

## From one 'Hand of God' to another

**REUTERS, Buenos Aires**  
Diego Maradona, scorer of the infamous 'Hand of God' goal against England in the 1986 World Cup, criticised European football officials for punishing Real Madrid striker Raul after his handball goal last week. "The UEFA directors have never played football," said Maradona. "As far as they're concerned, the ball is a UFO (Unidentified Flying Object). It's time to kick them all out."  
UEFA banned Raul for one game and fined him 20,000 Swiss francs (\$12,090) after he scored Real's opener in their 3-2 Champions League win against England's Leeds United by turning a free-kick into the net with his hand.  
Although Raul claimed afterwards the goal was legitimate, video evidence proved he used his hand to score.  
Maradona scored one of the famous handball goals of all time when he punched the ball into the net during Argentina's 2-1 quarter-final win over England at the 1986 World Cup in Mexico.  
Maradona also launched an attack on the Argentine Football Association (AFA) and Julio Grondona its president since 1979.  
"When I see that Grondona has no rivals in the AFA, I think that we're in a very bad state. Nobody can tell him anything and we continue making the same mistakes," he added.



Edgar Davids (L), Juventus' Dutch star, falling after a tackle from Reggina's Ezio Brevi during their Serie A encounter at Turin on March 11.

## Serie A

# Lazio lose more ground

**Football**

**AFP, Milan**  
Lazio's defence of their Italian First Division title took a near-fatal blow Sunday with a 2-0 defeat at Bologna seeing them lose contact with Serie A pacemakers AS Roma and second-placed Juventus.  
Goals from Carlo Nerio and Giuseppe Signori left Lazio 11 points behind Roma, who had two-goal striker Vincenzo Montella to thank for a 3-1 victory over 10-man Brescia.  
Juventus, 1-0 victors at home to Reggina and six points behind Roma, now look the only club capable of denying Fabio Capello's side a first Scudetto for 18 years.  
Roma's Brazilian midfielder Assuncao opened the scoring from a freekick before Brescia's Argentinian forward Andres Yllana equalised at the Olympic Stadium.  
But after 69 minutes Montella put Roma back in front and Brescia's challenge further wilted when defender Fabio Petrucci was sent off for two bookings. Montella added his second in injury time.  
That gave Roma their seventh consecutive win with Montella notching five goals in three games since he replaced the injured Gabriel Batistuta to whom he had refused to yield the number nine shirt requested by the Argentinian when he joined from Fiorentina last summer.  
referee for excessive complaining.  
"To have a chance at the title we have to play better than we did in the first half," Brehme said of his team's goalless first half.  
Bayern's victory over Cottbus allowed them to regain the lead from Borussia Dortmund, who had to settle for a point in a 2-2 draw at SC Freiburg after going two goals up.  
Hertha Berlin kept up their claim among the chasers with a 1-0 home win over Hansa Rostock that puts them fourth behind Bayer Leverkusen, Friday night winners over Werder Bremen, on goal difference.

