

Semifinal 2nd leg BAYER LEVERKUSEN v MANCHESTER UNITED

Still everything to play for



AFP, London

Alex Ferguson plans to make Bayer Leverkusen pay for their premature celebrations as Manchester United aim to defy the odds and clinch a place in the Champions League final on Tuesday.

The United manager believes Leverkusen may be overly confident, judging by their reactions after their 2-2 draw at Old Trafford last Wednesday.

The Leverkusen players hugged each other and went over to celebrate with their fans as if they had won the final itself, rather than just drawn the first-leg of the semi-final.

"They were celebrating at the end of the first game and that gives you a little bit of hope," Ferguson said. "Because it's my belief in life that you don't take things for granted."

"Everyone saw that and I think they may be in for a fright themselves come Tuesday."

Ferguson is confident his team will score in Germany to keep alive their hopes of qualifying for their

second Champions League final in four seasons.

United have netted in their last nine away games in Europe and the Scotsman believes his side will find the target at the BayArena, where Liverpool, Barcelona, Juventus and Deportivo La Coruna have all been beaten this season.

"Away from home this season we have been terrific in European games," Ferguson added. "We're talking about one game of football and Manchester United are definitely capable of doing that."

"Away goals count, they really do. It does have an impact when you score and we will score over there."

"We have to do it the hard way, which I suppose is the Manchester way, but it's the semi-final and we're only one kick away from the final."

"We will play better on Tuesday and I think we have a smashing chance."

Ferguson hopes to cash in on Leverkusen's misery after the Germans conceded first place in the Bundesliga to Borussia Dortmund with just one league game to go.

The defeat of Leverkusen and Dortmund's away victory threw the

German league title race wide open, setting up a nail-biting final weekend title-decider.

The championship has swung Dortmund's way after Leverkusen, who have never won the title in their 98-year history, fell 1-0 at Nuremberg and Dortmund had a 4-3 victory at SV Hamburg.

Dortmund top the table with 67 points, one ahead of Leverkusen.

Leverkusen coach Klaus Topmoller said the best way for his players to respond to Saturday's crushing defeat was to beat United and book their place in the final.

"We've got to bounce back. We don't want to fall down a hole on Tuesday night against United," he said.

Michael Ballack has a minor foot injury after blocking a shot against Nuremberg but is not believed to be serious.

Jens Nowotny also has a back problem but is expected to be fit.

The German international, who will have his hands full marking Ruud van Nistelrooy on Tuesday night, insisted Leverkusen can recover from Saturday's bitter blow by toppling the 1999 European champions.

"We've great hopes for the

second leg. Anything is possible for us now," Nowotny said.

Manchester United talisman Roy Keane is expected to start after suffering no reaction to his hamstring in Saturday's 1-0 Premiership win at Ipswich.

Keane, who returned from injury after three weeks out was outstanding in a victory which ensured second-placed United kept the pressure on Premiership leaders and title favourites Arsenal.

Ferguson paid tribute to Keane for his amazing powers of recovery, assisted by time spent in an oxygen tent.

"It's remarkable that Roy is back for us in three weeks. It was a tear in his hamstring and we all thought that was the finish of him for this season," Ferguson said.

"But Roy has been flying in training and working like a beast. His recovery has been helped by oxidation treatment, in which he places himself in a cylinder for four-and-a-half hours a day."

"He did that in separate 90-minute sessions for three consecutive days before having a week's break, then going through it again."

Roman goodbye for Aldair

AFP, Rome

AS Roma's Brazilian defender Aldair on Sunday was given a rousing send-off by supporters after what is probably his last home match in a 12-year spell with the Italian champions - but claimed he was still hopeful of staying on.

Aldair, 36, was given a standing ovation by 'Romanistas' on a lap of honour after Sunday's 5-0 thrashing of Chievo.

The player dubbed 'Pluto' by the



ALDAIR

Roma fans was clearly moved by the reception but afterwards he made it clear he was still unhappy to have learned from a journalist that Roma president Franco Sensi had said on radio that Aldair would be leaving the club in the summer.

"It was not Aldair who decided to go," said the veteran of Brazil's 1994 World Cup winning team. "It was Roma who decided they wanted to make changes."

