

Sport

Inter Milan rout Roma



ROME, Dec 21 (Reuters/AFP): Roberto Baggio came on as a second-half substitute to inspire Inter Milan to a 4-1 victory over title rivals AS Roma on Sunday — but the result hinged on the sending off of Roma's Fabio Petrucci in the 73rd minute.

Inter were trailing to Paolo Sergio's 38th minute goal with Roma dominating when Baggio was brought on for France's Youni Djorkaeff in the 55th minute.

Four minutes later, his neat pass found Francesco Colonnese free on the right and his cross was turned home by Frenchman Benoit Caulet for a timely equaliser.

With the match finely balanced, Baggio then duped Petrucci into a clumsy foul which earned the Roma defender a red card. The visitors were still reorganising when Diego Simeone's 40-metre pass released Chilean Ivan Zamorano to make it 2-1.

Baggio got on the scoresheet himself in the 87th minute before setting-up Javier Zanetti for a fourth to give Inter their best win of the season and end Roma's seven match unbeaten run.

The victory lifted Inter ahead of Roma into fourth place, five points behind league leaders Fiorentina, who conceded a last minute penalty from Japan's Hidetoshi Nakata in a 2-2 draw at Perugia.

The dropped points allowed Parma to reduce the Florence side's lead at the top with a thrilling 5-3 victory at Empoli.

As Serie A stops for a two-

week Christmas break, Fiorentina lead with 29 points, three ahead of Parma and four in front of AC Milan, held 2-2 at Sampdoria.

Florentina were hit by a sucker punch from Croatia Milan Rapajic after 20 seconds but Anselmo Robbiati's 10th minute free kick and Gabriel Batistuta's 14th goal in 14 matches put them 2-1 up entering injury time.



ROBERTO BAGGIO

Five minutes into it, Spaniard Guillermo Amor handed in the area and Nakata kept his nerve to level the scores with his seventh goal in his first season.

Nakata shared the limelight with Filippo Inzaghi, whose hat-trick gave struggling champions Juventus a morale-boosting 3-0 victory over relegation candidates Salernitana.

Parma's defence had been

beaten just six times in their previous 13 matches, but they conceded two goals in the opening 45 minutes at Empoli as Alessandro Pane and Arturo Di Napoli twice put the home side in front.

Argentina's Hernan Crespo, with his first goal outside Parma's Tardini stadium in 10 months, and Frenchman Alain Boghossian levelled the scores by halftime before Italy midfielder Diego Fuser edged Parma in front in the 57th minute.

Stefano Fiore added a superb fourth before Di Napoli's 88th minute second briefly raised Empoli's hopes of salvaging a point. Fuser's second in the 90th finished the home side off.

Argentine Ariel Ortega's former England midfielder David Platt a morale-boosting 2-2 draw on his first appearance as Samp's manager.

Lazio beat Udinese 3-1 in a match which started with a one-minute silence for the victims of the apartment building collapse in Rome last week. The team wore black armbands as a mark of respect.

The match itself was only underway for five minutes before Tomas Locatelli opened the scoring for Udinese.

Roberto Mancini soon equalised for Lazio after collecting a long ball forward from Yugoslav defender Sinisa Mihajlovic.

But the victory had a Chilean stamp on it, with Marcelo Salas scoring twice in the second half.

In other matches Piacenza were 3-2 winners over Bari, Vicenza drew 0-0 with Venezia and, Bologna beat Cagliari 1-0.

Hosts humiliate Indians

DUNEDIN, Dec 21 (AP/Reuters/Internet): New Zealand gave an early glimpse of their batting strength in the form of Stephen Fleming and Craig McMillan as they easily overpowered India by 66 runs in a limited-over cricket match at Carisbrook Oval on Monday.

The exhibition day night match, played on what would have been the fourth day of the abandoned first cricket Test, was the first outing for both teams after they had been confined indoors due to continuing rain that robbed the first game of the three-Test series.

New Zealand batting first hammered 304 for six in 50 overs and India replied with 238 for eight.

After Matt Bell and Matt Horne (64) had launched an early attack on the new-ball pair of Jagavall Srinath and Venkatesh Prasad, Fleming, 73 off 64 balls and McMillan (46) hammered a run-a-ball 95 runs for the fourth wicket.

