SPÖRT



UEFA Cup 3rd round defeat to Malaga FC at Elland Road on December 12.

Leeds shown the door



AFP, Paris

Terry Venables' crisis-hit reign as Leeds United boss suffered another setback on Thursday when his English Premiership side crashed out of the UEFA Cup.

Leeds were beaten by Spanish side Malaga 2-1 at Elland Road after having battled to a 0-0 draw in the first leg of the third round tie two

Veteran striker Dely Valdes was Malaga's two-goal star on the night, scoring a late winner after Erik Bakke had cancelled out his first-

Former England national coach Venables put a brave face on another night of bitter disappointment, which will increase the pressure on him to start producing better Premiership results very quickly - his team are fifth from bottom the

"Malaga are a very good side

RESULTS AT A GLANCE

UEFA Cup third round, second leg

Paris St Germain (Fra) 0 Tie finished 2-2 on aggregate, Boavista win on away goals rule

Lens (Fra) 1 (Song 28) Porto Porto win 3-1 on aggregate

At Vigo
Celta Vigo (Spa) 2 (Jesuli 22,
McCarthy 54) Celtic (Sco) 1

Tie finished 2-2 on aggregate

Celtic win on the away goals rule AtLeeds Leeds (Eng) 1 (Bakke 23)

Malaga (Spa) 2 (Dely Valdes 14,

Malaga win 2-1 on aggregate At Liverpool

Liverpool 1 (Owen 20) Vitesse Arnhem (Ned) 0

Liverpool win 2-0 on aggre-At Rome

Lazio (Ita) 0 Sturm Graz (Aut) 1 (Szabicz 86) Lazio win 3-2 on aggregate

At Prague Slavia Prague (Cze) 4 (Skacel

13, Vachousek 52, Kuka 89, 90) PAOK Salonika (Gre) 0

Slavia Prague win 4-1 on aggregate

Maccabi Haifa (Isr) 1 (Badeer 5pen) AEK Athens 4 (Katsouranis 55, Lakis 79, 89, Nalitzis 90)

AEK Athens win 8-1 on aggre-At Stuttgart

VfB Stuttgart (Ger) 1 (Hleb 90) FC Bruges (Bel) 0 Stuttgart win 3-1 on aggregate

Anderlecht (Bel) 2 (Aruna Dindane 28, Jestrovic 69) Bor-

deaux (Fra) 2 (Darcheville 83, 90)

Anderlecht win 4-2 on aggre-

At Athens Panathinaikos (Gre) 1 (Fissas 2) Slovan Liberec (Cze) 0

Panathinaikos win 3-2 on

aggregate At Lyon Lyon (Fra) 0 Denizlispor (Tur) 1

Denizlispor win 1-0 on aggre-

At London Fulham (Eng) 0 Hertha Berlin

Hertha Berlin win 2-1 on aggregate At Kiev

Dynamo Kiev (Ukr) 0 Besiktas

Besiktas win 3-1 on aggregate

At Auxerre Auxerre (Fra) 2 (Tainio 19, Lachuer 48) Real Betis (Spa) 0 Auxerre win 2-1 on aggregate
ON TUESDAY

At Krakow Schalke 04 (Ger) 1 (Hajto 42) Wisla Krakow (Pol) 4 (Zurawski 40, Uche 51, Zurawski 85, Kosowski

Krakow win 5-2 on aggregate

Bayern's weight factor!

Bundesliga preview

AFP, Munich

In an unfestive warning Bayern Munich's stars have been told to shape up and shed a few surplus kilos if they are to land an 18th league title.

Coach Ottmar Hitzfeld bluntly told his charges on Thursday ahead of Saturday's match against Schalke 04 that they had to ensure they return after the looming six week winter break in tip-top shape or he would not be pleased.

"All the players have been weighed," Hitzfeld explained, adding that if anyone comes back in the new year having consumed too much Christmas fayre "he will have to make a donation.

The squad have to adhere strictly to a holiday training plan designed to keep them trim and have access to equipment to monitor their own heart rate.

