

PHOTO: AFP

THANK YOU LORD: AC Milan's Brazilian star Kaka looks to the heavens scoring against Club Brugge in Brugge on November 4.

Milan hail Kaka

UEFA CHAMPS LEAGUE
AFP, Bruges

A late goal from AC Milan's newly-signed Brazilian midfielder Kaka gave the European champions a 1-0 revenge win over FC Bruges in their Champions League Group H tie here at the Jan-Breydelstadion on Tuesday.

Bruges failed to make the most of an injury to Milan captain Paolo Maldini and the early dismissal of Italian defender Alessandro Nesta after a challenge on Peruvian forward Andres Mendoza, the scorer of the goal in the Belgian team's surprise win in the San Siro two weeks ago.

The result puts AC Milan top of the table on seven points, ahead of former leader's Ajax who went down 3-2 at Celta Vigo, with Bruges bottom on four points after three games, and needing to win their next two games to stay in the chase.

AC Milan coach Carlo Ancelotti said that they needed the win to restore pride

after their home loss.

"Circumstances weren't really in our favour after the injury of Paolo Maldini and the sending off of Alessandro Nesta but we leave Bruges with three points, that's what is important," said Ancelotti.

"We had difficult moments after Nesta went off. Bruges got confident and at ten we suffered. But you have to believe until the end. These three points are extremely important and put us in a strong position."

"And above all this win gives us peace of mind again after the defeat to Bruges two weeks ago."

The home side got off to an attacking start with Belgian international striker Gert Verheyen, the only change from the San Siro leg, missing the target to the right of Brazilian goalie Dida after just a minute.

Milan replied with Giuseppe Pancaro and Paolo Maldini driving forward in a bid to break down their opponent's defence, with the home side trying to soak up the pressure.

Gennaro Gattuso had Milan's first unsuccessful shot at goal after 22 min-

utes, which was followed by attempts by Edgar Davids five minutes later and a failed header by Andrei Shevchenko.

Milan's challenge took a knock however when Nesta was shown the red card after 38 minutes, just minutes after captain Maldini was substituted following a knock on his left thigh and replaced by Alessandro Costacurta.

Bruges tried to make the most of Nesta's departure, but an attempt by Serbian international Ivan Gvozdenovic went straight into the hands of a waiting Dida.

In a bid to compensate for the loss of Nesta, Milan reshuffled their pack and Danish striker Jon Dahl Tomasson was replaced by Croatian defender Dario Simic.

Both sides played defensively in the dying minutes of the first half with a Verheyen effort from a Mendoza corner just before the half-time whistle never troubling Dida.

After the break Gattuso had an early run at the Bruges defence, but Czech defender David Rozehnal covered well.

Mendoza missed what was one of the

best chances of the match after 54 minutes, with the Peruvian jumping above Costacurta to meet a Peter Van der Heyden cross from the left, but it hit the bar.

Two minutes later Mendoza had another effort, but Milan's Brazilian keeper was again on the mark and stooped to save.

Shevchenko, who has so far failed to open his Champions League account this season for Milan, missed a shot at goal after 76 minutes from Giuseppe Pancaro's left-wing cross.

But the home side were stunned to silence when 21-year-old Kaka scored against the run of play four minutes from the whistle with a volley high into the net from inside the box after a chip from fellow Brazilian Cafu.

Kaka hardly had time to celebrate when he was immediately substituted by AC Milan coach Carlo Ancelotti by midfielder Massimo Ambrosini, as the visitors were already thinking about their final two ties against Ajax and Celta Vigo.

STANDINGS

European Champions League group stage standings after Tuesday's matches (played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, against, points):

Group E					Group G										
Man United	4	3	0	1	10	29	Chelsea	4	3	0	1	7	3	9	
Stuttgart	4	3	0	1	8	4	9	Besiktas	4	2	0	2	4	4	6
Rangers	4	1	1	2	3	6	4	Sparta	4	1	1	2	4	5	4
Panathinaikos	4	0	1	3	2	1	1	Lazio	4	1	1	2	5	8	4
Group F					Group H										
Real	4	3	1	0	8	3	10	Milan	4	2	1	1	2	1	7
FC Porto	4	2	1	1	6	6	7	Ajax	4	2	0	2	5	4	6
Marseille	4	1	0	3	7	8	3	Celta	4	1	2	1	4	4	5
Partizan	4	0	2	2	1	5	2	Bruges	4	1	1	2	2	4	4

