

Primera Liga
Nine-man Barca show grit

Football

REUTERS, Madrid

Atletico Madrid were held to a 0-0 draw by nine-man Barcelona in a frantic Primera Liga encounter at the Vicente Calderon on Sunday. Despite the scoreline the game was not short of incident as Barca midfielders Philip Cocu and Thiago Motta were dismissed in the second half for picking up their second bookings and both sides failed to cash in on good scoring opportunities. Unbeaten Villarreal continued their impressive start to the season with a 2-0 win away to Racing Santander, goals coming from former Barcelona players Sonny Anderson and Juan Roman Riquelme. Villarreal and Barcelona occupy fifth and sixth places respectively with nine points each from their five games. At the other end of the table Albacete claimed their first points since returning to the top flight with a 2-0 home win over Real Mallorca, while Malaga gained their debut win of the season with a 2-1 victory away to Espanyol. Espanyol, who have yet to win a game, now replace Albacete at the foot of the table. Despite being roared on by a 54,000 capacity crowd at the

Calderon, Atletico started nervously and it was Barca who took control of the game in the opening minutes. Ronaldinho looked certain to cash in on some hesitant defending in the eighth minute after he received a headed pass from Patrick Kluivert just three metres from goal, but his lobbed shot ended up in the hands of Atletico keeper German Burgos. Ronaldinho and Kluivert combined well on several more occasions to slice through the Atletico midfield, but they were unable to add the finishing touches to some promising attacks. It was Atletico, though, who looked to have stolen the lead just before the half hour mark when Mexican defender Rafael Marquez headed into his own net from a corner, but the goal was ruled out for pushing. Atletico sparked in to life for the remainder of the first half, with defender Matias Lequi forcing a fine full-stretch save from Barca keeper Victor Valdes. Barcelona faced an uphill battle after they were reduced to 10 men when Cocu was dismissed on 58 minutes when he picked up a second booking for a foul on midfielder Kizito Musampa. Atletico proceeded to lay siege to the Barca goal but not even after their opponents were reduced to nine men with the sending off of Motta 12 minutes from time were

they able to break the deadlock. Rafa Benitez's Valencia are the new leaders thanks to their confident 2-0 win over a disappointing Real Madrid at the Mestalla on Saturday. An early goal from Mista and a second-half strike from Brazilian forward Ricardo Oliveira gave Rafa Benitez's side a thoroughly deserved triumph over last season's champions. Former leaders Deportivo Coruna lost their 100 percent record on Saturday after they slumped to a surprise 3-2 defeat at Osasuna, shipping three goals in nightmare four-minute spell in the first half. Valencia now lead the standings on 13 points, one ahead of Deportivo and three ahead of Real, who are level on points with Osasuna, who are usually to be found at the other end of the table.

Table with 2 columns: Team, Points. Includes Valencia, Deportivo, Real, Osasuna, Villarreal, Barcelona.

Table with 2 columns: Group, Match. Includes AFP, Paris; At Glasgow; At Anderlecht; At Milan; At Moscow; At Monaco; At La Coruna; At Athens; At Istanbul.

Gunners have all the worry



AFP, Paris

Injury-hit Arsenal go into their Champions League match with Lokomotiv Moscow on Tuesday knowing that defeat could deal a fatal blow to their hopes of qualifying from the group stage. The Gunners slumped to a 3-0 defeat to Inter Milan in their opening match, setting the alarm bells ringing at Highbury. Although they have four matches to play after the trip to the Russian champions, a group that also includes Dynamo Kiev will be treacherous to navigate if they fail to get full points on Tuesday. The omens are not good for Arsene Wenger's side - Arsenal are seeking a first win in six European matches and the victory over Newcastle on Friday left four players doubtful for the tie. Midfield powerhouse Patrick Vieira, Martin Keown, Freddie Ljungberg and Ashley Cole all face a battle to be on the pitch. "Patrick has a muscle strain, Ashley got a kick below the knee, Freddie got an ankle sprain and Martin Keown got a big kick on his fibula," said Wenger. After a week when his players made all the wrong headlines following the jostling at the end of their grudge match with Manchester United, the Frenchman was just happy to see his side's resilience in Friday's 3-2 victory. "We found the resources to score every time we were in trouble. At the end we were really down to eight players and we still won it." The form of French champions Lyon is picking up just in time for their visit to Glasgow to face Celtic. Recent signing Giovanni Elber did not score in the 4-0 drubbing of Lens at the weekend, as his fellow Brazilian Juninho Pernambucano grabbed a hat-trick. Lyon have the comfort of full points from their first Group A match against Anderlecht, while Celtic went down to Bayern Munich. Inter Milan hope to welcome back striker Christian Vieri from injury as they host Dynamo Kiev at the San Siro, hot on the heels of a bad-tempered goalless draw with Udinese. In other matches, last year's losing finalists Juventus will expect at least a point from a visit to Olympiakos in Greece in Group D, while Bayern Munich put their leaky defence to the test in Group A at Anderlecht.

