

PHOTO: AFP

Gilberto Silva (L), Arsenal's Brazilian international, checks Manchester City striker Darren Huckerby during their Premiership match at Highbury on September 10.

Premiership Gunners unstoppable

Football

AFP, London

English Premiership champions Arsenal extended their unbeaten league run to 26 games with a 2-1 victory over Manchester City here at Highbury on Tuesday.

The result saw Arsenal go top of the table by a point from Tottenham although their arch north-London rivals do have a game in hand which they will use up Wednesday against Fulham.

The scoreline also saw Arsenal equal City's record English mark of scoring in 44 consecutive top flight matches set way back in 1937.

Emphasising the change in over 60 years of English football was the fact that all three goalscorers on Tuesday were French.

Sylvain Wittord gave Arsenal the lead in the 26th minute before former Highbury hero Nicolas Anelka equalised for City minutes later.

But another French forward, Arsenal's Thierry Henry completed the scoring shortly before half-time.

Ali Benarbia, City's captain, was sent-off for a second bookable offence five minutes from time, the midfielder receiving a red card for using foul and abusive language towards a linesman.

A delighted Henry told Sky Sports afterwards: "The most important thing is that we won against a great team - they came to go forward and we couldn't control them. They are a great team."

"I've played with Ali Benarbia and Nicolas (Anelka) before and they're great players and we knew it wasn't going to be easy, but at the end of the day we've got three points."

City manager Kevin Keegan said: "This is a step up for a lot of players but fair-dos to Arsenal."

they've got a lot of confidence. No complaints, although I think we can play better."

His Arsenal counterpart, Arsene Wenger conceded: "They (City) have some excellent offensive players so the result was in doubt until the end."

Arsenal went ahead when a superb slide rule crossfield pass from Dennis Bergkamp and, with the City defence left floundering, he beat goalkeeper Peter Schmeichel in a one-on-one situation.

But three minutes later Anelka levelled the match when he expertly headed home midfielder Ali Benarbia's cross from the right with England goalkeeper David Seaman staying on his line.

It was sweet revenge for Anelka, constantly boosed by the home supporters who remembered his controversial departure to Real Madrid in 1999.

But the much-travelled forward did not help his cause when, in a newspaper interview before this match he said much of Arsenal's subsequent success was down to the money they had been able to spend on players following his departure to the Spanish giants.

City's attack-minded approach under the guidance of former England coach Keegan makes them great to watch but defensively vulnerable.

That weakness was their undo-

ing and, three-minutes from half-time, Arsenal capitalised.

Shaun Wright-Phillips, son of Arsenal great Ian Wright, failed to track back allowing England left-back Ashley Cole an unimpeded run to the edge of the box.

And his centre was neatly steered home by Henry.

The striker then lifted his shirt to reveal a T-shirt bearing the words "For the New Born Kyd", a reference, he later confirmed, to a female friend who had recently given birth.

After the break both Anelka and Henry had further chances to score. In the 67th minute Anelka's fierce near-post shot was parried by Seaman.

Barely 60 seconds later, with the City defence nowhere to be seen, following a Bergkamp flick-on, Henry thrashed the ball into the roof of the net, only to have the goal disallowed for a narrow offside decision.

But just when City had Arsenal on the defensive they were forced to play the last five minutes with 10 men when Benarbia was red-carded.

In the evening's other Premiership match, a north-east derby, Middlesbrough beat Sunderland 3-0, Slovakian striker Sziard Nemeth netting twice and Italian forward Massimo Maccaroni also scoring.

Taking it slow with Ronaldo

Football

REUTERS, Madrid

Ronaldo trained with his new Real Madrid teammates for the first time on Tuesday, although the Brazilian was still unable to take part in the squad's practice game at the end of the session.

Ronaldo suffered a minor muscle strain in his left leg almost immediately after completing a 47 million euro (dollars 45.90 million) move from Inter Milan on August 31.

That injury limited his training to workouts in the gym and solitary sessions on the pitch but on Tuesday he was able to do some work with the squad in a session closed to the media.

"He was training more or less like everyone else," Real coach Vicente del Bosque told reporters at the club's training ground on Tuesday.

"How we move on will depend on what sort of shape he finds himself in. Everything will depend on his physical condition."

Ronaldo was plagued by injury problems during his last four seasons at Inter Milan.



RONALDO

He surged back to form at the World Cup, top scoring to help Brazil land a record fifth title, but his pre-season training was disrupted by the uncertainty over his club future.

According to Spanish newspapers, Ronaldo could be ready to make his Real debut in the Champions League against Genk on September 25.

