



PHOTO: AFP
Real Madrid superstar Ronaldo (R) celebrates his first goal against Espanyol with teammates Michel Salgado (L) and Raul at the Santiago Bernabeu stadium in Madrid on October 5.

Primera Liga

Night of Brazilliance

Football

AFP, Madrid

Valencia regained their place at the top of the Spanish first division by winning 1-0 at Barcelona while defending champions Real Madrid made hard work of beating Espanyol 2-1 on Sunday.

The triumphant teams can both thank their Brazilian strikers for the goals that gave them their narrow victories.

Valencia's goal came after just 13 minutes from a stunning left-foot, half-volley by Ricardo Oliveira, who was signed from Santos during the summer and who has quickly become a hit after also scoring against Real Madrid a week ago.

Oliveira has started to be talked about in the same breath as his illustrious compatriot Ronaldo, who continued to show exactly why he is the world's top striker by getting both of Real's goals, one with his right foot and the other with his head.

"It is always difficult to score against a team like Espanyol who are trying to close everything down by using five defenders and four midfielders just in front of them," said Ronaldo.

For the moment though, 2001-02 champions Valencia have the bragging rights as they lead the league and are unbeaten with 16 points from their six games.

Deportivo La Coruna lie second, one point behind after thrashing

Atletico Madrid 5-1 on Saturday, while Real remain third on 13 points. Valencia had the better of an entertaining match in the Nou Camp although Barca pressed hard in search of an equaliser during the second half and the Catalans nearly salvaged a point, and their unbeaten record, when Javier Saviola hit the bar, three minutes from time.

Espanyol coach Javier Clemente ensured that his contest with Real Madrid would be a tight and scrappy affair by deciding to pack his defence with eight men or more for much of the match.

It took Real 51 minutes to break down the visitors, Ronaldo finally sending home a right foot shot after service from Raul.

Raul himself found the net two minutes later but his effort was disallowed for pushing the Espanyol goalkeeper Erwin Lemmens.

Real continued to press, with Zinedine Zidane doing his best despite the close attention of the Espanyol defenders, but it was another 30 minutes before the hosts were able to add to their tally.

David Beckham crossed from the right and his pinpoint pass found by the head of Ronaldo.

Espanyol were then reduced to 10 men in injury time after Pierre Wome got his second yellow card but Real were made to pay for easing up as Alex Fernandez produced a sparkling individual effort to get a consolation goal.

Clemente said that he believed Espanyol could have won the game.

"But sometimes you don't get a drop of water when you are thirsty," added Clemente, who is well aware that Espanyol are firmly in relegation trouble just six games into the season and without a win to their name.

Unfashionable Osasuna continued their impressive start with a 1-1 draw at Real Mallorca to move into fourth place.

Mallorca took the lead, against the run of play, when 37-year-old defender Miguel Angel Nadal headed home a Nene corner seven minutes from the end.

However, the visitors took just 49 seconds to equalise, with Pierre Webo securing a draw almost immediately from the restart.

Murcia got their first win since their return to the top flight after a 14-year absence, a 1-0 victory over fellow strugglers Albacete, thanks to a stunning sixth minute free kick by summer signing Michel Sanchez.

TOP SIX

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

Valencia	6	5	1	0	9	1	16
Deportivo 6	5	0	1	15	5	15	
Real	6	4	1	1	15	8	13
Osasuna	6	3	2	1	8	5	11
Villarreal	6	2	4	0	7	4	10
Sociedad	6	2	3	1	7	4	9

Nat'l swimming starts today

UNB, Dhaka

The 19th National Swimming Championship begins today at the National Swimming Complex in Mirpur.

Mayor of Dhaka City Corporation Sadek Hossain will inaugurate the four-day meet, sponsored by Keya Cosmetics.

Bangladesh Swimming Federation (BSF) general secretary Shahabuddin Ahmed described the events at a press conference yesterday.

The championship will have three disciplines -- swimming (men's and women's), water polo (men's) and diving (men's). Service teams, educational institutions, corporations and divisional sports associations have been invited to take part in the meet.

