Quarterfinal 2nd leg

# Barca, Bayer hope for a reversal



German league leaders Bayer Leverkusen on Tuesday stand in Liverpool's path to the semi-finals of the European Champions League where a possible clash with Manchester United awaits.

Leverkusen face the same task in their BavArena as Spanish giants Barcelona will in the Nou Camp where they seek to overturn a surprising 1-0 first-leg defeat against Greek side Panathinaikos.

The incentive for Liverpool players is enormous - a semi-final clash with old rivals United, providing Alex Ferguson's team preserve their 2-0 first-leg lead against Deportivo La Coruna at Old Trafford on Wednesday.

And if Barcelona win on Tuesday and Real Madrid manage to overcome Bayern Munich on Wednesday, then the Spanish giants will battle it out for the other spot in the final to be played at Hampden Park, Glasgow, on May

### Pakistan, India friends in South

AFP, Karachi

Africa!

A long-awaited revival in sporting links between Pakistan and India will kick off in South Africa next month with a two-match football series, an official said Monday.

Pakistan Football Federation secretary Agha Liaquat Ali told AFP the matches would be held at Durban on May 12 and 17.

The fixtures are the first major sporting encounter between the South Asian nuclear rivals since they clashed in the President Gold Cup hockey final in Dhaka, Bangladesh, in March last year.

"We had hopes that football will break the ice since the sponsors were keen to arrange a football series and, since there are many Pakistani and Indian expats in Durban, the matches will attract large crowds," Ali said.

India cut off sporting relations with Pakistan after the Kashmir conflict in 1999 but took a step towards restoring ties when it sent its Olympic Association President Suresh Kalmadi to Islamabad for discussions last month.

Cricket, the national game in both India and Pakistan, has been badly hit with the two countries not meeting on a cricket field since an Asian Cup league game in Dhaka almost two years ago.

However, Pakistan's Under-19 team beat India in the ICC Junior World Cup in New Zealand in February this year.

India stunned the United Arab Emirates 1-0 in a football World Cup qualifying match. The Indians finished third in Group Eight and failed to qualify for this summer's

LEVERKUSEN v LIVERPOO Liverpool will again be boosted by their coach Gerard Houllier as the Frenchman travels abroad for the

first time since undergoing emergency heart surgery in October. Houllier is in fighting mood, laughing off criticism from figures including German legend Franz Beckenbauer that Liverpool's 1-0 first-leg victory at Anfield was bor-

"I'll tell you what is pretty," said Houllier. "Winning is pretty. We're in a hurry and sometimes we do not play so well. But, hell, we've got

mething about us. "I have told my players they must be doing something right because they are annoying people with their success," he told the Liverpool

Leverkusen coach Klaus Toppmoller can count on his side's formidable record at the compact BavArena, where they have beaten Deportivo, Juventus and Barcelona in the Champions League this

dence after staying on track for their first ever Bundesliga title with a 2-0 home victory over Cologne on Saturday.

Toppmoller believes his hardworking side can spoil English

Houllier said England striker Michael Owen, who was disappointing in the first leg, should be fit as Liverpool had no league fixture at

Leverkusen welcome back German international defender and their captain Jens Nowotny, who was suspended for the first leg, and experienced midfielder Michael Ballack, another player heading for World Cup duty with Germany in South Korea and Japan, will drive his side from midfield.

BARCELONA V PANATHINAIKOS

Barcelona substituted inspirational Brazilian midfielder Rivaldo in their 2-0 win over Athletic Bilbao on Saturday as he was suffering leg pains but he is expected to play against Panathinaikos on Tuesday.

Argentinian Javier Saviola could start the match after bagging both goals on Saturday, but Barcelona captain Carles Puyol is uncertain after injuring a calf muscle.

Panathinaikos coach Sergio Marcarian has appealed to FIFA to allow him to sit on the bench as he has been banned for pushing the referee in a league match against Olympiakos last month. If not, he will communicate with his coaches by mobile telephone. Marcarian insisted his side could spring a huge surprise despite the threat posed by Barcelona's deadly Dutch striker Patrick Kluivert

"We will play tight. We cannot do otherwise. Our opponents have very good strikers and when they have room they are unstoppable," said Marcarian.

He added: "Panathinaikos know how to react under pressure, just as we know how to apply pressure."

The Greeks are waiting on striker

Nikos Liberopoulos and Croatian midfielder Daniel Saric, who are suffering from viruses.