After opener Navjot Sidhu (10) had fallen cheaply, Laxman and Rahul Dravid (51) figured in a 112-run stand before India lost their way.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard in the day-night exhibition match between a New Zealand XI and an Indian XI on Monday.

NEW ZEALAND XI

Bell c Ganguly b Kumble	27
Horne c Laxman b Ganguly	64
Fleming c Prasad b Tendulkar	73
Astle c Mongia b Prasad	2
McMillan c Kumble b Laxman	46
Parore not out	24
Cairns b Kumble	22
Nash not out	23
Extras (lb-13, w-1, nb-9)	23
Total (For six wickets)	304
Fall of wickets: 1-65; 2-122; 3-132; 4-228; 5-235; 6-264	
Did not bat: D Vettori, S O'Connor, G. Allott	

INDIAN XI

Laxman c Bell b Cairns	82
Sidhu run out	10
Dravid c Horne b O'Connor	51
Tendulkar c and b Astle	16
Azharuddin not out	44
Ganguly c Vettori b Nash	8
Mongia c Astle b Nash	6
Kumble b Allott	2
Srinath c O'Connor	2
Prasad not out	2
Extras (lb-4, w-4, nb-2)	10
Total (For eight wickets)	238
Fall of wickets: 1-18; 2-130; 3-165; 4-165; 5-192; 6-200; 7-211; 8-222	
Did not bat: R Singh	

Result: New Zealand won by 66 runs.

Tasmania crush Queensland

BRISBANE, Dec 21: Tasmania destroyed Queensland inside three days to win their Sheffield Shield cricket match by eight wickets at the Gabba here today, reports AFP.

Chasing 109 runs for victory, Tasmania reached 110 for two midway through the post-lunch session, with Michael Divenuto unbeaten on 31 and Test discard Ricky Ponting 17 not out.

Openers Jamie Cox (six) and Dene Hills (43) were the only wickets to fall as the Tasmanians bounced back from last week's thrashing by South Australia in Hobart.

Tasmania set up victory Sunday when they posted a first innings 229 in reply to 164, before reducing Queensland to 127 for 7 in their second innings at stumps.

Tasmanian pacemen Greg Rowell (4-54) and Colin Miller (3-29) finished off the tail in just over an hour as Queensland crashed to be all out for 173.

Tasmania's victory lifts them to 10 points after five Shield matches.

In Sydney, New South Wales held a one-run lead with eight second innings wickets in hand at stumps on the third day against Victoria today.

Victorian captain Shane Warne declared his team's first innings at 438 for nine just after tea, giving Victoria a 78-run first innings lead, and when Mark Taylor had gone for nine and Steve Waugh for five to have NSW 36 for two late in the day, the Victorians could smell an outright victory.

Valdes' antic on page one!

MADRID, Dec 21 (Reuters/Internet): Spain's two main sports dailies gave front page prominence on Monday to pictures of the unusual goal celebration of Oviedo's Panamanian striker Dely Valdes.

After scoring the only goal of the home game against Real Madrid on Sunday.

Valdes' contribution to the ever-more bizarre celebrations sweeping the game was to have the team masseur rush on to the pitch with a mobile phone so that he could imitate a famous Spanish television advert.

"I had arranged it beforehand so that Paco, the masseur, would bring on the phone if I scored," Valdes said.

"I didn't actually make a call although I thought about calling my family in Panama."

"Now I'm thinking about what I can do next time I score," he added.

The striker has become a favourite with the Oviedo fans since his move from French club Paris St Germain in 1997.

Last season he was the club's top scorer - for which he received the unusual trophy of a giant iron lobster.

Argentina were also the vic-



VIVE LA FRANCE! The World Cup winning French soccer team.

—Star file photo

1998: The year of France's soccer revolution

LONDON, Dec 21 (Reuters/Internet): Two Frenchmen named Aime and Zinedine encapsulated the A-Z of soccer in 1998.

Aime Jacquet defied all odds and endless criticism of his coaching methods and team selection to fashion France into World Cup winners.

Zinedine Zidane emerged as France's ultimate hero as his team beat Brazil 3-0 to win the World Cup final at the Stade de France on July 12. Zidane scored two headers and later had his name emblazoned in lights on the Arc de Triomphe.

The French victory crowned the biggest-ever World Cup of 32 teams and inspired celebrations that had not been seen in the country since the end of World War Two.

