



Nuremberg's Ivan Saenko (R) tries to stave off a challenge from Bayern Munich midfielder Martin Demichelis (L) during their Bundesliga match at the Allianz Arena in Munich on Saturday.

Derby draws a blank

Reigning champions Bayern Munich missed the chance to move top of the Bundesliga after a 0-0 stalemate with neighbours FC Nuremberg on Saturday. Bayern had won both of their opening matches and had the opportunity to capitalise on an early slip from title rivals Werder Bremen who lost 2-0 to Schalke 04 on Friday. The league and cup winners had the better of the match but could not take their chances with Dutch forward Roy Makaay the main culprit missing an open goal from five metres out. "We took our time getting control of the match but sometimes you have days when the ball simply won't go in," said Bayern coach

Felix Magath. "We certainly had one of those days. "We have seven points which is not the maximum but we can be happy with our tally from August." Nuremberg, who had also collected a maximum six points, stood firm and lead the 18-strong German top-flight on goal difference. "A 0-0 against Bayern keeps up the good atmosphere around the club," said Nuremberg coach Hans Meyer. "It was our target to stay up near the top of the table. We have managed that although in the second half we had luck on our side." Schalke 04 and Bayern are second and third with Bremen falling to fifth. Despite taking a 4-0 hammering by Barcelona in a midweek friendly, Magath resisted the temptation to recall England international Owen Hargreaves to the starting line-up. Midfielder Hargreaves was on the substitutes bench as the club punish him for trying to force a 25

million euro move to Manchester United. Bayern started the brighter and Hasan Salihamidzic forced a fine save from Raphael Schaefer. Near the end of the first half Makaay was presented with a glorious chance but with the goal wide open the Dutch forward somehow hit the side netting instead of the goal. He will not want to see the replays. It proved costly as Bayern had to settle for a point and the club will see it as a missed chance to open up an early points advantage over Bremen. Schalke ripped up the formbook to triumph 2-0 courtesy of goals from German international forward Kevin Kuranyi and substitute Hamit Altintop. "We are delighted to leapfrog Bremen who are a great team," said Schalke coach Mirko Slomka. "We had no many chances to win the game convincingly but we will take the 2-0. There is no point in

getting carried away though as we have only played three games." Only an inspired performance from Bremen goalkeeper Tim Wiese, emerging as a candidate for the German national team, prevented Schalke from racking up a tennis score as Bremen looked anything but champion material. "I cannot remember the last time we played so poorly," said Bremen striker Miroslav Klose. "We should just be glad that it was only 1-0 for so much of the game." Brazilian journalists were at the game to monitor Bremen's in-form playmaker Diego but it was Schalke's Brazilian Lincoln that stole the show. "They came to see Diego but ended up watching Lincoln," said Schalke's Brazilian defender Marcelo Bordon.

Ronaldinho out of Vigo clash

Spanish and European champions Barcelona will be without their influential Brazilian playmaker Ronaldinho for their opening match of the season against Celta Vigo on Monday. Ronaldinho took a "knock on his left thigh" during the Spanish giants' 3-0 humbling by Sevilla in the European Super Cup on Friday, according to a club statement on Sunday. It added: "The injury is hurting him, so he's not 100 percent fit to play tomorrow." Barcelona coach Frank Rijkaard will also be missing Brazilian defenders Belletti and Sylvinho. Dutchman Rijkaard meanwhile is set to hand a club debut to Italian World Cup winner Gianluca Zambrotta, who can play in defence as well as on the left or right flanks.

Rio to sit out qualifiers

Manchester United defender Rio Ferdinand looks certain to be ruled out of England's Euro 2008 qualifiers against Andorra and Macedonia after suffering a suspected broken toe. Ferdinand sustained the injury during United's 2-1 Premiership win at Watford on Saturday and will undergo scans over the weekend to determine the exact nature of the problem. England coach Steve McClaren had been set to pair Ferdinand with John Terry at the heart of his team's back four when they open their qualifying campaign against Andorra at Old Trafford next Saturday. But United manager Sir Alex Ferguson told MUTV: "We think Rio might have a broken toe, so I don't think he will be joining up with England."

