

Primera Liga

# Beckham freekicks Real to top

Football

AFP, Madrid

Under-fire England captain David Beckham lifted some of the misery hanging over Spanish giants Real Madrid here as a spectacular free-kick saw them to a 1-0 victory over Osasuna and to the top of the table.

Beckham's 30 metres effort gave new coach Mariano Garcia Remon a winning start just a day after he took over from Jose Antonio Camacho, who resigned following two defeats to Bayer Leverkusen in the Cham-pions League and then to Espanyol in the championship on Saturday.

It rewarded Real for a dominant performance that had seen them fail to put their chances away, though they had given a nervy performance in the first half hour after being greeted with jeers and whistles from the fans.

All the so-called stars received catcalls when the team - which was deprived of injured playmaker Zinedine Zidane, and the suspended duo of Argentine Walter Samuel and Michel Salgado - was announced with the lesser known players receiving cheers as the fans made their displeasure at their performances under Camacho known.

However after they had settled down they overran Osasuna with Luis Figo sending a shot just wide of

the post on the half hour mark, then Fernando Morientes saw his shot beaten away by the inspirational Ricardo Sanz.

Morientes again went close as the half neared its end, then Roberto Carlos - who had been booed more vociferously than most as he was rumoured to be behind the dressing-room discord with Camacho - beaten away by Sanz, who also saved well from Albert Celades.

Sanz had to be at his best again to turn away for a corner a shot by Raul Bravo in the second-half before Beckham - who had been left on the bench by Camacho for an hour of Saturday's game - came to the rescue.

His freekick sailed into the top left hand corner leaving the valiant Sanz vainly stretching for it in a replica of his effort against Numancia in their 1-0 victory over a week ago - he was to slightly taint his evening when he was booked in injury time.

Real still had their nervous moments with Casillas having to get down to save from Australian striker John Aloisi but in the end they held out to gain a morale-boosting victory.

Remon said he was overcome by emotion after his team secured the narrow victory in his first match in charge.

The 53-year-old was promoted from assistant coach to the top job on Monday after the resignation of his friend and colleague Camacho, who said he felt he was unable to get the

best out of the players.

"These are very difficult times for me," Garcia Remon said after the match.

"I don't really feel able to speak about it.

"The fact that we won this game was down to the hard work of Jose and he should be congratulated for that.

"I know how he is feeling at the moment because he is dedicated to Real Madrid and is having a tough time."

Apart from the England captain's spectacular goal, however, Real gave an unconvincing display in front of a half-full Bernabeu who jeered the players for most of the game.

"It was a very difficult game for us," said Remon. "But from my point of view I thought the players showed a great attitude and commitment.

"I told the players that I have never won anything before as a coach and that I wanted to win something with them. I believe I've got the ability to take this team forward."

TOP SIX						
Primera Liga standings after Tuesday's match (Win, Draw, Loss, Goals For, Goals Against, Points).						
Real	4	3	0	1	3	19
Espanyol	3	2	1	0	6	27
Atletico	3	2	1	0	5	17
Barcelona	3	2	1	0	5	17
Zaragoza	3	2	1	0	7	47
Valencia	3	2	1	0	7	47



Real Madrid's David Beckham (R) celebrates his stunning free-kick against Osasuna with teammate Luis Figo during their Primera Liga match in Madrid on September 21. Real won 1-0.

# English League Cup More cheers for Keegan

Football

AFP, London

Former England manager Kevin Keegan can breathe a little easier after his Manchester City side thrashed Barnsley 7-1 in the second round of the League Cup.

He had been slated to be sacked after a stuttering start to the Premiership campaign but a narrow victory over Crystal Palace and this comprehensive win over admittedly far inferior opposition from League One has probably bought himself some time.

There was no such result for Premiership strugglers West Brom who went down 2-1 in extra-time to League One side Colchester while Premiership tallenders Crystal Palace scraped through against another League One outfit Hartlepool by the same margin also in extra-time.

Manchester City never looked like going down to a defeat that would probably have heralded the departure of Keegan as they stormed into a 4-0 lead in the first-half against Barnsley.

Joey Barton, Jon Macken and the appropriately named Willo Flood scored the first three with Shaun Wright-Phillips adding a fourth with a neat lob - Macken was to add a second on the stroke of half-time.