Hitzfeld says Bayern should do their utmost to go into the winter break with the biggest possible lead over the chasing pack. "It is the last match of the year

and we want to give our fans a great Christmas present in the form of three points," he explained. Meanwhile, Bayern are believed

to have reached agreement with England midfielder Owen Hargreaves. The 21-year-old midfielder, a European Cup winner in 2001, has

months but is ready to stay put. "FC Bayern are one of the best clubs there are. I feel good here and can still go to England when I'm 25 Hargreaves told Kicker

been mulling his options in recent

magazine's website. Liverpool and Arsenal were both reputedly interested in sianina Hargreaves had an opportunity presented itself when the transfer

window reopens in January. Schalke will be hoping they can gain revenge for a German Cup loss at Bayern earlier this month on

They will also hope Danish forward Ebbe Sand can do what he did at the Olympic Stadium in April last year, when he netted a hat-trick in a 3-1 win for Bayern's last home eague loss. Since then Bayern have gone 27

home encounters without defeat. It's unlikely that Schalke will manage to achieve what they did on October 9, 1976, when they slaughtered Bayern 7-0 even though the Bavarians fielded world champions Sepp Maier, Franz Beckenbauer, Uli Hoenes and Gerd Muller in their

Reigning champions Borussia "I like to be a winner. I have Dortmund will bid to gnaw away at an eight-point gap with a win at bottom side Energie Cottbus, who have managed just four points in eight home outings.

FIXTURES

Saturday: Bayern Munich v Schalke 04, Werder Bremen v Borussia M'gladbach Hannover 96 v Arminia Bielefeld, Hansa Rostock v SV Hamburg, icii, bayei Leverkusen v FC Nuremberg,

Primera Liga preview

Don't take Recreativo for granted

Football

AFP, Madrid

Spanish league basement club Recreativo Huelva are determined to pile on the misery for European champions Real Madrid on Sunday.

Real have not lost at home in the league for more than two years but the Bernabeu stadium is no longer the intimidating citadel it once was. Ronaldo, Zinedine Zidane, Raul

and company have now gone five games, and more than two months, without a victory in front of their home fans and after drawing 2-2 with Lokomotiv Moscow in the Champions League on Wednesday, the players trooped off with their heads held low and 40,000 supporters whistling their derision. Recreativo's 1-1 draw with

Deportivo La Coruna last Sunday showed the way that they can thwart Real, in a counter-attacking fashion, and they have a genuine goal-getter in the form of Raul Molina.

A late developer, learning his trade in the second and Third Divisions with Atletico Madrid's reserve team, the 26 year-old striker moved to Recreativo last season and prospered. His 15 goals were instrumental in

Recreativo getting promoted to the First Division after a gap of 23 years and he has already found the net five times this season, half of Recreativo's entire tallv.

"Last season I scored against Atletico on my return to Madrid with Recreativo so now I want to add the Bernabeu to the list of my scalps,

growing injury list.

Club captain Fernando Hierro is out for three weeks with a sprained right ankle. French midfielder Claude Makelele will miss the next two games with a hamstring strain while the Brazilian duo of Ronaldo and Roberto Carlos are also doubt-

four point advantage over Valencia with third-placed Celta Vigo one point further back on 24 points

However, Sociedad coach Raynald Denoueix is still far from satisfied at the state of affairs in San Sebastian and is looking to improve

at the front. Sociedad have not won by more



Real Madrid superstar Ronaldo drives to Ruber International Clinic in Madrid on December 12 to undergo a check on his right leg after suffering an injury during the European Champions League match against Lokomotiv on December 11.

Recreativo may be looking for a historic win to prise themselves off the foot of the table but, at the other end, Real Sociedad continue as league leaders and remain unbeaten after 13 games.

The Basques have 29 points, a

than a one goal margin since the second week of the season and Denoueix feels that the time is ripe for a change on Sunday, against a demoralised Real Mallorca still smarting from the 5-1 thrashing they received from Real Madrid last

"We are going well in training and making progress, but I'm impressing on the players every time that they have to cut out their

errors "said Denoueix If Valencia are to maintain contact with Real Sociedad then they will have to make their own little bit of history by winning for the first time

at Villarreal on Saturday. Barcelona may have equalled the Champions League record with their tenth consecutive victory in the competition on Wednesday but coach Louis van Gaal knows that they have to get back to business on the home front against struggling Sevilla on Sunday.

