**INTERNET,** undated

Tottenham are awaiting the results of food tests by environmental health officers before deciding whether to pursue any legal action against the Marriott Hotel or the Premier League

Spurs were forced to play their final match of the season against West Ham just hours after 10 of their players were struck down by food poisoning.

The police told the club they could not sanction a delayed kick-off of more than two hours and Spurs opted to play the match even though coach Martin Jol claimed some of the players were still vomiting in the dressing room minutes before going out onto the pitch.

The defeat cost Spurs fourth place in the Premiership and an estimated £10million cash bonanza from a place in the Champions

Tottenham's 2-1 defeat allowed north London rivals Arsenal to clinch fourth place instead with a 4-2 victory over Wigan at Highbury.

But Spurs today denied that an emergency board meeting had been called to discuss possible legal action against the hotel or the Premier League.

However, the incident is almost certain to be discussed at the club's previously planned management meeting but no course of action would be taken until the results of the tests on the lasagne, suspected of causing the food poisoning, were

A spokesperson for Spurs said: 'Until we get the results of the tests, we don't know whether it was the food or a virus. We should get the results of the tests in 48 hours.

### Xabi will be fit

**INTERNET**, undated

Liverpool remain hopeful Xabi Alonso will be fit for Saturday's FA Cup final after a scan on his ankle injury sustained at Portsmouth yesterday revealed ligament dam-

The Spain midfielder was carried off on a stretcher in the first half of the 3-1 victory at Fratton Park but later returned to the dug-out walking unaided.

After an assessment today Liverpool's medical staff hope he will make a good enough recovery to face West Ham at Cardiff's Millennium Stadium on Saturday.

'A scan this morning has confirmed that Xabi has an ankle ligament sprain.' said Liverpool spokesman Ian Cotton

'He'll now receive intensive treatment at Melwood and we are hopeful he will be available for the FA Cup Final on Saturday.

West Ham goal scorer Yossi Benayoun celebrates, surrounded by shocked Tottenham players, during their Premiership clash on Sunday.

### PREMIERSHIP

# **Gunners pip Spurs**

Football

AGENCIES, London

Thierry Henry scored a hat-trick as Arsenal said goodbye to Highbury with a 4-2 win over Wigan on Sunday which also guaranteed a place in the Champions League next

Henry, linked with a post-season move to Barcelona, fired home the ninth treble of his Gunners' career as Arsenal geared up for this season's Champions League final against the Spanish giants on May 17 in spectac-

Manager Arsene Wenger was delighted at the way in which his side brought down the curtain on the club's 93-year stay at Highbury. "For the history of the club and for

the history of this building here, to finish on a high I am very proud," the Frenchman told reporters. Henry, who finished the season

as the Premiership's top scorer with 27 goals, added: "No one now can say we didn't deserve it. We are fourth and we are going to play the final of the Champions League.

"At the end of 38 games the table

When Henry completed his hattrick from the penalty spot he fell to the floor and kissed the turf. "It was a kiss goodbye to the stadium," he said, refusing to comment on the Barcelona speculation.

As Wenger spoke, out on the pitch Arsenal fans remained behind for a 90-minute party that included music and a parade of former Gunners' heroes, including lan Wright and another successful manager. George Graham. Bob Wilson and Charlie George

stars of the 1971 side that won the league and FA Cup, made an appearance as Roger Daltrey, lead singer of The Who and one of Arsenal's many celebrity fans, sung a specially composed song about the history of the old stadium. Arsenal's victory, coupled with a

defeat for Tottenham against West Ham, saw the Gunners snatch fourth spot and with it the final qualification place in next season's Champions League at the expense of their north London rivals. This was the last match at Highbury before the stadium is

redeveloped as luxury flats and Arsenal take up residence at a new 60,000-capacity venue in nearby Ashburton Grove. Wigan had the historic game's first chance with midfielder David

Thompson shooting over from outside the box in the third minute. After Henry had a shot blocked, Arsenal opened the scoring in the

eighth minute Fellow France international Robert Pires, finding himself free in the box, fired home a close-range shot after his first effort was saved by Wigan goalkeeper Mike Pollitt.