"I spoke with the club about a week ago and they said they had not decided what to do with me. After so many years I wanted more respect and more clarity rather than having to wait until the end of the championship to know my future."

But Aldair had kinder words for the fans. "I was very moved although I suppose after so many years here it's normal. I was holding back the tears."

Rumours have linked the veteran either with a move to Perugia or back to Brazil with his former club Flamengo and the player said: "The club has still decided nothing and I can not answer questions about my future now. It's difficult, I must speak to my agent."

Roma president Franco Sensi did not close the door on Aldair, saying: "I don't know what will happen - it's up to the coach (Fabio Capello). We will see what happens - we can not afford sentimentality. If we can help him we will."

Aldair - full name Aldair Dos Santos Nascimento - was born in the coffee-making town of Ilheus and still tells the story of how he turned down the offer of a football as a birthday present as a child because he felt a fishing rod would be a better way to feed his family.

He spent a season with Portugal's Benfica after leaving Flamengo before arriving at Roma in 1990. Apart from one Italian Cup last year's Scudetto was the first major club honour of his 12-year stay in the Eternal City.

Kirin Cup

Japan pip Slovakia

AFP, Tokyo

Japan's World Cup preparations were given a boost here Monday as the Asian champions defeated Slovakia 1-0 in the Kirin Cup triangular tournament.

Philippe Troussier's side bounced back from the disappointment of drawing against Costa Rica earlier this month after scoring at the end of a goalmouth scramble in the 38th minute.

Former Bolton striker Akinoi Nishizawa was the architect of the winner, his cross from the right causing confusion in the Slovakian penalty area before ending up in the back of the net.

The goal was eventually credited to Nishizawa following a correction after Hiroaki Morishima, who was announced as the scorer in an official result, said "I didn't touch the ball."

Victory gave Japan a timely boost as they prepare for their World Cup on home soil, where they will face Belgium, Russia and Tunisia, and was achieved without Europe-based stars Hidetoshi Nakata and Shinji Ono.

"Even if we miss (Hidetoshi) Nakata and (Shinji) Ono, I don't worry about it," said Japan's coach Troussier.

"Everybody can play their roles pretty well. It would be different in a real competition, but everybody has enough experience."

Japan face Honduras in the next Kirin Cup match on Thursday.

Primera Liga

Deportivo out of it



Football

REUTERS, Madrid

Deportivo Coruna said goodbye to their already slim chances of challenging for the Spanish First Division title after they were held to a 2-2 draw at home by a combative Malaga side.

An 82nd-minute penalty from Panamanian striker Dely Valdes allowed Malaga to claim a hard-fought draw against the Galicians and complicate their fight for an automatic Champions League berth.

The title race, which has now officially become a two-horse race, looks to have swung decisively in favour of league leaders Valencia who showed real character to come from behind and a sending off to claim a 2-1 win against Espanyol.

With just two games to go, the Mediterranean club led the table on 69 points, four ahead of Real Madrid who slumped to a 3-0 defeat

at Real Sociedad on Saturday.

Deportivo follow in third on 62 points, while fourth-placed Celta Vigo occupy the last Champions League berth after a narrow 1-0 win at relegation-threatened Real Zaragoza.

A 53rd-minute corner from Jesuli hit keeper Cesar Lainez and swerved directly into the net for the only goal of a tense and closely-fought encounter at the Romareda stadium.

Despite an emphatic 4-1 win against Villarreal, Barcelona remain out of the Champions League places and must now hope for a Celta slip-up if they are to claim a spot in next season's competition.

Real Betis are hot on the heels of the Catalan side in sixth place after a 3-1 win at struggling Real Mallorca on Sunday.

Uruguayan striker Dario Silva grabbed the opener for Malaga at Depor's Riazor stadium when he fired his first-time shot under Jose Molina just before the half-hour.

Defender Nourredine Naybet levelled for the home side when he

poked in after a goalmouth scramble after 38 minutes and Depor took the lead in the second half when Fran saw his venomous shot squirm under Malaga keeper Pedro Contreras.

But Malaga earned a deserved draw when Valdes rattled home a penalty eight minutes from time after he had been brought down by Lionel Scaloni as he sprinted into the box.

