

Premiership Wonderrooney!

Football

AFP, London

Everton's 16-year-old striker Wayne Rooney scored a sensational late winner to bring Arsenal's 30-match unbeaten run to an abrupt end and earn high praise from Gunners manager Arsene Wenger.

Rooney's 25-yard strike flew past David Seaman and in off the underside of the bar in the final minute of regulation time to give David Moyes' revitalised Everton side a famous 2-1 victory at Goodison Park.

It was Rooney's first Premiership strike and it came just five days ahead of his 17th birthday, when he is due to sign a long-term contract with Everton.

A Saif Diao goal had been enough for Liverpool to claim the three points at Leeds earlier in the day and they now head their London rivals at the top of the table by one point.

Manchester United failed to fully capitalise on Arsenal's slip-up after being held to a 1-1 draw at Fulham.

Wenger said afterwards: "Rooney is the biggest England talent I've seen since I arrived in England. There has certainly not been an under-20 player as good as him since I became a manager here."

"We were beaten by a special goal from a very special talent. "I've seen a bit of him in recent months, his couple of goals on TV in the League Cup, and when he came on to do so well at Manchester United recently."

"But you do not need to be an expert to see that he is a special talent, very special. "This was our first league defeat in seven months and I would like to congratulate my team for that and offer them my utmost respect."

"We fought hard, but Everton also did for the full 90 minutes. They wanted to win with strength and power and not technique, but they were excellent."

"We always looked like scoring in the second half, except that our final ball wasn't good enough."

Freddie Ljungberg ensured

Arsenal had scored in 49 consecutive matches when he put the Gunners ahead after eight minutes.

But Everton hit back immediately and a period of sustained pressure produced an equaliser in the 22nd minute.

Danish international Thomas Gravesen played Lee Carsley in on the right.

His shot crashed off the post and back outside the box, where it was picked up by Tomasz Radzinski, who carried it back into the area and fired home.

David Seaman, who has suffered a torrent of ridicule since conceding a goal direct from a corner in England's Euro 2004 draw with Macedonia in midweek, was

TOP SIX						
English Premiership table after Saturday's matches (played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, goals against, points):						
Liverpool	10	7	3	0	20 8	24
Arsenal	10	7	2	1	25 11	23
Man Utd	10	5	3	2	13 7	18
Boro	9	5	2	2	13 5	17
Chelsea	10	4	4	2	18 12	16
Tottenham	9	5	1	3	13 13	16

given a warm reception from both sets of fans.

But despite some signs his confidence has been affected by his ordeal, there was no way he could have been blamed for Rooney's sensational winner.

Wenger, who had predicted his side could go through the season unbeaten, shrugged off the loss, and predicted a backlash in the Champions League clash with Auxerre on Tuesday.

"We will bounce back very quickly and the players will give the right response on Tuesday," Wenger added.

Steve Marlet, who scored twice in France's 4-0 win over Malta in midweek, picked up where he left off to fire Fulham ahead at Loftus Road.

The United defence failed to clear Rufus Brevett's cross and Marlet was able to nip in at the back post to score.

Ole Gunnar Solskjaer, leading

the United forward line in the absence of the injured Ruud Nistelrooy, took advantage of a mix-up in Fulham's defence to volley United back on to level terms.

Alan Shearer scored his 300th and 301st career goals as Newcastle mounted a valiant fightback at Blackburn, winning 5-2.

Two David Dunn goals, one from the penalty spot, inside eight minutes had got the home side off to a flying start.

But after Shearer had entered the 300 club with a 36th-minute penalty, he fired home a trademark powerful header three minutes after the break to get the Magpies back on level terms.

Blackburn however found another gear and a double from Martin Taylor and an Andy Griffin own goal saw them run out easy winners.

Manchester City's slide toward the relegation zone gathered pace with a 1-0 win away at fellow strugglers Sunderland.

