

**Toshack unsure about Raul**

MADRID, Sept 20: Real Madrid coach John Toshack is considering a gamble on the fitness of his star striker Raul Gonzalez for Tuesday's Champions League group E clash with Norway's Molde, reports Reuters.

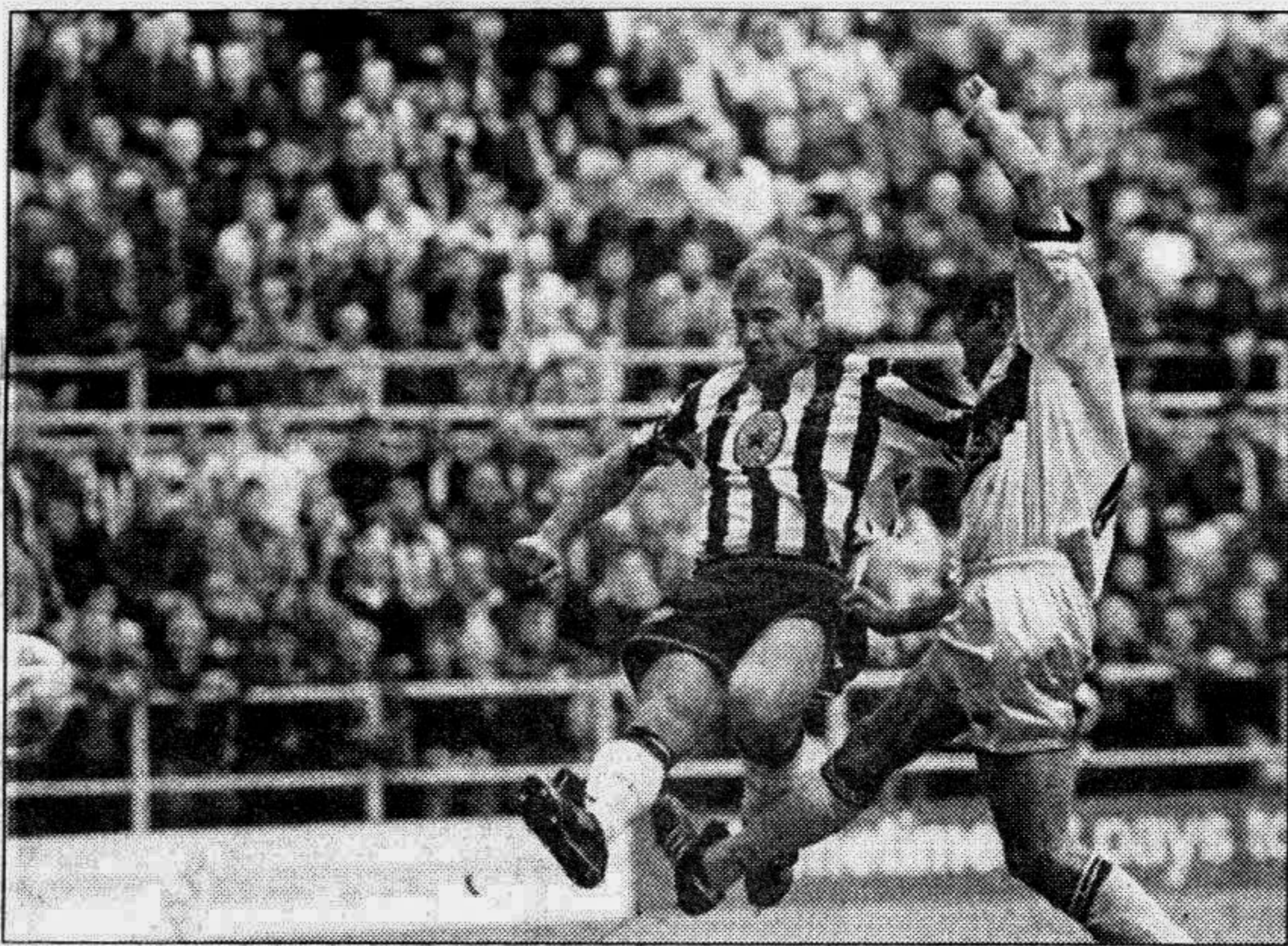
Raul, the leading scorer in Spain last year with 25 goals, limped his way through to the end of Saturday's 1-1 draw with Deportivo Coruna after suffering a thigh muscle strain.