Barnsley restored some pride in the second-half as leading scorer Barry Conlon struck but their five goal deficit was restored as Frenchman Antoine Sibierski made it 6-1 and for good measure he added a second to his own tally close to the final whistle.

Sam Allardyce - who has been linked with a move to City should Keegan go - had some nervous moments as his impressive Bolton side scratched around against League Two side Yeovil before winning 2-0.

They needed a late second-half goal by Julio Cesar to see off their determined opponents and Danish star Henrik Pedersen added a second from way out five minutes later.

Birmingham took a while to get into their stride as Steve Bruce's team who are yet to click in the Premiership made heavy weather of a 3-1 victory over Lincoln.

However a maiden goal for them

from Danish winger Jesper Gronkjaer late in the second-half put them on their way.

A goal from Ireland international Clinton Morrison and a penalty by irascible Welsh midfielder Robbie Savage wrapped it up soon afterwards, though Lincoln got a late consolation effort also from the penalty spot.

West Brom went behind early on to Colchester. Craig Fagan scoring with a spectacular effort.

Denied a clearcut chance in the first-half West Brom finally levelled early in the second-half through much-travelled striker Geoff Horsfield which took them into extra-time.

However they were eliminated when Ben May scored two minutes from the end of extra-time to give Colchester a famous scalp and leave West Brom manager Gary Megson's future in doubt as he is yet to sign a new contract and his team have been embroiled in two brawls in the past week.

Hartlepool also gave Crystal Palace a real scare as they took a 1-0 lead through Eifion Williams but Palace levelled through Scottish veteran Dougie Freedman.

However Palace got a much needed victory - their first of the season - when Tom Soares scored 10 minutes from the end of extra-time.

One of the sides that West Brom replaced in the Premiership, Wolves took an early lead against fellow Championship side Burnley as Korea's 2002 World Cup star Ki-Hyeon Seol scored his first goal for the club following his 1.2million pounds (2.14million dollars) move from Anderlecht in August.

However Burnley drew level in the second-half through the experienced Robbie Blake and eventually ran out 4-2 winners in a penalty shootout.

Another of the relegated Premiership sides Leeds United started well as Michael Ricketts scored against Swindon and they held on to their narrow lead to leave them four matches unbeaten.

Doncaster sprang a shock as the League One outfit beat highflying Championship side Ipswich 2-0 thanks to goals from Ricky Ravenhill and Jermaine McSpornan, both of them scoring early in each half.

# Roma hear the music

UEFA CHAMPS LEAGUE

REUTERS, London

Dynamo Kiev were awarded a 3-0 win over AS Roma on Tuesday after their Champions League match was abandoned when the referee was hit by an object thrown from the crowd in Rome.

Roma will have to play their next two European games behind closed doors, UEFA said in a statement. The matches are against Bayer Leverkusen on November 3 and Real Madrid on December 8.

UEFA's disciplinary committee acted after Swedish referee Anders Frisk was injured at the Olympic Stadium at halftime of last Wednesday's game, shortly after sending off Roma defender Philippe Mexes.

Kiev were leading the Group B match 1-0 at the time.

France's Mexes has been suspended for two matches "for particularly unsporting conduct", UEFA said.

"In taking the decision the Control and Disciplinary Body took into

account the seriousness of the nature of the incident, in which the referee Anders Frisk was injured and therefore led him to abandon the match," the UEFA statement said.

Roma were given until midnight (2200 GMT) on Friday to appeal but decided not to contest the decision.

The Serie A club said in a statement: "AS Roma takes on board the decision made by the UEFA disciplinary commission and states that it will not be presenting an appeal against it, while at the same time reserving the right to defend its interests, those of its shareholders and its own image, in all opportune forums, for the damage that has occurred."

"The UEFA sentence is taken by AS Roma as an important recognition of the professionalism shown by the club... However, the sentence needs also to be understood as a warning that such serious events should not be repeated."

Tuesday's decision satisfied the Ukrainian side who had demanded they be handed victory after the incident.

"To be honest we were expecting it," Dynamo spokesman Serhij

Polkhovsky told Reuters. "It's a justified decision which will be to the benefit of the sport."

Dynamo captain Olexander Shovkovsky added: "It's a tough decision (on Roma) but it doesn't diminish the respect for Roma as a club. And, at the same time, it should prevent such actions by the fans in the future."

