



Inter Milan superstar Adriano holds his head as he is carried away on a stretcher after injuring his knee during the match against Fiorentina, at the San Siro stadium in Milan on March.

SERIE A
Milan stay on par



AFP, Milan

AC Milan rejoined Juventus at the top of Serie A with a 2-0 win over Roma for the reigning champions' eighth consecutive league victory and their 10th in all competitions.

After a goalless first-half, Hernan Crespo put Milan ahead with a superb header before winning a penalty which Andrea Pirlo converted.

AC Milan and Juventus both have 66 points with just nine games of the season left to play.

Juventus, who along with Milan are through to the quarter-finals of the Champions League, beat Reggina 1-0 on Saturday in Turin where Alessandro Del Piero scored the only goal.

Milan broke the deadlock in the 63rd minute at the Olympic stadium.

Georgian defender Kakha Kaladze crossed from the left to the back post where Crespo outjumped Christian Panucci and planted a firm header wide of Roma keeper Giancarlo Curci.

Roma fell further behind eight minutes later when Panucci blocked Crespo's goalbound header with his

hand to conceded a penalty. Panucci was shown the red card and Pirlo coolly slotted the spot-kick into the top corner.

Earlier Sunday, Inter Milan defeated Fiorentina 3-2 at the San Siro to strengthen their position in third place.

All of Inter's goals were scored by South Americans. Argentine midfielder Esteban Cambiasso gave them the lead with a right-footed volley, before Giampaolo Pazzini equalised for the visitors with an acrobatic scissor kick.

Argentinian Juan Sebastian Veron restored Inter's advantage with a rasping right-footed drive eight minutes after the break, before Colombian defender Ivan Cordoba headed the home side's third goal.

Cordoba then put through his own net three minutes from time to give Inter a few anxious moments before the final whistle.

Inter's win was soured by a right knee injury to Adriano. The Brazilian striker, who scored a hat-trick in Tuesday's Champions League win against Porto that took Inter through to the last eight, was carried off in the 43rd minute after colliding heavily with Enzo Maresca, although early reports said the injury was not serious.

Inter have 50 points from their 29 matches played, two more than Udinese who won 2-1 at home to Lecce. Sampdoria fell one place to fifth after losing 2-1 at home to bottom club Atalanta.

Livorno threw away a 2-0 lead in their 3-3 draw with Cagliari, while Parma also shared six goals at home to Palermo.

Sergio Pellissier scored twice as Chievo improved their chances of surviving relegation with a 3-1 home win over fellow strugglers Brescia, while Messina drew 0-0 at home to Bologna.

Siena boosted their hopes of surviving the drop with a battling 1-0 home victory over Lazio on Saturday, the Tuscan club's first win since February 20.

| TOP SIX | | | | | | | | | |
|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|--|--|
| Italian league table after Sunday's matches (played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, goals against, points): | | | | | | | | | |
| Milan | 29 | 20 | 6 | 3 | 49 | 17 | 66 | | |
| Juventus | 29 | 20 | 6 | 3 | 47 | 16 | 66 | | |
| Inter | 29 | 11 | 17 | 1 | 53 | 35 | 50 | | |
| Udinese | 29 | 14 | 6 | 9 | 43 | 29 | 48 | | |
| Sampdoria | 29 | 14 | 5 | 10 | 32 | 23 | 47 | | |
| Palermo | 29 | 11 | 11 | 7 | 34 | 29 | 44 | | |

Federer destroys Hewitt



AFP, Indian Wells

Roger Federer successfully defended his Indian Wells ATP Masters Series title, defeating Lleyton Hewitt 6-2, 6-4, 6-4 in Sunday's final to claim his 26th career singles crown.

The world number one Federer is undefeated in his past 17 finals and has won seven titles in eight tournaments dating back to the US Open.

"This week I have been playing and feeling fantastic," said the 23-year-old Federer, who earned 455,000 dollars in prize money. "The pressure is off now and I feel a huge sense of relief."

In the final game of Sunday's championship he built a 40-0 lead then clinched the victory with his 14th ace of the match.

Federer said he would celebrate the win by going to dinner with his girlfriend.

"I am not a big party guy that goes crazy," said Federer, who has won four of the last six Grand Slams. "I like to have a party once in awhile but it is not a must after a win."

Switzerland's Federer is off to a personal best 26-1 this year and looks to be as close to unbeatable as anyone has been on the tour in years.

He was certainly dominant in this



ROGER FEDERER

off for him. The last year and a half, they have."

Federer hammered 41 total winners and just three double faults to Hewitt's 18 winners and seven double faults in the one hour, 52 minute match.

Four-time major winner Federer has won a record 17 straight finals he has appeared in, going back to October 2003 and he is 41-1 since the start of the US Open.

