



NOT ME, YOU DID IT TONIGHT! AC Milan's superstriker Andriy Shevchenko (R) gets into the lap of team goalkeeper Nelson de Jesus Dida after scoring the deciding goal in the shoot-out in the all-Italian European Champions League final against Juventus at Old Trafford on May 28.

## SHOOTOUT AT A GLANCE

AFP, Manchester

Champions League final result at Old Trafford on Wednesday.  
AC Milan (ITA) 0 Juventus (ITA) 0 after extra time  
AC Milan win 3-2 on penalties  
**PENALTIES**  
David Trezeguet (Juventus) - penalty saved by Dida  
**Juventus 0 AC Milan 0**  
Serginho (AC Milan) - scores, sending Gianluigi Buffon the wrong way  
**Juventus 0 AC Milan 1**  
Alessandro Birindelli (Juventus) - scores, sending Dida the wrong way  
**Juventus 1 AC Milan 1**  
Clarence Seedorf (AC Milan) - penalty saved to right by Buffon  
**Juventus 1 AC Milan 1**  
Marcelo Zalayeta (Juventus) - penalty saved by Dida  
**Juventus 1 AC Milan 1**  
Kakha Kaladze (AC Milan) - penalty saved in centre of goal by Buffon  
**Juventus 1 AC Milan 1**  
Paolo Montero (Juventus) - misses penalty  
**Juventus 1 AC Milan 1**  
Alessandro Nesta (AC Milan) - coolly slots home  
**Juventus 1 AC Milan 2**  
Alessandro Del Piero (Juventus) - scores, rolling ball into the net  
**Juventus 2 AC Milan 2**  
Andriy Shevchenko (AC Milan) - scores past Buffon's outstretched hand to win the trophy for AC Milan  
**Juventus 2 AC Milan 3**



FALLEN STARS! Shell-shocked Juventus forwards Alessandro Del Piero (L) and David Trezeguet try to come to terms with their Champions League final defeat against AC Milan.

# Sleepy giant awakes



REUTERS, Manchester

Milan's sixth European Cup win, over Juventus on Wednesday, restores their status at the top of the game but Carlo Ancelotti's side are still well short of the enthralling and entertaining play produced by earlier teams.

In fairness to Ancelotti it is not for want of trying to match Arrigo Sacchi's side, who were crowned champions in 1989 and 1990, and the Fabio Capello team that swept aside Barcelona 4-0 in 1994.

Ancelotti has built a Milan team that is positive and is committed to progressive passing and movement as they displayed in the opening 45 minutes against Juve.

The defending and distribution of captain Paolo Maldini and Alessandro Nesta at Old Trafford was sublime at times and Andrea Pirlo in midfield kept Clarence Seedorf and Rui Costa well fed with possession.

In attack Andriy Shevchenko, who had an early effort ruled out

but sealed the win with an ice-cool final penalty, and his partner Filippo Inzaghi were much more of a threat than the Juventus pairing of David Trezeguet and Alessandro Del Piero.

However in their last three Champions League games, Milan failed to win in regular time and managed just a solitary goal in 300 minutes of play -- Shevchenko's strike in the 1-1 semi-final second leg against Inter.

All of those matches were against tight Italian defences and in the earlier stages of the competition, when Milan sparked in their 4-0 away win at Deportivo Coruna and also beat last year's champions Real Madrid, Ancelotti's team displayed real flair.

But Milan have high standards to live up to -- Sacchi's side were one of the best ever in European competition, combining the expert defending of Franco Baresi and a young Maldini with the imagination and enterprise of Dutchmen Ruud Gullit and Marco van Basten in attack.

Later Capello remoulded the squad with the Yugoslav Dejan Savicevic and the Croatian

Zvonimir Boban the main creative forces allied with the power of France's Marcel Desailly in the centre of midfield.

While former captain Baresi would have appreciated the performances of Nesta, Maldini and Alessandro Costacurta in defence it is hard to imagine that Sacchi's side would have faded in the way that Milan did.

