

Premiership 10-man Arsenal hold on

Football

AFP, London

Second-placed Arsenal kept hot on the heels of Premiership leaders Manchester United by snatching a 3-2 win at Blackburn on Wednesday despite having Ukraine international Oleg Luzhny sent off.

The win saw Arsenal move to within a point of United with a game in hand while there were also wins for fellow challengers Newcastle, who came from behind to beat Spurs 3-1, and Liverpool, who edged Leicester 1-0 with a rare goal by their opponents former darling Emile Heskey.

Leeds, though, were overwhelmed 2-0 at Chelsea showing that a 10 day rest doesn't always bear out managers moans about playing too many matches in a short space of time and they need to beat Liverpool on Sunday to stay in touch with the leading quartet.

Arsenal were cruising with Dennis Bergkamp and Thierry Henry putting the Gunners 2-0 ahead.

But the Londoners allowed the home side to draw level and then had Luzhny dismissed for two rash challenges as he became the 43rd Arsenal player to see red during manager Arsene Wenger's five-and-a-half-year reign.

Matt Jansen scored twice to put Blackburn level at half-time but Bergkamp had the final say by netting the winning goal 15 minutes from time to leave Blackburn fourth from bottom.

Blackburn boss Graeme Souness was furious that Bergkamp was still on the pitch to score the decisive goal, claiming the Dutchman should have walked for striking Swede Nils-Eric Johansson in the face when the score was 2-2.

"If you smack someone in the mouth you have to go. They bring these rules in and some referees adhere to them and some referees don't," Souness raged.

"There's no way he should have been on the pitch. Normally I would be a bit reticent but I saw it, I saw my

player being smacked in the mouth by Bergkamp and Bergkamp scores the winning goal, so I'm absolutely delighted about that as you can imagine.

"Mr Wenger didn't think he did anything wrong. Maybe in France, football is different."

Wenger insisted he had not seen the Bergkamp incident and that Luzhny should not have been re-carded.

"I think the sending off was not deserved at all. The first booking was quite harsh and with the second, he didn't touch the player at all and the video shows that," Wenger said.

Clarence Acuna, Alan Shearer and Craig Bellamy punished Tottenham's sloppy defence as third-placed Newcastle rallied to win 3-1 in London for the second successive occasion.

Spurs appeared to be coasting after Steffen Iversen slammed home a 16th-minute opener.

But in a remarkable turn-about of events, Spurs went to sleep in the second half and gifted their visitors three goals.

Heskey took out his goal drought frustrations against his former club as fourth-placed Liverpool claimed a vital victory in their bid to stay in the title hunt.

Heskey scored in the second half with a fine chip over Ian Walker after a run from midfield, his first since November and only his second in 35 games for club and country since August.

Chelsea reignited their challenge for Champions League qualification - if not the title itself - with a deserved victory over Leeds.

The Blues, now two points behind David O'Leary's man who

are in fifth position, struck after just 95 seconds through Eidur Gudjohnsen's superb curling shot - a perfect way to celebrate his second child being born on Tuesday.

And the Blues doubled their lead amid controversy just after the half hour when the ball appeared to hit Sam dalla Bona's arm before the young Italian fired home the second.

Ipswich climbed out of the Premiership's bottom three with an invaluable 1-0 win at home to Fulham, their sixth victory in seven matches at Portman Road.

George Burley's side were seemingly down-and-out six weeks ago with just one league win all season.

But 18 points from a possible 21, thanks in no small part to the goals of Marcus Bent, have them better placed to become the first side in 10 years of the Premier League to be bottom at Christmas and survive.

It was Bent's 10th-minute goal - his sixth in six matches since joining from Blackburn - that settled the contest in front of the Suffolk club's best crowd of the season.

Fabrice Fernandes' thunderbolt and Kevin Davies' lucky tap-in upstaged Paolo di Canio as Southampton clinched a 2-0 success against West Ham at St Mary's Stadium.

Di Canio started for West Ham after the collapse of his transfer tug-of-war with Manchester United.

The gifted Italian striker seems destined to stay at Upton Park after United forward Dwight Yorke's move to Middlesbrough, which would have created space for di Canio at Old Trafford, fell through after Boro could not match his wage demands.

Spanish Cup Deportivo scrape through

Football

AFP, Coruna

Deportivo La Coruna proved to be one scalp too far for Third Division Figueras here Wednesday as they drew 1-1 in their Spanish Cup semifinal second leg match but the home side went through 2-1 on aggregate.

