



PHOTO: AFP

Manchester United striker Ole Gunnar Solskjaer (C) celebrates his second goal with teammates during their Premiership match against Newcastle United at Old Trafford on Sunday.

'Ole, Ole' for United

AFP, London



Ole Gunnar Solskjaer's double strike sunk Newcastle and put Manchester United on top of the English Premiership on Sunday. Solskjaer scored just before and after half-time to claim his first league goals at Old Trafford for over three years and take Sir Alex Ferguson's side above champions Chelsea on goal difference. United had failed to win their previous two league matches but, inspired by a superb display from Portugal winger Cristiano Ronaldo, they got back on track against lacklustre Newcastle. After Chelsea's draw against Aston Villa on Saturday a win against Newcastle was crucial if United were to keep the pressure on

Jose Mourinho's side.

Norwegian striker Solskjaer broke Newcastle's resolve in the 41st minute when he tapped-in after Ronaldo had driven a shot against the post.

He added a second three minutes after the break when he deflected Nemanja Vidic's shot past Newcastle goalkeeper Steve Harper.

Elsewhere on Sunday South Korea winger Seol Ki-Hyeon piled on the misery for West Ham as his second minute goal clinched a 1-0 for Reading at Upton Park.

Seol scored with a superb long-range strike after 80 seconds at Upton Park to condemn West Ham to a fifth consecutive defeat and claim a fourth victory of the season for newly-promoted Reading.

West Ham have struggled to find any kind of form since the arrival of Argentina stars Carlos Tevez and

Javier Mascherano in August and Alan Pardew's side were again being their best.

Tevez tested Reading goalkeeper Marcus Hahmann with a couple of long-range efforts but the closest West Ham came to equalising was a Yossi Benayoun strike that was cleared off the line by Steve Sidwell in the final moments.

Tottenham had started the day in the bottom three but they earned only their second win of the season as goals from Danny Murphy and Jermain Defoe helped beat Portsmouth 2-1 at White Hart Lane.

Murphy back-heeled Tottenham into a first minute lead after David James had failed to hold Dimitar Berbatov's header.

Defoe increased the advantage when he scored his first goal of the season from the spot after Pedro Mendes was penalised for a foul on Didier Zokora.

Television replays suggested referee Chris Foy had got it wrong as Zokora went to ground even though former Tottenham midfielder Mendes had made no contact.

Nigerian striker Kanu pulled one back just before half time as he scored his fifth goal of the season with a powerful header from Gary O'Neil's cross.

But Harry Redknapp's side slipped to a second defeat in a week as they were unable to break down Tottenham again after the interval.

Blackburn striker Benni McCarthy grabbed a late winner as his side beat Wigan 2-1 at Ewood Park.

But Blackburn's debutant goalkeeper Jason Brown, on as a second half substitute for the injured Brad Friedel, deserves a share of the credit.

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Loew to rest stars

AFP, Berlin

Germany coach Joachim Loew hinted he could rest key players in Saturday's friendly against Georgia in Rostock as he looks ahead to their Euro 2008 qualifier in Slovakia on October 11.

"Players that have played a lot of football such as (Miroslav) Klose, (Torsten) Frings and (Philipp) Lahm will have individual programmes and time to recover," said Loew.

"These players will certainly not play the full 90 minutes against Georgia."

"The Georgia game is a chance to rest players and to test out one or two new faces. The important match is the one in Bratislava. We need to be 100 percent ready for that game and the Georgia match is to help us do that."

Alemannia Aachen striker Jan Schkraudraff, Werder Bremen defender Clemens Fritz and SV Hamburg midfielder Piotr Trochowski are the three new faces in the squad and will be hoping to make their debuts against Georgia.

Germany have started the qualifying campaign with a perfect two wins -- a 1-0 victory over the Republic of Ireland and a 13-0 annihilation of San Marino -- as Loew keeps faith with the players who helped the hosts finish third at the World Cup.

Striker Lukas Podolski has failed to get into the Bayern Munich team since a 10 million euro summer move from FC Cologne but the 21-year-old has a starting spot under Loew.

