

Porto guarantee spot in style

PORTO, Portugal, Oct 27: Two early goals from Brazilian midfielder Deco handed Porto a second-phase berth in the European Champions League on Tuesday, setting up a 3-1 win over Norway's Group E strugglers Molde, reports AFP.

The win at the Das Antas stadium came on the heels of last week's triumph over seven-time European champions and group rivals Real Madrid, who likewise booked their passage after beating Olympiakos of Greece 3-0.

Porto, the 1987 continental champions who have won five consecutive domestic titles, made the perfect start with a Deco header inside the opening 40 seconds following a cross by Yugoslav winger Ljubinko Drulovic.

Deco then added a masterful swirling freekick on the half hour to make it 2-0 before Brazilian marksman Jardel, author of both Porto goals against Real a week ago, drilled the third past keeper Morten Bakke midway through the second half as 32,000 home fans erupted in celebration.

Soon after his goal, Jardel made way for veteran Jose Domingos.

Daniel Berg Hestad claimed a late consolation with a header for the Norwegians, who are set to claim the wooden spoon in the group.

Willem II hold Spartak

MOSCOW, Oct 27: Russia's Spartak Moscow were held 1-1 by Dutch side Willem II Tilburg in their home Champions' League Group G match here on Tuesday, reports AFP.

In pouring rain Spartak immediately seized the initiative, looking for an early opener, but the waterlogged turf at Moscow's Luzhniki stadium spoiled their early offensive efforts.

But in the 25th minute Spartak's attacking midfielder Artjom Bezrodny eluded Willem's defence, taking a pass from striker Alexander Shirko and lobbing helpless goalkeeper Jim van Fessen from the edge of the penalty box.

Spartak created several more scoring chances in the first period making seven shots on goal against none for the visitors, but failed to increase their lead before the break.

Willem II made a good start to the second half, pouring men into attack looking for an equaliser, but Spartak's Russian international goalkeeper Alexander Filimonov was equal to the task.

But Filimonov was unable to do anything in the 70th minute when Willem's striker Ousmane Sanou scored an equaliser after Spartak missed several clear chances to increase their lead.

Spartak's Yuri Kovtun was sent off.

Londoners impress Italian press

MILAN, Oct 27: Italian newspapers were paying tribute to Chelsea on Wednesday after the London club fought back to earn a 1-1 draw with AC Milan here in front of 75,000 fans at San Siro, reports AFP.

The Gazzetta dello Sport said that Milan's chances of qualifying for the second round were now extremely remote and that nobody in Europe these days was frightened of facing the Italian champions.

Comparing Milan's laboured manouvre with a broken-winded elephant, Italy's top sport's paper said Chelsea "could have scored other goals and overall played the better football".

The Blues had "splendidly taken what was owed to them" by equalising, it said, and warned Zaccaroni: "This team needs to be rebuilt from the foundations up."

Tuttosport said that Milan had tried everything "but came up against splendid and extremely tenacious opponents."

"Chelsea were very well positioned on the pitch and were well supported by their Italian players and those who had previously played in Italy - all of whom wanted to put on a good display."

"Milan now risk going out of the Champions League and not even having the consolation of the UEFA Cup," the paper added.

The Corriere dello Sport said: "Milan suffered the punishment of hell in midfield, where Chelsea took control... while the Norwegian Flo was highly dangerous up front, and well supported by Deschamps and Wise."

Booth to become Leicester's record signing

LONDON, Oct 27: English Premiership highfliers Leicester were poised Wednesday to smash their transfer record by signing Sheffield Wednesday striker Andy Booth, reports AFP.

The Foxes have agreed a fee worth up to 2.75 million pounds (4.55m dollars) with the Premiership strugglers for Booth, due to have talks with Leicester manager Martin O'Neill.

City, lying sixth in the table, desperately need additional firepower to boost the current strike force of Emile Heskey and Tony Cottee, with only veteran Ian Marshall as back-up to the duo.

But the arrival of Booth, if he agrees personal terms, is not the forerunner to the departure of the in-demand Heskey, who has been linked with Premiership leaders Leeds and Liverpool.



PSV Eindhoven striker Ruud van Nistelrooij (R) is dispossessed by Patrik Andersson of Bayern Munich (No 5) during their Champions' League encounter at Eindhoven. — AFP photo

PSV strike Bayern severely

EINDHOVEN, Netherlands, Oct 27: Bayern Munich club president and 'eminent grise' Franz Beckenbauer slated last season's Champions League runners up Tuesday after they slid to a demoralising 2-1 loss at PSV Eindhoven, reports AFP.

