



PHOTO: AFP

Sevilla's Uruguayan striker Ernesto Chevanton (L) is over the moon with joy after scoring against Liga giants Real Madrid at the Sanchez Pizjuan Stadium in Sevilla on Saturday.

## Sheva aims to deliver

REUTERS, Cobham

Chelsea striker Andriy Shevchenko has ruled out an early exit from the Premier League and is determined to put right his faltering start to English football.

Prolific in Serie A with AC Milan, Shevchenko has scored only three league goals since moving to Stamford Bridge for 30 million pounds (58.83 million dollars) in the close-season, sparking speculation about his future at the champions.

"I know why my performances haven't been what I want and I am working hard to put it right," the Ukraine captain told reporters at Chelsea's training ground.

"It's difficult coming to a new country. When you have played for seven years in Milan and you have got used to the culture, the way of life and the language it's normal that there are problems when you change," he said.

"But I like living in London and I am feeling good now."

Shevchenko, who scored against Levski Sofia in the Champions League in midweek, said he had faced similar challenges when he first arrived in Milan from Dynamo Kiev in 1999.

"I didn't get it easy at Milan," said the 30-year-old. "I had difficult times and I earned my respect -- and the confidence of the manager. What I'm doing here is the same."

"When I am really at my top level I will have no problems at all."

Chelsea manager Jose Mourinho named nine players this week he considered "untouchable" in terms of team selection. Shevchenko, one of the first names on a Milan team sheet, did not make the list.

The striker said, however, he had a good relationship with the Portuguese coach who has guided Chelsea to two consecutive league titles.

"I've got no doubts that when I'm in my best form I will play. Everyone in the team is helping me. And I spoke a lot to Jose. It's a good feeling between us," he said.

Shevchenko also discounted any suggestion that he might be considering a return to Italy.

### SERIE B

## Camo sends Juve top

REUTERS, Rome

Mauro Camoranesi's goal gave Juventus a 1-0 win over Verona and sent them top of Italy's Serie B on Saturday.

The result gave Juventus 28 points from 15 matches, level on points with Bologna, who cruised to a 3-1 win over Lecce.

Napoli, who started the day top of the division with 26 points, will retake the lead if they win at Cesena on Monday.

Although Italian international Camoranesi got the winner, the highlight of Juventus's victory was Raffaele Palladino.

The 22-year-old midfielder, standing in for the suspended Pavel Nedved, hit the bar with a shot from outside the area midway through the first half.

In the 54th minute, he broke down the left and curled in the ball for Camoranesi to head in to maintain Juventus's 100 percent winning record at home this season.

Bologna, meanwhile, swept aside Lecce. Two goals by striker Claudio Bellucci and one from midfielder Lamberto Zauli put them 3-0 up at halftime before Jaime Valdes got the southerners' consolation goal.

Piacenza rose to third on 27 points with a 1-0 win over bottom-placed Arezzo, and Rimini overwhelmed Pescara 5-0 to draw level on points with Napoli.

## REAL GO DOWN AT SEVILLA

# Barca consolidate lead

REUTERS, Madrid



Barcelona moved two points clear at the top of the table on Saturday after notching a 1-0 win at home to Real Sociedad while title challengers Sevilla beat Real Madrid 2-1 in a highly charged encounter at the Sanchez Pizjuan.

Ronaldinho continued his superb run of recent form with his 11th league goal of the season when he steered a clever first-time shot into the far corner 16 minutes after the break to end Sociedad's stubborn resistance.

Sevilla's 100 percent home record looked to be in danger when they fell behind to a wonderfully struck free kick from David Beckham.

But in-form Sevilla striker Frederic Kanoute equalised soon after with a sharp finish to join Ronaldinho at the top of the scoring charts on 11 goals.

The UEFA Cup holders then claimed a deserved victory when substitute Ernesto Chevanton

hooked a spectacular overhead kick into the bottom corner after a free kick 13 minutes from time.