The Catalans currently lie tenth and nothing less than their first victory in five domestic outings will quieten the critics, who are calling for his head

Micheal Reiziger is out for six weeks after tearing his right hamstring in Wednesday's 3-1 win over Newcastle United in the Champions League while fellow Dutchmen Philip Cocu and Frank de Boer are

FIXTURES

(Kick off GMT in parentheses) Saturday: Alaves v Atletico Madrid (1930), Villarreal v Valencia (2030) Sunday: Real Betis v Rayo Vallecano (1600), Deportivo La Coruna v Màlaga (1600),

Osasuna v Espanyol (1600), Racing Santander v Celta Vigo (1600), Real Sociedad v Real Mallorca (1600), Valladolid v Athletic Bilbao (1600), Real Madrid v Recreativo Huelva (1730), Barcelona v Sevilla (1930)

Premiership preview

Hammers in deadly territory

Football

West Ham's Premiership survival credentials face a tough examination on Saturday when Glenn Roeder takes his injury-hit squad to Old Trafford to face a resurgent Manchester United. If they can dispose of the team

United can move level on points with leaders Arsenal, who are not in action until Sunday's north London derby clash with Spurs. With United in irresistible form after recent victories over Liverpool,

currently propping up the table,

Arsenal and Deportivo La Coruna. they were always likely to start as clear favourites. But West Ham's injury pr have further tilted the odds even further in favour of the home side.

Roeder is without captain Paulo di Canio, and fellow striker Frederic Kanoute and has only three fully fit midfielders -- Joe Cole, Michael Carrick and Trevor Sinclair.

United, in contrast, are spoiled for choice following David Beckham's return to action as a second-half substitute against Deportivo. He had been out for nearly a month with fractured ribs. But, for once, the England cap-

tain is not an automatic choice with United boss Alex Ferguson obliged to consider sticking with the line-up that has served him so well over the last couple of weeks. Chelsea, currently a point ahead of Ferguson's men in second place.

away from Middlesbrough with a Boro have stumbled in the last two weeks, losing to West Brom then drawing with West Ham, but

can go top of the league if they come

they remain unbeaten at their Riverside stadium. Spurs go into Sunday's derby seeking revenge for a 3-0 defeat at Highbury last month. Arsenal were in irresistible form that day but the controversial sending-off of Spurs striker Simon Davies after only 26

minutes made their task easier.

Spurs' Irish fullback Steve Carr admitted. "We didn't play well, went down to 10 men early and that changed everything. "The lads know we can't have

performances like that against a

"It was disappointing up there,"

team of Arsenal's quality but they are raring to go and can't wait for it." Carr acknowledged though that Arsenal would also have their own point to prove after being outbattled by Manchester United last week-

"It's a big game for them as well after getting beaten by United so it's a massive game for both clubs,'

Carr said. Arsenal are expected to be without skipper Patrick Vieira, who limped out of the Champions League draw with Valencia in mid-

week after only 37 minutes. If Vieira does not make a surprise recovery, fit-again Ray Parlour

can expect to start. "If Patrick is fit then I am sure he will come straight back in the team because he is a vital player for us.'

Parlour said

"But if he isn't, hopefully I can make the most of it. It didn't go too badly against Valencia. I lacked a bit of sharpness but, considering it was my first game for 12 weeks other than a reserve match and a 30 minutes-each-way in a friendly, it went well.

"Tottenham came here (on November 16) and we beat them 3-0. Now we are going back to White Hart Lane. But you enjoy playing in games like that, you don't need to motviate yourself for Spurs away."

FIXTURES

1500 GMT kick-off unless stated) Saturday: Aston Villa v West Brom, Charlton v Man City, Everton v Blackburn, Man Utd v West Ham (1215 GMT), Middlesbroug Southampton v Newcastle

Sunday: Fulham v Birmingham (1400 GMT), Sunderland v Liverpool (1605 GMT), Tottenham

v Arsenal (1400 GMT) Monday: Bolton v Leeds

League One preview

All eyes on



The French league leaps back into action on Saturday after last week's round of League Cup games with the focus on whether Nice can continue to hold on to their surprise

Nice, who are two points to the good over Lyon, Guingamp, Auxerre

Before then Marseille have a chance to go top for a night when they travel to Sedan in one of Saturday's two fixtures.