* Real Madrid qualify for second stage

RESULTS AT A GLANCE

Results of European Champions League Group matches played on Tuesday:

Group E
At Manchester, England
Manchester United (ENG) 3 (Forlan 6, Van Nistelrooy 43, 60) Glasgow Rangers (SCO) 0
At Athens
Panathinaikos (GRE) 1 (Konstantinou 60) VfB Stuttgart (GER) 3 (Fyssas 68-og, Kuranyi 75, Hinkel 77)

Group F
At Porto, Portugal
FC Porto (POR) 1 (Alenichev 21) Marseille (FRA) 0
At Belgrade
Partizan Belgrade (SEM) 0 Real Madrid (SPA) 0

Group G
At Istanbul
Besiktas (TUR) 1 (Ronaldo 82) Sparta Prague (CZE) 0
At Rome
Lazio (ITA) 0 Chelsea (ENG) 4 (Crespo 14, Gudjohnsen 70, Duff 74, Lampard 80)

Group H
At Vigo, Spain
Celta Vigo (SPA) 3 (Luccin 25-pen, Milosevic 39, Vagner 63) Ajax (NED) 2 (Sonck 53, Van der Vaart 82)
At Bruges, Belgium
FC Bruges (BEL) 0 AC Milan (ITA) 1 (Kaka 86)

Alenichev Porto's hero

AFP, Porto

UEFA Cup holders FC Porto took a significant step towards a place in the Champions League knock-out stages with a 1-0 defeat of Marseille here on Tuesday.

Russian striker Dmitri Alenichev got the decisive goal in the 21st minute, when he pounced on a Derlei cross from the left to chip in over Vedran Runje in the Marseille goal.

Jorge Costa had an opportunity to extend Porto's advantage but he failed to convert a shot from in front of goal.

This win left Porto placed second in Group F on seven points, three behind Real Madrid with two group games to go.

Marseille lie third and Alain Perrin's team now only have an outside hope of extending their European adventure through to the next round.

Brazil to miss Carlos



REUTERS/AFP, Madrid/Rio de Janeiro

Brazilian defender Roberto Carlos is set to miss his country's next two World Cup qualifiers against Peru and Uruguay after tearing a leg muscle in Real Madrid's Champions League match against Partizan Belgrade.

The Real left back sustained the injury while taking a free kick after 12 minutes of his side's 0-0 draw in Belgrade on Tuesday and was unable to take any further part in the game.

"It is an important injury," said Real's chief of medical staff Alfonso del Corral. "He will definitely be out for this Sunday's (league) match against Sevilla, but we hope that he will be fit again in a couple of weeks."

Brazil, who top the South American World Cup qualifying group with a maximum six points from two games, play Peru away on November 16 and Uruguay at home three days later.

SQUAD

Goalkeepers: Dida (AC Milan/ITA), Julio Cesar (Flamengo)
Defenders: Cafu (AC Milan), Belletti (Villarreal/SPA), Roberto Carlos (Real Madrid/SPA), Junior (Parma/ITA), Roque Junior (Leeds United/ENG), Juan and Lucio (Bayer Leverkusen/GER), Edmilson (Lyon/FRA)
Midfielders: Diego and Renato (Santos), Emerson (AS Roma/ITA), Kaka (AC Milan/ITA), Gilberto Silva (Arsenal/ENG), Ze Roberto (Bayern Munchen/GER), Juninho Pernambucano (Lyon), Alex (Cruzeiro)
Strikers: Ronaldinho (Barcelona/SPA), Ronaldo (Real Madrid), Rivaldo (AC Milan), Luis Fabiano (Sao Paulo).
* Carlos out injured. Replacement to be named.

Hefty fine on Viduka

AFP, Leeds

Leeds striker Mark Viduka was on Tuesday fined a week's wages of 65,000 pounds (109,000 dollars) by the Premiership side for turning up late for training.

The Australia international had a meeting with manager Peter Reid expecting to be fined two weeks wages.

