

# Serie A Juventus last action heroes

## Only tears left for Inter

Football

AFP, Rome

Juventus were crowned champions of Italy on Sunday in the most dramatic of circumstances as long-time leaders Inter Milan were beaten 4-2 by Lazio at the Olympic Stadium.

Second-half goals from Diego Simeone and Simone Inzaghi in Rome ensured Lazio denied Inter what would have been their first Scudetto for 13 years.

At Udine goals from prolific strike pair David Trezeguet and Alessandro Del Piero gave Juventus the 2-0 victory over Udinese that earned the Turin outfit their 26th title and sweet revenge for coach Marcello Lippi, sacked by Inter in October 2000.

Outgoing champions AS Roma, still in contention at the start of the day, surrendered their crown but a 1-0 victory at Torino earned by substitute Antonio Cassano ensured they deprive Inter of second place and qualify for the Champions League automatically while Inter must go through the qualifiers.

But this championship will go down as the Scudetto that Inter threw away with a defeat at the Olympic Stadium where everyone - even the Lazio fans - appeared to be willing Inter to victory with Inter players in tears at the final whistle.

Inter president Massimo Moratti told Stream TV: "It's a bitter disappointment - what can I say? But the players could have done more. We did not deserve this over the season but we did on the day."



STARING AT DOOM: Inter's coach Hector Cuper (L) and Brazilian superstar Ronaldo feel the title slipping away at Rome on May 5

first half.

But Simeone and Inzaghi's goals in effect handed the crown to Juve.

Away from the top AC Milan beat Lecce 3-0 to snatch fourth place and the last Champions League spot while Verona were defeated 3-0 by Piacenza and join Venezia, Fiorentina and Lecce in Serie B next season while Brescia saved themselves with a 3-0 win at home to Bologna.

Rome's Olympic Stadium was a scene of desolation as Inter coach

That goal was greeted with delight not only by the 40,000 Inter fans but also the Lazio supporters who were making it clear to their players that they would rather see their team lose than win and hand the title either to hated rivals AS Roma or Juventus.

But just as the cynics who predicted that Lazio were going to lie down were beginning to say 'I told you so' Lazio equalised.

Their Czech winger Poborsky was the scorer, playing a one-two with Stefano Fiore before beating Peruzzi.

Just four minutes later, however, Inter found the net again with Italian international Luigi Di Biagio heading the ball past Peruzzi.

But in first-half injury-time Inter faltered again. Their Slovak defender Vratislav Gresko misplaced a backpass and Poborsky nipped in to make the score

Ten minutes into the second period the unthinkable happened when Argentinian Simeone headed the ball past Inter goalkeeper Francesco Toldo and then Inzaghi killed the match.

In Milan the AC Milan faithful celebrated Inter's collapse with a 3-0 win over Lecce that ensures they

the preliminary round of the Champions League.

Goals from Kakha Kaladze, Italian international midfielder Massimo Ambrosini and Ukraine international Andriy Shevchenko proved sufficient.

In the relegation battle at Piacenza it was the home side who struck first when Sergio Volpi's freekick found the Verona net.

Two second-half goals from Piacenza's Dario Hubner ensured a 3-0 win as he joined Trezeguet as the division's top scorer with 24 goals.

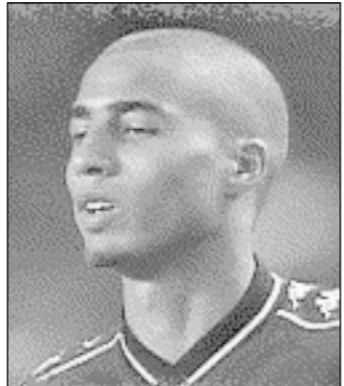
Brescia midfielder Jonathan Bachini struck early in the second half for his club in their home match with Bologna and then talismanic Roberto Baggio made it 2-0 with a penalty rebound after visiting goalkeeper Gianluca Pagliuca had saved his spot kick, ensuring safety at Verona's expense. Luca Toni added a late third.

Surprise packages Chievo's magical season ending on a winning note with a 2-1 win over Atalanta. Atalanta's Fausto Rossi gave the visitors from Bergamo the lead but goals from Bernardo Corradi and Federico Cossato earned Chievo a spot in the UEFA Cup, a remarkable achievement.

Goals from Fabio Bazzani and Brazilian Ze Maria gave Perugia a 2-0 win over Fiorentina who had Andrea Tarozzi sent off.

