



Manchester United's in-form striker Wayne Rooney (C) chips the ball over Bolton's goalkeeper Jussi Jaaskelainen (R) to make it 2-0 during yesterday's Premiership match at Old Trafford.

# Red Devils crush Bolton

INTERNET, undated



The Red Devils' charge towards their ninth Premiership title continued.

Cristiano Ronaldo had a hand in all three first-half goals as he set up Park Ji-sung for the opener, Wayne Rooney for his 50th goal for United and his shot allowed Park to score his second on the rebound.

Rooney took advantage of Bolton's high backline to get the fourth from Alan Smith's ball with 15 minutes remaining and Gary Speed's late goal from the spot was nothing more than a consolation.

Bolton had an opening as early as the first minute when John O'Shea gave the ball away and Nicolas Anelka dragged a shot wide from the edge of the area. United however were soon into their stride.

Park should have put United ahead when gifted the chance from some unconvincing goalkeeping

from Jussi Jaaskelainen after Ryan Giggs' flick, but the South Korean somehow poked over from close range.

The hosts suffered a blow inside the first ten minutes when captain Gary Neville injured his ankle in a challenge from Speed. The injury could well put the right-back's participation in England's international against Israel next week in doubt.

Ronaldo blazed over from a difficult angle after getting in behind from Wes Brown's ball over the top, but moments later the Portuguese winger set up Park for the opener.

Some sloppy defending from The Trotters allowed Ronaldo to race to the by-line and pull the ball back for a waiting Park who slotted home. Bolton claimed the ball had gone out, but referee Alan Wiley allowed the goal to stand.

Bolton strived for a quick response, only for United to hit them on the counter attack and double their advantage through Rooney. Ronaldo burst forward, fed in his teammate and Rooney did the rest with a sublime finish over Jaaskelainen.

The pair linked up again moments later, but Ronaldo fired wide this time, before Bolton's best chance of the half was headed over the top by Kevin Davies from Kevin Nolan's excellent in-swinging free-kick.

United's lead was three before the half-hour mark as Park made Jaaskelainen pay for some more poor goalkeeping after the Finn had only parried Ronaldo's low strike into his path. Having missed the earlier chance, Park made no mistake this time.

Carrick could have added another before the break but side-footed Giggs' ball across just wide, while at the other end Davies headed wide and Ricardo Gardner shot over from corners.

Ronaldo should have got the goal he deserved five minutes after the re-start when Gabriel Heinze's cross looked to have picked him out, but he failed to make contact with the ball at the back post.

Giggs saw an attempted lob drop over Jaaskelainen but past the post and Ronaldo's drive was wide as United continued their search for more goals after half-time.

Anelka lashed a volley from the centre of goal off target and a well-worked attack soon after did not produce a goal as the ball failed to fall kindly for the Bolton strikers.

Jaaskelainen made slight amends for his earlier errors as he pulled off a fine stop to deny Ronaldo a goal with his final attempt before being replaced by Smith, who returned to Premiership action after 13 months out.

Smith made an instant impact in setting Rooney up for his second and United's fourth with a ball over the top which the England striker ran onto and fired past Jaaskelainen into the corner of the net.

Bolton were gifted a consolation with five minutes remaining when Speed squeezed home from the penalty spot after Nemanja Vidic was adjudged to have pushed Abdoulaye Faye in the area.

## Zidane, Ronaldo up against each other

REUTERS, Paris

Former Real Madrid teammates Zinedine Zidane and Ronaldo will captain teams against each other on Monday in an exhibition match aimed at mobilising the public in the fight against poverty.

Zidane, the former France captain who was born in a Marseille district and retired after France's defeat by Italy in last year's World Cup final, and Brazil striker Ronaldo, who now plays for AC Milan, will lead their selections in the fourth "Match against Poverty", organisers said. Zidane and Ronaldo, who played alongside each other for Real Madrid for several seasons, are both goodwill ambassadors for the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), which organises the event at Marseille's Velodrome Stadium. Each have invited a number of players for the match, entitled Ronaldo and Friends versus Zidane and Friends.

Among Zidane's guests are compatriot William Gallas and Robert Pires while Ronaldo's team includes fellow Brazilians Rivaldo and Robinho.

The match is the second high profile friendly for good causes in a week following Manchester United's match against a European Select XI at Old Trafford last Tuesday which raised money for children's charities.

## Petrov back for Bulgaria

REUTERS, Sofia

Former captain Stilian Petrov has agreed to end his self-imposed exile from international football, the Bulgarian Trud daily reported on Saturday.

The newspaper said the 27-year-old Aston Villa midfielder would return to Bulgarian squad for their Euro 2008 qualifier against Albania on March 28.

"It was a difficult decision to me," the former CSKA Sofia and Celtic player was quoted as saying in Trud. "I quit the national team but I was in touch with my team mates every day. I was still living with the team."

Petrov, who scored seven goals in 68 internationals, shocked the Bulgarian team by announcing his retirement the day after their 1-0 victory over Luxembourg that put them second in Euro 2008 Group G on October 11.

Netherlands lead the group with 10 points from four matches, followed by Bulgaria on eight. Romania, who have a game in hand, are third with seven points.

Last week, Bulgaria coach Hristo Stoichkov named 12 foreign-based players in his squad for Albania match with Petrov not included.

Stoichkov has said several times in the last few months that Petrov would be welcome back, however.

