

# Ferguson expects Rooney to shine

AFP, Reading



Sir Alex Ferguson is backing Wayne Rooney to fire Manchester United to Champions League glory at Benfica despite failing to sparkle as his side were held by Reading on Saturday. Rooney made only his third league appearance of the season as United tackled Premiership newcomers Reading, but could not earn them the victory needed to regain the top spot. Ferguson was full of praise for the England striker in the 1-1 draw despite further question marks over his level of performance since returning from the World Cup. United manager Ferguson said: "I thought Wayne was much better today and he looks a lot sharper with every game. "That was only his sixth game in the last six months and that is not a lot for a young lad. "He tired in the last 15 minutes but his all round game was very good and that bodes well for Tuesday night. "United looked to be heading to a

second successive Premiership defeat when Kevin Doyle, a boyhood United fan, put Reading in front from the penalty spot after Gary Neville handled in the box. Ferguson's side enjoyed plenty of possession but could not find any cutting edge in front of goal. Most of Rooney's good work was being done outside the penalty area and it needed a sparkling solo goal from his World Cup nemesis Cristiano Ronaldo to earn a point. Ronaldo was easily the best player on the pitch and made his presence tell in the 73rd minute, cutting in from the left before outwitting two Reading defenders and shooting left-footed into the bottom left hand corner. Reading manager Steve Coppell, a former United player, was full of admiration for one of his successors in wearing United's famous number seven jersey. Coppell said: "Ronaldo is a terrific player but he can be as good as he wants to be. "He has got pace, he is dangerous with both feet, he is six-foot-three and 13-and-a-half stone. "He will probably be on any managers shopping list given the

opportunity and you can see why United want to keep him. "We will wake up in the morning and see this as a good point, but we are disappointed not to have won. "United have some form players but we gave them a terrific game. "We have some of the big teams to come here in the next few weeks and I hope we can play as well as we did today. "Once we get to nine or ten games of the season we will have a better idea of where we are." Ferguson will now rally his troops for their trip to Portugal as they return to the scene of last seasons premature European exit. Ferguson said: "Every team is going to drop points somewhere over the course of the season and at least we have not been beaten. "We have made a solid start to the season and last week against Arsenal was disappointing but we did not play badly today. "We brought back Nemanja Vidic and Gabriel Henize after injury and they were a different class, hopefully they will take that form into Tuesday."

## Juve win again

AFP, Rome

Juventus coach Didier Deschamps is refusing to get carried away by his team's winning streak in Serie B after Saturday's 4-0 thrashing of Modena. French striker David Trezeguet scored twice and Alessandro Del Piero and Pavel Nedved chipped in with a goal apiece to seal the Turin giants third successive victory. After being held to a 1-1 draw at Rimini on the opening day of the season, Juventus -- starting on minus 17 points for their part in the Italian match-fixing scandal -- have taken maximum points from their last three games. But Deschamps knows that although they are chipping away nicely at their deficit, promotion is still a very tall order. "We must be careful because now it becomes difficult," said the former France international as Juve

# Ancelotti's spat with Seedorf



INTERNET, undated

Yesterday's newspapers in Italy were highlighting the vicious touch-line row between Carlo Ancelotti and Clarence Seedorf. The pitch side television cameras caught the exchange during Saturday's 0-0 draw at Livorno and it came just a few days after a similar argument with Kaka. "You have to play the ball quickly. You're too slow," said the Coach from the side of the field. Seedorf responded: "Focus on Coaching. You can't just criticise. Instead of shouting, you might like to give us a hand from the bench." Ancelotti was furious and answered the Dutchman. "And you

focus on playing. You're lucky I've run out of substitutions, otherwise you'd be off." The 0-0 draw at the Stadio Armando Picchi was Milan's first stalemate of the season, as they had won all three of their Serie A games and as many in the Champions League. Nonetheless, reports of tension within the Rossoneri camp hit boiling point with this exchange and Ancelotti took his anger out on the media. "I'm not angry about what happened, as it's between Seedorf and me. I won't explain it to you, otherwise it'll get turned into a soap opera like the Kaka discussion. If I'm angry it's because there's always a camera under my nose and getting on my nerves." SEE PAGE 18 COL 5



Chelsea's Frank Lampard is ecstatic after scoring his second goal against Fulham during their Premiership match at Craven Cottage on Saturday.