At Parma, bottom club Venezia gave the hosts a fright when Filippo Maniero bagged the 18th goal of what has been a successful season personally if a disastrous one for his club.

But Parma's Marco Di Vaio equalised from the penalty spot for his 20th goal of the season although he missed another after the break. But Frenchman Johan Micoud earned a 2-1 win for Parma



DAVID TREZEGUET

**TOP SCORERS (Italian unless stated)**  
24 goals - David Trezeguet (Juventus/Fra), Dario Hubner (Piacenza)  
22 goals - Christian Vieri (Inter Milan)  
20 goals - Marco Di Vaio (Parma)  
18 goals - Filippo Maniero (Venezia)  
16 goals - Cristiano Doni (Atalanta), Alessandro Del Piero (Juventus)



DARIO HUBNER finished fourth and fill the last place in

**Serie A's final standings**

After Sunday's final round of matches (Played, Won, Drawn, Lost, Goals For, Goals Against, Points)

1	Juventus	34	20	11	3	64	23	71
2	Roma	34	19	13	2	58	24	70
3	Inter	34	20	9	5	62	35	69
4	Milan	34	14	13	7	47	33	55
5	Chievo	34	14	12	8	57	52	54
6	Lazio	34	14	11	9	50	37	53
7	Bologna	34	15	7	12	40	40	52
8	Perugia	34	13	7	14	38	46	46
9	Atalanta	34	12	9	13	41	50	45
10	Parma	34	12	8	14	43	47	44
11	Torino	34	10	13	11	37	39	43
12	Piacenza	34	11	9	14	49	43	42
13	Brescia	34	9	13	12	43	52	40
14	Udinese	34	11	7	16	41	52	40
15	Verona	34	11	6	17	41	53	39
16	Lecce	34	6	10	18	36	5	6
17	Florentina	34	5	7	22	29	63	22

At Udine Lippi, who returned to Juve last summer, said: "Coming back here and winning again is just fantastic. We were relying on Inter to lose but I think all three clubs (Juve, Inter and Roma) deserve credit for such an exciting finish."

Twice Inter took the lead in the first half through Italian international Christian Vieri and Luigi Di Biagio only for Lazio's Czech winger Karel Poborsky twice to equalise in the

Hector Cuper once again lived up to his tag as an eternal choker, after losing two Champions League finals with Spain's Valencia.

News had already arrived at the Olympic Stadium of two early goals for Juve at Udine when Inter took the lead.

Vieri was the scorer with his 22nd of the season after a rash run from his goaline by goalkeeper Angelo Peruzzi.

# Lippi makes magic

Football

AFP, Udine

Juventus coach Marcello Lippi was magnanimous in victory Sunday as he savoured an Italian First Division title at the expense of his former club Inter Milan.

Lippi, who returned for his second stint with the Turin giants last summer, piloted Juve to a 2-0 win over Udinese that ensured the Turin club won the title at the expense of Inter who crashed to a 4-2 defeat to Lazio at Rome.

Lippi said: "Coming back here and winning again is just fantastic. We were relying on Inter to lose but I think all three clubs (Juve, Inter and Roma) deserve credit for such an exciting finish."

"We did have to rely on the Inter result. But I am particularly happy for my boys."

Celebrating his fourth national title with Juve but his first in his second stint, he said: "This is the sweetest of them all. Because it came after so much suffering and also because it is the first since a turbulent period when I had to leave a job and then after coming back here."

Lippi's emotions contrasted strongly with those of Inter president Massimo Moratti who sacked him on day one of the 2000-1 season after a defeat by Reggina that had followed the San Siro club's elimination at the hands of Sweden's Helsingborg in the Champions League preliminary round.

When Inter took the lead Moratti was seen to make a sign of the cross in the VIP area at the Olympic Stadium but his prayers in the Eternal City were not answered as Lazio - despite the exhortations of their fans who were openly supporting Inter to stop rivals Roma - came back to win.



Marcello Lippi (C), the Juventus coach is the toast of ecstatic fans at the end of the match against Udinese in Udine on May 5.

Lippi, a 54-year-old from the seaside town of Viareggio, confounds the old football adage that a coach should never return to a club where he was successful.

The silver-haired Lippi, who frequently chomps on cigars during matches, had a glorious first spell with Juve winning three Scudetti, the 1995-6 European Cup and the 1996 Intercontinental Cup as well as many lesser prizes.

Many questioned his wisdom of returning to Juve especially given the controversial circumstances of his appointment in place of Carlo Ancelotti.

