

What's the Batistuta story?

INTERNET SOURCE

Barcelona president Joan Laporta has ruled out signing Argentine great Gabriel Batistuta.

The former AS Roma and Fiorentina star was being linked with Barca as a replacement for Henrik Larsson.

But Laporta said: "He is a great player, but he does not correspond to the profile of a forward who interests us."

"We must replace Larsson with someone who has great movement, agile and that can score regularly."

But in a contradictory statement handed out to the Argentine press, Batistuta apparently confirmed he was negotiating with Barcelona for a sensational January move to the Nou Camp.

"I am in contact with the Catalan club since two days. My vacation stay in Argentina will depend on how the negotiations go," said the 35-year-old veteran striker.

Batistuta is currently bound to Qatar club Al-Arabi until the end of next year, however the Argentine living legend revealed he forged a 'gentlemen's pact' with the club that would free him to leave Al-Arabi if he has the chance to join a European giant.

Batistuta had been Al-Arabi's leading goal scorer last season.

Qatar has become a popular destination for still active world stars on the wrong end of 30. German international Stephen Effenberg, Spanish great Fernando Hierro and a host of other big names have brandished their trade in this oil-rich country.



FLY AWAY WITH ME! AC Milan's Brazilian superstar Kaka is airborne during the match against Parma at the Tardini stadium in Parma on December 4.

Serie A

Adriano on fire

Football

REUTERS, Milan

Late goals from Brazilian Kaka and midfielder Andrea Pirlo gave AC Milan a 2-1 win at lowly Parma in Serie A on Saturday.

Brazilian Adriano hit a devastating first half hat-trick as Inter Milan crushed Messina 5-0 at the San Siro to move up to fourth place ahead of Sunday's games. The victory ended a frustrating Inter run of seven straight draws in Serie A.

Champions Milan are now just a point behind leaders Juventus who are at home to Lazio on Sunday but it was so nearly a costly defeat for Carlo Ancelotti's side.

Milan, who face Juve away on December 18, dominated the first half but managed few serious chances.

Ukrainian striker Andriy Shevchenko, a contender for the European Footballer of the Year award, hammered a shot against the post in the 13th minute.

Then Dutchman Clarence Seedorf had an effort ruled out due to a foul by Argentine team mate Hernan Crespo.

Parma created little and it was their first real effort on goal that gave them the lead.

Australian Mark Bresciano whipped in a free kick from the right and Alberto Gilardino, a Milan transfer target, rose well to glance a header past the poorly positioned Dida.

Ancelotti made three changes as he sought a way back into the game and it was one of those substitutes, Serginho, who proved the

game's decisive figure.

The Brazilian's corner was flicked on by another substitute, Danish forward Jon Dahl Tomasson, and Kaka drilled the ball home at the back post.

With only a minute of normal time remaining Parma's defence failed to clear a Serginho cross from the left and Pirlo pounced to fire home from the edge of the area.

Inter had their game wrapped up well before the interval thanks to Adriano, now the league's top scorer with 13, who again underlined his clinical finishing.

The Brazilian struck in the third minute with a scrambled effort but his second goal was a fine example of his power -- a rocketing 25 metre drive from an indirect free kick.

Adriano completed his hat-trick in the 36th minute, tapping home from short range after Messina's defence failed to clear a corner.

Inter suffered a setback four minutes after the break when keeper Francesco Toldo was sent off after crudely bringing down Japanese striker Atsushi Yanagisawa just outside the area.

But six minutes later Inter had made it 4-0 when a rocketing free kick from Sinisa Mihajlovic struck the post and went into the goal off the back of Messina's Greek goalkeeper Dimitrios Eleftheropoulos.

Messina's Nicola Amoroso converted a penalty kick in the 76th minute but referee Pierluigi Collina ordered it re-taken and substitute keeper Fabian Carini, making his Inter debut, saved the second shot.

Christian Vieri completed a comfortable victory with a strike six minutes from the end.

Primera Liga

Barca breathtaking

Football

REUTERS, Madrid

Barcelona maintained their stranglehold on the leadership of the Primera Liga with a 4-0 win over a lightweight Malaga at the Nou Camp on Saturday.

Leading scorer Samuel Eto'o took his tally for the season to 12 as he helped himself to a well taken double. Portugal midfielder Deco scored with a spectacular 25-metre strike and highly rated youngster Andres Iniesta weighed in with a neat finish.

The victory, Barca's seventh in seven home games this season, sent them 10 points clear of arch-rivals Real Madrid at the top of the Primera Liga.

Real travel to Villarreal on Sunday with a weakened side as they rest several first-choice players ahead of next week's decisive Champions League clash against AS Roma.

Earlier, last season's champions Valencia notched their third victory in a row as they rode their luck to snatch a late 1-0 win at dominant Albacete.

