SPÖRT

Big boys only



AFP, Paris

The going is about to get tougher for the 16 elite sides left standing in the Champions League as the second phase begins Tuesday

This is the point at which squad depth increasingly becomes a factor - which is highly fortunate for holders Real Madrid in particular as they head for a crunch Group C encounter at five-times European champions AC Milan.

Real's Brazilian star Ronaldo has flu and is out of the match meaning he will not come up against compatriot Rivaldo, who set up several of his World Cup goals in the summer.

Ronaldo pulled out of Saturday's goalless draw at former club Barcelona and remains on antibiotics so will not be risked with further ties to come against group rivals Lokomotiv Moscow and Borussia Dortmund, who face off in Russia with the Muscovites having just won their championship

Real Madrid director general Jorge Valdano says he can hardly wait for the action to start.

"The match against Milan will be a classic. Football-wise it should be a clash of two top notch teams," Valdano predicted

Aside from Ronaldo's problems Real are already without skipper and central defender Fernando Hierro, who has a twisted ankle while French midfielder Claude Makelele also has an ankle injury.

The biggest loss of all for the "meringues", however, could be Zinedine Zidane, who missed the Barcelona match with back trouble and remains a doubt for Tuesday.

Yet the injury crisis could prove a boon to fringe players Steve McManaman and Fernando

"Milan are very difficult in the first game. But we beat Roma 3-0 in the first game of the last stage so we know we can overcome the top Italian clubs in Italy," insists

Contrast such squad riches with the other end of the Champions League scale, where Swiss minnows FC Basel will bid to complete a hattrick of shocks against British

Premiership

Football

An inspired Robbie Keane let go of

his old club ties to score the second

against former employers Leeds

seventh place, a position confirmed

later Sunday when Charlton

stopped Blackburn advancing with a

strike came in the first half after

former England striker Teddy

Sheringham had given Tottenham

an early lead as United manager

Terry Venables endured an

unhappy return to the club where he

Leeds manager was to sell Republic

of Ireland forward Keane for seven

million pounds in August to

Tottenham in a bid to help clear

finals of the Champions League in

2001, have now won just one of their

last nine Premiership games and

are four points off the relegation

half and they played exceptionally

well," Venables told Sky Sports

not good enough," he added.

Achilles (tendon).

get better."

out of games like this.'

we got three points.'

"Not a lot went right in the first

"The second half was better but

'It didn't help when Nick Barmby

"But we've still got to get results

Venables, who succeeded David

O'Leary in July, admitted that

Leeds' form had come as a shock to

But it is disappointing. We've got to

said: "It was nice to score today but

the most important thing was that

mance, striking partner Sheringham

said: "He brings excitement to the

team. We needed this today. We've

manager Alan Curbishley was

delighted with a result that took his

side four points clear of the relega-

tion zone as they followed up last

spin would kickstart our season, it's

a boost for us and hopefully we can

carry on." he told Sky Sports.

"I said before to win two on the

week's win over Manchester City.

Elsewhere in London, Charlton

had a couple of dodgy results."

"The spirit of the players is good.

Meanwhile a delighted Keane

Commenting on Keane's perfor-

him. "It's been very, very tough.

got injured in the warm-up: his studs

caught in the turf and he's done his

Leeds, who reached the semi-

One of Venables' first acts as

was in charge from 1987-91.

United's debts.

Keane's superb long-range

3-1 win at The Valley.

The result put Tottenham into

here at White Hart Lane on Sunday.

AFP, London

against Manchester United at St Jakob's Park in Group D.

Basel dumped Celtic in the oreliminaries and then managed two draws with four-time continental kings Liverpool to add a second notable scalp to their collection.

United coach Alex Ferguson admired Basel's 3-3 home showing against Liverpool which put the Swiss through.

"Their attacking play was tremendous. It is their major strength and that is obviously something we have to be aware of.'

United are sweating on the fitness of French defender Laurent Blanc, injured in Saturday's win at Old Trafford over Newcastle, having already lost Rio Ferdinand, Gary Neville, David Beckham, Roy Keane and Nicky Butt.

FIXTURES

TUESDAY

Group C At Moscow Lokomotiv Moscow (Rus) v Borussia Dortmund (Ger) (1745 GMT)

At Milan AC Milan (Ita) v Real Madrid (Spa) (1945 GMT)

Group D FC Basel (Swi) v Manchester United (Eng) (1945 GMT) At La Coruna Deportivo La Coruna (Spa) v Juventus (Ita) (1945 GMT)

WEDNESDAY

Group A At Barcelona Bayer Leverkusen (Ger) v Barcelona (Spa) (1945 GMT)

At Newcastle Newcastle (Eng) v Inter Milan (Ita) (1945 GMT) Group B At Rome AS Roma (Ita) v Arsenal (Eng) (1945 GMT)

At Valencia Valencia (Spa) v Ajax (Ned) (1945 GMT)

"We don't know how Blanc is but I hope he will be fit for Tuesday," said Ferguson.