Deportivo, who will play either Real Madrid or Athletic Bilbao in the final, took an early lead through Jose Manuel as he rattled home the

ball in the sixth minute following nice work by Brazilian playmaker Djalminha.

Despite cruising for much of the match they were set back on their heels when Figueras, conquerors of among others Catalan giants Barcelona in an earlier round, were awarded a penalty in injury-time.

Piti duly converted it but to Deportivo's relief the referee soon whistled for full time and end Figueras' wonderful adventure was over.

Real host Athletic Bilbao on Thursday trying to overcome a 2-1

Ghana join the party



AFP, Mopti

Ghana produced one of the most extraordinary finishes in the 45-year history of the African Nations Cup on Wednesday to join South Africa in the quarterfinals from Group B.

Two goals in the final minute from Ghana substitute Isaac Boakyee saw the Black Stars steal an amazing 2-1 win over Burkina Faso, a thrillingly ironic finale to a group that had earlier been dubbed the 'Group of Boredom'.

World Cup qualifiers South Africa meanwhile, who had laboured to consecutive 0-0 draws in their opening games, suddenly found their feet in Segou to rout Morocco 3-1 and finish as group winners.

But while South Africa were

romping to victory over the Moroccans, the story of the tournament was unfolding in the dusty Saharan border town of Mopti, 650km from Mali's capital.

Ghana had appeared to be down and out after Burkina Faso went 1-0 up in the 81st minute thanks to a superb curling free-kick from Amadou Toure.

That scoreline - coupled with Morocco's defeat to South Africa - would have seen minnows Burkina Faso scrape into the last eight on goal difference.

However the picture was to change in lightning-quick speed in the final minute at Mopti's newly constructed Barema Bocouma Stadium.

On 89 minutes Boakyee scrambled in his equaliser to leave Burkina Faso shattered, knowing that a 1-1 final score would put Morocco into the quarter-finals ahead of the Stallions.

But Ghana were to have the last word. The ball was swept upfield and Boakyee was in the right place at the right time to smash an improbable winner past Burkina keeper Mohamed Kabore.

Ghana now advance as Group B runners-up to play Nigeria in the last eight, while South Africa play Mali in Sunday's other quarterfinal.

Brazil get ball rolling



AFP, Rio de Janeiro

The samba beat of Brazil gets into its pre-World Cup swing on Thursday with a friendly match at home to Bolivia to kick-off their seven-match World Cup build-up.

The under-pressure, four-time champions have much to prove at the May 31 to June 30 finals in Korea and Japan and this match in Goiania, in the central state of Goias, will no doubt give coach Luiz Felipe Scolari food for thought.

The omission of 1994 World Cup and Brazilian league top scorer Romario, who will be 36 during the finals, has been an

unpopular move and has even begun to wear down the spirit within the squad.

Scolari accepted a request by his own players, irritated by the continued booring of pro-Romario fans, to have training behind closed doors, though he has agreed to have their final practice session open to the public.

Scolari is likely to keep a five-man defence, including two wing backs, and a three-man midfield though he will probably experiment with players yet to make their mark.

In defence, he is set to field Juan, Cris and Anderson Polga in the backline in front of keeper Dida, with wing backs Belletti and Paulo Cesar patrolling the flanks.

Midfield is likely to be an experimental area though Gilberto Silva could be the best option in a more

defensive role, combined with the more attacking-minded Juninho Paulista and Kaka.

Kleberon is another possible in midfield in place of Kaka though his reliability is offset by possessing less pace than Gilberto Silva.

The attack is likely to be unchanged from that which finished the qualifiers - Edilson and Luizao.

Bolivia are set to field a young side with many changes from the team which easily beat Brazil 3-1 during the World Cup qualifiers in November at La Paz.

Coach Carlos Truccho told the press his side were motivated, young and full of determination to do well in this fixture and among the youngsters set to start are 18-year-old striker Jose Alfredo Castillo.

Serie A Chievo add to Lazio woes

Football

AFP, Verona

Cinderella club Chievo defeated Lazio 3-1 to further cement their hold on fourth place in the Italian First Division, a position that would guarantee them Champions League football if they were to hold it at the end of what has proved a fairytale season for the Serie A debutants.

Lazio took an early lead through Claudio Lopez but Chievo brushed aside the Roman side after the interval, prevailing with one goal from Massimo Marazzina and two from Eugenio Corini - his second from a penalty - to end a mini-slump, having lost their two previous matches.

