

Primera Liga

Not the Real story

Football

REUTERS, Madrid

England striker Michael Owen continued his prolific scoring form with a fourth goal in as many games to help Real Madrid secure a flattering 2-0 win over Primera Liga newcomers Getafe on Sunday.

The former Liverpool player, who scored the winners in the 1-0 victories over Dynamo Kiev and Valencia as well as weighing in with another in the midweek Cup victory over Leganes, got on the scoresheet with another well taken goal in the first half.

His Brazilian strike partner Ronaldo helped disguise what was a disappointing performance when he made it 2-0 11 minutes from time as Real scored more than once in a league match for the first time this season. Earlier, Real Zaragoza put a humiliating mid-week King's Cup exit behind them with a sparkling 3-0 win at home to high-flying Sevilla that propelled them into fourth spot in the table.

The visitors' second defeat of the season meant they missed a chance to close the gap on Barcelona, who were held to a 1-1 draw at Athletic Bilbao on Saturday.

Barca lead the standings on 23 points from nine matches, six ahead of Sevilla and seven ahead of Real Madrid, Zaragoza and Levante who are all level on 16 points.

Levante, the surprise package of the early part of the season, inflicted a first home defeat this term on Osasuna with a spectacular goal from former Barca striker Sergio Garcia.

Getafe, who had lost all four previous away games this season, were certainly not intimidated by their illustrious neighbours at the Bernabeu.

Midfielder Mario Coto gave the home side an early scare when he fired a rasping shot over the bar from 20 metres in the 11th minute and were given another warning when striker Riki was given a clear header moments later.

The former Real Madrid youth player was then denied a goal by sharp stops from goalkeeper Iker Casillas as he drilled in two quick-fire shots from the edge of the area.

Real, missing midfielders David Beckham and Luis Figo, were slow to warm to the task and did not mount their first attack until midway through the half.

Zinedine Zidane curled a pass behind the Getafe defence towards

Ronaldo but the Brazilian striker fired over the bar as he came under pressure from keeper Francisco Sanchez Broto.

Less than five minutes later, Owen grabbed his fourth goal in four games to put Real in front.

Ronaldo picked off a defender before sliding the ball into the path of his fellow striker who tucked a perfect right-foot shot past the keeper inside the far post.

But it was Getafe who continued to have the better of the game and had it not been for some outstanding goalkeeping from Casillas and desperate last-ditch defending they almost certainly would have caused an upset.

Real coach Mariano Garcia Remon looked as though he had settled for the narrow win when he replaced Owen with defensive midfielder Albert Celades 17 minutes from time, the change being greeted with a chorus of jeers by the Bernabeu.

But Ronaldo popped up at the far post to net a rebound after a Raul shot was parried into his path and put a rather better gloss on what had been a poor overall performance. It was the Brazilian superstar's 50th strike in the La Liga for Real Madrid.