"He has scored five goals in the last two qualification matches and we are really happy with him," Loew said.

Bommel snubs Basten call-up

AFP, Munich

Bayern Munich midfielder Mark van Bommel said Monday he no longer wants to play for the Dutch national team while Marco van Basten is in charge. The 29-year-old van Bommel was a surprise call-up for the Euro 2008 qualifiers against Bulgaria and Albania on October 7 and 11, but said on his homepage that he was not prepared to play for van Basten.

Van Basten, part of the Dutch team that won the 1988 European championships, chose not to include van Bommel in his World Cup squad despite the player winning the Champions League with Barcelona last season.

Van Bommel has played 34 times for his country scoring seven goals.

Real Madrid striker van Nistelrooy was also called up, as a replacement for the injured Klaas Jan Huntelaar, however he too has turned down the Dutch Football Association (KNVB).

Van Basten made a surprise phone call to van Nistelrooy over the weekend, but failed in his bid to lure the ex-Manchester United forward, who had recently criticised the national coaching staff, back to the squad.

Van Basten said that no players would be called up to replace van Bommel and Huntelaar.

Dida cuts national ties

REUTERS, Rio de Janeiro

Brazil goalkeeper Dida has effectively called time on his international career, coach Dunga said on Sunday.

"He has called us saying that it is not in his plans to play for Brazil any more," Dunga said in a television interview.

The new coach implied that he was unlikely to be sympathetic to any future change of heart on the part of the softly-spoken goalkeeper.

"We don't want any player who doesn't want to represent Brazil, who doesn't have any pleasure in being here," said Dunga, who replaced Carlos Alberto Parreira following the World Cup.

"The player has to put his soul and his heart with the team as well as his body."

Dida, 32, has not played for Brazil since the World Cup quarterfinal defeat against France.

The AC Milan player was in Brazil's squad at the last three World Cups, although he had to wait until the 2006 tournament to get a game.

He played in all five of Brazil's games in Germany conceding only two goals.

He made his international debut against South Africa in 1997 and went on to win 92 caps. He also played in the 1996 Olympic Games when Brazil won the bronze medal.

Heroes back for Azzurri

Football

AFP, Rome

Strikers Alessandro Del Piero, Luca Toni and Vincenzo Iaquinta all won recalls when Italy coach Roberto Donadoni named his squad here Sunday for the Euro 2008 qualifiers against Ukraine and Georgia.

The world champions, who have taken just one point from their first two Group B matches, face Ukraine in the capital next Saturday before taking on Georgia in Tbilisi the following Wednesday.

Juventus' Del Piero, Fiorentina's Toni and Iaquinta of Udinese -- all members of Marcello Lippi's World Cup-winning squad -- were left out by Donadoni for the matches against Lithuania and France due to a lack of fitness.

Inter Milan defender Marco Materazzi returns after completing the two-match suspension he was given for provoking Zinedine Zidane in the World Cup final.

There is no room in the 23-man

squad for Real Madrid striker Antonio Cassano, who impressed against Lithuania but was disappointing against the French.

In-form midfielders Gennaro Delvecchio and Stefano Mauri, of Sampdoria and Lazio respectively, are both rewarded with call-ups for



ALESSANDRO DEL PIERO their excellent early season performances.

SQUAD

Goalkeepers: Gianluigi Buffon (Juventus), Cristian Abbiati (Torino), Marco Amelia (Livorno). **Defenders:** Andrea Barzagli (Palermo), Cristian Zaccardo (Palermo), Fabio Cannavaro (Real Madrid/ESP, capt), Fabio Grosso (Inter Milan), Marco Materazzi (Inter Milan), Alessandro Nesta (AC Milan), Massimo Oddo (Lazio), Manuel Pasqual (Fiorentina), Gianluca Zambrotta (Barcelona/ESP). **Midfielders:** Mauro Camoranesi (Juventus), Gennaro Delvecchio (Sampdoria), Daniele De Rossi (Roma), Simone Perrotta (Roma), Gennaro Gattuso (AC Milan), Andrea Pirlo (AC Milan), Stefano Mauri (Lazio). **Forwards:** Alessandro Del Piero (Juventus), David Di Michele (Palermo), Antonio Di Natale (Udinese), Vincenzo Iaquinta (Udinese), Filippo Inzaghi (AC Milan), Luca Toni (Fiorentina).

