

PRIMERA LIGA

Barca back to earth

Football

AFP, Madrid

Barcelona will have given some hope to their rivals that they can still grab the Spanish title after the league leaders crashed 2-0 at home to Atletico Madrid...

had been brought down by Barca keeper Victor Valdes. The scoreline was a little unfair to the hosts as they had two decent claims for penalties turned down...

always have to take risks." Antonio Ramiro opened the scoring for Sevilla after 32 minutes, chesting down a long ball and then blasting it past Levante keeper Juan Luis Mora...

Villarreal's prolific Uruguayan striker Diego Forlan finished off a well-worked team effort three minutes after the break for their equaliser, the former Manchester United player getting his 10th goal in eight games.

TOP SIX Spanish League standings after Sunday's matches. Table with 6 columns: Team, P, W, D, L, Goals For, Goals Against, Points.

UEFA planning betting ban

AFP, Frankfurt

The ongoing match-fixing scandal in Germany has prompted European football's governing body UEFA to draw up plans for legislation to stop all players, management and referees in Europe from betting on games.



THAT'S THE SPIRIT! The North Korean football team receiving a bouquet upon their arrival at the Narita International airport, east of Tokyo yesterday.

Del Piero gets Azzurri axe

AFP, Rome

Italy coach Marcello Lippi has dropped misfiring Juventus striker Alessandro Del Piero from his squad to face Russia in Wednesday's friendly international.

Gerrard worth more than 50m pounds

Football

AFP, London

Liverpool chief executive Rick Parry has revealed they would turn down a 50 million pound bid for Steven Gerrard who is seen as top of big-spending Chelsea's summer priorities.

will." Parry said Real Madrid asked for an option on the England midfielder during negotiations for striker Fernando Morientes.

over Gerrard last summer. "We had told Chelsea that as far as we were concerned he was not for sale and we didn't want to sell him.

Magath thinks Gunners' days are over

AFP, Munich

Bayern Munich manager Felix Magath insists his side have the edge for the Champions League showdown with Arsenal in Munich on February 22 claiming the Premiership champions are running on fumes.

North on a mission

AFP, Tokyo



North Korea's football team flew in here Monday for a World Cup qualifier against Japan, where hostility is simmering toward the Stalinist state over its abductions of Japanese.

sure will be enforced for the match on Wednesday in Saitama, a satellite city north of Tokyo, although Japanese football fans are not known to act violently.

victims while challenging the rest of the world with its nuclear arms ambitions. Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi called on Japanese fans to behave during the football showdown...

SERIE A

Milan owe Crespo one

Football

REUTERS, Rome

Champions AC Milan cut Juventus's lead at the top of Serie A to two points on Sunday when a stoppage-time goal by Hernan

Crespo earned them a 2-1 win over Lazio. The result gave Milan 48 points from 23 matches.

put Lazio ahead from the penalty spot in the 56th minute following Jaap Stam's foul on Tommaso Rocchi.

period of pressure by the home side culminating 20 minutes later when Inter defender Marco Materazzi stuck out a hand to prevent a Bresciano shot crossing the line, earning himself a red card.

The ensuing Parma penalty was converted by Fabio Simplicio. Inter's hopes of salvaging anything from the encounter looked even slimmer when Italy international Alberto Gilardino beat keeper Hector Carini with a superb overhead kick on the hour.

PREMIERSHIP

James keeps Blues at bay

Football

REUTERS, London

Manchester City proved a real thorn in championship-chasing Chelsea's side on Sunday when they took a fourth Premier League point off the London club with a 0-0 draw at Stamford Bridge.

United beat Birmingham City 2-0 at home on Saturday, while third-placed champions Arsenal remained two points further back after romping to a 3-1 win at Aston Villa.

Sven-Goran Eriksson, James then saved low from Mateja Kezman and in the 39th minute blocked a William Gallas header after another Duff corner from the right.



THERE'S SO MUCH TO DO IN BRAZIL! Argentine star player Carlos Tevez (C) of Brazilian club Corinthians, plays the "agogo", flanked by two samba dancers during Sao Paulo's samba school parade on February 6.

It seemed the visitors would hold out for a point but, in the fourth minute of stoppage time, Crespo sealed a last-gasp victory by poking home the rebound after a Kaka shot struck the post.

However, Inter refused to buckle and were rewarded in the 76th minute when defender Ivan Cordoba nodded a Sinisa Mihajlovic free kick past Frey. Cordoba was at the centre of the action again five minutes later when he was pushed to the ground by Parma defender Daniele Bonera.

TOP SIX Italian league table after Sunday's matches. Table with 6 columns: Team, P, W, D, L, Goals For, Goals Against, Points.

TOP SIX Standings in the English Premiership after Sunday's matches. Table with 6 columns: Team, P, W, D, L, Goals For, Goals Against, Points.

TOP SIX Standings in the English Premiership after Sunday's matches. Table with 6 columns: Team, P, W, D, L, Goals For, Goals Against, Points.