AEK a Real match Same old Diego! Valencia lesson for Basel

CHAMPS LEAGUE

REUTERS. Athens

AEK Athens have given Real Madrid their first real test of this season's Champions League, making them fight all the way for a 3-3 draw with two goals from Zinedine Zidane.

Vassilis Tsartas was at the heart of a stunning first half from the Greeks. The former Sevilla midfielder swung a sixth-minute free kick against a post only to be booked for taking the kick too early.

Forced to retake, he made no mistake, coolly swinging the ball beyond Iker Casillas for the opener.

With Fernando Hierro absent the Champions League favourites lacked an organising figure in defence and the Greeks took advantage. A 24th-minute corner from

Tsartas was nodded home by Christos Maladenis before another free kick from the Greece international was diverted in by the darting Demis Nikolaidis four minutes later.

For all their adventure in attack the hosts had no answer to the quick-fire passing of Real, driven forward by Zidane.

It was the Frenchman who hit back with a well struck 15th minute shot, before closing the deficit in the 40th minute from close range. With both sides opting for all-out attack more goals seemed certain to arrive after the interval.

Raul rattled the bar with a rising shot at one end, before Nikolaidis chipped a neat ball over Casillas only for it to roll just wide.

It took 20 minutes for the score to change and it was in-form Guti who equalised, darting in front of Dionysos Hiotis to flick a Roberto Carlos cross into the net.

Both sides missed chances in a frantic finale and home coach Dusan Baievic finished the match with a trio of strikers on the pitch pressing for victory.

Real coach Vicente Del Bosque acclaimed what he described as a beautiful game.

Roma's first

AS Roma needed a late goal to beat

and secure their first victory in

minute after the Belgian defence

a goal like that," dejected Genk

midfielder Bernd Thijs told Club RTL

points from three games, three

behind group leaders Real Madrid,

while AEK Athens have three and

newcomers, played their best match

so far in group C, despite having to

cope with 10 men and a substitute

mously after their crushing 6-0

defeat by Real Madrid last week,

holding out well against the Italian

side after their goalkeeper Jans

Moons was sent off in the ninth

minute for handling the ball outside

was brought on at the expense of

outfield player Mirsad Belija and he

was called on to save two danger-

ous shots from Argentine forward

Sonck had several chances to

score, but beat the turf in frustration

when he failed to equalise from

inside Roma's penalty area late in

Dortmund on

Borussia Dortmund took a big step

towards the second stage of the

Champions League with a 3-1

victory at PSV Eindhoven in group A

first away win in the competition

since 1997, the year they lifted the

trophy for the only time in their

Dortmund drew first blood in the

21st minute when Jan Koller scored

from close range and Tomas

Rosicky doubled their lead after 69

one back for PSV four minutes later

but substitute Marcio Amoroso

sealed Dortmund's victory two

clear in second place in group A with

six points. Leaders Arsenal have

nine, with AJ Auxerre and PSV on

scored but the final result was okay,

Dortmund coach Matthias Sammer

"We had some scares after PSV

The result means Dortmund are

minutes into injury time.

one point apiece.

Remco van der Schaaf pulled

It was the German champions'

Genk's leading striker Wesley

Substitute keeper Davy Schollen

The Belgians improved enor-

goalkeeper from early in the match.

Genk, the Champions League

TV. "It's really disappointing."

"It's hard, especially to lose with

victory

REUTERS, Genk

third attempt.

failed to clear.

Genk one

the area.

Gabriel Batistuta

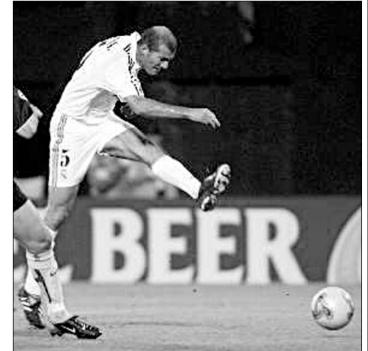
course

on Wednesday.

history

REUTERS, Eindhoven

the game.



Bajevic declared Roma favour-

"As with the other games we had

ites to follow Madrid into the second

the chances but we have only three

points. After the Roma win they will

go on and things become extremely

difficult for us, we now have to beat

that his team had already qualified

and refused to identify which team

next step for us is to qualify for the

surprise draw to the club's acting

president Makis Psomiadis who

was this week sentenced to 12

years in prison on fraud charges

"This one is for our president who is

going through difficult times at the

Del Bosque would not accept

"I don't indulge in predictions, the

The AEK coach dedicated the

Roma in Rome," said Bajevic.

he expected to progress.

next phase," he said.

