

Serie A Inter in solo lead

Football

AFP, Milan

Inter Milan took sole possession of top spot in the Italian First Division Sunday, a freekick from Grigoris Georgatos giving them a 1-0 victory over Bologna at the San Siro. That result - combined with a 2-0 defeat for Juventus at home to champions AS Roma on Saturday and a 3-1 defeat for AC Milan at Perugia - means the side coached by Argentinian Hector Cuper enjoys a one-point lead at the summit. Inter's closest challengers are surprise packages Chievo. The top-flight newcomers from Verona moved second after winning 2-1 at Udinese, their fourth win in five outings since their historic promotion.

At the San Siro, Inter's Greek full-back Georgatos scored from a first-half freekick which was retaken after encroachment by Bologna players. There were no more goals although Bologna midfielder Fabio Pecchia was dismissed in the closing minutes. Cuper said: "We did not play well but the only thing that matters is the three points and that we are top of the table."

AC Milan were listless at Perugia and they fell for the sucker punch when the Umbrians opened the scoring. Brazilian international Ze Maria's pinpoint cross was headed home by Fabio Bazzani, signed on loan from Venezia on Friday just before the transfer deadline.

AC Milan's Georgian defender Kakha Kaladze equalised but Giovanni Tedesco quickly restored Perugia's lead and Greek forward Zisis Vryzas sealed the points. Perugia coach Serse Cosmi, forced to sell star player Fabio Liverani to Lazio in midweek, said: "We know we are a breeding ground for talent but we managed to let the show go on."

AC Milan's Turkish coach Fatih Terim said: "We gave away some silly goals. We've lost one match, let's stay calm. But we have to give credit to our opponents." Chievo started well at Udinese with Simone Perrotta, who was born



PHOTO: AFP

Inter Milan's Sierra Leone international Mohammed Kallon (R), trying to evade a sliding tackle from Matteo Brighi of Bologna at Milan on September 30.

in England, and Brazilian Eriberto giving them a 2-0 lead. Udinese's Honduran player Jorge Caballero pulled one back for the northerners but Chievo hung on for victory.

Udinese's Chilean star David Pizarro and Roberto Muzzi and Chievo's Maurizio D'Angelo and Fabio Moro were all sent off in a furious finale.

Chievo coach Luigi del Neri said: "All the plaudits we are getting of course make us very happy but we must remember this is still very early in the season."

Florentina got off to a flyer when Enrico Chiesa volleyed them ahead after six minutes against Venezia.

Chiesa's fifth of the season came two days after he agreed to stay with

the cash-strapped Florence club. He was later stretchered off but his Portuguese strike partner Nuno Gomes notched a second.

Filippo Maniero reduced the arrears but a second from Gomes ensured it finished 3-1 to Fiorentina, leaving Venezia still pointless.

Lazio and Parma fought out a 0-0 bore draw at the Olympic Stadium meaning the Roman club are still winless after eight games in all competitions.

Lazio coach Alberto Zaccheroni had no less than seven first-teamers ruled out through injury and he admitted: "I don't like making excuses but you could see we were stretched."

Veteran striker Dario Hubner gave Piacenza an early lead at

home to Torino and veteran Carmine Gautieri doubled that margin.

A deflected freekick from Cristiano Lucarelli reduced the arrears for Torino but after Torino's Stefano Fattore was dismissed Hubner's late penalty ensured it finished 3-1.

Hubner joined Chiesa as the division's top scorer on five goals.

An early Alberto Gilardino goal put Verona in front against Lecce whose Croatian striker Davor Vugrinec restored parity with half-time looping.

Natale Gonnella put Verona back ahead after the restart and it finished 2-1.

The historic grudge match between Brescia and Atalanta was a 3-3 thriller.

Roberto Baggio opened the scoring for Brescia but the visitors from Bergamo hit back with goals from Luigi Sala and Cristiano Doni to take a 2-1 lead against Brescia who had presented new signing and former Barcelona skipper Josep Guardiola before the kick-off.