Now the club that has its roots in a tiny hamlet of 2900 people north of Verona lies just seven points behind leaders AS Roma and four points ahead of fifth-placed AC Milan.

But this result will heighten the pressure on Lazio coach Alberto Zaccheroni who this week received the vote of confidence from his board - something that in football often proves to be a harbinger of doom.

It was a lacklustre first-half display at the Stadio Marc'Antonio Bentegodi by a Chievo side that in recent weeks has shown signs of running out of legs after the stunning start to the season that took them to the top of the Italian first division for six weeks before Christmas.

Lazio struck in the seventh minute with a textbook counter-attack. Stefano Fiore was the investigator, playing in Lopez with a

precision pass and the Argentinean drilled the ball through the legs of advancing Chievo goalkeeper Cristiano Lupatelli.

But whatever coach Luigi del Neri said at the interval obviously worked as Chievo hit back in the first minute of the second period.

Corini's cross looped off the leg of Chievo striker Bernardo Corradi into the path of Massimo Marazzina who tapped in for his 11th goal of the season, no mean feat for a striker who had made it clear in the summer that he did not want to move north to Verona and would have preferred to stay at relegated Reggina.

Chievo's Brazilian winger Eribero then had a goal disallowed but 13 minutes from time the 'Flying Donkeys' took the lead with a fine goal started and ended by Corini.

Corini, whose form this season has led some pundits to call for his inclusion in Italy's World Cup squad, fed Eribero on the right and then latched onto the cross, scoring at the second bite of the cherry after his first effort came back off a Lazio defender.

The experienced campaigner then killed the match with his penalty, awarded by referee Pierluigi Collina after a foul by Paolo Negro on Bernardo Corradi.

Premiership's top six

English Premiership table after Wednesday's matches (played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, goals against, points):

Man Utd	25	15	3	7	60	34	48
Arsenal	24	13	8	3	49	29	47
Newcastle		24	14	4	6	45	30
	46						
Liverpool	25	13	7	5	34	24	46
Leeds	24	11	9	4	35	23	42
Chelsea	24	10	10	4	42	23	40

Serie A's top six

Italian league table after Wednesday's match (played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, against, points):

AS Roma	20	12	7	1	31	12	43
Inter Milan	20	12	6	2	36	17	42
Juventus	20	11	7	2	38	15	40
Chievo	20	11	3	6	37	29	36
AC Milan	20	8	8	4	29	22	32
Bologna	20	9	4	7	21	21	31

TV GUIDE

BTV
Morning session
9:10 News Headlines
9:15 Aalor Pothey
9:35 Cartoon picture
10:00 The News
10:05 Exchange of SAARC programme
10:30 Folk song programme
11:00 News Headlines
11:30 Kishalay
11:55 Angana
12:30 Closing
Evening session
3:10 News headlines
3:15 Desher Gaan
3:30 Live telecast of inaugural programme of Ekushey Book Fair
4:00 Khabar
5:00 News Headlines
5:05 Full length Bangla movie
6:00 news Headlines (English)
7:25 Drama serial : Sukher Tori
8:00 News in Bangla
8:25 Ekush Amar Ahankar
8:40 Drama serial
9:00 News Headlines
9:05 magazine programme
10:00 News in English
10:25 Movie
11:20 World Music Album
11:30 khabar/The News
11:45 Closing
EKUSHEY TV
2:00pm Ekushey Headlines
2:05 Ajker Potrikey
2:15 Bangla Film: Tumi Amar Bhalobasha
3:00 Ekushey Headlines
3:05 Bangla Film: Tumi Amar Bhalobasha
5:30 Gillette Sports
6:00 Ekushey Headlines
6:05 WWF Smackdown
6:55 Ekushey Headlines
7:00 Mukto Khobor
7:30 Ekushey News
7:58 Ek Minute
8:00 Annonodo
9:00 Ekushey News (English)
9:05 Shukrobarer Natk: Goyla
10:00 News : Simulcast from BTV
10:30 Sanai of Bismillaha Khan
11:00 Ekushey Late Night News
11:30 Ei Shoptaho
12:00 Ekushey Headlines