Bayern, three-times kings of Europe - but not since the mid 1970s - now have to ensure they beat Group F rivals Glasgow Rangers in their final opening phase match to reach the next round.

Beckenbauer suggested that if Bayern showed similar form to Tuesday they would not be going much further after goals from Ruud van Nistelrooij and Luc Nilis either side of half-time cancelled out a striker from teenage star Roque Santa Cruz.

PSV, despite a disappointing European campaign, showed in the first half why they are top of the Dutch First Division.

Van Nistelrooij sidefooted the hosts ahead after Belgian Nilis drew Bayern keeper Stefan Wessels and slid the ball to van Nistelrooij who could hardly miss.

But Paraguayan striker Santa Cruz - the world's most expensive teenager - squared the match for the German champions six minutes after the interval from close range.

Nilis struck the winner for PSV, European champions in 1988, after 57 minutes with a rising left-foot shot that went in off the underside of the bar.

"I can't explain our lethargic showing," said Beckenbauer.

"We only really played how I think we should have done throughout in the final 20 minutes. Perhaps our players thought a draw would do."

"But the defeat changes nothing in essence - even before the win in Eindhoven we had to win the last match against Glasgow. So it's still in our own hands."

The Bavarians' amateur keeper Stefan Wessels, in for injured Oliver Kahn, kept the Dutch at bay and prevented a heavier defeat for the visitors with brilliant stops from Van Nistelrooij and Mark van Bommel. But he was helpless for the two goals.

PSV coach Eric Gerets had a special reason to be happy with the result, even though his side are out of the event, as nine years ago he was playing for Eindhoven when Bayern knocked them out at the quarter-final stage.

The match boiled over at the end as Bayern had midfielder Jens Jeremies dismissed after a clash by the PSV bench.

Gerets was angry that matters got out of hand in the final moments and claimed he saw one Bayern player kick out at a Dutchman.

Bayern coach Ottmar Hitzfeld admitted that "things got too emotional at the end. But my colleague (Gerets) provoked the players. That should not happen."

"We should have got something out of the match but we were caught napping in the first half. Their second goal came from one of our lads being caught out of position."

"Things are still in our hands and if we don't come through then we won't have deserved to," added Hitzfeld, who led Dortmund to the European Cup in 1997.



Glasgow Rangers' Michael Mols (C) tries to dodge past Valencia's Miroslav Djukic in their Champions' League clash at Glasgow. — AFP photo

Valencia book their place

GLASGOW, Oct 27: Spanish side Valencia secured a vital 2-1 win over Rangers at Ibrox on Tuesday, a victory which sent them into the second phase of the Champions' League, reports AFP.

Valencia's victory, courtesy of goals by Gaizka Mendietta and Argentine Claudio Lopez in the first half, now have nine points from four games in Group F.

Rangers hit back with a goal from Australian Craig Moore in the second half but failed to find an equaliser despite heavy pressure.

Dick Advocaat's side have seven points and now face a titanic trip to Bayern Munich, who have six, in their final match.

Rangers had been outplayed by Valencia in Spain last month and it was the same story in the first half at Ibrox.

Knowing a victory would assure them of a place in the second round, Rangers started positively, roared on by their vocal support.

But Hector Cuper's Valencia side had clearly come prepared for a scrap and, apart from a Moore effort from a free-kick which flashed wide, the Spaniards contained Rangers' early onslaught.

Mendietta was looking dangerous up front and after 20 minutes he glanced a sharp header wide just of Stefan Klos' near post to sound a warning to the home side.

It wasn't heeded and 10 minutes before half-time the same player gave Valencia the lead.

Mendietta latched onto a cross on the edge of the area before swivelling to fire the bouncing ball past Klos with his left foot.

Rangers' manager Advocaat immediately brought on Russian flier Andrei Kanchelskis in an attempt to wrest back the initiative.

It made no difference.

Just before the interval Moore cleared Romanian Adrian Ilie's shot off the line after a typical snaking run by the player nicknamed 'The Cobra' for his ability to pounce on unsuspecting defences.

Rangers' relief was short-lived. Two minutes into stoppage time Barry Ferguson lost possession and Lopez beat his man before sidefooting neatly past Klos to make it 2-0.