"The manager is saying that he (Viduka) was disciplined and it is an internal matter," said a club spokesman who refused to reveal the amount.

However, it is understood the fine was 65,000 pounds.

Viduka turned up late for training and was then dropped for Saturday's game against Arsenal which his teammates lost 4-1 to send them plunging to the foot of the table.

Blank fire enough for Real

UEFA CHAMPS LEAGUE
AFP, Belgrade

Nine-time European champions Real Madrid took another step towards a possible tenth title when they became the first team to book a place in the knockout stages of this season's Champions League despite a 0-0 draw against Partizan Belgrade here on Tuesday.

The Spanish superstars made sure of their place when Porto defeated Marseille 1-0 in the night's other Group F fixture.

The results mean that Real now have 10 points from four matches, with Porto in second spot on seven while Marseille are slipping out of contention in third spot on three points.

Raul, who scored the only goal of the game in the first meeting between the two sides last month, led the side while

England skipper David Beckham returned to the line-up after a thigh strain.

Partizan, coached by former German World Cup winner Lothar Matthaus, had much-travelled Nigerian defender Taribo West in defence while top striker Andrija Delibalic was back after missing the game in Spain because of suspension.

Real were forced into an early change when Brazilian defender Roberto Carlos injured his hamstring as he took a 12th minute free-kick.

He was replaced by Guti with Raul Bravo slipping into the vacant left back slot.

The Spanish did most of the pressing in the early stages but it was not until the 32nd minute that Djordje Pantic had to make a serious save when he kept out an 18-yard drive from Ronaldo who had smartly beaten the Partizan offside trap.

On the stroke of half-time, Iker Casillas, in the Real goal, pulled off a fine save from Delibalic who shot at close

range after being put through by Sasa Ilic.

Half-time substitute Milan Stojanovski made a quick impression when he burst through the Madrid defence but could only lob the ball over Casillas.

Four minutes after the restart, Figo, celebrating his 31st birthday, had a powerful drive tipped over the top by Pantic.

Real slowly imposed themselves and Zinedine Zidane almost put the finishing touches to a swift passing move on the hour but, once again, Pantic was equal to the task.

Beckham, who had a busy night probing down the right hand side, saw a quick shot find its way into the side-netting in the 68th minute before Partizan substitute Ljubinko Drulovic then squandered a glorious chance after being put through by the impressive Ilic two minutes later.

Stuttgart on course

AFP, Athens

VfB Stuttgart edged closer to the Champions League knockout stages with a 3-1 defeat of Panathinaikos here on Tuesday.

Stuttgart, top of the German league after an 11-match unbeaten run, are similarly without defeat in Group E, this latest win placing them on nine points with Manchester United but second on goal difference.

Panathinaikos are out of the running, footing the group with just one point from their first four matches.

Stuttgart went behind when Michalis Konstantinou put the Greeks in front on the hour but revenge when it came was swift and decisive.

A 67th minute own goal by Panathinaikos' defender Panagiotis Fyssas when he was trying to clear for a corner put Stuttgart level, and they took the lead when Kevin Kuranyi hit a low drive past Antonios Nikopolidis.

Andreas Hinkel rounded off a successful night with a close range shot with a quarter of an hour remaining.

Stuttgart are next in action against Glasgow Rangers at home followed by an away date against United.

Inter to get Ronaldo money

REUTERS, Zurich

Real Madrid have been ordered to pay an extra 10 million euros (\$11.45 million) to Inter Milan for Ronaldo, world soccer's governing body FIFA said on Wednesday.

FIFA's Players' Status Committee decided that Real should pay the additional fee for the Brazil striker, who moved to Spain in a 45 million euros deal in August 2002, because Santiago Solari refused to join Inter.

The original transfer agreement had included Argentine Solari as part of the deal, prompting Inter to make a formal complaint to FIFA claiming they were entitled to additional money for Ronaldo.

"At the FIFA Players' Status Committee meeting on 30 October, a decision was taken on the case regarding the transfer of Ronaldo from Inter Milan to Real Madrid," a FIFA spokesman said.

"It was decided that Real Madrid has no legitimate reason for not complying with its contractual obligations to Inter Milan."

