

## Premiership Silvestre sinks Liverpool

### Football

AFP, Manchester

A rare double from French defender Mikael Silvestre handed Manchester United teammate Rio Ferdinand a victorious Premiership return to the team in a 2-1 victory over Liverpool here on Monday.

Ferdinand had earned an instant recall from manager Sir Alex Ferguson on finishing his eight-month ban for missing a drugs test and gave an assured performance at the back as United dominated most of the match.

Silvestre though was the goalscoring hero as he scored with two headers -- one in each half -- while Liverpool had briefly levelled at 1-1 through a fortuitous own-goal by John O'Shea.

Ferdinand was just delighted to have got back to playing football.

"It was never going to be easy and I was under no illusions it would be easy both physically and mentally and nice to play the ball around," the 25-year-old England international told Sky Sports.

He admitted that the physical wear and tear of the match had taken its toll.

"I guess it was a huge loss of nervous energy and I needed some sugar intake and the physio brought the bar around to give me.

"I'm not looking back, I'm looking to the future to play football like I wanted to when I was a kid.

"I never ever failed to accept responsibility and that is a fact.

"It is for others to learn from and the next person to do that knows what will happen. He will be bang to rights."

Ferguson was delighted with the ease that Ferdinand had played himself back into the match.

"Rio was superb," purred the Scot.

"He brings a composure and an authority to the defence that was missing. The back four were really good, defending quickly and aggressively."

"It is a very welcome win after a lot of injuries. It's a wonderful win against historically our biggest rivals.

"The only thing that worried me was not scoring goals in the first-half and the first 15 minutes of the second half they made life very difficult for me.

There was not such good news for England coach Sven-Goran Eriksson in the case of Liverpool midfielder Steven Gerrard, who went off in the first-half and is feared to have broken a metatarsal bone in his foot and could be out for six to eight weeks.

"No one was behind me when (Xabi) Alonso passed to me," said Gerrard.

"I turned but my foot stayed in the turf."

"It is a disappointing result for us but we paid for our first-half performance and it was equally disappointing to concede two goals to set pieces and to the same player."

Liverpool's Spanish manager Rafael Benitez said Gerrard's injury was a body blow.

"Gerrard is a bad blow. For us it looks like he will be out for six to eight weeks."

"He will be examined again tomorrow."

Liverpool equalised against the run of play as Steve Finnan's header from Alonso's freekick was going across goal but rebounded off Roy Carroll's thigh onto O'Shea's knee and over the line in the 54th minute.

Liverpool were a changed side after that piece of luck and Alonso's compatriot Josemi tried a bold effort from 30 metres out which just sailed over the bar.

However all that new found confidence disappeared in the 66th minute as Silvestre rose imperiously to meet Ryan Giggs' corner and power it into the net.

Alonso though refused to lie down and unleashed a superb effort in the 70th minute as he spied Carroll off his line and from 40 metres shot, but the United keeper was just able to get back and parry it.

Argentine defender Gabriel Heinze came to United's rescue with five minutes remaining as the ball whipped across the box but just as it looked like it would fall to Milan Baros, the Olympic gold medallist stuck out a foot to concede a corner.

Ferdinand was called for a foul on Luis Garcia in the third minute as he clattered him from behind. From the resulting freekick Djibril Cisse was presented with a glorious chance from Josemi's low cross but he airkicked it from just five metres out.

Portuguese star Cristiano Ronaldo produced a superb run and shot from distance in the 10th minute which beat Jerzy Dudek -- making his 100th start for Liverpool -- but came off the post and it was eventually cleared for a corner.

Two minutes later and Ruud van Nistelrooy was unfortunate not to get a penalty from referee Graham Poll as the Dutch master turned Sami Hyppia in the box and was blatantly held back, though he got his shot in which was cleared for a corner by Dudek's legs.

The pressure eventually told in the 20th minute as Ronaldo's excellent freekick was met perfectly by Silvestre, who had slipped into the box totally unnoticed by the Liverpool defence, to head firmly past Dudek for his first goal since March.

Liverpool had to wait till the 26th minute to have their first shot as Josemi let fly from far out on the right but his shot curled wide of the post.

United had another opportunity to score a minute later as a fine cross from Giggs -- making his 600th appearance for United -- was met by van Nistelrooy but he could only direct it into Dudek's welcoming arms.

It was Ronaldo's turn next as Liverpool were run ragged, the Portuguese teenager shooting just wide of the post from inside the box after the visitors defence failed to clear effectively.