Deportivo finished the game with 10 men when Naybet was dismissed after receiving his second booking three minutes from time.

Tensions are also high at the other end of the table as eight teams fight it out to avoid the drop.

The defeat for Zaragoza, who have now gone 10 games without a win, leaves Marcos Alonso's side teetering on the brink of relegation.

But the outlook looks even bleaker for bottom club Tenerife, who were given an embarrassing 5-1 thumping by Valladolid in front of their home fans.

There was good news, however, for Rayo Vallecano who eased their relegation worries after claiming a 4-2 home win over an out-of-sorts Athletic Bilbao.

A fine first-half strike from Roberto Peragon and second-half goals from Elvir Bolic, Michel and Sergio Corino meant the modest Madrid-based side are now close to ensuring their survival in the top flight.

Primera Liga's top six										
After Sunday's matches (Played, Won, Drawn, Lost, Goals for, Goals against) Points										
1 Valencia	36	19	12	5	47	27	69			
2 Real	36	19	8	9	69	41	65			
3 Deportivo	35	18	7	10	57	39	61			
4 Barcelona	36	17	9	10	62	36	60			
5 Celta	36	16	12	8	63	43	60			
6 Betis	36	15	14	7	42	29	59			

Bundesliga

Bayer digging own grave



Football

AFP, Berlin

The defeat of leaders Bayer Leverkusen and Borussia Dortmund's away victory threw the German league title race wide open on Saturday, setting up a nail-biting final weekend title-decider.

The championship has swung Dortmund's way after Leverkusen, who have never won the title in their 98-year history, fell 1-0 at Nuremberg and Dortmund, league winners in 1996, had a 4-3 victory at SV Hamburg.

Bayern Munich's 1-0 win at VfL Wolfsburg meant mathematically they could still win their fourth consecutive title by the backdoor.

Dortmund, who host Werder Bremen next Saturday have 67 points, a point ahead of Leverkusen, who entertain Hertha Berlin. Bayer are two points in front of Ottmar Hitzfeld's Bayern, who are at home to Hansa Rostock in their last game.

All top three clubs are certain to qualify as Germany's representatives in the Champions League next season.

Nuremberg's victory meant they will definitely play top-flight football next term, condemning Cologne, who beat fellow relegated side SC Freiburg 2-0, and Sankt Pauli to the drop.

Dortmund coach Matthias Sammer, whose side are also in the UEFA Cup final in Rotterdam against Feyernoord on May 8, said: "We are now in first spot but of course the championship won't be decided before next week."

"The team showed character and

team spirit today and certainly held their nerve much better than their coach!"

Both Dortmund and Hamburg finished their match with 10 men, following the first half sendings off of both Christian Worns and Ingo Hertzsch, in an eventual match.

Dortmund were virtually in control of the game from start to finish, three times leading by a two-goal margin though their battling opponents tried hard to get back on level terms.

Brazilian Marcio Amoroso scored his 17th goal of the season in the 36th minute from the spot, after being fouled by Hertzsch who was sent off.

Czech Republic's Tomas Rosicky added a second two minutes later, Amoroso taking advantage of the gap left by Hertzsch, and Rosicky knocked the ball home with just the keeper to beat.

Three minutes before the break, Worns got his marching orders after fouling Sergej Barbarez of Bosnia and Swiss midfielder Raphael Wicky found the net from the resulting spot kick.

Dortmund restored their two-goal advantage when Amoroso fired home a rebound in the 63rd minute, after first firing a 20-metre freekick into the Hamburg wall, before a final flourish from both teams.

Dutchman Nico-Jan Hoogma netted 10 minutes from time for Hamburg, giant Czech Jan Koller added to Dortmund's score with three minutes to go and Dutchman Erik Meijer yet again gave Hamburg hope in the dying seconds.

Nuremberg defender Marek Nikl of the Czech Republic caused misery for Leverkusen with a 23rd-minute goal for a result which will have given triple-chasing

Bundesliga's top six										
After Sunday's matches (Played, Won, Drawn, Lost, Goals for, Goals against) Points										
1 Dortmund	33	20	7	6	60	32	67			
2 Bayer	33	20	6	7	75	37	66			
3 Bayern	33	19	8	6	62	23	65			
4 Hertha	33	18	7	8	60	36	61			
5 Schalke 04	33	18	7	8	51	34	61			
6 Werder	33	17	5	11	53	41	56			

Blatter wants second term



Football

AFP, Dubai

FIFA president Sepp Blatter said Monday he needed a second term as the most powerful man in world football, dismissing his Cameroonian rival's manifesto as containing "discrepancies".