"By September 23 he should be available to the coach," Real doctor Alfonso del Coral was quoted as saying in Spanish sports daily As on Tuesday.

"The player is keen to play as soon as possible but we won't move too quickly."

Moreno doesn't learn!

Football

REUTERS, Quito

Ecuador's controversial World Cup referee Byron Moreno has been suspended for 20 matches and placed under investigation by the South American country's soccer authorities after his controversial handling of a First Division match on Sunday.

The losing side, Barcelona of Guayaquil, conceded two goals near the end of the 13 minutes of injury time added by Moreno that allowed hosts Liga de Quito to win 4-3 and their president slammed the referee for allegedly mixing football and politics.

Barcelona president Leonardo Bohrer claimed that it was unethical for Moreno, a candidate in October elections for places on the Quito city council, to continue refereeing in the run-up to the poll and demanded his definitive suspension.

Moreno, who caused a major stir with some of his decisions in the World Cup second round match in which co-hosts South Korea upset Italy with a golden goal in June, could be struck off the register and banned from football for life.

"The refereeing and disciplinary commissions decided to suspend (Moreno) for 20 matches and open a

probe to analyse the request...to strike him from the register of referees," Ecuadorian Football Federation (FEF) president Luis Chiriboga told Reuters late on Tuesday.

He said the refereeing commission were unhappy with Moreno's match report in which he allegedly gave false information on the min-

ute in which Liga de Quito scored the two late goals that gave them victory.

Moreno gave two hotly-disputed penalties, sent off two players and caused confusion by first awarding a goal and then disallowing it during the Liga de Quito-Barcelona derby.

He signalled just six minutes of injury time but played 13, during which Liga de Quito scored twice -- in the 99th and 101st minutes -- to secure their 4-3 win.

"It's not ethical for him to continue being a referee, especially in a province in which he is a candidate," said Bohrer.

"The supporters of Liga de Quito are voters in his province," the official added.

FEF vice-president Carlos Willis said the refereeing commission would hold a "wide-ranging and in-depth" meeting on the issue.

The FEF's website, which said it had received "endless" e-mails from fans on the matter, said that Moreno had admitted an error and had added that "it's human to make mistakes".

Ecuadorian media, who backed Moreno during the World Cup when he was viciously criticised by Italy after their defeat, this time added to the flak.

"He's gone from hero to villain in three months," said El Comercio, which demanded foreign referees for major matches. "To avoid more problems, we recommend him to move away from football during his political campaign."

An Italian fan has threatened to sue Moreno after he controversially sent off Francesco Totti and disallowed a Damiano Tomassi goal before South Korea beat Italy 2-1 with a golden goal in June's World Cup second round.



BYRON MORENO

Scottish Premeirship Celtic halted

Football

AFP, Glasgow

Motherwell gave Scottish football outside of Parkhead hope with a 2-1 Premier League victory Tuesday at Fir Park that ended champions Celtic's perfect start to the season.

With the country's football still coming to terms with the humiliation of Scotland's 2-2 draw with

European part-timers the Faroe Islands last weekend, Motherwell proved that there was some home grown talent available to national manager Bertie Vogts.

Shaun Fagan opened the scoring in the 77th minute before Motherwell team-mate James McFadden's penalty three minutes later made it 2-0.

Wales striker John Hartson pulled one back for Celtic in the 80th minute but Motherwell held on.

Bundesliga

Bochum remain at top

Football

AFP, Berlin

Unfancied Bochum, for years a yo-yo side unable to settle in either the top flight or the second division in Germany, showed their mettle again Tuesday, holding on to top spot with a 0-0 home draw with reigning champions Dortmund.

Bayern Munich drew level at the top of the Bundesliga, however, as they sent city rivals 1860 Munich packing 3-1 at the Olympic Stadium with Hasan Salihamidzic levelling after Martin Max had given 1860 a shock lead on 14 minutes.

After the break Bayern moved through the gears and Peruvian star Claudio Pizarro put them in front seven minutes into the second period before Brazilian Giovane Elber made the result safe on 76 minutes.

Bayern, bidding for an 18th Bundesliga title, have lost only twice to their neighbours in 14 years.

Both Bochum and Bayern now have 10 points from four games, as well as an identical goal difference and goal average.

That leaves the way for easterners Hansa Rostock to move two points clear if they can make it four wins in four on Wednesday when they host Bayer Leverkusen, last season's runners-up.

In other Tuesday action, Werder Bremen's Brazilian forward Ailton showed himself to be as potent a



PHOTO: AFP

Bayern Munich's Brazilian playmaker Ze Roberto jumps to evade a tackle from TSV 1860 Munich's Marco Kurz in Munich on September 10.