Barca, who travel to Japan to take part in the Club World Cup on Sunday, lead the table on 33 points from 14 games, Sevilla move up to second on 31, while Real are a further two back on 29.

"We are delighted with the win and an important three points," goalkeeper Victor Valdes told Barca TV. "We are leaders and have now got a great tournament ahead of us."

Sociedad, who had not won at the Nou Camp in 15 years, frustrated Barcelona until the break but Ronaldinho broke the deadlock when he side-footed an angled shot past keeper Claudio Bravo after Ludovic Giuly picked him out with a pass from the right wing. Barca had to endure a nervous finale, however, when left back Silvinho was dismissed after two quick-fire bookings five minutes before the final whistle.

Valdes produced a stunning one-handed reflex save to tip Gaizka Garitano's header over the bar at the death and preserve the home side's lead.

Sociedad, the only Primera Liga

side yet to win a match, remain in deep trouble with six points from 14 games, one above basement side Gimnastic Tarragona who host Levante on Sunday.

Former England captain Beckham put Real ahead against Sevilla when he curled the ball high across the area, over the head of keeper Andres Palop and inside the far top corner from a free kick wide on the left. But Sevilla were back on level terms four minutes later thanks to a fine opportunist finish from Kanoute.

Luis Fabiano slammed a shot against the bar after turning inside Sergio Ramos on the edge of the area and the Mali striker was on hand to snap home on the half volley before the Real defence had time to react.

Ronaldo had a great chance to give Real the lead when he was put in the clear by Ruud van Nistelrooy only to have his final shot smothered by Palop as he burst into the area.

But it was Real who slipped to their third defeat of the season with Uruguayan Chevanton's spectacular winner after Julien Escudé had nodded on Daniel Alves's free kick.

## Old Trafford beckons Becks

AFP, Manchester

David Beckham is to line up against a Manchester United side at Old Trafford for the first time since he left the club for Real Madrid in 2003.

The former England captain has agreed to play for a Europe XI coached by Marcello Lippi in a match against the Premiership leaders on March 13.

The match has been organised to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Treaty of Rome, which gave birth to the European Union, and mark half a century of United competing in Europe.

Beckham, a huge favourite with United supporters before his 25-million-pound move to Spain, will play for Europe. The England international has returned to Old Trafford before to represent his country, but has not faced United since leaving three years ago.

Lippi, who coached Italy to World Cup glory in Germany in the summer, said he had no hesitation agreeing to take part when approached.

"I accepted the invitation immediately," said Lippi at a special press conference at Old Trafford after Manchester United had beaten Manchester City 3-1 to go nine points clear at the top of the Premiership table.

"I'm delighted by the prospect of such a game and I am really looking forward to taking on my great friend Sir Alex Ferguson."

## Arsene gets even with Jose

AFP, London

Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger has warned English champions Chelsea that their plans to become the biggest club in the world are doomed to failure.

Chelsea chief executive Peter Kenyon recently claimed that the Blues have the potential to be the world's most powerful club by 2014.

But Wenger believes the west London outfit are getting ahead of themselves in their plans for world domination.

He is adamant that it will take more than just a successful team to make Chelsea into the number one brand in football.

"Playing the best football is one of the things that makes a club bigger. You also have the natural size of the club built through history," he said.

"It will always be that Real Madrid are bigger than Alaves, even if Alaves has a better team for a few seasons."

"Also you have the accumulation of history with players who are faithful to the club. A lot of things come into making a club big."

"Arsenal is a club that you could easily underestimate in terms of size because when we built the stadium we had the question, do we make 50,000, 55,000 or 60,000 seats?"

"With a good team today maybe even 60,000 is too small. Whether Chelsea can become the biggest club in the world is also down to the size of the fanbase. "That takes a very long time to build up and at the moment they are bit premature to say what they will do."

## Brazilians lift Palermo

REUTERS, Rome

Palermo got their Serie A title bid back on track with a 3-0 win over Livorno on Saturday.