Basel coach Christian Gross, keen to prove that his poor spell at English Premiership club Tottenham was a career blip, is set to play Bernt Haas in defence ahead of Sebastien Barberis while Australian midfielder Scott Chipperfield, who played in Friday's 3-0 romp over Thoune, comes in for the suspended Antonio Esposito.

Depleted United, winners in 1999, will be keen not to go the way of Celtic and Liverpool with even tougher matches at Deportivo La Coruna and Juventus to come.

United played the Spaniards four times last year, losing pool matches home and away and then turning the tables in the quarter-finals before going out to Bayer

Ferguson's men famously recovered from a 2-0 deficit at Juve on the way to winning the tourna-

ment three seasons ago. Deportivo have been highly inconsistent this season - a habit

In the opening phase they won at Bayern Munich but followed up with a 4-0 home loss to AC Milan and later lost in Lens. But a win in Milan booked their passage.

they showed in Europe last season.

Juventus, set to be without Chilean striker Marcelo Salas with a thigh strain, won their first group easily enough - despite a surprise loss at Newcastle as they bid to crank up an Italian renaissance with the two Milan clubs and AS Roma. On Wednesday Newcastle have

their work cut out to see off Inter on Tyneside after leaking five goals at Old Trafford while Group A fellow travellers Bayer Leverkusen take on Barcelona, where Newcastle will head next under former Barca coach Sir Bobby Robson.

Inter are clearly admirers of the English game if reports Sunday are to be believed that they want Manchester United's Welsh flyer Ryan Giggs and Leeds forward Alan

In Group B Arsenal will tackle Roma away hoping to put points on the board before later encounters with Ajax and a buzzing Valencia side who twice proved too clever for Liverpool.

Smith was still trying to make

something happen for Leeds and

his 73rd minute cross from the right

almost found Kewell but was frac-

in the second half at the Valley.

Substitute Paul Konchesky's 59th

minute free-kick from the edge of

But their lead lasted barely 60

However, Blackburn made the

seconds, David Thompson linking

well with Cole before firing home

fatal mistake of leaving Richard

Rufus unattended in front of goal at

a corner and the defender's search-

ing header gave Charlton the lead

Euell let fly with a powerful shot to

Then, in stoppage time, Jason

15 7 3 5 19 12 24

the box put Charlton 1-0 up.

At The Valley, all the goals came



Bernardo Corradi of Lazio scoring with a spectacular scissor-kick against Modena at Rome on November 24.

Naughty, naughty!

AFP, London

Manchester United director Martin Edwards and Newcastle United's deputy chairman Doug Hall paid to have sex with prostitutes in a Geneva hotel ahead of their clubs' draw for the second phase of the Champions League, a British tab-

loid reported Sunday. The Sunday Mirror said former Manchester United chairman Edwards, 57, and Hall, 44, who are both married with children, invited the prostitutes up to their rooms at the Noga Hilton hotel in the early hours of November 15, ahead of the draw for Europe's premier club

tournament the same day. The Mirror carried testimonies from the prostitutes, with one telling the paper that Edwards haggled for her services while Hall paid her friend the going rate.

"Doug was a lot more generous," she said.

According to the Mirror, the trip was paid for by the clubs, who have refused to comment over the alleged incident.

But spokesmen for the teams' supporters clubs called for the immediate resignation of Edwards and Hall.

"Martin Edwards continues to bring shame on the club. It is time his fellow directors told him he needs to go," Manchester United Supporters Association spokesman Andy Walsh told the paper -- which said it was not the first time Edwards had been caught up in a scandal involving a prostitute

The Champions League second phase begins this week. Manchester United travel to Swiss side Basle in their opening tie on Tuesday, though whether Edwards returns to Switzerland remains to be

Newcastle meanwhile host Inter Milan on Wednesday, the same day England's third representative in the competition, Arsenal, play Roma

Rangers plan **Dubai trip**

AFP, Dubai

Scottish footballing giants Rangers will hold a one-week warm weather training camp in Dubai in January, a source close to the Glasgow-based team said Monday.

"The full Rangers squad will be in Dubai from January 13-19 for a training camp. A first choice team will play a match against Al-Shabab, one of the emirate's First Division clubs, on January 18," the source toldAFP

"Dubai was chosen for its good reputation and facilities, while its warm seasonal weather coincides with the winter break in the Scottish season." he said.