Latin American finisher as Elber and Pizarro by snatching a hat-trick - including a penalty - in a 4-1 blitz of Nuremberg.

Sarsa Ceric bagged a consolation for Nuremberg - levelling after Ailton's opener from the spot.

But recent French signing from Parma, Johan Micoud, crowned a fine performance with a goal on the hour and Ailton produced a pair of quickfire finishes to round off a handsome scoreline for Bremen, who have now won two and lost two.

Elsewhere Tuesday, Hertha Berlin slumped to a 2-1 home defeat to Borussia Monchengladbach to stay winless with the victors rising to provisional fourth spot.

Wednesday's matches pit Wolfsburg against Hamburg, Hannover against Energie Cottbus in a battle of the bottom two, Stuttgart against Schalke and Kaiserslautern, under new coach Eric Gerets, against Arminia Bielefeld.

Bundesliga's top six

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

VfL Bochum	4	3	1	0	12	3	10
Bayern Munich	4	3	1	0	12	3	10
Hansa Rostock	3	3	0	0	8	0	9
Borussia M'gladbach	4	2	1	1	5	2	7
Schalke 04	3	2	1	0	4	1	7
Borussia Dortmund	4	1	3	0	6	4	6

Henry in shirty trouble

Football

AFP, London

Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger has called for understanding for Thierry Henry who could be punished for stripping off his shirt to reveal a message during the 2-1 Premiership win over Manchester City on Tuesday.

The French striker celebrated after scoring Arsenal's 41st-minute winner by lifting his jersey and displaying the words "For the newborn kyd."

The message was believed to be aimed at his friend Sharleen Spiteri,

the lead singer with the band Texas, following the birth of her new baby.

FIFA have recently introduced rules banning players from displaying such messages, and Wenger condemned the authorities for trying to take some of the fun out of the game.

"Everything is forbidden now," said Wenger. "To show emotions is forbidden. You have to create rules but for me, spontaneous celebration is part of the game and I wouldn't like that to be cut out."

When it was pointed out to Wenger that having a message printed on a t-shirt was hardly spontaneous, he added: "It is nice. It is a moment when people look to

see what he has put on the t-shirt.

"It makes the brain work of a few people who watch the TV and I don't know why you should be punished unless you have bad things on the t-shirt."

City manager Kevin Keegan also faces an FA rap after condemning the referee's assistant who got skipper Ali Benarbia sent off.

Keegan described the official's performance as being: "So biased it was frightening," and said he would score him zero marks because that was what he deserved.

Football Association bosses are sure to study his remarks and may hit him with disrepute charge.

Football

AFP, Paris

A piece of Brazilian flair took Lyon to the top of the League One (First Division) table in France on Tuesday - but it was Juninho Pernambucano with his fourth goal of the season rather than habitual marksman Sonny Anderson whose effort saw off Lens 1-0.

Title-holders Lyon saw Juninho smash home a tremendous freekick on the half-hour to end the hopes of Lens, last season's runners-up who conceded the crown on the final day of the season in the same fixture.

Four months on and the encounter was rather tighter - Lyon having won the May showdown 3-1.

But the three points were no less important as they sped to the summit a point ahead of surprise package Nice, who meet Marseille on Wednesday.

Auxerre, level with Nice on ten points, can also have a shot at

taking over pole position Wednesday when they host Bastia.

Auxerre's charismatic coach Guy Roux will equal the record of matches for a French manager when he takes charge for the 782nd time.

The 63-year-old Roux, who led the modest club to the 1996 domestic double, has spent his entire career with the club from the centre of France, taking over 21 years ago ironically also against Corsican side Bastia.

He will equal the record of Kader Firoud who coached 782 times between 1955 and 1981 at Nimes, Toulouse and Montpellier.

In other Wednesday action Brazilian World Cup star Ronaldinho will make his first full appearance of the season for Paris Saint Germain at Lille.

PSG have already benefited from Lens' loss at the Stade Gerland, moving up from fifth to fourth on goal difference.

A PSG win could put them top if other results go their way.



PHOTO: AFP

Sydney Govou (L) of Lyon being intercepted by Lens' Abdoulaye Faye at Lyon on September 10.