Striker Gianni Comandini, like Sala bought from AC Milan in the summer, made it 3-1 to Atalanta at the interval.

But Baggio reduced the arrears with his second - the 174th Serie A goal of his career taking him ahead of AS Roma striker Gabriel Batistuta as the top career marksmen still playing in Italy.

Then came the equaliser with Brescia's Alessandro Calori claiming it although Atalanta's Alessandro Rinaldi appeared to get the decisive touch.

Brescia coach Carlo Mazzone was sent off by referee Pierluigi Collina as he celebrated the equaliser in front of the Atalanta fans who had taunted him throughout the match.

Roma's victory against Juventus on Saturday at Turin's Stadio Delle Alpi was fully deserved.

Argentinian Batistuta opened the scoring with a fine freekick after 37th minutes.

The Latin American was later sent off for using his elbow but in injury time Brazilian midfielder Marcos Assuncao secured the points.

Chiesa's season over



ENRICO CHIESA

AFP, FLORENCE

Italian First Division outfit Fiorentina Monday said their star player Enrico Chiesa had undergone a successful operation in Antwerp, Belgium on his injured knee ligaments.

But the club confirmed that 30-year-old Chiesa would not play again this season, seriously endangering his prospects of making the 2002 World Cup squad should Italy as expected make the showpiece.

"The operation was a perfect success," said Fiorentina in a statement.

"Now the player must have a period of rest after which he will begin rehabilitation work."

However team doctor Marcello Manzuoli all but confirmed Chiesa would miss the World Cup.

"It is too early to say how long it will be before he recovers," said Manzuoli.

"But it is clear that Enrico's season is over."

Chiesa, whose 22 goals made him the top scoring Italian in Serie A last season and who is joint leader of this season's standings with five, injured his left knee while shooting during the 3-1 victory over Venezia on Sunday.

French First Division Lille join Lyon, Auxerre at top

AFP, Paris

Lille went joint top in France after they came from behind to earn a 1-1 draw at neighbouring Sedan on Sunday.

Title favourites Lyon had thrashed Rennes 4-0 on Saturday thanks to a fine display from new boy Pegguy Luyindula and, with all three teams on 19 points, they lead Auxerre and Lille on goal difference after nine matches.

Auxerre are also unbeaten after they too came from behind to force a 1-1 draw at fourth-placed Lens, who now have 18 points.

Togoese striker Adebkanmi Olufade levelled for Lille, 12 minutes from time after Philippe Celdran had opened the scores for Sedan 18 minutes into the first half.

In Sunday's late match title pretenders Bordeaux bagged their third win with a 1-0 home victory over Paris Saint Germain, who are struggling to find the back of the net.

Premiership Leeds stay in front

Football

AFP, London

Leeds went to the top of the English Premiership table with a 2-1 win away to Ipswich on Sunday, a result that leaves them three points ahead of Manchester United and Arsenal.

David O'Leary's side were trailing to Marcus Stewart's first-half strike before Robbie Keane equalised in the second-half with a goal created by Australian international Harry Kewell.

Leeds wrapped up the points with a Mark Venus own goal, the second successive occasion in this fixture that he had put through his own net.

"It was a tough game," Republic

be there at the end of the season."

Ipswich have now gone five games without a Premiership win but a defiant Venus said: "If we keep playing like we did today we'll get something."

Both teams came into this match on the back of midweek victories in the UEFA Cup and it was Ipswich who struck first.

Venus' curling cross was difficult to defend and Stewart's 22nd minute glancing header gave Leeds' England goalkeeper Nigel Martyn no chance.

But Ipswich could not get the second goal they needed to make sure of victory and it was no surprise when Leeds eventually levelled.

In the 70th minute Kewell's superb delivery found Keane who at last broke the Ipswich outside trap and he finished expertly.

right behind him.

In other matches, Liverpool striker Robbie Fowler took advantage of a rare start as his club enjoyed a 2-0 victory away to Newcastle.