The crowd at a ground often derided as the 'Highbury library' by visiting fans responded by turning up the volume in honour of Arsenal

greats, past and present The music died temporarily however, as Wigan interrupted the

party with a tenth-minute equalizer. The Lancashire side, looking to end on a high during their first sea-

ment -- a substitution that coincided son in the top flight, had defender Paul Scharner to thank for latching on to a free-kick whipped into the penalty area by Thompson.

Looking to regain the ascendancy, Arsenal drove forward, but Arsenal's second after being set free

the 33rd minute, Thompson driving home a direct free-kick from about 30 yards. The ball deceived Arsena goalkeeper Jens Lehmann, bouncing over the German international. But the crowd only had to wait

two minutes again for the equalizer, Henry slotting the ball past Pollitt after running on to a through ball as Wigan's defenders looked to play him offside. Wigan began the second half in

similar bright fashion, with Lee McCulloch and Henri Camara going But Arsenal fought back and with

an hour almost played, Henry intercepted a misplaced back pass by Thompson, rounded Pollitt and nudged the ball into the empty net. With a little over 15 minutes

out to Freddie Ljungberg. What followed was extraordinary, as Johansson immediately brought down the Swede in the box. Johansson was red-carded and Henry scored his hat-trick from the

resulting penalty. The biggest cheer was saved until last, however, as Dennis Bergkamp came on for his last ever Arsenal league match before retirewith news that West Ham had taken the lead against Spurs.

West Ham left Spurs' Champions League hopes in tatters, the White Hart Lane side pipped to the fourth Champions League spot by bitter rivals Arsenal.

The game went ahead despite several Spurs players suffering from food poisoning, although their starting line-up showed no notable Midfielder Carl Fletcher let fly

from 30 metres to give the hosts the lead before West Ham old boys Michael Carrick and Jermain Defoe combined for Defoe to equalise from a tight angle. Spurs' England keeper Paul

Robinson saved Teddy

Sheringham's penalty but West Ham won it 10 minutes from time when Yossi Benayoun blasted in. Elsewhere, United won 4-0 against Charlton but the main talking point came before the start when Dutch striker Ruud van Nistelrooy stormed

Louis Saha's 15th goal of the season began the rout on a sorry day for departing Charlton manager Alan Curbishley, stepping down after 15 years at the helm.

out of Old Trafford after being left out of

Cristiano Ronaldo and a Jason Euell own goal had United 3-0 up at the break and Kieran Richardson added a fourth.

Liverpool also won 3-1 away to Portsmouth but it was overshadowed by an injury to Spanish midfielder Xabi Alonso-- that might rule him out of the World Cup.

### SERIE A

## Title race down to the wire

Football

Juventus moved closer to their 29th Serie A title with a 2-1 home win over Palermo on Sunday

Second-placed AC Milan won 3-2 at Parma, leaving Juventus three points clear of their rivals with one game to go.

In next week's final round of games. Milan are at home to AS Roma and Juventus play away to Reggina but at a neutral ground.

The only way that Milan can now lift the title is if they win their final game and Juventus lose, leaving the teams tied but the crown going to Milan who have the better headto-head record.

The battle for fourth place, which brings a place in the third qualifying round of the Champions League, will also go down to the wire after Fiorentina defended their two-point advantage over Roma Fiorentina crushed Reggina 5-2

while Roma won 1-0 at home to Juve's final game at the Delle

Alpi stadium before it undergoes

tense affair -- on and off the field.

Czech Pavel Nedved fired Fabio Capello's side ahead in the 31st minute before Swede Zlatan Ibrahimovic made it 2-0 six minutes into the second half.

Palermo fought back with a superb shot from Denis Godeas in the 62nd minute and Juventus were forced to hang on against some intense pressure nthe final half hour.

