

# Elber bemuses champions

UEFA CHAMPS LEAGUE  
AFP, Madrid

Bayern Munich's Giovane Elber produced a thunderous shot from 25 metres out to give the German side a surprise 1-0 victory over Real Madrid in their European Champions League semi-final, first leg match on Tuesday.

The victory puts Bayern firmly in the driving seat in the tie, and they will feel confident that they can hang on to their advantage when the two team's meet again in the second leg in Munich's Olympic Stadium on May 9.

Bayern's coach Ottmar Hitzfeld preferred to view the result as a fair return for his tactical judgement rather than a lucky win.

"From the very beginning I knew that a good defence was necessary and our own defence played magnificently.

"We always believed we could score on the counter-attack because we expected Madrid to risk everything going forward, and so it proved," Hitzfeld said. "Although a 2-0 win would have been unfair."

Hitzfeld paid tribute to his goalkeeper Oliver Kahn for keeping a clean sheet under almost continuous assault from Real Madrid.

Real Madrid, the reigning European champions, will feel dismayed that they were unable to find the net after dominating the match for long periods.

After Elber's 55th minute goal against the run of play, the hosts threw everything they could at Bayern and only heroics from Oliver Kahn in the Bayern goal prevented Real levelling the score, or even clinching victory.

Raul, Michel Salgado and Ivan Helguera all had shots acrobatically saved by Kahn in the final half hour.

Real though will also regret not putting the game beyond Bayern Munich's reach by half time.

The first 45 minutes will chiefly be remembered for the series of missing opportunities by the hosts, who repeatedly prised open the Bayern defence but could not finish off a number of clear-cut chances.

Only four minutes had elapsed



PHOTO: INTERNET

Giovane Elber unleashing a left-footer to score against Real Madrid on May 1.

when Raul shot high and wide when in front of the Bayern goal.

After 15 minutes, Michel Salgado made an outstanding run down the right wing but no one was able to stab his cross into the open goal.

Raul again failed to find the net after half an hour, when he chipped over the prone Oliver Khan in the Bayern goal from out on the left. However the ball agonisingly trickled along the line and beyond the post.

A fourth chance went begging four minutes before the break when Jose Maria Gutierrez failed by inches to get his foot to an outstanding pass from Ivan Helguera.

After the break, Brazilian Elber then celebrated his goal by kissing the knee which he had operated on just a fortnight ago after they ousted Manchester United.

However, his evening ended prematurely after he tumbled over in the area chasing on to a through ball and he had to go off to be replaced by the more cumbersome Carsten Jancker.

The only comfort that Real Madrid will take from the game is that Bayern's influential midfielder and club captain Stefan Effenberg will be missing from the second leg, after picking up a yellow card late in the game for a harsh tackle on Luis Figo.

Real Madrid coach Vicente Del Bosque said afterwards: "We had the initiative during the game but the Bayern defence had a solution to everything we threw at them.

"We had the ball most of the time and hardly let them hit on the break but they won. The Germans proved to be very effective and though we

tried we just weren't able to break them down.

"Munitis and Savio (the substitutes) tried hard down the flanks but just did not get through. But I'm not going to be pessimistic and we still have a chance to make the final. We have 90 minutes to play with and we will give it our all in Munich."

Real Madrid defender Aitor Karanka said: "It's going to be complicated but we were by far the better team in this game and so there is no reason to believe we cannot win in Munich next week.

"However, I want to say to everyone, 'We told you they were dangerous.' Everyone made us the overwhelming favourites because of what happened last season but the players knew that Bayern were going to be as good as us.

"They didn't attack very much

and we knew that was going to be their tactic, but when they did go forward Bayern were very effective and dangerous," the former Spanish international added.

Real Madrid's goalkeeper Iker Casillas, who had an outstanding match but stood little chance of keeping Elber's thunderbolt out of the net, admitted that the Real Madrid players left the field with the hearts in their boots.