## Primera Liga

# Real romp past Sociedad

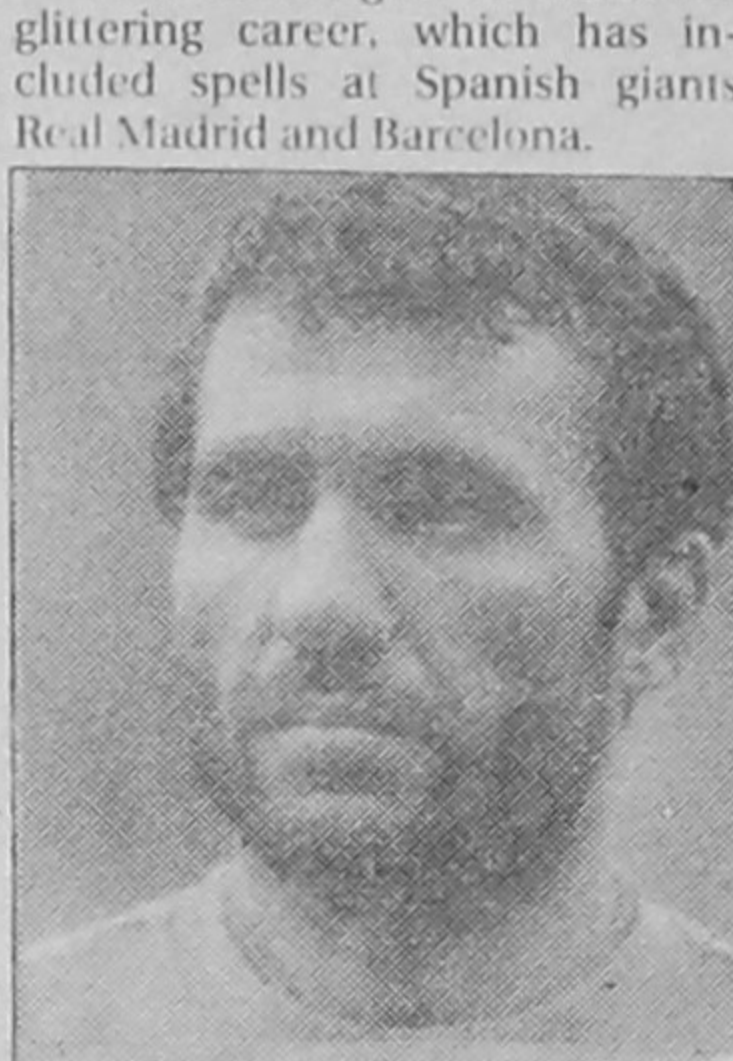
**Football**

**AFP, Madrid**  
Real Madrid maintained their five-point lead at the top in Spain with a class 4-0 victory over struggling Real Sociedad on Sunday while Barcelona were held to a 1-1 draw by Real Mallorca.  
Second-placed Deportivo La Coruna kept up the pressure on Real - and warmed up for their crucial European Champions League match against AC Milan - with a 4-1 drubbing of Numancia on Saturday.  
Real were irresistible as Vicente Del Bosque's side put on a superb display for their former mentor, Sociedad's Welsh coach John Toshack.  
Fernando Morientes scored twice before Raul headed home the third from Portuguese star Luis Figo's free-kick and English international Steve McManaman completed the scoring.  
Valladolid make history  
**REUTERS, Madrid**  
A penalty scored in the first minute by Valladolid against Celta Vigo on Sunday has been heralded as the fastest in the history of the Spanish league.  
The penalty was awarded by referee Medina Cantalejo after just 13 seconds when Celta defender Fernando Caceres brought down Alberto Lopez in the opening attack of the First Division game.  
Fernando Fernandez converted from the spot to put his team ahead but Valladolid were eventually beaten 2-1. It was their first home defeat of the season.  
Capello warned: "We must still beware of Juventus who have a great mentality and are so used to winning."  
Montella joked: "I have to score twice every match because of all the games when I did not get picked."  
Juventus scored their crucial goal against Reggina after 31 minutes. A freekick from French playmaker Zinedine Zidane was headed home by Croatian defender Igor Tudor.  
Reggina dominated the second half but could not level the match and Juve's Carlo Ancelotti admitted: "Reggina played very well but at this stage of the season for both of us it is the result that counts."  
Bologna dominated their match with Lazio and it was no surprise when midfielder Nerio gave them a 19th-minute lead.  
And Lazio's problems worsened when Portuguese defender Fernando Couto was dismissed for a foul on Giacomo Cipriani.  
Fourteen minutes from time Signori, a former Lazio favourite, sealed his erswhile club's fate.  
Lazio coach Dino Zoff came close to conceding defeat when he said: "We must not get depressed but we are starting to face the reality of the Championship situation."  
Fourth-placed Parma hammered bottom club Bari 4-0 in the Sunday evening match with Marco Di Vaio scoring all four goals including a first-half hat-trick.  
Stefano Torrisi had already had

