PRIMERA LIGA

Barca back at their best



AFP, Madrid

League leaders Barcelona gave their emphatic response to the pressure put upon them by second-place Real Madrid with a 4-0 rout at Malaga on Sunday.

The victory maintains Barca's six point advantage at the top of the Spanish first division, with five games to go, after Real ensured that their eternal rivals didn't sleep easily by beating Villarreal 2-1 24 hours earlier.

'This win was tribute to my players' concentration. The only time Malaga was in this game was during the first 15 minutes," analysed Barcelona coach Frank

TOP SCORERS

Leading scorers in the Spanish league after this weekend's matches:

- 21 Samuel Eto'o (Barcelona) 18 - Diego Forlan (Villarreal), Ricardo
- Oliveira (Real Betis) 17 - Julio Baptista (Sevilla)
- 16 Fernando Torres (Atletico Madrid), Ronaldo (Real Madrid)
- 14 Juan Roman Riquelme (Villarreal) 13 - Maxi Rodriguez (Espanyol), Nihat Kahveci (Real Sociedad), David Villa (Real Zaragoza)
- 12 Santiago Ezquerro (Athletic Bilbao) 11 - Marco Di Vaio (Valencia), Edu (Real
- Luis Garcia (Real Mallorca), Albert Luque (Deportivo La Coruna),
- Michael Owen (Real Madrid) 10 - Antonio Pacheco (Albacete), Raul Tamudo (Espanyol),
- Ismael Urzaiz (Athletic Bilbao) 9 - Ludovic Giuly (Barcelona), Chengue
- Morales (Osasuna) Diego Tristan (Deportivo La Coruna)

"Malaga gave us some opportunities at the back, and my players were in a position to take advan-

tage of them." reflected Riikaard on the reasons why Barca had triumphed so easily.

The Catalans opened the scoring with their first serious attack on 21 minutes

Malaga's defence was caught on the hop with a quick counterattack and central defender Oleguer Presas was in the unusual position of being in the front line rather than at the back.

Oleguer took his rare chance in an opponent's penalty area and sent a rasping shot past Malaga goalkeeper Francesc Arnau, a fellow product of the Barcelona youth system, to get his first goal on Barca senior

It took Barca just another 12 minutes before French winger Ludovic Giuly added to the tally, heading home a centre from Ronaldinho.

Giuly then put the game beyond Malaga's reach when he waltzed through the hosts' defence unmolested to get Barca's third goal after 67 min-

Gerard Lopez headed Barca's fourth in the dying seconds of the game to add to the embarrassment of Malaga who played the last 14 minutes with just 10 men after Amoroso was sent off for a crass challenge on Carlos Puvol.

There were celebrations on both sides of Barcelona on Sunday.

Barcelona's often overshadowed neighbours Espanyol continued their challenge for a place in next season's Champions League and moved up to fourth after their 3-1 win over Real Zaragoza.

Sevilla stay in third, but a huge 14 third goal of the night, and his 17th of points behind Real Madrid, after their impressive 3-1 victory at Athletic Bilbao.

Julio Baptista opened the scoring with a vicious free kick after six

Jesus Navas then put Sevilla in control 14 minutes later with one of the best goals of the season, going past three Bilbao players before lashing the ball home with a left foot shot from the edge of the area.

Baptista then headed Sevilla's

home to Real Sociedad. Second half goals from Mista Ferrer and Miguel Angel Angulo were sufficient for reigning Spanish champions Valencia to beat relegation-threatened Albacete 2-0 and move up to fifth.

the season. 14 minutes from the

whistle before Julen Guerrero got a

slipped to seventh after losing 3-2 at

Sevilla's local rivals Real Betis

late consolation for Athletic.

TOP SIX

Spanish football league table after Sunday's late match (played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, goals against,

poirito).							
Barcelona	33	23	6	4	65	25	75
Real	33	22	3	8	59	29	69
Sevilla	33	16	7	10	40	36	55
Espanyol	33	15	8	10	44	40	53
Valencia	33	13	13	7	50	34	52
Villarreal	32	14	10	8	53	30	52



Barcelona's French international Ludovic Giuly celebrates one of his two goals against Malaga at the La Rosaleda

PREMIERSHIP

Rooney rocks

AFP, Manchester

Wayne Rooney was hailed as 'phenomenal' by Manchester United manager Sir Alex Ferguson after defying injury to score the wonder goal that inspired United to a crucial 2-1 win against Newcastle at Old Trafford on Sunday.

