

PHOTO: INTERNET

Real Madrid superstar Luis Figo (L) and Osasuna's Jose Manuel Yanguas fight for the ball during their Primera Liga encounter at Madrid's Santiago Bernabeu stadium on April 28.

Primera Liga

Raul saves Real blues

Football

REUTERS, Madrid

league leaders Real Madrid come from behind to snatch a barely deserved 1-1 draw against relegation strugglers Osasuna on Saturday. Raul's 19 th goal in the La Liga, which made him joint top-scorer in the league with Barcelona's Rivaldo, brought the home side back on level terms after they fell behind to a perfectly-struck free kick from Osasuna midfielder Alex Fernandez. The result meant Real stayed well on course for their first Spanish title in four years. They extended their lead to 12 points over Deportivo Coruna who play Espanyol on Sunday. A 64th minute header from striker Juan Sanchez gave third-placed Valencia a 1-0 victory over 'Valladolid, moving them a point behind Deportivo.

Real had appeared in no hurry to take the initiative as they stroked the ball harmlessly around the midfield,

Bundesliga

Football

apparently more concerned with conserving their energy ahead of Tuesday's Champions League semifinal against Bayern Munich.

Real made several half-hearted An opportunist strike by Raul saw and shooting wide on 24 minutes

Alex Fernandez stepped up to after the break a poor clearance curl his superb free kick around the wall and between a post and the diving Casillas to make it 1-0.

But only two minutes later refarracks with Luis Figo going it alone - erce Turienzo Alvarez gave Real apenalty after Figo appeared to dive and Michel Salgado cutting in from in the area after the slightest of

Primera Liga's top six

Spanish top six after Saturday's matches (played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, against, points)

Real Madrid	32	21.	6	5	70	33	69
Deportivo	- 31	17	6	. 8	60	38	57
Valencia	32	16	8	8	49	25	56
Mallorca	31	14	11	6	44	37	53
Barcelona	31	14	9	8	68	50	51
CeltaVigo	31	13	8	10	43	44	47

With Real still playing at half pace, but then sent the ball wide of the

Osasuna caught them napping in right post to the joy of the Osasuna defence and Roberto Carlos gave players. away a free kick metres outside the area on 37 minutes.

the right wing and unleashing a contacts with Cesar Cruchaga. fierce shot that forced a sharp save The European player of the year from Osasuna keeper Nuno. claimed the spot kick for himself,

> But luck was not to favour the battling Navarran side. Six minutes

rebounded off Jose Manuel Yanguas and fell to Raul who clipped over Nuno to give Real a barely deserved equaliser.

The match opened up in the second half, but Real still appeared to be playing well within themselves. Ivan Rosado came close to restoring the lead for the visitors as he skipped past three defenders and saw his angled shot spin off the post on 66 minutes.

But it was keeper Nuno who produced an inspired performance as he pulled off a string of quality saves to help give his side a vital point in their bid to stave off relega-

Valencia struggled to overcome a highly disciplined Valladolid, but did just enough to take only their second win in six matches.

With coach Hector Cuper resting a host of players ahead of their Champions League semifinal against Leeds United, it was down to striker Juan Sanchez to head home a ZlatkoZahoviccomertosecurethewin.

"We knew we faced a tough

challenge today as Freiburg are a

form side and we also took a while to

get going," said Bayern coach

Ottmar Hitzfeld. "It was an impor-

tant win for us to keep the title in

Hitzfeld warned, however, that

"We played well enough to beat

such domestic form just will not

Freiburg - but such a showing won't

do against Real Mardid," Hitzfeld

noted in allusion to next week's

Champions League semi-final

brace from Brazilian striker Alex

Alves as they beat relegation-

to boost their hopes of a European

Hertha moved to within a point

Dortmund had to indulge in

some damage limitation after

Wolfsburg opened the scoring in the

10th minute through Polish forward

Andrzej Juskowiak, who outsprinted

former German international

22nd-minute effort which took a

Jorg Heinrich saved a point with a

Level with Dorimund are Bayer

Kaiserslantern 1-0 away with Oliver

defender Jurgen Kohler.

of Borussia Dortmund, who on

Friday saw their title hopes take a

knock when they could only draw 1

Hertha Berlin were thankful of a

against the Spanish giants.

place next season.

Lat Wolfsburg.

Akpoborie,

Neuville on target.

reach.

washin Europe.

Premiership

Bradford go down fighting

Football

AFP, London

Bradford coach Jim Jeffries was bursting with pride on Saturday despite watching his side lose their Premiership status after two seasons in the top flight.