WORLD CUP MYSTERY

Apart from France's success, the World Cup also provided the year's greatest soccer mystery after Ronaldo's lethargic performance in the most one-sided World Cup final of all time.

After apparently suffering a seizure the night before the final, he was taken to hospital and his name left off the team sheet for the game.

But with less than an hour to go before kickoff, Ronaldo arrived at the stadium and after major disagreements between the coaching staff, medical staff and senior players, the striker was named in the starting lineup.

An indication something was wrong came when Brazil failed to show for their pre-match warm-up, and it was clear almost from the first whistle that Ronaldo was completely out of sorts looking slow, sluggish and playing as if in a daze.

Brazil never looked remotely like winning the match and when Emmanuel Petit scored the third and final goal in the last minute, France's victory was complete.

That they achieved it without a potent strike force spoke volumes for both Jacquet and Zidane, who, apart from his suspension following his first round, sending-off against Saudi Arabia, was an inspiration on the pitch.

Jacquet's team overcame their lack of firepower, and the temporary loss of Zidane for two matches, by pushing defenders and midfielders into attacking positions as often as possible, and as a result, the goals were spread around the team.

GOLDEN GOAL WINNER

Defender Lilian Thuram scored his first international goals in the 2-1 win over Croatia in the semifinal, while centre-back Laurent Blanc scored the golden goal winner in the 1-0 quarter-final victory over Paraguay.

Blanc, one of France's outstanding players, was denied a place in the final after being sent off in the semifinal when Croatian defender Slaven Bilic over-reacted to a touch from Blanc, collapsing and holding his head as if he had been poleaxed.

His later apology was rejected by the Frenchman, but symbolised one of the negative aspects of the tournament which produced a record number of 22 sendings off and 257 cautions.

Not only were players too quick to dive and feign injury, but referees were too inconsistent, glib and under pressure from FIFA, whose conflicting messages on how to control matches, merely made matters worse.

Although the World Cup did not produce one truly great match, there were some memorable moments and goals.

The goal of the tournament was scored by Denis Bergkamp in the last minute of the Netherlands' quarter final against Argentina.

With the score at 1-1 Bergkamp collected a lofted 70-metre pass from Frank de Boer. He controlled the ball with one touch, turned inside the defender with a second and volleyed it home with his third.

SUPERB SOLO EFFORT

Argentina were also the vic-

times of an audacious goal scored against them in the second round by England teenager Michael Owen who ran through the defence to strike home after a run and shot of breathtaking skill.

After 120 minutes of unrelenting drama which saw both teams hold the lead an England reduced to 10 men just after halftime when David Beckham was sent off, the match finished 2-2. Argentina won 4-3 on penalties to secure a famous victory.

While the tournament saw a change in order of at the top with the emergence of France and Croatia and the eclipse of an aging German side and the end of Brazil's reign as world champions, Europe still dominated.

The continent that produced seven of the eight quarter-finalists in 1994 had six in the last eight this time as Africa again failed to mount any sort of challenge.

Egypt, who lifted the African Nations Cup in February, failed to qualify for the World Cup, while runners-up South Africa were out of their depth in France.

Nigeria topped their group

but crashed to earth in the second round to leave Africa still off the pace as new FIFA president Sepp Blatter argues its case to host the 2006 World Cup.

ELECTION BATTLE
Blatter, 62, succeeded Brazilian Joao Havelange, 20 years his senior, who had been president of the world governing body of 24 years.

The Swiss, Havelange's long-time deputy, won a fierce election battle against UEFA's 68-year-old Swedish president Lennart Johansson for the right to take soccer into the new millennium.

While the World Cup provided most of the on-field drama, administrators such as Johansson and Blatter have been battling to steer the ever-expanding global game forward without it being destroyed by a totally unworkable fixture list and sheer greed from the leading clubs and players. It is not yet clear whether they will succeed.

Once the World Cup was over UEFA, with FIFA's backing, had to battle hard to see off the threat of a rival European Super League to its own Champions League.

UEFA has responded with an

expanded Champions League offering tens of millions of dollars in prize money starting next year.

With the 2000 European Championships just over the horizon and Blatter keen on the continuation of the largely meaningless Confederations Cup tournament for confederation winners, soccer is reaching saturation point. It is a worrying trend for the future.

But in this year of profound change, there were two significant successes that at least acknowledged the past.