England forward Rooney, who suffered a first-half leg injury, was set to be substituted by Ferguson just seconds before beating Newcastle goalkeeper Shay Given with a fierce 25-yard volley on 57 minutes.

But the 19-year-old's strike cancelled out Darren Ambrose's 27th minute opener and levelled for United before Wes Brown headed in his firstever Premiership goal to seal victory and move Ferguson's men to within one point of Arsenal in the race for

second place. Ferguson said: "It was a fantastic goal by Wayne Rooney, absolutely phenomenal. The ironic thing is that I was ready to take him off just before the goal because he had got himself injured in the first-half.

"But he is always a threat when he is on the pitch and that's why I kept him on. You have to say that the goal was even better considering that he was injured when he scored it."

TOP SIX

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

Chelsea	34	26	7	1	65	13	85
Arsenal	33	21	8	4	73	33	71
Man Utd	34	20	10	4	50	21	70
Everton	34	17	7	10	41	34	58
Liverpool	35	16	6	13	48	36	54
Bolton	35	15	9	11	45	39	54

STANCHART CRICKET

Rajdhani Model crush St Joseph SPORTS REPORTER

Rajdhani Model High handed a 185run defeat on St Joseph Higher Secondary School in the Standard Chartered Under-15 Young Tigers National School Cricket Tournament at the Residential Model College

Ground yesterday.

Batting first, the winners piled up 299 and then wrapped up St. Joseph

In the day's other matches, Sheikh Abdullah Mollah High (126) managed five-run victory over Khilgaon Government High (121), Adarsha Bidyapith (155) defeated Shourav Smrity High (151) by six wickets, Iqra Model (176) thumped University Laboratory (175) by seven wickets, Scholars School (179) earned an exciting eight-run victory over Titas Gas (171), Ideal School (85) outplayed Maniknagar Model (82) by nine wickets, Barnamala Adarsha High (102) defeated Sunnydale (100) by eight wickets. Jinzira PM Pilot High(179) beat Residential Model

(177) by three wickets. In the under-13 competition, North Zone suffered a 53-run defeat against East Zone in the second round match at the Jagannath Hall ground of Dhaka

University North Zone were bundled out for 151 in reply to East Zone's 204.

Juve hail Nedved

Football

Juventus rejoined AC Milan at the top of Italy's Serie A after defeating Lazio 1-0 at the Olympic stadium here on Sunday.

A poor game appeared to be heading for a draw until five minutes from time when Czech midfielder Pavel Nedved grabbed a dramatic winner for the Turin club.

The former European Footballer of the Year ran onto Marcelo Zalayeta's flicked header, evaded

footed from an acute angle. Gianluigi Buffon kept Juve's lead intact with a superb one-handed save to keep out Massimo Oddo's curling free-kick three minutes later.

Milan had opened up a threepoint lead on Saturday after beating struggling Parma at the San Siro. Milan and Juve both have 73

points with five games of the season left. Goal difference cannot decided the championship and should the teams finish level on points on the final day there will be a two-legged play-off in June.

The two title-chasing teams meet in Milan on May 8. Lazio drop to ninth after seeina

their three-match unbeaten ended by Fabio Capello's men. The importance of three crucial

points in the title race was not lost on especially with several key players missing through injury and suspension and their captain Alessandro Del Piero hobbling off in the first-half.

Earlier Sunday, Sampdoria

maintained their push for a Champions League place with a 2-1 home victory over Roma. Max Tonetto gave Sampdoria a

33rd minute lead with a crisp close-

range finish before Francesco Flachi coolly slotted a second-half Vincenzo Montella ensured a nail-biting finale by scoring a stoppage-time penalty, but the hosts

held on for three precious points. Sampdoria's victory saw them reclaim fourth spot from Udinese, 3-2 winners at Siena on Saturday.

Palermo, the other team in contention for the final Champions eague snot lost 1-0 away to hot tom club Atalanta.

Inter Milan went down to a shock 2-1 defeat at Messina, only their second loss of the season.

Julio Cruz put Inter ahead soon

after the restart, but goals from Arturo Di Napoli, a former Inter youth team player, and Brazilian Rafael secured victory for the battling Sicilians.

Inter remain in third place, fou points clear of Sampdoria. On Saturday, title-holders AC

Milan thrashed Parma 3-0.