A brace by Brazilian midfielder Fabio Simplicio and another by compatriot Amauri gave the Sicilian side 31 points from 15 matches, five behind leaders Inter Milan, who travel to Empoli on Sunday.

Palermo, who surrendered second place to AS Roma after earning just one point in their previous three games, dominated fourth-placed Livorno, highlighting the gulf in class between Serie A's top three and the rest.

Their first goal arrived after less than two minutes -- David Di Michele threading an insidious pass across a crowded box for Simplicio to tap in from close range.

Palermo continued to press forward aggressively and were rewarded again in the 36th minute when Amauri headed in a Eugenio Corini cross.

Di Michele came close to getting on the scoresheet himself midway through the second half with a long-range shot that crashed off the bar.

Then, with 11 minutes remaining, Simplicio wrapped up the win by running on to Marco Pisano's cut-back and thumping the ball into the roof of the net.

Earlier, bottom side Reggina continued their fight against the 15-point penalty handed to them in Italy's match-fixing scandal by beating Ascoli 2-1.

The victory, courtesy of goals from defender Alessandro Lucarelli and striker Nicola Amoruso either side of the break, gave Reggina five points, one fewer than winless Ascoli.

### NOTICE

Due to an unavoidable reason, we could not print the CROSSWORD today. We regret any inconvenience.

--Sports

Editor

# Frankfurt hit for six

AFP, Berlin



Werder Bremen claimed the outright lead in the Bundesliga with a 6-2 demolition of Eintracht Frankfurt on Saturday.

This was the perfect pick-me-up for Thomas Schaaf's side after the disappointment of getting dumped out of the Champions League by Barcelona in midweek.

If the Bremen players were suffering any hangover from that Barca defeat it certainly didn't show with Brazilian defender Naldo putting them into the lead after three minutes play.

Marco Russ had Frankfurt back on level terms a minute later but that only served to invigorate Bremen.

Danish midfielder Daniel Jensen put the visitor's back in front in the 11th minute with Naldo increasing their advantage on the

half-hour.

And the 24-year-old defender whom Schaaf reckons is the most talented in Brazil popped up with a third just after the break with Jurica Vranjes and Diego completing the rout in the dying minutes.

Sotorios Kyrgiakos bagged a late consolation for the hosts.

This six-star display pushed Bremen on to 33 points, two clear of VfB Stuttgart, the surprise package of the season who ran out 1-0 winners over VfL Bochum.

"I think we are the best team in Germany at the moment," Werder manager Klaus Allofs said.

"We want to stay in front right to the end of the season," he added.

Champions Bayern Munich, now Germany's only representative in the Champions League, struggled to see off Energie Cottbus 2-1 to put them level in third with Schalke 04 but with an inferior goal difference.

After last week's draw with Monchengladbach Bayern took all

three points with Bastian Schweinsteiger opening the scoring with a 42nd minute free-kick.

His hastily taken set-piece caught out Energie's excellent Bosnian keeper Tomislav Piplica.

Steffan Baumgart levelled for Cottbus with Dutch defender Daniel van Buyten saving Bayern's blushes with the 54th minute decider.

"Once again we had difficulty up against a well organised and very physical opposition," Bayern coach Felix Magath said.

Schalke 04 can draw level with Bremen at the summit if they get a result against Borussia Dortmund on Sunday.

Hamburg meanwhile were unable to follow up their Champions league win over CSKA Moscow in midweek, the second from bottom club playing out a goalless draw with Nuremberg.

That performance may hasten the departure of coach Thomas Doll.

# Goals galore in EPL

AFP, London



Manchester United's drive to reclaim the Premiership title accelerated on Saturday as Sir Alex Ferguson's side pulled nine points clear of Chelsea at the top of the Premiership with a 3-1 drubbing of bitter rivals Manchester City.