### Serie A

# **Atalanta hurt Inter**

Football

AFP, Rome

Inter Milan's dreams of lifting a first Italian championship crown since 1989 suffered a major setback on Sunday when they went down to a 2-1 defeat at the hands of Atalanta. The result completed a miserable

week for Hector Cuper's team after they had lost 1-0 to Feyenoord in the first leg of the UEFA Cup semi-finals on Thursday. However. Inter remain two points clear at the top with four games to play after closest rivals and defend-

ing champions Roma could only draw 2-2 with bottom side Venezia. Luigi Sala headed Atalanta into the lead on the stroke of half-time after getting on the end of a cross from Damiano Zenoni before Italian international Christian Vieri, who

was rested for the UEFA Cup tie,

equalised two minutes into the

second period.

It was Vieri's 21st goal of the campaign but it proved to be in vain as Daniele Berretta stepped up to fire in the 62nd minute winner.

It was his first goal for the club and came after a mistake by Inter keeper Francesco Toldo.

The goal stunned the 40,000 crowd at the San Siro and they were left even more perplexed by the decision of Cuper to keep Brazilian ace Ronaldo on the bench throughout the afternoon.

Meanwhile. Roma were indebted



to Vincenzo Montella for saving their

blushes at Venezia who have

the last three minutes to give Roma

a point and keep them two points

Roma had gone into the game full

confidence having defeated

Inter have 62 points from 30

Juventus were the big winners of the day beating Perugia 4-0 to move on to 59 points, three behind the

Alessandro del Piero scored

French star David Trezeguet had

In the late match on Sunday, Lazio kept alive their slim hopes of playing in the UEFA Cup next sea-

son with a 1-0 win over Lecce at the

Stefano Fiore scored the only of the game in the 68th minute.

On Saturday, Bologna consoli-

Alessio Scarchilli gave the Turin

side a 20th minute lead before Julio

Ricardo Cruz equalised six minutes

dated their fourth place, although ten

points behind third placed Juventus.

twice from the penalty spot in the 45th minute and in the 62nd minute.

opened the scoring after nine min-

utes with Cristian Zenoni adding to

the total in the 57th minute.

with a 1-1 draw at Torino.

into the second half.

Olympic Stadium.

matches and Roma have 60 from

the same number of games.

Bologna 3-1 last week but they were stunned when they fell 2-0 down through goals by Filippo Maniero and Ivone De Franceschi after 62

Montella scored two penalties in

already been relegated

behind Inter.

and 80 minutes.

# Serie A's top six

Standings in the Italian league after Sunday's late match (played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, goals against, points)

ı								
	Inter Milan	30	18	8	4	53	27	62
	AS Roma	30	16	12	2	49	23	60
	Juventus	30	16	11	3	55	23	59
	Bologna	30	14	7	9	37	34	49
	AC Milan	30	12	12	6	42	31	48
	Chievo	30	12	11	7	50	42	47
ı								

# **CUP CORNER**



Nigerian fans have been slow in snapping up tickets for the country's first

SPÖRT

round matches at the May 31 to June 30 World Cup, football officials said "Our ticket sales have been in trickles. We have over 8,000 tickets to

sell for Nigeria's first round matches in Japan but so far we have only sold less than 200," said Nigeria Football Association (NFA) head of market-

"Many reasons could be responsible for this poor response - in the first place we only started selling last month after the new management "And when you consider that the cheapest ticket is as much as the

minimum pay in the country and that you need to spend much more for your transportation and boarding in Japan, you will understand why we have not exactly been bombarded with enquiries for tickets," he added. Nigeria are drawn in the so-called Group of Death along with tourna-

ment favourites Argentina, England and Sweden in the first round of the

The official said the NFA has been permitted by FIFA to sell some of the match tickets to the residents of Hiratsuka City, where Nigeria will train ahead of the soccer finals kicking off on May 31 "Hiratsuka has adopted Nigeria for the World Cup and so we expect

the people there will be only too happy to buy tickets for our matches," he He said Nigerian residents overseas, particularly in Britain, will also be targeted in an effort to sell more World Cup match tickets.

#### **VOLLER UNSURE ABOUT LINEUP!**

The World Cup is to start in Japan and South Korea in less than two months but German national team manager Rudi Voller has serious hardships with defining his line-up as many of his players suffer from injuries. For instance, Alexander Zickler underwent an operation and is out of action for three months. Hertha Berlin's Sebastian Deisler also can miss World Cup line-up as he is again injured after being out for five

"It is senseless to take injured players to the Word Cup tournament," said Franz Beckenbauer to DPA information agency, "They can hardly make up their experience in the course of the championship.