Federer also continued his domination over world number two Hewitt, winning the last seven encounters, including six victories in 2004.

"All the finals in a row that's fantastic," Federer said of his remarkable run. "I didn't have a great record in finals at the beginning of my career. To come through is special, especially in the first Masters Series of the year."

This was the first Indian Wells final between the number one and number two players in the world since 1995, when Pete Sampras beat fellow American Andre Agassi.

Federer jack-hammered his way through the men's draw here with ease, earning straight-set victories over Mardy Fish, Gilles Muller, Ivan

Ljubicic, Nicolas Kiefer and Guillermo Canas. His toughest test was against Ljubicic whom he beat in two tiebreakers.

Hewitt has played well in big tournaments the last six months, but titles have eluded him.

The 24-year-old Hewitt came into the final as a huge underdog. Unlike Federer who cruised through his semi-final in straight sets, Hewitt was coming off after a marathon two hour, 33 minute semi-final win over Andy Roddick the day before.

Host teams

FROM PAGE 12 Sahagir converting his overnight 54 to 80 and his partner left-arm spinner Abdur Razzak making 40 in a seventh wicket stand of 63.

Chittagong, who are without six frontline batsmen due to injury, ended the second day on 226-6, still 180 runs in arrears.

The visitors lost half their wickets for 119 runs but were eventually rescued by a fighting 74 by wicketkeeper batsman Dhiman Gosh. The young stumper struck ten boundaries and a six during his defiant 98-ball knock. Off-spinner Sabbir Khan was batting with him on 13.

CORES IN BRIEF

KHULNA-CHITTAGONG
KHULNA: First innings 406 all out in 115.4 overs (Shafiq 62, Bashar 20, Manzarul 151, Hasibul 80, Razzak 40, Russel 22; Alamgir 3-63, Ahsanullah 2-92, Sunny 2-62).
CHITTAGONG: First innings 226-6 in 64 overs (Masum 69, Arif 20, Dhiman 74 n.o.; Razzak 4-68).

DHAKA-RAJSHAHI
RAJSHAHI: First innings 217
DHAKA: First innings 311 all out in 81.2 overs (Javed 30, Anwar 18, Mehrab Jr 54, Mehrab 41, Ashraf 114; Shahjada 4-69, Shafaq 3-59).
RAJSHAHI: Second innings 35-4 in 15 overs (Farhad 9, Naeem 11 n.o, Rosel 7, Anisur 5 n.o; Talha 2-9).

SYLHET-BARISAL
SYLHET: First innings 478-7 declared in 169.3 overs (Rahman 51, Moniruzzaman 123, Imtiaz 56, Mabud 114 n.o, Rezaul 107; Nadif 3-83).
BARISAL: First innings 20-0 in 12 overs (Imran 8 n.o, Hannan 9 n.o.).

Adriano remains calm

INTERNET SOURCES, Milan

Inter Milan superstar Adriano underwent a magnetic resonance test Monday morning to assess the extent of the knee injury suffered in the first half of Sunday's Serie A match at home to Fiorentina.

The results of the test, carried out by professor Eugenio Genovese in accordance with the Inter medical staff at the Ospedale del Circolo, have confirmed a sprain of the collateral medial ligament in the player's right knee. The Brazilian will rest for a week, after which further tests will be carried out. A rehabilitation programme will then be scheduled.

After this morning's medical tests, Adriano said: "It was a strange feeling. I can't even say I felt a strong pain."

"It was unpleasant because I wanted to continue helping the team. Once I was back in the dressing room the doctors reassured me and I'm even calmer after today's tests. I will do everything to be back as soon as I can and, as always, help Inter as the season continues. I thank everyone for their affection after what has happened."

PRIMERA LIGA

Carlos saves the day



REUTERS, Madrid

Real Madrid kept the Primera Liga title race alive by beating Malaga 1-0 in the Bernabeu on Sunday, reducing Barcelona's lead at the top to 11 points.

Brazilian defender Roberto Carlos drilled a 20 metre shot low into the corner on the hour, but Real were made to work hard for their victory by a resilient Malaga, and a demanding crowd who whistled every error.

With midfielder Thomas Gravesen suspended Guti returned to Real's starting line up, as did Michel Salgado who made an early return from a knee injury.

Real were unable to make much headway in the first period and as Malaga soaked up the pressure the crowd grew ever more frustrated. Vanderlei Luxemburgo's side were whistled off at half time after hardly troubling Francesc Arnau's goal.

Real showed more purpose after the break and Ronaldo was denied in a one-on-one with Arnau soon after the re-start.

Malaga defender Fernando Sanz almost silenced the Bernabeu with a diving header but his effort skimmed over the bar.