United, now unbeaten in 12 league matches, had been in control of the derby after first-half goals from Wayne Rooney and Louis Saha.

But they looked weary and vulnerable after Hatem Trabelsi pulled one back for City before Cristiano Ronaldo finally made the points safe with six minutes left.

Steven Gerrard had a second-half penalty saved but managed to score from the rebound to send Liverpool on their way to a 4-0 win over Fulham at Anfield that was watched by representatives of Dubai International Capital, the would-be new owners of the club.

Jamie Carragher, who had last scored in 1999, got the second before

late strikes from Luis Garcia and Chilean Mark Gonzales completed an ultimately comfortable win.

Matthew Taylor scored from inside the centre circle as Portsmouth returned to third place with a 2-0 win over Everton.

Nigerian forward Nwankwo Kanu added a superb volleyed second midway through the first half as Harry Redknapp's side chalked up their sixth win out of nine matches at their Fratton Park fortress.

Bolton returned to winning ways by beating West Ham 4-0 on the day that midfielder Gary Speed became the first player to make 500 appearances in the Premiership.

A brace from Kevin Davies and fine finishes from El Hadji Diouf and Nicolas Anelka left West Ham mired in deep trouble.

A double from Nigerian striker Obafemi Martins helped Newcastle pull further away from the drop zone with a 3-1 win over ten-man Blackburn.

Martins and Steven Taylor had put Newcastle two goals up by the time Blackburn's Swiss defender Stephane Henchoz was given a

straight red card for fouling Martins when he had a clear run at goal.

Morten Gamst Pedersen pulled one back for Rovers just after the break but Martins added his second in the final minute.

Aiyegbeni Yakubu's close-range finish salvaged a point for Middlesbrough at home to Wigan, who had taken the lead through Henri Camara's first-half penalty and were frustrated by a superb display from Boro goalkeeper Mark Schwarzer.

Charlton's hopes of going on a relegation-beating run after defeating Blackburn in midweek were crushed by Tottenham, who thrashed their London rivals 5-1 at White Hart Lane with the help of two goals from their Bulgarian forward Dimitar Berbatov.

Jermian Defoe, Teemu Tainio and Steed Malbranque also got on the scoresheet and Spurs even provided Charlton's only strike in the form of an own goal by Michael Dawson.

Watford remained at the bottom of the table, five points adrift of the last survival spot, after a goalless draw with Reading, the only one of the Premiership newcomers not to be embroiled in the relegation battle.



PHOTO: AFP

Tottenham Hotspur striker Dimitar Berbatov (R) is ecstatic as he is congratulated by a teammate after scoring the opening goal against Charlton Athletic during their Premiership match at White Hart Lane on Saturday.

# Lens stretch unbeaten run

AFP, Paris



Lens consolidated second place behind runaway leaders Lyon and Djibril Cisse made his long awaited debut for Marseille in the French first division on Saturday.

At the Velodrome Cisse kicked a ball in anger for the first time in six months when coming on as a second half substitute in Marseille's 2-1 win over Monaco.

Cisse, on-loan from Liverpool, was returning after the horrific leg fracture suffered in a France warm-up on the eve of the World Cup in June.

Marseille badly need Cisse back firing on all cylinders in a bid to reignite their flagging season.

And after being introduced on the hour mark he was at the heart of Marseille's 77th minute winner when teaming up well with Mamadou Niang who completed the move by shooting the ball past Flavio Roma.

Mikael Pagis had put Marseille into a 37th minute lead after having had a goal disallowed for offside, with Italian Marco Di Vaio drawing Monaco back level 20 minutes later.

Cisse said afterwards: "I'm really happy to have made my debut at the Velodrome a winning one. That's the most important thing."

Reflecting on his lengthy absence he added: "It went quickly.

I was patient, we did good work with the medical staff."

These three points against their south coast neighbours will be warmly received and they pushed Marseille up three places to fifth. Earlier Lens were deserved 1-0 winners over Toulouse.

