



Valencia's Vicente Rodriguez (L) celebrates his goal with teammate Francesco Tavano during their Primera Liga match against Deportivo La Coruna at the Mestalla in Valencia on Sunday.

England, Germany face off in Wembley

AFP, Frankfurt

Germany will meet England in a football friendly to inaugurate the new Wembley stadium in London on August 22 next, German coach Joachim Loew confirmed Monday.

Loew said that the English Football Association (FA) have officially invited the German team for the match, the first to be played in the new stadium, which is set to be completed by mid-2007 after several technical setbacks and budgetary problems.

Wembley last hosted a major football match at the end of 2000, when Germany beat England in a World Cup qualifier that triggered the resignation of Kevin Keegan as coach of the national side.

Ties between Germany and England are among the biggest draws in international football. Since 1908 the two sides have met 29 times of which England have won 14 and Germany 11.

VALENCIA POUND DEPORTIVO

Zaragoza on the up

REUTERS, Madrid



Argentine striker Diego Milito scored his 11th goal of the season as he helped Real Zaragoza to a 2-0 win at Racing Santander that pushed them up into fourth place in the Primera Liga on Sunday.

Milito broke the deadlock in a four match when he fired an angled shot inside the far post after playmaker Pablo Aimar had surged through the Racing midfield on the hour.

Midfielder Angel Lafita added a second 20 minutes later, drilling under keeper Tono after he had beaten the offside trap to latch on to a fine through ball.

Milito spurned the chance to add a third when Tono saved his spot kick after the referee awarded a penalty for a dubious foul on Lafita seven minutes from time.

Zaragoza held on to fourth spot thanks to Atletico Madrid's 2-1 defeat at home to an improving Espanyol.

Striker Raul Tamudo scored his

sixth goal of the season to put Espanyol in front at the Calderon, steering into the open net after Ivan de la Pena and Luis Garcia had outflanked the Atletico defence with a slick passing move.

Fernando Torres equalised with a powerful header early in the second half, but Luis Garcia secured the win for the visitors five minutes later when he whipped a superbly struck free kick over the wall and into the corner.

Barca top the pile with 33 points, Sevilla have 31 and Real 29. Zaragoza are three points further back on 26, two clear of Atletico.

Leading striker David Villa scored twice as Valencia notched up their first win in seven outings and moved up to ninth position with an emphatic 4-0 victory at home to 10-man Deportivo La Coruna in Sunday's late

match.

The game of the day was at San Mames where centre-forward Ismael Urzaiz struck twice as struggling Athletic Bilbao hauled themselves out of the relegation zone with a 4-2 victory at home to Recreativo Huelva.

Athletic were gifted their opener when Recre defender Dani Bautista headed into his own net in the seventh minute after failing to see that his keeper Javier Lopez Vallejo had strayed off his line.

Urzaiz netted his first with a spectacular strike before the half hour when he used an acrobatic Johan Cruyff-style volley to reach a Javi Martinez cross that was speeding past the far post.

The burly striker added a third before the break with a trademark header, paving the way to his side's first victory under new coach Mane and their second of the season.

Athletic are now fourth from bottom with 11 points, one ahead of Real Betis who drew 1-1 at Getafe and three ahead of Gimnastic Tarragona who came from a goal down to claim their first home win of the season, 2-1 against Levante.

Team	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts
Barcelona	14	10	3	1	33	11	33
Sevilla	14	10	1	3	28	14	31
Real Madrid	14	9	2	3	25	11	29
Zaragoza	14	8	2	4	28	17	26
Atletico	14	7	3	4	19	11	24
Getafe	14	6	4	4	11	9	22

Crespo in injury scare

INTERNET, undated

Inter striker Hernan Crespo has admitted to asking to be substituted during the Nerazzurri's 3-0 win over Empoli on Sunday.

The Argentine marksman made the request just minutes before he netted the opener as a recent muscular injury threatened to make a reappearance.

"I have to say that before I scored, I asked to be replaced due to a muscular injury," Crespo confirmed.

"Adriano was set to come on, but the medical staff preferred to wait a few minutes more, and so I had the chance to score.