Malaga continued to threaten and Sanz almost caught out Iker Casillas with a dipping free kick.

Roberto Carlos finally found a gap on the edge of the area after Ronaldo fed him and his angled a low shot into the far corner of Arnau's goal to settle the home side.

Ronaldo's header was tipped over the bar by Arnau as Real pressed in search of a second and David Beckham set up Albert Celades for a great chance but the substitute fired against the post from 12 metres.

Valencia made short work of Getafe as they strolled to a 3-1 win that put them up to fifth and back in the hunt for the European places.

Francisco Rufete, Marco Di

Vaio and Mista all scored for Valencia before Mariano Pernia pulled one back for the visitors.

Sevilla striker Julio Baptista ended his side's five-match winless run from the penalty spot, then got sent off, as the Andalucians beat struggling Real Mallorca 1-0.

Mallorca midfielder Gonzalo de los Santos brought down Baptista in the area just before half-time, earning himself his second yellow card of the game, and Baptista got up to score his 14th goal of the season.

| TOP SIX | | | | | | | | | |
|---|----|----|----|---|----|----|----|--|--|
| Spanish league table after Sunday's matches (played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, goals against, points): | | | | | | | | | |
| Barcelona | 29 | 21 | 5 | 3 | 54 | 18 | 68 | | |
| Real | 29 | 18 | 3 | 8 | 49 | 25 | 57 | | |
| Betis | 29 | 13 | 9 | 7 | 47 | 37 | 48 | | |
| Villarreal | 28 | 13 | 8 | 7 | 48 | 26 | 47 | | |
| Valencia | 29 | 12 | 10 | 7 | 44 | 30 | 46 | | |
| Espanyol | 29 | 13 | 7 | 9 | 37 | 35 | 46 | | |

PREMIERSHIP

Liverpool get the result



REUTERS, London

Liverpool boosted their hopes of qualifying for next season's Champions League with a 2-1 victory over Everton in a passionate Merseyside derby on Sunday.

Liverpool led through first-half goals by captain Steven Gerrard and Spanish playmaker Luis Garcia before a 77th-minute red card for their Czech striker Milan Baros threw Everton a lifeline at Anfield.

Everton's Australian midfielder Tim Cahill capitalised with a fine strike on 82 minutes but Liverpool held on during a thrilling finale for a priceless win in the race to finish fourth. They now trail Everton by only four points.

Birmingham City beat Aston Villa 2-0 in the Midlands derby and two Peter Crouch goals hauled Southampton out of the relegation zone, giving them a 3-1 win at Middlesbrough.

Chelsea moved ever closer to the league title after Saturday's 4-1 rout of Crystal Palace, maintaining an 11-point lead over Manchester

United, who beat Fulham 1-0, and a 13-point lead over champions Arsenal, who edged Blackburn Rovers 1-0.

However, Sunday's spotlight was trained on Merseyside and the battle for England's final slot in the Champions League qualifying round.

Everton kept hold of that prized fourth place on 51 points despite their defeat, but the lead was cut to four points over fifth-placed Liverpool and to five points over Bolton Wanderers with eight games to play.

Liverpool knew it was a must-win game and Gerrard rose to the occasion in the 27th minute, lashing his shot below the Everton wall after Dietmar Hamann had nudged a free kick to him on the edge of the area.

The second followed five minutes later after a speculative long shot by Spaniard Fernando Morientes was parried on to the crossbar by Everton goalkeeper Nigel Martyn and Garcia headed the rebound into an empty net.

Liverpool were cruising until Baros, who had missed two glaring chances to score, was sent off for a wild, high challenge on Everton

skipper Alan Stubbs.

Cahill reduced the arrears with a low shot on the bounce but Liverpool held on.

It was a much more tame affair at St Andrews in the Midlands derby which was effectively decided by a goalkeeping blunder.

Birmingham took a deserved lead after 52 minutes when Emile Heskey powered past two defenders and Danish keeper Thomas Sorensen let the striker's near-post shot slip beneath him.

Midfield substitute Julian Gray made it 2-0 in the 89th minute, pouncing on sloppy defending to steer home a shot from close range and give City their second 'double' over their local rivals in three seasons.

| TOP SIX | | | | | | | | | |
|--|----|----|---|----|----|----|----|--|--|
| English Premiership table after Sunday's matches (played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, goals against, points): | | | | | | | | | |
| Chelsea | 30 | 24 | 5 | 1 | 58 | 10 | 77 | | |
| Man United | 30 | 19 | 9 | 2 | 48 | 17 | 66 | | |
| Arsenal | 30 | 19 | 7 | 4 | 68 | 32 | 64 | | |
| Everton | 30 | 15 | 6 | 9 | 35 | 32 | 51 | | |
| Liverpool | 30 | 14 | 5 | 11 | 43 | 31 | 47 | | |
| Bolton | 30 | 13 | 7 | 10 | 38 | 46 | | | |

Second tsunami match at Lord's



AFP, London

A second major fund-raising limited-overs cricket match, in aid of the tsunami appeal, will be staged at Lord's on June 14 it was announced on Monday.