"If life was fair this was a game we would have won," Casillas said. "The mood in the dressing room was very sombre after the whistle went, but we'll try to pick ourselves up in the next couple of days. We've got a league match on Sunday to concentrate on and we can still make the Champions League final as well. It's not over yet."

## Farina pleads with superstars

AFP, Sydney

Australia football coach Frank Farina appealed Wednesday for Leeds United stars Mark Viduka and Harry Kewell to play in their World Cup play-off in June.

Australia finished their first round matches in the Oceania Zone with four wins and a 66-0 goal average and play the winners of the other group -- most likely New Zealand -- home and away in June.

The winners of that tie take on the fifth-placed team from the South American qualifying group for a place in the 2002 World Cup finals in Korea and Japan.

Farina was blasted by English clubs who released players for last month's 66-goal first round farce which led to relegation-threatened Coventry City losing John Aloisi with a hamstring injury.

But Farina said New Zealand posed a real threat.

"This is the best New Zealand side they've had in 20 years," he said, referring to the 1982 side which qualified for the World Cup finals in Spain.

"We have to qualify and we need our best players to do it," he added.

Neither Kewell, who has had an injury-plagued season for Leeds, or Viduka played in the first round matches against Fiji, Samoa, American Samoa and Tonga.

Kewell was awaiting the birth of his first child and has not played for Australia for a year after Leeds refused to release him for friendly internationals.

Viduka said earlier this week he wanted to play in June.

"But we'll just have to see how things go," he added.

Both players star in their biggest club match later Wednesday when Leeds play Valencia in the first leg of their European Champions League semi-final.



PHOTO: INTERNET

FIVE-STAR MACALLISTER: Gary McAllister (C) is the centre of team celebrations once again after scoring against Bradford.

## Premiership L'pool on course

Football

AFP, London

Goals from Michael Owen and Gary McAllister kept Liverpool's hopes of a Champions League place alive as they beat bottom-of-the-table and already relegated Bradford 2-0 at Valley Parade on Tuesday.

The result moved the Merseyside club from fifth to third in the English Premiership table.

Liverpool took the lead two minutes into the second half. McAllister's long ball was chased by Owen - outpacing Gunnar Halle - before squeezing an angled left footer just inside the far post.

Owen got away again five minutes later on to a Danny Murphy pass, but this time keeper Gary Walsh made a spectacular block at the striker's feet.

Bradford clearly had no intention of giving up the ghost, and were presented with a golden opportunity by referee Jeff Winter in the 56th minute.

The official decided that Sander Westerveld had picked up a Sami Hyypia backpass and awarded a free kick on the six yard line.

Westerveld was booked for arguing and somehow Jamie Carragher hurled himself from the mass of players on the line to block Benito Carbone's shot after Eoin Jess had tapped the free kick to him.

**But McAllister was to strike again in the 67th minute, his fifth set piece goal in five games.**

This time it was a free kick for a foul by Halle on Owen. Up stepped the Scot to lift a 20-yarder in off the underside of the bar.

In Tuesday's other Premiership match at St James' Park Marian Pahars came off the bench to score Southampton's first goal in six games and snatch a point at Newcastle.

The Latvian headed past Shay Given 10 minutes from time to cancel out Kevin Gallacher's first-half strike and score the south coast club's first goal since former boss Glenn Hoddle quit for Tottenham.

# Vialli takes over Watford

Football

AFP, London

Former Italian World Cup star Gianluca Vialli returned to football management on Wednesday when he was named as manager of Elton John's English First Division side Watford.

The appointment comes eight months after he was dismissed as manager of Premiership outfit Chelsea only five games into the new season.

The high-profile 36-year-old Vialli will take over at the end of the season when Watford's current manager Graham Taylor retires.

The Italian is believed to have signed a three-year-deal with the Hornets and is expected to bring in former Chelsea coach Ray Wilkins as his assistant.

"I was surprised and flattered by the club's approach. My aim was to work in football with people with the same philosophy as me," Vialli told Sky Sports.

