

Vieira out of Moscow trip

REUTERS, Rome

Inter Milan midfielder Patrick Vieira will miss the away match against Champions League rivals Spartak Moscow on Tuesday after failing to recover from a sprained ankle.

The 30-year-old French international suffered the injury during Inter's 4-3 win over city rivals AC Milan on Saturday and was left out of Inter squad for the trip to Russia, which was announced on Sunday.

His place in the starting line-up is likely to be taken by Javier Zanetti, who also played in midfield during the win over Milan.

Inter have three points from their first three matches in Champions League Group B and need a win over Spartak to stay on course to qualify for the knockout stage of the competition.

Steaua invoke past heroics

REUTERS, Bucharest

Steaua Bucharest are hoping to be inspired by the memory of past goalkeeping heroics when they face Real Madrid in the Bernabeu in Wednesday's Champions League Group E tie.

Former Steaua goalkeeper Helmuth Duckadam helped secure the Romanian side's greatest triumph when his penalty saves in a shootout against Real's arch-rivals Barcelona sealed a European Cup triumph in 1986.

"The show Duckadam made 20 years ago was a miracle and that is exactly what Steaua needs now at the Bernabeu -- a new miracle," Steaua Bucharest coach Cosmin Olariu told Reuters.

"I would be happy to have such a goalkeeper now."

Steaua are third in Group E standings, their three points coming from an opening win over Dynamo Kiev. They have conceded seven goals in defeats by Olympique Lyon and Real Madrid leaving Olariu fearing the worst.

"I need Duckadam's advice, his presence might fortify the morale of my players against Real," he said.

Steaua are set to start with Cornel Cernea in goal after first choice Carlos Fernandez was dropped for a succession of errors.

The Romanians have also been hit by injury to key players but winger Banel Nicolita is optimistic of producing a solid performance.

"We are going to Spain to play our own game," Nicolita said. "We want to show that we are a good team, we hope not to concede a goal in the Bernabeu."

Firefighter loses fingers

AFP, Nice

A fireman had two fingers blown off after bending down to pick up an agricultural bomb during the Nice-Marseille French league match on Sunday, according to Nice's chief of security Andre Bolo.

Anthony Roko, a 20-year-old volunteer firefighter, was taken from the field on a stretcher before being transferred to a clinic that specialises in hand injuries.

The match, which Nice won 2-1, was held up for several minutes as police officers picked up pieces of Roko's fingers from the field.

The bomb had been thrown from the area of the stand where the Marseille supporters were sitting, when the match was just five minutes old.

Agricultural bombs are usually used to make holes in the ground.

Local leader Christian Estrosi condemned the throwing of the bomb as "a criminal and stupid act."

Porto minus Anderson

AFP, Lisbon

FC Porto's Brazilian midfielder Anderson will miss Wednesday's Champions League Group G match against Hamburg after he broke his right leg in a weekend Portuguese league match, the club said Sunday.

The 18-year-old playmaker was stretched off the field in the 25th minute of Porto's 3-2 home win over Benfica on Saturday after a clash with the visitor's Greek midfielder Konstantinos Katsouranis.

Doctors on Sunday determined he fractured his right leg's peroneal bone, an injury which should keep him sidelined for a few months, FC Porto said in a statement posted on their Internet site.

Porto's win on Saturday pushed the team to the top spot again in the 16-team Portuguese Premier league. The club has 19 points, two ahead of Sporting.



Lyon's Norwegian forward John Carew (C) skips past Nancy's Brazilian defender Andre Luiz during their Ligue 1 match at the Gerland Stadium in Lyon on Sunday.

Imperious Lyon march on

AFP, Paris



Lyon have only failed to win a single game this season, a 1-1 draw at home to Toulouse in their second league match when most of their World Cup stars were still searching for fitness, and few were even in the starting line-up.

Giant Norwegian striker John Carew was the hero on Sunday, arriving late into the box to side-foot the ball home from 10 yards out.

But it was Portugal midfielder Tiago who was the main star, hitting the post with an exquisite chip in the first half before setting Florent Malouda clean through on goal with a delectable back-heel in the second period.

That Nancy kept the deficit to a single goal was barely a reflection of Lyon's dominance.

Eleven games into the league campaign they already have an 11-point lead, something that looks likely to grow rather than shrink in the coming weeks.

Second-placed Marseille slipped further behind in the championship race after a 2-1 defeat at Mediterranean rivals

Nice in a match that was marred by crowd troubles.

A fireman lost two fingers after picking up an agricultural bomb thrown from the away end that exploded in his hand.

The game was held up for several minutes as policemen searched the field for the missing pieces of his fingers.

Anthony Roko, 20, was taken away on a stretcher and transferred to a specialist hand clinic.

Brazilian midfielder Ederson tucked away the winning penalty in stoppage time at the end of the game after Marseille captain Habib Beye's unnecessary late foul in the box.

