



A combo of photos showing (L) the Manchester United players celebrating with the FA Carling Premiership trophy and (R), super star David Beckham giving his son Brooklyn a taste of the Old Trafford on May 5.

Premiership Derby dampen MU party

Football

AFP, London

Derby County gatecrashed Manchester United's championship party on Saturday and pulled off an unlikely 1-0 win at Old Trafford to retain their English Premiership status.

A fantastic strike by Malcolm Christie 11 minutes before the interval, his first goal in 17 games, took the fizz out of United's champagne and had the 'Rams' jumping for joy.

Elsewhere perennial strugglers Coventry joined Bradford in the First Division next season after losing 3-2 at Aston Villa, bringing to an end 34 years in the top flight.

Derby coach Jim Smith paid tribute to his players who became only the second side to snatch a league win at the 'Theatre of Dreams' this season, where United were presented with the Premier League trophy after the match.

"The lads were magnificent, they

more important than ever to stay in the Premier League, but there's no way I want to be doing the same thing next year."

Christie pounced in the 34th minute, turning away from Ronnie Wallwork before curling an brilliant shot into the top corner.

The youngster was overwhelmed with the result which stunned the home crowd who were expecting a final flourish in United's final home match of the season.

"It's the most brilliant day I've ever known," said Christie. "We came to Old Trafford and we were just not expected to win but we got there because of the great team performance."

United manager Sir Alex Ferguson said the celebratory atmosphere made it difficult for his players to raise their game.

"I thought we were a bit casual in the first half but after Derby scored, and in the second half particularly the urgency was much better.

"At the end of the day I think Derby deserved their victory, and I am pleased for Jim Smith."

Moroccan international

Premiership's top six

After Saturday's matches (played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, goals against, points):							
Manchester United	36	24	8	4	77	26	80
Arsenal	36	20	9	7	61	35	69
Liverpool	36	19	8	9	65	37	65
Leeds United	36	18	8	10	55	41	62
Ipswich Town	36	19	5	12	54	40	62
Chelsea	36	16	9	11	64	42	57

gave it everything," he said proudly.

"It has been difficult but I never lost belief that we could do it. To do it at Old Trafford makes it even more special.

"We have shown this season what we can do against sides like Liverpool and now we have got a result at Manchester United.

"It's an enormous achievement and so important for this club - it's

Mustapha Hadji scored twice in six first-half minutes to give Coventry a 2-0 half-time lead at Villa Park and a fighting chance of survival.

But the visitors capitulated in the second half with second half goals from Darius Vassell, Argentinian Juan Pablo Angel and former England international Paul Merson condemning City to relegation.



PHOTO: AFP

PSV retain Dutch title

AFP, Amsterdam

PSV Eindhoven retained their Dutch league title on Sunday when they beat Heerenveen 3-0 to put them beyond the reach of nearest rivals Feyenoord. It was PSV's 16th league title in their history.

With three games remaining PSV have 74 points, 15 points clear of Feyenoord, who were playing Fortuna Sittard later on Sunday, on 59 points with a game in hand.

Both PSV and Heerenveen started the match carefully. It took until the 33rd minute for PSV to break the deadlock when Heerenveen winger Mika Nurmela lost possession in defence to give Arnold Bruggink space to open the scoring.

In the 66th minute captain Mark van Bommel doubled the score after he was freed on the right and netted via the far post.

Four minutes late the the PSV fans began celebrating in earnest when Dutch leading scorer Mateja Kezman met a Van Bommel cross to score his 23rd goal of the season from close range.

PSV are still hunting a league and cup double. They play Twente Enschede in the Dutch Cup final on May 24.

Scottish Premiership

Rangers in Champions League

AFP, London

Rangers booked their place in the Champions League qualifiers with a comfortable 4-1 win at Hearts on Saturday.

Two goals from man-of-the-match Jorg Albertz and one each from 12-million-pound (17-million-dollar) striker Tore Andre Flo and Rod Wallace clinched the points the former champions required to join champions Celtic in Europe's elite competition next season.

In a fractious match both sides had a man sent off with Rangers captain Barry Ferguson being shown a straight red card for a late tackle on Steven Pressley when the game was only just half an hour old.

Moments after the break Pressley was himself dismissed for two bookable offences.

Albertz fizzed a free-kick in off the far post after 29 minutes to give Rangers the lead before Stephane Adam bundled in an equaliser within two minutes of the re-start for the Edinburgh club.

Wallace restored Rangers' lead when Lorenzo Amoroso's fierce low shot was beaten out by Antti Niemi only as far as the former Leeds hitman who made no mistake from the rebound.

Flo slipped inside a defender to set up Albertz for Rangers' third goal and the German repaid the compliment five minutes from time to set up the former Chelsea for the fourth.

