



The Liverpool squad engage in a team hug after Peter Crouch gave them the lead in their Champions League encounter against Bordeaux at the Chaban-Delmas Stadium on Wednesday.

## Crouch leaps high again

**AFP, Bordeaux**

Peter Crouch sealed victory for Liverpool with a second-half header that clinched a 1-0 Champions League Group C win against Bordeaux.

England striker Crouch capped a solid, if unspectacular, performance by the English team with a 58th minute header from Craig Bellamy's corner.

And despite being forced to weather some periods of pressure from the home side, Liverpool always appeared comfortable at the Chaban-Delmas stadium.

Liverpool manager Rafael Benitez was delighted that his side had won their first match away from home this season.

"Two things were very important for us: to win away and to keep a clean sheet, and in terms of confidence that will be a very very good thing," said the Spaniard.

"It was important for senior players like Sami Hyypia or Jamie Carragher to come up with a key performance. Now we only need two wins at home, but you never know, its football."

Benitez, with captain Steven Gerrard already ruled out with a hamstring injury, opted against risking fellow midfielder Momo Sissoko's ankle problem from the start of the game.

Benitez began with the attacking flair of Luis Garcia and Mark Gonzalez on the flanks with Dutch international Bolo Zenden alongside Xabi Alonso at the heart of midfield.

It was certainly an adventurous selection, but Bordeaux have done little to suggest that they are one of the more potent attacking units in the Champions League and Liverpool always appeared in control in the first-half, despite the odd scare in their own goalmouth.

Had Bordeaux playmaker Johan Micoud been able to take advantage of a clear chance to open the scoring on 25 minutes, it may have been a

different story for the home side.

The former France international should have scored when, after outjumping Jamie Carragher in the six yard box, he failed to connect with Wendel's floated free-kick into the penalty area.

Even the slightest of touches from Micoud would have diverted the ball past Pepe Reina in the Liverpool goal, but instead, the 2005 Champions League winners survived and went on to waste their own clear-cut chances to break the deadlock before the interval.

England striker Peter Crouch did brilliantly to spring the offside trap on 36 minutes and latch on to Craig Bellamy's cross at the far post. Crouch was unmarked six yards out, but he lacked composure and could only direct his volley wide of the far post. Having failed to score away from home in the Champions League for 12 months, it was a case of the same old story for Liverpool, but Crouch went close to ending the club's goal drought when he broke free again five minutes before half-time.

Crouch did well to control the ball and his effort on goal looked set to hit the target until it was diverted into the sideneeting by Franck Jurietti.

Bordeaux attempted to turn up the pressure on Liverpool early in the second-half, though, and Brazilian midfielder Fernando Menegazzo tested Reina with a 25-yard effort second after the re-start.

The home side could not break through, however, and Liverpool took the lead against the run of play on 58 minutes when Crouch headed his third Champions League goal in two games from Bellamy's corner.

Garcia had created the opportunity when he forced a fine save from Rame's after cutting in from the right-flank before unleashing a fierce left-foot strike.

And Crouch made it pay off when he rose above the static Bordeaux defenders to head home from close range and all but extinguish the home side's hopes of a place in the knock-out stages.

## Bremen keep pace

**AFP, Bremen**

German league leaders Werder Bremen kept alive their hopes of qualifying for the knockout stage of the Champions League at the expense of holders Barcelona with a 2-0 Group A win over Levski Sofia.

Brazilian defender Naldo scored his first ever Champions League goal on the chime of half-time to put Bremen ahead and Brazilian playmaker Diego clinched the points with a 74th minute effort.

It was a first group win for Bremen who now move level on four points with Barcelona who lost 1-0 to Chelsea on Wednesday.

Bremen had crushed VfL Bochum 6-0 over the weekend but found Sofia, the first Bulgarian side to qualify for the Champions League, a tougher nut to crack.

Without midfield duo Tim Borowski and Frank Baumann through injury, Bremen lacked drive from midfield and German international defender Christian Schulz had their first chance with his 24th minute effort whistling wide of the right hand post.

Sofia, who had lost their first two matches against Barcelona and Chelsea, looked set to make it to the half-time break at 0-0 but paid the price for a terrible defensive wall.