So far some 350 swimmers have submitted their entries. The budget of the meet has been estimated at Tk 5.5 lakh, of which Tk 1.5 lakh will come from the sponsors.

Shahabuddin Ahmed said: "I am expecting that our swimmers will be able to set some national records and even break one or two SAF Games marks."



PHOTO: STAR
Bangladesh Swimming Federation general secretary Shahabuddin Ahmed (C) speaks at a press conference in connection with the 19th National Swimming Championship at the NSC yesterday.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

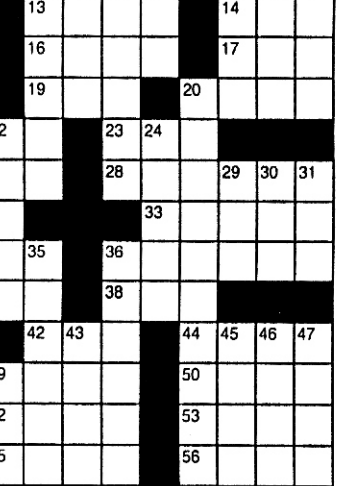
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CRYPTOQUIP

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H O R H U K Q R H L W O D
O U Y Y J K E V R K D W O U W

H U K A D U Y Y F U I Y R K D I U Y Y !
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: A FRIEND AND I
FREQUENTLY MAIL EACH OTHER CORNY
QUIPS. YOU MIGHT CALL US PUN PALS.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: Y equals L
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.

USA bamboozled

It's a Germany vs Sweden final

AFP, Portland



World Cup champions USA 3-0 on Sunday to reach the 2003 Women's World Cup final.

Maren Meinert and Birgit Prinz struck in the 91st and 93rd minutes to ice the victory.

Germany will play in the tournament final on October 12 in Los Angeles against Sweden which beat Canada 2-1 in the other semi.

Germany had not been in a Women's World Cup semi-final since 1995 and was determined to make it count. And count it did as the Europeans shocked the US with an early goal off a corner kick.

Poor cover by American captain Julie Foudy on the set play allowed Garefrekes to put an uncontested header past netminder Briana Scurry in the 18th minute off service from Renate Lingor.

Boasting a 12-3-2 all-time edge against the Germans, the Americans were the favourites heading into the semi-final.

And they defeated their semi-final foe 1-0 in January at the Four Nations Tournament.

But in the end the Americans had nothing to show for their home-field advantage and a multi-million dollar training programme which is the envy of other programmes the world over.

On Sunday, the hopes for a second-straight title were dashed as Germany exposed the American flaws and their failure to convert chances.

US coach April Heinrichs tried to downplay the significance of the loss saying the match was good for women's soccer.

"We will be able to deal with this loss," said Heinrichs. "because that was the best game ever played in women's foot-

ball."

The US pressed hard for the rest of the match but was unable to capitalize on German errors.

Kristine Lilly and Mia Hamm had sure chances at goal that were smothered by goalkeeper Rottenberg.

Rottenberg arguably won it for Germany. Making save after save. She often was the only defence against the American attack.

Sweden got two goals in the final 11 minutes of the second half from Malin Moström and



PHOTO: AFP
A distraught USA superstar Mia Hamm after the semifinal defeat against Germany at PGE Park in Portland, Oregon on October 5.

substitute Josefine Oqvist to claim a come-from-behind 2-1 victory over Canada and advance to the final of the 2003 Women's World Cup.

The scrappy underdog Canadians nearly pulled off an upset after taking an unlikely second half lead from Kara Lang's 65th-minute goal. 16-year-old Lang blasted a 25-yard free kick through the hands of 'keeper Caroline Joensson.

The final is October 12 at The Home Depot Center in Los Angeles. The US and Canada will play Saturday for third place.

Serie A

AC party in Milan

Football

AFP, Milan

European champions AC Milan joined Juventus at the top of Italy's Serie A after defeating neighbours Inter Milan 3-1 in a pulsating derby at the San Siro on Sunday.