Gravesen fears transfer stalemate

Real Madrid midfielder Thomas Gravesen fears his career may be on hold until January if he does not move before the transfer window closes on Thursday night. The 30-year-old will be allowed to leave the Bernabeu Stadium once clubs agree a fee with the Spanish giants. Celtic manager Gordon Strachan remains hopeful he can complete a deal for the ex-Everton player. But he faces competition from Everton, Newcastle, Bolton and Middlesbrough for the player's services. Gravesen's agent, John Sivebaek, believes a deal can be concluded over the next 48 hours but the player himself is concerned he will not join a new club before he has to link up with the Denmark squad for the Euro 2008 qualifier against Iceland. Gravesen said: "It is in my mind there are five days left and I go into the Denmark camp on Sunday. "I fear I will be stuck in Madrid not playing and doing the thing I love." But the Real man, who moved to Spain from Everton for around 2.5 million dollars in January 2005, admits his immediate future is the hands of the businessmen at the clubs involved. Gravesen told BBC Sport: "I am aware of his (Strachan's) interest. I am interested in going as well. "But it is out of my hands now and it is down to the guys who do business-side of things. "I have had interest from Newcastle, Everton, Middlesbrough and Bolton. "I am hoping something can be done. I want to find a way back to playing football."

Reports claim the French striker's agents have met with officials from the Premiership club to discuss a possible move to Old Trafford. United are still on the lookout for a striker to replace Ruud van Nistelrooy, who joined Real Madrid earlier in the summer. However, with just four days to go before the transfer window closes, Sir Alex Ferguson was thought to have turned his attentions to bringing another midfielder to the club. Trezeguet has been constantly linked with a move away from Juventus during the summer following their relegation to Serie B because of their part in the match-fixing scandal. But the 28-year-old was expected to remain at the Stadio Delle Alpi after insisting he was happy at the club.

Reyes wants out of England

Arsenal's Spanish international striker Jose Antonio Reyes insisted Sunday that his Premiership career is over. The 22-year-old is determined to play at home in Spain and says he is ready to sign for any of the clubs showing an interest in him. "I want to return to Spain. I won't play in England again," Reyes told sports daily Marca. "I want to come home. If it's to play for Atletico, the answer is yes, if it's to play for Real Madrid I say yes and if it's to play for Sevilla it's yes again..." Sports daily AS reported meanwhile that the player has negotiated a four-year deal with Atletico subject to agreement from the Premiership club. But the offer is reported to remain the 16 million euros (20.4 million dollars) which Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger on Friday branded an "insult". Atletico had already had a 13 million euros (16.6 million dollars) bid rejected the day before that. Wenger insists he will not be pressured into a cut-price deal. Arsenal had been demanding 25 million euro before dropping to 22 million.

Babies for 'repair kits'!

Premiership footballers are storing stem cells from their newborn babies to use in case of their own career-threatening sports injuries, according to a report here Sunday. They are freezing cells taken from the umbilical cord blood of their babies as a possible future cure for cartilage and ligament problems, the Sunday Times newspaper reported. Five professional footballers have frozen their children's stem cells with Liverpool-based CryoGenesis International (CGI), and London-based Smart Cells, has done the same for three Premiership players in the past year. One Premier League footballer, playing in the northwest of England,

explained: "We decided to store our new baby's stem cells for possible future therapeutic reasons, both for our children and possibly for myself. "As a footballer, if you're prone to injury it can mean the end of your career, so having your stem cells -- a repair kit if you like -- on hand makes sense," added the player, who declined to be named. Paul Griffiths, managing director of CGI, said: "This has been carried out experimentally. The stem cells are injected directly into the knee and because they have the same genetic code they start rebuilding." One professional footballer known to have stored stem cells for his children's future use is Arsenal's French international striker Thierry Henry, although there is no indication he intends them for his own use. Over 11,000 British parents have in the past five years paid up to 1,500 pounds (2,831 dollars) to store their babies' stem cells to use should their children become ill.

