

Spanish King's Cup

Owen scores treble!

Football

REUTERS, Madrid

Real Madrid striker Michael Owen scored his third goal in three games when he helped his side to a 2-1 win over third division neighbours Leganes in the first round of the King's Cup.

Fellow striker Fernando Morientes, getting his first start of the season, put Real ahead in the 19th minute when he poked the ball home on the rebound after an Owen volley.

The England striker, who got the winners in Real's 1-0 victories against Dynamo Kiev in the Champions League and Valencia in the Primera Liga, made it 2-0 early in the second half as he steered the ball in after a neat pass from Morientes.

But Real had to endure a nervous finale on Tuesday after Leganes pulled one back with a superb Dani Ruiz free kick in the 56th minute.

Deportivo Coruna striker Diego Tristan continued his impressive return to form by scoring both goals in the 2-0 victory against fourth division Cerceda, a game which saw both sides reduced to 10 men after 30 minutes.

In Tuesday's other match, Primera Liga side Osasuna managed to squeeze through with a 4-2 victory on penalties against third division Castellon after the game ended 0-0.

Holders Real Zaragoza, who



MICHAEL OWEN

Bundesliga

Pizarro boosts Bayern

Football

AFP, Berlin

Peruvian striker Claudio Pizarro left his injury woes behind him with a brace of goals for Bayern Munich in a telling 2-0 win over Bundesliga leaders VfL Wolfsburg.

Pizarro's first goals of the season following a back injury gave Bayern's title aspirations a boost and brought Wolfsburg back down to earth although they retained their one-point lead over Bayern and VfB Stuttgart.

Stuttgart, who are in third on the same points as Bayern, host German champions Werder Bremen on Wednesday.

Elsewhere Borussia Dortmund gave their irate fans something to cheer about with a 1-0 win at Hertha Berlin.

Hundreds of Borussia fans prevented the team bus from leav-

ing the home stadium on Saturday after a 2-0 defeat to SV Hamburg, but on Tuesday smiles were back on some faces after Borussia climbed from 15th to a more respectable 11th.

Bayern playmaker Michael Ballack was forced to watch from the stands along with his fellow German international Sebastian Deisler, who is recovering from his relapse into depression.

Their absence handed a chance to teenager Bastian Schweinsteiger, 19, and he grabbed it with both hands.

In the ninth minute Schweinsteiger produced a powerful drive from 25 yards and it took a fine save from Simon Jentzsch to push the effort onto the crossbar.

It was a warning that Wolfsburg failed to heed, and a rampaging run from the effervescent Schweinsteiger created the opening goal on 24 minutes.

He ghosted past two defenders

before a clever reverse pass played in Pizarro to slot home.

It was the Peruvian international's first goal of the season, and his second - when he slotted home an Owen Hargreaves cross on the chime of half-time - helped ease the pain of his recent injury woes.

The South American star could even have netted a hat-trick but a chance on the hour mark rebounded off the post to safety.

Hertha meanwhile were left feeling dejected after hitting the woodwork three times in the first 30 minutes against Dortmund.

Borussia rode their luck and Czech striker Jan Koller netted the winner on 44 minutes to move the club away from the relegation zone.

The noose is tightening, however, around the neck of Kaiserslautern coach Kurt Jara following a 3-1 defeat by Hannover.

Kaiserslautern are bottom of the table after conceding 20 goals in 10 matches.



ARSENÉ WENGER

Wenger a Gunner till 2008

Football

AFP, London

Arsene Wenger has extended his contract at English champions Arsenal for another three years to the end of the 2007-2008 season.

That includes the first two years at the 350-million-pound (636-million-dollar), 60,000-seat Emirates Stadium which is due to open in August 2006.

"My intention has always been clear. I love this club and am very happy here -- signing a new contract just rubber-stamps my desire to take this club forward and fulfil my ambitions," Wenger said.

"I still have so much to achieve and my target is to drive this Club on, not only by sustaining our recent success but building upon it. These are exciting times for Arsenal and I'm proud to be the manager."

Arsenal have been at Highbury since 1913 but the club's ability to compete financially with rivals like Manchester United has been hampered by its relatively small capacity of 38,500.