Table with 2 columns: Team, Points. Includes Roma, Juventus, Milan, Parma, Inter, Lazio.

Serie A
Milan, Roma romp

Football

AFP, Rome

AC Milan and Roma joined Juventus at the top of Italy's first division on Sunday after securing comfortable 3-0 victories at home to Lecce and Ancona respectively as the nations' footballers helped lift the gloom and misery caused by the country's worst ever power cut. Wins for the two title challengers took them level on 10 points with reigning champions Juventus, 2-0 winners at Reggina on Saturday. All of Sunday's matches went ahead as the country recovered from the worst power outage in its history. Andriy Shevchenko scored twice, his fourth and fifth league

goals of the season, as European champions Milan saw off Lecce, while Roma endured a goalless first-half before thrashing Ancona. Parma missed out on joining the top trio after drawing 1-1 at home to Siena and remaining tied on eight points with Inter Milan, who were held to a 0-0 draw at Udinese on Saturday. A goal three minutes from time prevented Lazio from crashing to their second successive defeat as Roberto Mancini's men salvaged a 2-2 draw at plucky Empoli. A point lifted Lazio to sixth, while Empoli moved off the bottom. In the capital, Vincenzo Montella scored three minutes after coming on as a second-half substitute to put Roma in front at the Olympic stadium. Captain Francesco Totti's eased the home side's nerves by scoring 12 min-

utes from time with a low angled shot before Marco Delvecchio's diving header wrapped up the points. Francesco Flachi's last-gasp penalty gave newly-promoted Sampdoria a 2-1 win over Brescia, while Andrea Zanchetta netted twice for Chievo in the 4-1 demolition of Perugia. In the day's other match Modena defeated Bologna 2-0, goalless draw.

Bari waiting for the call

FROM PAGE 13

"The main reason for the our debacle was not having enough players on the reserve bench. We took only 16 players unlike other teams that had 18 and it was heavily criticised by everybody in Malaysia," said Shikder. Bari also admitted that all the participating countries took eighteen players except Bangladesh. But when asked what was the need for taking so many officials at the expense of players, he tried to deflect the flak. "Actually we did not apply to the organisers for 18 players after our request was turned down at the Busan Asian Games last year," Bari said. But when Bari was made aware that it was a different competition and he should have known the number of players eligible to take part in the meet, he

was searching for words. Bari also had the audacity to disregard all norms while letting umpire Abdur Rashid Khan, a Grade A umpire with absolutely no international exposure, to fly with the team. But the Asian Hockey Federation (AHF) did not allow the Bangladesh umpire to conduct a single match since he failed to meet the necessary standards. The AHF had earlier categorically ruled out a BHF plea to carry an umpire with no experience of conducting international matches. But knowingly Bari flaunted the rules and his couldn't care less attitude brought only shame on the nation. It was not the only instance of mismanagement but the whole process started with the selection of the team. Bari's only solution

for the moment is to call an emergency meeting on the Asia Cup debacle as soon as BHF president Air Vice Marshal Fakhru Azam returns to the capital. "The president is out of town now. We will sit immediately after he get back to discuss the disastrous Asia Cup. And if everybody feels that I should quit, I shall do so," Bari said. This is however not for the first time the hockey dinosaur expressed his desire to leave the post. He played the same trick straight after the World Cup qualifiers in Scotland in 2001, where Bangladesh finished last in the 16-nation competition. But he did keep his word then. And one wonders if he will find the courage to resign this time.

Premiership
Liverpool's Lisbie lesson

Football

AFP, London

Liverpool's Premiership revival was stopped in its tracks on Sunday as Kevin Lisbie's first senior hat-trick gave Charlton victory in a five-goal thriller at The Valley. After two first half strikes, the Jamaican international striker rounded off a superb performance with a stunning solo effort to complete his hat-trick and clinch a 3-2 victory for his side, seven minutes from the end of regulation time. A Steve Watson hat-trick helped Everton to a 4-0 win over a shell-shocked Leeds as the Merseysiders finally gave their fans a glimpse of the form that made them Champions League contenders last season. Duncan Ferguson, making his first start of the season, also found the net while another nightmare display from Brazilian centre-half Roque Junior left Leeds looking as if this season could turn into another painful struggle to stay clear of the relegation zone. But the night belonged to Lesbie and his wonder goal was a fitting finish to the proceedings at The Valley. Picking up Dean Kiely's throw near the left touchline inside his own half, Lisbie embarked on a 50-yard run which carried him inside Liverpool fullback Steve Finnan to the edge of the Liverpool box. From there he curled a right-foot shot beyond Jerzy Dudek and into the corner of the net. It was the first hat-trick of Lisbie's professional career and the perfect response to the boos he has had to suffer from some of the Charlton fans this season. "To get my first hat-trick and do it against Liverpool is great for me," Lisbie said afterwards. "At the beginning of the season I was getting booed off and it was difficult for me because I've been at the club since I was 14 - I suppose the fans only want the best out of me. "But I think that's my best goal and we were pleased to get it because when Liverpool get ahead it's hard to break them down." Harry Kewell's defence-splitting pass had enabled Vladimir Spicer to put Liverpool ahead after 15 minutes. At the time a fourth straight win for Gerard Houllier's men looked firmly on the cards. But Charlton equalised in similar fashion with Graham Stuart's crisp first time pass creating an opening for Lisbie, who finished with a deftly executed chip over the outrushing Dudek. The home side then went ahead two minutes before the break when Shaun Bartlett fired in a half-volleyed shot from 12 yards. Dudek blocked but was unable to hold the South African's effort and the ball rebounded into the path of Lisbie, who stabbed it home from