Substitute forward Xisco scored the winner three minutes from time when he netted with a deflected shot from five metres out after centre-half Carlos Marchena had cut a neat pass back from the byline.

The win lifted Claudio Ranieri's side up to third in the table, level on 25 points with Real and two ahead of Espanyol who travel to Real Zaragoza on Sunday.

Real Betis stayed in fifth spot after

Real Sociedad ended their 10-match unbeaten run with a 1-0 victory at Anoeta, striker Darko Kovacevic notching the winner when he chipped in from the edge of the area nine minutes before halftime.

Barcelona were never put under any pressure by a feeble Malaga who only managed to keep the home side at bay in the opening quarter by packing their defence.

The visitors began to tire, though, as they were forced to chase shadows while Barca stroked the ball around the midfield and gradually upped the pace.

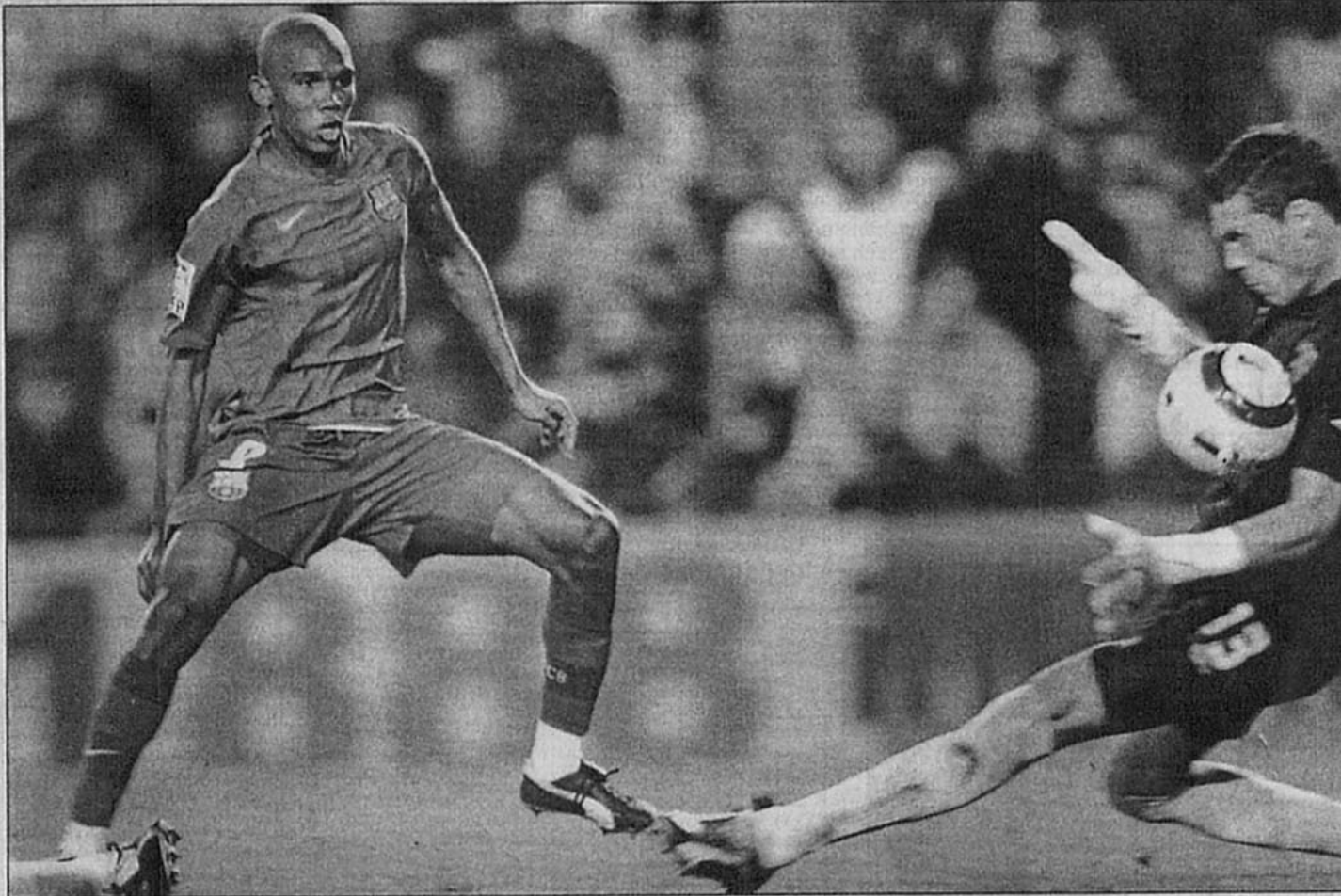
Iniesta had the first real chance of the game when he drilled wide of the post from the edge of the area midway through the half and just two minutes later Deco set up Eto'o for Barca's opener.