"I'm responsible for the defeat," he admitted afterwards. "In conceding a penalty I wrecked all the good work put in by the team."

Cyril Rool opened the scoring for Nice on 25 minutes but Mikael Pagis levelled matters just past the hour mark.

Samir Nasri should have put Marseille ahead two minutes from time but scooped his close range effort over the bar.

"We're not having one of those times where lady luck is smiling down on us," said Marseille coach Albert Emon.

"We were going well for a time but that is no longer the case."

Marseille have picked up only four points in their last five games, having been neck and neck with Lyon during the first six matches.

On Saturday, Nantes finally lifted themselves off the bottom of the table with a narrow 1-0 victory in the basement battle against

Monaco.

Striker Julio Rossi scored the winner in the 27th minute as the 2001 champions overcame the team they succeeded as kings of France, and also consigned the principality club to the foot of the table.

Monaco now sit bottom of the league, having fired manager Laszlo Boloni at the beginning of the week and seen new boss Laurent Banide preside over their exit from the League Cup in mid-week, at the hands of lower league opposition.

"I am a little disappointed," said Banide. "Like I said before, the rebuilding work is important and we have to put everything in place to rediscover our balance."

"We need time to think about our problems. This run of bad results has hugely affected us."

Once they went behind, Monaco lost any hope of scratching their way back into the contest on the stroke of half-time as midfielder Jaroslav Plasil was sent off.

While Monaco might be struggling, there was better news for capital giants Paris St Germain who held on grimly for a 1-0 home success over Rennes, Amara Diane scoring the game's only goal.

Last year's runners-up Bordeaux are gradually coming into form and three goals in eight minutes overturned a 1-0 home deficit against third-bottom Sedan into a 3-1 win.

Zola linked to A-League

AFP, Sydney

Former Italian international Gianfranco Zola has been linked with a guest stint at several clubs in Australia's A-League, reports said Monday.

Zola, 40, who retired in June last year after two seasons with Cagliari, has been linked with Sydney FC, Melbourne Victory and Perth Glory, the reports said.

Interest in the 35-times capped Zola follows a brief guest appearance by compatriot Benito Carbone at Sydney FC, which was ended by a hamstring injury and disagreement over financial terms for a longer contract.

The Sydney Morning Herald said Zola, a fan favourite in 229 games for Chelsea in England's Premier League from 1996 to 2003, was contemplating a pre-Christmas guest stint in Australia.

Sydney FC chief executive George Perry said later Monday no immediate contact had been made with Zola, but said the club would be keen to sign the Italian.

"If the opportunity arose and we had a chance to talk to (Zola), and he was fit and the price was right, we'd certainly want to talk to him," Perry said.

"We'd like to have a marquee or guest player on our books, that's for sure."

The newspaper said one of Zola's major sponsors is keen to have him play in Australia's largest city and is hoping to finalise a deal in time for Sydney's three successive home games next month.

Perry also refused to rule out a return for Carbone to Sydney FC.

"We'd love to have Beni back. I know he'd like to come back, it's just a matter of whether he's fit and willing to play," he said.

Violence worries DFB chief

REUTERS, Berlin

German Football Association (DFB) president Theo Zwanziger will meet Bundesliga chief Werner Hackmann on Tuesday to discuss a worrying rise in fan violence in the country's lower leagues.

"We have noted the recent incidents with dismay," Zwanziger said in a statement on Sunday. "We take this very seriously."

A riot at the regional third division match between Hertha Berlin's second team and Dynamo Dresden on Friday led to 23 injuries to police and brought 22 arrests, the DFB said on Sunday.

"I'm especially concerned at the injuries to the police," Zwanziger said. "I would like to apologise and to wish them a good recovery."

There was also crowd trouble and a number of arrests at the second division match between Augsburg and TSV 1860 Munich the same night.

That followed the incident in the German Cup on Tuesday night, when the referee abandoned the match between Stuttgarter Kickers and Hertha Berlin after a linesman was hit in the head by a beer cup thrown from the crowd.

The DFB also reported on Sunday that around 30 fans stormed the pitch at a lower league match in Baden-Wuerttemberg, while all the weekend's matches in the Siegen-Wittgenstein area were called off because of growing violence on the pitch and off it.

Levski being optimistic

REUTERS, Sofia

Veteran midfielder Daniel Borimirov believes Levski Sofia can revive their Champions League fortunes by beating Werder Bremen at home on Tuesday.

The 24-times Bulgarian champions are still pointless in Group A after three defeats, but a win over the German outfit would at least keep them in touch for third place.

"(Bremen) make mistakes in defence and we have to exploit them," said 36-year-old Borimirov, who was part of the Bulgaria team that reached the 1994 World Cup semi-finals in the U.S.

"We know that Werder will be searching for a win from the first minute but we also know that they attack most of the times through the centre of the field."

"They don't have good wingers and they don't hit many crosses," added Borimirov, who spent eight years in Germany playing for 1860 Munich between 1995 and 2003.