The English Football Association (FA) chose Dubai, one of the seven members of the United Arab Emirates federation, as the place for the English team to enjoy rest and relaxation en route to the World Cup earlier this year.

Primera Liga

A Mallorca miss

Football

AFP, Madrid

Real Mallorca squandered the chance to lead the Spanish First Division for only the third time in their history when they were held to a 1-1 draw by Villarreal on Sunday.

Sharing the points also brought seven game winning streak. Real Sociedad hang onto to their

lead in Spain despite only drawing 0-0 at Rayo Vallecano on Saturday.

The Basques have 23 points from games with Mallorca one point adrift in second place. Mallorca controlled much of the

game against Villarreal but went behind when Martin Palermo weaved his way through the home side's defence midway through the Walter Pandiani headed

Mallorca's equaliser 11 minutes after the break for his sixth goal of the season but, try as they might with Pandiani and Ariel Ibagaza going close late in the game, they couldn't snatch a winner. Reigning champions Valencia

stay in third spot but closed the gap on the top two after a comfortable 2-0 win over Valladolid on Sunday. Mista Ferrer, standing in for the

injured Pablo Aimar, proved his worth with two first half goals. However Valencia were spared a

late scare when their Spanish international goalkeeper Santiago Canizares saved a last minute penalty from Gonzalo Colsa, after Valencia defender Amadeo Carboni had brought down Fernando Sales.

One negative point for Benitez that his Argentine playmaker Kily Gonzalez ruptured ligaments in his left ankle after an injury time challenge from David Aganzo. Gonzalez will be out of action for

between two and three months. including Tuesday's Champions League group B match against Ajax.

Real Madrid held Barcelona to a 0-0 draw on Saturday, and edged up to fourth place, but the bitter derby was more notable for what was happened beyond the field of play. The match had to be suspended

midway through the second half when Real playmaker Luis Figo - on Barcelona's books until his world record transfer in July 2000 - had various objects rain, including a whisky bottle and a pig's head, on

TOP SIX

Spanish football league table after Sunday's matches (played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, goals against, points):

Sociedad 11 6 5 0 21 13 23 Mallorca 11 7 1 3 17 13 22 Valencia 11 6 3 2 20 7 21 Real 11 4 6 1 17 10 18 Atletico 11 4 6 1 18 12 18 Celta 11 5 3 3 13 8 18

him while he was trying to take a

Referee Luis Medina Cantaleio decided to send both teams to the dressing room for 10 minutes while

things calmed down in the stands. Atletico Madrid are now unbeaten in their last six games after their 1-0 victory over Real Betis on Sunday and climb to fifth, their highest position of the season.

Fernando Torres, still only 18, an end to Mallorca's club record headed the only goal of a frantic game after 14 minutes.

Athletic Bilbao continued their revival with a 4-1 win over struggling Espanyol.

Three wins now in their last four games have eased the pressure on Athletic coach Jupp Heynckes, whose fractious relationship with the club's fans and players of late seemed to make him a candidate for

Espanyol took the lead after 14 minutes thanks to Maxi Rodriguez but Aitor Larranzabal's penalty five minutes later got Athletic back on level terms.

Athletic then moved up a gear after the break to send Espanyol tumbling to the foot of the table.

Carlos Gurpegi headed Athletic into the lead four minutes after half

Espanyol were reduced to 10 men after 56 minutes when Roger

Garcia picked up his second yellow Ismael Urzaiz and Etxeberria

then finished off Espanyol with late goals for Athletic's best win of the Recreativo Huelva climbed off

the bottom of Spanish First Division. thanks in part to Espanyol's ineptitude and the heroics of substitute Raul Molina who scored two goals in the last five minutes to give Recreativo a 2-1 win over Racing Santander.

Bebeto unwanted at Al-Ittihad

AFP, Riyadh Brazil's 1994 World Cup-winning

star Bebeto has been released by his Saudi club Al-Ittihad for poor form in the five games he played, the club said Monday. Bebeto received 525,000 dollars

of the one-year deal worth 1.1 million dollars he signed with Al-Ittihad in September. The 38-year-old Brazilian scored

just one goal in his limited run in Saudi soccer and was subjected to strong criticism for his poor perfor-

Bebeto formed the Brazilian national side's front-line with Romario during their fourth World Cup win in the United States in 1994 He also played at the 1990 and 1998 World Cup finals and the 1996

Olympic Games. Al-Ittihad also released Nigerian star Tijani Babangida for the same reason as Bebeto, the club said.