After three successive draws against Olympiakos in the Champions League and Athletic Bilbao and Deportivo in the Spanish Primera Liga, Real desperately need to rediscover their killer touch.

And that leaves Toshack with a tricky decision... whether he can afford to rest the player most likely to lead his side to victory on Tuesday.

Raul is pleading with Toshack to play and although the Welsh coach says he is so far undecided, the 22-year-old is likely to line up in a three-man attack with Fernando Morientes and Nicolas Anelka.

Raul is a unique player in Spain, Toshack said this week.



SIMPLY SUPERB: Newcastle United's England international striker Alan Shearer scoring one of his five goals against Sheffield Wednesday.

**English Premiership**

**Scorching Shearer**

LONDON, Sept 20: Alan Shearer cracked five goals, including a 12-minute hat-trick, as Bobby Robson

celebrated his first home match as manager of Newcastle United with an 8-0 demolition of bottom club Sheffield Wednesday in the English Premiership, on Sunday, reports AFP.

The humiliating defeat looks almost certain to end Sheffield Wednesday coach Danny Wilson's tenure at the club - which has also been riven by dressing room discontent over unwanted Italian star Benito Carbone.

The win, Newcastle's first in 15 league matches, followed their 2-0 UEFA Cup victory over CSKA Sofia in midweek and lifted them three points clear of bottom club Wednesday.

Shearer matched the feat of Manchester United striker Andy Cole who hit five goals in a 9-0 demolition of Ipswich in the 1994-95 season.

Elsewhere Leeds United went second in the table on 16 points, four less than leaders Manchester United, after a 2-0 home win over Middlesbrough.

Tottenham Hotspur beat visiting Coventry City 3-2 and Everton won 1-0 at home to West Ham United.

Former England manager Robson, now 66, was greeted by rapturous applause as he took charge of his first home game since replacing Raul Oulit, but even the most optimistic Georgie fans could not have predicted what followed.

Wednesday started well but Aaron Hughes headed Newcastle in front after just 11 minutes and on the half-hour Shearer volleyed in to make it 2-0.

Three minutes later the England skipper converted a third from the penalty spot after Wednesday defender Emerson Thome was harshly ruled to have handled a Warren Barton cross.

Newcastle could do no wrong and after 42 minutes Shearer completed his hat-trick at the far post after Kieron Dyer's surging run and cross down the left.

It was 5-0 a minute into the second half when comedy Wednesday defender ended with Dyer poking past goalkeeper Kevin Pressman.

A glorious Gary Speed header from a corner made it 6-0 with 12 minutes left and soon after Shearer grabbed his fourth after a Pressman fumble.

Paul Robinson was then fouled in the area and Shearer slammed in his fifth and Newcastle's eighth after 84 minutes as Wednesday collapsed.

At Elland Road Michael Bridges gave Leeds, who host Newcastle next Saturday, the lead against Middlesbrough after 14 minutes with a deflected shot.

The visitors, watched from the stands by Brazilian Juninho who is waiting for clearance to start a month's loan with 'Boro, improved after the interval but committed suicide after 64 minutes.

Colin Cooper's backpass was too short and goalkeeper Mark Schwarzer, under a challenge from Darren Huckerby outside his box, could only deflect the ball to Australian Harry Kewell who side-footed into the empty net.

The victory was Leeds' fourth in a row.

Coventry City have now shipped 12 goals in three games

after their defeat at Tottenham. Norwegian Steffen Iversen volleyed Spurs ahead at White Hart Lane after seven minutes.