Some of key players of German clubs are also injured. Among these Mehmet Scholl and Carsten Jancker (Bayern Munich), Marko Rehmer (Hertha Berlin), Gerald Asamoah (Shalke 04), Marko Bode (Werder) and probably will miss Germany's friendly against Argentina on April 17. The complete German line-up must be presented to FIFA on the May 21 at the

#### KIRCH, FIFA MOVE TO PROTECT WC TV

The ailing German media group Kirch moved on Monday to protect live television broadcasts from the 2002 football World Cup by transferring all its holdings in the World Cup television rights to a Swiss-based company, FIFA said. "It means we will be able to ensure that all broadcast operations regarding 2002 will take place as planned," Andreas Herren, a spokesman for world football's governing body, told AFP.

FIFA hopes that by moving Kirch's holding companies for the 2002 and 2006 World Cup television rights to Switzerland, the FIFA-related side of the media giant's business will avoid insolvency proceedings officially filed in Germany on Monday

"As part of these precautions, the FIFA-related assets as well as the implementation and operational management of the World Cup broadcast rights have been combined in a group of companies now falling under KirchSport AG, which is headquartered in Zug, Switzerland,"

The Swiss-based company was already involved in running only the sales side of Kirch Group's holding in the World Cup television rights, but under the new deal it becomes the parent company

Kirch stepped in to acquire the lucrative World Cup rights last year after FIFA's former media partners, the ISL/ISMM group, ran into finan-

"My understanding is that it is a restructuring that has been made by Kirch media with the full support of FIFA," Herren said of the latest opera-

tion.
"It is preferable to an insolvency and termination of contract," he

FIFA had already received a 1.2 billion Swiss franc payment for the 2002 World Cup rights from Kirch in January. Herren said the remaining 100 million Swiss francs, which is due to be

paid by the German media giant within 20 days of the end of the World Cup, was covered by "an irrevocable" bank guarantee. "For sure we will receive the money once the World Cup has taken

Although most of the payments were made, the latest deal is meant to

ward off any potential trouble with live television screening of the 2002 World Cup in Korea and Japan, which is due to kick off on May 31. One of the subsidiaries placed under the Swiss-based company is

Host Broadcast Services (HBS), which is in charge of the technical side of World Cup TV tranmissions. KirchMedia's three main holding companies for the World Cup rights.

which were previously based in Germany, now become fully controlled subsidiaries of the Swiss-based KirchSportAG, according to FIFA. FIFA hopes the deal will carry on after 2002 and the same structure will handle, as previously arranged with Kirch, the broadcast rights for

"This solution is to be used for the 2002 World Cup and beyond, but at the moment obviously more than that can't be said because you have to

assess the situation on an ongoing basis," he said. FIFA president Sepp Blatter welcomed the arrangement on Monday. "We have been closely monitoring the recent developments regarding the KirchGroup and implemented the appropriate measures in order to ensure the smooth organisation of the television operations of the 2002

Kirch's financial troubles comes in the middle of Blatter's re-election campaign as FIFA president and the deal avoids the potential embarrass-

ment of a costly second collapse of a FIFA TV marketing partner during Kirch's predecessor, ISMM and its subsidiary ISL Worldwide were

ordered into liquidation by a Swiss court in April last year ISMM had the marketing rights for the 2002 and 2006 World Cup finals

and ISL held the television rights to the two events for all countries out-

The worldwide television rights were taken over by Kirch, which already held the rights for World Cup broadcasts in Europe, in May 2001.

# Premiership Leeds do the



Football

AFP, London

Leeds improved their chances of a top-four finish and a place in next season's Champions League with a 2-0 win over struggling Sunderland at Elland Road on Sunday.

A bizarre own goal from Jody Craddock gave Leeds an early lead and after Cameroon striker Patrick Mboma missed a golden opportunity to level the scores, substitute Robbie Keane killed off the visitors with a late strike.

The goal ended the Republic of reland international's four-month goal drought.

Leeds remain sixth in the table but are now just three points behind fourth-placed Newcastle who play

Fulham on Monday. Sunderland, with just nine goals from 16 league matches away from home, stay sixth from bottom, five

points clear of the relegation zone. Man-of-the-match Lee Bowyer feels he is recovering his form after an indifferent last few months for

"The manager said I went

required

roasted Sunderland defender Darren Williams wide on the right wing and spotted strike partner Mark Viduka lurking in Sunderland's penalty box. Smith crossed but before his

Leeds' young forward Alan Smith

delivery found the Australian international, Sunderland central defender Jody Craddock stuck out a foot and diverted the ball over Thomas Sorensen's head and into the back of the net.