Second half substitute Issam Jemaa broke the deadlock in injury time off a cross from Abdoulrazak Boukari.

That was just reward for the Tunisian striker as seconds earlier he'd hit the woodwork twice.

Lens were stretching their unbeaten run to nine games to move onto 32 points, 11 adrift of Lyon who host Paris Saint Germain on Sunday.

"Overall we deserved the win," reflected Lens coach Francis Gillot. He added: "I was beginning to get frustrated but we were rewarded for all the energy we showed."

"It's a result that gives me a lot of pleasure as we arrived here with high ambitions. I played four strikers towards the end and the high risk strategy paid off." Third-placed Sochaux were held to a goalless draw by Valenciennes.

Elsewhere on Saturday Auxerre and Troyes shared the spoils in a six goal thriller; bottom club Sedan fell 2-0 at mid-table Lorient; and there were no goals at the fixtures between Nantes and Le Mans and Nice and Nancy.

All eight of Saturday's games kicked off 10 minutes late as French referees staged a protest over their employment status.

## Barcelona set to sue Le Monde

REUTERS, Madrid

Barcelona announced on Saturday that they will be taking legal action against French daily Le Monde for alleging that the club had links to the doctor at the centre of a Spanish doping investigation.

The European and Spanish champions reiterated that they had no relationship with Doctor Eufemiano Fuentes who has been accused of offences against public health following raids on a number of addresses in Madrid and Zaragoza in May this year.

Le Monde said it had accessed documents suggesting that Fuentes, who has collaborated with several cycling teams, had been involved in the physical preparation, including possible use of illegal substances, of the Barcelona and Real Madrid teams via their respective medical departments.

"Doctor Fuentes is not linked nor has ever been linked with the medical services of FC Barcelona neither officially nor unofficially," the club said in a statement.

Le Monde asserted that Barcelona had approached Fuentes to collaborate with the Primera Liga side in 1996 and 2006; but although the club admitted there may have been an approach in 1996 they said there had been no contact since 2003.

Barca demanded that Le Monde issue an official apology before initiating legal action.

## CLUB WORLD CUP

# Al Ahli blank Auckland



REUTERS, Toyota

African champions Al Ahli beat New Zealand's Auckland City 2-0 on Sunday to earn a crack at Brazil's Internacional at the Club World Cup.

Angola striker Flavio fired home six minutes into the second half and dangerman Mohamed Aboutrika curled in a free kick in the 73rd minute as Ahli dominated the tournament curtain raiser.

The Egyptian side's reward will be a semi-final against South American champions Internacional in Tokyo on Wednesday.

Seeded teams Barcelona and

Internacional are scheduled to meet in the final of the competition involving the world's six continental champions.

Al Ahli totally outclassed Oceania representatives Auckland with Aboutrika twice coming close to breaking the deadlock in the first half.

But Flavio gave Ahli a deserved lead in the 51st minute, smashing a fierce shot past Auckland goalkeeper Ross Nicholson from the edge of the box after Emad Moteab's neat layoff.

Aboutrika effectively sealed Ahli's victory midway through the second half with a superb free kick from 20 metres that left Nicholson rooted to the spot.

Semi-professional Auckland

rarely threatened Ahli's goal, with the second-half introduction of former Japan midfielder Teru Iwamoto doing little to improve their fortunes in chilly Toyota.

European champions Barcelona are red-hot favourites to win the six-team tournament in Japan.

The Catalans begin their campaign in Yokohama on Thursday when they take on the winners of Monday's clash between Mexico's Club America and South Korea's Chonbuk Motors.

The final takes place in Yokohama on Dec. 17.

Brazil's Sao Paulo edged out Liverpool 1-0 in last year's final to win the first edition of the revamped FIFA tournament.



PHOTO: AFP

Palermo's Brazilian forward Carvalho Amauri (L) dances with teammates after scoring against Livorno during their Serie A match at the Barbera Stadium on Saturday.