Inter appointed spy!

Football

AFP, Milan

A lawyer acting for former Telecom Italia security chief Giuliano Tavaroli claims his client was asked by Serie A club Inter Milan to spy on disgraced Italian referee Massimo De Santis.

Inter are accused of tailing De Santis -- currently serving a five-year ban for his involvement in the Italian match-fixing scandal -- between the end of 2002 and the beginning of 2003.

The club are said to have been suspicious of De Santis' relationship with former Juventus general manager Luciano Moggi, the central figure in the match-fixing scandal who was banned from sport for five years.

If found guilty of spying on De Santis, Inter could face sanctions from the Italian football federation (FIGC).

"The (spying) activity was com-

missioned by Inter, by its directors who turned to Tavaroli and (Emanuele) Cipriani of the detective agency Polis d'Intinto," Massimo D'Inoia was quoted as saying in Monday's Gazzetta dello Sport.

However, Mario Stagliano, the former deputy of the FIGC's match-fixing investigation, believes Inter will not be punished even if they are found guilty of tailing De Santis.

"Inter will not suffer any kind of consequence, they're not at risk," he said in a radio interview on Monday.

"Even if it emerges Inter acted illegally, it has been four years since the alleged spying and the law only applies to what has happened in the past two years. The maximum punishment would be a fine."

Tavaroli, head of Telecom Italia's security operations until May 2005, was arrested last month in connection with the company's alleged phone-tapping.

Telecom Italia are suspected of tapping the phones of thousands of clients, including celebrities and high-profile footballers.

Also arrested were Cipriani and Pierguido Iezzi, the current head of security for Telecom Italia's major shareholder Pirelli, who have a large stake in Inter Milan.

Francesco Saverio Borrelli, head of the FIGC's match-fixing investigation, will speak to De Santis later on Monday before talking to Inter Milan owner Massimo Moratti on Tuesday.

De Santis has accused Moratti of hiring a private detective to tap his and his wife's phones; claims the Inter owner vehemently denies.

"I can confirm that I never sent anybody to follow anyone," Moratti said last week.

Inter, who finished third in Serie A last season but were awarded the title after Juventus and AC Milan were penalised for rigging matches, were not implicated in the match-fixing scandal.

The scandal involved clubs, SEE PAGE 18 COL 1

Roma, Palermo share lead

AFP, Rome



Roma and Palermo claimed hard-fought 1-0 wins on Sunday to share top spot in Italy's Serie A. Vincenzo Montella's first-half headed goal sealed Roma's slender victory against Empoli at their Olympic stadium home, while Eugenio Corini was Palermo's match-winner at Chievo.

A fourth win in five matches for both clubs lifted them to the top of the table on 12 points, one ahead of title favourites Inter who could only manage a 1-1 draw at Cagliari.

Reigning champions Inter had hoped to lift some of the gloom

hanging over them after back-to-back Champions League defeats -- losses which have left them struggling to reach the knockout stages.

But a poor result against a team without a win did little to improve their mood and will inevitably increase the pressure on coach Roberto Mancini, whose team are expected to stroll to the Scudetto following Juventus' relegation and AC Milan's points handicap for match-fixing.

Mancini played down Inter's failure to overcome a stubborn but inferior Cagliari side.

"We have come out of a month of difficult matches with 11 points and to me that doesn't seem like a travesty," he said.

AC Milan, who started on minus eight points but climbed into positive

territory after winning their first three matches, were held to their second consecutive 0-0 draw at home to Siena.

Fiorentina, stung by a minus 19-point start for rigging matches, thrashed Catania 3-0, while Livorno sneaked a 1-0 victory at Messina.