The Cameroon striker exploded past three defenders, drew keeper Juan Calatayud and then side-footed into the far corner.

The second came five minutes later when Deco sent a stunning right-foot shot flying into the top corner after Eto'o had slipped a quick pass to his feet 25 metres out.

Iniesta made it 3-0 after the break when he manoeuvred his way across the area to fire in at the far post and the under-21 international set up Barca's fourth after he had weaved his way through and slipped the ball to Eto'o who guided home a first-time shot.

Malaga's sixth defeat in seven outings left them in deep trouble just two points above basement side Real Mallorca who host fellow strugglers Numancia on Sunday.



Barcelona's Samuel Eto'o (L) places the ball past Malaga's goalkeeper Calatayud (R) to score at the Camp Nou stadium in Barcelona on December 4.

PHOTO: AFP

Victoria tense as butler quits!

INTERNET SOURCE

The butler and housekeeper of David and Victoria Beckham have quit after a series of fall-outs, according to the News of the World tabloid.

John and Nikki Giles-Larkin moved out of "Beckingham Palace" on Friday after two years in service.

News of the World on Sunday suggested that Victoria was now terrified that John will go public about his time with the Beckhams.

"No one knows what pushed John over the edge and made him walk out on one of the most glamorous jobs in his profession. But he made no secret of the fact he got on a whole lot better with David than Victoria. Victoria is paranoid about the possibility that John will talk," the tabloid quoted a source.

The butler of John and Nikki insisted there was no such possibility.

"John's a nice guy. There's absolutely no suggestion he would spill the beans. They've just had enough. John loved working for David but found it less easy to work with Victoria. She was always making demands on him."

"If anything was needed she'd shout for him and get him to do it, regardless of what he was doing. He practically organised Romeo's birthday in September which took months of planning on top of his everyday chores."

"Victoria no doubt felt she was entitled to treat him like a servant. After all, that's what he was employed as. But David was always much more polite when he asked him to do anything."

The source claimed that David was not the one to blame for them leaving, saying: "No matter how tired David was, he would always smile and be nice to them and, to be honest, if it wasn't for David they would have left ages ago."

The departures are a fresh blow to Victoria in what has proved to be a difficult year.

In April the News of the World revealed how Beckham had enjoyed a passionate affair with aide Rebecca Loos.

The PA then revealed to the world how they made passionate love in hotel rooms and sent raunchy text messages to each other. Former model Sarah Marbeck then claimed Beckham bedded her after they met during a Manchester United tour of the Far East.

Premiership

Blues mean business

Football

REUTERS, London

Chelsea maintained their drive for their first title for 50 years when they thrashed Newcastle United 4-0 at Stamford Bridge on Saturday to stay five points clear of Arsenal at the top of the Premier League.

Chelsea briefly led the table by eight points after kicking off early but the status quo returned at the top when Arsenal beat Birmingham City 3-0 at Highbury. Everton beat Bolton Wanderers 3-2 at Goodison Park and Manchester United beat Southampton 3-0 at Old Trafford.

With 16 matches played and the top four all winning, Chelsea lead the standings with 39 points followed by Arsenal (34), Everton (33) and Manchester United (30).

At the other end of the table the bottom four all lost.

West Bromwich Albion stayed bottom after losing 3-2 at Portsmouth, Norwich were 19th after losing 1-0 at home to Fulham, Southampton 18th after their defeat at United and Blackburn Rovers staying 17th after losing 1-0 at home to Tottenham Hotspur.

It took Chelsea more than an hour to make the breakthrough against Newcastle, who have won only twice at Stamford Bridge in the last 50 years and were beaten there 5-0 last season.

There was only going to be one outcome after Frank Lampard put Chelsea ahead in the 63rd minute with a volley after chipping down a header by Didier Drogba.

Drogba doubled the tally after 69 minutes after being set up by a 30-metre pass by Lampard and goals from Arjen Robben (89) and Mateja Kezman with a stoppage-time penalty, completed the rout. It was the fifth time in seven matches that Chelsea had scored four goals.

Arsenal had things almost as easy at Highbury where they beat Birmingham thanks to goals from Robert Pires and Thierry Henry, who scored twice in the last 10 minutes to take his tally for the season to 16.

It was Arsenal's first win in any competition for five matches and manager Arsene Wenger, who dropped goalkeeper Jens Lehmann and gave a league debut to Manuel Almunia, was a relieved man afterwards.

"What was important today was that we did the job and got a win. We stayed focused and showed some real strength."

Everton stayed third on 33 points after coming from behind twice to beat Bolton Wanderers 3-2 in a fiercely contested Lancashire derby at Goodison Park with an 85th-minute own goal from Tunisian defender Radhi Jaïdi handing Everton the points.