Dynamo coach Josef Sabo admitted, however, that the last few days had been tough on his squad.

"All our players have been very uptight and nervous in the last few days and it was very difficult to coach the team for (Monday's league) game against Dnipro," he told the official club website.

A month ago, Israeli side Maccabi Tel-Aviv were awarded a 3-0 win over PAOK after the Greek club fielded a suspended player in a Champions League third round qualifier.

In 2001, Paris St Germain were given a 3-0 win at Rapid Bucharest after their UEFA Cup tie had to be abandoned following a floodlight failure.

# Burn-out behind Euro-2004 flop

UEFA EURO 2004 PORTUGAL

REUTERS, Stockholm

Europe's top players are failing to reproduce club form in international tournaments because of burn-out, European soccer's ruling body UEFA said in its post mortem of the 2004 European Championship in Portugal.

UEFA said it believed too little time to recover from club commitments could explain why some of the biggest names in European football failed to shine during Euro 2004.

"The clear message is that the people... who are overused in terms of playing during the season are the stars and they are the one's that suffer during the championships," Andy Roxburgh, UEFA's technical director told a media briefing in Stockholm after a meeting of Europe's national team coaches.

"It is just too many matches at too

high a tempo."

Europe's traditional powerhouses such as France, Italy and Spain were all knocked out before the closing stages of the tournament - surprisingly won by rank outsiders Greece.

But although some of the established names did not hit top form, Roxburgh said the overall quality of football at Euro 2004 had been high with emerging talent such as England's Wayne Rooney and Arjen Robben of the Netherlands, picking up the baton.

"Euro (2004) gave international football an enormous boost," he said.

"A lot of people have been saying it has been dying in comparison with the clubs."

Pressure on international managers, however, continues to be a problem due to intense press scrutiny, growing public expectations and increasing player power.

"It has become such a high intensity, pressurised job, for many it is a four-year cycle," said Roxburgh.

# Centennial Order of Merit for Pele, Beckenbauer

REUTERS, Zurich

Pele and Franz Beckenbauer will be awarded FIFA's Centennial Order of Merit on Thursday.

The award ceremony was originally scheduled to have taken place at FIFA's Centennial Congress in Paris in May but Pele was recovering from an eye operation and could not attend.

The awards are being given to mark their outstanding lifetime contributions to the sport. Pele won the World Cup with Brazil in 1958 and 1970 and is considered the greatest player in soccer history.

Beckenbauer is the only man to captain and then coach his team to World Cup victory - feats he achieved in 1974 and then 1990 with West Germany. He is now the president of Germany's 2006 World Cup organising committee.

After the ceremony, due to be held at FIFA's headquarters, the two men will be part of the panel to choose their three favourite FIFA Centennial stamp designs from over 70 submissions from the postal services of FIFA member associations.

# Japan to host first two world club tournaments

REUTERS, Tokyo

Japan is set to host the 2006 World Club Championship in addition to the 2005 tournament, Japanese soccer chief Saburo Kawabuchi said on Wednesday.

Kawabuchi confirmed FIFA had agreed to let Japan stage the first two editions of the revamped event, which from next year will feature a club from each of world soccer's six confederations.

"If we can stage it successfully over the next two years, I think FIFA will say the tournament should stay in Japan," said Kawabuchi after returning from Zurich from a meeting with FIFA officials.

Japan has hosted the Intercontinental Club Cup since 1980 - an annual clash between the European champions and winners of South America's Libertadores Cup for the unofficial title of the best club in the world.

FIFA launched the World Club Championship in Brazil four years ago but it proved unpopular with some teams involved and the 2001 version in Spain was scrapped, partly because there was no tournament sponsor following the collapse of FIFA's marketing partner ISMM.

After initial opposition, Europe's top clubs agreed to play in the tournament earlier this month when FIFA agreed that the representative of the continent would not necessarily be the winners of the Champions League.



A file photo of Swedish referee Anders Frisk (L) being attended to by an assistant with blood coming out of his forehead during a Champions League Group B match between AS Roma and Dynamo Kiev on September 15.

# Ligue 1 Champs in lead

Football

AFP, Paris

Three-time champions Lyon went top of the French league after beating Toulouse 2-0.

Second-half Goals by Mickael Essien and Florent Malouda saw them to victory ahead of Wednesday's matches where Monaco could resume the lead should they win at home against Nantes.