Howard Wilkinson's hopes of turning Sunderland's season around suffered a setback after only 22 minutes when England midfielder Trevor Sinclair raced on to a superb Paulo di Canio pass to fire past Jurgen Macho for what was to prove the winner.

Manchester City's slide toward the relegation zone gathered pace with a 3-0 defeat at home to Chelsea.

The London club withstood a fierce City onslaught at Maine Road before taking the lead through Gianfranco Zola in the 69th minute.

Fifteen minutes later, the veteran Italian broke free on the left, cut inside and finished with a curling shot for his second. Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink completed the rout just before the end.

Premiership newcomers West Brom and Birmingham looked destined for a 0-0 draw in their derby clash at the Hawthorns before a final five minutes of drama.

First Darren Moore deflected the ball into his own net to give 10-man Birmingham an unlikely lead with only four minutes left. But only a minute later, Jason Roberts fired West Brom level.

West Brom level.

Bundesliga Bayern thank star duo

AFP, Berlin

Bayern Munich's star signings Michael Ballack and Ze Roberto combined to earn the winning goal in a 1-0 victory at Hansa Rostock to keep them top of the German league on Saturday.

Inter remain at the summit with 13 points from five matches but can be overtaken by neighbours AC Milan on goal difference should they win at second bottom Atalanta on Sunday.

Juventus thought they would take three valuable points from the San Siro when they were awarded a controversial penalty just 60 seconds from normal time.

Referee Pierluigi Collina pointed to the spot after Francesco Coco was judged to have brought down Argentine Mauro Camoranesi in the box and Alessandro Del Piero rattled home the spot-kick.

The decision angered the home side and a mid-pitch scuffle between Juve's Antonio Conte and Inter's Dominic Morfeo resulted in both players being sent off.

But Inter were saved in the fifth minute of stoppage time by their talismanic striker Christian Vieri.

The Italy international, who was passed fit to play after recovering from an ankle injury, got the final touch to the ball on his way to the ground after jumping with Juventus goalkeeper Gianluigi Buffon to meet Alvaro Recoba's corner.

Inter goalkeeper Francesco Toldo, who was in the visitors' six-

ahead of Schalke 04 on goal difference.

The day was marked however by the familiar sight of Bayern topping the Bundesliga, with Brazilian Ze Roberto finding the net following good work from Ballack as the former Bayer Leverkusen players came to the fore when it mattered.

In the 73rd minute, Ballack shot from the edge of the box, Rostock keeper Mathias Schober parried but Ze Roberto was on hand to easily knock home from close in.

It was also a boost to Munich's morale on the run-up to their European Champions League match at AC Milan on Wednesday, a game they must win to stay in the competition.

Midway through the half, Bayern almost went ahead in similar circumstances. Jens Jeremies shot, Schober parried, and Giovane Elbe's follow-up effort was knocked out to the crossbar by Schober who thankfully caught the ball on the way down.

The victory was deserved however with Rostock's four-man defence sitting back and barely managing a counter attack. In fact, they hardly had a chance the whole match.

Meanwhile SV Hamburg beat Borussia Monchengladbach 1-0 in a mid-table battle and Leverkusen, reeling after a nightmare start to the season and reduced to 10 men when Croatian Boris Zirkovic was dismissed in the 33rd minute, gave Kaiserslautern more relegation worries with a win by the same scoreline.



SWEET-SIXTEEN VENOM! Everton's 16-year-old wonder-kid Wayne Rooney (top) is over the moon as he celebrates his winning goal against Arsenal with teammate Kevin Campbell at Goodison Park on October 19.

Serie A Honours shared at the San Siro

Football

AFP, Milan

Italian league leaders Inter Milan lost their 100 percent record but still held on to top spot in Serie A after being held to a 1-1 draw in a pulsating encounter at home to bitter rivals Juventus on Saturday.