Ancelotti's approach relies heavily on Portugal international Rui Costa being able to open the opposition defence and the second half showed that when he or Seedorf are unable to do so the team lack a cutting edge.

Club president and Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi has given Ancelotti the task of rediscovering what he calls "the spectacle" and it will be interesting to see if, as so often in the past, he brings in players to liven up the attack.

Brazilian Rivaldo was signed after his World Cup success last year to deliver that but apart from sporadic moments he has been hugely disappointing and watched the semi-finals and the final from the bench.

## Seedorf treble

REUTERS, Manchester

Dutch midfielder Clarence Seedorf broke down in tears after becoming the first player to win the European Cup with three different clubs on Wednesday.

Seedorf was one of 10 men before this final to win the European Cup with two clubs having played for Ajax (against Milan) in 1995 and for the Real Madrid team which beat Juventus in 1998.

"It's incredible, incredible," Seedorf told British television broadcaster ITV Sport. "I don't have any words. I am so, so happy."

Sobbing, the Dutchman -- one of two Milan players to have his penalty saved -- added: "It has just been a great spectacle for us, a great atmosphere today, a great stadium."

"I think Milan deserved it, during the game we were the better team I think."



THE PARTY BEGINS: Fans of AC Milan are in euphoria after their beloved team won the most coveted trophy in Europe on May 28.



REUTERS, Rome

AC Milan's Champions League final victory over Juventus left Europe's media wondering what ever happened to the so-called Italian renaissance.

"What a bore," moaned Spanish daily Marca on Thursday after 120 minutes of goalless football at Old Trafford the night before finished in a 3-2 win on penalties for Carlo Ancelotti's side.

"Give the Cup back (to Real Madrid)," continued the paper that earlier in the week had predicted a mind-numbing deadlock between two defensive teams.

Marca's told-you-so tone on the morning after was echoed by rival sports daily AS.

"They should prohibit two Italian teams from playing in a European final because, as (Johann) Cruyff has said, the presence of just one Italian team is a tragedy for football," it crowed.

Both were predictably sour reactions from papers that had attacked Juventus and Inter Milan for "undeserved" wins over Barcelona and Valencia in the quarterfinals of this season's competition.

Even the Italian press, however, could not help but scratch their head after the final, which they had billed as a crowning moment for the Italian game.

While the result, they admitted, represented a victory for individuals - above all Milan president Silvio Berlusconi and coach Ancelotti - it had failed to dispel Italy's image as the home of dull, defensive football.

"From now on it'll be difficult to argue with the aesthetes of football - those who insist the true European final was last month's showdown between Real Madrid and Manchester United," commented La Gazzetta dello Sport on Thursday.



THE TENSION MOUNTS: Two tense AC Milan supporters hold their breath during the tie-breaker in the European Champions League final at Old Trafford.

"It will also revive our vociferous Spanish critics and sow doubt in England and France, where they had just started to celebrate Italy's footballing style."

The two teams' failure to score was especially disappointing, continued La Gazzetta, because they had started so promisingly, both seemingly committed to shaking off the old stereotypes with a display of fluid, attacking football.

"In front of 500 million people across the world, Juve and Milan freed themselves from the fear of losing," it said.

"The opening 15 minutes promised spectacle, excitement and fireworks, maybe a memorable

match.

"But after 120 minutes it boiled down to penalties, which returned like a condemnation of Italian football."

Italy's last triumph in the Champions League - by Juventus in 1996 - was also achieved on penalties.

English reaction, meanwhile, was the most varied, ranging from boredom to incomprehension at the Italian way of playing football to polite applause.

"The Eurovision Pong Contest! Milan win stinker of an Old Trafford final," ran a strident headline in The Daily Mirror, which went on to describe the match as "a

drab stalemate".

The Daily Express euphemistically branded it "a game for purists", but the Daily Mail was more appreciative, commenting: "This might have been billed as an encounter that could send its spectators to sleep, but it did anything but that."