Although the 26-year-old forward failed to score he set up Danny Murphy for Liverpool's second four minutes from time.

Fowler has been severely criticised by Liverpool boss Gerard Houllier in recent weeks but he responded in style.

"It's nice to get a game - hopefully I'll go on from here," Fowler told Sky Sports.

"I'm the first to admit when I don't have a good game but I felt sharp today - I played my part in a good Liverpool win here."

Murphy added: "We've got a few of our best players missing so we've done very well with a changed side."

"It was a good game. Apart from their slip at West Ham, Newcastle have played well but the lads worked tremendously hard today - but we got the second goal to kill them off."

Liverpool took the lead through John Arne Riise's third-minute strike and then effectively shut out Newcastle before Murphy played a one-two with Fowler and slotted the ball under advancing goalkeeper Shay Given.

Aston Villa bounced back from their UEFA Cup exit to Croatian side Varteks with a 2-0 win against Blackburn that maintained their unbeaten league record.

Second-half goals from Colombian forward Juan Pablo Angel and England Under-21 striker Darus Vassell took the Birmingham club into fourth place in the table.

Lee Hendrie was the creator for both goals although he later said he was "miles away" from agreeing a new contract with the club.

Earlier, at Craven Cottage, Premiership new boys Fulham drew 1-1 with Chelsea in the first West London derby between the two sides for 16 years.

The visitors took the lead through Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink's seventh goal of the season before Fulham striker Barry Hayles levelled the scores in the second half.

Chelsea played the last eight minutes of the match with 10 men after midfielder Slavisa Jokanovic was sent-off for a second bookable offence after throwing the ball away.

Frustrated Chelsea manager Claudio Ranieri had no complaints about the dismissal but admitted his side's lack of concentration was a handicap.

"The referee is always right," said the Italian.

"We don't have good concentration at the moment during the whole game and sometimes it dies."

Fulham, managed by former French international Jean Tigana, now have seven points from seven games but veteran midfielder John Collins saw no reason for panic.

"That's disappointing but we're not going to get too worried," said the former Scottish international.

"It's not as if teams have rolled us over and we've played very poorly, yet we do need to start winning our home games."

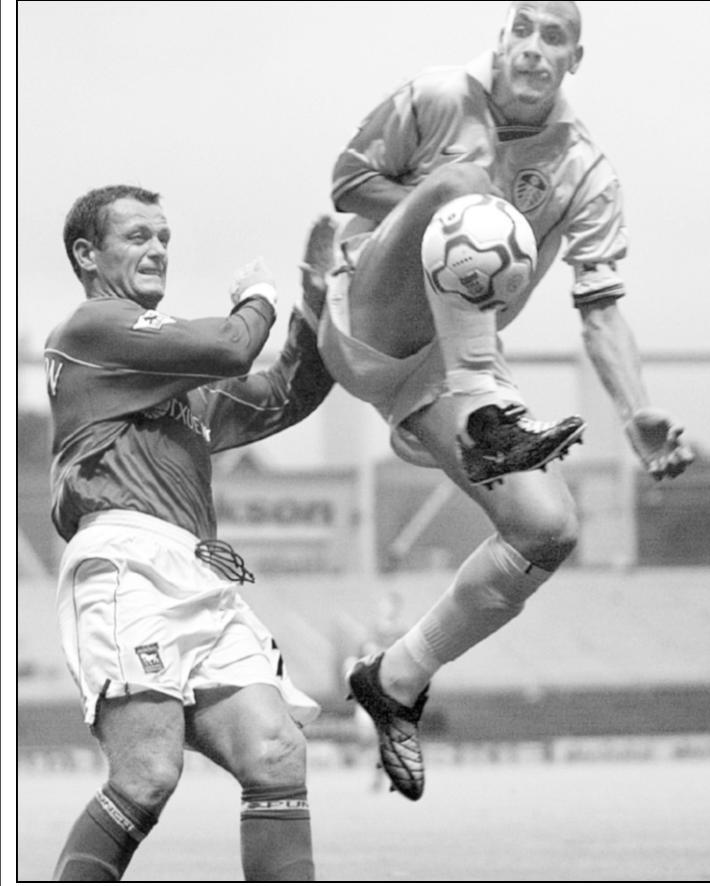


PHOTO: AFP

Leeds United defender Rio Ferdinand (R), makes an airborne clearance under pressure from Ipswich Town's Jim Magilton at Ipswich on September 30.

of Ireland international Keane told Sky Sports.