Let off for Suker

AFP, Zagreb

Croatian international striker Davor Suker is not to be prosecuted for failing to perform his military service after Zagreb district attorney's office on Saturday decided not to file charges against him.

The military recruitment authorities in Croatia began an investigation last March into the 33-year-old former Real Madrid and Seville star, who is currently with West Ham in the English Premiership.

Primera Liga

Celta shake leaders

Football

AFP, Madrid

Faltering Spanish league leaders Real Madrid slipped to a surprise 3-0

of Deportivo following their 2-1 win over relegation-threatened Basque outfit Real Sociedad, who were reduced to just nine men in the second half.

Slovenian Zlatko Zahovic gave Valencia a late lead on the 66th



PHOTO: AFP

Real Madrid goalkeeper Iker Casillas gets in a scramble during a Celta Vigo attack at Vigo on May 5.

defeat at sixth-placed Celta Vigo on Saturday night, but remain in control of the *Primera Liga* with a nine-point lead at the top of the table.

After dominating the Spanish league this season Real have suffered a disappointing slump in form recently with a 1-1 draw against Osasuna last weekend followed by Tuesday night's 1-0 Champions League home defeat to Germany's Bayern Munich.

The European Cup holders are still firmly in control with five matches remaining, but could have their lead cut to six points if second-placed reigning champions Deportivo La Coruna, narrow the gap with a win Sunday away at Rayo Vallecano.

A win would have made life easier for Real as the battle for the title heats up, but the visitors were struggling from the outset against the Gallacians with Juan Fran and Gustavo Lopez giving the home side a two-goal lead going into the break and midfielder Jesuli grabbing a last-minute third just before the whistle.

Meanwhile third-placed Champions' League semi-finalists Valencia moved up to within a point

minute, with Real Sociedad grabbing the equaliser through Agustin Aranzabal's 74th-minute penalty. But Hector Cuper's side grabbed their vital three points when midfielder Pablo Aimar found the net on 82.

Cuper decided to rest key defenders Mauricio Pellegrino and Jocelyn Angloma and midfielder Gaizka Mendietta for the crucial Champions League return leg at home next Tuesday against Leeds, opting to use French World Cup winning captain Didier Deschamps in midfield.

Barcelona's new coach Carlos Rexach failed to revive the fortunes of the struggling Catalan outfit after they were held to a 0-0 draw in their derby match played under driving rain at city rivals Espanyol which leaves them stuck in fifth position.

The woes of Barca don't look to be easing as key Brazilian playmaker Rivaldo left the pitch injured in the first half and was replaced by France's Emmanuel Petit.

Primera Liga's top six

After matches played on Saturday (played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, against, points):							
Real Madrid	33	21	6	6	70	36	69
Deportivo	32	18	6	8	61	38	60
Valencia	33	17	8	8	51	26	59
Mallorca	32	15	11	6	46	38	56
Barcelona	33	14	11	8	69	51	53
Celta Vigo	33	14	9	10	47	45	51

Cup honours Lyon's

Football

AFP, Paris

A goal deep into extra-time from Lyon substitute Patrick Muller gave his side a 2-1 French League Cup victory over Monaco at the Stade de France on Saturday, the club's first trophy in 28 years.

The 118th minute winner, coming after some fine play from Lyon captain Sonny Anderson, dealt a withering blow to French champions Monaco's dismal season.

"Monaco had a good match and dominated the second half," Anderson, a former Monaco player, admitted after the match.

"But unhappily for them their can only be one winner," he added.

The match went into extra-time with the scores at 1-1 after Lyon took the lead on 35 minutes with a Claudio Cacapa lob and Monaco drew level on 65 with a Shabani Nonda volley.

In a fast and physical first half AS Monaco took the game to Lyon as dynamic midfielder Ludovic Giuly strove incessantly to supply forwards Marco Simone and Nonda.

After nine minutes Gregory Coupet saved a close-range Nonda effort with his shin and two minutes later he was in action again tipping a 20-yard Simone shot over the bar.

But Lyon broke out of defence to split Monaco's backtracking defence with a one-two between Steve Marlet and Cacapa at the edge of the area on 35 minutes.

The Brazilian defender ran into the area alone and deftly lifted the ball over the advancing Stephane Porato.

Under-threat Monaco coach Claude Puel's half-time pep-talk must have been fairly hot as his struggling champions, eighth in the league and needing victory here for a European spot, came out gunning



Lyon's Anderson and Edmilson with the French Cup.

Bundesliga

It's a two-horse race

Football

AFP, Berlin

Schalke 04 and Bayern Munich are set to fight it out right down to the wire for the 2000/01 German league championship after both clubs won on Saturday to remain level on points with two games to go.