Italian football league table after Sunday's matches (played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, goals against, points):

Milan	33	22	7	4	55	20	73	l
Juventus	33	22	7	4	56	22	73	ı
Inter	33	14	17	2	58	37	59	ı
Sampdoria	33	16	7	10	36	25	55	ı
Udinese	33	15	8	10	50	36	53	ı
Palermo	33	12	12	9	39	35	48	ı

Non-stars shine



SPORTS REPORTER

The just concluded Sixth National Cricket League should be remembered as the competition where local batsmen got rid of their inhibition of not being able to reach threefigure scores.

No less than a record 39 hundreds were scored in the lone firstclass competition of the country this season. Significantly, the best performances came from cricketers who were not even on the fringes of national selection. Although Svlhet finished bottom, opener Golam Rahman hogged the spotlight. The left-handed batsman amassed 825 runs from 10 matches at an average of 51.56 with three hundreds. His merry run however, did not accompany him in the League's one-day competition where he could muster just 154 in nine outings.

Chittagong's Nazimuddin hit the only double century (204) in the

Young Rajshahi batter Forhad

Asia, Middle East bridge in Dhaka

SPORTS REPORTER

The South East Bank 13th Asia and Middle East Zonal Bridge Championships will be held in Dhaka from April 28.

Men's and women's teams from India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Jordan, Qatar, Bahrain, Palestine, Syria and hosts Bangladesh will take part in the

Wright points

Zealand, where cricket has only a

FROM PAGE 12

few takers." But commentary was out of the question: "Oh, I wouldn't do that just for the sake of money. I already have a lot of money. I just don't like it.

Reza was the find of the season. He shone in both versions. Reza finished second in the four-day event (769 runs in 10 matches at average of 58.74) and was the leading rungetter in the one-day competition

(340 in 10 matches). But the abridged form did not

produce as many hundreds with Azam Igbal, Anisur Rahman and Imran Ahmed hitting the three Out-of-favour paceman Alamgir

Kabir was the most successful bowler with 45 wickets from nine first class matches while veteran pacer Hasibul Hossain's 17 scalps from nine outings put him atop the one-day chart.