"I had to think carefully about this proposal but it took me a couple of weeks to realise that this is the club where I want to start again, where I want to give my best. I want to take Watford to the next level.

Elton John said: "I am incredibly excited that we have appointed Luca and his team. Following Graham Taylor is difficult and Graham is a legend.

"I can't wait for the beginning of next season. It is great that such a man of international status has taken over."

Vialli, the son or a millionaire and brought up in a castle, first made his name with Sampdoria with whom he won the 1990 European Cup Winners Cup. He also played that year in the Italian team that finished



PHOTO: AFP

Former Italy international Gianluca Vialli listens as Watford chairman Sir Elton John (not in picture) speaks during his introduction as the club's new manager at Vicarage road on Wednesday.

third in the World Cup at home .

In 1992 Juventus paid a then world record 12.5 million pounds to bring him to Turin and he stayed with them until 1996 when he captained them to victory in the European Cup final.

He then joined Chelsea on a free transfer as foreign players flooded into the English Premiership, but soon fell foul of the London club's flamboyant Dutch manager Ruud Gullit.

After Gullit's shock departure in 1998, he was made player-manager and led the side to the European Cup Winners Cup against Stuttgart in Stockholm.

But a disappointing season in the following year when Chelsea missed qualification for the Champions League and growing unrest in the dressing room provoked outspoken Chelsea chairman Ken Bates to sack Vialli.

In his short sabbatical, Vialli has

sought to better himself as a manager, embarking on a UEFA coaching course in an attempt to improve his motivational and management skills.

In his last season in charge, Taylor has been unable to take Watford to the play-offs in their first season after relegation from the Premiership at the end of the 1999-2000 campaign.

## Real foresee turnaround

UEFA CHAMPS LEAGUE

REUTERS, Madrid

Real Madrid insist they can still land a third Champions League title in four years, despite Tuesday's 1-0 defeat by Bayern Munich in the semifinal first leg at the Bernabeu.

Real dominated possession but were frustrated by outstanding defending by the German side for whom Brazilian striker Elber hit a 55th minute winner to earn a valuable lead to take into the second leg. But Real believe they can still make it through to the final in Milan on May 23 and stay on course for an unprecedented ninth European Cup success.

"We were much better than Bayern Munich," said midfielder Ivan Helguera.

"We did everything but score but it was Bayern who went away with the win. It's going to be very tough but we're optimistic.

"I'm sure we're going to make it through to the final." Portuguese forward Luis Figo agreed the result hardly reflected the balance of play.

"They were defending for the entire game only to get a favourable result," he lamented "But we've demonstrated with our attacking football that we're more than capable of turning this result around."

Newspapers in Spain, who were roundly critical of Bayern's defensive approach, hit upon the suspension of Stefan Effenberg for the second leg as at least one cause for hope.

## Ancelotti gets vote of confidence

Football

AFP, Turin

Juventus director of sport Luciano Moggi Tuesday gave the vote of confidence to his coach Carlo Ancelotti ahead of this weekend's crunch Italian First Division match with leaders AS Roma.

Juve fans called for Ancelotti to be sacked and replaced by Gianluca Vialli Sunday after the club's 1-1 draw with lowly Lecce but Moggi said that the former Reggiana and Parma coach had the confidence of the board.

Talking to Rai2 TV channel Moggi said: "I do not understand this bad atmosphere surrounding our

coach. The team was only foiled against Lecce because we hit the post three times and had many injuries.

"We are in second in the Championship and very much in the race for the Scudetto: that is thanks to Ancelotti's work and that of a team that many said would struggle to finish in the top four at the start of the season.

"It all seems very strange to me. Ancelotti will be there next season."

Earlier cameramen had filmed Ancelotti and Moggi apparently giving a stern lecture to the Juve players.

With six games remaining second-place Juve are six points behind Roma ahead of Sunday's showdown at the Stadio Delle Alpi.

## Lazio banned, fined

Football

REUTERS, Rome

Italian champions Lazio have been banned from their home ground for one match for their fans' racist behaviour at Sunday's Rome derby.