Real Madrid superstar Zinedine Zidane (R) shoots for his team's first goal against AEK Athens at the Nikos Goumas stadium in Athens on October 2,

phase.

"It was a beautiful spectacle, there were a lot of chances," he

"We dominated the game but AEK had the superior attack," said Del Bosque. "It was an open game and they scored three goals from three chances, we gave them the space and the game could have finished 7-5."

Bajevic echoed Del Bosque's assessment but bemoaned missed chances that could cost his side a place in the next phase.

"It was a great game, fast, open and lots of chances. We started well, took the lead but we lost (Milen) Petkov to injury and we conceded the equaliser. When we found ourselves with a two-goal lead we couldn't hold on to it.

"It was not a position we expected to be in and you can't make the game finish when you AFP, London

Argentine football legend Diego Maradona fired the latest shot in his perpetual battle with British footballers when he accused them of being

The 41-year-old hero of Argentina's 1986 World Cup triumph predicted in the Sun that Premiership giants Liverpool would be hammered by Spanish champions Valencia when they play at Anfield in the Champions League at the end of this month.

While Maradona had little time for Premiership footballers he heaped praise on Valencia's young Argentine star Pablo Aimar, who he regarded as the genuine successor to him in the national side and who scored one of the goals in the 2-0 win at home to Liverpool last month. "He is the legitimate successor to

me as the best player in the world, he said. "Pablo is having fun on the pitch, iust like I used to," added the former

exit at the World Cup finals, was having so much fun that Liverpool and the Spanish side's other rivals would suffer.

"This is why he will bring Valencia much more joy and will make sure life won't be a bed of roses for their opponents

"Unlike the Brits, who have square feet. Aimar has skill in his that goes all the way to the tips of his

"I would pay any entrance fee to see him play," said Maradona, whose virtuoso 1986 performances were offset by his 'hand of God' goal against England in the quarter-

John Carew opened the scoring on 10 minutes and added a second three minutes later before turning provider for Brazilian fullback Fabio Aurelio to add a third, still with only 17 minutes on the clock.

Ruben Baraia headed in the

signs of life at the start of the second half, Hakan Yakin's run setting up Julio Hernan Rossi to turn in.

That surprise strike only served to sting Valencia back into full attack mode, though, and Pablo Aimar and Mista added further goals before Hakan Yakin's left-foot chip in the last minute restored a small measure of pride for the visitors.

The result left Valencia well clear at the top of the standings with a maximum nine points. Basel are level on four points with Liverpool after the English side's 5-0 victory at

home to Spartak Moscow. Valencia went into the game

reply in their two previous Champions League matches and they were quickly in gear once

> by a day's rain. Aimar set up Carew for the first, slipping a pass past the static Basel defence for the Norwegian to poke his shot past keeper Pascal Zuberbuehler.

> again, despite a pitch made heavy

Carew was unchallenged to head in his second just three minutes later after Vicente's run and cross caught the defence out once

Basel could hardly get the ball out of their own half as Valencia roared forward and they found themselves 3-0 down thanks to Carew's neat assist for Aurelio. whose shot rocketed past Zuberbuehler

Miguel Angel Angulo's fine footwork came close to adding a fourth a couple of minutes later but the ball was scrambled away at the far post.

The home side continued to press and after another near miss, as Vicente's arrowed shot went just wide, Baraja's header in off the frame of the goal made it 4-0.

The Valencia pace slackened a little for the remainder of the half and immediately after the break Basel responded as Hakan ripped through the home defence and fired in a shot that Santiago Canizares could only palm into the path of Rossi.

There was never a realistic chance of a fightback from the Swiss side, though, as Valencia simply resumed their tempo from the opening half-hour.

Carew, aiming for a hat-trick, had a shot blocked on 58 minutes but Aimar was on hand to drive in for the

Two minutes later, Aimar's trickery set up Carew, who in turned up substitute striker Mista for a simple

With half an hour left to play, Valencia looked set to rewrite the competition's goalscoring records but once Aimar had left the field to a standing ovation after his latest virtuoso display the Spaniards were a lot less threatening. In fact, it was Basel who had the

final word thanks to Hakan's splen-

Humble Del Piero

Football

AFP, Turin

Juventus striker Alessandro Del Piero refused to take all the plaudits for his side's 2-0 Champions League win over Newcastle, a victory which almost ensures the Italians a place in the second round group phase.

