

Primera Liga
Sociedad thrash Atletico

BARCELONA, Aug 29 (Reuters/Internet): Victor Bonilla and Oscar de Paula struck two second-half goals apiece to earn Real Sociedad a 4-1 win over Atletico Madrid in a bad tempered Spanish first division clash on Saturday. Big-spending Atletico took the lead on eight minutes through Argentine forward Santiago Solari but failed to build on their advantage, with expensive signing Jimmy Floyd Hasselbank turning in another poor display. They paid the price in the second half as Atletico coach Claudio Ranieri -- who once again left Juninho out of his squad was left to watch in dismay as his side self-destructed in the space of 15 minutes. Real equalised six minutes into the second half through de Paula from close range and took the lead with a great finish from Bonilla, who controlled de Paula's cross on his chest before calmly rounding Atletico goalkeeper Toni Jimenez. Atletico then threw away their chance of a comeback as Jose Antonio Chamot was sent off for throwing a punch at Francisco de Pedro after the Spanish international defender had clattered into him. Real ran the Atletico defence ragged, with Bonilla a particular menace. The Colombia international made it 3-1 on 76 minutes, and de Paula wrapped up the scoring in injury time as he was left unmarked to nod in from close range. The result left Atletico bottom and put some early season pressure on Ranieri after his side's 2-0 opening day defeat by Rayo Vallecano last weekend.

Reigning champions Bordeaux and Marseille, last season's runners-up, both drew on Saturday to miss the chance of closing on French First Division leaders Paris St Germain, reports Reuters. But AJ Auxerre joined the Parisians on 10 points after their 2-1 victory over Le Havre following an ill-tempered game in which three players were sent off. Marseille had to settle for their fourth consecutive draw, held 1-1 at home by Bastia. A defensive blunder allowed Bastia's Fredric Nee to score in the sixth minute and Marseille, despite dominating for long periods, could not clinch victory after former Everton striker Ibrahim Bakayoko levelled on 51 minutes. The home side were booted off, with fans chanting for the resignation of coach Roland Courbis. Bordeaux drew 0-0 with visitors Metz. Bordeaux playmaker Stephane Ziani broke his leg in the first half and faces at least six weeks out. They now have eight points from five games. Paris Saint Germain, with a game in hand, travel to Olympique Lyon today. Bordeaux president Jean-Louis Triaux said: "We're not going to panic just because we drew with Metz." Auxerre, meanwhile, were shocked by an early Thierry De Nee goal against Le Havre but levelled through Finn Temmu Taino in the 62nd minute. Stephane Guivarch scored the winner in the 77th minute after missing a penalty. Auxerre ended with 10 men and Le Havre with nine. Auxerre coach Guy Roux refused to be carried away by the result, saying: "We're not really in second place as Monaco could catch us tomorrow." Monaco, sixth with seven points, host bottom club Troyes on Sunday. St Etienne lost to Sedan 3-2 following a last-gasp goal by Olivier Quint. St Etienne had defender Stephane Hernandez sent off after 63 minutes.

Di Biagio moves to Inter
ROME, Aug 29: Italian international midfielder Luigi Di Biagio has quit AS Roma to join Serie A rivals Inter Milan, his new club announced Saturday, reports AFP. Di Biagio wanted a move as he feared he did not feature in the first-team plans of new Roma coach Fabio Capello, who has signed a similar player in Brazilian Marcos Assuncao. Di Biagio believed first-team football is key to retaining his place in the national squad. It is yet another high-profile signing for Inter, who have bought Italian striker Christian Vieri and French World Cup winning defender Laurent Panza on Wednesday. The champions looked jaded after their heroics in midweek but a 69th minute strike by Finnish substitute Jonatan Johansson settled a frenetic contest at Easter Road. Rangers' nearest rivals Celtic can close the gap on Sunday when they play Hearts at home. In Saturday's other premier league match, Dundee moved up to fifth with a 2-0 win at Motherwell.