"Ipswich were the better side. But it was a great comeback and Harry Kewell's pass was tremendous."

He added: "It's nice to be at the top of the table but let's see if we can

Kewell also played a key part in Leeds' second.

Chris Makin's poor defensive header landed in Kewell's path and his centre across the six-yard box was turned into his own net by Venus, who panicked as Leeds forward Mark Viduka was lurking

English Premiership table after Sunday's matches (played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, goals against, points):										
Leeds	7	5	2	0	11	2	17			
Arsenal	7	4	2	1	16	5	14			
Man United	7	4	2	1	22	13	14			
Aston Villa	6	3	3	0	9	3	12			
Bolton	8	3	3	2	10	6	12			
Liverpool	6	4	0	2	10	7	12			

Scottish Premiership Celtic prevail in titans clash

AFP, Glasgow

Scottish Premier League champions and leaders Celtic beat Rangers 2-0 in the first 'Old Firm' derby of the season at Ibrox on Sunday, establishing a seven point lead at the top of the table over their arch Glasgow rivals.

Martin O'Neill's side took the lead through a 14th minute goal from Stilian Petrov that owed much to a dreadful error from Rangers' German goalkeeper Stefan Klos.

Then, after Rangers had been reduced to 10 men following the sending off of Lorenzo Amoroso, Celtic wrapped up the match in injury time through a calm finish from Alan Thompson.

It was the first time Celtic had achieved back-to-back wins at Ibrox since 1983 and this result is bound to increase the pressure on Rangers' Dutch boss Dick Advocaat.

In the day's other Premier League matches, new boys Livingston beat Hibernian 1-0 and leapfrogged their opponents into third place in the table, just two points behind Rangers, while Kilmarnock (fifth) beat second-from-bottom Dunfermline 2-0.

Bundesliga

Brazilians blaze for Bayern

Football

AFP, Berlin

Reigning German and European champions Bayern Munich thrashed VfB Stuttgart 4-0 on Sunday to close the gap on surprise leaders Kaiserslautern who lost their 100 percent record the previous day.

Bayern's Brazilian forward Giovane Elber struck twice in the first 13 minutes before completing his hat-trick in the 61st minute.

His Brazilian teammate Paulo Sergio added the fourth in the final minute against a Stuttgart side weakened when midfielder Silvio Meissner was sent off after just 18 minutes in front of 61,000 fans at Munich's Olympic Stadium.

Bayern's win moved them on to 19 points, two behind Kaiserslautern whose perfect start to the season ended abruptly when they were beaten 2-0 at strugglers VfL Wolfsburg on Saturday.

Bayer Leverkusen, like Bayern also competing in the Champions League, moved into third, one point behind Bayern, after brushing aside SC Freiburg 4-1 at home on Sunday.



PHOTO: AFP

SAMBA TIME: Bayern Munich's Brazilian stars Paulo Sergio (L) and Giovane Elber celebrate a goal against VfB Stuttgart at Munich on September 30.

German league table after Sunday's matches (played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, against, points):										
Kaiserslautern	8	7	0	1	20	9	21			
Bayern	8	6	1	1	16	2	19			
Leverkusen	8	5	3	0	18	8	18			
Dortmund	8	5	1	2	13	5	16			
Schalke 04	8	4	2	2	11	9	14			
VfB Stuttgart	8	3	3	2	8	9	12			

Bayer's German internationals Michael Ballack and Oliver Neuville underlined their goalscoring form going into the crucial 2002 World Cup qualifier against Finland next Saturday.