Real Madrid, who set European soccer alight with their five successive European Cup wins in the 1950s and early 1960s, were crowned European champions for the first time in 32 years when they beat Juventus 1-0 in the final in Amsterdam.

And in England, Arsenal won the daunting Cup and League Double for the second time in their history.

Their success in May owed much to the tactical ingenuity of their French coach Arsene Wenger, who made his own contribution to a memorable French soccer year.



USA forward Mia Hamm (R) and Ukraine's Oxana Andryushcheko go for the ball during a friendly soccer match in California on Sunday. The Americans won 5-0. —AP/UNB photo

OUCH! Inter Milan's Brazilian superstriker Ronaldo being taken off the field after a collision with a Roma defender during their Serie A match at the San Siro Stadium on December 20.

—AP/UNB photo

Mallorca increase gap

MADRID, Dec 21: Mallorca extended their lead at the top of the Spanish First Division despite being held to a 1-1 draw by visiting Racing Santander on Sunday, reports Reuters.

The island club's two nearest challengers, Celta Vigo and Valencia both lost away from home to leave Mallorca four points clear on 29 points from 15 games.

Celta are second with 25 points from 15 games after going down 2-0 at Real Sociedad while Valencia are third, trailing on goal difference, after losing 2-1 at Espanyol.

Oviedo moved up to fifth with a 1-0 victory over Real Madrid to leave the European champions in eighth place.

In Mallorca it was two players released in the summer by Real Madrid, who got on the scoresheet.

Mallorca rarely looked like

the team that has set alight the Spanish First Division in recent weeks but scored after 54 minutes when Dani Garcia headed home a Vicente Engonga cross.

However, Racing salvaged a point with a phenomenal free kick by Victor Sanchez from 25 metres, which evaded the Mallorca wall and goalkeeper Carlos Roa.

Mallorca coach Hector Cuper regretted the fact that two points had been squandered, with a difficult series of games looming in January, but praised both the scorers.

Celta fell victim to two goals from Real Sociedad's Yugoslav international striker Darko Kovacevic, one in each half.

In Barcelona Espanyol were always in charge against Valencia.

Joan Capdevila headed home the first Espanyol goal after 35 minutes, Francisco Farinos equalised just before halftime but Cristobal Parralo won

it for Espanyol 15 minutes from time.

Panamanian striker Dely Valdes scored Oviedo's goal to beat Real Madrid in the 75th minute.

Barcelona coach Louis Van Gaal has probably been spared being sacked before Christmas by the 1-0 win at Valladolid.

The streak of four consecutive losses, their worst run in a decade, was broken thanks to 18-year-old midfielder Xavi Hernandez's first goal for the club.

He headed home after Valladolid goalkeeper Cesar Sanchez could only parry a close range shot from Rivaldo.

Aleccio Madrid kept intact their unbeaten home league record, which now stretches back more than a year, with a 0-0 draw with Real Zaragoza.

Spanish international striker Ismael Urzaiz got his ninth goal of the season for Athletic Bilbao with the only goal of the match against Villareal.