The first tsunami appeal match between Asia and the rest of the world was held in Melbourne on January 10 and raised over 11 million dollars for relief efforts.

The tsunamis, triggered by a massive earthquake off the Indonesian coast, killed more than 290,000 people in several Indian Ocean nations.

The Lord's fixture will feature 22 of the best cricketers from around the world.

Top names already pledged to play are Australian master spinner Shane Warne, New Zealand captain Stephen Fleming (New Zealand), Sri Lankan spin wizard Muttiah Muralitharan, West Indies star batsman Brian Lara and former Zimbabwean batsman Andy Flower.

Flower said that it was important for cricket to do its part.

"We are incredibly fortunate in this country (England) to live a pain-free, privileged and comfortable existence," said Flower.

"There are millions of people affected by the tsunami living in terrible conditions."

"This one event has caused so much sadness and hardship. It is important that we make a contribution to such a vital cause. This match gives us an opportunity, in one small way, to alleviate some of

that suffering."

Other leading cricketers have also been approached to play in the 50 over fixture. The names of the remaining players, and the captains of the two teams (MCC and International XI), will be announced in due course.

Tickets go on sale from April 4.

Bob predicts

FROM PAGE 12 four wickets in the match so it was not a mistake. Our seamer Mohammad Khalid did not bowl well while leg-spinner Danish Kaneria was less effective due to dehydration," said Woolmer.

Kaneria, who took 6-150 in the first Test, managed just six wickets for 259 runs in the second Test.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Talent was E.

6 Electrician, lost in Hollywood

12 Trinket

13 "My Cup Runneth Over"

14 Bawdy musical

15 "Gong Show" creator

16 A Baldwin brother

17 Goblet feature

19 Poseidon's realm

20 Friends and neighbors

22 Perched

24 Pro

27 Not even one

29 Senate employee

32 Sequence of causes and effects

35 One of the Jackson 5

36 Mexican entree

37 Follow relentlessly

38 Conclude

40 Grand

DOWN

42 Its cap, was E.

44 Vote off the island

46 TVA structures

50 Water nymphs

52 Small studio's output

54 Even the score

55 Tease

56 Checked

57 Impaled in the ring

1 Not even get a D

2 Garage job

3 By surprise

11 Artist

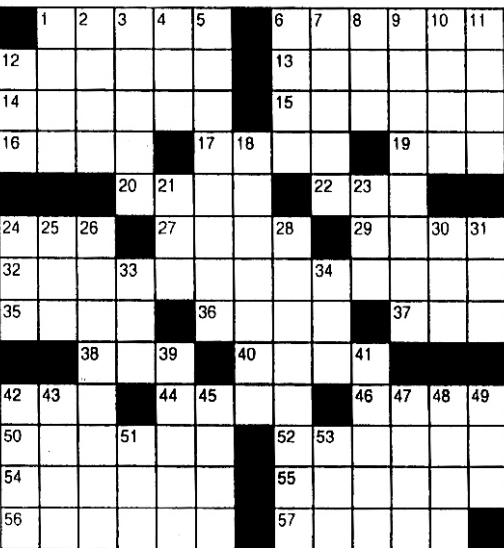
12 Shape shifter?

18 Vows to inflict injury?

21 B&B

Solution time: 27 mins.

| | | |
|--------|----------|-------|
| KEN | PINS | TAPS |
| AMO | AYOW | ALTO |
| LIV | WIRE | BLAB |
| ELAINE | RHO | |
| DES | VTOLIN | |
| SHRED | BLED | IDA |
| HEIR | GAIS | FUES |
| ARG | PRIV | SLUSH |
| HOOPLA | SUE | |
| ARUN | PESTILE | |
| FIFI | DEADHEAT | |
| AKIN | MARE | ANN |
| QENT | AUKS | KEA |



CRYPTOQUIP

WOQKKV NYM VISNE QOFYV

NOS RKDQYW FRR ICS

VCSKUSV . ICSD`OS

MSRQYQISKD CFI QISEV

Yesterday's Cryptogram: HE CAN'T REMEMBER THE GENERIC NAME OF THE PILL, BUT IT'S ON THE TIP OF HIS TONGUE.

Today's Cryptogram Clue: R equals F

The Cryptogram is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. You think that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.