United target Trezeguet

Press speculation in Italy is linking Manchester United with a renewed bid for Juventus striker David Trezeguet. Reports claim the French striker's agents have met with officials from the Premiership club to discuss a possible move to Old Trafford. United are still on the lookout for a striker to replace Ruud van Nistelrooy, who joined Real Madrid earlier in the summer. However, with just four days to go before the transfer window closes, Sir Alex Ferguson was thought to have turned his attentions to bringing another midfielder to the club. Trezeguet has been constantly linked with a move away from Juventus during the summer following their relegation to Serie B because of their part in the match-fixing scandal. But the 28-year-old was expected to remain at the Stadio Delle Alpi after insisting he was happy at the club.

Betis bid for Odonkor

Spanish side Real Betis have launched a bid for Borussia Dortmund's German international winger David Odonkor, the German club confirmed Sunday. "David told us that he wants to listen to the offer," said Dortmund press spokesman Josef Scheck. Betis sold Spanish international wide-man Joaquin to Valencia for 25 million euros in midweek and want Odonkor as a replacement for a reported seven million euros. The 22-year-old Odonkor, renowned for his electric pace, was a surprise late inclusion in Germany's World Cup squad in Germany's Klinsmann calling him in despite the Dortmund man being uncapped. Odonkor was often used as a substitute on the right flank and caught the eye as hosts Germany finished third after losing 2-0 to eventual victors Italy in the semi-final.

Capello rediscovers Cassano

Cassano, but Capello seems to be suggesting it could be as early as today, when the Coach names the squad for his Euro 2008 qualifiers against Lithuania and France. The Real Madrid boss also gave his view on Ronaldo, who was on the verge of joining Milan this week and is still linked with a 15-million-pound switch to Inter. "I spoke to him, but not about his situation. As far as I am concerned, he is a Real Madrid player. He works hard all day and has lost weight. He still needs a month to be fully fit, though." Antonio Cassano has already returned to his old self and hinted he's due for an Azzurri recall by Roberto Donadoni. "Antonio is getting back to the player I knew," said the new Real Madrid Coach, who had brought the best out of the young talent at Roma. "He has lost weight, is in good shape and is showing some great technique in training. It's no coincidence that Donadoni put him on stand-by for a call-up to the Nazionale." Cassano had been frozen out of the Italy squad after his well-publicised personality clashes with Under-21 boss Claudio Gentile and the contract dispute with Roma that saw him sidelined for six months. His move to Real Madrid in January had been characterised by Spanish jibes over his weight, but the arrival of Capello seems to have shaken him out of this torpor. Donadoni had hinted upon his appointment to the Azzurri bench that he would open the door to



ANTONIO CASSANO

Keane closer to Sunderland job

Former Manchester United captain Roy Keane took a step closer to taking over the helm at Sunderland, by visiting the club's training facilities on Sunday. The 35-year-old, who only retired from playing in the close season after a six-month stint at Scottish champions Celtic, took a trip to Sunderland's Academy of Light. And he is also expected to be among the crowd on Monday at the Stadium of Light as Sunderland take on West Brom in a must-win Championship match. Despite starting the season as one of the promotion favourites, Sunderland are rock-bottom after four games with no points. At the start of the season, chairman Niall Quinn had appointed himself as manager but quit in midweek after his side were dumped out of the League Cup by League Two Bury, who at the time were propping up the entire football league structure in England.