English Premiership table after Monday's match (played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, goals against, points):

Arsenal	6	5	1	0	21	7	16
Chelsea	6	4	2	0	6	1	14
Everton	6	4	1	1	8	6	13
Tottenham	6	3	2	1	11	8	11
Middlesbrough	6	3	1	0	4	2	10



PHOTO: REUTERS

Manchester United's Rio Ferdinand (top) celebrates Mikael Silvestre's (bottom 3rd L) goal against Liverpool with teammates in their Premier League match at Old Trafford on September 20.

## Real-ly bad

### Football

AFP, Madrid

Promising that there would be "no revolutions" and warning echoing his predecessor's forecast that coaching Real Madrid was a "tough but rewarding task," unheralded Mariano Garcia Remon stepped out of the shadows Monday to replace Jose Antonio Camacho at the Bernabeu.

"There will be no revolutions. It's a tough task but a very beautiful one to be able to take on an interesting project," Remon said as he emerged blinking into the limelight of former and now current Manchester United assistant coach Carlos Queiroz.

A Champions League quarter-final knockout and fourth place finish in the league later and Queiroz was history, Remon saying hiring the hapless Portuguese had been "a mistake" all along.

Enter Camacho, eight times a league champion with Real and a man whose blood would surely bleed meringue white if one were to cut him and his observation that "I am alone, the dressing room does not back me" would suggest there are those who have tried.

Yet Camacho's resignation after a Champions League thumping at Bayer Leverkusen and a limp league loss to Espanyol is a spectacular case of *deja vu*.

Rather, Remon hoped that Remon will as a "recognised madrider," who embodies the culture of the club, as well as being a great person of experience" take the club forward and serve it for "many years."

"He will be there for this season and we hope much longer, this is not transitory," Remon insisted on Radio Marca.

Yet with only three league games and one Champions League game played this term Real have changed horses not so much in mid-stream but with one front hoof of their white charger having barely left the riverbank.

Moreover, Real have been here before often enough -- and under Remon's own stewardship.

Last year he decided it was time to wield a new broom, sacking Vicente Del Bosque, himself a "recognised madrider" to the extent

that in less than four years at the helm he had landed not just two league titles but two European Cups.

For Perez, however, a breath of fresh air was required in the shape of former (and indeed now current) Manchester United assistant coach Carlos Queiroz.

A Champions League quarter-final knockout and fourth place finish in the league later and Queiroz was history, Perez saying hiring the hapless Portuguese had been "a mistake" all along.

Enter Camacho, eight times a league champion with Real and a man whose blood would surely bleed meringue white if one were to cut him and his observation that "I am alone, the dressing room does not back me" would suggest there are those who have tried.

Yet Camacho's resignation after a Champions League thumping at Bayer Leverkusen and a limp league loss to Espanyol is a spectacular case of *deja vu*.

The former Spanish national coach had spent all of 23 days in charge in 1998 only to fall out with former president Lorenzo Sanz over transfer policy and quit, only to be welcomed back into the fold six years later.

After a Portuguese Cup netted during a sabbatical at Benfica the 49-year-old Camacho, who had previously performed "fireman" roles at several clubs, including Rayo Vallecano (1991-93), Sevilla (1996-97) and Espanyol (1997-98), returned only to find the heat in a galactico-filled kitchen too much to bear.

While taking responsibility for losses on the pitch Camacho's off-pitch asides have spoken volumes.

"I don't feel I have the team's backing and prefer to step down," was an observation which said it all.

Despite talk in the media of

dress room intrigue some players have spoken up for him, including the outspoken Roberto Carlos.

"We as players are to blame and take responsibility," insisted the Brazilian wingback.

"Camacho is a good guy -- a spectacular person who takes the blame on behalf of everyone," the World Cup winner told Onda Cero radio, while adding that "I've lived through worse situations at Real Madrid."

Keeper Cesar Sanchez told Cadena Ser radio Real had been full of "anxiety" in recent games and welcomed Remon's promotion as "we need someone who knows us well, such as Mariano."

Perez, who has sought to stuff as many galactico superstars into a team which looks so often more like a collection of gifted individuals, admitted meanwhile that "this squad of players with so much talent is tough to administer."

He added curtly that "we are a club which seeks excellence and perfection," while accepting that for a coach "the pressure that goes with (the post) is difficult to imagine."

Now Remon has the pressure

demon on his back -- until such time as Perez decides to cast a glance elsewhere, perhaps in the direction of former Real favourite Hugo Sanchez, who led Mexico's Pumas to a friendly win at the Bernabeu last month.