TOP SIX

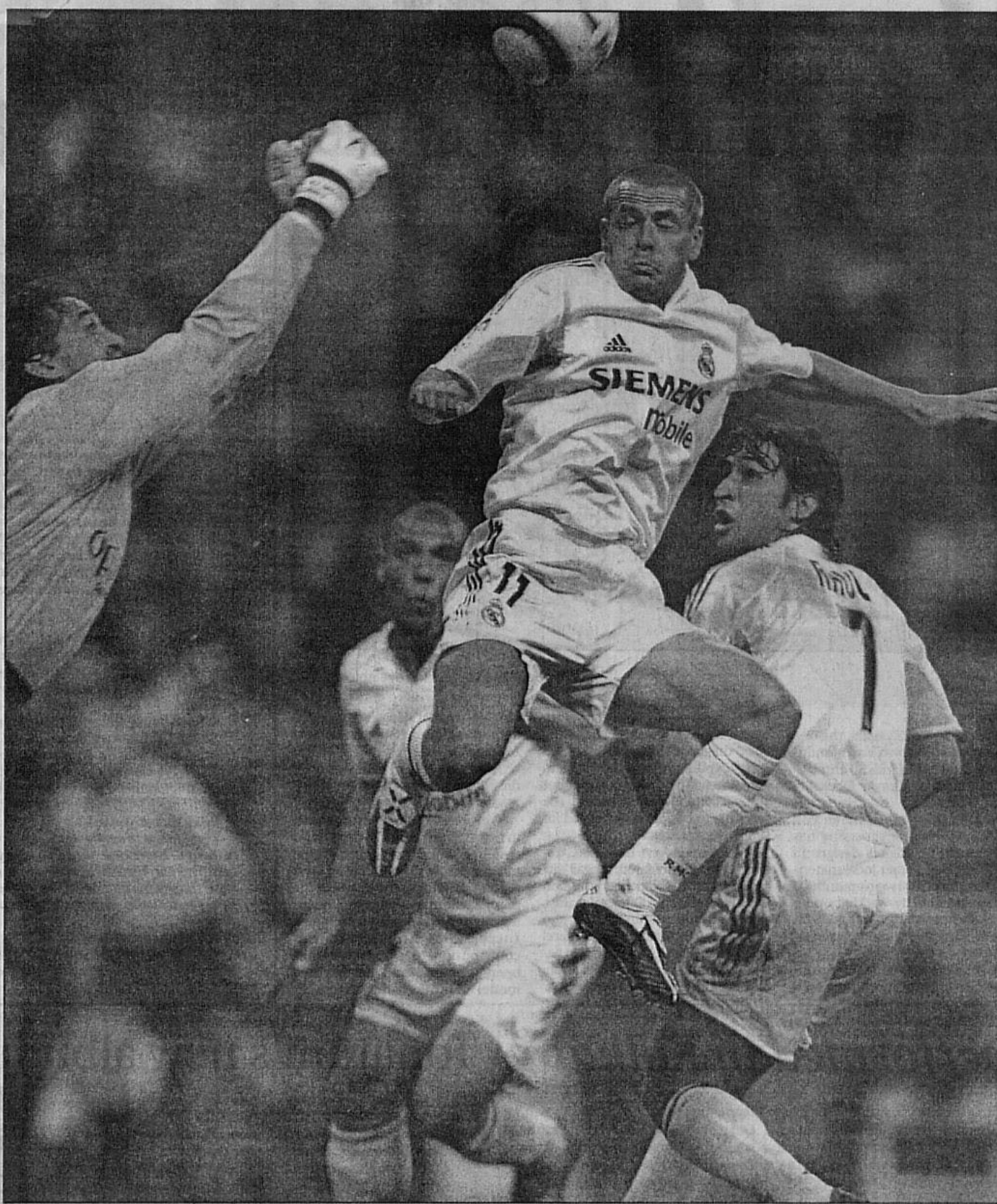
Spanish league standings after Sunday's matches, (played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, goals against, points):

Barcelona	9	7	2	0	18	4	23
Sevilla	9	5	2	2	10	8	17
Real	9	5	1	3	8	5	16
Zaragoza	9	5	1	3	17	15	16
Levante	9	5	1	3	14	12	16
Valencia	9	4	3	2	17	10	15

TOP SCORERS

Leading scorers in the Spanish league after the weekend matches:

8 - Samuel Eto'o (Barcelona)
6 - David Villa (Real Zaragoza)
5 - Marco Di Vaio (Valencia), Fernando Torres (Atletico Madrid), Vladimir Manchev (Levante), Savo Milosevic (Osasuna)
4 - Julio Baptista (Sevilla), Diego Forlan (Villarreal), Javi Moreno (Real Zaragoza), Maxi Rodriguez (Espanyol), Ricardo Oliveira (Real Betis), Valentin Pachon (Getafe), Walter Pandiani (Deportivo La Coruna), Savio (Real Zaragoza), Ismael Urzaiz (Athletic Bilbao), Paulo Wanchope (Malaga)



Real Madrid's Michael Owen (R) puts pressure on Getafe goalkeeper Sanchez Broto (L) while superstar Ronaldo and Raul look on at the Santiago Bernabeu stadium in Madrid on October 31.

PHOTO: AFP

Premiership

Magpies shot down

Football

AFP, Bolton

Bolton returned to fourth place in the Premier League with a 2-1 win against Newcastle here Sunday that ended the visitors' unbeaten run under manager Graeme Souness.

Kevin Davies' 70th minute goal saw Bolton wrap up the points after they had taken the lead earlier in the second half through El-Hadji Diouf only for Newcastle to hit back minutes later thanks to Darren Ambrose's wonder-strike.

The result left Bolton in fourth, where they started the weekend, on 21 points. Newcastle, who would have moved up into fourth had they won, were left five points

back in eighth spot.

In the early stages both teams created openings with Newcastle's veteran striker Alan Shearer picking out Stephen Carr only for the defender's cut-back to be blocked by Greek Euro 2004 hero Stelios Giannakopoulos.

Diouf then delivered a cross from the right that was cleared by Robbie Elliott.

But the best chance of the first half fell to Davies in the 23rd minute when Diouf split the Newcastle defence.

Former Blackburn and Southampton striker Davies drew Newcastle keeper Shay Given out of his goal only to pull his shot wide.

After the break the match sparked into life with two goals in the space of four second-half

minutes.

From a long throw, Bolton's Radhi Jaidi outjumped Given and Diouf, on loan from Liverpool, steered the ball home from barely a yard for his first goal in 18 months which ironically came for Liverpool against his new team.