NATIONAL LEAGUE'S TOP TENS

BATSMEN OF 4-DAY MATCH												
Name	Team	М	- 1	NO	R	HS	Ave	SR	100	50	Ct	St
Golam Rahman	Svlhet	10	17	1	825	160	51.56	46.45	3	5	5	-
Farhad Reza	Rajshahi	10	20	2	769	177	42.72	58.74	1	5	9	-
Hasanuzzaman	Rajshahi	10	18	2	722	109	45.12	46.76	2	6	7	1
Nazimuddin	Chittagong	9	13	1	713	204	59.41	51.29	2	3	5	-
Mehrab Hossain	Dhaka	9	14	0	674	168	48.14	50.03	2	2	6	-
Shahin Hossain	Barisal	8	14	3	645	119*	58.63	49.34	2	5	2	7
Moniruzzaman	Sylhet	9	15	0	625	151	41.66	41.77	2	2	6	-
Jamaluddin Ahmed	Khulna	9	16	2	617	116	44.07	48.92	1	3	7	
Monirul Islam	Khulna	8	16	3	590	118*	45.38	41.72	1	3	5	-
Naeem Islam	Rajshahi	9	16	2	584	110*	41.71	41.53	1	5	8	1
BOWLERS OF 4-DAY MATCH												
Name	Team	М	0	M	R	W	Ave	Best	5	10	SR	Econ
Alamgir Kabir	Rajshahi	9	297	76	850	45	18.88	6-71	3	-	39.6	2.86
Nabil Samad	Sylhet	10	451.4	135	996	37	26.91	5-66	1	-	73.2	2.20
Mosharraf Hossain	Barisal	8	331.1	86	843	30	28.10	9-105	1	1	66.2	2.54
Nadif Chowdhury	Barisal	7 :	255.2	64	721	28	25.75	5-34	2	-	54.7	2.82
Alok Kapali	Sylhe	7	242.4	55	572	27	21.18	7-81	2	-	53.9	2.35
Saifullah Khan	Rajshahi	8	253.3	45	727	27	26.92	5-65	1	-	56.3	2.86
Gazi Alamgir	Chittagong	8	262.2	62	803	27	29.74	4-97	-	-	58.2	3.06
Arafat Sunny	Dhaka	9	287.2	92	719	27	26.62	6-50	2	-	63.8	2.50
Khaled Mahmud	Dhaka		173.3	45	517	24	21.54	5-50	1	-	43.3	2.97
M Shahzada	Rajshah	6	188.5	51	488	24	20.33	4-43	-	-	47.2	2.58
BATSMEN OF ONE	E-DAY MATCH											
Name	Team	M`	- 1	NO	R	HS	Ave	SR	100	`50	Ct	St
Farhad Reza	Rajshahi	10	10	0	340	96	34.00	80.56	-	3	5	-
Anisur Rahman	Rajshahi	9	9	0	312	101	34.66	66.95	1	1	1	-
Imran Ahmed	Barisal	9	9	0	301	115	33.44	76.59	1	1	6	-
Faisal Hossain	Chittagong	10	10	0	270	56	27.00	66.66	-	2	2	-
Hasanuzzaman	Rajshahi	10	10	0	245	58	24.50	71.22	-	2	5	-
Mehrab Hossain jr	Dhaka	8	7	1	240	58	40.00	62.66	-	2	2	-
Mushfiqur Rahman	Rajshah	8	8	1	237	67	33.85	67.13	-	2	1	-
Rashidul Haque	Dhaka	10	10	1	236	79*	26.22	67.42	-	2	4	-
Ejaj Ahmed	Sylhet	8	7	1	235	67	39.16	87.03	-	2	-	-
Golam Mawla	Sylhet	7	7	3	232	85*	58.00	59.94	-	1	2	-
BOWLERS OF ON					_					_		_
Name	Team	M	0	M	R	W	Ave	Best	4w	5w	SR	Econ
Hasibul Hossain	Sylhet	9	72.2	6	303	17	17.82	4-15	2	-	25.5	4.18
Manjurul Islam	Khulna	9	75.1	14	243	17	14.29	3-18	-	-	26.5	3.23
Mushfiqur Rahman	Rajshahi	8	57.3	5	263	15	17.53	4-38	2	-	23.0	4.57
Ashraful Khan	Dhaka	7	66.1	10	258	15	17.20	4-13	2	-	26.4	3.89
Ahsanullah Hasan	Chittagong	7	62.4	5	220	14	15.71	4-36	1	-	26.8	3.51
Mashrafe Mortaza	Khulna	4	37	9	84	11	7.63	4-25	1	-	20.1	2.27
M Shahzada	Rajshahi	8	60.3	4	232	11	21.09	3-49	-	-	33.0	3.83
Elias Sunny	Chittagong	8	73	4	309	11	28.09	2-27	-	-	39.8	4.23
Shabbir Khan	Chittagong	5	49.1	2	166	10	16.60	3-31	-	-	29.5	3.37
Mehrab Hossain jr	Dhaka	8	58.3	1	232	10	23.20	2-8	-	-	35.1	3.96

Beckham could sue nanny!

AFP, London

Lawyers for England captain and Real Madrid star David Beckham said they are considering legal action after a Sunday tabloid newspaper alleged that his marriage to pop star Victoria is on the rocks.

The News of the World, the bestselling newspaper in Britain, based its report on interviews with Abbie Gibson, who was nanny to the celebrity couple's children for two years.

"We are consulting our lawyers with a view to taking legal action," a spokesman for the Beckhams said Sunday.

Gibson, who quit her nanny job

three weeks ago, was quoted as saying that she had seen Beckham screaming and swearing at Victoria last December when she was heavily pregnant with their third child. She also claimed that Victoria told Beckham that "I want to split", and that the footballer, whose flings with

News of the World last year, had other extra-marital affairs as well Lawvers for the Beckhams tried but failed Saturday to get a judge in London to block publication of the revelations, spread across seven

two women were exposed in the

pages of the tabloid newspaper. In a statement, The News of the World said that after a 90-minute hearing, the judge had ruled in its favour on the grounds that its story was in the public interest.

LIGUE 1 Lyon march on

AFP, Paris

Lyon continued their relentless march towards a fourth straight French league title with a comprehensive 3-0 victory over Auxerre under the driving Burgundy rain on Sunday night.

Inspired by Brazilian international Juninho, Lyon now have an 11-point advantage on second-placed Lille, 2-1 winners at Strasbourg Saturday, with Monaco four points adrift after winning by the same scoreline against Toulouse.

Juninho put the champions ahead after 27 minutes with his 12th goal of the season, and the Brazilian set up their second with a corner which was headed in by Ghanian international Mickael Essien in first half injury time.