PHOTO REUTERS

MAN OF THE MOMENT: Charlton Athletic's Jamaican international Kevin Lisbie (R) being congratulated by Danish team mate Claus Jensen after scoring one of his three goals against Liverpool at The Valley on September 28.

close range. Liverpool got back on level terms six minutes after the interval when Chris Perry attempted to wrestle Emile Heskey to the ground after the England striker had got in behind him. Perry was lucky not to be cautioned for the foul but there was no let-off from Owen, who sent Dean Kiely the wrong way from the spot. At Goodison Park, Everton took the lead on 26 minutes after Tomasz Radzinski's harassment prompted Roque Junior to miscue a clearance. The ball dropped for Watson who played a one-two with Ferguson before lashing the ball into the roof of the net. Radzinski hit the post before racing on to James McFadden's long ball to force Paul Robinson off his line. Robinson cleared but only as far as Watson who superbly lobbed home into an empty net from 35 yards. Two minutes later Ferguson made it three with the easiest of headers from six yards as Roque Junior and his central defensive partner Zoumana Camara went missing once more. Watson completed his hat-trick seven minutes after the interval with Roque Junior at fault once more,

this time for failing to clear David Unsworth's cross, which Watson was able to chest down and finish. Goals from Luis Boa Morte and Louis Saha condemned Blackburn to a third straight home defeat on Sunday and extended Fulham's bright start to their first full season under Chris Coleman. Tipped to struggle in this campaign, Coleman's side find themselves sitting comfortably in the top half of the table after seven matches. At Manchester, Managerless Tottenham escaped from the relegation zone on Sunday after riding their luck to earn a point with a goalless draw against a Manchester City side that squandered chance after chance.

Table with 2 columns: Team, Points. Includes Arsenal, Chelsea, Man Utd, Birmingham, Man City, Southampton.

Beckham out of Porto clash

AFP, Madrid

England captain David Beckham has been ruled out of Real Madrid's Champions League match against FC Porto on Wednesday after injuring his right foot in the Spanish champions' 2-0 defeat to Valencia. Real captain Raul is doubtful with a hip injury. Good news for Real is that Ivan Helguera is back after a fortnight out with a knee cartilage injury. Real, who started the Champions League in style with a 4-2 win over Olympique Marseille, lost their unbeaten record to Valencia on Saturday.

Premiership stars in gang-rape probe

Football

AFP, London

Eight English Premiership soccer stars are at the centre of investigations into the alleged gang rape of a 17-year-old girl. She told police she consented to sex with one of the players in a London hotel over the weekend. But she claims seven others then joined in and forced themselves on her, The Sun newspaper reports. The seven all play for the same club and at least one is an international. The other player, with whom the girl was willing to have sex, plays for another club. She reported the allegations to a central London police station. Scotland Yard confirmed that officers from their specialist unit

which tackles sex crimes were investigating her allegations. The Sun newspaper says it cannot name the players for legal reasons but claims they are instantly recognisable stars. Police said the inquiry was at a very early stage. Detectives have yet to speak to the victim in detail. They are planning to take a full statement from her within the next few days. They are expected to interview her before making further inquiries with anyone she claims as being involved in the alleged attack. Any decision to arrest the players involved will be taken later. Premiership games to take place in London over the weekend involved Arsenal and Newcastle on Friday night, Chelsea and Aston Villa on Saturday and Charlton against Liverpool Sunday.

Desperate to keep Rivaldo!