Off the field, Juve's management have been put under scrutiny following the publication of embarrassing telephone intercepts featuring general manager Luciano Moggi talking about refereeing appointments with a Football Federation

Media reports have speculated

that Moggi, chief executive Antonio Giraudo and vice-president Roberto Bettega's positions at the club are in doubt and former Italy international Bettega was in tears at the end of the game. Milan were hoping for a slip-up

from Juventus that never came but they did their bit, albeit with some sweating of their own at the end of the game The match started badly for

Ukrainian striker Andriy Shevchenko limped off with an

injury after eight minutes. A penalty from Brazilian Kaka put Milan on their way in the 29th minute and then Kaka set up compatriot Cafu to make it 2-0 two minutes

before the interval. Parma pulled one back through Bernardo Corradi after the break but Dutch midfielder Clarence Seedorf restored Milan's two-goal cushion with a thundering free kick from 25

metres. That cushion was needed as Corradi headed a second for Parma two minutes from the end but Milan held on to win.

Italy striker Luca Toni took his season's tally to 30 with two goals in Fiorentina's impressive performance while Roma midfielder Damiano Tommasi scored the goal against Treviso.

Treviso, Lecce and Messina have already taken up the three relegation places while on Saturday Bergamo club Atalanta secured promotion from Serie B with three games remaining.

PRIMERA LIGA

## Differing emotions across Spain

Football

Real Madrid's Zinedine Zidane bid a moving farewell to the Santiago Bernabeu on Sunday while, at the other end of the Spanish first division, Cadiz endured an emotional night for all the wrong reasons as they were relegated. French superstar Zidane, who

will retire after the World Cup, scored on his last home appearance but Real were still held to a 3-3 draw by Villarreal. Real opened the scoring after

22 minutes from Julio Baptista but Villarreal fought back with goals from an Alvaro Meija own goal and Diego Forlan. Zidane found the net after 66

minutes only for Forlan to find the net from the penalty spot four minutes from time. However, in barely a minute, Julio Baptista headed an

equaliser to salvage a point and return Real back to second place. Real are now one point and

one place ahead of Valencia, their

only other challengers for automatic entry into next season's Champions League group stages, going into the last game of the

Cadiz, last season's second

gated back to the lower league when they lost 3-1 at Getafe. "It was the turn of the last card. and it wasn't to be," said Cadiz

division champions, were rele-

coach Victor Esparrago "We had a good first half and then we got tired. It's sad for the

supporters who have followed us all over Spain. Three goals from Getafe in the last 20 minutes condemned Cadiz after they had taken the lead

Lucas Lobas.

Alaves look good prospects to be the third team to go down after they lost 3-0 at Real Zaragoza.

midway through the first half from

Diego Milito headed Zaragoza into the lead, former Brazilian international Savio scored from the penalty spot, and Oscar Gonzalez completed the scoring after 71 minutes.

Alaves need to win their last game at home to Deportivo La Coruna and Espanyol must drop

points at Real Sociedad for the Basque side to survive. Racing Santander saved their

skins with a last gasp 2-1 win over Osasuna, who remain fourth. Real Sociedad also secured

their first division future despite

giving away a two-goal lead and being held 2-2 by Celta Vigo. Real Betis are another side that breathe a little easier after they won 2-1 over Real Mallorca.

First half goals from Betis Brazilian strike force of Assuncao and Robert put them well in control although Mallorca got one

back in the second half thanks to a Yordi Gonzalez header. Athletic Bilbao kept alive their accolade of being one one of

three teams to be ever-present in the Spanish first division with a 2-1 win at Deportivo. Spanish champions Barcelona

continued their celebrations with 2-0 win over local rivals Espanyol on Saturday thanks to an own goal from Daniel Jarque and a second from Ronaldinho.

## Rudd to get the boot?

## Football

**INTERNET**, undated

Ruud van Nistelrooy's Manchester United future should be determined within the next 48 hours by a conversation between Sir Alex Ferguson and chief executive David Gill.

away from Old Trafford three hours before yesterday's 4-0 home win over Charlton was very ill-advised if the Dutchman felt he was part of Ferguson's long-term plans. More likely, the move was the final

act before what seems certain to be a summer parting of the ways between the 29-year-old and the club he has scored an incredible 150 goals for.