Filippo Inzaghi gave Milan the lead before second-half goals from Kaka and Andriy Shevchenko piled the misery on Inter, desperate to avenge their Champions League semi-final defeat to their local rivals last season.

Inter's Nigerian teenager Obafemi Martins reduced the deficit, but the 'home' side spurned several late chances to close the gap further and make for an exciting finale.

Milan's victory took them level on 13 points with Juventus, who earlier on Sunday edged Bologna thanks to a controversial penalty converted by David Trezeguet.

Inter's first defeat of the season saw them drop to sixth.

Shevchenko's goal was his 11th in 30 derby matches.

The game sprung to life in the 40th minute when Milan took a deserved lead. Cristiano Zanetti found Kaka on the edge of the box to concede a free-kick which Andrea Pirlo curled towards the far corner of the net.

Inzaghi, who broke away from the defensive wall, was standing in the way of the shot, but with a swift turn of his head directed the ball wide of wrong-footed Inter goalkeeper Francesco Toldo and into the net.

Milan turned the screw a minute after half-time. Shevchenko found space wide on the right and fed Gennaro Gattuso, whose left-wing cross was headed in by Kaka for his first goal for the Champions League holders.

Inter fell further behind in the 67th minute when Shevchenko played a neat one-two with Cafu before rifling the ball into the net off Toldo's legs for his sixth goal of the season.

Martins responded with a stunning drive which found the top corner two minutes later, but Inter's recovery came too late and Milan stood firm for their fourth league victory.

Trezeguet's spot-kick 10 minutes from time gave Juventus a scrappy 2-1 win which was overshadowed by Gianluca Zambrotta's admission that he conned the referee to earn the penalty.

With the scores level and Bologna continuing to frustrate the home side, Zambrotta went charging into the box and fell under the innocuous challenge of Cristian Zaccardo and referee

Liverpool booter shot at

AFP, Liverpool

Liverpool defender Jon Otsemobor was shot in the buttocks as he sat drinking with friends in a bar early Monday, police said.

The 20-year-old Otsemobor, who has played one first team game, was wounded in the buttocks and an 18-year-old was shot in the hand and thigh with a small calibre weapon, Merseyside Police said.

Both men were released from hospital after treatment.

A spokeswoman for Liverpool Football Club confirmed that Otsemobor was at the training ground Monday but it was too early to say whether he would be able to take part in training.

AB Bank TT

SPORTS REPORTER

Sheikh Russell Kriha Chakra maintained their all-win record in the AB Bank Metropolis Senior Division Table Tennis League beating Inter Sports 3-0 at the wooden floor gymnasium yesterday.

With this win, Sheikh Russell led the table with maximum 8 points.

Bangladesh Biman earned their successive third victory with a comfortable 3-0 win against Engineers' Club while Brothers Union Club beat Mariner Youngs Club 3-1.

Armanitola JS defeated Ajax Sporting Club 3-1 to secure their third victory from five matches.

Meanwhile, league leader Swamibagh Boys' continued their winning spree in the First Division League with a straight 3-0 victory over Dhaka TT Club yesterday. This was Swamibagh's sixth win in a row.

North South University overpowered ORCA 3-0, Sports World outplayed New Colony (Red) 3-0, Swamibagh TTS dumped Ghop KC 3-0, Purbachal Parishad beat Mansoor Sporting 3-1, Management Net beat Bangladesh Boys 3-1 and Mohammadpur Boys beat Durbar KSS 3-2 in the other matches.

Manik struck twice in the first half while Shawkat netted the other goal after the breather.

Adriano's sixth goal of the season gave Parma a 1-0 win at home to Sampdoria and moved them level on 11 points with Roma, while Andrea Caracciolo scored a hat-trick in the 4-1 demolition of Lecce.

Strugglers Ancona also had a miserable afternoon, going down 3-0 at home to Udinese. In the day's other action, Modena won by the same score at Empoli while Perugia and Reggina, both looking for their first wins of the season, shared the spoils after drawing 0-0 in Umbria.