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Juventus idol Alessandro Del Piero (C) celebrates with his team mates after scoring against Inter Milan at the San Siro on October 19.

yard box, ran towards the crowd claiming the goal but television replays confirmed it was Vieri who got the final touch.

Inter coach Hector Cuper said he wasn't surprised the penalty was given but thought Camoranesi went down far too easily.

"There was contact so I can see why a penalty was awarded but Camoranesi certainly made the

TOP SIX						
Italian league table after Saturday's matches (played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, goals against, points):						
Inter Milan	5	4	1	0	10 4	13
AC Milan	4	3	1	0	13 1	10
Juventus	5	2	3	0	9 4	9
AS Roma	5	3	0	2	12 8	9
Bologna	4	2	2	0	5 3	8
Lazio	4	2	1	1	5 4	7

most of Coco's challenge," he said. Cuper said he was disappointed not to make it five wins on the trot but admitted reigning champions Juventus were worth a point.

"For me it was the right result," said the Argentinian. "It's true Juventus had a lot of possession in the second half but we had several good chances before they took the lead."

Cuper added his team deserved a bit of luck after falling behind to such a dubious penalty.

"I didn't see clearly who scored our goal because there were a lot of players in the area," he added. "We got lucky and I'm satisfied with a point."

Juventus coach Marcello Lippi found it difficult to hide his feelings after being denied three valuable points.

"It's never easy to accept when you let in a late goal, especially when it would have allowed us to close the gap on Inter," he said.

"Sometimes you just have to take it on the chin and focus on the next match."

Earlier Saturday AS Roma thrust themselves back into the title race by winning 3-1 at newly-promoted Empoli for their third successive league victory.

Roma, who lost their first two games of the season, underlined their recovery thanks to goals from Emerson, Vincent Candela and Damiano Tomassi.

Empoli's rising star Antonio Di Natale scored a consolation goal for the Tuscans.

Roma coach Fabio Capello applauded his players for a professional performance which lifted them up to fourth in the table.

"It was very difficult to get a result here as Empoli are a very organised side but we produced a quality performance," said Capello. "Tactically we were very disciplined and above all showed greater calm when in possession. We made few mistakes today."

Marcos Cafu was one of the best players, but admits his contract negotiations are not going particularly well.

Empoli coach Silvio Baldini admitted his team just could not live with Roma's star-studded squad. "We couldn't really have done any more," Baldini said. "We were able to give Roma some real problems, but they are a great team and took every opportunity."

Fergie not bothered

AFP, London

Manchester United manager Alex Ferguson remained upbeat despite watching his side miss an opportunity to make up ground in the Premiership title race in a 1-1 draw with Fulham here on Saturday.

Only a controversial late penalty save by Fabien Barthez saved United from defeat and Fulham matched their illustrious rivals for industry and footballing ability.

Barthez was booked for his delaying antics just before Steed Malbranque took his 71st-minute penalty.

The tactics paid off when Malbranque pushed an unconvincing spot kick low to Barthez's left and the French goalkeeper pulled off a magnificent save to keep his side in the match.

Ferguson did not dispute that Barthez deserved his yellow card but insisted Fulham should not have had the penalty -- awarded when Laurent Blanc pulled down Steve Marlet -- in the first place.

"There was a slight brush from Laurent Blanc, but the boy's played at an angle away from Laurent Blanc and I don't think it was a penalty kick at all."

On Barthez's antics, Ferguson added: "He got the yellow card for it. That's justified. It's professionalism, delaying, we've seen that many times, that's been well used over the years, but he's got his yellow card for it so there's no complaints."

Primera Liga Real brought down to earth

Football

AFP, Madrid

Racing Santander brought Real Madrid's unbeaten season to an end as they beat the European champions 2-0 on Saturday with Real cast-off Pedro Munitis dealing the crucial blow.

Munitis was deemed surplus to requirements in the Spanish capital this summer and was loaned back to Racing for his third spell at his home town club, where he has spent most of his professional career.