Wenger, who resisted an approach by Real Madrid in the summer, has been at Arsenal for eight years during which time Arsenal have won two domestic doubles and gone an entire league season unbeaten.

Manchester United ended their 49-match unbeaten run in a controversial 2-0 win at Old Trafford on Sunday.

Wenger's current contract ran out in 2005.

In seven full seasons, he has guided the club to six major trophies -- three FA Premier League titles and three FA Cups -- and has never finished outside the top two positions in the Premier League.

Wenger has also been named manager-of-the-year three times including in 2004 when the

Gunners were crowned Premier League champions without losing a single game during the 38-match campaign.

Chairman Peter Hill-Wood said: "We are absolutely delighted that Arsene has signed an extension to his contract. Since his arrival in 1996, he has revolutionised the club both on and off the pitch.

"As well as the six major honours he won during his time here, Arsene has been a leading influence behind all the major initiatives at the club including the construction of our new training centre and also our new stadium.

"The club has continued to reap the benefits of Arsene's natural eye for unearthing footballing talent and we currently have a fantastic crop of young players coming through the ranks together with a number of world class players who are playing a wonderful brand of football."

Capello dismisses Roma rivalry

REUTERS, Milan

claimed a dramatic extra-time victory over Real Madrid in last year's final, face a tricky game at second division Gimnastic on Wednesday when league leaders Barcelona visit third division Gramenet.

Leganes's 8,000-capacity stadium was only half full for the arrival of a shadow Real Madrid side missing leading Galacticos Ronaldo, Raul, Zinedine Zidane, Luis Figo and David Beckham.

But with Owen and Morientes leading the way, Real took little time to get the measure of their modest opponents.

Owen forced a sharp save from goalkeeper Sergio Vera with a close-range snap volley following a miscued clearance by the Leganes defence and Morientes was on hand to stab home the rebound in the 19th minute.

Morientes returned the favour at the start of the second half when he powered his way into the area and cut back a neat pass to Owen who tucked a first-time left foot shot past the keeper and inside the far post.

But Leganes, who had barely managed to mount an attack in the first half, narrowed the lead when Ruiz looped a perfectly struck free kick over the wall and beyond the reach of keeper Cesar in the 56th minute.

Real went through a nervous patch for the next 15 minutes and were fortunate not to concede a penalty when defender Javier Paredes handled in the area but they eventually regained their composure to book themselves a place in the next round.

Capello left Roma at the end of last season after five years in charge to take over at the Delle Alpi, leading Juventus to the top of the league.

"I haven't got any problems with anyone," Capello said.

"If you spend years together there are always going to be discussions but you have to look at the rapport that existed above all that, above the moments of anger."

The coach transformed Roma during his tenure, winning the title for only the third time in the club's history in 2001 with a team inspired by Francesco Totti.

Totti will be the main threat to Capello's Juve on Thursday along with strikers Vincenzo Montella and Antonio Cassano -- players Capello frequently clashed with during his time in the capital.

Indeed since moving to Turin, Capello has also said that his relationship with Roma captain Totti was a troubled one at times.

Capello even had words for Roma president Franco Sensi, who the coach was reported to have a strained relationship with and who has often pointed an accusing finger at Juve.

"I want to thank him again, and I will always do so, for giving me the chance to have five splendid, intense years in which I was able to win something in an atmosphere where it is difficult to do so," the Juve coach said.

In recent years clashes between the two clubs have been preceded by accusations and rancour, the majority of which has emanated from club officials rather than players.

Sensi has frequently engaged in bitter public rows with Juventus managing director Luciano Moggi.

Even Moggi decided this week was the time to make peace with septuagenarian Sensi and call an end to the verbal jousting.

"That is over because I am tired of entertaining people by involving an elderly man who deserves the maximum amount of respect," said Moggi.

While Capello has produced instant results at Juve, with six wins and a draw from the opening seven games, Roma have had a terrible start to the campaign.

After Capello's replacement Cesare Prandelli stood down on the eve of the new season due to family reasons, German coach Rudi Voller struggled to impose his authority on the team and poor results led him to resign.