Naldo drilled a 25 yard free-kick straight through the collapsing wall and the unsuspecting Sofia goalkeeper had no chance with the ball going in off the inside of the post.

Croatian international striker Ivan Klasnic replaced Cameroon defender Pierre Wome in the second half as manager Thomas Schaaf showed he was not willing to sit on the one goal cushion.

Brazilian playmaker Diego, a summer signing from FC Porto, eased their nerves with a second on 74 minutes and Bremen took the spoils.

## Hunt cleared over Cech challenge

**AFP, London**

Reading midfielder Stephen Hunt will not face any disciplinary action over the challenge which left Chelsea goalkeeper Petr Cech with a fractured skull, the Football Association has confirmed.

Chelsea boss Jose Mourinho had accused Hunt of deliberately trying to hurt the Czech goalkeeper, who is facing a lay-off of up to a year as he recovers from cranial surgery.

But the FA ruled Thursday that it would be impossible to prove that Hunt had acted with malicious intent. A similar judgement was made about Ibrahima Sonko's challenge on Chelsea's substitute keeper Carlo Cudicini, who was knocked unconscious later in the same game.

In a statement, the governing body said: "The FA has reviewed the incidents involving Stephen Hunt/Petr Cech and Ibrahima Sonko/Carlo Cudicini and has contacted referee Mike Riley, who confirmed that the match officials saw both incidents at the time. There will therefore be no further action."

Chelsea are still planning to write to the FA outlining their dissatisfaction with the referee's handling of the Hunt challenge and the speed of treatment received by the Czech goalkeeper at the Madejski Stadium.

## Jose lauds Hilario

**REUTERS, London**

Jose Mourinho praised his third-string goalkeeper Hilario on Wednesday after the Portuguese debutant kept a clean sheet against European champions Barcelona.

"Hilario showed security from the first moment," Mourinho said of his compatriot captured on a free transfer from Nacional last June. "The team gave him confidence and he showed confidence in the team and he played a very comfortable game."

The lofty keeper, little known until he was drafted in after both senior Chelsea keepers suffered head injuries in the Premier League against Reading last Saturday, kept out world player of the year Ronaldinho and his illustrious team mates, allowing a goal from Didier Drogba at the other end to earn Chelsea three points.

Czech Republic keeper Petr Cech is likely to be sidelined for several months after an operation on a fractured skull, Carlo Cudicini should be fit next week after also being knocked out and taken to hospital during the Reading game.

Mourinho said he had been

inundated with calls from agents offering him goalkeepers but said recently-retired France keeper Fabien Barthez, suggested in the media as a possible replacement, would not be coming to Chelsea.

"What I know is Hilario and Carlo are very good keepers. What we will try to do is get a third goalkeeper and Fabien Barthez is not a third goalkeeper. He is a high profile goalkeeper."

Mourinho, keeping the mood upbeat after the injuries and the death in a road accident on Tuesday of a young member of the Chelsea administrative staff, said the team had played very well and deserved the win.

"The week was difficult, the game was difficult but every individual played well and as a team we played well," he said.

The win put Chelsea five points clear at the top of Champions League Group A and with a foot in the knockout stage.

Mourinho said that with the victory Chelsea had changed their aim from merely qualifying from the group to winning it.

Of course we have two games away and one at home so it will be difficult but we have five points advantage," he said.

Chelsea go to the Nou Camp in the return game on Oct. 31 and meet Werder Bremen in Germany before hosting Levski Sofia in the last game in December.

## Cesc signs long Gunners deal

**REUTERS, London**

Spain's teenage midfielder Cesc Fabregas has signed a new eight-year contract at Arsenal, the Premier League club announced on Thursday.

The 19-year-old, who played at the World Cup, put pen to paper on an extension last summer that was agreed when he negotiated his initial contract with the north London club.

However, he was expected to sign a new longer-term deal after emerging as one of Europe's most promising players since joining the Premier League club from Barcelona three years ago.

Fabregas became Arsenal's youngest player and scorer in his first season and is setting his sights on major honours after committing his future to the north London club.