Brazilian soccer playoffs nicely balanced

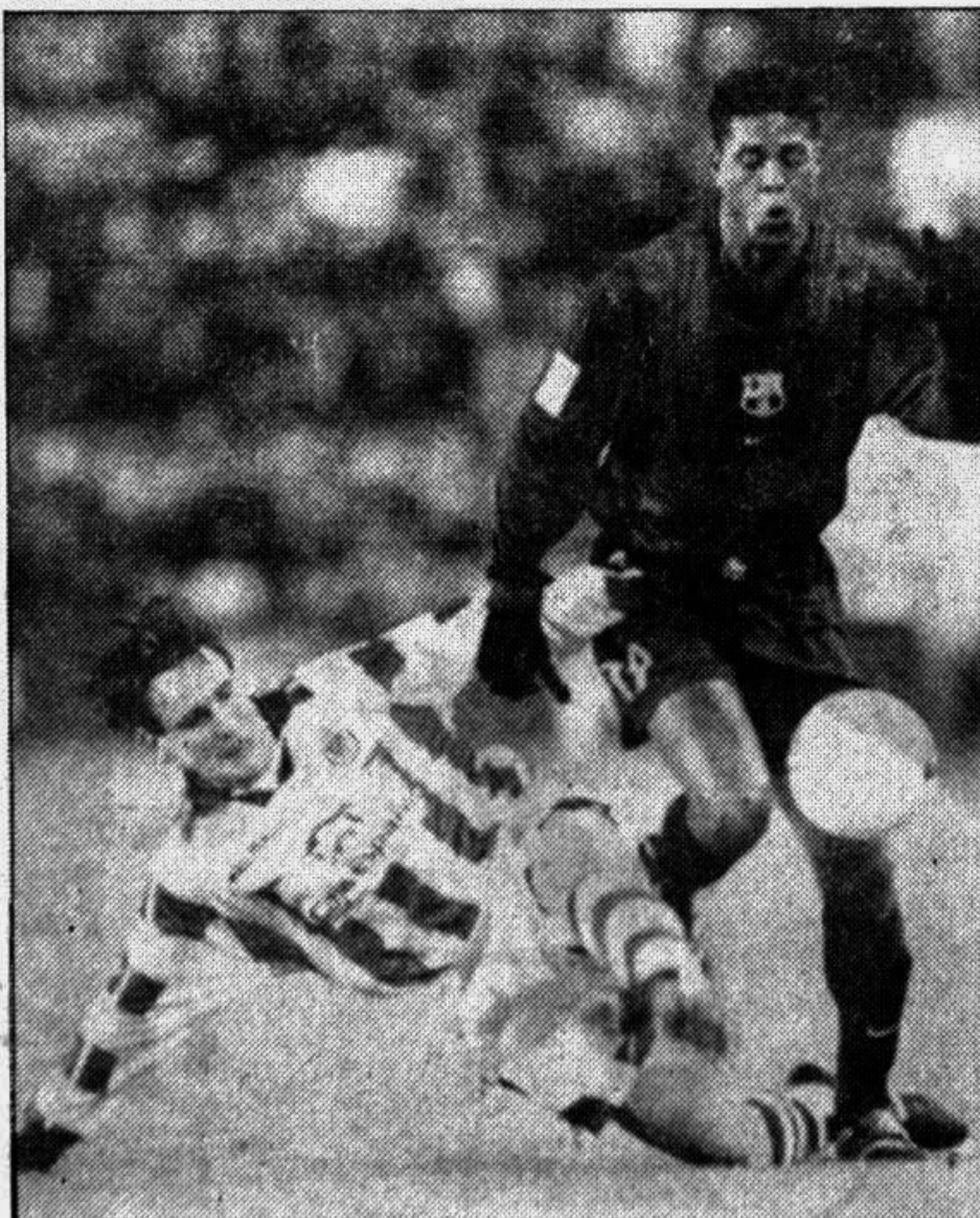
RIO DE JANEIRO, Dec 21: Cruzeiro and Corinthians tied for the second straight playoff game of the 1998 Brazilian soccer championship Sunday before 60,000 screaming fans at Sao Paulo's Morumbi Stadium. A third and deciding game will be played Wednesday, reports AP.

In the first half, the Corinthians kept up a relentless attack but were stopped by tenacious defence and several spectacular goals by Cruzeiro goalie Dida.

Also in the first half, a television replay showed a referee erred when he called an off sides after a goal by Corinthians's Freddy Rincon. Minutes later, Corinthian defender Gilmar was carried off the field with a leg injury and is expected to miss Wednesday's decisive game.

On Wednesday, the two teams will play for the title at Morumbi Stadium. Last Sunday, they tied 2-2 at Belo Horizonte's Mineiro stadium.

The Corinthians can win the title with a tie in the next game because of a better won-loss record during the championship series. For Cruzeiro, they would need a win.



Barcelona's Netherlands striker Patrick Kluivert (R) skips a tackle by Valladolid's Jose Garcia Calvo in their Spanish Premier league fixture at Valladolid on December 20. Barca won 1-0. —AP/UNB photo

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

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25 Help a hood	40 "War Games" group	16 Seance	42 You'll get a rise out of it
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38 Highway divisions	51 Crafty		
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CRYPTOQUIP

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L Y U Y B I K S Y K B Y V E L K V N
E V Y O S D U O S Y R L K
I E H Y D K S S Y D L O K S N
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: THINK ABOUT THIS ONE: WILL YOUR REPAIRED RADIOS BE LIKELY TO WORK OR PLAY?
Today's Cryptoquip clue: S equals N
The Cryptoquip 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.