"Four years ago, I said that to implement my programme I would like, or need, two terms of office," Blatter told delegates at the opening of Soccerex 2002 in the Gulf emirate of Dubai.

The re-election for a four-year presidential term was a "race. It's like a football game, so let's go," the Swiss national said.

But he blasted "people outside the running team" of rival Issa Hayatou, the African Football Confederation chief, notably the British tabloid press, for trying to "destroy the office of the outgoing president. This is not correct."

Blatter also rounded on Hayatou for certain "discrepancies" in his

manifesto.

"When he says ... it is essential that the national associations, confederations and 'Goal' projects ... go on with the same dimensions as in the past, I applaud."

But "how can he (then) say that

share the power of FIFA with the national associations, but for doing that I need an executive committee that will follow the pattern of solidarity and transparency," Blatter vowed.

Aside from the presidency campaign, which will be decided in Seoul on May 29, Blatter reiterated that "World Cup 2010 is in Africa."

He also stressed that the world's premier sports event would only be held on a four-yearly basis: "To play the World Cup every two years would not be wise."

Blatter arrived in Dubai from Qatar, and will travel on to Bahrain. He is expected to secure widespread support throughout the Middle East for his campaign.

Qatar's FIFA executive committee member Mohammad bin Hammam is a long-time supporter and lobbied on Blatter's behalf at the last FIFA election in 1998.

The United Arab Emirates, of which Dubai is a member, will host FIFA's 2003 World Youth Cup drawing 24 teams from five continents.



SEPP BLATTER

the finances (of FIFA) are not in order?" Blatter asked. Hayatou was due to address the trade exhibition on Tuesday.

"I don't want the power. I want to

Serie A 5-star rivals keep pressure on Inter



Football

REUTERS, Milan

Hat tricks from Vincenzo Montella and David Trezeguet gave AS Roma and Juventus 5-0 wins in Serie A on Sunday, but leaders Inter Milan go into the final game a point clear after defeating Piacenza 3-1.

All three teams remained in the title race, with Inter leading on 69 points from Juventus on 68 and Roma on 67.

If Inter win at Lazio next Sunday they will secure their first title in 13 years -- but a slip up could let in Juventus, who are at lowly Udinese or Roma who travel to midtable Torino.

Juventus pushed Roberto Baggio's Brescia into the relegation zone with a stunning second half display while Roma damaged Chievo's Champions League hopes with a convincing performance in the capital.

Inter were struggling at 1-1 against Piacenza until superb free-kicks from Alvaro Recoba and Ronaldo secured victory. Piacenza ended the game with nine men after they had Vincenzo Sommese and Francolino Matuzalem sent off.

Hector Cuper's side began the day knowing that they could be crowned champions if Roma and Juve stumbled and they got off to the perfect start when Colombian defender Ivan Cordoba poked them ahead in the seventh minute after a goalmouth scramble from a corner.

But the capacity 80,000 San Siro crowd was stunned in the 36th minute when Piacenza striker Dario Hubner set up Brazilian Matuzalem who beat Francesco Toldo with a well-placed finish.

Inter piled on the pressure after the break with Ronaldo having a shot cleared off the line by Vittorio Tosto.

Piacenza's resistance weakened when Sommese was sent off for a second bookable offence in the 69th minute and a minute later Inter were in front when Uruguayan Recoba curled a free-kick from 25



PHOTO/INTERNET

ON SONG: Inter Milan superstar Ronaldo celebrates his goal against Piacenza at Milan on April 28. This was Ronaldo's fourth goal in his last four matches.

meters into the top corner.

Ronaldo then sealed victory with his fourth goal in as many games, thumping a free-kick past Piacenza 'keeper Paolo Orlandoni.

Any nerves Juventus had for the

return of Baggio and his battling Brescia were eased in the eighth minute when Trezeguet put them in front with a thundering header from a Del Piero corner.