The 'Bantams', who avoided the drop on the last day last season, were relegated after losing 2-1 to fellow strugglers Everton at Goodison Park, although they might have extended their stay had they not missed two second-half penalties.

Manchester City live to fight another day after edging West Ham 1-0 thanks to an Ian Pearce own goal going down 2-0 at home to Liverpool.

"We have tried to keep things going in recent weeks with a couple of wins, and we battled right to the death in this one," said Jeffries.

"We had a real go, battling for each other and we showed that we will be capable of challenging next season to win our Premiership place

Jeffries conceded that the spotkicks missed by Robbie Blake and Italian Benito Carbone gave his side a mountain to climb.

"We blew it with those two penalty misses," said the affable Scot, who used to manage Scottish Premier League club Hearts.

"We aren't the first team to miss penalties and we won't be the last so I'm not going to blame the lads."

Manchester City coach foe Royle said luck played an important part in his side's narrow victory at home toWestHam.

City certainly enjoyed the rub of the green at Maine Road. Shaun Goater shot in the 21st minute took a critical deflection off Pearce while West Ham had an effort disallowed.

Goalkeeper Carlo Nash made a couple of great saves to protect City's lead and his defenders cleared

two goalbound efforts off the line. Royle said he did not care how the points were won and was just thankful to still be in the Premiership for

another week. "We were lucky," said Royle. "I'm glad to say that and it's the first time I've said that this season.

"We've had a little bit of luck for a change, or a lot of luck for a change. "Having said that the game

should have been over after about 15 minutes and we should have been two up and that would have killed With just two games to play

Coventry remain second bottom with 33 points, one less than Manchester City and five less than both Derby and Middlesbrough.

Coventry are still hanging on thanks to results elsewhere despite losing to UEFA Cup finalists Liverpool.

Two goals in the last 10 minutes, from Finland defender Sami Hyypia and former Coventry idol Gary McAllister, kept Liverpool's chal-

lenge for a Champions League spot

on track. Derby are still in danger after losing 2-1 at home to second-placed Arsenal, as are Middlesbrough who were beaten 2-0 at home to champions Manchester United.

Substitute Robert Pires scored with his first touch at Pride Park to keep Arsenal on course for a Champions League place.

The Frenchman calmly slotted home in the second half to increase the Gunners' advantage over the chasing pack.

Arsene Wenger's men took the lead through Nwankwo Kanu only to be pegged back by Stefano Franio's header on the stroke of half-time.

Manchester United opened the but Coventry look doomed after scoring at the Riverside after four minutes with Phillip Neville scoring for the first time since November

England captain David Beckham grabbed the second six minutes from time to keep Middlesbrough fifth from bottom.

In-form Leeds assured themselves of a place in Europe next season with two goals in the last five minutes to defeat Chelsea 2-0.

Republic of Ireland international Robbie Keane came off the substitutes' bench to fire Leeds in front his ninth goal in 17 appearances before Australian international striker Mark Viduka slammed home the second, his 16th in 31 Premiership matches.

Leeds' sixth win on the trot in a 13-match unbeaten league run took David O'Leary's side above Ipswich into third place and guarantees the Yorkshire club a place in the UEFA Cup next season. A top three finish will book their place in the Champions League.

Leeds, who are the only English team left in the Champions League this season, take on Spanish outfit Valencia on Wednesday in the first leg of their semi-final encounter.

Chelsea's prolific striker Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink made his longawaited return to Yorkshire where he was idolised by Leeds fans before leaving under a cloud almost two years ago.

Hasselbaink left in acrimonious circumstances after holding the club to ransom and the ill-feeling caused by his departure was evident as Leeds fans booed him throughout.

Republic of Ireland international Kevin Kilbane scored a spectacular goal nine minutes after half time to give Sunderland a 1-0 victory at Southampton, still looking for their first win since Glenn Hoddle's

Aston Villa, unbeaten in nine games, were held to a 0-0 draw at Tottenham while Carl Cort scored in the 90th minute for Newcastle in their 1-0 home win over Leicester, whose ninth straight defeat was a club record.

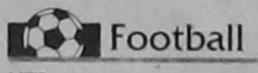
Fourth-placed Ipswich, looking for a place in next season's Champions League, travel to Charlton on Monday.