Ancelotti, who was twice denied victory on the last day of the season with Juve, had been told in May 2001 that Lippi would replace him even if Juve won the 2000-1 Scudetto - at the time Juve were very much in contention.

But with Juve crowned champions - and taking a 2-1 lead into the second leg of the Italian Cup Final with Parma next weekend - the Juventus management felt vindicated by their decision.

The club's honorary president Giovanni Agnelli said: "Lippi and the players deserve all the credit because they never stopped believing."

## Former Juve coach dead

AFP, Turin

Juventus were Monday celebrating the 26th Italian First Division title of their history but the festive mood was tarnished somewhat by the death of their former coach Cesto Vycpalek.

Vycpalek died at 5:22 p.m. on Sunday in the presence of his wife Hana less than half an hour after Juve had been crowned champions.

The 79-year-old originally from the Czech Republic also died on the 30th anniversary of the air crash that killed his son Cestino. Weeks after that tragedy Vycpalek's Juve won the 1971-2 Scudetto, a title they successfully defended a year later.

## Ronaldo heads home for World Cup

AFP, Malpensa, Italy

Inter Milan's Brazilian striker Ronaldo on Monday left for Brazil to link up with his national team ahead of the World Cup, ANSA news agency reported.

The 25-year-old two-times FIFA World Player of the Year, who wept on Sunday as his team was piped to the Italian First Division title by Juventus, departed on a flight from Milan's Malpensa airport.

Accompanied by his wife Milene, son Ronald and his dog he was due to fly to Sao Paulo before getting a connecting flight to Rio de Janeiro.

A visibly distraught Ronaldo said it really hurt to lose the title after being so near.

"The disappointment is huge, especially because we were so close to our dream. I am sad for the missed victory for myself, the team, the company, the president and for all the fans that supported us for the entire season and that were amazing even yesterday; that is why I want to 'pay them' back as soon as possible."

Ronaldo is disappointed and sad, but also ready to start back right away trying to get ready for next year. Last night he landed in Malpensa after the terrible trip to Rome.

Inter ends the season with 69 points following Juventus and Roma that have respectively 71 and 70 points, after being in the top spot for the entire season. The team will now have to play the qualifications of the Champion's League in August in order to take part in the event.

## Deisler's last chance ?

AFP, Frankfurt

German playmaker Sebastian Deisler will get an early chance to show coach Rudi Voller he has shaken off all his fitness problems when he faces Kuwait in Thursday's friendly in Freiburg.

The 22-year-old, who has been beset by injuries all season, was named in a 20-man squad by Voller on Monday which has been weak-



SEBASTIAN DEISLER

ened because of Borussia Dortmund's UEFA Cup final date with Feyenoord on Wednesday and the German Cup final between

## SQUAD

**Goalkeepers:** Oliver Kahn (Bayern Munich), Timo Hildebrand (VfB Stuttgart)

**Defenders:** Tim Borowski (Werder Bremen), Sebastian Kehl (Borussia Dortmund), Thomas Linke (Bayern Munich), Christoph Metzelder (Borussia Dortmund), Marko Rehmer (Hertha Berlin), Christian Ziege (Tottenham Hotspur/Eng)

**Midfielders:** Sebastian Deisler (Hertha Berlin), Fabian Ernst (Werder Bremen), Paul Freier (VfL Bochum), Torsten Frings (Werder Bremen), Jens Jeremies (Bayern Munich), Christian Rahn (St Pauli), Sebastian Schindzielorz (VfL Bochum)

**Forwards:** Oliver Bierhoff (AS Monaco/Fra), Daniel Bierofka (1860 Munich), Carsten Jancker (Bayern Munich), Miroslav Klose (FC Kaiserslautern), Marco Bode (Werder Bremen)

Bayer Leverkusen and Schalke 04.

Central defender Marko Rehmer, another of the players regarded by Voller as vital to any hopes of having a successful World Cup finals, has also been named in the squad despite still being out of action with an ankle problem.

The match will also provide an opportunity for veteran striker Oliver Bierhoff and Bayern Munich's Carsten Jancker to try and hit some sort of form, particularly Jancker as he has failed to hit the net once this term and was controversially preferred to the league's leading scorer Martin Max when the final squad was announced Monday.

Two Dortmund players are included - Sebastian Kehl, who is ineligible for the UEFA Cup final, and Christoph Metzelder, who is suspended - while there are also call-ups for former Under-21 internationals Daniel Bierofka, Fabian Ernst and Christian Rahn.