"I really worked the leg that was giving me pain and I was a little worried. But luckily the problem is now solved.

"It was probably due to the bad condition of the pitch."

Totti accuses derby ref

INTERNET, undated

Francesco Totti has accused referee Roberto Rosetti of failing to make the grade in Sunday night's 3-0 derby defeat.

"He wasn't up to the task," slammed the Roma captain. "I wouldn't say he was biased in favour of Lazio, but looking at the game on the whole..."

Totti was a major injury doubt for this clash due to an ankle problem, but recovered in time to start and was involved in a scuffle with Luciano Zauri.

"The Lazio players wanted me to be sent off, but I showed them the giant cut I've got on my thigh from Zauri's studs. The referees won't give me any more protection and never will, but I'm used to that now."

The result may have taken the Giallorossi out of the Scudetto race and lifted Lazio to fifth place, but Er Pupone still managed to get a verbal jab in at his rivals.

"Of course I'm disappointed to lose, especially as we didn't play to our usual standards. Unlike other clubs, we continue to aim high and we can fight back, even though seven points from Inter are a mountain to climb. We'll focus on beating Palermo next, as that would be important to pull away from the third placed team."

Amantino Mancini agreed that the title race was not over, as the season is only 15 weeks old and the Christmas break is approaching.

"We felt the tension of the occasion and our desire to over-do it worked against us," said the Brazilian of this setback.

"This team is aware of its strength and quality, so the defeat will give us even more of a push to go all the way and aim for the Scudetto. Inter are doing very well, but we can catch them and must also focus on the Champions League."

Lyon tame brave PSG

REUTERS, Paris



Ligue 1 leaders Olympique Lyon needed two late goals to overcome a brave Paris St Germain side 3-1 on Sunday.

The score was 1-1 with three minutes left but Brazil defender Cris and France midfielder Florent Malouda struck in quick succession to give Lyon the points.

"That game had the quality of a Champions League match," Lyon coach Gerard Houllier said.

"It's a very good victory for us against an excellent PSG side. They made us work for it".

The five-times champions moved on to 46 points from 17 games, 14 clear of second-placed Racing Lens, who won 1-0 at Toulouse on Saturday.

Lyon opened the scoring just before the end of a tight first half, Sylvain Wilford deflecting a Juninho

free-kick into the net with a header.

PSG kept fighting in the second half and were rewarded when striker and captain Pauleta levelled with a superb free kick from 20 metres.

The Parisians had set up camp in the French Alps three days before the game to prepare for the challenge.

They lived up to it, giving Lyon a hard time throughout the match, but still lost to drop a spot to 15th, 29 points off the pace.

"We played really well but against Lyon you have to play well until the very last second," Pauleta said. "We badly need a good result. We'll keep fighting for one."

PSG are also facing problems off the pitch following the death of a fan after last month's 4-2 UEFA Cup defeat by Hapoel Tel Aviv.

Lille lost ground when they were held to a 2-2 home draw by St Etienne in a lively match earlier on Sunday.

Lille looked tired four days after their stunning 2-0 win over AC Milan at the San Siro took them through to the knockout stage of the Champions

League.

The northerners stayed third but fell two points behind Lens.

Brazilian forward Ilan opened the scoring for St Etienne from close range on eight minutes and Lille responded through midfielder Mathieu Bodmer on 22 minutes before Ivory Coast forward Kader Keita put them ahead in the 54th.

The home side then appeared to run out of steam and Ilan secured a share of the points for St Etienne with his second goal in the 67th

TOP SIX

Team	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts
Lyon	17	15	1	1	35	11	46
Lens	17	9	5	3	26	15	32
Lille	17	8	6	3	26	16	30
Sochaux	17	8	6	3	21	16	30
St Etienne	17	8	4	5	27	21	28
Marseille	17	8	3	6	23	16	27

Schalke keep the pressure

AFP, Berlin



Schalke 04 rejoined Werder Bremen at the top of the Bundesliga with a 3-1 derby defeat of Borussia Dortmund on Sunday leaving the race for the honorific title of winter champions going down to the wire.