Midfielder Ballack struck twice, Neuville grabbed another and Turkish international Yildirim Basturk opened the scoring.

Tunisian international Adel Sellimi was Freiburg's scorer.

Kaiserslautern had won their first seven games of the season, equalling a league record, but Wolfsburg's Polish international striker Andrzej Juskowiak opened the scoring in the 14th minute and defender Frank Greiner put the result beyond doubt with the second goal eight minutes from time.

With their first win of the season, Wolfsburg moved off the bottom of the table.

Borussia Dortmund took full points with a hard-fought 2-1 victory at newly-promoted St-Pauli. Brazilian Ewerthon marked his league debut for Dortmund with the first goal and giant Czech striker Jan Koller added a second in the 33rd minute.

Dortmund were cruising until St-Pauli midfielder Thomas Meggle made them sweat with a 77th-minute effort.

Primera Liga Beticis in charge

Football

AFP, Madrid

Real Betis went to the top of the Spanish First Division after their 1-0 win over Las Palmas on Sunday, but their path was eased by Deportivo La Coruna and Celta Vigo fighting out a 2-2 draw.

However, Sunday's soccer was overshadowed by Deportivo's Spanish international Manuel Pablo having his right leg accidentally broken in a tackle by Celta defender Everton Giovanella in the Galician derby.

Newly-promoted Betis notched up their fourth consecutive victory but were made to work hard by a spirited Las Palmas side, who had the better of the first half.

The Seville side only took control after the Canary island club's Gabriel Schurrer headed a miss-hit shot by Gaston Casas into his own net, and both Joaquin Sanchez and Denilson should have added to their tally.

Betis won their one and only league title back in 1935.

Villarreal also have 12 points, the same as Real Betis, but are second on goal difference despite a 1-0 win at Real Mallorca.

Argentine striker Martin Palermo

headed his third goal of the season after 13 minutes to put Villarreal ahead and the club nicknamed the Yellow Submarine, after their shirt colour, floated away with three points comfortably, especially after Mallorca striker Samuel Eto'o was dismissed just before the break.

Deportivo came from two goals down to deny Celta their first victory in seven seasons at the Riazor stadium in a bitterly fought 2-2 draw.

Celta's Manolo Berizzo and Edu had put the visitors by midway through the second half.

However, Juanfran Garcia headed into his own net on 69 minutes and then Deportivo's Walter Pandiani scored from the spot with ten minutes to go, after Berizzo had brought down Lionel Scaloni.

The bitterly fought match - which had 12 yellow cards - was marred by the injury to Manuel Pablo, which will cause concern to Spanish national coach Jose Antonio Camacho as well as his Deportivo counterpart Javier Irureta.

Real Sociedad remain rooted to the bottom of the Spanish First Division, with just one point and one goal to their name, after losing 2-0 at home to Barcelona on Saturday.

The Catalan club's goals came from Patrick Kluivert and Xavi Hernandez.

One place above the struggling Basque club are Rayo Vallecano, who crashed 3-1 away at Espanyol on Saturday and who are also still winless after five games.

The loss was the final straw for Rayo general manager Alvaro Ruiz Mateos, who made Andoni Goikoetxea the first coaching

casualty of the season in the Spanish First Division when he sacked the former Spanish international defender on Sunday.

Real Madrid had to settle for a 2-2 draw with Valladolid on Saturday, and remain ninth in the middle of the table in 12th place.

Spanish First Division table after Sunday's matches (played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, against, points):										
Real Betis	5	4	0	1	10	4	12			
Villarreal	5	4	0	1	7	3	12			
Celta Vigo	5	3	2	0	10	2	11			
Barcelona	5	3	2	0	7	2	11			
Deportivo	5	3	1	1	11	6	10			
Bilbao	5	3	1	1	9	6	10			