Del Piero struck twice in the second half on Wednesday at the Stadio Delle Alpi to give Juventus a comfortable win that keeps them top of Group E with seven points, two points clear of Dutch club Fevenoord.

Newcastle remained firmly rooted to the bottom of the table with no points and no goals after three

The Italian international has now scored 11 times in all competitions this season and is determined to continue his good form to keep Juventus in the hunt for silverware

rosy for Del Piero who played poorly for Juventus in the first half of last season and scored just once for Italy at this summer's World Cup in the 1-1 draw with Mexico. "When I score goals everything

seems fine," he told the club's official website, www.juventus.it. "I haven't always had success at

only am I scoring goals now but the whole team is playing very well too. Now we are in a position every team

wants to be in." Juve boss Marcello Lippi said the winning margin did not tell the whole story of a match which was evenly balanced until Del Piero netted with

a 65th minute free-kick

forward in Alan Shearer who sets up chances both for himself and his

ally does not tell the truth," he said.

they didn't deserve to lose.

"I saw Newcastle play very well

They have a hard-working

against Feyenoord at home when

other team-mates. "They have very good players from a tactical point of view like (Laurent) Robert, (Nolberto) Solano and (Kieron) Dyer.

I like Newcastle very much. To beat Newcastle, we needed two wonderful goals from del Piero.'

FA cautions Di Canio

AFP, London

West Ham's charismatic Italian striker Paolo di Canio escaped with just a warning from the Football Association (FA) Wednesday following his goal celebrations against London rivals Chelsea last week

The 34-year-old produced a spectacular volley early in the second half of West Ham's 3-2 English Premiership victory at Chelsea's Stamford Bridge on

But he then celebrated in front of the home fans, a move that could have incited crowd trouble, before scoring the winner six minutes from

www.thefa.com, read: "We can confirm that the FA is aware of Paolo di Canio's actions and subsequent comments in the Chelsea v West Ham fixture on Saturday.

"The FA has spoken to representatives of West Ham about the matter and Paolo will be advised as to his future conduct.

Liverpool finally kick-started their faltering Champions League campaign with a comprehensive 5-0 victory over Russian champions Spartak Moscow at Anfield.

REUTERS, Liverpool

Goals from Emile Heskey, Bruno Cheyrou and Sami Hyypia in the opening half hour effectively sealed the English premier league side's first victory in group B to put them joint second with Basel on four points behind runaway leaders

*CHAMPS LEAGUE

on as a late substitute, headed his first goal for the club on 81 minutes and Heskey's last strike sealed a totally one-sided encounter.

Senegalese defender Salif Diao,

Red hot Liverpool

Spartak were a pale shadow of the side that defeated Liverpool 2-0 on their only previous visit to Anfield in the European Cup Winners Cup a

The class of 2002 arrived at Anfield without a point and looking for their first win in 14 Champions League games, dating back to a victory over English side Arsenal in

November 2000. They immediately had a lucky escape as John Arne Riise sped down the left and crossed for



John Carew (L) of Valencia sneaks the ball past FC Basel goalkeeper Pascal

Zuberbuhel to score at Valencia's Mestalla stadium on October 2.

Liverpool's Senegal international Salif Diao celebrates his strike against

Steven Gerrard, whose low, goalbound drive was blocked by Maksym Kalynychencko.

But on seven minutes, the hopelessly flat-footed Spartak defence was cruelly exposed as Heskey raced on to Riise's long ball to fire the opening goal past exposed Russian keeper Stanislav

That was Liverpool's first goal at Anfield against Russian opponents - and they had to wait just seven

minutes to double that tally Leggy midfielder Cheyrou found acres of space on the right side of the penalty area to latch on to Danny Murphy's flick and score his first goal for the club since signing

from Lille in the summer. Michael Owen almost put the game beyond Spartak with just 21 minutes gone, racing on to Dietmar Hamann's long ball and comfortably outpacing defender Dmitry Khlestov, only to see his chip hit the

But the inevitable third goal came on 28 minutes as Finnish captain Hyypia rose unmarked to head home Murphy's inswinging

free kick following a foul on Gerrard. Reds keeper Jerzy Dudek sayed from Dmitri Kudryashov and Alexander Paylenko curled a shot narrowly wide as Spartak looked for a lifeline

But with such a fragile defence, that was a forlorn hope and Diao

opened his Anfield account with his first touch on 81 minutes, heading home Heskey's cross at the far post. England striker Heskey then

completed the rout two minutes from time, slotting home from a tight angle after being set up by Owen.