FIFA said that the first instalment of the 10 million euro sum should be paid within 30 days, but added that Real have the right to lodge an appeal to FIFA's executive committee within 20 days.

Inter had been forced to sell Ronaldo after the Brazilian had a bust-up with then coach Hector Cuper. The Argentine was sacked by Inter last month

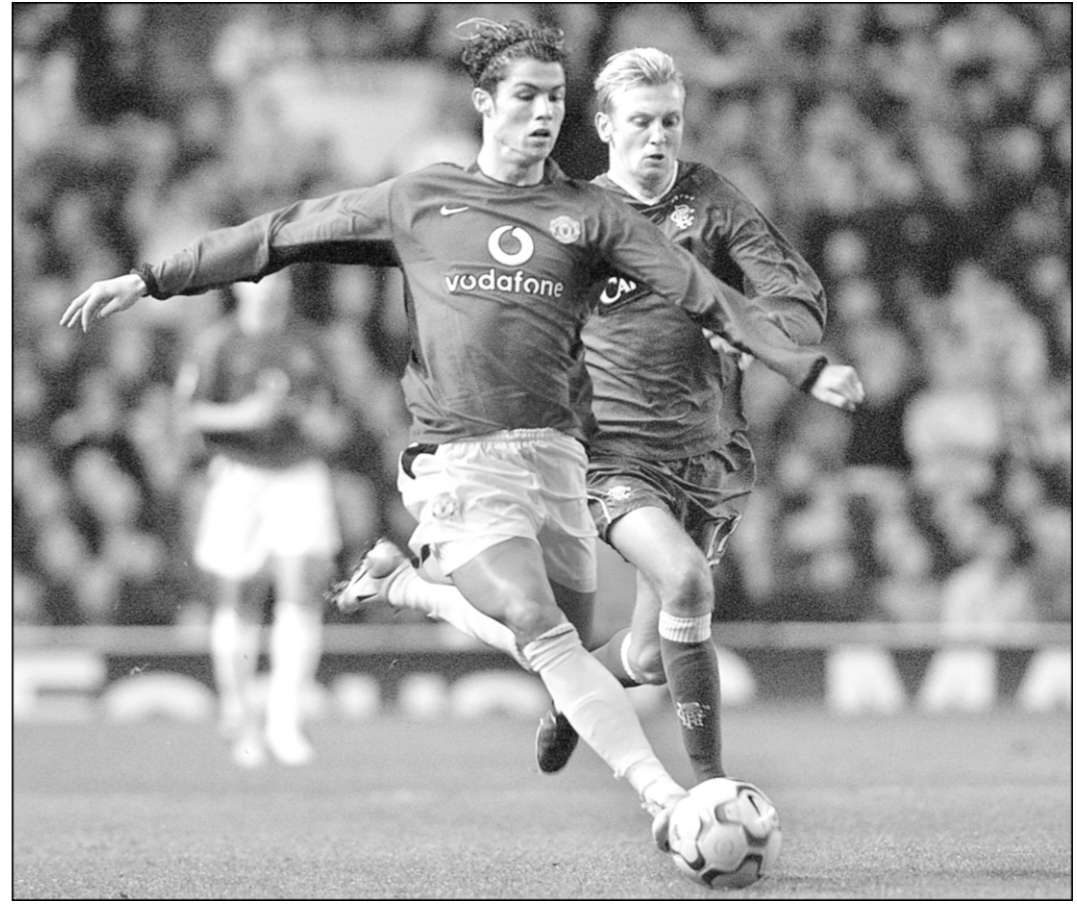


PHOTO: AFP

Cristiano Ronaldo (L) of Manchester United leaving Rangers' Steven Hughs in his wake at Old Trafford on November 4.

four games - and a double from Ruud van Nistelrooy ensured it finished 3-0 and Rangers can count themselves not to have been on the receiving end of an even heavier defeat after being run ragged by a United side superbly orchestrated by an inspired Roy Keane.

"It's good to play in these Champions League nights here and to score two goals is just brilliant," said Van Nistelrooy who took his career toll in the competition to 27 goals in 29 games.

His goals were also watched by Dutch national coach Dick Advocaat who has hinted that the striker does not form part of his plans for the upcoming Euro 2004 play-off against Scotland.