Chelsea lead the group with nine points, with European champions Chelsea and Werder on four.

"Tuesday's match will be our most important, maybe our match of the year," said Borimirov. "We'll keep our chances of playing in the UEFA Cup next spring if we beat Werder."

The third-placed team in each group drops into the UEFA Cup.

"We need some more courage and I believe our loyal fans will help us. We know the price of every single point in the Champions League and I have no doubts that all of us will be exceptionally motivated."

Fergie wants one last triumph

AFP, Manchester



Ferguson has won eight Premier League titles, five FA Cups, two League Cups and a European Cup Winners' Cup and one European Cup in his time with the English giants.

Now the Scotsman, whose 20th anniversary at the club is on November 6, is keen to pocket the greatest club prize again before he departs.

"It is a priority to do better in the European Cup and that will not change at this club because Europe is a motivation for us all the time," he said.

"In my time at United, we should have done better. In some years we have been unlucky, in others we have thrown it away and in others we were not good enough."

"But the bottom line is we should have had at least one more European Cup in my time at the club and hopefully we can do that before I ride off into the sunset."

After last season's humiliating group stage exit, few were talking of United as potential winners this season.

Yet, the Red Devils have emerged as genuine contenders once more thanks to three successive wins that mean just a point from Wednesday's trip to FC Copenhagen will be enough to secure a place in the knockout stage with two matches to spare.

The reason for such a spectacular transformation is fairly obvious. In six games last season, United managed just three goals.

Already they have seven this term, courtesy of five different

scorers with, remarkably, Wayne Rooney not among them.

And Ferguson believes United's wide spread of goalscorers can be a major factor in their drive for honours.

"We have players we rely on in terms of goals, the most important being Louis Saha," said the manager.

"I am sure Wayne will eventually go on to get us 15 and Cristiano Ronaldo is quite capable of reaching that figure too. But the real impact comes from the spread of goals in other areas."

"Obviously Paul Scholes' return to the team is a bonus in that respect because historically, he has always given us an average of 10 a year. That was one of the things we missed last year when his season was cut down by injury."

"Hopefully, Ryan and Michael Carrick will make a contribution, as will the defenders, so we could have a healthy situation this year."

achieved all I wanted to achieve in my career playing in all the top leagues of Europe.

"But I felt that the time had come to call it a day. Physically I am still on top of my game but mentally it's more difficult."

Djorka, whose father was also a noted French international, began his career at Grenoble in 1984 going on to play for Strasbourg, Monaco and Paris St Germain.

He moved to Inter Milan in 1996 for a successful three-year stint during which he played a key role in the France side that won the World Cup in Paris in 1998.

He moved to Kaiserslautern in Germany from 1999 until 2002 before joining Sam Allardyce at Bolton Wanderers in the English Premiership for two years.

After a brief spell with Blackburn, Djorka joined the

YOURI DJORKAEFF

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
1 Ahs' mates
4 Donkey
7 "Meet Me — Louis"
11 Burkina Faso
13 Spiral molecule
14 Create
15 Poor part of town
16 Tin Man's need
17 Cameo stone
18 Yellow Sea land
20 Menial worker
22 By way of
24 Dell array
28 Carlsbad attractions
32 Singer
33 Eastern potentate
34 Heavy weight
36 Reed instrument
37 Broadway awards
39 Manhattan college
41 Spit in the food?

43 "Ta-la"
44 The yoke's on them
46 Nail file material
50 Move speedily
53 Police officer
55 Out of the storm
56 Midwest state
57 NAFTA signatory
58 Houston acronym
59 Subsequently
60 Scarlet
61 To the — degree

2 Angel's glow
3 Speak unclearly
4 Big bother
5 Wild the scissors
6 Comedian
7 Sopy
8 Flat bread
9 Firmament
10 John Ritter's dad
12 1993 Whiney Houston hit
19 Melody

21 Squirrel's home
23 Pismire
25 Actress Jessica
26 Couturier Christian
27 Eventual plant
28 Record holder before "Phantom..."
29 Uncontrollable
30 Tarzan's transport
31 Weep
35 Apprehend
38 Gender
40 "Catcher in the —"
42 Happen again
45 Cyrano's trademark
47 Verve
48 What-er's left over
49 "Uh-huh"
50 Dermatologist's concern
51 Fireworks reaction
52 Have bills
54 Cushion

Solution time: 24 mins.
C H R I M S
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Y U R T S R I A E D S
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CRYPTOQUIP
E F P Q W C P F T P Q M E W X P W I X
A F B K M K M E C P F B F A
E B I X F T Z B F X X F J : C Q A Q F X
C F B L X F J P C B L X F K Z B .
Saturday's Cryptquip: WHICH OF THE B-COMPLEX VITAMINS WOULD CAUSE A PERSON TO BEHAVE PLAYFULLY? FROLIC ACID.
Today's Cryptquip Clue: W equals P
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 locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.