PHOTO: AFP

## Mourinho hails fabulous Frank

AFP, London

Jose Mourinho insists Frank Lampard is back in the kind of form that can help Chelsea win a third consecutive Premiership title. Chelsea midfielder Lampard finally scored from the penalty spot as his brace gave Mourinho's side a 2-0 victory over west London rivals Fulham at Craven Cottage on Saturday. The England star, who was Chelsea's stand-in captain in the absence of John Terry, ended his run of three misses from four penalty kicks for club and country as he fired into the roof of the net, following a handball from Liam Rosenior. Lampard then added his second of the day with a splendid strike ten minutes from time to seal the points. Mourinho was delighted with his midfielder and praised the way his side dealt with Terry's late withdrawal with a back strain. "For me Frank has nothing to prove," Mourinho explained. "I said it was for Lampard and Andriy Shevchenko to share the responsibility, and Frank had a very good game so probably felt he would score. "Frank has made himself one of

# Lampard shoots Chelsea atop

REUTERS, London



Champions Chelsea hit the top of the table for the first time this season when a second-half Frank Lampard double earned them a 2-0 victory at local rivals Fulham in the Premier League on Saturday. England midfielder Lampard, criticised for his performances at the World Cup, took his season's tally to four with a 73rd-minute penalty and right-foot finish seven minutes later. Manchester United failed to join Chelsea at the top when they were held 1-1 at Reading in the evening game -- Cristiano Ronaldo rescuing a point for the Reds with a stunning strike. Liverpool and Arsenal, both on the up after poor starts, enjoyed emphatic 3-0 home wins. Dutchman Dirk Kuyt struck his second goal in four days at Anfield as Liverpool brushed Tottenham Hotspur aside in a rampant second half. Chile winger Mark Gonzalez

opened the scoring and John Arne Riise's thunderbolt condemned Spurs to their fourth defeat in six league matches. Arsenal's wait for a first league win at their new Emirates Stadium ended with victory over Sheffield United as French duo William Gallas and Thierry Henry were both on target. Martin O'Neill's much-improved Aston Villa climbed to fourth place with a 2-0 home victory over Charlton Athletic. Gabriel Agbonlahor and Luke Moore scoring the goals at Villa Park. Arjen Robben struck the under-side of the bar for Chelsea in the first half but they had to wait until the 63rd minute for their superiority to be rewarded when Liam Rosenior handled in the box and Lampard dispatched the penalty. Lampard then made the game safe after being set up by Didier Droghda's pass. "We clearly deserved the three points," Chelsea coach Jose Mourinho told Sky Sports, picking out Lampard for special praise. "He needs to know he is one of the best

players in the world and he needs to know always," added the Portuguese. Chelsea's fourth straight win takes them to 15 points from six matches, two ahead of surprise early pacesetters Portsmouth, who host Bolton Wanderers on Monday, and Manchester United. Reading, who have adapted well to the Premier League after storming to promotion last season, looked on course for a famous victory against United when Irish striker Kevin Doyle held his nerve to score from the penalty spot shortly after halftime. The former Cork City player beat Edwin van der Sar after Gary Neville handled a skidding cross in the area. United's pressure finally paid off after 73 minutes when Portugal forward Ronaldo produced a superb individual goal. Liverpool are up to sixth after maintaining their perfect home record this season against a Tottenham side who have managed just two goals in six games. Jermaine Jenas was guilty of a

horrible miss for Spurs in the second half, prodding wide from a metre out, just 30 seconds before Gonzalez put Liverpool in front. Kuyt, who scored his first goal for the Merseyside club against Newcastle United in midweek and is keeping England striker Peter Crouch on the bench, added the second and Riise's deadly left foot completed the rout. Arsenal are up to eighth, seven points behind Chelsea, after breaking through a resolute Sheffield United side in the second half at the Emirates. The Gunners breathed a sigh of relief after 65 minutes when defender Gallas, signed from Chelsea last month, rifled a shot into the net after a clever build up. Phil Jagielka's own goal four minutes later made the points safe before a rare Henry header added some goals. Watford are still looking for their first win of the season but moved off the bottom with a 1-1 draw at Wigan Athletic. SEE PAGE 18 COL 5



Real Madrid's Mahamadou Diarra (C) celebrates his strike with teammate Antonio Cassano against Real Betis during their Primera Liga match at the Ruiz de Lopera Stadium on Saturday.