Premiership Crespo saves the day

Football

AFP, Middlesbrough

Argentinian hitman Hernan Crespo came off the bench to grab a late winner as Chelsea kept their Premiership challenge firmly on track with a 2-1 win over Middlesbrough on Sunday.

The home side looked to have done enough to secure at least a point after Slovakia striker Szilard Nemeth had cancelled out Eidur Gudjohnsen's early strike for the visitors.

But they were undone by the brilliance of man-of-the-match Damien Duff.

The Irish winger had provided the pass for Gudjohnsen's 17th minute opener.

Then, with only two minutes left, he twisted and turned his way into space near the right touchline and sent over a superbly judged cross to the back post which Crespo met with a textbook downward header past Mark Schwarzer, two minutes from the end of regulation time.

The win moves Chelsea back to within a point of Premiership leaders Arsenal with a game in hand.

It was also the perfect tonic for Claudio Ranieri's side after their shock Champions League defeat by Besiktas in midweek.

Middlesbrough's fifth defeat in eight matches so far this season.

At Villa Park, Juan Pablo Angel scored a stunning equaliser then had a late penalty saved by Jussi

'Victim' in tears

Football

GUARDIAN/SUN, London

The teenage girl at the centre of rape allegations against up to eight Premiership footballers on Sunday denied reports that she had consented to have sex with four men, including two footballers.

Max Clifford, the publicist who is representing the girl and her family, said she "utterly refuted" claims in several Sunday newspapers that she was a willing participant in group sex at the Grosvenor House hotel in London last month.

The 17-year-old has told police that she was raped by several men after a night out on Friday September 26.

Police are understood to be treating her story as credible, and will start interviewing those alleged to have been involved this week.

The girl's denial followed a detailed report in one newspaper in which Nicholas Meikle, a "party organiser" and friend of the footballers alleged to be involved, said the girl had consented to sleep with him after meeting him in a club.

The newspaper claimed that Meikle's statement was backed up by a sworn affidavit from another of the men allegedly involved.

Speaking on behalf of the girl, Clifford rejected the suggestion that she was a willing participant.

"I have spoken to the girl and her father and they totally reject these claims," he said. "She is very distraught and was in tears when I spoke to her, and she totally refutes the suggestion that she was a willing party in group sex.

"She had consensual sex with

Fleming

FROM PAGE 13
West Indies showed in 1983 and South Africa, spearheaded by Allan Donald, in 2000, that sheer pace was the best way to overcome India at home.

However, New Zealand are without injured strike bowler Shane Bond and all-rounder Chris Cairns, who is out for personal reasons.

Wright might

FROM PAGE 13
captain said.

Ganguly, whose side lost both Tests in New Zealand last year, said he did not believe it was a grudge series.

"We'll play as we do in other series. We just need to win. They're a good side, but it's always difficult to beat India at home," he said.

The second Test will be played at Mohali from October 16, followed by a one-day triangular series also featuring Australia.

AIU derail Railway

FROM PAGE 13
(Deep 56, Kishore 24, Iqbal 2/19, Mamun 2/28, Shakil 2/29). Pabna-128/6 in 39.3 overs (Abu Bakar 32, Zahid 27, Rajan 2/25).
Chandpur v Feni (at Chandpur Stadium)
Chandpur- 190/10 in 48.2 overs (Bhutta 42, Jamil 41, Russel 2/20, Bipul 2/31, Jafar 2/28). Feni- 116/10 in 42.5 overs (Kapil 38, Sanchoy 4/28, Jamal 3/260).
Khulna v Magura (at Chuadanga Stadium)
Magura- 137/10 in 32 overs (Monsoor 32, Rana 3/13, Raju 2/26, Paltu 2/30). Khulna- 138/3 in 20.3 overs (Taj 43, Sabuj 42, Arif 2/23).

Premiership Crespo saves the day

Football



PHOTO: AFP
ASHAMED! Chelsea's Eidur Gudjohnsen (L) and Hernan Crespo both hide their faces after a near miss against Middlesbrough at the Riverside Stadium in Middlesbrough on October 5.

Jaaskelainen as Aston Villa blew their chance of taking all three points in a 1-1 draw against Bolton here on Sunday.