Serie A Lazio unperturbed

Football

AFP, Rome

Lazio, crippled by massive debts and put up for sale by their major shareholder, shrugged off their financial worries Sunday to thump Modena 4-0 and rise to third in the Italian First Division

Two goals from Bernardo Corradi and further strikes from South American duo Claudio Lopez and Cesar settled a one-sided contest and saw Lazio leapfrog early season pacemakers Inter

Corradi opened the scoring in the 25th minute with an acrobatic closerange shot before Argentine striker Lopez headed home Lazio's second before the interval

Lopez turned provider to set up Brazilian Cesar for Lazio's third goal 19 minutes from the end, and Corradi headed home in secondhalf stoppage-time to complete the scoring for Roberto Mancini's men.

Lazio, who travel to Austria to face Sturm Graz in the UEFA Cup on Thursday, are looking for new partners following president Sergio Cragnotti's decision to sell his company Cirio's 51 per cent stake in the Roman club.

Mancini complimented his players for their desire to improve on last season's indifferent campaign. "The secret of this squad is the

players," said the former Lazio star. They have come through a difficult year and they want to redeem themselves.

"We played intelligently, without taking risks, and killed the game off early."

AS Roma's hopes of hauling

themselves back into the title race were severely dented after the 2001 champions crashed 3-0 at Parma, their third league defeat of the Sorely missing their inspirational

captain Francesco Totti, who is still nursing a knee injury, Roma's loss means they now trail table-toppers Milan by a massive nine points.

Emiliano Bonazzoli was the architect of Roma's downfall at the Ennio Tardini stadium, scoring a goal in each half and winning a penalty which Romania international Adrian Mutu gratefully converted.

Roma coach Fabio Capello was unhappy with referee Pierluigi Collina whose decision to award a spot-kick when Aldair tussled with Bonazolli allowed Mutu to make it 2-0.

"The penalty was a killer blow.

We didn't deserve to lose like this," lamented Capello, who has openly criticised referees this season for alleged bias against his side.

'Collina blew his whistle and evidently he saw a penalty."

Capello refused to accept defeat in the race for the championship, but admitted Roma now had a mountain

"The numbers speak for themselves." he said.

"We need to stop giving goals away cheaply and be more clinical in front of goal."

Chievo overcame the sendingoff of defender Daniel Andersson to snatch a 1-0 win at home to Empoli to continue their climb up the table.

Massimo Marazzina scored the winner for Luigi Del Neri's men in the 27th minute, Chievo's fifth home victory this season.

Del Neri insisted his side were worthy of all three points which took Empoli to the lofty heights of fifth in Serie A.

"This is a victory for the whole group," he said. "We had our problems but we

deserved to win. In the first-half we played with great character and were worthy of the lead.' Eusebio Di Francesco's header

was enough to give Piacenza a 1-0

triumph over strugglers Torino, while Perugia piled more misery on newly-promoted Como by beating the bottom club 3-0. Elsewhere in Italy, there were 1-1 draws in the matches between

Brescia and Udinese and Reggina and Atalanta. On Saturday Milan went top of Serie A by beating derby rivals inter Milan 1-0 at the San Siro, Brazilian

winger Serginho scoring the decisive goal in the 13th minute. The victory saw Milan go ahead on goal difference of second-placed Juventus, held to a 1-1 draw at

home to Bologna the same day. An under-strength Juventus needed an equaliser five minutes from time by Mark Iuliano to steal a point after Guiseppe Signori's penalty had given the visitors a deserved lead.

TOP SIX

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

Milan	11	8	1	2	26	8	25
Juventus	11	7	4	0	19	6	25
Lazio	11	7	3	1	22	8	24
Inter	11	7	2	2	21	12	23
Chievo	11	7	0	4	20	12	21
Bologna	11	5	4	2	13	9	19

Brazil too hot for Iran!

Football

AFP, Tehran

A bid to lure world champions Brazil to play in football-mad Iran has been cancelled because the Islamic republic could not afford the South American team's 500,000-dollar price tag, an Iranian football official said on Sunday.

domestic sponsors were not successful, since neither could muster the price tag of 500,000 dollars,' marketing head of the Iranian football federation Abbas Torabian told the student news agency ISNA.