The visitors achieved their third ten minutes into the second half with a magnificant Florent Malouda free kick which Brazilian defender Cris headed in after finding himself alone on front of Auxerre goalkeeper

Arsenal booter arrested

AFP, London

Arsenal striker Quincy Owusu-Abeyie was arrested Monday after a fight broke out following the Professional Footballers' Association Player Awards.

The 19-year-old Dutchman was arrested following a punch-up outside the Cafe Royal in central London.

One man was taken to hospital

with head injuries. A police spokeswoman said "Police were called at around 3am to Shaftesbury Avenue to reports of a fight in progress.

"Officers arrived to discover a man, believed to be in his mid-20s, suffering from injuries to the head. "He was taken to a central

London hospital in a stable condition "It is understood the altercation involved the victim and up to four men outside the Cafe Royal, A short time later, three men aged 19, 28 and

"They are all currently in custody in a central London police station.'

35 Charged

36 Pointer

37 Resigns

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35 were arrested in the vicinity.

CROSSWORD

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Terry players' choice

Football

AFP, London

Chelsea captain John Terry has been named Player of the Year by the Professional Footballers Associa-tion

Two of Terry's Stamford Bridge team-mates, Frank Lampard and goalkeeper Petr Cech, had also been shortlisted, along with 2004 winner Thierry Henry of Arsenal, Liverpool skipper Steven Gerrard and Crystal Palace striker Andrew Johnson.

The 24-year-old England defender dedicated his award to his Chelsea team-mates and manager Jose Mourinho.

"It is unbelievable, and the ultimate accolade to be voted for by your fellow professionals whom you play against week-in and week-out." Terry said.

"You just go out there and try to give it your best, and for them to show their appreciation and vote for me is fantastic

"For Petr. Lamps and myself to be voted in, it was important that one of us won it. It has been a real special season with Chelsea and this just adds to it.

"I want to thank all of my teammates, because without them this would not have happened. "It is my first year as captain and

they have helped me a lot, on and off

the pitch.' Terry was the first defender to win the award since Paul McGrath in 1993 and the first Englishman to do so since Teddy Sheringham in 2001.

part of a carefully supervised reha-

be in Lancashire's Championship

Flintoff's next appearance could

Flintoff ahead

FROM PAGE 12

bilitation programme.

gives the go ahead.

from Everton, received the award on the same day he fired a stunning winner against Newcastle. It was his 15th goal in all competi-

Manchester United striker

The 19-year-old, who joined

Wayne Rooney won the Young

United in a 27 million pound move

Player of the Year award.

JOHN TERRY

tions so far this season.

Jermain Defoe, Arjen Robben Cristiano Ronaldo, Stewart Downing and Shaun Wright-Phillips were also nominated.

"Obviously for any footballer to receive any award is a great achievement, and especially so when it is one voted for by all your fellow professionals," said Rooney.

"As a footballer, you are always looking to improve and learn from the people around you. "If I keep learning and keep my

feet on the ground, then hopefully

can start winning more trophies.



match. He got the title in 1975 when Bobby

Fischer refused to defend his title. Karpov

became a Candidate Master at the age of

11. a Master at 15. an international Grand

Master at 19 and world champion at 24

play him then obviously we won't," said Watkinson. "We're monitoring him on a day-Anatoly Karpov, the first world chess to-day basis and at the moment he's champion to win the title without playing a

not bowling flat out. "He's probably at 50 per cent and could push it beyond that, but there's no need to do that at this

"We can accommodate him as a batter and when he starts bowling he'll be a very useful asset."

It is unlikely England will pick Flintoff for the two Tests against Bangladesh which begin the summer's international programme. They will be followed by the triangular NatWest Series and

three-match NatWest Challenge

before the first Ashes Test gets

Roddick victor AFP, Houston

Top seed Andy Roddick captured his third ATP US Clay Court Championship in five years here Sunday, defeating France's sixth-

seeded Sebastien Grosiean 6-2. 6-



Players of BAF Shaheen School, who clinched the Sunnydale third boys' mini handball title, pose with Agriculture Minister MK Anwar during the prize-giving ceremony at the Dhanmondi Women's Sports Complex on Sunday.

CRYPTOQUIP

PV XNHPNON QLYNLTN

ANYLHPQENQ S JLLV, EN QELFHA BNC PT CJLFXHN

V L J N S O N Q A J L R R P T B Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF AN L.A. BASEBALL PRO HAS A KNACK FOR SKETCHING PICTURES,

IS HE AN ARTFUL DODGER? Today's Cryptoquip Clue: J equals R