Rather than try to gloss over Van Nistelrooy's unscheduled exit, Ferguson instead pointed to the former PSV Eindhoven's poor attitude

Charlton's visit as evidence for his decision to leave him out of his starting

'Sometimes in management, you have to take tough decisions, said

in the best interests of Manchester incidents in training this week which

'There have been a couple of have concerned me about team spirit.

Ferguson. 'I have made one I feel was

'This was such an important game for us, I just wanted everyone together so I felt Ruud should be left out of the

'I do not need to say anything else about it. I will discuss it with the direc-If history is anything to go by, the

`discussion' will be more like Ferguson telling Gill he no longer wants Van Nistelrooy, who has two years of a contract worth an estimated £90,000 a week still to run.

the one which saw David Beckham depart for Real Madrid three years ago, Gill will then be forced to try to attract the most amount of cash possible for a player who cost £18.5million when he arrived from Holland in 2001.

Van Nistelrooy's absence, from ooth the game and a post-match lap of honour which Wayne Rooney turned up for, overshadowed a comprehensive home win that sent United straight into next season's Champions League group phase.

Louis Saha and Cristiano Ronaldo netted within quick succession. A Jason Euell own goal put United three up before Kieran Richardson gave one final nudge to Sven-Goran Eriksson with a thunderous fourth just

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**CRYPTOQUIP** 

VKIGKMD, K IQXXRIW GW

DANCE SCHOOL HAD TO SHUT DOWN, PROBABLY BECAUSE IT WENT BALLET UP. Today's Cryptoquip Clue: X equals P

The Cryptoguip 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

### 30 barrier REUTERS, Milan Fiorentina's Italy international striker Luca Toni struck twice in his

Toni breaks

The last man to reach 30 goals in a season was Argentine Anton Valentin Angelillo who scored 33 goals in the 1958/1959 season for Inter Milan.

Toni is only the third Italian born

player to have achieved the feat in

Serie A following Felice Placido

team's 5-2 win over Reggina on

Sunday to become the first player in

47 years to score 30 goals in Serie

Borel of Juventus in 1934 and Giuseppe Meazza for Inter Milan in 1930. Both scored 31 goals. Fiorentina's win maintained their two point lead over AS Roma in the battle for fourth place in Serie A which brings a place in the qualify-

ing round for next season's Champions League. Toni is expected to lead the line for Marcello Lippi's Italy in the World

## **Desailly calls**

time

Cup finals in Germany.

Former France captain Marcel Desailly said on Sunday he had

work in football.'

moving to AC Milan.

trophy with the Italian side in 1994.

**REUTERS, Paris** 

ended his playing career Desailly confirmed his retirement on French TV station Canal Plus but added: "I'm going to continue to

A member of France's 1998 World Cup and 2000 European championship-winning teams, the 37-year-old defender earned a French record of 116 caps before retiring from international soccer in 2004.

Desailly made his professional debut at Nantes and helped Olympique Marseille to win the Champions League in 1993 before

He lifted again the continental He played for English Premier League club Chelsea before he joined Qatar's Al Gharafa in 2004.

He has been without a club since

November 2005.

Football

**REUTERS, Buenos Aires** Boca Juniors won the Argentine

running with a 2-0 victory at Independiente on Sunday. Strikers Rodrigo Palacio and Martin Palmermo scored either side of halftime as Boca, one of the country's most popular clubs, wrapped up the title with one match to spare.

