'o (Real Mallorca), Dario Silva (Malaga)

seasons ago, has now taken just two points in its last eight games and faces the real threat of dropping out of the top flight for the first time since 1998.

Recreativo Huelva, which was unlucky to slip to a 1-0 defeat at Racing Santander, and Rayo Vallecano accompany the Basque side in the relegation slots.

Deportivo began the match at the Riazor in ambitious fashion and were a constant threat to the Sevilla defence

TOP SIX

Spanish league table on Sunday (played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, goals against, points):

Real	30	17	10	3	67	32	61
Deportivo	30	18	6	6	52	33	60
Sociedad	30	17	9	4	57	38	60
Celta	30	15	6	9	36	24	51
Valencia	30	14	8	8	43	24	50
Sevilla	30	11	9	10	28	25	42



PHOTO: INTERNET

Rayo Vallecano's Argentine Patricio Andres Graff (L) loses balance under pressure from Real Sociedad's Turkish forward Nihat Kahveci at San Sebastian's Anoeta stadium on April 20.