Christian Pander put Schalke into a 14th minute lead, with Kevin Kuranyi coming up with his sixth goal of the season before the half hour with Danish international Peter Lovenkrands killing off the game as a contest in the second half.

Swiss striker Alexander Frei saved Borussia's blushes with an 82nd minute consolation.

With only next weekend's action to come before the winter recess Werder are out in front on goal difference after their 6-2 thrashing of Eintracht Frankfurt on Saturday.

But if either of the top two slip in their last game of the year the winter champion title could fall to third placed VfB Stuttgart, two points behind, or champions Bayern Munich, lying waiting to pounce in fourth a further point adrift.

In Sunday's other game VfL Wolfsburg went down 2-1 to

Alemannia Aachen.

Werder's win 24 hours earlier was the perfect pick-me-up for Thomas Schaaf's side after the disappointment of getting dumped out of the Champions League by Barcelona in midweek.

If the Bremen players were suffering any hangover from that Barca defeat it certainly didn't show with Brazilian defender Naldo putting them into the lead after three minutes play.

Marco Russ had Frankfurt back on level terms a minute later but that only served to invigorate Bremen.

Danish midfielder Daniel Jensen put the visitor's back in front in the 11th minute with Naldo increasing their advantage on the half hour.

And the 24-year-old defender whom Schaaf reckons is the most talented in Brazil popped up with a third just after the break with Jurica Vranjes and Diego completing the rout in the dying minutes.

Sotorios Kyrgiakos bagged a late consolation for the hosts.

"I think we are the best team in Germany at the moment," Werder manager Klaus Allofs said.

"We want to stay in front right to the end of the season," he added.

Stuttgart, the surprise package of the season, kept up their title push with a 1-0 win over VfL Bochum.

Bayern Munich, now Germany's

only representative in the Champions League, struggled to see off Energie Cottbus 2-1.

After last week's draw with Monchengladbach, Bayern took all three points with Bastian Schweinsteiger opening the scoring with a 42nd minute freekick.

His hastily taken setpiece caught out Energie's excellent Bosnian keeper Tomislav Piplica.

Steffan Baumgart levelled for Cottbus with Dutch defender Daniel van Buyten saving Bayern's blushes with the 54th minute defender.

"Once again we had difficulty up against a well organised and very physical opposition," Bayern coach Felix Magath said.

Hamburg were unable to follow up their Champions league win over CSKA Moscow in midweek, the second from bottom club playing out a goalless draw with Nuremberg.

That performance may hasten the departure of coach Thomas Doll.

TOP SIX

Team	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts
Bremen	16	10	3	3	45	21	33
Schalke	16	10	3	3	28	17	33
Stuttgart	16	9	4	3	28	19	31
Bayern	16	9	3	4	26	19	30
Hertha	16	6	6	4	27	24	24
Leverkusen	16	6	5	5	27	23	23



Schalke 04 striker Kevin Kuranyi (R) runs off in joy as he scores against Borussia Dortmund in their Bundesliga match in Gelsenkirchen on Sunday.

CLUB WORLD CUP Motors driven out



AFP, Tokyo

Club America conjured a late goal to knock Asian champions Jeonbuk Motors out of the Club World Cup and set up a semi-final with Spanish giants Barcelona on Monday.

The Mexicans dominated the first half, but were under pressure in the second before Chilean defender Ricardo Rojas' ungainly winner with 11 minutes to go.

Rojas was first into the box to meet Salvador Cabanas' cross from the right, falling on the ball under pressure from a defender as it squirmed over the line off his knees.

"It was a very tough match, the South Korean team were well organised and their movement was very quick and agile," said America coach Luis Fernando Tena.

"We'll need luck to beat Barcelona - they're the world's number one club team, they have one of the best line-ups in the world and they play great as a team."

Jeonbuk coach Choi Kang-Hee said his team almost won after a series of near-misses in the second half.

"Too many of our players were overwhelmed and intimidated in the first half so we didn't play well," Choi said.

"In the second half the midfielders started to move well and we had more chances. If we'd capitalised on our chances before Club America the result could have been different."