Boca, who have 40 points from 18

games, took an unassailable six-

championship for the second year

point lead over second-placed Lanus in the Clausura championship, the second of two separate league tournaments played in the Argentine Led by Argentina's 1994 World Cup coach Alfio Basile, Boca com-

pleted a double after winning the Apertura championship played in the first half of the 2005-06 season. In other matches. Lanus were held to a 0-0 draw away to Velez Sarsfield and there were mixed

feelings for Racing Club coach Diego Simeone's side won 2-0 at River Plate for their fourth win in a row but

the result came amid reports that the

former Argentina midfielder will be

**Boca retain title** 

replaced at the end of the season. Boca have now won 22 titles in the various formats used since Argentine football turned professional in 1931 but are still 10 behind their arch-rivals

They have won every competition

they have competed in since Basile took over last June, having also won the Copa Sudamericana, played last December This is all down to the players, I have a great squad and we were the

best,' said Basile. 'The boys never let me down. Mid-table Independiente were missing 17-year-old striker Sergio Aguero, suspended after receiving a

fifth yellow card last week, and played second fiddle for most of the game. Boca strikers Rodrigo Palacio and Martin Palermo combined to produce

both goals

played a clever diagonal pass to set up Palacio, who beat Oscar Ustari with a clinical finish. Immediately after halftime,

Palacio returned the complement as he crossed from the byline and Palermo headed in.

In the 36th minute, Palermo

Gonzalo Vargas who scored the winner as Gimnasia-La Plata won 3-2 at Newell's Old Boys on Saturday.

nament but this time looking overawed, could manage only a goalless stalemate on Saturday. At the other end of the table, Racing's revival continued at River,

Libertad on Thursday. cross from Juan Manuel Torres in the 38th minute and Claudio Fileppi put

shot just before fulltime. sent off for a second bookable

offence. Simeone began the championship in February as a Racing

embarked on a winning streak in the It was Palermo's 11th goal of the competition, one behind Uruguayan

Boca Juniors players collectively celebrate retaining the Clausura Tournament after a win against Independiente on

Pires failed to score his and by Ashley Cole mid-way through the Wigan then took a shock lead in

remaining, Wigan sent on Andreas Johansson and Arsenal gave a run-

Boca had needed only a draw after Lanus, the surprise of the tour-

who rested several players before their Libertadores Cup quarter-final first leg tie at home to Paraguay's Maximiliano Morales, the smallest player on the pitch, headed home a

the finishing touches with an angled River striker Lucas Pusineri was

midfielder but was persuaded by the club to bring forward his retirement and take over as coach. Racing won only one of their first nine games under Simeone but

## Podolski set for Bayern

AFP, Cologne

Germany's shooting star Lukas Podolski revealed Monday that he is set to join newly-crowned German champions Bayern Munich after next month's World Cup finals in his home-

FC Cologne forward Podolski has been coveted by several top clubs in the Bundesliga but the 20-year-old striker is to make Munich his new home. "It was a really difficult decision.

Werder Bremen and Hamburg are

both attractive options and I thought

about them, but Bayern are the best club in Germany at the moment, Podolski said in Bild daily. "I always wanted to play at the very top and challenge myself. At Bayern would have to measure myself against top stars every day and that is

an advantage '

Cologne have just been relegated from the Bundesliga and Bayern are reportedly ready to offer seven million euros for Podolski Cologne are reluctant to sell but are likely to do business as a get-out

one million euros next summer "The time is right for both clubs and hope the transfer goes through as soon as possible," Podolski added. "I have to thank this club for every-

thing. The fans are unique in the

Bundesliga and I will never forget

them for the way they stuck by me in

clause allows Podolski to leave for just

Podolski has disappointed with 10 eague goals so far this season but his record of 10 goals in 22 internationals suggests he can be a prolific striker. With Dutch international Roy Makaay, Paraguayan star Roque Santa Cruz and Peruvian internation-

als Claudio Pizarro and Paolo

Guerrero striking competition is fierce

at Bayern but Podolski says he is not

World Cup with his nation opening the

tournament against Costa Rica in

"If it came to that (sitting on the substitutes bench) I would not have a problem with it. I am young and still have a lot to learn," Podolski declared. Podolski is expected to spearhead Germany's attack at next month's

Munich on June 9.

worried.

Van Nistelrooy's decision to drive

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