"I am so happy here and I am delighted to have signed this new contract that will keep me at the club for years to come," he was quoted as saying on Arsenal's official Web site.

"I wanted to pay back the club, especially (manager) Arsene Wenger for the support and faith he has shown in me."

"What is important now is for the team to realise its potential and win trophies. That is our main aim, that is my aim as well."

Fabregas joined from Barca's youth ranks in July 2003. Real Madrid expressed interest in taking the midfielder back to Spain in the close season but he made it clear he was happy in London.



Roma midfielder Simone Perrotta (L) celebrates with fellow midfielder Alessandro Rosi (R) after scoring in their Champions League clash against Olympiakos in Athens on Wednesday.

## Perrotta keeps Roma rolling

**REUTERS, Athens**

Midfielder Simone Perrotta's first goal in the Champions League was enough to give AS Roma a scrappy but valuable 1-0 win at Olympiakos Piraeus on Wednesday.

Victory at the Karaiskakis Stadium left second-placed Roma with six points in Group D and a five-point cushion over Olympiakos and Shakhtar Donetsk. Valencia top the group on nine points after beating the Ukrainians 2-0 on Wednesday.

Olympiakos had plenty of possession but were made to rue missed chances with Michalis Konstantinou going close twice.

Roma, who were wearing black armbands to commemorate the

metro crash in Rome on Tuesday, stole the points when Italy's Perrotta slid in at the near post in the 76th minute to turn in a cross from second half substitute Aleandro Rosi.

Olympiakos had dominated the first half but could not make it count.

Cyprus international Konstantinou thought he had put them ahead after 28 minutes but his header was ruled out because team mate Giorgios Anotolakis had simultaneously barged Roma goalkeeper Doni into the back of the net.

Twelve minutes later, Konstantinou rose above the Roma defence to meet a Rivaldo free-kick but his header hit the bar and went over.

Uruguayan Nery Alberto Castillo, who has been linked with Chelsea and Manchester United in recent weeks, also created a good chance for himself when he drifted inside

two defenders and shot from the edge of the area. Doni dived to his right to make a good save.

Roma, playing very deep and seemingly looking for a draw, came more into the game in the second half with Francesco Totti firing over and Cristian Chivu producing a good save from Antonis Nikopolidis in the the Olympiakos goal.

Totti opened up the Olympiakos defence with a telling pass that freed Rosi down the right to set up Perrotta's goal.

He could have finished things off himself in injury time when he latched on to a poor back pass from Grigoris Georgatos but pushed his shot wide.

## Inter Cruz past Spartak

**REUTERS, Milan**

Argentine Julio Ricardo Cruz struck twice in the first 10 minutes for Inter Milan as they beat Russia's Spartak Moscow 2-1 in Champions League Group B on Wednesday to pick up their first points of the campaign.

Cruz was selected ahead of Brazilian Adriano and Inter coach Roberto Mancini's decision paid off handsomely as the forward put his side ahead with a first-time strike in the second minute and then added a second with a header seven minutes later.

Spartak pulled a goal back in the 54th minute through Roman Pavlyuchenko and went close to a late equaliser but Inter's Brazilian keeper Julio Cesar did well to keep out a shot from the impressive Boyarintsev. That ensured victory after the Italian champions had lost their opening two games to Sporting Lisbon and Bayern Munich.

"I think we played very well in first half, we just lacked the third goal to finish the game off," said Mancini.

"In the second half unfortunately some players faded, particularly those coming back from injury, and we struggled a bit and let them back into the game," he added.

Mancini's decision to start with Cruz paid instant dividends when he fired home a first time drive after the Spartak defence had failed to clear a whipped in free-kick from strike partner Alvaro Recoba.

Cruz was on target again seven minutes later, again helped by Recoba who chipped a smart cross over the out-of-position Spartak keeper Wojciech Kowalewski for the Argentine to head in firmly at the back post.

After such a perfect start Inter were buzzing with confidence and Serbian Dejan Stankovic went close to a third in the 19th minute with a

fiercely-struck low drive from 25 metres that zipped past the post.

The Russians were struggling to get a grip in midfield but they could have pulled one back in the 21st minute when Boyarintsev was allowed to break free on goal but floated his shot harmlessly over the bar.