CONCACAF champions America will play favourites Barcelona on Thursday while Jeonbuk will battle it out with Auckland City to avoid last place in the competition.

Barcelona coach Frank Rijkaard was watching from the stands at Tokyo National Stadium and he will have found little to worry him in a match lacking high quality.

Jeonbuk keeper Kwoun Sun-Tae almost gifted America an early lead when he charged out of his area and fumbled comically, but former Valencia and Lazio striker Claudio

Lopez could not direct the rebound on target.

On-loan midfielder Fabiano had a lively start in his first match for America, firing wide from inside the box on 11 minutes and over the bar from long-range minutes later.

Kwoun denied Lopez from close range after another defensive mistake while Salvador Cabanas and German Villa both shot wide before half-time.

Botti worked Jeonbuk's best chance early in the second half, challenging America goalkeeper Guillermo Ochoa on a high free-kick with Lim You-Hwan blasting his follow-up wide.

With Jeonbuk turning up the pace, Botti was denied again after 62 minutes when Ochoa parried his firm shot after a run and cut-back from Chung Jung-Kwan.

Jeonbuk came even closer when their other Brazilian import, Ze Carlo, dribbled into the box and almost squeezed a shot through the Mexican keeper's legs.

But Motors quickly ran out of gas when Rojas pounced in the 79th minute.

Defender Jeon Kwang-Hwan almost made it 2-0 when he cleared just inches wide under pressure from Cabanas, and substitute Juan Mosqueda blazed over the bar in injury-time.

America have two days' rest before playing Barcelona while Jeonbuk will play part-timers Auckland City for fifth place on Friday.

Jeonbuk qualified for the Club World Cup by beating Al Karama over two legs in the AFC Champions League final.

Club America are also playing in their first Club World Cup after beating Mexico City rivals Toluca to win their fifth CONCACAF title.

The competition between football's six continental champions has replaced the traditional match-up between the top European and South American clubs played since 1960.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 "Of course" 30 More than sing. 3 Bee partic-pant 14 Dryer collection

4 Needing repair 33 Kids' game 4 Put one's two cents in 19 Shell-game need

7 Daytime drama 37 Mirror's offering 5 Gives temporarily 20 Fellow 21 Jellied dish

8 Com-mand to Fido 38 On the chilly side 6 Morse T 22 Show the source

10 Beat 39 Pianist Peter 7 Tallow seat 23 Bunch of cronies

11 Christ-mas-tree glitter 40 Make lace one's seat 24 Still in process

13 Steven-son's two-in-one 41 Solidify 9 Touch-tone 25 Blond shade

16 Rds. 10 Night-wear, for 26 With ardor

17 Queues from their surround- 12 Treat-ments for 28 Phi Beta

18 "Wham!" 2 Uncom-plicated 30 Oyster's prize

19 Hang in the balance 20 Stare stupidly 31 Building-block brand

21 On the qui vive 21 They often got separated 10 Night-wear, for 26 With ardor

23 Cheese selection 23 Uncom-plicated 30 Oyster's prize

25 On the briny 24 Still in process 25 Blond shade

26 Oodles 27 Hot tub 35 Hench-man of Captain Hook

28 Wild ass of Asia

Solution time: 21 mins.

SHIR CHA HARD
GODA OER OLLIO
ALOE GAU P OLLI
BELLIMOP ONSSET
LEA OOO
MACAW TAREBELL
OVA HRS LIE
BELLIMOP ONSSET
TRASH DAREBELL
BELLIFUL ERIE
SAITE ART AGES
PROIS DRY TOUT

Wednesday's answer

10-25 CRYPTOQUIP

Q O D R T F O Q E U F D R T Q K S
X V A U V A E F D R V Y D K Z F I
Q ' Z R D Y Y X V A D K

D H H I F K U Q R F Q K E U I D Q K Q K S
Wednesday's Cryptquip: WHAT MIGHT SOMEONE CALL A BADLY CHARRED, UGLY LOOKING BREAKFAST ITEM? AN AWFUL WAFFLE

Today's Cryptquip Clue: X equals Y
The Cryptquip is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If 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.

8x3