Patience the key with Ronaldo

REUTERS. Madrid

Ronaldo will take time to find the sort of form that helped Brazil to World Cup glory earlier this year, Real Madrid's sporting director Jorge Valdano has warned. Ronaldo, signed from Inter Milan

for around 45 million euros (\$44.33 million) just before the start of the season, has not played a competitive game since scoring both goals in Brazil's World Cup final win over Germany. After a series of minor injuries,

expectation is mounting that he could finally make his Real debut against Alaves on Sunday, but Valdano is being careful to play down expectations.

"The coach will make the decision depending on how he feels after training this week," Valdano told Real's official website.

lot of years to come.'

'Once he does make his debut he's going to have to be patient because it's three months since he olayed a competitive game. "It's going to be a while before we

It was a fully deserved victory for Paul Le Guen's well-organised side who played some attractive football

other match

found their shape or rhythm The sprightly Govou, the latest see the Ronaldo of the World Cup exciting strike talent to emerge in but he's signed up to be with us for a France, caused Inter's defence problems from the outset with his

In the 10th minute he went close with a 20-metre shot after a pacy run, and six minutes later he broke clear of his marker but blasted over the bar from a promising position.

Just as in their fortunate win over Aiax last week. Inter were unable to find any sort of fluidity in midfield and the strike partnership of Alvaro Recoba and Hernan Crespo were given little effective service.

the passes or the runs to give the frontmen a chance.

Inter midfielder Stephane

Lyon broke through in the 21st minute with a classic counterattack. Anderson played the ball

forward to Eric Carriere and Govou latched on to the cross to drive the

the pattern of the game with Inter continuing to struggle and Lyon content to keep possession in midfield and catch the Italians with an incisive break

forced Toldo into action in the 58th minute when he nutmegged Marco Materazzi and skipped into the area but the Inter keeper was out swiftly to halt the Frenchman's path to

Inter coach Hector Cuper brought Domenico Morfeo and Sergio Conceicao into midfield in an attempt to inject some sort of life

would surely have done better with his header if his team mate Ivan Cordoba had not also challenged for the cross.

seven minutes later that Inter brought themselves back into the game, with Fabio Cannavaro rising at the near post to head in a Recoba

That prompted some noise from a disappointing 31,448 crowd and a late lurch forward from Inter, but while the effort re-emerged the craft did not, and Cuper was left with some thinking to do before the return match in France in three

Coach Cuper was scathing in his criticism of his side.

performance was a step back for his team. Cuper said it meant much more than that. "No it is not one step back, it is

more, two or three steps back. It is shame as we seemed to have got our game going on Sunday against Chievo," he said, referring to the 2-

it again 10-man Genk 1-0 on Wednesday **★**CHAMPS LEAGUE

Champions League group C at the Substitute Antonio Cassano headed in a loose ball in the 81st

just one point from three matches.

Gunners coach Arsene Wenger hailed surprise guy Gilberto who had also scored in the 4-0 thrashing of PSV Eindhoven last week.

Gilberto, who netted the winner on his Gunners debut in the Community Shield against Liverpool, earned Arsenal their

Gilberto does

soured by the loss of hitman Thierry Henry, who limped off with a ham-

"He is very good in the air, espe-

Teammate Patrick Vieira, who looks like forging an even better



string injury.

Auxerre rarely threatened although Zimbabwean Benjani hit

but sometimes when you buy a player you get some good sur-

cially offensively, which I didn't know when I bought him. "And I wasn't aware of his ability to time his runs into the box. When I saw him playing for Brazil he always



Brazilian international Gilberto Silva scored in the 48th minute for the English champions, who have European competition in recent years, after a clever pass from Sylvian Wiltord. But the win was

The north London club are now virtually assured of a place in the second round while Auxerre have

the bar eight minutes from fulltime.

Wenger, who signed the Brazilian for 4.5 million pounds from Atletico Mineiro, admitted: "I never expected these goals from Gilberto

staved in front of the defence.

seventh straight victory.



a good shape to the whole team On the negative side. Wenger could be without both Henry and sidelined strike partner Dennis Bergkamp for Sunday's Premiership clash with Sunderland.