The Senegalese forward then promptly collected a yellow card after referee Graham Poll booked him for removing his shirt.

Newcastle then hit back in spectacular fashion in the 55th minute. Ambrose won the ball in the midfield and, as the Bolton defence backed off, he let fly with a 25-yard strike that flew past Jussi Jaaskelainen's left hand and into the top corner.

Bolton though regained the lead 20 minutes from time when Newcastle failed to deal with a

free-kick launched into their box.

Davies won the initial header before Diouf nodded on. And with Given slow off his line and going at the ball with feet rather than hands, Davies beat the Republic of Ireland international to the loose ball and slid in to ease the ball home.

TOP SIX

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

Arsenal	11	8	2	1	31	12	26
Chelsea	11	8	2	1	16	3	26
Everton	11	7	2	2	14	10	23
Bolton	11	6	3	2	18	13	21
Middlesbrough	11	5	3	3	19	14	18
Liverpool	10	5	2	3	18	10	17

Preview

Pace-setting Italians

UEFA CHAMPS LEAGUE

AFP, London

Arsenal, top dogs in England but often fall guys in Europe, face Panathinaikos on Tuesday determined to quell supporters' fears that they are losing their taste for the big occasion.

Beaten by Manchester United, which brought their 49-match unbeaten league run to an end, and fortunate to escape with a draw against Southampton on Saturday, the Gunners return to Champions League action against a Greek side who held them 2-2 in Athens two weeks ago.

While the Gunners' fate in Europe can't be decided on Tuesday, the Italian juggernaut of Milan rivals Inter and AC can storm into the knockout stages as both have 100-percent records.

Inter face Valencia, who they crushed 5-1 two weeks ago, while Milan go to Barcelona who they edged 1-0 in their first meeting thanks to deadly hitman Andriy Shevchenko.

Chelsea can also make sure of their place in the last 16 with a win against CSKA Moscow.

Arsenal's French international Robert Pires is aware of the pressure ahead of the Group E match at Highbury against the Greeks who were let off the hook two weeks ago thanks to two embarrassing blunders by goalkeeper Jens Lehmann.

"In my mind, winning the Premier League is a far greater achievement than lifting the Champions League," Pires said.

"Maybe the Champions League is more prestigious, but I believe the domestic league is the more accurate measure of the strength of a team.

"This is especially true in England, where the league is a physical challenge. You have to be on top of your game week in week out over 10 months."

If the statistics are any guide, the Gunners shouldn't worry too much on Tuesday as they have beaten Panathinaikos 2-1 on the Greeks' last two visits to London.

London rivals Chelsea have a perfect record in Group H and can make sure of a place in the knockout stages with a win in Moscow but the Stamford Bridge side's Russian star Alexei Smertin warned his team-mates to expect a frosty reception.

"CSKA are a good team and I think they can go a long way," said Smertin, who left rivals Lokomotiv Moscow to join Bordeaux in 1999.

"The minimum objective for us was to take nine points, and we have done that. Now, though, we have to go to Moscow - I hope that the weather will be good for us, but I expect it will be snowing!"

The night's glamour tie will be at the Nou Camp where Spanish league leaders Barcelona face AC Milan with the home side having suffered nightmares at the hands of their visitors in the competition down the years.

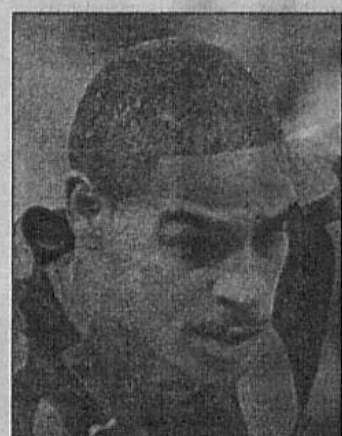
Barca were thrashed 4-0 by Milan in the 1994 final while a 2-0 defeat four years ago ensured the Spaniards didn't progress beyond that year's group stage.

"I am well aware of the history between the two clubs," said Barcelona coach Frank Rijkaard after their 1-0 defeat in Milan two weeks ago.

"But I think we showed enough in the San Siro to make sure that Milan will be thinking long and hard about the return game. Obviously, their big danger man is Shevchenko. We've got to keep him quiet."

Inter, who have drawn seven of the nine league matches this season, can do no wrong in the Champions League and victory at home to Valencia will clinch a place in the knockout stages.

"In the Champions League so far we have done very well, whereas in the championship we have been



ADRIANO

very inconsistent," said Inter's Brazilian striker Adriano.

"Perhaps we are more focused when it comes to playing in Europe. We played superbly in Valencia, we passed the ball around without any fear."