The Germans, who are in Group E with Ireland, African champions Cameroon and Saudi Arabia, have two other warm-up matches prior to leaving for Japan, against Wales on May 14 in Cardiff and Austria on May 18 in Leverkusen.

Germany, who open their campaign against the Saudis on June 1 in Sapporo, will have a final prep match against a local Under-21 team in Miyazaki on May

## Primera Liga

# Valencia after three decades

Football

AFP, Madrid

Valencia's South American connection ensured that they clinched their first Spanish league title since 1971, by winning 2-0 at Malaga on Sunday.

First half goals from Argentinian international Roberto Ayala and Brazilian defender Fabio Aurelio gave Valencia the fifth championship in their history, after Real Madrid could only draw 0-0 with Real Mallorca.

Real, the defending champions, were the only team able to overhaul the leaders prior to the penultimate day of the championship.

Valencia now have an unassailable 72 points from 37 games while Real stay in second with 66 points with just one round of matches left to play.

Deportivo La Coruna kept up the pressure on Real for direct qualification into next season's Champions League group stage by winning 3-0 at Real Betis.

Spanish international Diego Tristán scored two of Deportivo's

changed his mind and allowed the goal to stand.

Perez Burrull's indecision was forgotten though when the salesman blew his whistle to signal that 31 years of waiting were over, leading to wild celebrations among the 2,500 Valencia supporters who had managed to get tickets for the match.

Thousands of fans immediately swarmed into the streets of Valencia, Spain's third biggest city, celebrating in the local tradition by lighting fireworks and flares.

Struggling Real Mallorca were the last team to beat Real Madrid in a league match at the Santiago Bernabeu back in November 2000, and although they couldn't produce the same trick this time around, the point earned from the 0-0 draw may be vital in them avoiding relegation.

Real Madrid had the best chances of the game when Jose Maria Gutierrez hit the crossbar after 19 minutes but Mallorca also saw good opportunities for their World Cup-bound Cameroonian striker Samuel Eto'o begging.

The game bizarrely saw the Bernabeu empty behind its south goal after half an hour when mem-

checking for further additional devices and clearing up the area after a car bomb had exploded 100 metres away from the stadium just under four hours before the kick off of the game.

Barcelona bounced back from Wednesday's Champions League exit by beating Espanyol 2-0 in the Catalan derby.

Dutch international striker Patrick Klivert got his 18th goal of the season in injury time at the end of the first half and Xavi Hernandez ensured three points for Barcelona, as they move up to fourth with 63 points.

Espanyol ended the game with nine men after Alex Fernandez and Alberto Lopo got their marching orders in the last 10 minutes.

Celta Vigo's chances of appearing in the Champions League next season crashed after they lost 2-1 at home to Sevilla and they slipped to fifth place.

Real Zaragoza face life in the Spanish Second Division next season for the first time since 1978 after losing 2-1 at Villarreal, their 11th successive game without a win.

After their defeat, Zaragoza players had to flee for the safety of



A MOMENT TO SAVOUR: Valencia players and fans celebrate in Malaga on May 4 after championship was ensured.

goals to take his tally to 21 for the season, and maintain his place as the Spanish First Division's leading scorer.

The Galicians are third with 65 points and play host to Real Madrid in their final game of the season on Friday.

Valencia had early chances on the Costa Del Sol through Miguel Angel Angulo and Pablo Aimar before Ayala rose high above the Malaga defence to break the deadlock after 35 minutes, heading home a Vicente Rodriguez corner.

Ayala's goal was only his second of the season but Fabio Aurelio is even less prolific and got his first ever competitive goal in his two-year stint at the club, when he slipped through Malaga's offside trap and connected with a perfect Aimar pass.

The referee Alfonso Perez Burrull initially ruled the strike offside but the Valencia players made prolonged protests, lasting more than four minutes.

After two consultations with his referee's assistant, Perez Burrull

bers of Real's notorious Ultras Sur, who have a reputation as a right-wing hooligan element, left the stadium in protest at the arrest of four of their number earlier in the day.

Four Ultras Sur, with alleged links to a neo-Nazi group, were arrested in the Madrid suburb of Moratalaz, accused of participating in the disturbances before Wednesday's Champions League semi-final second leg between Real and Barcelona.

Police and members of the media were attacked around the Bernabeu after emergency services were

their dressing room as stadium security fell apart and the pitch was invaded by thousands of irate supporters.