REUTERS, Milan

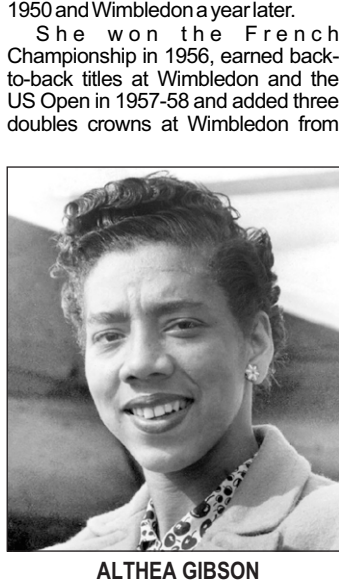
AC Milan vice-president Adriano Galliani says the club has had a change of heart and wants to keep Brazilian World Cup winner Rivaldo. Milan announced on Friday that they had agreed to the player's request to be released from his contract and Rivaldo said he was considering offers from English clubs. The former Barcelona striker said he wanted to leave Milan as he could no longer cope with being left out of the side by coach Carlo Ancelotti. But after the Brazilian said farewell to his team mates before the 3-0 win over Lecce on Sunday, Galliani said he would make an attempt to keep Rivaldo. "The documents relating to the cancellation of Rivaldo's contract are still in the office drawer. I will do everything in the coming hours to keep Riva," Galliani told the club's television station Milan Channel. "It is my desire and that of the team and Carlo Ancelotti would be very glad to have him back," added Galliani.

Gibson passes away

Tennis

AFP, East Orange

Tennis champion Althea Gibson, the first black to win Wimbledon and the US Championships, died Sunday. She was 76. Gibson had been in poor health for years and passed away at East Orange General Hospital, according to Darryl Jeffries, a spokesman for the city of East Orange. Fran Clayton Gray, chief executive officer of the Althea Gibson Foundation, said Gibson suffered a heart attack three months ago that kept her bedridden. She entered the hospital two days ago with bladder and kidney infections and died from respiratory arrest. Abig hitter with an awesome serve, Gibson became the first black person to play at the US Championships in



ALTHEA GIBSON

Favourites comfortably thru'

AFP, Washington

China kept alive their hopes of improving on their 1999 Women's World Cup runner-up finish, closing out the first round with a 1-0 victory over Russia on Sunday to finish top of Group D. The defending champion United States and Sweden also confirmed their quarter-final berths with victories on the final day of first-round action. The Chinese will play Canada in Portland, Oregon, on Thursday, where the Russians will meet European Champions Germany on the same day. The United States defeated North Korea 3-0 to finish top of Group A, and will meet Group B runners-up Norway on Wednesday in Foxboro, Massachusetts. The Swedes, who stopped Nigeria 3-0 to finish in second place in Group A, will take on Group B winners Brazil in Foxboro on Wednesday. In Group D on Sunday, Ghana ended Australia's faint hopes with a 2-1 victory in Portland.

U-17 booters'

FROM PAGE 13 Kyrgyzstan in the second week of October, will play two more matches against Myanmar under-17 team at the same venue on October 2 and 4. The boys of Shahidur Rahman Shantoo were clueless about the fixtures before left Dhaka on Saturday. Bangladesh will play Kyrgyzstan at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium on September 11 and 15.

Nat'l cricket

FROM PAGE 13 secretary of the tournament committee Khandakar Jamil Uddin yesterday. The Dhaka Zone matches of the championship was scheduled to start from October 1. The delay means the event will start country-wide on October 6 as well.

Boycott blasts

FROM PAGE 13 Zealand. Take it from me, India will never win an overseas tour except in Sri Lanka unless the above issues are addressed," Boycott said. And if Saurav Ganguly was in the mood for some advice from Boycott, he should put away the hook shot and practice his ducking. While Ganguly had never had the best batting technique, he made up for it with his big heart and excellent hand-to-eye co-ordination. "My advice to him is don't hook at all and just keep ducking. That way he's going to tire the bowlers. Take it from me, no batsman enjoys playing pacers, it's just that some play it better." Boycott did acknowledge India's next opponents, New Zealand, third-ranked on the International Cricket Council's Test ladder. "I admire the New Zealanders. They work hard at their game and do basics right. They make up for the lack of talent with their tremendous mental strength," he said.

Proteas leave

FROM PAGE 13 manager, told this website before the squad's departure. "The players have accepted it. They were part of a conference call we had this morning with Ian Smith and Ben van Deventer." The chief executive of the South African Cricketers' Association, Tony Irish, echoed De Kock's comments. "The security guys are over there, they say it's safe and we have to put our trust in them." The South Africans have been promised presidential security by the Pakistanis. That should help set their minds at ease, but it will add to the strain of a tour that, even without added complications, is invariably among the more difficult on the international circuit. "It will undoubtedly be a challenging tour," said Irish. "But this is a bold side and I think that's how they will approach it."

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down. Includes clues like '35 Feel bad', '1 Rather's employer', '4 Detail, for short', etc.

Cryptogram puzzle with grid and clues. Includes clues like '12 13 14', '15 16 17', '18 19 20', etc.