Premiership's top six

After Saturday's matches (played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, goals

Manchester United	35	24	8	3	77	25	80
Arsenal	35	19	9	7	59	34	66
Leeds	35	18	8	9	54	39	62
lpswich '	35	19	5	11	53	38	62
Liverpool	34	17	8	9	60	37	59
Chelsea	35	15	9	11	62	41	54

Ginola touched



AFP, London

Aston Villa French star David Ginola admitted he was "overwhelmed" by the reaction of Tottenham's fans when he made an emotional return toWhite Hart Lane on Saturday. Supporters and groundstaff from

the north London club presented Ginola with gifts including champagne, and some even wept as they were reunited with the flamboyant winger for the first time since his controversial transfer to Aston Villa last summer.

"I am lost for words after the incredible reception I received, said Ginola. "It has never happened. ·like that at a previous club.

"The reaction of the fans was simply overwhelming - it touched my heart. The Tottenham supporters are beautiful people, Hove them all. I had fans and staff coming up to me with gifts, such as bottles of champagne, because they were so happy to see me again.

"People cried when they saw me, team," he said.

and I have to admit there was a tear in my eye too. It was great to see so many old friends again, and words cannot adequately describe how I

"There are plenty of souvenirs in my mind from my time here - like the Wembley Worthington Cup final. As you get older the more sensitive you become about things you have enjoyed in your life." The Villa fans love Ginola too, but

the same cannot be said for manager John Gregory, who opied for the industry of Steve Staumton rather than the artistry of the Frenchman. That clearly hurt Ginola, who

said: "The big disappointment was that I never got the chance to play a significant role in the match.

"It was incredibly frustrating for me to have been denied the chance to start the game.

"It hurt that I was given only 10 minutes to play in front of those adoring fans - both from Spurs and Villa - but of course I never question the decision of the manager, and he did what he felt was right for the



Sonny Anderson (R), Lyon's Brazilian goal-machine, scoring his team's first past a hapless Lille custodian Gregory Wimbee (C) during their French First Division fixture at Lille on April 28.

French First Division

Lyon stay in the hunt

Football

AFP, Paris

A goal seconds from time by Christophe Delmotte gave Lyon a 2-I win at Eille on Saturday to keep the French title race alive and move them to within a point of leaders Nantes.

With Nantes playing Troves on Sunday it was imperative for Lyon to go for the win in a battle of third and second and Delmotte's late goal from an acute angle ensured they kept in the hunt for a first league

Johnny Eckert had put Lille ahead on 26 minutes with a fine header and it seemed the hosts would themselves claim a win which would have left them second and killed off Lyon's hopes.

But Brazilian hit man Sonny Anderson grabbed his 18th goal of the season to level on the half hour and although he then had a goal disallowed for a foul on Lille keeper Gregory Wimbee the visitors redoubled their efforts in a frantic finale with Delmotte's strike giving them their just reward. Elsewhere, Bordeaux's

Portuguese striker Pauleta scored twice to send his side a point clear of Lille into third with a 2-1 win at Rennes, for whom Jocelyn Gourvennec scored a consolation.

Pauleta's double moved him to the top of the goalscoring charts with 19 - one ahead of Anderson.

But as Lyon and Bordeaux moved closer to the cash cow of the mance by PSG, as Brazilian Champions League there was Christian and Nicolas Anelka despair at Saint Etienne as their brief worked hard up front but they had two-year stay in the top flight ended following a 1-1 home draw against defence.

The French league authorities had opened the trapdoor for Les Verts, ten times league champions in the 1970's and 80's, by docking the club seven points for the club's role in the false passports affair and they had to win their final three games to

retain hope of beating the drop. Marseille did their best to keep Saint Etienne's hopes alive another week as they slumped to a 1-0 loss at Metz before a sellout 27,000 crowd. Mario Espartero hitting the only goal with a rasping drive on 66 minutes somewhat against the run.

Metz's Colombian keeper Farid Mondragon made a strong of five saves, notably from Ibrahim Bakayako and George Weah, to keep former European champions Marseille at bay and the latter now still need a point to ensure that Toulouse go down alongside Saint Etienne and Strasbourg.

. Going up from division two are Lorient, Montpellier and Sochaux.

Elsewhere, Paris Saint Germain and Monaco fought out a 1-1 drawat the Parc des Princes as want-away midfielder Laurent Robert came off the sub's bench for PSG to net a late equaliser after former PSG favourite Marco Simone had scored the opener on 66 minutes.

Monaco still have a chance of competing in Europe if they can win the league cup final next week but PSG's season is set to peter out under a cloud as they are just 12th in the table.

It was a much improved perforno reward against a tough visiting

Serie A Reggina see off Napoli

Football

AFP, Milan

Reggina defeated fellow strugglers Napoli 3-1 Saturday evening, rekindling their hopes of staving in the First Division.