"He knows what I can do and it's up to him. I want to play for Holland but at the moment it doesn't look like it."

The defeat leaves Rangers needing to win in Stuttgart in three weeks time

leaving two goals down within seconds as former United defender Henning Berg stooped low to intercept a Ryan Giggs cross with a header that only just cleared Stefan Klos's bar.

A minute later a disbelieving van Nistelrooy repeated the trick from a virtually identical position after a cross by Ronaldo, whose trickery had bamboozled Paulo Vanoli on the right.

At Ibrox, Rangers had responded to their early setback by raising their tempo and ultimately were unlucky not to make more of their chances. This time however they struggled to get out of first gear.

It was not until the 18th minute that the visitors mounted their first serious attack. Michael Ball's pass put Michael Mols in behind the United back four but the Dutch forward's first touch was poor and Rangers' best chance of the opening period went begging.

United goalkeeper Tim Howard

from Rangers was capped when Ball rifled in a free-kick that Howard could not hold.

Peter Lovenkrands was closest to the rebound but the faster reactions of Mikael Silvestre snuffed out what was to prove Rangers' last chance of getting back into the match.

Just before the hour mark, the irrepressible Ronaldo was fouled on the right of the box, Giggs delivered a trademark inswinging free-kick and a weary Rangers defence were unable to prevent van Nistelrooy from prodding the ball home from close range.

The Dutchman could have celebrated his return to scoring form in style but for the efforts of Klos, who produced two fine saves in quick succession to deny him a hat-trick.

Charming Chelsea

UEFA CHAMPS LEAGUE
AFP, Rome

Lazio's hopes of securing a place in the last 16 of the Champions League were dealt a massive blow after they crashed to a stunning 4-0 defeat against big-spending English side Chelsea here on Tuesday.

Argentine forward Hernan Crespo scored against his old club to give the visitors a first-half lead before further goals from Eidur Gudjohnsen, Damien Duff and Frank Lampard settled a one-sided Group G clash.

Lazio, who lost 2-1 in the away leg at Stamford Bridge a fortnight ago, were still very much in the tie until seven minutes after half-time when their veteran defender Sinisa Mihajlovic was sent off for his second bookable offence.

The Serbian international may find himself in even deeper trouble if he is pulled up by UEFA for spitting in Adrian Mutu's face in the first-half. Although Russian referee Nikolai Ivanov failed to spot the offence, television pictures did not.

Mihajlovic was banned and forced to pay a hefty fine after making racist remarks to Arsenal midfielder Patrick Vieira in a Champions League match here three years ago.

Chelsea's impressive win leaves them

in command of the group on nine points, while Lazio, five points adrift of the Londoners, have an uphill task to qualify for the knock-out phase.

Chelsea started positively and carved out the first real chance in the 10th minute. Lampard found England team-mate Wayne Bridge wide on the left, but his low

cross was played too far in front of Juan Sebastian Veron's outstretched boot.

Mutu enjoyed plenty of freedom out on the left wing and a robust run from the quick Romanian led to the visitors taking the lead four minutes later. The former Parma forward was brought down 25 yards from goal and Veron's curling free-

kick was punched by Matteo Sereni straight at Crespo and the ball rebounded off the South American's chest and into the net.

The Italians enjoyed their best spell late in the half with Dejan Stankovic's volley forcing Carlo Cudicini into a smart save and Bernardo Corradi heading narrowly over the bar.

Lazio were quick off the mark at the start of the second-half and only a brilliant point-blank save from Cudicini denied Corradi an equaliser.

But after two fouls in quick succession, both on the lively Damien Duff, ended Mihajlovic's night. Chelsea piled on the pressure, scoring three goals in the final 20 minutes.

Lampard's shot was parried by Sereni but only as far as second-half substitute Gudjohnsen, and the Iclander slotted home from two yards out to double Chelsea's lead.

And Duff made it three with a brilliant solo effort, evading two desperate challenges before finding the bottom corner with a curling right-foot drive.

Lampard completed the rout with a close range tap-in after Sereni spilled Gudjohnsen's shot to put the icing on the cake.



PHOTO: AFP

Damien Duff (C) of Chelsea taking on Lazio's Simone Inzaghi (L) at the Olympic stadium in Rome on November 4.