Rangers started the second half forcefully and gained their reward on the hour.

The Glasgow side forced successive corners and the second Moore managed to side-foot the ball beyond Valencia goalkeeper Andres Pallo from close range.

Advocaat immediately sent on hammer-footed German Jorg Albertz to try to force an equaliser which almost came when Rod Wallace grazed a post with a header.

Lopez was then denied at the other end by Rangers' Italian centreback Lorenzo Amoroso as he prepared to pull the trigger for Valencia's third.

A dallying Mendietta wasted another clear chance soon after as Rangers appeared to run out of steam.

They still almost salvaged a point when, deep in stoppage time, Albertz slammed an angled drive just wide of the post but Valencia deservedly held out for a hard-earned victory.

| STANDINGS | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|----|----|----|--|--|--|
| European Champions League tables after matches in Groups E-H played Tuesday (played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, against, points) | | | | | | | | | | |
| GROUP E | | | | | | | | | | |
| FC Porto | 5 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 9 | 5 | 12 | | | |
| Real Madrid | 5 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 14 | 7 | 10 | | | |
| Olympiakos | 5 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 8 | 12 | 4 | | | |
| Molde | 5 | 1 | 0 | 4 | 6 | 13 | 3 | | | |
| Porto and Real Madrid qualify for next phase | | | | | | | | | | |
| GROUP F | | | | | | | | | | |
| Valencia | 5 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 7 | 4 | 9 | | | |
| Rangers | 5 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 7 | 6 | 7 | | | |
| Bayern Munich | 5 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 6 | 6 | 6 | | | |
| PSV | 5 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 5 | 9 | 4 | | | |
| Valencia qualify for next phase | | | | | | | | | | |
| GROUP G | | | | | | | | | | |
| Bordeaux | 5 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 7 | 4 | 11 | | | |
| Sparta Prague | 5 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 9 | 4 | 9 | | | |
| Spartak Moscow | 5 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 7 | 7 | 5 | | | |
| Willem II | 5 | 0 | 1 | 4 | 7 | 15 | 1 | | | |
| Bordeaux and Sparta Prague qualify for next phase | | | | | | | | | | |
| GROUP H | | | | | | | | | | |
| Chelsea | 5 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 8 | 3 | 8 | | | |
| Hertha Berlin | 5 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 7 | 8 | 8 | | | |
| AC Milan | 5 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 4 | 4 | 6 | | | |
| Galatasaray | 5 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 7 | 11 | 4 | | | |

RESULTS AT A GLANCE

Collated results of European Champions' League matches Tuesday:

Group E
At Madrid
Real Madrid (Spa) 3 (Raul 21, Morientes 64, Roberto Carlos 83) Olympiakos (Gre) 0

At Porto, Portugal
FC Porto (Por) 3 (Deco 1, 28, Jardel 58) Molde (Nor) 1 (Hestad 82)

Group F
At Glasgow
Rangers (Sco) 1 (Moore 60) Valencia (Spa) 2 (Mendietta 35, Lopez 45)

At Eindhoven, Netherlands
PSV Eindhoven (Ned) 2 (van Nistelrooij 40, Nilis 57) Bayern Munich (Ger) 1 (Santa Cruz 51)

Group G
At Moscow
Spartak Moscow (Rus) 1 (Bezrodny 25) Willem II (Ned) 1 (Sanou 69)

At Bordeaux, France
Bordeaux (Fra) 0 Sparta Prague (Cze) 0

Group H
At Milan, Italy
AC Milan (Ita) 1 (Bierhoff 73) Chelsea (Eng) 1 (Wise 76)

At Berlin
Hertha Berlin (Ger) 1 (Rekdal 35-pen) Galatasaray (Tur) 4 (Sukur 48, 66, Tugay 81, Okan 90)

Galatasaray lesson for Hertha

BERLIN, Oct 27: Wins over Milan and Chelsea had possibly made them over-confident but Hertha Berlin crashed to earth on Tuesday, losing 4-1 at home to Galatasaray leaving their Champions League hopes hanging by a thread, reports AFP.

The Germans, making an unexpected debut in the Champions League after placing third in the Bundesliga last season, were expected by many to constitute potential cannon fodder for group giants AC Milan and Chelsea, but the Germans shrugged off the dog tag to win their home legs against both.