Rangers' fifth in a row
GLASGOW, Aug 29: Reigning champions Rangers went six points clear at the top of the Scottish premier league table after a 1-0 away win at Hibernian on Saturday, reports AFP. Rangers' fifth straight league win maintained their perfect start of the season and completed a triumphant week for Dick Advocaat's side who qualified for the Champions League with an aggregate win over Parma on Wednesday. The champions looked jaded after their heroics in midweek but a 69th minute strike by Finnish substitute Jonatan Johansson settled a frenetic contest at Easter Road. Rangers' nearest rivals Celtic can close the gap on Sunday when they play Hearts at home. In Saturday's other premier league match, Dundee moved up to fifth with a 2-0 win at Motherwell.



Nicola Ventola of Bologna (L) being challenged by Torino defender Dijbril Diawara during their Serie A game at Bologna on August 28. —AFP photo

Serie A
Vieri sets San Siro alight

MILAN, Aug 29: Christian Vieri started repaying his world record 50-million-dollar transfer fee in style on Sunday, scoring a hat-trick on his debut as Inter Milan whipped new boys Verona 3-0, reports AFP. Champions AC Milan were held to a 2-2 draw at newly-promoted Lecce, despite a goal from 22-million-dollar Ukrainian Andriy Shevchenko, while two other title hopefuls, Parma and AS Roma, both drew 1-1. There was no shortage of thrills at San Siro where a delirious crowd saw Vieri erase all the bad memories of last season's disastrous campaign. Vieri opened the scoring in the 16th minute on the break, while his stand-in strike partner Ivan Zamorano hit the woodwork just minutes later. Zamorano made way for Ronaldo, who is still short of match fitness, at the start of the second half but it was Vieri who continued to find the target, scoring again in the 53rd and 65th minutes. AC Milan, watched by Italy's holidaying Prime Minister Massimo D'Alema, were not so fortunate in the first league match of their centenary season. Milan took the lead when Liberian veteran George Weah hit the post and then drilled home the rebound, but Lecce were level about five minutes later through defender Alberto Savino. The Italian champions looked to have had all three points in the bag when Shevchenko made it 2-1 in the 72nd minute, only for Lecce to come storming back to level with Cristiano Lucarelli in the 81st. The draw proved to be only one of several surprises on the opening weekend. AS Roma skipper Francesco Totti scored the first goal of the millennium season, driving home a 14th minute penalty against perennial strugglers Piacenza. But Fabio Capello's men were caught out by Giovanni Stroppa's superb 82nd minute free-kick into the roof of the net and had to settle for a draw. Parma, freshly knocked out of the European Champions League qualifiers by Glasgow Rangers, needed a late equaliser from Croatian Mario Stanic after Renato Olive had given away a 46th minute lead. However, Fiorentina made no such mistake against Bari -- new striker Enrico Chiesa scoring the only goal of the match on his debut. A late goal from Filippo Maniero earned Venezia a 1-1 surprise draw against Udinese, who took the lead through new signing Roberto Muzzi, while Juventus were due to open in the night match against newcomers Reggina.

On Sunday, Torino, returning to the top flight after a three-year absence, held Bologna to a goalless draw in the season's opener. The match, brought forward from Sunday to meet the demands of Italy's fast-developing pay-television market, offered one moment of note -- the 71st-minute dismissal of Torino's Gustavo Mendes for a foul on striker Giuseppe Signori. The decision looked harsh on the Uruguayan midfielder, playing his first match for the Torino side since his move from Vicenza. Torino's Brazilian defender Andre Cruz came close with a free kick in the first half but Bologna had the better of a largely sterile encounter. In the remaining fixture of the weekend, UEFA Super Cup champions Lazio take on Cagliari on Monday. Serie A results at a glance: Sunday Fiorentina 1 (Chiesa 47) Bari 0 Inter Milan 3 (Vieri 16, 53, 65) Verona 0 Lecce 2 (Savino 65, Lucarelli 81) AC Milan 2 (Weah 57, Shevchenko 72) Perugia 1 (Olive 46) Parma 1 (Stanic 80) Piacenza 1 (Stroppa 82) AS Roma 1 (Totti 14) Venezia 1 (Maniero 71) Udinese 1 (Muzzi 54) Juventus v Reggina (evening kick-off) Saturday Bologna 0 Torino 0