Until last week the side from Reggio Calabria looked doomed to relegation but consecutive victories in relegation doglights with Verona and Napoli have given them renewed hope while Napoli and Vicenza, defeated 1-0 by Parma earlier Saturday, are back in trouble.

Goals from Davide Dionigi, Massimo Marazzini and Andrea Zanchetta

had Reggina 3-0 in the lead after 50 minutes. Goalkeeper Massimo Taibi saved a penalty from Napoli's Nicola Amoruso and Edmundo's goal just before the hour mark was not enough to spark a comeback for the visitors from Naples. Both sides produced some thrilling football in the first period but both

first-half goals went to Reggina. They took the lead after only six minutes when Dionigi volleyed home his sixth goal since he joined Reggina on loan from Second Division Sampdoria

Napoli came back looking for an equaliser but Taibi was outstanding with one particularly impressive save from Fabio Pecchia. And four minutes before the interval Reggina made it 2-O when Massimo

Marazzini fired home after some slack defending. Five minutes after the interval Andrea Zanchetta made it 3-0 with a superb strike and after Amoruso's penalty blunder he partly redeemed himself by

setting up Brazilian Edmundo for an easy goal. Napoli's Francesco Baldigi and Reggina's Portuguese player Jose Mamede were sent off for fighting in the closing minutes.

Earlier Parma pulled off a 1-0 win at Vicenza, consolidating their hold on the fourth place in the Italian First Division that would give them a place in the preliminary round of next year's Champions League.

Marco Di Vaio came up with the priceless goal after 80 minutes just as the lacklustre match seemed to be heading for a draw but his strike, while boosting his side, also deepens the relegation worries of Vicenza.

Di Vaio's goals under Sacchi and now Renzo Ulivieri have propelled his club from midtable obscurity towards a place in next season's Champions League.

J-League

Jubilo's sixth on the trot

Football

AFP, Tokyo

Naohiro Takahara's cored twice as Jubilo Iwata whitewashed nearest rivals Nagoya Grampus Eight 3-0 Sunday to remain unbeaten and on top of the J-League table with six straight wins.

Nagoya slipped down to a third-place tie with Shimizu S-Pulse past Consadole Sapporo which kept up the lead from a fifth-minute goal to beat Gamba Osaka 1-0. With many key players still weary from a 0-1 friendly international loss in

Spain, Iwata got off to a slow start and perked up in the 66th minute of the home match when Takahara banged home a through pass from veteran striker Masashi Nakayama. Nakayama headed home nine minutes later and fakahara scored another

goal against 10-man Nagoya to keep Iwata up from in the league with 18 points against Sapporo's 13. Nagoya and Shimizu S-Pulse were level at 11.

get into the contest and that boosted Bochum. In the second half we did · carve out a few chances and that was

AFP, Berlin In Bayern's earlier match Schalke 04 slipped on their way to collecting an anticipated three

points away to bottom club Bochum, earning a grim 1-1 draw to leave second-placed champions Bayern Munich with a sly Saturday night smile. Bayern had upped the stakes earlier Saturday, grabbing a hard-

fought 1-0 win over Freiburg at the

Olympic Stadium which took them

top ahead of their rivals' evening match at Bochum. Schalke's poor draw and onepoint result hoisted them back to top spot on goals difference, but it is Bayern who will be licking their lips in anticipation of pulling back the

slim difference between the sides. The pressure is on Schalke, who now have three matches to show that are capable of winning their first league title, and on this display Bayern would be forgiven for celebrating early.

Visitors Schalkewent down 1-0 in the 21st minute when Paul Freier fired the home side in front, and it was not until the 70th minute that Schalke's Belgian international striker Emile Mpenza pulled the

scores level. Schalke coach Huub Stevens said he was not too happy with his side's performance but at least the "Royal Blues" had secured a place in Europe

"In the first half we struggled to

primary goal of getting into pressure on in the face of stubborn recent poor home form behind Europe, Stevens said.

Bochum upset Schalke plans

solitary goal with a fine freekick on now have 56 points from 31 matches "At least we have achieved our 65 minutes as Bayern piled the to Schalke's 55 from 30 after putting

resistance by their visitors.

The Bavarians, who have a German international midfielder European Cup and Bundesliga Mehmet Scholl scored the game's double in their sights this season,

Bundesliga's top six After Friday and Saturday's matches (played, won, drawn, lost, goals for,

against, points): Schalke 04 Bayern Munich Borussia Dortmund 31 Bayer Leverkusen 31 Hertha Berlin Kaiserslautern



Bochum's Paul Freier (C) celebrates his strike against Schalke with teammates during their Bundesliga match in Bochum on April 28.