"Contacts with international and

ing budget. So we decided to cancel the game for this year." he said. Torabian said the federation would try to schedule the game for 2003 and they hope the fixture will take place in Tehran's Azadi sta-

"The international sponsors told

us that since it is the end of 2002.

they had exhausted their advertis-

capacity. In its 77-year history, Iran has only made it into the World Cup finals on two occasions, in 1978 and 1998. However the squad did storm to victory at the 2002 Asian Games

dium, currently undergoing renova-

tion and which has a 100,000

Bundesliga Results &

top six table German league results on

1860 Munich - 2 (Kauth 39, 71) FC Nuremberg - 2 (Stehle 12, 42) SV Hamburg -1 (Cardoso 47) Energie Cottbus - 1 (Juskowiak

Saturday

Kaiserslautern - 0 Bayern Munich - 2 (Ballack 9, Santa Cruz 16) Hertha Berlin - 0 Werder Bremen 1 (Ailton 10) VfL Wolfsburg - 2 (Klimowicz 19, 55) Borussia Dortmund - 0

Arminia Bielefeld - 2 (Wichniarek 25. 84) Bayer Leverkusen - 2 (Brdaric 17, Zivkovic 69) Borussia Monchengladbach - 2 (Demo 56, Joris van Hout 59) VfL Bochum - 2 (Hashemian 85,

Graulund 90) Schalke 04 - 2 (Sand 5, Mpenzaa 39) Hansa Rostock - 2 (Wibran 51, Prica 86

VfB Stuttgart - 3 (Amanatidis 35, Hleb 54, Stefulj 73-o.g) Hanover German football league top six

table after weekend matches (played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, against, points):

1410 2 2 31 14 32 14 8 2 4 28 25 26 Stuttgart 14 6 6 2 24 15 24 Dortmund 14 6 6 2 19 11 24 Schalke 14 6 5 3 18 13 23 14 6 4 4 16 13 22 Scottish Premiership

in Busan, South Korea.

Larsson keeps **Celtic on track**

AFP, Glasgow

Celta Vigo.

Henrik Larsson's double strike was good enough to give champions Celtic a 2-0 win over Livingston at Almondvale on Sunday.
The result kept Martin O'Neill's

Rangers at the top of the table as Larsson took his goal total for the season to 24. But Celtic's joy was tempered by the sight of Bulgaria midfielder Stilian Petrov having 12 stitches

men a point clear of arch-rivals

inserted in a facial wound, following a collision with Marvin Andrews. It was just what the Glasgow giants did not need four days before their UEFA Cup third round tie at Parkhead against Spanish side

Andrews came close to scoring for Livingston when he headed against the woodwork late on but otherwise Celtic were dominant.

They took the lead in the sixth minute after a strange decision by referee Stuart Dougal Larsson found Petrov, whose

centre to Paul Lambert saw the midfielder find the back of But referee Dougal awarded a

no mistake from the spot.

Only some fine saves from Livingston's Spanish goalkeeper Javier Sanchez-Broto prevented Celtic going further ahead.

penalty instead and Larsson made

But seven minutes from time Larsson wrapped up the points when he capitalised on a slip by Oscar Rubio and shot past Broto.

"Results breed confidence and Tottenham Hotspur striker Robbie Keane (R) trying to get the better of Leeds I'm sure they'll all come in full of United's Teddy Lucic at White Hart Lane on November 24. beans this week. They've been

Keane shows no mercy back Dean Richards as he was about to shoot.

tionally overhit.

from long range

Cole had a penalty claim turned ing goals, bad goals," Souness said.

vital time.' Blackburn stay in ninth. At White Hart Lane, Tottenham took the lead in the 12th minute. A quick throw in by Stephen Carr

and it bounced towards Sheringham Robinson for his fifth goal of the

minutes before half-time to double

by Sheringham. he let fly with a

boot that gave F Leeds show the hour mark Smith and Viduka linked well before the Australian was

Blackburn boss Graeme

Souness bemoaned Rovers' defending after seeing his side dominate the first half when Andy

"I think we just went to sleep at a

found Sheringham and he released Keane, pursued by Teddy Lucic. As Keane stopped to change direction he was robbed of the ball whose first-time strike from the edge of the area swept past keeper Paul

Smith was left to plough a lone furrow and the only surprise was that it took Tottenham until four

keeper Kasev Keller was headed on Gustavo Poyet played the ball through to Keane down the right and

Leeds and England striker Alan

their lead. A long clearance from goal-

from 20 vards

TOP SIX English Premiership table after Sunday's matches (played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, goals

against, points):

again in the 74th minute.

a superb curling effort				_	_			
off the outside of his	Arsenal	15	10	2	3	33	16	32
Robinson no chance.	Liverpool	15	9	4	2	26	13	31
wed more passion	Everton	15	9	2	4	18	15	29
econd half. Just after	Chelsea	15	7	6	2	25	13	27
econd hall. Just after	Man Utd	15	7	5	3	23	16	26

Boro