The Germans made a solid start and went ahead on 35 minutes through a penalty from Norwegian Kjetil Rekdal but 'Bull of the Bosphorus' Hakan Sukur equalised three minutes after the break and suddenly the Germans lost their way catastrophically.

The referee, it was all Galatasaray and Sukur notched his second in the 66th minute to stun the 70,000 crowd at the Olympic stadium.

Kerimoglu Tugay stuck the knife further into the Germans' hopes with the third on 81 minutes and Buruk Okan completed a comprehensive victory with the fourth in the final seconds.

Hertha coach Jurgen Rober berated his side's collapse.

"I thought we deserved to go in front but then we made a bad mistake for their equaliser and were punished for it. Suddenly we were making mistakes we previously had not. But we're still in the running."

Galatasaray counterpart Fatih Terim drew comfort from the fact that a UEFA Cup place was still in the offing via third place in the group.

"We deserved to win this one and we have preserved our chance of a UEFA Cup spot," said Terim.

The Turks cannot qualify but their stunning second-half showing leaves Group H wide open with Chelsea now top ahead of Hertha on goal difference with eight points following the Londoners' 1-1 draw at AC Milan.

If Chelsea draw at home to Hertha in their last match they will go through.

But if Hertha draw at Stamford Bridge they could well grab second spot ahead of the Italians, who must travel to Turkey with two points to make up.

Draw suits Bordeaux, Sparta

BORDEAUX, France, Oct 27: Bordeaux did the minimum in the Champions League here on Tuesday, securing a second goalless draw with Sparta Prague in Group G to cement top spot in Group G and hand a second phase slot to the Czechs, reports AFP.

The French league champions, while wanting to ensure they finish top of the pile, could afford to relax having already qualified for the next round with last week's win at Spartak Moscow.

As a result the opening was low key with the Czechs having the majority of the possession and doing most of the probing without really troubling Bordeaux keeper Ulrich Rame, rumoured to be a possible transfer target for Manchester United.

Bordeaux eventually got into their stride and Jean-Christophe Rouviere saw a low drive saved by Tomas Postulka after a Lilian Laslandes effort was blocked in the 11th minute.

Sylvain Wiltord then had another effort charged down before Corentin Martins floated the rebound just millimetres over the crossbar. That was about the closest either side would come to a goal in a fairly dull showing.

Rame started a Bordeaux counter attack in the 32nd minute, his clearance finding Wiltord, who fed Martins. Martins in turn found Rouviere and he whipped in a return for Wiltord whose first time effort flashed just wide of Postulka's left hand post.

"We were up against a really solid opponent today and we have another match against Willem II to consolidate first place. I think the draw wasn't a bad result," said Bordeaux coach Elie Baup afterwards.

Djorkaeff to miss UEFA Cup match

KAISERSLAUTERN, Germany, Oct 27: French World Cup winner Youri Djorkaeff has been ruled out of German side Kaiserslautern's UEFA Cup second round tie with English Premiership side Tottenham Hotspur on Thursday, reports AFP.

Djorkaeff took a blow to the testicles during his side's 2-0 defeat by Bayern Munich at the weekend and has not trained since. He will not fly to London on Wednesday with his teammates.

He is also a doubt for the Red Devils' Bundesliga match with Stuttgart on Sunday.

instincts to flick the ball home from barely eight metres.

That settled the nerves of the seven-times continental kings and Real showed no sign of the defensive lapses which forced them to be content with a 3-3 draw in the away leg.

Real coach John Toshack decided to take no chances after just two wins in ten outings - both in the Champions League - and elected not to plunge Steve McManaman back into the fray from the start as the England winger has only just recovered from a torn thigh muscle.

Olympiakos, who had to win to keep alive their interest after throwing away a two-goal lead to lose at Molde in Norway last week, arrived hoping to banish memories of four straight European losses in Spain, including a 5-1 thrashing in Madrid two seasons ago.

However, shorn of the talent of former Barcelona star Giovanni, suspended after picking up a third booking at Molde, they had little to offer as the Spaniards swarmed over them.

Morientes earned his reward for a fine display by bagging the killer second goal in the 64th minute.

With a two-goal cushion established, Toshack, under fire owing to Real's eight-match winless run in the Spanish league, brought McManaman on for Guti with 19 minutes left.