Two goals in a minute five minutes after half-time from Chris Armstrong and Norwegian Oyvind Leonhardsen made it 3-0.

Coventry, thrashed 5-1 in midweek by Tranmere in the League Cup, hit back with goals by Robbie Keane (54) and Moroccan Youssef Chippo, who was scoring in his second successive Premiership match, but Spurs held on for the three points.

West Ham goalkeeper Shaka Hislop allowed a 64th-minute Francis Jeffers shot to slip through his hands to give Everton a 1-0 win at Goodison Park. It was West Ham's first defeat of the season.

**STANDINGS**

English Premiership table after Sunday's matches (played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, against, points):

Man Utd	8	6	2	0	20	7	20
Leeds	8	5	1	2	14	9	16
Arsenal	8	5	1	2	11	7	16
Aston Villa	8	5	1	2	10	6	16
Sunderland	8	4	2	2	13	8	14
Chelsea	8	4	1	3	9	3	13
Everton	8	4	1	3	14	9	13
West Ham	8	4	1	3	9	4	13
Tottenham	7	4	1	2	13	10	13
Middlesbrough	8	4	0	4	10	12	12
Leicester	8	3	2	3	11	10	11
Liverpool	7	3	1	3	10	9	10
Southampton	7	3	0	4	10	13	9
Wolves	8	3	0	5	5	8	9
Derby	8	2	2	4	7	14	8
Wimbledon	8	1	4	3	12	17	7
Coventry	8	1	2	5	10	13	5
Bradford	7	1	2	4	3	9	5
Newcastle	8	1	1	6	16	19	4
Sheff Wed	8	0	1	7	3	23	1

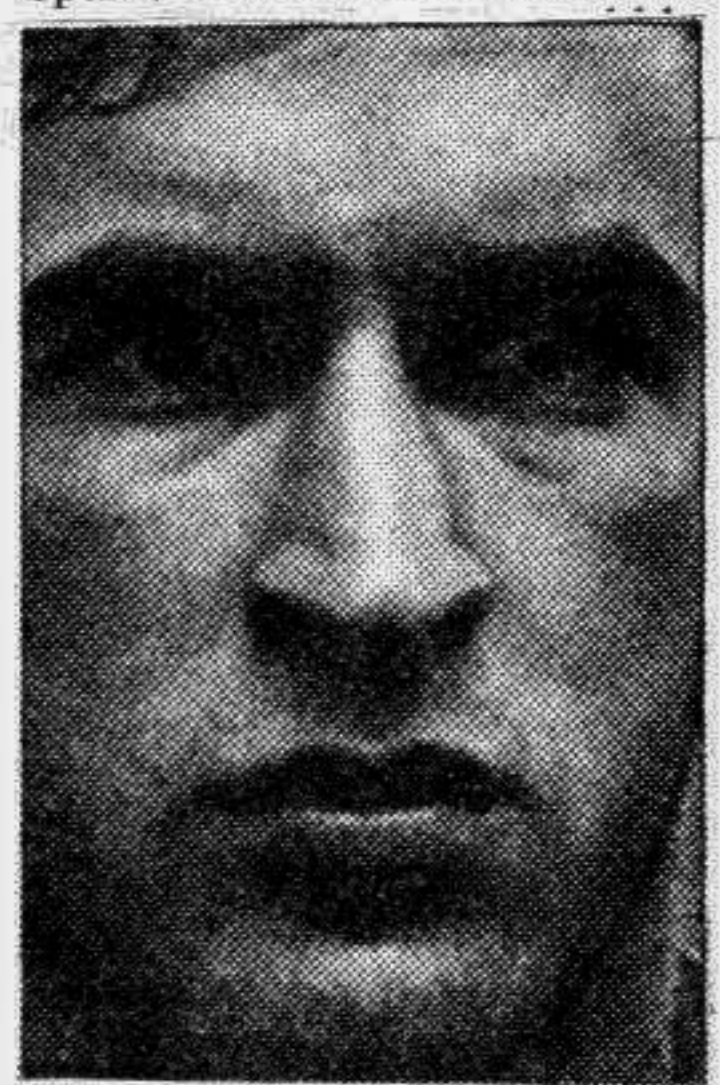
**THE GOAL GLUTTONS**

LONDON, Sept 20(AFP): Alan Shearer became the second player to score five goals in a match since the formation of the English Premier League in 1992 when Newcastle United beat Sheffield Wednesday 8-0 on Sunday.