Valencia's Italian coach Claudio Ranieri, who was sacked by Chelsea in the summer, is desperate for a win and end a run of seven games without a victory.

"We are in the middle of a bad streak right now, but we are working hard to put things right," he said after Saturday's 1-1 draw with Atletico Madrid.

Celtic need a miracle to qualify from Group F having lost all their three matches but there is still hope.

In 2001, Newcastle lost their opening three games but won the next three to make the knockout stages.

TUESDAY'S MATCHES

Group E
Arsenal (ENG) v Panathinaikos (GRE)
PSV Eindhoven (NED) v Rosenborg (NOR)

Group F
Barcelona (SPA) v AC Milan (ITA)
Celtic (SCO) v Shakhtar Donetsk (UKR)

Group G
Werder Bremen (GER) v Anderlecht (BEL)
Inter Milan (ITA) v Valencia (SPA)

Group H
CSKA Moscow (RUS) v Chelsea (ENG)
Porto (POR) v Paris Saint Germain (FRA)

TOP SIX

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TOP SCORERS

ROME, Oct 31 (AFP) - Leading scorers in the Italian league after Sunday's matches:

8 - Vincenzo Montella (Roma)
7 - Adriano (Inter Milan)
6 - Valeri Bojinov (Lecce), Andriy Shevchenko (AC Milan)
5 - Andrea Caracciolo (Brescia), Mauro Esposito (Cagliari), Alberto Gilardino (Parma), Francesco Totti (Roma)



PHOTO: AFP

Juventus playmaker Pavel Nedved (R) trying to move clear of two Chievo defenders during their match at the Delle Alpi stadium in Turin on October 31.

Serie A

Juve still good enough

Football

AFP, Rome

Fabio Capello rotated his squad to good effect on Sunday as Juventus restored their five point lead at the top of Serie A with a resounding 3-0 home win over Chievo.

Capello, whose side face Bayern Munich in the Champions League on Wednesday, rested Alessandro Del Piero and Stephen Appiah, while Brazilian midfielder Emerson was suspended following his red card in Thursday's 2-0 home victory over Roma.

Wingbacks Gianluca Zambrotta and Jonathan Zebina were injured, so the Juve coach made five changes to the team that defeated their former club three days ago.

Defending champions AC Milan were hot on Juve's heels having won at Sampdoria on Saturday and moved to within two points of the pace-setters.

But even with numerous changes to the starting line-up, the 27-time champions rose to the challenge with goals from Marcelo Zalayeta, Pavel Nedved and Zlatan Ibrahimovic sealing their eighth league victory.

Juventus have 25 points from their nine matches played -- something no other Italian team has achieved

since three points were awarded for a win -- while second-placed AC Milan have 20.

"Playing so many games is difficult so rotation becomes a necessity, but those who were called up today did extremely well, even if they haven't been involved a great deal," Capello said, referring to the likes of Alessandro Birindelli, Gianluca Pessotto and Alessio Tacchinardi.

"Everyone on the pitch was very focused and that is the strength of this group. I'm very happy, even if we did give Chievo too many chances when we were 2-0 up."

Lecce held on to third spot despite being thumped 4-0 away to Fiorentina, where Nigerian international Cristian Obodo was on target twice.

It was the newly promoted Florence club's second win in a row since they sacked coach Emiliano Mondonico and lifted them up to sixth place on 13 points, behind Inter Milan on goal difference.

Sicilian side Messina ended a run of three straight defeats by coming from behind to beat local rivals Reggina 2-1.

Although not an authentic derby as such, the two towns are separated by the sea, the Messina Strait, and are only 40 kilometres apart.

Messina's win moved them up to fourth on 14 points, one behind Lecce.

Roma, whose team bus was pelted with eggs by their own fans venting their anger over the club's recent slide, gave their supporters something to cheer about with a 5-1 thrashing of Cagliari in the capital.

Livorno won their third game in a row, a 2-1 victory at home to Brescia moving the Tuscany club further away from the relegation zone.

Bottom club Atalanta drew 2-2 at fellow strugglers Parma, while Siena were held at home to Bologna.

In Sunday's late match, Udinese edged Palermo 1-0 in Udine where Stefano Mauri headed the only goal in the second half.

Udinese climbed up to 10th with 12 points, above Sampdoria and Lazio on goal difference, while Palermo, who were unbeaten in their first five matches, slipped to 15th.

Vincenzo Montella took his league tally to eight goals by netting twice for Roma in the final two minutes at the Olympic stadium.

Greek defender Traianos Dellas' diving header put Roma in front before Francesco Totti converted a penalty, both goals coming inside the first six minutes.

Totti then missed a second spot-kick after David Suazo had pulled one back for the Sardinians.

Simone Perrotta grabbed