Brazilian winger Roberto Carlos, latching on to a Clarence Seedorf cross, put the



AC Milan's Brazilian star Leonardo makes his way through two Chelsea players during their Champions' League fixture at Milan. — AFP photo

Milan look at uncertain future

Chelsea owe Wise one

MILAN, Oct 27: Chelsea fought back to earn a priceless 1-1 draw with AC Milan here on Tuesday night as skipper Dennis Wise kept them on course for a slot in the European Champions League second round, reports AFP.

German striker Oliver Bierhoff gave the hosts a 73rd minute lead but Dennis Wise levelled for Chelsea just three minutes later to keep the Blues two points ahead of the Italians in Group H.

With Chelsea and Hertha Berlin now level at the top on eight points, and due to meet each other next week, a draw at Stamford Bridge would be enough put both sides into the next round.

Chelsea were more than a match for the Italian champions in the first half, but Milan dominated the second in front of a 75,000 crowd and clearly thought all three points were theirs when Bierhoff struck.

Chelsea coach Gianluca Vialli said he was optimistic about his chances of reaching the second round and paid tribute to their display.

"We are all proud of our performance because I think we put on a great performance. Of course, as a manager I'm happy because it was a very difficult task, but we made it."

Milan coach Alberto Zaccaroni said: "I don't know what I can criticise them for, they tried everything possible to win against a good team who defended well and who proved they are very dangerous on the break."

"Clearly, Hertha and Chelsea are the favourites and things are now out of our hands. It all depends on what the others do."

Chelsea made a bright start with Tore Andre Flo managing to wheel round between Paolo Maldini and Fabian Ayala in the third minute and hit a low drive which goalkeeper Christian Abbiati stopped at the second attempt.

Brazil's Leonardo did just as well to pierce the Chelsea back four minutes later but let the ball run just too long to get in a shot.

However, Dan Petrescu had a great chance on the break in the seventh minute when Flo squared the ball to the unmarked Romanian and his stinging low shot was kicked away by the Milan keeper.

Chelsea looked good moving forward, although Flo found Italy captain Maldini a very different proposition to the average Premiership defender.

Milan's first real chance came in the 19th minute when Andriy Shevchenko blasted a 22-metre free-kick.

But Chelsea should have been ahead three minutes later, when Zola's defence-splitting pass put Wise through on the right.

Chelsea's only Englishman steered the ball across to the far post, where the inrushing Flo could only blast it over from point-blank range.

Shevchenko fared no better minutes three later when Brazilian midfielder Serginho curled in a free-kick and the Ukrainian's header flashed just wide of Ed De Goeij's post.

Albert Ferrer replied for the Blues with a stinging 20-metre drive which the keeper had to push a low shot from Flo round the post as Chelsea kept up the pressure.

But Oliver Bierhoff gave the visitors a scare in the 35th minute when Chelsea's French Frank Leboeuf missed an interception and the German striker hit a drive which De Goeij did well to catch.

The Dutch keeper was back in action nine minutes in the second half to stop a majestic 25-metre shot from Massimo Ambrosini and there was a narrow squeak for him minutes later when Bierhoff got his head to Andres Guglielminetto's miscued shot but could send the ball over the bar.

However, the real fireworks came midway through the second half.

Chelsea's Uruguayan midfielder Gustavo Poyet rose for a Wise cross from the right but his potent close-range header failed to beat Abbiati and Chelsea were punished just seconds later when Serginho broke down the left wing, crossed into the middle and Bierhoff nodded in at the near post.

San Siro exploded with joy and it suddenly looked over for the Londoners.

But it was all square just three minutes later when Chelsea's Italian substitute Roberto Di Matteo flicked the ball through with almost his first touch and Wise ran on to steer it past the advancing Abbiati.

Vintage Real show

MADRID, Oct 26: A superbly-executed goal from Spanish international striker Raul and further efforts from Fernando Morientes and Roberto Carlos propelled Real Madrid into the second phase of the Champions League on Tuesday following a 3-0 win over Olympiakos of Greece at the Bernabeu stadium, reports AFP.

Morientes was the provider for the opener, setting off on a brilliant run down the left and twisting and turning on the edge of the box before slipping the ball to international teammate Raul, who showed a predator's instincts to flick the ball home from barely eight metres.

That settled the nerves of the seven-times continental kings and Real showed no sign of the defensive lapses which forced them to be content with a 3-3 draw in the away leg.

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Real Madrid's mercurial striker Raul taking a tumble after a desperate tackle by an Olympiakos defender inside the penalty area during their Champions' League match at Madrid on October 26. — AFP photo