The first to achieve the feat was Manchester United striker Andy Cole who trued five in a 9-0 defeat of Ipswich in 1994-95.

Other major individual league scoring records:

- 10 goals in a game:** Joe Payne for Luton v Bristol Rovers 1936 (Division 3 South)
- 9 goals in a game:** Robert 'Bunny' Bell for Tranmere v Oldham (Division 3 North)
- 7 goals in a game:** Ted Drake for Arsenal at Aston Villa 1935 (Division 1); James Ross for Preston v Stoke 1888 (Division 2); Tim Coleman for Stoke v Lincoln 1957 (Division 2); Tommy Briggs for Blackburn v Bristol Rovers 1955 (Division 2)
- 6 goals in a game:** Bert Lister for Oldham v Southampton 1962 (Division 4)
- 5 goals in a game include:** Barrie Thomas for Scunthorpe v Luton 1965 (Division 3); Keith East for Swindon v Mansfield 1965 (Division 3); Steve Earle for Fulham v Halifax 1969 (Division 3); Al Wood for Shrewsbury v Blackburn 1971 (Division 3); Tony Caldwell for Bolton v Walsall 1983 (Division 3); Andy Jones for Port Vale v Newport 1987 (Division 3); Paul Barnes for Burnley v Stockport 1996-97; Robert Taylor for Gillingham at Burnley (1998-99); Tony Naylor for Crewe v Colchester 1992-93 (Division 3); Steve Butler for Cambridge v Exeter 1993-94 (Division 3); Guilian Grazio for Peterborough at Barnet 1998-99; Andy Cole for Manchester United v Ipswich 1994-95 (Premiership)



RAUL GONZALEZ

"The obvious decision would be to play him but I do have to think about the end of the season as well."

Real will certainly be without their German goalkeeper Bodo Illgner - meaning a fourth successive start for youngster Iker Casillas - while Fernando Hierro, like Raul, is facing a late fitness test.

The absence of Hierro at centre-back would be easier for Real to live with than Raul's, with Molde promising to take a defensive approach.

The Norwegians have already seen off the challenge of the Spanish side this season as they dumped out Real Mallorca in the final qualifier for this stage.

And striker Andreas Lund, who scored the crucial penalty in Palma de Mallorca, believes his side can also make things tough for Madrid.

**Hervey asked to return**

LONDON, Sept 20 (AFP): Australian Ian Hervey has been invited to return to Gloucestershire next season as the county's overseas player.

Victorian all-rounder Hervey, whose precise medium-pace bowling was a feature of Gloucestershire's triumphs in this year's Benson and Hedges Super Cup and NatWest Trophy, is being offered a new one-year contract.

Gloucestershire chief executive Colin Sexton said: "He has been a superb one-day bowler but we are confident he can score a lot more runs next year."

**Barlow**

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"I don't know why they did not disclose the names of the other eight players. But the list is with me," said the portly South African.

"We have actually selected five players (in the 16)," said Barlow, adding that he had tried to retain the same squad that played in the World Cup.

But after the retirement of three experienced cricketers - Minhazul Abedin, Faruque Ahmed and Mohammed Rafique - Barlow said they had to inject fresh blood in the team.

Among the new quintet, medium-pace Ahmed Kamal had impressed him most.

"Kamal played magnificently in the practice matches. Besides, Javed (Omar Belim) also played well," Barlow claimed.