Schalke, lead Bayern on goal difference with the sides neck-and-neck on 59 points while third-placed Dortmund scuppered their title chances with a 0-0 draw against VfB Stuttgart on Friday seeing them drop five points back.

Schalke beat VfL Wolfsburg 2-1 at home and Bayern Munich dealt a withering blow to fourth-placed Leverkusen's title aspirations with a late 1-0 away win. Now only a complete collapse by the top two could give the title to a third outfit.

In the remaining ties Bayern host

Kaiserslautern next week before travelling to SV Hamburg the week after while Schalke face two relegation threatened sides travelling to VfB Stuttgart before hosting Unterhaching.

Bayer Leverkusen can take some comfort despite being six points adrift as they lie in the third European Champions League qualification spot, albeit with Hertha Berlin and Kaiserslautern in the UEFA Cup places still breathing down their necks.

Schalke, who finished 13th last season, took the lead after half an hour when "Great Dane" Ebbe Sand bagged his 21st goal of the season. The Ruhr side then doubled the lead on 34 minutes with a strike from Belgium's Emile Mpenza.

VfL Wolfsburg's Polish international Andrzej Juskowiak gave Schalke a shake when a late rally produced an 89th minute consolation goal that had fans holding their breath as Schalke go for their first title



PHOTO: AFP

Liverpool super striker Michael Owen completes his hat-trick in the 3-0 win against Newcastle in their Premiership encounter on May 5.

Middlesbrough took a step closer to safety with a 1-1 draw at already-relegated Bradford.

A draw means Boro have a five-point lead over Manchester City who must win at Ipswich on Monday if they are to stand any chance of staying in the Premiership.

Second-placed Arsenal, who were knocked out of the Champions League by German champions Bayern Munich at the quarter-final stage, booked their place in next season's competition by beating Leeds 2-1 at Highbury.

Defeat was a blow for Leeds who face Spanish outfit Valencia in next Wednesday's Champions League semi-final, second leg.

David O'Leary's young guns are still looking for a top three place to qualify for Europe's top club competition next year.

O'Leary has urged the Football Association (FA) to investigate video

replays of two controversial incidents involving Martin Keown after his side lost 2-1 in a bruising encounter at Arsenal.

"Some things have happened today that should have been dealt with and weren't. I hope the FA deal with them."

Arsenal coach Arsene Wenger insisted the rivalry between the two clubs has not reached an unhealthy level, despite 40 yellow cards and two reds in the past six encounters.

"You could see there was something at stake for both teams," he said.

"Maybe it was sometimes over-commitment or too many physical challenges but there's no bad feeling on my side towards Leeds."

Liverpool retain third spot after beating Newcastle 3-0 at Anfield thanks to a hat-trick by England striker Michael Owen.

Owen gave the UEFA Cup final-

ists a half-time lead before knocking in his 18th and 19th goals of the season to kill off the visitors in the second period.

Goalscoring machine Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink scored twice in three minutes as Chelsea came from behind to beat Everton 2-1 at Stamford Bridge to keep alive their UEFA Cup hopes.

Leicester avoided a Premiership record ninth defeat on the trot with a 4-2 win at home to Tottenham.

Sunderland are still in with a shout of a UEFA Cup place next season after a 3-2 home win over Charlton.

Southampton, still without a win since Glenn Hoddle's departure, lost 3-0 against West Ham at Upton Park.

Serie A

Red-hot Baggio

Football

AFP, Rome

Roberto Baggio produced another virtuoso display Saturday evening, scoring a hat-trick to lead his club Brescia to a 3-0 victory at Lecce in an Italian First Division match.

The Italian international has almost singlehandedly pulled Brescia clear of the relegation zone with a series of masterful performances in April and he continued that form into May.

Lecce, meanwhile, are back on the fringes of the relegation zone and will be waiting anxiously on the results of the teams below them who all play Sunday.

Baggio, whose recent inspired form caused national team coach Giovanni Trapattoni to say he would consider him for international duty again even at the age of 34, took just four minutes to get off the mark firing home a rebound after Lecce goalkeeper Antonio Chimenti had made a fine save.

He added a second just before the hour mark direct from a corner.

Baggio, dubbed the 'codino divino' (divine ponytail) because of his Buddhist religion and his hairstyle, completed his hat-trick 13 minutes from time from the penalty spot after his team-mate Emanuele



PHOTO: AFP

Leverkusen's custodian Adam Mastyssek has on chance to stop Bayern's Roque Santa Cruz's (not in picture strike on May 5.

since 1958.

Bayern Munich, fresh from their formidable 1-0 away victory at Real Madrid in the Champions League semi-final, seemed to be heading for a goalless draw but bagged their

third consecutive 1-0 win when a header from 19-year-old Paraguayan striker Roque Santa Cruz hit the target with three minutes to go.



ROBERTO BAGGIO