## Hagi in trouble

**REUTERS, Istanbul**

Galatasaray's Gheorghe Hagi faces a lengthy suspension for attacking a Turkish referee in a league match at the weekend, officials said on Monday.  
The 35-year-old Romanian midfielder spat at referee Frol Ersoy during his club's 2-1 win over Genclerbirligi after a goal by striker Hasan Sas had been disallowed.  
Hagi also stamped on the official's feet and had to be dragged from the pitch by team mates and coach Mircea Lucescu. He then compounded the offence by launching a verbal attack on the referee.  
"The ref's a thief. He came to steal three points from us but couldn't. He does this all the time. The Federation want Fenerbahce to win the league," Hagi said before renewing threats to give up playing altogether.  
UEFA and Turkish champions Galatasaray are eight points behind Istanbul rivals Fenerbahce, who lead the league with 57 points. Galatasaray have one game in hand.  
Turkish officials said they would act on the basis of the report from the match referee, which they were expecting to receive shortly.  
Hagi has found himself in trouble with authorities for bad behaviour on the pitch with increasing regularity recently and this incident could see him banned for as long as seven months.  
That could signal an end to his glittering career, which has included spells at Spanish giants Real Madrid and Barcelona.  
His contract at the Turkish club ends in June and he has already spoken of returning to Romania to take up coaching.  
Hagi, who joined Galatasaray in 1996, missed two Champions League matches this season for "unsporting behaviour". He was also sent off in last season's UEFA Cup final, in which the Turkish side beat Arsenal on penalties.  
Hagi apologised for his behaviour at the weekend, but refused to back off from criticising referee Ersoy, one of Turkey's most experienced officials.  
"I apologise. I lost myself...but this referee provokes us," newspapers quoted Hagi as saying.  
"He's always a problem for us. He's trying to send Hagi off to prove he's a big referee. If you ask me, he's no referee, just a guy who wears black."  
J-League  
Antlers' winning start  
**AFP, Tokyo**  
Last year's triple champions Kashima Antlers started their defence of the title with a 2-1 come-from-behind victory over Sanfrecce Hiroshima in the J-League football on Sunday.



GEORGHIE HAGI

On Saturday AC Milan drew 1-1 with Atalanta in Bergamo.  
Milan took the lead somewhat fortuitously with a freak own goal by Atalanta's Stefano Lorenzi but then Maurizio Ganz bagged an acrobatic equaliser for the hosts.  
Vicenza had prevailed 2-0 at home to fellow relegation rivals Napoli with goals from Luca Toni and Fabio Firmani.  
Pandiani and Tristan both got on the score-sheet again Saturday.  
Pandiani had been his team's hat-trick hero in the amazing 4-3 win over Paris Saint Germain in Europe last week, with Tristan scoring the winner.  
Liverpool boss Gerard Houllier hailed captain Robbie Fowler for his bravery Sunday in slotting home the 82nd minute penalty that put Liverpool into the FA Cup semi-finals and a clash with giant killers Wycome Wanderers.  
Fowler was to blame for a suicidal back pass that gifted Tranmere a cup lifeline at just 2-3 down before he stepped up to ram home the spot kick that finally broke the hearts of Liverpool's fellow Merseysiders and ensured the Premiership side a 4-2 win.  
Houllier said: "It shouldn't have been Robbie taking that penalty, it would normally have been Gary McAllister's job."  
"But Robbie showed courage and guts to take that penalty, particularly after he had missed a couple of chances out there."  
"Never mind saying Robbie made a mistake, he will learn from that, but he showed all the guts in the world to take that late penalty."  
But Houllier admitted he breathed a sign of relief when Liverpool emerged successful from this tie.  
He said: "It was a banana skin, but there was no upset, we were determined to avoid that."  
Houllier refused to accept that a semi-final draw with Wycome was an easy passage into their second Cardiff cup final of the season - they beat Birmingham City in a penalty shoot last month to win the English League Cup and are also in the UEFA Cup quarter-finals.  
He said: "There are no underdogs at this stage of a competition. You have to respect that Wycome went to Leicester and won. They deserve and will get all our respect."  
Tranmere boss John Aldridge claimed that his First Division strugglers were denied a second-half penalty when the ball appeared to strike Markus Babbel's arm in the box.  
He said: "I felt it was a penalty. They then went down the other end and got one themselves, the referee had a good game but one decision could have cost us a replay."  
Liverpool took the lead

# CHAMPIONS LEAGUE PREVIEW2

**Football**

**REUTERS**

Preview of Tuesday's Group A and Group B matches in the second phase of the European Champions League:

## AC MILAN v DEPORTIVO LA CORUNA

**MILAN**

AC Milan face Deportivo Coruna in Group B aware that a victory will give them a place in the quarter-finals.  
But for coach Alberto Zaccaroni and his team the importance of the match goes far beyond the question of progress in this season's campaign -- failure will almost certainly lead to massive changes at the five-times European champions.  
A draw is enough to see Deportivo through to the last eight and although a Milan win would leave both sides level on nine points, the Italians would go through due to a better head-to-head record, having won 1-0 in December at the Riazor stadium -- their only previous meeting in European competition.  
But wins are proving hard to come by for Milan -- they have managed just two victories in their last 17 league and cup matches.  
Milan were far from impressive in their 1-1 draw with Atalanta on Saturday and the pressure on a side which has slumped to eighth in Serie A was visible with skipper Paolo Maldini and playmaker Zvonimir Boban arguing furiously at the end of the game.  
In contrast to Milan, Deportivo go into the match on a high. They came back from 3-0 down at half-time to beat Paris St Germain 4-3 on Wednesday with Uruguayan substitute Walter Pandiani scoring a hat-trick.  
Pandiani then scored two more as Deportivo put four past against lowly Numancia in the league on Saturday, but Spanish coach Javier Irureta is still likely to choose Roy Makaay to lead the Deportivo attack, and use Pandiani to relieve the Dutch striker in the second-half.  
The prodigiously talented midfielder Djalminha looks to have shaken off a nagging muscle problem and will join his compatriots Emerson and Mauro Silva in midfield.  
The experienced Mauro, who has formed the backbone of the Deportivo midfield over the past decade, says his team cannot afford to play for a draw.

## GALATASARAY v PSG

**PARIS**

Galatasaray head into Tuesday's Group B match with Paris St Germain assured of advancing to the quarterfinals -- but hungry for three more points to finish top of the group.  
The benefits of that are two-fold, first, they get to avoid another group winner, and secondly, they will play at home in the second leg of the quarter-final.  
"We're comfortable now, but there's no way we're going to let up because we've got to get points out of this match," said midfielder and captain Bulent Korkmaz, who is actually suspended from playing.  
Suspended along with Korkmaz is midfielder Okan Buruk after both picked up their third yellow cards against Milan, while striker Hasan Sas is out because of dental surgery. The Turks also enter the match overshadowed by the possibility of a stiff punishment that could end the career of midfield genius Gheorghe Hagi, after the tempestuous Balkan star kicked, spit at and stomped on a referee during a weekend league match.  
But at least Galatasaray know they are through.  
Paris St Germain have nothing but pride to play for after being eliminated last week after their 4-3 defeat at Deportivo Coruna.

Manchester United manager Alex Ferguson insists his side are as good as through to the quarterfinals and will not slip up against Stur姆 Graz in their final Group A match on Tuesday.  
United need to avoid being beaten by three goals by Stur姆 at Old Trafford, and Ferguson is convinced that United's name is already in the hat for the last eight draw.  
United have beaten Stur姆 on all three previous occasions the sides have met in the last two seasons, all in the Champions League. United won 2-0 at Stur姆 in their last meeting in December.  
With Valencia already qualified, United are second in the group on nine points, the same as the Spaniards, but could lose out on a place in the last eight if Stur姆, who have six points, win by three clear goals. That would give the Austrians a better head-to-head record against United and see them qualify in their place.  
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## MANCHESTER UNITED v STURM GRAZ