When asked why he did not include a recognised off-spinner against a side which would be carrying as many as six left-handed batsmen, Barlow said: "We do not have an outstanding off-spinner at this moment. But we have mediocre spinners and they are already in the side."

**Frustration with**

From page 13

on a couple of things and they were coming out really well and I just felt quite confident that if I got a chance they would come out well.

"I couldn't be happier really." Fleming adopted a patient attitude while spectating during the first Test defeat in which Gillespie's right leg was broken in a sickening collision with captain Steve Waugh, who suffered a broken nose.

"I've been in the game long enough to know that you have got to bide your time," Fleming said.

"You do always seem to get an opportunity at some stage. I was pretty happy with the way I was going in the nets and to have this game and go really well was really good."

"You have just got to be prepared. I was really pleased with the way I was going about it when I wasn't getting a game and the way it's worked out has been great."



LEONARDO

Milan striker Leonardo has turned many a game with his spectacular long-range free kicks.

But on Tuesday there will be no element of surprise as the long-haired winger will be fired in his dipping, swerving shots at his old team mate - Brazilian goalkeeper Claudio Taffarel.

Two other Brazilians will have a big say in the outcome of

**Veteran Brazilians face to face**

the game. AC Milan will look to left wing-back Srginho to provide the width they often lacked in their opening Champions League game, a 0-0 draw with Chelsea in London.

The Brazilian's equaliser in an otherwise disappointing 1-1 draw at Bari, in Serie A on Saturday, was a reminder that he can provide a surprise element to Milan's attacks.

But while pleased with Srginho's impressive form, Milan coach Alberto Zaccaroni was concerned about his defence's performance.

Zaccaroni, who has been patient and supportive while his team has made a stuttering start in their Italian league campaign, was critical of the way his side went behind in the first half on Saturday.

"It can't be a good thing when we let an opponent run 30 metres at us, get close to goal and no one tries to stop him," he said of Yksel Osmanovski's solo goal for Bari.

"We gifted them a goal and then we managed to equalise... this is a match we should have

won, instead it could have turned into a defeat," said Zaccaroni.

Galatasaray, who drew their opening Champions League game 2-2 with Hertha Berlin, will hope their Brazilian defender Carlos Oliveira can help tighten a defence that has been exposed in recent games.

They conceded three goals away to lowly Adanaspor on



TAFFAREL

Friday and although they ran out eventual 4-3 winners, it was another sign that their back line can be vulnerable.

Fatih Terim's side were opened up with two goals in the first 13 minutes against Hertha, before fighting back for a point and Terim is determined to tighten up at the back.

"Against Hertha we paid the price for two early goals. But against Milan there will be a different Galatasaray. I am sure we will come away with points," Terim said.

**Juve superstars upbeat**

MILAN, Sept 20: Juventus stars Alessandro Del Piero and Zinedine Zidane sent their rivals a warning this week: 'watch out, we're back,' reports AFP.

Now recovered after one of their worst seasons in the club's history, Juventus scored nine goals in three days between a UEFA Cup tie in Cyprus and Sunday's thumping 4-1 league win over Udinese.

Del Piero, who ripped his cruciate ligaments against Udinese last November, scored in both matches and is fast coming back to the form which made him Italy's first choice striker at international level.

"I'm not in top shape yet," he said. "I'm still having to work hard in training and improve match after match. But with Juventus, I'm going to get back my place in the national team."

Del Piero is convinced that his season-ending injury is finally behind him, both physically and mentally.

"One thing is for certain," he told Tuttopost. "From today I have turned the page. This first league goal is really precious."

It helped Juventus on their way to victory and psychologically it helped me get clear away any after-effects (of the injury) which might still have been lingering, even unconsciously.

"I can't deny it, this was a special match for me," he said. "Udinese and the memory of what happened last November, how could I forget it? But then life is also made up of these things too, the unpleasant things."

Zidane is meanwhile returning from surgery at the very end of last season. The Frenchman who won the World Cup final is still short of match fitness, but the recent progress has been encouraging.