J-League
Happy homecoming for Kazu

TOKYO, Aug 29: Japan's former top striker Kazuyoshi Miura made his return from Croatia, scoring twice to give Kyoto Purple Sanga a 3-1 win over Vissel Kobe in the J-League on Saturday, reports AFP. "My experience allowed me to score these two goals today, but I must do better. I dedicate these two goals to my fans, teammates and coach Kamo," said Miura who failed to score once for Croatia Zagreb since joining them in December. Head coach Shu Kamo, the former national team coach who was fired during the World Cup qualifying round, has been hospitalized since Friday due to extreme stress and strain. Miura, who was sent home shortly before the World Cup finals, headed home on a pinpoint corner in the 53rd minute and then made it 2-0 easily taking a rebound after the Vissel keeper saved a shot in the 76th. It was Purple Sanga's fourth win against one defeat for 12 points to trail front runners Yokohama Marinos by one point. Shimizu S-Pulse also stood with a 4-1 record for 12 points, ahead of Verdy Kawasaki with 11 points. Marinos whitewashed Gamba Osaka 3-0 with Japanese and South Korean internationals Shoji Jo and Yoo Sang-Chul adding insurance goals in the 52nd and 76th minutes. Brazilian striker Fabinho scored a goal for the third game in a row as he hit home a decider in the 79th minute to give the S-Pulse a 4-3 win over Nagoya Grampus Eight, while Verdy blanked Avispa Fukuoka 2-0. In other games, defending champions Kashima Antlers finally scored their first win in the second stage with Brazilian legend Zico re-joining the team as a general manager. They overwhelmed first-stage winners Jubilo Iwata 4-0. Kashima Reysol ran out 2-0 winners over JEF United Ichihara. Sanfrece Hiroshima edged past Bellmare Hiratsuka 3-2 in extra time, and Urawa Red Diamonds downed Cerezo Osaka 3-2. Standings (played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, goals against, points -- three points for a win in regulation time, two points for a win in extra time and one point for a draw): Yokohama F. Marinos 5 4 1 0 13 4 13 Shimizu S-Pulse 5 4 0 1 12 6 12 Kyoto Purple Sanga 5 4 0 1 10 4 12 Verdy Kawasaki 5 4 0 1 12 8 11 Kashima Reysol 5 3 0 2 8 6 8 Vissel Kobe 5 2 2 1 10 7 8 Cerezo Osaka 5 3 0 2 10 9 6 Sanfrece Hiroshima 4 2 0 2 9 6 6 JEF United Ichihara 5 2 0 3 8 10 6 Gamba Osaka 5 2 0 3 8 5 6 Bellmare Hiratsuka 5 1 1 3 10 11 4 Avispa Fukuoka 5 1 1 2 3 5 4 Nagoya Grampus Eight 5 1 1 3 9 14 4 Kashima Antlers 5 1 0 4 8 9 3 Urawa Red Diamonds 5 1 0 4 8 12 3 Jubilo Iwata 5 1 0 4 11 3