Considered the biggest club in France. Marseille have nonetheless failed to land a title since they won the European Cup in 1993, and appear to be trying to make it up to their long-suffering fans this season

of going top for a night has failed to get the Velodrome boys excited. "Sedan will have a big advantage over us because the players are well

Perrin has another reason to Sedan might be struggling in 14th in the French table on 22 points, but 14 of those points have

Ardennes area.

been earned at the home of the

"Wild Boars" - so called because of

the quality of hunting in the

midfielder Salomon Olembe (thigh) is also unavailable, although Perrin will welcome back feisty winger Brahim Hemdani and Frank

Asuar, who was born in Marseille and also played at the club. Asuar returns from a month-long

Marseille player, Hamada Jambay, could also line up as Sedan's sweeper.

On Sunday Nice will have some hunting of their own to do when they travel to Bordeaux hoping to replace the memory of elimination from the

league wilderness because they were not deemed to have the finances to survive the top flight. Now, after 18 games and six wins the majority of which have shown an attractive blend of flowing, attacking football - most of the

Nice will welcome back Jose Cobos, who is recovering from a muscle strain and Romain Pitau.

FIXTURES Saturday: Sedan v Marseille,

Sunday: Auxerre v Strasbourg, Bordeaux v Nice, Lens v Le Havre, Lyon v Montpellier, Ajaccio v Lille

Serie A preview

Lazio's Juve mission

Football

champions Juventus.

AFP, Rome Lazio midfielder Stefano Fiore is determined to make up for last weekend's capitulation against Inter Milan by taking all three points from Sunday's trip to reigning Italian

Rome club Lazio stormed into a three-goal lead at the Stadio Olimpico on Sunday thanks to Claudio Lopez's stunning hat-trick, but they had to be content with a point after Inter came storming back to snatch a 3-3 draw.

Questions were raised about Lazio's title credentials after their collapse which sparked speculation as to whether they have the stomach for a genuine championship challenge. But Fiore is in no doubt Lazio can

live with the big boys this season despite the club's ongoing financial problems "We have found the right balance and have demonstrated that we can

fight with the very best in Italy," said

the former Italy international. "Up until now Inter have given us the most problems but that is in the past, "Everbody here is just focusing on going to Juventus on Sunday with the intention of bringing back three points.

"We've thrown some important points away since the start of the season, but we are satisfied with our position in the table. "AC Milan were winning all the

praise at the start of the season but at the moment it is Lazio who are playing the best football. Although the players have not been paid for three months because

of Lazio's cash crisis, Fiore dismissed reports of unrest in the dressing-room. "We are bored by this talk that we haven't been paid in months." he

trating on is just playing football," he added "We have no intention of ruining

into our season so far.' Juventus are hurting too after suffering their first defeat of the campaign at Brescia last week. But the title holders were back to

Wednesday when they thrashed Swiss side Basel 4-0 in the Champions League in Turin. League leaders AC Milan can hold onto top spot with a victory at Como, still searching for their first

their impressive best on

win since being promoted last season. Brazilian Rivaldo is expected to start the match after recovering from

The World Cup winner made a brief appearance as a second-half substitute in Milan's 1-0 Champions League win over Borussia Dortmund in Germany on

Wednesday. Fourth-placed Inter Milan host struggling Atalanta amid the news that star striker Christian Vieri has been ruled out for a month with a hamstring strain. The Italy forward pulled up with

the injury during Tuesday's 3-2 win over Bayer Leverkusen in the Champions League and had tests on Thursday. An Inter spokesman said Vieri

would miss the remaining two Serie A matches before the Christmas break but was hopeful the striker would be back when the season restarts on January 12 with Inter hosting Modena.

"He certainly won't play again in 2002 and will receive special treatment throughout the holiday period with the aim of returning on January 12." said the spokesman. Thre is also growing concern

about the San Siro pitch. Colombian defender Ivan Cordoba believes Inter and their ground-sharing neighbours Milan deserve a better playing surface.