Former Chievo coach Luigi Del Neri has restored some order to the club but they are already 10 points behind Juventus and Sunday's home draw with Palermo showed they have yet to find their form.

Capello's side will feature two players he brought with him from Rome in French full back Jonathan Zebina and Brazilian playmaker Emerson.

Crazy hairdos out in Iran

AFP, Tehran

Iranian footballers have been banned from sporting "unconventional" hairstyles and beards on the pitch and offenders will be fined and banned from playing, football officials said.

"Football clubs have been ordered to stop players with long, messy hair, ponytails, hair bands and certain kinds of beard, or they will be fined and banned from playing," an Iranian football federation official said.

"We live in a traditional society and certain values must be respected. The champions who act as role models to society set a bad example to the youth by appearing like that," he added.

Football is the most popular sport in Iran and scores of top players have long hair and wear ponytails.

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Socrates dons yellow shirt!

Football

REUTERS/AFP, London

Brazilian Socrates is to pull on the famous yellow jersey once more, but this time it will not be for the five-time World Cup winners but for a non-league English team.

The former Brazil captain, who played alongside fellow Latin luminaries Zico and Junior, has agreed to join Garforth Town in the Northern Counties East League.

Teesside businessman and owner of Garforth Simon Clifford persuaded Socrates to join the club -- based in a former pit village near Leeds in Yorkshire -- initially on a month-long deal until December.

"It is a fantastic coup. Our fans will be pinching themselves when they see Socrates running out," he told Britain's Sun newspaper on Wednesday.

Clifford, who names a number of Brazilian soccer players among his friends, owns a string of soccer schools in the South American country.

"I wanted to put the focus on the club (Garforth) so a few weeks ago I started putting out feelers in Brazil," Clifford told The Times.

"This is the result."

Socrates reportedly still has the same slim physique as he did in his prime but Clifford may have to relax his smoking ban as the Brazilian was a heavy smoker even at his peak.

Joining Socrates in the team will be former Manchester United man Lee Sharpe, who has also recently signed for the club.

According to the club website garforthtown.com, "the lure of a spell in the Northern Counties East League has proved too much for the 50-year-old (Socrates)."

However Socrates, a doctor by profession, will have to get back to



SOCRATES

football basics.

Having played in front of 200,000 people at the legendary Maracana stadium in Rio, he will have to get used to playing with electricians and plumbers -- and in front of a capacity 3000 crowd.

The West Yorkshire club, which is based in a mining village, have

signed Socrates initially on a one-month deal.

Socrates, who retired from the game 14 years ago having skippered Brazil to two World Cups, will line up for his first game for the club against Tadcaster Albion on November 20.

League Cup

Villa shown exit

Football

REUTERS, London

Aston Villa lost 3-1 away to second division Burnley in the League Cup third round as the top Premier League clubs made their first appearance in this season's competition.

Manchester United, showing 11 changes from the side that started Sunday's league victory over champions Arsenal, eased past Crewe in the first competitive match between the near neighbours, which pitted English soccer's two longest-serving managers in Alex Ferguson and Dario Gradi.

United took the lead after only 10 minutes on Tuesday through Alan Smith who was set up by his fellow striker Louis Saha.

Crewe held their own until 12 minutes into the second half when Ireland midfielder Liam Miller grabbed his first goal for United, and the Premier League side added a third through a Steve Foster own goal just before the hour mark.

Liverpool, record seven-time League Cup winners, took the lead at second division Millwall on 17 minutes when midfielder Saif Diao rammed the ball home from 10 metres after a corner routine to double Burnley's advantage.

Colombia striker Juan Pablo Angel got a goal back for Villa with a header nine minutes from time but Jean-Louis Valois made the game safe for Burnley in the dying minutes.

David O'Leary's team rarely threatened to equalise and, after Villa goalkeeper Thomas Sorensen saved a penalty, Mohammad Camara scored following a short corner routine to double Burnley's advantage.

Nottingham Forest beat Doncaster Rovers 2-0 thanks to goals by striker Marlon King and midfielder James Perch.

The all-Championship match between Sheffield United and Watford and the game between Bournemouth and Cardiff City went to extra time.