All the gloomy days toiling to no avail at Real were forgotten on Saturday as he turned on the style to get his revenge on his former club with a stunning effort seven minutes from the edge of the box.

Munitis' strike, following Racing's first goal by Uruguayan winger Mario Regueiro four minutes before half time, will re-ignite the argument about whether he should have been playing at all.

Real insist they had a verbal agreement that Munitis would not appear against his old club but Racing dismissed their claims.

The war of words became so acrimonious that on Friday, Munitis' agent insisted that the player would never return to Real, where he has spent two difficult seasons.

His long sessions among the substitutes at Real meant Munitis' 20-cap international career dissolved over the last year and he was overlooked for World Cup squad selection.

However, Racing's result was due to more than just Munitis. They showed little fear of Real and Ronaldo and took the game to them from the outset.

During a thrilling first half Racing nearly took the lead several times before Regueiro broke the deadlock when he latched on to a right-wing cross from Medhi Nafti.

The game flagged after the hour had passed as Real appeared resigned to the fact they would not claw back two goals against the

site number and made a mess of gathering a long-range free kick from Txomin Nagore.

Point number that Valencia move up to third but league leaders Celta Vigo play host to Rayo Vallecano on Sunday while second-placed Real Sociedad must travel to follow Basques Alaves.

Deportivo La Coruna, Spanish champions in 2000 and second for the last two years, continued their indifferent start to this season with a 3-1 loss at Villarreal on Saturday.

The Galicians started in promising fashion with Spanish international Victor Sanchez finding the net with a header after just eight minutes but barely launched a decent attack after that.

They threw away the game in the second half with Villarreal getting on their way to their first victory of the season three minutes after half-time when Deportivo defender Cesar Martin scored an own goal.

Nine minutes later, Victor Fernandez put Villarreal ahead from the penalty spot after Moroccan

after 40 minutes thanks to Atletico old boy Ruben Baraja, who stabbed the ball into the net after the Madrid's flamboyant Argentine goalkeeper Mono Burgos had fumbled a corner.

Atletico can feel that justice was served by the manner of their equaliser.

Javi Moreno ensured honours were even when he tapped the ball home with 16 minutes to go after Valencia goalkeeper Santiago Canizares had emulated his oppo-

TOP SIX						
Spanish league table after Saturday's matches (played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, goals against, points):						
Celta Vigo	5	4	1	0	10 3	13
Sociedad	5	4	1	0	15 9	13
Valencia	6	3	2	1	11 4	11
Real Madrid	6	3	2	1	13 7	11
Malaga	5	3	2	0	12 8	11
Santander	6	3	1	2	7 5	10

League One PSG fly on Ronaldinho

AFP, Paris

Brazilian World Cup star Ronaldinho scored with a delightful lob after eight minutes to leave Paris St Germain breathing down the neck of French league leaders Nice on Saturday.

While Nice went back to the top despite dropping two points in a goalless draw at Nantes, PSG raced off to a two-goal lead and held on grimly to beat Troyes 2-1 away.

The Parisians are now third, one point behind Nice and Auxerre, who fell victim to more Brazilian magic, a hat-trick from Juninho Pernambucano sending them crashing to a 3-0 defeat at Lyon.

In Troyes, Ronaldinho was at the heart of PSG's first goal as well when he accelerated away from his marker and released Fabrice Fioresse with a pinpoint pass.

Fioresse's cross was turned in by Argentinian striker Martin Cardetti after just four minutes.

Ronaldinho scored himself four minutes later after he picked up an errant David Hamed pass and, one-on-one with Troyes goalkeeper Toury Heurtelbe, deftly lifted the ball into the net.

PSG spent the rest of the match defending their lead after Tunisian international Rafik Saifi gave Troyes hope with a 19th minute goal and, in second-half injury time, PSG keeper Lionel Letizi saved from Hamed to preserve his side's win.