Kevin Davies twice put Bolton ahead but Everton equalised first

through Duncan Ferguson and then Thomas Gravesen before sealing victory when Jaïdi deflected the ball into his own net five minutes from time.

Manchester United won their fourth successive league game, with Paul Scholes, Wayne Rooney and Cristiano Ronaldo all scoring in the second half.

United manager Alex Ferguson was delighted afterwards and told Sky Sports News: "We played exceptionally well for periods in the second half."

West Brom conceded two late goals to lose 3-2 at Portsmouth and remain on 11 points two behind Southampton and Norwich, who lost 1-0 to a seventh-minute Andy Cole goal for Fulham at Carrow Road.

Spurs won 1-0 at Blackburn Rovers thanks to a 56th-minute goal from Robbie Keane after a run from Michael Brown.

The win lifted Spurs to 12th but Blackburn remained locked in the relegation zone with just one home win from eight at Ewood Park.

Aston Villa drew 1-1 with Liverpool, whose opening goal was a rare header from Harry Kewell -- his first goal for 33 matches.

Crystal Palace were playing Charlton Athletic on Sunday and Middlesbrough were facing Manchester City on Monday.

Bundesliga

Bayern drop points

Football

REUTERS, Berlin

Bayern Munich squandered their chance to widen their lead at the top of the Bundesliga on Saturday when they gave up a late goal and were forced to settle for a 2-2 draw at Nuremberg in the Bavarian derby.

Nuremberg's Ivica Banovic converted a penalty in the 74th minute after Hasan Salihmidzic got a red card for bringing down Stefan Kiessling in front of Bayern's goal

before a sold-out Frankenstadion crowd of 44,359.

The draw, ending a four-match winning streak that had lifted Bayern to the top of the table, was especially bitter because Nuremberg were down to 10 men from the 25th minute. Bayern coach Felix Magath said his side gave Nuremberg a Christmas present.

VfB Stuttgart moved into second place on 30 points after a 5-2 win over VfL Bochum, with Germany striker Kevin Kuranyi scoring twice. Schalke 04, who play at Dortmund on Sunday, also have 30 points. Bayern lead on 33.

Defending champions Werder Bremen moved up a notch to fifth with a 6-0 win at Freiburg. Greece striker Angelos Charisteas made the most of starting lineup chance with a hat-trick ahead of Bremen's Champions League match on Tuesday at Valencia.

Hertha Berlin jumped two to seventh and stayed unbeaten in six matches with a 6-0 thrashing of Borussia Moenchengladbach.

In Nuremberg, Magath made no attempt to conceal his anger over the weak showing against the 12th place hosts before Bayern's Champions League match on

Wednesday at Ajax Amsterdam.

"We squandered two points that could cost us dearly at the end of the season," Magath said. "The team got complacent after taking the lead 2-1. Instead of adding to that we ended up giving Nuremberg a little Christmas present. They deserved it."

Marek Mintal had put Nuremberg ahead in the 23rd minute, beating Oliver Kahn with a header for the Slovak's league-leading 13th goal of the season.

But two minutes later Nuremberg's Andreas Wolf got a red card for handling a ball in front of

the goal just seconds after getting a yellow card for fouling Michael Ballack. Dutch striker Roy Makaay converted to even the score.

Ze Roberto, who replaced a disappointing Bastian Schweinsteiger in the 55th minute, put Bayern in front five minutes later with a long distance free kick that curled into the right corner only for Banovic to salvage the draw.

Bayern had won six of their last seven league matches before Saturday and seemed to be running on all cylinders after a shaky start under Magath, who moved from Stuttgart this season.



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Tender Notice

Sealed tenders are invited from the bonafide manufacturers/experienced suppliers/accredited agents & contractors for the supply of stores as stated below. Detailed description has been provided in the bidding documents.

Bidding documents are available in the Cash Section (Room # 208) of BIRDEM on all working days (from 9.00 AM to 1.00 PM). The last date of sale of documents is 14 December, 2004. Tenders will be received in a tender box kept in front of Room No-224 on the receiving/opening date of 15 December, 2004 (Wednesday) up to 12.00 hours (noon) and tenders will be opened on the same day at 12.30 hours (noon) in presence of the tenderers (if any).

Tender No	Name of tendered stores	Value of bidding documents in Taka (non-refundable)
i) BIRDEM/P/(L)/2004-2005/02	Suture Materials	200.00
ii) BIRDEM/P/(L)/2004-2005/03	Pulse Oxymeter with NIBP	200.00
iii) BIRDEM/P/(L)/2004-2005/04	ECG & ETT Paper	200.00

The authority is not bound to accept the lowest offer and reserves the right to accept or reject the whole tender or any part of it without assigning any reason whatsoever.

Sajjad Hussain Khan
Director, Procurement

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