Jong wins marathon
SEVILLE, Spain, Aug 29: Jong Song Ok of North Korea brought the country its first medal ever in the World Championships, winning the women's marathon gold medal Sunday in 2 hours 26 minutes 59 seconds, reports AP. Ari Ichishibu of Japan -- who wore silver shoes in the race -- took silver in 2:27:02 with bronze for Romanian Lidia Simon in 2:27:41. The 25-year-old Jong, a little-known runner from an isolated country, broke away from Ichihashi at 40 kilometers (25 miles) and looked fresh entering Olympic Stadium, where moderate late morning temperatures (26C/78F) greeted her. Defending Olympic champion Fatuma Roba of Ethiopia broke out of a pack of 10 to take the lead just past the 30-kilometer (19-mile) mark and, as she pulled steadily away, seemed to have the race won. But at 38 kilometers (24 miles) the three-time defending Boston Marathon champion was surprisingly overtaken by Jong and Ichihashi. She finished fourth in 2:28:04. After that, it was a foot race with Jong pulling away in the final minutes to run a personal best and a national record. Her previous best time was 2:29:54. "I imagined in my mind the image of our Korean leader, Kim Jong Il, and this inspired me today," Jong said. "This was the source of my power." "Yes, I am a new marathon runner in the eyes of the rest of the world. Hopefully they will know me better in the future." Jong's coach Tae Dong Hak described his star's tough training habits. She runs 35-40 kilometers daily (22-25 miles) and trains in a mountain region in the north of North Korea.



North Korean Jong Song-ok poses after winning the women's marathon yesterday. —AFP photo

Championships at a glance

SEVILLE, Spain, Aug 29 (AP): A brief look at what happened Saturday on the eighth day of the World Championships. Weather -- Sunny and hot with the mercury rising to 36 C (97 F) mid-afternoon. Attendance -- 52,273. Winners -- Men's Marathon: Abel Anton, Spain, 2:13:36. Women's 100 Hurdles: Gail Devers, United States, 12.37. Women's Javelin: Mirela Manjani -- Tzellili, Greece, 67.09 (220-1). Men's Long Jump: Ivan Pedroso, Cuba, 8.56 (28-1). Men's 5,000: Salah Hissou, Morocco, 12:58.13. Other Highlights -- Sweden's Ludmila Engquist caps an amazing comeback from breast cancer with a bronze medal in the 100-metre hurdles. Surprises -- Kenya's Daniel Komen surrenders his 5,000m crown, managing only a fifth place finish. Quote of the Day -- "It's a dream come true, something I could not have envisioned three months ago," Engquist, who had a mastectomy in April and is still undergoing chemotherapy. Sunday's Finals: Women's Marathon, High Jump, 1500, 4x100 and 4x400, Men's 800, 4x100, 4x400 and Javelin.