"I'm fairly satisfied," he said after Sunday's victory. "The most important thing was to win and we managed it."

"But what I did wasn't enough for me," he added. "I can play a lot better than this, but then I've only recently started intensive training."

And he summed up: "We're on the right road. But Juventus are capable of doing a lot better than this."

**French First Division**

**PSG fail to take advantage**

PARIS, Sept 20: Paris Saint Germain lost sole possession of their lead in the French championship on Sunday as they could only draw 1-1 at Strasbourg - they are level on points and goal difference with Lyon who beat champions Bordeaux 3-1 on Saturday, reports AFP.

Auxerre, who beat St Etienne 2-1 on Saturday, also have 14 points but are third on goal difference.

Paris Saint Germain took the lead against a dour Strasbourg with a Michael Maréchal 65th minute penalty, which was awarded after Brazilian striker Christian was brought down in the area by Ibrahim Hemandani.

However, four minutes later Strasbourg were level as Olivier Echouafni headed past Bernard Lama from a freekick.

Elsewhere Echouafni's former club Marseille snatched only their second league win of the season, their first since July 30, as they beat minnows Troyes 1-0, though both sides ended with just 10 men and Marseille added to the bores of their supporters.

Italian striker Fabrizio Ravanelli was Marseille's goal hero shooting home in the 40th minute after being set up by French international Robert Pires.

**Bundesliga**

**Kaiserslautern blank leaders**

UNDATED, Sept 20: Kaiserslautern improved on a miserable start to their Bundesliga campaign to beat front-runners Hamburg SV 2-0 on Sunday and two players scored hat-tricks as Werder Bremen crushed VfL Wolfsburg 7-2, reports Reuters.

Previously unbeaten Hamburg, leading before the weekend, managed to drop to second place one point behind Bayer Leverkusen, who drew 0-0 at Hertha Berlin and are now the only unbeaten side in the league after five games.

Bayern Munich have a goalkeeping crisis ahead of their Champions League match with Rangers on Tuesday with two keepers injured in the 2-1 win on Friday over Eintracht Frankfurt. They will now rely on Stefan Wessels, 20, who plays for their amateur side.

**Primera Liga**

**Vallecano's dream run continues**

VIGO, Sept 20: Rayo Vallecano went to the top of the Spanish Primera Liga with a 1-0 victory at Celta Vigo on Sunday, reports Reuters.

Striker Bolo Perez's 65th minute header gave the modest Madrid club their fourth win in a row, the most successful sequence in the club's 75-year history.

Rayo are now three points ahead of Barcelona and Alaves, and four ahead of neighbours Real Madrid.

Atletico Madrid won their first point of the season with a 1-1 draw away at Real Zaragoza with Dutchman Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink scoring his first league goal for the club but Barcelona gave a weary performance on Saturday and slipped to a shock 2-1 defeat at modest Alaves.

**Serie A**

**Biggies go on scoring spree**

MILAN, Sept 20: Gabriel Batistuta made up for firing blanks against Arsenal by bagging a hat-trick on Sunday as Fiorentina thrashed Verona 4-1 while Juventus and Lazio also rattled up big wins, reports AFP.

Fiorentina, humiliated in their 0-0 Champions League debut, were far too good for Verona, while Juventus were also 4-1 winners against Udinese and Lazio trounced Torino 3-0 at the Olympic stadium.

"Batistuta is so ineffective against Arsenal," he scored twice in the first half to set Fiorentina on their way to a morale-boosting victory.

The Argentinian tapped the ball into an empty net in the 17th minute, pouncing on a rebound after strike partner Enrico Chiesa's shot hit the crossbar and bounced out, and then added a second in the 31st minute.

Chiesa scored the third, bundling home the loose ball after he had worked a one-two with Portuguese playmaker Rui Costa and seen his first shot parried by the Verona keeper.

Martino Melis scored one for Verona, but Batistuta soon responded for Fiorentina by bringing up his hat-trick in the 81st minute.