PHOTO: AFP

# Real ride on Diarra

AFP, Seville

Real Madrid produced their most accomplished display since Fabio Capello took over as the coach of the Spanish giants to run out 1-0 winners at Real Betis here on Saturday. The victory puts Madrid on top of the Spanish first division for the first time in 11 months but they will slip back within 24 hours as the rest of the Spanish first division fixtures are being played on Sunday. However, Capello is unlikely to mind. After two wins and a draw against poor opposition and a demoralising 2-0 defeat by Lyon in the Champions League two weeks ago, Real Madrid finally showed what they should be capable of after their summer signing spree. Mahamadou Diarra scored the

only goal of the game, and his first for Real, since moving in the summer from Lyon, after just six minutes. The Malian midfielder sneaked in at the far post to put away a cross from fellow new boy Jose Antonio Reyes, as the Betis defence stood and watched. Betis keeper Toni Doblas, who had to take some of the blame for the goal after failing to come out to Diarra, redeemed himself by stopping Real going further ahead only moments after half time. Doblas bravely took the ball away from the feet of Ruud Van Nistelrooy when the Dutch striker was free and bearing down on goal. Betis had their moments and pressed hard for an equaliser in the final 15 minutes but their best chance came from a header by Spanish international defender Juanito Gutierrez after 35 minutes and Real keeper Iker Casillas had to work hard to keep the ball out of the net. The game ended on an un-

lucky note with Betis defender Nano Rivas being justifiably sent off after head butting Diarra in injury time. Former England captain David Beckham was once again on the bench, the first time he has been among the substitutes for two consecutive games since joining Real Madrid in 2003, although he did get on the field after 67 minutes. Real Betis's neighbours Sevilla will be looking to retain the leadership of the Spanish first division at Atletico Madrid on Sunday. One of only three teams with a 100 per cent record, the UEFA Cup winners are travelling to the Spanish capital full of optimism. "It should be three golden points. They haven't won at home since April and we are determined to carry on our great streak," commented Sevilla's highly rated wing-back Daniel Alves. Barcelona and Valencia, second and third respectively, are the two other teams with three wins out of three to start the season.

# Livorno frustrate Milan

AFP, Milan

AC Milan dropped their first points in Serie A on Saturday after they were held to a goalless draw at Livorno, while newly-promoted Catania drew 2-2 with Sicilian rivals Messina. Starting on minus eight points for their part in the Italian match-fixing

scandal, Milan came into their match full of confidence after three straight wins. But despite a promising first half, they lost their way in the second and might have even lost had Stefano Morrone been more accurate with his shooting. The 27-year-old Livorno midfielder was presented with a glit- edged chance just after the hour, but he struck the crossbar with the goal at his mercy.



Ricardo Oliveira had a chance to snatch the three points for Milan at the death when he tried to take the ball around Marco Amelia, but the Livorno keeper made a brave save at the feet of the predatory Brazilian. A draw for Milan, whose frustration was compounded by the loss of their captain Paolo Maldini in the fourth minute with a right thigh strain, left them on two points, seven behind leaders Palermo who play on Sunday. Milan coach Carlo Ancelotti was unhappy with the way his team faded after the interval. "We played well in the first half, but our form dipped in the second and we gave Livorno too much space in which to play," he said. "We lost our shape and they gave us a few problems. But a draw was a fair result. It's not easy for any team to come here and get a positive result." Livorno came closest to ending the stalemate in the 61st minute with a sweeping move. David Balleri sped down the right and whipped in an inviting cross for Ibrahim Bakayoko, but Alessandro Nesta was quick to intercept. However, the ball sat up nicely for Morrone whose drive shook the crossbar rather than ripple the net. Messina would have replaced Palermo as league leaders for a day at least had they won, but had to settle for a point which left them in second place on eight points. Sergio Floccari's close-range strike put Messina ahead before Giuseppe Masacara's glancing header levelled the score. Mascara celebrated his goal by taking off his shirt which earned him a second yellow card and an early bath. Despite being a man down, Catania went ahead when Gionatha Spinesi's low drive found the bottom corner, but Nicolas Cordova equalised for the visitors with a right-footed shot. Messina were then reduced to 10 men themselves when Mark Luliano received his second caution.

AC Milan striker Filippo Inzaghi (L) and midfielder Kaka look frustrated as they played out a goalless draw with Serie A rivals Livorno at the Communal Stadium on Saturday.



PHOTO: INTERNET

AC Milan striker Filippo Inzaghi (L) and midfielder Kaka look frustrated as they played out a goalless draw with Serie A rivals Livorno at the Communal Stadium on Saturday.