Cesar Lainez and Toro Acuna were not as lucky as their teammates and both men were slightly injured as spectators kicked and hit them with fists, before they were rescued.

At least one Canary island team will join Zaragoza but Tenerife kept alive their slim hopes of avoiding the drop after winning 1-0 away at their bitter local rivals Las Palmas thanks to a first half goal from their Argentine striker Bruno Marioni.

## Primera Liga's top six

After Sunday's matches (Played, Won, Drawn, Lost, Goals For, Goals Against, Points)

1	Valencia	37	20	12	5	49	27	72
2	Real	37	19	9	9	69	41	66
3	Deportivo	37	19	8	10	62	41	65
4	Barcelona	37	18	9	10	64	3	6
5	Celta	37	16	12	9	64	45	60
6	Betis	37	15	14	8	42	32	59

## Press lauds champs

Football

AFP, Rome

The Italian sports press on Monday hailed the feat of Italian champions Juventus after the Turin outfit were on Sunday crowned Serie A winners for the 26th time in their history.

But given almost equal prominence was the despair of Inter Milan players who capitulated to Lazio 4-2 in Rome, allowing Juve to steal the title by virtue of their 2-0 win at Udinese.

"Juve, savour the triumph," trumpeted Gazzetta dello Sport. "Inter's suicide with Lazio gives (Juve) the 26th Scudetto."

Gazzetta, like its principal rival Corriere dello Sport, provided a pictorial contrast of the contest with both papers showing photos of an elated Alessandro Del Piero at Udine and a weeping Brazilian Ronaldo after he had been substituted at Rome.

Corriere meanwhile simply headlined: "Juve 26. Champions of Italy 2001-2. Lazio decides the Scudetto."

Leader writers pointed out that Inter had thrown away the title while also emphasising that the Lazio-Inter result proved the integrity of the game in Italy after the build-up had seen many cynics claim Lazio would not compete against Inter.

Even Lazio's fans, vastly outnumbered, pressurised their own players to throw the match by cheering Inter goals and remaining silent when their own side scored, making it clear they would rather Lazio lose rather than hated rivals AS Roma, in contention at the start of play, or Juve win the title.

equalised.

Poborsky, who later revealed he promised fellow Czech Pavel Nedved of Juve that he would help sink Inter, made his feelings known to the Lazio fans by gesticulating towards them after his goals.

Poborsky's second leveller came in first-half injury time after Inter's Slovak defender Vratislav Gresko bungled a headed backpass and Inter never recovered, conceding goals to Argentinian Diego Simeone and Simone Inzaghi after the break.

Inter's Argentinian coach Hector Cuper, normally implacable in the face of adversity but who emerged to talk to journalists with his eyes clearly swollen, said: "I told them to stay calm at half-time. 2-2 was not a disaster. But they lost their heads in the second half."

Inter defender Marco Materazzi remonstrated with Lazio defenders Alessandro Nesta and Brazilian Cesar, saying: "You play like this and two years ago I helped you win the Scudetto when I was with Perugia and we beat Juve on the last day."

Corriere editor Italo Cucci, in reference to remarks by Juve coach Marcello Lippi during the week that he felt sick at what was widely anticipated as a match in Rome where Lazio would lie down, wrote: "Football is honest and not nauseous."

But his colleague Luigi Ferrajolo pointed out that Inter had not just lost the title on the last day, having led Juve by six points with five matches to play. Juve won their last five matches while Inter lost to Atalanta, drew with Chievo before finally losing to Lazio.

"Inter self-destructed, Roma missed too many opportunities and Juve deserved the title," wrote Ferrajolo.

## The family deserves it

Football

AFP, Madrid

The first words from the mouth of Valencia's victorious coach Rafa Benitez were not to congratulate his players or the club but to thank his family on Sunday.

Valencia won the fifth Spanish championship in their 83-year history with a 2-0 win at Malaga, where they had not won for 13 seasons, but it was their first league title for 31 years.

"My wife Monste and my daughter Claudia have suffered every week of this championship," joked Benitez, cracking a rare smile now that the pressure had lifted from his shoulders.

The Valencia players, whose well-deserved victory on the Costa Del Sol clinched the title, eventually got their plaudits from Benitez.

"The most important thing was that we played the same as usual, we didn't let the pressure get to us. We were the leaders and we are the best team this season away from home, and so we played almost perfectly under the circumstances," added the 42-year-old coach, the