Henry was substituted after 50 minutes with a hamstring problem. But the French ace insisted: " don't think it is too serious and I hope I can play at the weekend."

Wenger was more concerned by a reckless late lunge by Auxerre sub Arnaud Gonzalez on Ashley Cole. The Gunners chief said: "I wasn't happy at all we don't want to lose

'Tonight we could see that both teams were tired said Wenger "But we relied on our tactical and technical solidity to make the difference when it mattered.

Auxerre's veteran coach Guy

him to a challenge like that."

Roux said he had been impressed by the English champions. 'They're a very strong team and I have no reproach for my players. Arsenal had a scoring chance in the sixth minute when Wiltord was

picked out by Patrick Vieira on the

right wing and his shot was saved by defender Jean-Alain Boumsong Henry then had an opportunity with a free kick in the 36th minute. Benjani, the early season sensation in the French First Division, came close to equalising against

the run of play with a 82nd shot

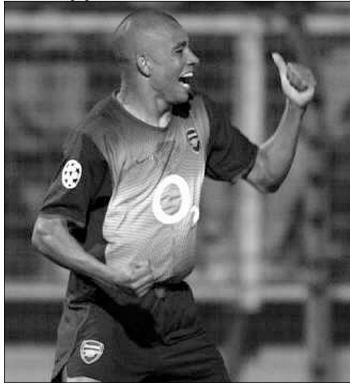
But third place remains possible

and a lot will be decided in our

match at Eindhoven," Roux said.

"With one point, it looks difficult.

which hit the bar



Gilberto Silva is delighted after scoring for Arsenal against Auxerre at Abbe Deschamps stadium in Auxerre on October 2.

But things haven't always been

the start of the season but it's no use hiding when that happens. "It's doubly satisfying that not

A statement on the FA's website.

"The matter is now closed." "The result for Newcastle actu-Fernandez protecting

Ronaldinho

Football

REUTERS, Paris Paris St Germain have left for a UEFA Cup first round second leg game against Uipest in Hungary without injured Brazilian Ronaldinho.

The World Cup playmaker was left behind in Paris with a pulled muscle in his right thigh, PSG said. The Brazilian was spared amid

newspaper rumours that he had had

a row with PSG coach Luis Fernandez over discipline in training this week

"I have no problems with Ronnie

(Ronaldinho). He has the potential to become the best player in the world in two or three years. "I'm protecting him. I'm like his big brother. I would be a fool to do with-

out a player like him," Fernandez Ronaldinho was booked after being involved in a brawl at the end of a first divison game against Bastia

Lyon end Inter run

REUTERS, Milan Goals from Sidney Govou and Sonny Anderson gave impressive Olympique Lyon a 2-1 victory over

Inter Milan in Champions League

first defeat of the season but also

their first in 34 home matches in

The result was not only Inter's

group D at the San Siro stadium.

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Europe's premier club competition dating back to 1963. Lyon moved top of the group with six points ahead of Inter and Ajax on four each after Ajax and Rosenborg drew 0-0 in the group's

and took advantage of the space afforded them by Inter who never

Spartak Moscow at Anfield on October 2.

Even if the injured Christian Vieri had been fit to play it is unlikely he would have been able to make much of an impact with a midfield that was simply unable to provide

Dalmat's touch let him down in the 12th minute when he failed to control a Javier Zanetti cross and Recoba tested Lyon goalkeeper Gregory Coupet with a low shot in the 13th minute but after that all the creative play came from the French

ball past Inter keeper Francesco The break did little to interrupt

The impressive, nimble Carriere

Two minutes later, though, Lyon doubled their lead in spectacular fashion when Anderson burst towards the Inter area and unleashed a thundering drive that crashed into the top right-hand corner of Toldo's net.

into his side Morfeo whipped over a corner in the 66th minute and Luigi Di Biagio

It was from another set-piece

weeks time.

Asked whether he thought the

1 Serie A win.

CHAMPS LEAGUE Football Argentine captain, who also appeared in the 1990 World Cup final defeat to the then West Germany and was thrown out of the REUTERS, Valencia 1994 finals after failing a drugs test. Maradona said it was because Valencia struck four times inside the 23-year-old Aimar, who was inspiraopening half-hour to set up a devastional in leading Valencia to their first tating 6-2 victory over Basel and title in 31 years but rarely featured in continue their impeccable progress Argentina's disappointing first round in Champions League group B. 'square-footed' on Wednesday.