Pan Pacs end Aussies rekindle Olympic spirit

SYDNEY, Aug 29: Australia were the big winners at the Pan Pacific swimming championships which finished in Sydney's Olympic pool today, reports Reuters. Not only did the host nation finish level with the powerful United States team at the top of the medals standings, but the extraordinary performances by Ian Thorpe and his teammates helped re-ignite local interest in next year's Sydney Olympics after a year of IOC scandals. The Pan Pacs were not on the list of official Olympic test events. Olympic organising body SOCOG was nowhere to be seen -- but Australia's head coach Don Talbot said they had given fans a foretaste of the 2000 Games. "This meet had the feel of an Olympics. It was just amazing," Talbot said. A total of 12 world records were set during the eight-day event, dispelling fears that Sydney's state of the art Olympic pool was slow because it had been set there since it opened four years ago. Thorpe, chosen as the male swimmer of the meet, was responsible for four of the new marks. Propelled by his flipper-sized feet, the Sydney schoolboy shattered fellow-Australian Kieren Perkins's 400 metres record by almost two seconds with a time of three minutes 41.83 seconds then stole the 200 metres record from another of his countrymen, Grant Hackett, before lowering it even further to 1:46.00. The 16-year-old Thorpe also helped the Australian 4x200 freestyle relay team slash more than three seconds off their old mark, finishing the event with four gold medals. "The really scary thing about Ian Thorpe is that we all know that he's only just starting to scratch the surface," the head of the US men's team Mark Schubert said. "He is an extraordinary talent and what we saw here is just the beginning." South Africa's Penny Heyns won the award for the best female swimmer after breaking four of her own world records. Her job was made easier by the absence of China's top women after Beijing decided to send a weakened team of just five swimmers -- bringing accusations from some of the other countries that they had something to hide. Heyns, a double Atlanta Olympic champion, came into the meeting in the best form of her life after setting four world marks in Los Angeles last month and cheerfully carried on with her spree, lowering her own standards for the 100, the 200 metres twice, then the 50 metres after receiving permission from the sport's world governing body to attempt a time trial. Lenny Kravtzeburg also cracked the 50 metres record after getting the thumbs up from FINA to swim against the clock. The American won the 100m-200 metres double, setting records in the finals of each event, then thundered down the pool to add the 50, taking Heyns's lead. The only other world record was established by all-rounder Jenny Thompson, who erased the 18-year-old 100 metre butterfly mark set by her fellow-American Mary T Meagher, hitting the wall after 57.88. Thompson, 26, also won the 50 and 100 metre individual freestyle events and was a member of each of the three US women's relay teams, finishing the meeting with six gold medals. Australia's Michael Klim won four gold medals and a silver. The shaven-headed sprinter took the 100 freestyle and 100 butterfly crowns as well as helping the Australians win gold in the men's 4x100m and 4x200m freestyle relays. He should have had a second silver in the 4x100 medley relay but, desperate to catch the Americans in the final event of the championships, he left the blocks too early and disqualified his team. "This was one of the most extraordinary meets I've ever been to in my 30 years in this sport," Schubert said. "If this doesn't get you motivated about coming back here next year then you don't love swimming."

Devers in a league of her own

SEVILLE, Aug 29 (AP/Reuters): Gail Devers of the United States became the most successful woman in World Championship history, winning the 100-metre hurdles Saturday to take her fifth gold medal overall. Devers easily defeated Glory Alozie of Nigeria. Ludmila Engquist capped her amazing comeback from breast cancer with a bronze medal. Devers, the 1993 and 1995, was lightning fast out of the blocks and finished in 12.37 seconds, the best time this year. Alozie set an African record of 12.44 and Engquist set a Swedish record of 12.47. Devers had already won the 100 and 100 hurdles in 1993, the 100 hurdles in 1995 and was part of the women's 4x100 relay bond with Devers, who overcame Graves' Disease, a potentially fatal thyroid disorder. "I was really proud of Ludmila that she came back and accomplished what she did," Devers said. "Let everyone know if you are believing in yourself dreams can come true." The victory gave Devers five career World Championship gold medals, putting her first on the all-time list ahead of Jackie Joyner-Kersey. Carl Lewis and Michael Johnson lead the men's list with eight golds apiece. Devers' time broke her previous American record of 12.46 seconds, set in 1993 at the World Championships in Stuttgart. It was the world's fastest time since Engquist ran 12.26 seconds in Seville in 1992. Devers burst quickly from the blocks, was first over the



American Gail Devers (R) and Swede Ludmila Engquist look up at the giant screen after their 100m hurdles final on August 28. —AFP photo

first hurdle and pulled away throughout the race. Engquist got off to a slow start and trailed badly for the first half of the race. But she came on strongly in the final stages and was just beaten by the silver by Alozie, who out-leaped her at the line. Earlier Abel Anton touched a deep tribulation chord as he ran through the streets of Seville in fierce early evening heat to win the world men's marathon title for Spain. The gaunt Spaniard made the most of the final metres as he ran around the track in front of the first capacity crowd of the first hurdle and pulled away throughout the race. Engquist got off to a slow start and trailed badly for the first half of the race. But she came on strongly in the final stages and was just beaten by the silver by Alozie, who out-leaped her at the line. Earlier Abel Anton touched a deep tribulation chord as he ran through the streets of Seville in fierce early evening heat to win the world men's marathon title for Spain. 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