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## VALENCIA v PANATHINAIKOS

**VALENCIA**

With qualification for the quarterfinals already assured, Valencia host Panathinaikos in their final match of the second phase on Tuesday knowing that a win will secure them first place in Group A.  
First place will mean that Valencia will enjoy the double benefit of home advantage in the return leg of their quarter-final in a tie against one of the tournament's second-placed teams.  
Valencia hit form in their European last match as they effectively terminated Stur姆 Graz's hopes of qualification with their 5-0 drubbing of the Austrian side at their Arnold Schwarzenegger stadium last week.  
Panathinaikos, who drew 0-0 with Valencia in Greece, go into their final group match with only pride to play for. But Manchester United will vouch for the Greeks' commitment after a lucky escape in Athens last week.  
"I knew we would always win it. It was a fantastic game - a great cup tie."  
"I thought we did a lot of good blocking and Neil Sullivan did a lot of great saves when he had to."  
Hammers boss Harry Redknapp, whose side had previously defeated Manchester United and Sunderland away from home, said: "I'm a big friend of George's and I'm pleased for him. Against Arsenal, anything could happen."  
"But the lads are very low and I'm very low as well. It's a big disappointment as I thought we would win."  
"You can't give away three goals like that and win though."  
"They (the players) did work hard but the second goal was just a long ball which was headed on. It was a goal out of the lower divisions and it was poor defending."  
Inter Milan president Massimo Moratti Sunday gave coach Marco Tardelli the green light to continue at the club for another season, finally burying rumours that AC Milan coach Alberto Zaccaroni might cross the San Siro divide.  
Inter, who have no chance of winning a trophy this year, have nonetheless started to improve in recent weeks and have a slim chance of qualifying for next year's Champions League.  
Speaking after the 2-0 victory over Verona, Moratti, whose turbulent five-year reign has seen eight coaches fired, confirmed that he was in accordance with the recent confidence in the coach expressed by the club's sporting director Gabriele Oriali, a teammate of Tardelli in Italy's 1982 World Cup winning side.  
"The other day Oriali spoke in the name of the club," said Moratti. "I rate Zaccaroni but the confirmation of Tardelli is a fait accompli."  
Zaccaroni, who led AC Milan to an unexpected Scudetto in his first season in charge two years ago, is expected to leave his present club in the summer.

## Mancini dispensation criticised

**AFP, Milan**

Florentino coach Roberto Mancini was forced to defend himself Sunday as his fellow Italian First Division coaches queued up to criticise the decision of Italian Football Federation (FIGC) commissioner Gianni Petrucci to waive rules to allow him on the touchline.  
Mancini was ineligible to replace Fatih Terim, who had quit, as he had already held a coaching post earlier in the season as Sven Goran Eriksson's assistant at Lazio, but Petrucci gave the former Italian international the green light.  
Many of Mancini's peers voiced their criticism in press conferences after Sunday's matches.  
Brescia coach Carlo Mazzzone, at 63 the oldest coach in Serie A, was the strongest critic, lamenting the decision of former Italy national team coach Azeglio Vicini to quit as president of the coaches association in protest at Petrucci's ruling.  
"It is Petrucci who should resign, not Vicini," said the Brescia coach. "This episode proves we coaches count for nothing. There is no point us striking as it would achieve nothing."



Real Madrid superstar Luis Figo (R) trying to make his way past a Real Sociedad player Stephane Collate during their Primera Liga fixture on March 11.

## FA Cup

# Liverpool, Spurs in last four

**Football**

**AFP, London**

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through a 12th minute Danny Murphy header before Michael Owen made it 2-0 15 minutes later.  
A header from Tranmere's Steve Yates gave them a lifeline early in the second half before Steven Gerrard made it 3-1 to Liverpool. However, Tranmere substitute Wayne Allison took advantage of Fowler's error to reduce the gap.  
Aldridge added: "We came back and gave it a real go. But we can't keep on giving Premiership sides two and three goal starts, this in the end was one game too far for us."  
"But we have done ourselves proud. If we can now turn this into a successful fight to avoid relegation and take advantage of our games in hand, it will be a successful season for us."  
At Upton Park, Tottenham set up a repeat of the 1991 semi-final against arch rivals Arsenal with a 3-2 win over fellow Londoners West Ham.  
Sergei Rebrov scored twice, either side of half-time and Gary Doherty headed in Tottenham's third.  
Delighted Ukrainian striker Rebrov said: "It's one more step towards the final and I think we can do it."  
"We're very confident. We must concentrate on the next game, which will be very hard but we're looking forward to it."  
West Ham substitute Svetoslav Todorov reduced the deficit to 3-2 in the 72nd minute and Tottenham were indebted to goalkeeper Neil Sullivan for some superb saves.  
I don't remember much to be honest," said the Scotland international keeper afterwards.  
"It was just backs to the wall, we were just trying to clear our lines and not give that final goal away."  
"We defended well when we had to and I was fortunate to make a couple of saves."  
West Ham had earlier got back into the game when 38-year-old former England defender Stuart Pearce fired in a trademark blockbuster free-kick in the 43rd minute.  
Despite the tension, Tottenham's ex-Arsenal boss George Graham was always confident of