"You can ask any player from Milan or Inter and they will tell you that the pitch is not worthy of such "In all honesty all we are concenprestigious clubs," he said.

"It is important to try to find a solution quickly because a better

the entertainment level for the fans. The state of the pitch has been a constant problem for the Milan clubs as as the high stands in the stadium

do not allow enough sunlight to feed

2001, desperately need a victory at

AS Roma, who won the title in

home to Reggina to kick-start their season after an alarming slump in Fabio Capello's side dropped to 11th in the table following last week's loss at Milan while a 2-0 defeat away at Ajax on Tuesday left

e Champions League. Parma travel to local rivals Bologna boosted by the news that in-form striker Adriano wants to stay at the club.

them on the brink of elimination from

The Brazilian is part-owned by Inter, who are reportedly keen to take back the 20-year-old next

"For now I am a Parma player," he said. "I feel happy here and am enjoying my football

FIXTURES

(1400 GMT kick-off unless stated) Saturday: Bologna v Parma (1930 GMT), Piacenza v Chievo 1700 GMT)

Sunday: Brescia v Perugia, Como AC Milan, Empoli v Modena, Inter Milan v Atalanta, AS Roma v Reggina, Udinese v Torino, Juventus v Lazio (1930 GMT).

Milan rout

Friendly

Qatar

AFP, Doha Result from a football friendly match

played here on Thursday: Qatar 0 AC Milan 6 (Rivaldo 11. Leonardo 18, 63, Tomasson 35, 40, Serginho 44)

STARING AT DOOM! Leeds United's coach Terry Venables (2nd from R) and the training staff are dejected during the

showed great spirit and got back to the hard work down the left wing and

1-1, and I thought we were the team which was going to go ahead," he "To do that against a team that can play like that - and we did not let them play - I think we did well up until

half-time and then for 25 minutes

To complete a miserable night for Venables, Michael Bridges, making

his second start after two years out through injury, ruptured an Achilles tendon and is likely to be out for the rest of the season. Lee Bowyer is also facing a European ban after a brutal chal-

up with what looked like a stamp on the Malaga player's face. By contrast. Celtic will celebrate European football after Christmas for the first time in 23 years after beating Celta Vigo on away goals.

Celta won the second leg 2-1 to

draw 2-2 on aggregate, but John Hartson's goal after 36 minutes was

enough to see the Scottish champi-

lenge on Gerardo which he followed

After losing 1-0 in the first leg at Parkhead two weeks ago, the Spaniards got on level terms when Benni McCarthy found Jesuli Mora open after 22 minutes. Celtic put the onus back on Celta

when they equalised on the night,

getting a vital away goal nine min-

AFP, Nyon

Liverpool, the 2001 champions,

were drawn to play French side

Auxerre in the fourth round of the

UEFA Cup here on Friday and could

be on course for a Battle of Britain

German outfit Stuttgart next

February and if they win they will

meet the English Premiership side

If the Battle of Britain does mate-

rialize it will be a repeat of their first-

round clash in 1997-98 when

Liverpool progressed on away goals after drawing 2-2 at Parkhead and

Meanwhile a pair of Michael Owen goals saw Liverpool win both

legs of their third round against

Dutch side SBV Vitesse and they

next meet Auxerre, who beat

English side Arsenal in the UEFA

Champions League first group

will be a meeting of friends Gerard

Houllier and Auxerre boss Guy

Roux, as well as a chance for the

Reds boss to get a look at one of his

reported transfer targets, Djibril

Parry was pleased with the draw.

Liverpool chief executive Rick

"I know Gerard is excited. He's

knows more about them (Auxerre)

and there's real excitement," said

"That'll be exciting, no doubt about that," added Parry, of the

prospect of taking on British rivals Celtic.

would rather not think ahead and

would focus on the match against

Auxerre for now. "We'll take this one

they've got very good young play-

Bourgoin shook Parry's hand after the draw, saying: "The little one

that could happen to us," said

against the big one.

But he insisted that Liverpool

"It's a difficult draw because

Auxerre joint president Gerard

"It's the most interesting thing

Liverpool's fourth-round match

Scottish champions Celtic face

quarter-final against Celtic.

over two legs in March.