Brescia had defender Daniele

Serie A's top six										
After Sunday's matches (Played, Won, Drawn, Lost, Goals for, Goals against) Points										
1 Inter	33	20	9	4	60	31	69			
2 Juventus	33	19	11	3	62	23	68			
3 Roma	33	18	13	2	57	24	67			
4 Milan	33	13	13	7	44	33	52			
5 Bologna	33	15	7	11	40	37	52			
6 Chievo	33	13	12	8	55	51	51			

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Garbage barge

5 Put together

9 Ally

12 McBeal's field

13 Stage prize

14 Glass of NPR

15 Diplomacy

16 Authentic

17 Contral

18 A util.

19 Pac. counter-part

20 Labyrinth

21 Store-sign abbr.

23 Clean-air org.

25 Regatta setting

28 Eye part

32 Kind of candle or nose

33 Thespian

34 Rouse

36 Plot

DOWN

1 Location

2 Fossil

3 A single time

4 Swiss craftsman

5 Swamp

6 Facilitate a felony

7 Rotary phone user

8 Slippery swimmer

9 Bean typo

10 Four Corners st.

11 Test the waters

20 Marriage broker

22 Get more magazines

24 Armistice objective

25 Singing syllable

26 "___ come?"

27 Docs' org.

29 Dweller

30 Artesian appellation

31 Exist

35 Make invalid

36 Cratty

39 Stroller

40 "Chaplin" role

41 Intaglio stone

43 Congregation's cry

45 California town

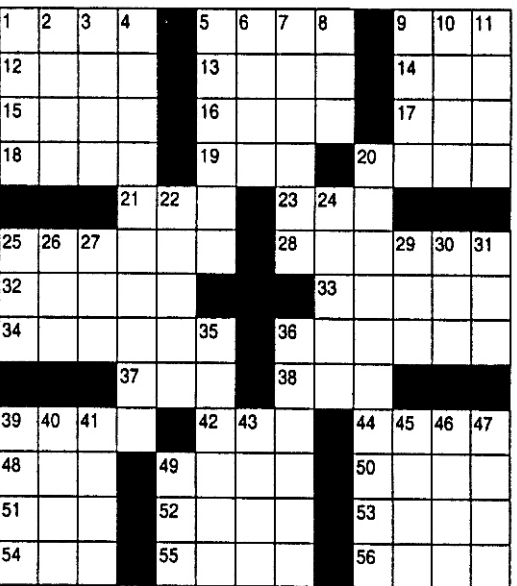
46 Monad

47 Partner

49 Fast flier

Solution time: 28 mins.

BEG BIAH MICA
AGO ROGE ADAM
GOES EASY
SEEN GLASS
BOWED SALT
AVIO STRANGER
SAL COULD ORO
ELDORADO LEAP
COPY PASSE
SCREW NOVA
ORIAL GOES AWAY
FIARO ELSE RHO
ABET MEIS YAM



CRYPTOQUIP

EPH XDDJRHSVRUJHG
PRIHWHINNVGNWVDUF.PH
GHICHXNEHVWUHHGH
SNEERUF CXNMERMH.
Yesterday's Cryptiquip: REVIEW OF NEW DINER ON THE MOON: "SERVES AWFUL FOOD, PLUS IT HAS NO ATMOSPHERE."
Today's Cryptiquip Clue: V equals L

The Cryptiquip is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Pauleta best in France

REUTERS, Paris

Portugal international striker Pedro Pauleta has been voted the best player in the French First Division in the 2001-2002 season by fellow players and coaches.

The 29-year-old enjoyed an impressive run with Girondins Bordeaux this season and is the First Division's leading scorer with 21 goals.

He is expected to make an impact at the World Cup starting next month in which Portugal play in first-round group D with co-hosts South Korea, Poland and the U.S.

Pauleta joined Bordeaux in September 2000 from Deportivo Coruna.

AJ Auxerre striker Djibril Cisse, who has scored 20 goals for his club and could still make it into France's squad of 23 for the World Cup, was voted most promising player of the season.

RC Lens coach Joel Muller was voted best manager of the season. Muller joined from Metz this season and led Lens to the top of the standings.

Lens, who