Lyon had already had a goal by Sydney Govou ruled out for offside in the eighth minute and had to wait till six minutes into the second-half to take the lead.

It stemmed from a mistake by the referee Gilles Veissiere who awarded an indirect freekick after judging that Christophe Revault had picked up the ball from a backpass when in fact it had rebounded off the

defender's leg into his arms.

Lyon though took full advantage as Essien seized on the pass and shot home.

Toulouse came back strongly with striker Daniel Moreira twice going close first with a header which was brilliantly saved by Gregory Coupet and then hit the post in the 68th minute.

However Lyon took advantage of Toulouse's constant pressure by scoring on the break in the first minute of injury time as Malouda scored.

The first-half had seen little goalmouth action save from former Arsenal striker Sylvain Wiltord.

He had the first real scoring chance in the 40th minute anticipating superbly that the ball would be headed back to Toulouse goalkeeper Revault, but despite beating the keeper to it his outstretched boot could only direct the ball wide.

# Assault charge on Keane

AP, Manchester

Manchester United midfielder Roy Keane was charged with assault and criminal damage Tuesday over an alleged confrontation with a 16-year-old boy.

Manchester police said Keane got into the confrontation with the teenager while walking his dog earlier this month at an area golf course.

No details of the confrontation were available.

The Irish midfielder was ordered to appear before a judge Thursday to answer the charges.

Keane, one of the first five picks on FIFA's list of the greatest 100 living soccer players, is known for his temper. He missed the 2002 World Cup in Korea and Japan after an argument with coach Mick McCarthy over the team's preparations and training facilities. He flew home, and Ireland played without him.

Football

AFP, Berlin

Dutch international Roy Makaay continued his act of rescuing Bayern Munich, scoring in the final seconds to secure a 3-2 second round cup win over regional minnows VfL Osnabruck.

Makaay netted in the final minute to seal a 2-2 draw with Borussia Dortmund over the weekend and he popped up again to save Bayern's blushes with another clinical finish.

Osnabruck were 17 minutes from eliminating the mighty Bayern, who fielded big-name stars such as Brazilian World Cup winner Lucio and Makaay, but Claudio Pizarro levelled at 2-2 before Makaay stole the headlines.

With five minutes gone Peruvian Pizarro headed Bayern ahead and the floodgates were expected to open.

But tiny Osnabruck responded on 19 minutes when captain Joe Enoch drilled a shot past Michael Rensing, deputising for the ill Oliver Kahn, in the Bayern goal.

The 18,400 fans at the Osnatle-

Arena went crazy cutting a stark contrast to the irate Munich manager Felix Magath in the Munich dug-out.

Thomas Reichenberger then netted on 63 minutes to rock Bayern and Osnabruck should have scored again in the 70th minute but for a fine save from Rensing.

It proved crucial as Pizarro lashed home an equaliser three minutes later before Makaay broke Osnabruck hearts with 15 seconds remaining.

Cup specialists SC Freiburg defeated fellow Bundesliga side VfL Bochum 3-2 to join Bayern in the last sixteen of the competition for the third successive season.

Frenchman Regis Dorn was the hero netting a 90th minute equaliser at 2-2 and then scoring the extra-time winner.

Elsewhere Bundesliga outfits FC Nuremberg and Mainz 05 both crashed out to lower division opposition with Ahlen and Karlsruhe progressing at their expense.

Holders Werder Bremen host the fellow Champions League hopefuls Bayer Leverkusen on Wednesday in the tie of the round.

Football

AFP, London

England coach Sven-Goran Eriksson denied any link with the Real Madrid coaching post after their coach Jose Antonio Camacho resigned after just six games in charge.

British newspapers said Tuesday that although no official contact had been made through formal channels, it was understood intermediaries working for the Spanish club had started sounding the Swede out about taking over.

Camacho's assistant, the former Real goalkeeper Mariano Garcia Remon, has taken over and although Real say he is in charge until the end of the season, he is seen as a stopgap appointment.

However Eriksson told the BBC that he had not been approached.

"I haven't spoken to anyone from that club. It is not an issue to decide," said the Swede, who has been linked in previous years with Manchester United and Chelsea.

"I have a contract and that's it." English Football Association sources indicated they had not received any approach from Madrid over Eriksson.



SVEN-GORAN ERIKSSON