0-0 at Anfield.

utes before the break when Hartson played and managed all my life at the highest level, it's very important connected with Chris Sutton's pass. McCarthy scored at close range Liverpool given

French challenge

"We are the outsiders, we will behave like serious people. Of course we have our win against Arsenal, but that does not mean we will be able to feel safe. We will be playing a footballing monument.

passed into the box to the feet of the

. South African striker but Celtic clung

on to book their place in the last

goal to give Liverpool a 1-0 win over

Dutch side Vitesse Arnhem on the

Houllier admitted his side had been

was to qualify and get ready for the

and lost. Today I did not think that we

played that well but at least we were

strong and showed good desire to

Fulham's run in the competition, which began in the Intertoto Cup

back in July, came to an end when

their 0-0 draw with Hertha Berlin put

Londoners' French coach Jean

Tigana said he was hungry to return

to European competition again next

season even if it meant taking the

much-maligned Intertoto route

the Premiership so I'd take the

Intertoto Cup option. I'd do it all

"I don't know if we can qualify via

Despite the defeat, the

then out 2-1 on aggregate.

But Liverpool boss Gerard

"The most important thing today

"We have played better games

night and 2-0 on aggregate.

less than convincing.

next round next year.

Michael Owen scored the only

"The fact that we are the last French side will give added responsibility and motivation to the play-Italian side Lazio have been drawn against Polish side Wisla

Wisla have already beaten

Parma in round one and are eyeing another scalp after seeing off 1997 champions FC Schalke 04 on Tuesday. Another former winner, the 1983 champions RSC Anderlecht, face Panathinaikos with the Greek side's

rivals AEK Athens drawn against

Malaga, the only remaining Spanish

challenger after they defeated

Hertha Berlin and Boavista, who

Leeds United. Denizlispor take on Portugal's FC Porto, while their Turkish league rivals Besiktas will bid for a quarterfinal spot against Czech outfit Slavia

defeated English side Fulham and French outfit Paris Saint-Germain respecitvely, were drawn together. Fourth-round matches are on February 20 and 27, with the quarter-finals on March 13 and 20. Times and venues will be finalised on

December 18.

Boavista (Por)

Denizlispor (Tur)

pool (Eng)

The draw made here on Friday for the UEFA Cup fourth round and quarter-finals: Match 1: Slavia Prague (Cze) v Besiktas (Tur) Match 2: Hertha Berlin (Ger) v

THE <u>DRAW</u>

Match 3: Malaga (Spa) v AEK Athens (Gre) Match 4: Lazio (Ita) v Wisla Krakow (Pol) Match 5: Anderlecht (Bel) v Panathinaikos (Gre) Match 6: Celtic (Sco) v VfB

Match 7: FC Porto (Por) v

Match 8: Auxerre (Fra) v Liver-

QUARTER-FINAL Winner Match 1 v Winner Match 4 Match 3 v Match 2 Match 6 v Match 8 Match 7 v Match 5

* Fourth round: 1st leg on February 20, return leg February 27 * Quarter-finals: March 13 and 20

Energie Cottbus v Borussia Dortmund Sunday: VfL Wolfsburg v VfB Stuttgart, Kaiserslautern v Hertha

and Marseille - all on 31 points - face a tricky away trip to Bordeaux on

by playing some refreshing football. Marseille will travel to the chilly Ardennes region hoping to build on that form, but even the enticement

used to training and playing in particular weather conditions," said Marseille coach Alain Perrin, referring to the wet and foggy climate expected at Sedan's Louis-Duguaguez stadium. treat their encounter with suspicion.

Sedan, who on their return to the top flight two years ago surprised all by leading the league for a spell, will be relieved to know that Marseille will be without star Brazilian forward Fernandao, who has a calfiniury. Cameroon international

Leboeuf, who has been ill with gastro-interitis. As for Sedan, one player in particular who could have mixed emotions is their playmaker Ludovic

injury lay-off, while another former

League Cup last week with their seventh win of the season. Before the start of the season the French Riviera club were threatened with demotion to the French

deserve to be there.

league are convinced that Nice

Sochaux v Bastia

Monaco v Guingamp, Nantes v Troyes, Rennes v Paris St Germain,