Sampdoria ended a run of three straight draws with a 3-2 win at home to Parma and Udinese against Ascoli ended goalless.

Roma scored what proved to be the winner in the 23 minute against Empoli.

Max Tonetto crossed from the left to Montella whose powerful header flashed into the roof of the net.

Without the luxury of a second goal, Roma could not relax and had to survive several scares in the second half before claiming the

three points. Corini's first-half strike was enough for Palermo to edge Chievo in Verona.

Playing against his former club, Corini fired home the loose ball after Mark Bresciano's cross was poorly dealt with by the Chievo defence.

Cagliari brutally exposed Inter's defensive weaknesses in the 17th minute at the Sant'Elia stadium.

Mauro Esposito skipped past two tackles down the right wing before crossing to the back post to find Leonardo Colucci unmarked, and his left-footed volley gave Julio Cesar a chance.

Inter lost Hernan Crespo, one of

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PHOTO: AFP

Valencia's prolific striker David Villa celebrates his strike against Gimnastic during their Primera Liga match at the Mestalla in Valencia on Sunday.

Derby ends in stalemate

AFP, Madrid



The cheers in the Santiago Bernabeu that greeted Real Madrid's 5-1 Champions League win over Dynamo Kiev in midweek turned to jeers on Sunday as they were held to a 1-1 draw by local rivals Atletico Madrid.

The Spanish giants also ended the game with 10 men after international defender Sergio Ramos was controversially sent off midway through the second half.

"We made errors in the first half but the second half started off well but after that there was the referee's error," said Real coach Fabio Capello.

"I would have been upset losing two points if we had 11 men for the full 90 minutes but, having played nearly 30 minutes with just 10, I'm satisfied with a point."

Real went behind after seven minutes when Mista Ferrer, ironically a product of their youth system, put Atletico ahead.

The summer signing from Valencia got his first goal for his new club by stabbing the ball home after Fernando Torres had chipped the ball down to his feet.

The hosts levelled when captain Raul Gonzalez got an equaliser after 33 minutes, giving the best possible response to Spanish team coach Luis Aragonés who had dropped him from the national team on Friday.

"Raul has recovered his nose for goal. He's as good as he always was. I don't think he's running out of steam after 10 years at the top. I think he's got lots of good years ahead of him," said Capello.

Real were reduced to 10 men when Ramos' flying arm appeared to hit Torres in the face after 63 minutes but the incident brought a furious response from Capello.

"He (Torres) invented a foul in front of the referee... the way he threw his hands up to his face, he was just trying to trick the referee," said Capello.

With their advantage, Atletico looked likely to pick up a memorable win but Real keeper Iker Casillas once again came to the rescue as they maintained their unbeaten record although they slipped to fourth.

Real's big rivals Barcelona, Spanish champions for the last two years, continue to make the pace in La Liga after a 3-1 win at struggling Athletic Bilbao, who drop to second from bottom, on Saturday.

Goals came from Einar Gudjonson and Javier Saviola

after Athletic defender Ustaritz Aldekoalata had put the ball in his own net although Francisco Yeste had put the Basques ahead after 11 minutes.

Valencia moved up to second, and preserved their own unbeaten run, with a 4-0 thrashing of newly-promoted Gimnastic Tarragona late on Sunday.

David Villa's pass set up Fernando Morientes to score after 13 minutes before getting two second-half goals himself.

Miguel Angel Angulo then celebrated his return to the Spanish squad with Valencia's fourth, six minutes before time.

Luis Fabiano put Sevilla ahead after 30 minutes and last season's UEFA Cup winners ran out 1-0 winners over Getafe to move up to third.

"The big problem for us is the state of our pitch. It's very difficult to play the way we want. But Getafe played well and we are going to face many teams like them this season so three points is acceptable," said Sevilla coach Juande Ramos.

At the other end of the table, Racing Santander are still without a

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PHOTO: AFP

AS Roma forward Vincenzo Montella (R) is congratulated by teammate Francesco Totti after scoring against Empoli during their Serie A match at Olympic Stadium in Rome on Sunday.