Robbie Fowler almost doubled Leeds' advantage in the 25th minute but the former Liverpool striker's outsretched leg failed to connect with Bowyer's angled pass with the goal gaping and Sorensen

Kevin Phillips went close on the half hour mark in one of the visitors' rare attacks, his crisp volley squirming wide of Nigel Martyn's right-hand

Reid was forced into a substitution at half-time with Mboma replacing the injured Phillips

Keane replaced Fowler just after the hour, before Bowyer let fly with a screamer from 22 yards which whistled narrowly over Sorensen's



Robbie Keane (C) of Leeds being marked by Sunderland's David Bellion (L) and George McCartney at Leeds' Elland Road stadium on April 7.

through a bad patch, but I've had a long break (because of suspension) and there's four games now until the end of the season and hopefully I can keep improving," he told Sky Sports

Goalscorer Keane was delighted

to get on the scoresheet after a miserable spell in front of goal. "Obviously it was nice to get the

second goal. It was a good team performance and that's all credit to the lads," he said.

"We just have to keep doing what we're doing and hopefully we can keep up with the teams above us."

eighth minute lead

Sunderland, still not assured of their Premiership status next season, gifted David O'Leary's men an

have equalised nine minutes from Niall Quinn flicked on a Kevin Kilbane cross into the path of

Despite enjoying the majority of

possession, Sunderland should

took take him away from his marker. he drove a rising 12-yard shot over the crossbar. It proved costly as Leeds

Mboma and after a neat first touch

grabbed their second two minutes

Viduka's clever play provided Keane with the chance to steer the ball past Sorensen for his first Premiership goal since September

## Premiership's top six

English Premiership table after Sunday's match between Leeds and Sunderland (played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, goals against, points)

- 11								
	Arsenal	33	21	9	3	68	33	72
	Man Utd	34	22	4	8	83	44	70
	Liverpool	33	20	8	5	55	26	68
	Chelsea	34	16	12	6	63	32	60
	Newcastle	32	18	6	8	61	43	60
	Leeds	34	15	12	7	50	36	57

## Primera Liga

# Valencia keep pace with Real



AFP, Madrid

Valencia ensured the Spanish title race stays close as they thrashed Real Sociedad 4-0 on Sunday to put themselves back on the same number of points as Real Madrid.

Ruben Baraia. Kilv Gonzalez Miguel Angel Angulo and Mista each scored past former Liverpool goalkeeper Sander Westerveld at the Mestalla stadium.

Real Madrid are still top with a superior goal difference after defeating city rivals Rayo Vallecano 3-1 on Saturday as Portuguese international Luis Figo made a goalscoring return from injury



Valencia's Ruben Baraja (R) and Inigo Idiakez of Real Sociedad in scarmble at the Mestalla stadium in Valencia on April 7.

## Bundesliga's top six

er Leverkusen	30	20	5	5	73	33	65
ussia Dortmund	30	18	7	5	54	27	61
nalke 04	30	17	7	6	49	28	58
ern Munich	30	16	8	6	56	22	56
rtha Berlin	30	16	7	7	57	33	55
serslautern	30	15	5	10	53	46	50

German league standings after Sunday's matches (played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, goals against, points):

#### Weah boost for Blatter **Football** occupied world football's top post Blatter is the best man for the job,' Weah said.



AFP, Dubai

George Weah, the first African to win the World player of the year award in 1995, on Monday threw his

weight behind incumbent president Sepp Blatter's bid to land another four-year term at FIFA's helm. Weah, who plays for Abu Dhabibased Al-Jazirah, said Blatter had

been a "true friend to football and Africa during his four years at FIFA's helm.' "I wholeheartedly support him for a second term," the 36-year-old

Liberian told a press conference

organised by one of Blatter's aides,

Emmanuel Maradas. "I think FIFA should give him the mandate he needs to finish the excellent work he has begun in his since 1998, faces a challenge for the FIFA presidency from African Football Confederation (CAF) UEFA president Lennart president Issa Hayatou of The election by 204 FIFA mem-

bers is due to take place in Seoul on May 29, just two days before the opening match of the World Cup Weah was damning of Hayatou's credentials: "We have all seen what

has failed in the development of football. It would be a big mistake" were he elected. "He is not capable and is acting only for personal interests, not in the interests of Africa or the sporting

"I know that people may find it

strange that I am backing a

European candidate against an

he's not done for African soccer. He

Johannson, who was Blatter's bitter rival in 1998, the powerful South Korean FIFA vice-president Chung Mong-Joon and the Council of East and Central Africa Football

Associations (CECAFA). CECAFA's president, Somalia's Farah Addo, who recently alleged that corrupt deals had been struck during the 1998 FIFA elections won by Blatter, said last month the body guaranteed all 11 members would vote for Havatou.

Hayatou has won the support of

Weah arrived in the United Arab Emirates after a career that saw him play at Monaco, Paris Saint Germain, Marseille, Italian giants AC Milan, and English sides Chelsea and Manchester City.