ATN
6:00am Islamic prog:
7:30 Islamic prog: Sundor Jeebaner Jannee
7:35 Musical prog : Protibha
8:00 ATN Bangla News
8:25 Musical prog. Gan Sudu Gan
9:00 Drama serial: Jeyo Na Fere
9:35 Talk Show: Samokalin Prosongo
10:10 Reporting prog: Prekha Pot
10:50 Bengali feature film: Nuri
12:00pm ATN Bangla News
6:07 Children Cholo Gan Gai
6:45 Motamot
7:00 ATN Bangla Evening News
7:35 Musical prog Meril Tumar Janne
8:10 Film Songs Prog: Gan
8:45 Manazine prog Muktokatha
9:20 Drama Serial Goenda Kaheni
10:00 ATN Bangla News
10:35 Bengali Feature Film: Bhat Day
11:30 ATN Bangla News
BBC WORLD
6:00am BBC News
6:30 World Business Report
7:00 BBC News
7:30 Talking Movies
8:00 BBC News

8:30 Money Prog
9:00 BBC News
9:30 Asia Today
10:00 BBC News
10:30 Question Time Time
11:00 World Business Report
11:30 The Car's The Star ex Top Gear
12:00pm BBC News
12:30 World Business Report
1:00 BBC News
1:30 Hardtalk
2:00 BBC News
2:30 Rough Science
3:00 BBC News
3:30 World Business Report
4:00 BBC News
4:30 Correspondent
5:00 BBC News
5:30 World Business Report/Asia Today
STAR GOLD
7:00am Ankhen (Dharmendra, Mala Sinha)
10:30 Bollywood News
11:00 Geet Bahar
11:30pm Nastik (Ajit, Nalini Jaywant)
3:00 Bollywood News
3:30 Dekh Kabira Roya (Anita Guha, Daljit)
7:00 Geet Bahar
7:30 Shaandaar Shukrawaar Bachpan (Sanjeev Kumar, Tanuja)
11:00 Bollywood News
11:30 Himalaya Super Action Filmein
2:30 Happy Days

TODAY'S HIGHLIGHTS
EKUSHEY : 9:05 p.m. Friday drama Gaila.
Kanu Ghosh never adulterates his products just because it is his paternal occupation. Since he can not deceive people he harvests less profits. As a result financial constraints persist in the family. While Kanu's daughter supports him, his son can not accept his occupation.
EKUSHEY : 11:30 p.m. Ei Saptah. To be presented by Samia Rahman, this report based programme features important events at home and abroad that took place throughout the week.
HBO: 12:15 am. Forbidden Sins. When a stripper is murdered in an apparent crime of passion, all evidence seems to point to her lover and employer, David Mulholland. Already a suspect for a previous murder, Mulholland is an easy target for detective John Doherty, the cop assigned to the case.

PICK OF THE DAY
The Fury Within
On HBO at 8:00pm
The Hanlons are not happy. In fact, read that as terrified. They appear to be disturbed by the power of some supernatural subconscious that wrecks havoc on the entire family. They come face to face with an angry Rottweiler, flying knives, books speeding through the air, and graffiti on garage doors. And in case you are thinking demonic possession, well rethink that. This is a story that plays on the possibilities and what could very well happen to you and your family. Be afraid.

Hukumat (Dharmendra)
12:30 Hukumat (Dharmendra) (cont)
3:00 Geet Bahar
3:30 Dekh Kabira Roya (Anita Guha, Daljit)
3:00 Baywatch
4:00 The Simpsons
4:30 3rd Rock From The Sun
5:00 Star News Asia
5:30 Friends
6:00 Worlds Wildest Police Videos
6:55 Asianews Update
7:00 Nash Bridges
8:00 Bugs
9:00 Friends
ESPN
6:00 Nba Basketball Cleveland, OH USA Washington Wizards @ Cleveland Cavaliers
8:30 World Cup Mix
9:00 X-Games 2001 Asian X Tour Presented By Toyota Review
10:00 Bloopers
10:30 Australia Cricket Vb Series Melbourne, Australia New Zealand @ Australia 10th Odi, Highlights
11:42 Australia Cricket Vb Series Perth, Australia New Zealand @ South Africa 11th Odi, 1st Session
3:15 World Cup Mix
3:45 Australia Cricket Vb Series Perth, Australia New Zealand @ South Africa 11th Odi, 1st Session
5:00 Racehorse Digest
5:30 Here We Go
STAR SPORTS
6:30 Pakistan Cricket Pepsi Cup Home Series 2001/2002 Sharjah, UAE West Indies @ Pakistan 1st Test Day I
Singapore Semifinals & Finals
7:30 Here We Go
8:30 Sportscenter Hindi
9:00 Here We Go!
9:30 Nba Action
10:00 Australia Cricket Vb Series Perth, Australia New Zealand @ South Africa 11th Odi Highlights
11:30 Sportscenter Hindi
12:00 Nba Basketball Cleveland, OH USA Washington Wizards @ Cleveland Cavaliers
2:00 Sportscenter Hindi
3:00 Atlantic Coast Conference Basketball Charlottesville, VA USA Maryland @ Virginia
5:00 Racehorse Digest
5:30 Here We Go
8:00 Sportsline Today
8:00 Heineken Classic Golf 2002 Melbourne, Victoria, Australia Day Two
12:00 Pakistan Cricket Pepsi Cup Home Series 2001/2002 Sharjah, UAE West Indies @ Pakistan 1st Test, Day 2, 1st Session
2:30 Sportsline Today
3:00 Inside The Pga Tour
3:30 Pakistan Cricket Pepsi Cup Home Series 2001/2002 Sharjah, UAE West Indies @ Pakistan 1st Test, Day 2, 2nd & 3rd Session
7:30 Sailing Volvo Ocean Race
8:00 Sportsline Tonight
8:30 Here We Go!
9:00 Football Asia
9:30 South Africa Cricket South Africa, England, Zimbabwe Tri Series