League One's top six

French League One table after Tuesday match (played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, goals against, points):

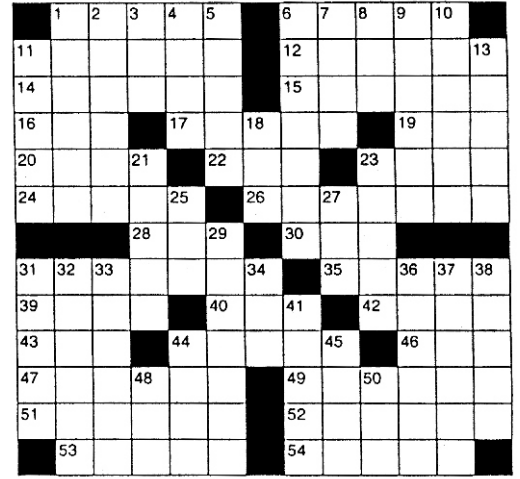
Lyon	6	3	2	1	16	8	11
Nice	5	3	1	1	11	4	10
Auxerre	5	3	1	1	6	3	10
Paris SG	5	2	3	0	5	3	9
Lens	6	2	3	1	6	5	9
Guingamp	5	2	2	1	9	5	8

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
 1 Supergarb
 6 Pub game
 11 Volkswagen model
 12 Surpass
 14 Dangle a
 15 Groom-to-be
 16 Sch. computer domain
 17 Under-world
 19 Weir
 20 November responsibility
 22 Workweek abbr.
 23 Stoic philosopher
 24 Upright
 26 Some dates
 28 Trail the pack
 30 A million millennia
 31 Party outfit, perhaps
 35 "The Time Machine" author

DOWN
 1 Frankness
 2 Sharp
 3 Omega
 4 Apiece
 5 Watt's
 6 Stadium
 7 Graph line
 8 Nipper's co.
 9 Sore
 10 Intersecting line
 11 Annoyance
 13 Show-room autos
 18 Anonymous John
 21 Brilliance
 23 Made into areas
 25 Shel-land
 26 chapeau
 27 Barn
 29 Parking spaces
 31 "I've Got a Secret" group
 32 Aquila's brightest star
 33 Elbow
 34 Show sorrow
 36 Apt
 37 Taxes
 38 Numerical data
 41 artwork

Solution time: 23 mins.
 JACOBB RAP SICI
 EVIDADE ELLI TION
 TENION VIAN DALLS
 DRIVE WIGS ILLIE
 TILL NOR AGENT
 DIEP WIARE
 ASISUMIE SAISHAY
 LITLAC TACIO
 AITALL MIA NEW
 STIRE GUIDED
 STANDALLS ALLIAN
 ARIT LIES PLEGE
 MAE FIED TIASTIE



CRYPTOQUIP

FX ICYYFDRRX DR MFFO
 HFSVAB MF MVGHFXFZRMVU
 TYCBB CXA MIRX

TCYTSYCMRA WSWGX WG.
 Yesterday's Cryptogram: IF A GUY IS REALLY INTO FENCING I SUPPOSE YOU COULD SAY HE HAS A DUEL PERSONALITY.
 Today's Cryptogram Clue: W equals P
 The Cryptogram 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.

Chilavert's parting meeting?

Football

AFP, Strasbourg

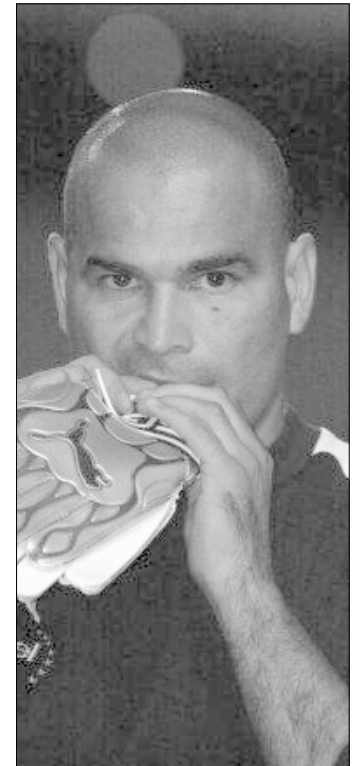
Flamboyant Paraguay goalkeeper Jose-Luis Chilavert has met with Strasbourg secretary general Jean-Michel Colin here on Tuesday before his formal sacking, the French First Division side confirmed.

"We gave him the reasons for the action. He outlined his arguments in this affair, which are still confidential," said Colin.

Chilavert, who joined Strasbourg two seasons ago, was banned from the stadium just over a week ago for his "unprofessional attitude."

The team's current number one keeper Vincent Fernandez is injured and Chilavert refused to come into to play a recent match against Lille.

His weight has also ballooned to 106kg, 11kg over his ideal weight. "I no longer want to play at Strasbourg, I won't wear the jersey again," said Chilavert, claiming the club "lacked respect" for him and owed him a lot of money which they deny.



JOSE-LUIS CHILAVERT