Coach Giovanni Trapattoni said: "We got an early lead and just managed to avoid conceding an equaliser. But you can understand the odd lapse in concentration after such a hard week."

As for Batistuta, the coach said: "He's back in style. But I was never in any doubt. Like all star players, there are times when they score and others when the ball just doesn't go in."

Two penalties in as many minutes set the tone for Juventus' match in Turin.

Alessandro Del Piero converted the first in the 20th minute after being tripped by the Udinese goalkeeper, while Filippo Inzaghi notched the second after Martin Jorgensen barged down Juventus skipper Antonio Conte.

Del Piero set up his team's third with a cross into the middle; Dutchman Edgar Davids knocked the ball back and Inzaghi headed home.

Gianluca Zambrotta made it 4-0 with a superb solo effort just three minutes after the re-start, while Danish substitute Morten Bisgaard scored a consolation goal for Udinese.

Juventus coach Carlo Ancelotti, who had been wary of facing Udinese, said: "We were right to be worried about them before the match. But we played well and got an important result."

"We got ahead early on and that made everything easier." The team were moving well and looking good.

Lazio took the lead in their match in the 14th minute. Argentinian Juan Sebastian Veron converted a penalty, for a foul by Mauro Bonomi on Czech midfielder Pavel Nedved, despite being made to take it twice by the referee.

Simone Inzaghi made it 2-0 just before the break, also at the second attempt after his first shot was blocked by the Torino keeper, while Chilean Marcelo Salas added Lazio's third just two minutes before the end.

The home fans who had threatened to remain silent for the whole match, in protest at the cost of travelling to the away Champions League ties, announced before the game that

they would keep quiet only for the first 15 minutes.

However, the protest ended a minute early with Veron's penalty although there was still plenty of barracking for the man held responsible for the ticket crisis - club president Sergio Cragnotti.

Fabio Capello's AS Roma were 3-1 winners over Venezia. Marco Delvecchio made it an unhappy meeting-up with Austrian goalkeeper Michael Konzel, who played for Roma for the last two seasons but on Sunday was between the posts for Venezia.

Delvecchio steered home Roma's first in the 37th minute, after skipper Francesco Totti had done all the hard work, and snapped up the second from point blank range after Totti curled over a corner in first-half injury time.

Yugoslav Dejan Petkovic, spurred by Capello when the two men were at Real Madrid three seasons ago, pulled one back for Venezia with a superb solo effort.

But Russian Dmitri Alenitchev, who bagged a hat-trick

in Thursday night's UEFA Cup rout of Vitoria Setubal, put the result beyond doubt with Roma's third.

Capello said: "There are very good teams above us, but this win will give us confidence for the matches ahead. We suffered in the first 15 minutes, but we gradually improved and after the goal we could afford to take it easy."

As for Delvecchio, he said: "He's a big player and it takes him time to get into full match fitness. He's chosen the right time to manage it."

Reggina continued their remarkable start to the southern club's first ever season in the Serie A, beating Bologna 1-0 away with a late goal from Davide Possanzini, while Piacenza finished up 1-1 with Lecce.

The afternoon action came hours before the big match between Inter Milan and Parma.

Saturday's matches finished with a disappointing 1-1 draw for champions AC Milan at Bari and a 3-0 victory for Hidetoshi Nakata's Perugia over Cagliari.



Fiorentina's striker-supreme Gabriel Batistuta (R) in his elements against Verona during their Serie A tussle at Florence on September 19.

**STANDINGS**

Italian Serie A table on Sunday (played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, against, points):

Inter Milan	3	2	1	0	8	1	7
Fiorentina	3	2	1	0	7	3	7
Juventus	3	2	1	0	6	2	7
Lazio	3	2	1	0	5	1	7
AC Milan	3	1	2	0	6	4	5
AS Roma	3	1	2	0	4	2	5
Reggina	3	1	2	0	4	3	5
Perugia	3	1	1	1	5	4	