9:30 World Wildest Police Videos
10:30 Nash Bridges
11:30 Bugs
12:30 World Wildest Police Videos
1:30 Nash Bridges
2:30 It's Supernatural
3:00 Morris Cerullo
3:30 Exalted Word
4:00 Creflo Dollar
4:30 World News
5:00 Mission Impossible
STAR PLUS
6:00 Sanskruti
6:30 Geet Bahar
7:30 Hum Saath Aath Hain
8:00 Aatma
9:00 Hit Filmein Hit Sangeet
9:30 Fox Kids Daily
10:30 Small Wonder

11:00 Pal Chhin
11:30 Saahil
12:00 Shanti
12:30 Hit Filmein Hit Sangeet
1:00 Hum Saath Aath Hain
1:30 Jannat
2:30 Star Bestseller- Uncha Kaun
3:30 Kashmirkash
4:00 Kabhi Sauten Kabhi Saheli
4:30 Kalash
5:00 Meri Saheli
5:30 Hit Filmein Hit Sangeet
6:00 Small Wonder
6:30 Fox Kids
7:10 Aaj Ki Baat
7:30 Gharwali Uparwali
8:00 Hum Saath Aath Hain
8:30 Kya Masti Kya Khuum
9:30 Khulija Sim Sim
10:30 Ssshhh... Koi Hai
11:30 Kahani Jurm Ki
12:00 Aaj Ki Baat
12:30 Gharwali Uparwali
1:00 Chalti Ka Naam Antakshri
2:00 Jubilee Plus
2:30 Amul Best of Surabhi
3:00 Family Fortunes
3:30 Eena Meena Deeka
4:00 Tu Tu Main Main
4:30 Kahani Jurm Ki
5:00 Sonpari
5:30 Star Bestsellers
HBO
6:30 The Third Miracle
9:00 Killers in the House
10:45 Every Breath
12:30 The First Wives Club
2:30 Facing The Enemy
4:30 Dying to Live

6:15 Nadine
8:00 The Fury Within
10:00 The Relic
12:15 Forbidden Sins
1:45 The First Wives Club
3:45 Bugs
STAR MOVIES
10:45 Return of the Jedi
1:00 Rough Air
2:30 Mission To Mars
4:30 Of Mice And Men
6:30 Instinct
8:30 Benny and Joon
10:15 Crush, The
14:00 Cover Me
1:45 Rough Air
3:30 Big Bully
5:00 Mission to Mars
7:00 Hostile Hostages
8:45 Robin Hood Prince of Thieves
HALLMARK
12:00pm The Mysterious Death of Nina Chereau
2:00 Katts and Dog
3:00 The Mysterious Death of Nina Chereau
5:00 Sesame Street
6:00 Something So Right
8:00 Sanctuary
10:00 The Young Riders
11:00 A Town Torn Apart
1:00pm Sliders
2:00 Sesame Street
3:00 Scholastic Clifford
3:30 Caillou
4:00 The Young Riders
5:00 Star Trek: Voyager
6:00 Sliders
7:00 Royal Scandal
9:00 Star Trek: Voyager
10:00 3 A M