Wenger cool over Cole

Arsene Wenger insists he is not frustrated by the continuing uncertainty surrounding Ashley Cole's future despite Arsenal's stuttering start to their Premiership campaign. Cole was once again missing from the Gunners' line-up for Saturday's 1-0 defeat against Manchester City at Eastlands and Wenger admitted his side lacked experience in the back-four after losing to a Joey Barton penalty. The England left-back's future will be decided one way or the other when the transfer window closes at midnight Thursday (2300GMT) with Cole set to join Chelsea if the Premiership champions up their 16 million pounds offer closer to Arsenal's 20 million pounds asking price. Although Arsenal have failed to win their opening two league

matches, Wenger refuses to get ruffled by the situation. "If it happens, it happens," he said. "And if not, we will carry on. I don't find the situation annoying. If a player wants to leave a club, he generally goes." With Spain winger Jose Antonio Reyes also looking increasingly likely to leave, Wenger is hoping his squad quickly finds form although he claims he never expected anything other than a sluggish start. "We are not ready and that shows in the final third where we are not sharp enough," he added. "But we knew that would be the case with people coming back from the World Cup and the Champions League qualifying round. But we can take a lot of positives out of this game and defeat will not affect our confidence. "We are also missing some experience in the back-four but we will be okay. If people want to make others champions after three

games, that's up to them. But we have only played two games and we'll come back into it." For Manchester City manager Stuart Pearce the victory came as a relief after a week in which the club suspended left back Ben Thatcher for his vicious challenge on Portsmouth's Pedro Mendes. Pearce believes the defender has learned his lesson although he is bracing himself for further punishment from the FA and, possibly, the police. "We will continue with our internal investigations into the incident and we will then decide when Ben should return," Pearce said. "But I honestly think the whole thing has sunk in with Ben. "He has said he is willing to take whatever punishment is thrown at him because he knows he has done wrong. I told him to stay away from the ground today because I thought it would be better for everyone concerned."

Lyon maul Nice

Portugal striker Pauleta grabbed a brace late in the match to level, taking his goals tally to 121 and thus surpassing Lilian Laslandes as the French league's highest goalscorer still actively playing. However Pauleta and PSG's joy was ended by Ziani when he stepped up to convert from the penalty spot 10 minutes from time to wrap up the points. Brittany side Lorient also grabbed a league scalp in the shape of Nantes. The former champions succumbed to a 3-1 defeat which came down to the exploits of striker Andre-Pierre Gignac, who on his starting team debut for Sochaux in the top flight scored a hat-trick in a blistering first half. Canaries striker Frederic Da Rocha waited only 10 minutes before levelling Gignac's opener in the second minute, however his and Nantes' joy was to be short lived as Gignac added goals in the 15th and 28th minutes. Lille maintained their tradition of enjoying a solid start to the season with a 3-0 whitewash at home to Bordeaux. Goals from Yohan Cabaye, Mathieu Bodmer and Peter

Odemwingie put Lille in second in the table just a point behind Lyon. Minnows Troyes were, along with Nice, the other team to lose at home on the night with a 2-1 defeat to visitors Toulouse. Vahuria's opening goal for Nice against Lyon was a joy. He robbed Brazilian playmaker Juninho in the middle of the park and then ran purposefully at goal before drifting to his right and chipping the on-rushing Lyon goalkeeper Gregory Coupet. Nice held on until the break but just four minutes after it they were undone. Portugal midfielder Tiago escaped down the left and fed Rod Fanni, who in turn set up Malouda for a clinical finish. Twenty minutes later it was 2-1 as Cris's miscued shot looped up to Malouda who centred for the unmarked Benzema to head nonchalantly into an unguarded net. Only five minutes after that Tiago increased the lead, with France international Malouda again involved, before Benzema wrapped up victory from the penalty spot in stoppage time.



Lyon forward Sylvain Wiltord is ecstatic as he scores against Nice during their Ligue 1 match at the Ray stadium in Nice on Saturday.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

A crossword puzzle grid with clues. The grid is 11 columns wide and 18 rows high. Clues are provided for both across and down words. The puzzle is titled 'CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer'.

A cryptogram puzzle. It consists of a grid of letters and a key below it. The key is: C V F G M V V C X O Y ' R. The puzzle is titled 'CRYPTOQUIP'.

Today's Cryptogram Clue: V equals F. The Cryptogram 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.