Nice, without their influential Brazilian Everson, emerged with a point from a match of few chances at struggling Nantes, where supporters held up a banner warning Argentinian coach "Our patience has limits".

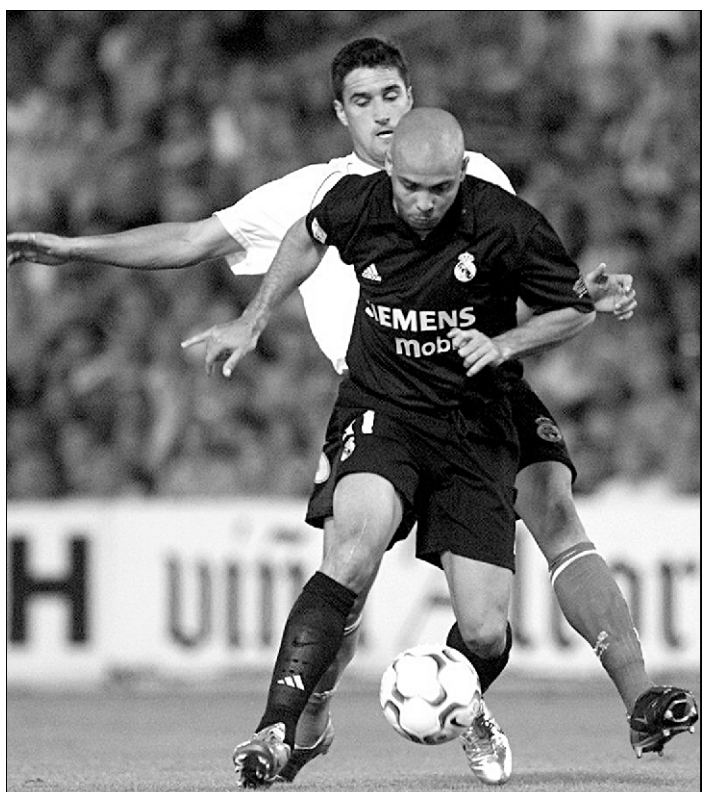
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A delighted Paris Saint-Germain superstar Ronaldinho after his magic goal against Troyes in Troyes on October 19.



Superstar Ronaldo under pressure from Racing Santander's Ismael at Sardinero Stadium in Santander on October 19.

newly-promoted and highly-motivated Cantabrians.

Real coach Vicente Del Bosque was brutally honest in defeat. "We were not as good as them, Racing were brilliant. We didn't control the ball they way we should have done at times," he said.

Racing coach Manuel Preciado couldn't contain his joy. "This was a victory against the best club side ever so a result like this augers well for the future," said Preciado, in response to critics who tipped Racing for relegation.

Reigning champions Valencia were held to a 1-1 draw at Atletico Madrid.

The visitors opened the scoring

international Nouredine Naybet had handled in his own area.

Villarreal played the last 11 minutes with 10 men after Unai Vergara got his second yellow card and his marching orders.

However the home side made sure of three points when their Brazilian defender Belletti scored from a Javier Calleja pass two minutes from time.

Deportivo have now lost as many games as they have won this season, three apiece after six games, including their last two outings.

Ronaldo relishing the prospect

Football

AFP, Sao Paulo

World Cup star Ronaldo said he would be delighted to win the FIFA World Player of the Year award for the third time this year, the Estado de Sao Paulo newspaper reported on Saturday.

The 26-year-old Real Madrid striker scored both goals in Brazil's 2-0 World Cup final victory in

Yokohama, Japan earlier in 2002. Ronaldo, who won the award in 1996 and 1997, said: "It would be a great gift to win the award again. I hope to win the honour but I won't be worrying about it."

When asked if he was disappointed at not being named the official World Cup best player - German keeper Oliver Kahn got that honour - Ronaldo added: "I was not at all bothered. The most important thing was to have won the World Cup and to have played well."