Recoba brought a good save out of Kowalewski before Julio Cesar

was finally brought into action in the 38th minute.

Inter's Luis Figo clipped the bar with a shot from the edge of the area early in the second half but the visitors re-opened the contest moments later when, after good work from half-time substitute Quincy Owusu-Abeyie, Pavlyuchenko slotted home a low cross from Denis Boyarintsev.

Mancini responded by taking off Recoba for Argentine defender Nicolas Burdisso, pushing captain Javier Zanetti forward into a midfield role although he shortly reverted to two strikers by introducing Adriano for Figo.

The game became increasingly scrappy although Stankovic had an effort disallowed and Cruz went close to a hat-trick, forcing Kowalewski into a save with a low drive in the 82nd minute before Inter's late scare.

With a minute of normal time remaining Owusu-Abeyie burst down the left flank, outpacing Ivan Cordoba and slipping the ball into the path of Boyarintsev, whose side-foot shot forced Julio Cesar into a diving save -- much to the relief of the San Siro crowd.

Spartak coach Vladimir Fedotov rued his team's lack of concentration in the opening stages.

"I told them to be very careful in the first few minutes because Inter are always aggressive and dangerous early on. That was shown straight away when we gave the ball away twice and they punished us both times," he said.

"It was much more balanced after the break, we got a goal and we could even have got a draw."



Inter Milan forwards Alvaro Recoba (L) and Julio Ricardo Cruz (R) pump their fists in celebration after the latter scored in their Champions League clash against Spartak Moscow at the San Siro on Wednesday.

**CROSSWORD** By Eugene Sheffer

**ACROSS**

37 Beta  
38 "Ed"  
5 Lobbyists' org.  
8 Lily type  
12 Floral neckwear  
13 Black cuckoo  
14 "— Brock-ovich"  
15 High voice  
17 Comic Letterman  
18 Exploit  
19 Aspects  
21 Intelligent  
24 Dalmatian's name?  
25 St. Patrick's home  
26 Heel type  
30 "— Camera"  
31 Cecil's pal  
32 "A mouse"  
33 Operatic text  
35 Paraphernalia  
36 Other-wise

**DOWN**

21 Close up light  
22 Thorn in Drew  
1 Spite  
2 Goddess (Latin)  
3 Zero  
4 Guarantee  
5 Scalp  
6 Pismire  
7 Italian fish soup  
8 Tranquillize  
9 History chapters  
10 Donate  
11 Change for a  
15 \$5 bill  
16 Superlative suffix  
20 Sacrosanct  
23 Speedy steed  
24 Put into words  
26 Attacks  
27 Abound  
28 Co-workers  
29 Gumbo ingredient  
31 Composer  
32 Bartok  
34 Turn crimson  
35 Summer-house  
37 Jewel  
38 Biography  
39 Alkali neutralizer  
40 Actress  
41 Took off  
44 Fuss  
45 Also  
46 Recipe abbr.  
47 Surprised reactions

**Solution time: 21 mins.**

PAL LIANA MAD  
AGE INNER AVA  
RAINSTORM TON  
ATE VITENNA  
BIGGER ENDS  
ONIA DIT GACIOR  
OTIS WAS MADE  
TONES WEB VITIN  
SETS CEASED  
REASON OIL  
TIVE VAINGLORY  
TIE ENDOE PLE  
EIR SEJUIS TION

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12				13				14		
15			16				17			
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25				26				27	28	29
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38	39	40				41				
42				43	44			45	46	47
48					49				50	
51						52				53

**CRYPTOQUIP**  
Q K X U H J R L H R E Q G O Z Q I G .  
J C I L R H E K H R B J R X G G J R Q  
U O U H V . Q L V C K H I Q L  
" B X Q A J Z K Q L A J E H Z E I "  
Yesterday's Cryptquip: IFA WALL PLASTERER IS CONCITED AND POMPOUS, WOULD YOU SAY HE'S STUCCO ON HIMSELF?  
Today's Cryptquip Clue: Q equals T

The Cryptquip 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 locatlog vowels. Solution is by trial and error.