The club was also fined 60 million lire (19,300 pounds), an Italian Football League spokeswoman said on Wednesday.

Lazio fans booed AS Roma's Brazilian players Cafu and Aldair as well as French-born defender Jonathan Zebina whenever they had the ball in Sunday's 2-2 draw.

They also held up a banner carrying the words; "Black squad, Jewish home end".

Roma were fined 20 million lire for the unruly behaviour of their fans, who threw bottles, many of them filled with water, at players on the pitch.

Lazio have been fined on numerous occasions for the racist behaviour of their supporters, a hardcore section of whom are believed to have links with far-right political groups.

Lazio, third in *Serie A* and trailing seven points behind leaders Roma, will still play Saturday's home match against Bari at the Olympic Stadium.

The stadium ban will come in to effect for their May 20 home match against Udinese which will be played at a venue that has yet to be decided.

## Arsenal, Nigeria clash over Kanu

Football

AFP, Lagos

English Premiership side Arsenal and Nigeria have again clashed over the release of striker Nwankwo Kanu for this weekend's World Cup tie against Liberia.

"Arsenal have asked we leave Kanu out of the World Cup match (against Liberia) because they also need the player on the same day for a league match," an official of the Nigeria Football Association (NFA) told AFP Tuesday.

"We will not compromise with Kanu's release and we therefore expect his club to comply with FIFA's directives on this matter."

Kanu reportedly told Nigerian officials before last week's sack of Dutch coach Jo Bonfrere that he will not be available for the Liberia

encounter.

Several international teammates of the Arsenal forward who have also asked to be excluded from the World Cup qualifier appear to have backed out of this decision.

Officials told AFP that captain Sunday Oliseh, Taribo West and Austin "Jay Jay" Okocha have informed the NFA they will be available for the match in the southern oil-city of Port Harcourt on Saturday.

Meanwhile, Hansa Rostock striker Victor Agali is among the players who began training for the match Tuesday. Agali was ruled out of the game against Sierra Leone a fortnight ago because of injury.

Officials said first choice keeper Ike Shorunmu of Turkish team Besiktas is also fit after he being sidelined by a knee injury for about a month.

## Caniggia's up for sale

Football

AFP, Glasgow

Claudio Caniggia has been put up for sale by Dundee and the Argentinian crowd favourite will be allowed to leave if a club meets their valuation, the club said on Tuesday.

The 34-year old striker has made a tremendous impact since arriving on Tayside in October and signed an extended contract in February taking him to June 2003.

But such was his success in the Scottish Premier League that Caniggia realised, or at least hoped that he still had a chance of returning to his national side in time to make next year's World Cup finals.

He and agent Fernando Consentino became convinced that he needed a bigger stage to achieve this with moves to Celtic and especially Rangers almost constantly suggested afterwards.

A Dundee spokesman told the official Scottish Premier League website, scotprem.co.uk: "We can confirm that despite repeated efforts of the directors to persuade him otherwise, Claudio Caniggia has intimated through ongoing discussions that he feels his futures lies away from Dens Park.

"Whilst disappointed with this decision, we have reluctantly agreed to allow him to leave if another club makes an offer of appropriate compensation to Dundee. To date we have had no offer from any club.

"Dundee have notified agents throughout the game advising them to make it absolutely clear that clubs interested in securing Claudio's services, that he'll only leave Dens Park if the offer meets our valuation."

That price tag is believed to be more than one million pounds (1.47million dollars) for a player who was listed among the nominations for Scotland's player of the year crown.

Caniggia arrived at Dundee after some gentle persuasion from Dark Blues boss and long-time friend Ivano Bonetti.

However, the Italian did not appear to have been informed about the statement already having been made by the club.

"We don't want to sell him and there is nothing going on," he insisted. "Claudio is playing for Dundee on Sunday and next Saturday as well, he has got three years on his contract he his here and he is a Dundee player."