The Guardian mustered the warmest praise.

"Juve and Milan came to Old Trafford to prove how attractive an impasse can be," it said - hardly the compliment Italian football was fishing for, but a fitting coda to a anti-climactic end to the European competition.

# Delight and despair



REUTERS, Milan/Turin

The city of Milan burst into spontaneous celebration after AC Milan won a dramatic Champions League final penalty shootout on Wednesday while a shroud of silence fell over Turin, home town of losing finalists Juventus.

Fans in both cities had crowded around huge screens and crammed into bars to watch the first all-Italian Champions League final but had to sit through more than two hours of goalless football before Milan triumphed 3-2 on spot kicks.

"I watched two dreadful halves, 30 minutes of nail-biting extra time and in one second of a nightmare shootout, my world has crashed around me," said Juventus fan Tomaso Rossi, who watched the

match in Turin's central Piazza Castello.

But 140 km (88 miles) down the road, Milan fans forgot how they had clutched their temples every time Juventus attacked and predicted a golden era for their club, owned by Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi.

"We're six-times European champions. Now we're going to win the World Championship, Serie A and the European Cup again. Nobody can stop us," cried Riccardo Battaglia, hanging out of one of the hundreds of cars in a huge traffic jam.

Other fans decked Italy's financial capital in Milan's red and black flags and fired bright red flares into the balmy evening air.

Flocks of the 30,000 people who watched the match on a giant screen in Milan's San Siro stadium hugged each other on the metro trains home.

"This was judgement day for Juve -- they can't win forever," beamed 27-year-old Tarek, waving a blue and yellow Ukrainian flag in honour of Milan striker Andriy Shevchenko, who scored the decisive penalty at Manchester's Old Trafford stadium.

In Turin, groups of grown men collapsed on the side of the street, weeping quietly on each other's shoulders.

Others kicked despondently through the sea of empty bottles in Piazza Castello, blaming the loss on a weakened midfield that missed the influence of a suspended Pavel Nedved.

"We played so well against Real Madrid in the semifinals but without Nedved they were like a bunch of teenagers. I can't bear it," said Geli Odobashi, an Albanian immigrant who said his job in life was to cheer on the recently-crowned Serie A champions.

## The family affair



REUTERS/AFP, Manchester

Paolo Maldini completed a unique family double when he emulated his father Cesare and captained AC Milan to their penalty shootout victory over Juventus in the Champions League final at Old Trafford on Wednesday.

Never before had a son followed his father in skippering the same club to victory in Europe's premier competition -- or any other major final. Cesare led Milan to their first European Cup success when they beat Benfica 2-1 at Wembley 40 years ago.

Either Cesare or Paolo have been involved in all six of Milan's European Cup successes. Cesare skippered the side in 1963 and was assistant coach to Nereo Rocco when they won the trophy for the second time in 1969. He is now, in his early 70s, the club's chief scout.

"There has always been myself or my father involved. With Milan these things can happen -- it is too beautiful for words," said an ecstatic Paolo afterwards.

This was Paolo's fourth European

Cup success with Milan, having played in the winning teams in 1989, 1990, 1994 and now this season. He was also in the teams beaten by Olympique Marseille in 1993 and Ajax Amsterdam in 1995.

At the age of 34, Maldini knows there will not be too many more nights like this.

"It is the sixth time I've played in a European Cup final but it feels like it is the first," Maldini said.

It might have taken a penalty shoot-out to secure victory over Juventus, but Milan's greater attacking endeavour in the 120 minutes that preceded the finale made them deserved winners.

None more so than Maldini, whose customary excellence at the heart of Milan's defence was rewarded with the man of the match award.

Maldini was still a teenager when he first established himself as a regular in the great Milan teams of the late 80s and early 90s. It was as a left back that he first made his name and where he has won most of his 126 caps for Italy.

But for club at least he has since switched to the centre of a back four whose solidity has been the basis for Milan's unexpected return to the top of European football.