Other candidates could variously include former Dortmund and Bayern Munich coach Ottmar Hitzfeld, or maybe even England boss Sven-Goran Eriksson.

Then there is former Valencia and Inter Milan technician Hector Cuper, or ex-Argentina boss Marcelo Bielsa.

Or perhaps this time the ejector seat will be nailed down for long enough for the new incumbent to prove his worth and football's most prestigious environment.

He added curtly that "we are a club which seeks excellence and perfection," while accepting that for a coach "the pressure that goes with (the post) is difficult to imagine."

Following his exam, Maradona has been treated regularly for drug dependency in Cuba, a government-run establishment that restricts the freedom of movement of its patients, a com-

## Easy win for Sangu Boys

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bandarban

Sangu Boys Club got off to a flying start in the Bandarban Football League when they crushed Deshbandhu Ekashad 3-0 in yesterday's match at the local stadium.

Rafique struck twice and Tapash score one but Bablu stole the man-of-the-match for the winners.

Alikadam Upazila KS will meet Reergrinhaong Juba Samity in today's match.

## Warne leads advance party

AFP, undated

Shane Warne and three Australian teammates fly to India on Wednesday for a cricket tour which remains in doubt due to a legal battle over television rights.

Warne, Cameron White, Justin Langer and Nathan Hauritz will be joined in India next week by the players who are part of the one-day team contesting the ICC Champions Trophy in England.

But the tour depends on the outcome of a case which was due to resume later Tuesday in the High Court in Bombay.

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) is hoping the High Court will quickly dispose off the TV rights legal battle between two rival networks so the high-profile Test series can be telecast live.

"We're not expecting any further advice until the court case is over. We're in their hands," Cricket Australia spokesman Peter Young said Tuesday.

"We're continuing to plan to go there after the Champions Trophy, and will continue to do so unless we're advised the TV coverage can't go ahead."

He said Cricket Australia chairman Bob Merriman wrote to the BCCI last week outlining Australia's concerns.

"He pointed out in that letter the formal consequences for us should the TV coverage not be possible," Young said.

The letter, which has been tabled as part of the court case, explained the sponsorship difficulties which would flow from the cancellation or non-televi-sion of the series.

Australia are due to play one warm-up game and four Tests, with the first beginning in Bangalore on October 6.

Meanwhile, the three-day tour opener will now be held in Bombay instead southern city of Hyderabad. The match against Ranji Trophy champions Bombay starts on September 30.

## Pele's shirt goes for \$105,600

REUTERS, London

The shirt worn by Pele when he scored two goals as a 17-year-old for Brazil in the 1958 World Cup final against Sweden was sold at auction for \$105,600.

The blue, short-sleeved, v-necked shirt with Pele's number 10 on the back went to a telephone buyer for substantially less than the pre-sale estimate of 70-100,000 pounds.

It had been on show at a museum in Sao Paulo but was sold off to raise funds.

In 2002, the number 10 shirt Pele wore in the 1970 World Cup final fetched 157,750 pounds (\$283,000).

Also at Tuesday's auction the England shirt worn by midfielder Paul Gascoigne in the 1990 World Cup semifinal against West Germany was sold for 24,000 pounds.

## Gerrard blow

REUTERS, London

Liverpool and England midfielder Steven Gerrard will be out of action for two months after breaking his left foot, his club says.

Gerrard, who will now miss England's World Cup Group Six qualifiers against Wales and Azerbaijan next month, was injured during Liverpool's 2-1 Premier League defeat at Manchester United on Monday.

The midfielder, who will also miss several domestic and Champions League matches, fractured the fifth metatarsal in his left foot.

England play Wales on October 9 and Azerbaijan four days later.

## Size Richards'

FROM PAGE 13

was a huge following for the game.

"I don't want to say anything about the big venues rather I'm sad that you lack enough grounds. This is an important factor for development of any game. I don't know about your domestic structure but it is my observation your team's performance might be far better if you have good domestic competitions," he observed.

Richards known for his forthright views also took a swipe at cricket's establishment for arranging too many cricket tournaments around the world within a short space of time.

"There has hardly been any excitement in this tournament. It is not wise to stage the World Cup and ICC Champions Trophy within a short gap. The format of the tournament is also not perfect. You can't expect good competition when you allowed poor sides in the meet," he said.

## Maradona in Cuba

### Football

AFP, Havana

Argentine football legend Diego Maradona arrived at Havana late Monday to undergo treatment for his addiction to cocaine.