After a turgid opening 45 minutes, the encounter exploded into life within a minute of the restart when Bolton striker Kevin Nolan ran on to a Kevin Davies flick-on, turned past Turkish defender Alpay and fired his shot into the corner of the net.

But Villa got back on level terms just before the hour mark with a well-worked move which finished with Angel striking a superb shot into the top of the net from the edge of the area.

The home side piled on the pressure in the closing stages and their efforts paid off when former

one of the men and then, despite her protests, all of the others joined in."

Scotland Yard declined to discuss the newspaper reports, but said "a very useful witness" had come forward after an appeal for information at the weekend.

Meanwhile, Meikle on Sunday, insisted he stood "1,000 per cent" behind his claims despite being branded a liar by the "rape" girl.

He is planning to turn himself over to detectives with the mystery fourth man he says also had sex with the 17-year-old.

Meikle said: "I'm speaking to a solicitor. He has advised me not to say anything. I have nothing to hide. Now it has gone high profile, I'm getting the right advice. I stand by what I say 1,000 per cent."

Meikle plans to walk into a police station for interviews within the next few days. He works for Everything PR, based in Notting Hill, West London. His boss Saif Rubie said: "The pair will present themselves to police they've nothing to hide."

Meikle insisted the sordid practice of roasting, where a group of men casually swap sex partners, is common among Premiership stars.

He said the evenings begin with young soccer stars using their wealth to seduce girls. The girl agrees to sex with a player but ends up having it with others who "wander" in and out of bedrooms.

Meikle admitted many girls felt under huge pressure to take part in swapping.

He added "The more I've moved around with footballers, the more I've seen they just share their girls around. There is a generation of players who are doing it."

Pak go 2-up

AFP, Lahore

Upbeat Pakistan put on another brilliant display to down a rusty South Africa by 42 runs in the second day-night limited overs international at Gaddafi Stadium here on Sunday to open up a 2-0 lead in the series.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard of the second one-day international match between Pakistan and South Africa at the Gaddafi Stadium on Sunday:

PAKISTAN: 267 for seven in 50 overs.

SOUTHAFRICA				
Smith c Younis b Sami				6
Dippenaar b Hafeez				58
Kallis lbw b Hafeez				42
McKenzie run out				3
Boucher run out				5
Rudolph lbw b Hafeez				25
Pollock run out				11
Hall b Sami				8
Peterson b Sami				1
Dawson not out				23
Ntini not out				16
Extras: (lb-9, nb-6, w-12)				27
Total: (For nine wkts in 50 overs) 225				
Fall of wickets: 1-19, 2-108, 3-116, 4-121, 5-138, 6-163, 7-168, 8-174, 9-187				
Bowler	O	M	R	W
Sami	8	1	20	3
Gul	9	0	54	0
Shoab	8	0	43	0
Razaq	7	0	27	0
Hafeez	10	0	37	3
Malik	8	0	35	0

Result: Pakistan won by 42 runs.
Man-of-the-match: Mohammad Sami.
Toss: South Africa
Umpires: Darrell Hair (AUS) and Nadeem Ghauri (PAK)
TV umpire: Asad Rauf (PAK)
Match referee: Clive Lloyd (WIs)

Premiership Crespo saves the day

Football



PHOTO: AFP
ASHAMED! Chelsea's Eidur Gudjohnsen (L) and Hernan Crespo both hide their faces after a near miss against Middlesbrough at the Riverside Stadium in Middlesbrough on October 5.

Real Madrid defender Ivan Campo wrestled Angel to the ground in the 85th minute.

The Colombian striker's spot kick was struck firmly but too close to Jaaskelainen, who was able to save diving to his left.

TOP SIX							
English Premiership table after Sunday's matches (played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, goals against, points):							
Arsenal	8	6	2	0	16	6	20
Man Utd	8	6	1	1	16	3	19
Chelsea	7	6	1	0	18	7	19
Fulham		4	2	1	15	9	14
Birmingham	7	4	2	1	8	5	14
Man City	8	3	3	2	14	9	12