"I've been in a similar situation during my playing days," said Stoichkov. "There's an enormous pressure in football nowadays."

"The most important thing is the success of the national team. I believe that with Petrov's return our chances of reaching reach the finals will rise significantly."

## Wembley doors open

AFP, London

England's new 800-million pound (1.45 billion-dollar) stadium has finally opened its doors to the public for the first time as a precursor to the FA Cup final in May, the BBC reported on Saturday.

About 60,000 Londoners were allowed into the 90,000-capacity national arena in order to test turnstiles and escalators as part of the safety certificate application.

A football session will take place on the pitch and visitors will be asked to collectively flush the stadium toilets.

The ground was due to re-open in August 2005 but a series of hold-ups cancelled music and sports events.

Members of an England fan club have also been invited to Saturday's "community day", which will feature music and dancers from the local area.

## Saudi Arabia sack Paqueta

AFP, Riyadh

Saudi Arabia coach Marco Paqueta of Brazil was sacked by the country's football federation on Friday and replaced by compatriot Helio DosAnjos.

Paqueta, who had held the job since December 2005, led Saudi Arabia at the 2006 World Cup finals in Germany when they exited after the first round group stage.

Dos Angos, who has coached several Brazilian clubs, will be entrusted with preparing the Saudi team for the Asian Nations Cup in July, organised jointly by Thailand, Vietnam, Malaysia and Saudi Arabia.

# Kiessling in Germany squad



Football

REUTERS, Berlin

Germany coach Joachim Loew called up Bayer Leverkusen striker Stefan Kiessling on Friday as one of four uncapped players in his squad for their Euro 2008 Group D qualifier against Czech Republic on March 24.

Germany will be without Miroslav Klose, top scorer in the World Cup last year, because of suspension, while fellow strikers Mario Gomez, Mike Hanke, Oliver Neuville and Gerald Asamoah are all injured.

That leaves Loew with just three forwards with full international experience in Kevin Kuranyi, Lukas Podolski and Jan Schlaudraff.

Kiessling has scored five goals in the Bundesliga so far this season and has been tipped for a promotion from

the Under-21s for some time.

The other new faces in the squad are Bayer defender Gonzalo Castro and VfB Stuttgart midfielder Roberto Hilbert.

Robert Enke, who has been in the squad before but has never played, is the third-choice goalkeeper behind Jens Lehmann and Timo Hildebrand.

Germany lead Group D with 10 points from four matches, with the Czechs behind them on goal difference.

Loew has decided not to call up Klose for a friendly against Denmark four days after the Czech game, even though his chief striker would be eligible. Klose missed Werder Bremen's UEFA Cup match in mid-week because of injury and he remains doubtful for Sunday's Bundesliga game at home to Mainz.



Football

AFP, London

Low-profile Liverpool defender Jamie Carragher has been praised to the heights by England manager Steve McClaren as the team prepares for forthcoming Euro 2008 qualifiers.

Carragher looks set to come in at left back against Israel in Tel-Aviv on Saturday, though he normally plays in central defence for his club.

England's strong central defensive pairing of John Terry and Rio Ferdinand have been instrumental in keeping Carragher, who has made 32 appearances for his coun-

try, out of his favourite position.

However, having watched most of his recent performances -- particularly the 29-year-old's superb displays against Manchester United and Barcelona -- McClaren would have no hesitation in giving Carragher the responsibility of replacing the suspended Ashley Cole.

"Jamie is one of those unsung heroes every team needs," said McClaren after naming his squad for the Euro 2008 qualifier. "He is very professional and very conscientious, someone who quietly gets on with his job and is probably only missed when he is not in the side."

"His performances against Manchester United and Barcelona

## SQUAD

**Goalkeepers:** Robert Enke (Hanover 96), Timo Hildebrand (VfB Stuttgart), Jens Lehmann (Arsenal)

**Defenders:** Gonzalo Castro (Bayer Leverkusen), Manuel Friedrich (Mainz), Marcell Jansen (Borussia Moenchengladbach), Philipp Lahm (Bayern Munich), Per Mertesacker (Werder Bremen), Christoph Metzelder (Borussia Dortmund)

**Midfielders:** Michael Ballack (Chelsea), Torsten Frings (Werder Bremen), Roberto Hilbert (VfB Stuttgart), Thomas Hitzlsperger (VfB Stuttgart), Bernd Schneider (Bayer Leverkusen), Bastian Schweinsteiger (Bayern Munich), Piotr Trochowski (Hamburg SV)

**Forwards:** Stefan Kiessling (Bayer Leverkusen), Kevin Kuranyi (Schalke 04), Lukas Podolski (Bayern Munich), Jan Schlaudraff (Alemannia Aachen)

# McClaren hails Carragher



Football

AFP, London

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"His performances against Manchester United and Barcelona

were fantastic and I am really delighted with his form."

As expected, McClaren has omitted Joey Barton, Gareth Barry and Shaun Wright-Phillips, who all featured against Spain.

The England coach is facing a worrying few days, though, with 13 of his party due to be involved in FA Cup quarterfinal replays on Monday, threatening an injury nightmare which could completely wreck his planning for the game.

At least Owen Hargreaves is available for the first time since September after recovering from his broken leg.

## UEFA target Bayern duo

AFP, Paris

European football's governing body UEFA on Friday opened disciplinary proceedings against Bayern Munich's Oliver Kahn and Lucio, accusing the pair of "improper behaviour" during a doping test.

"UEFA have accused the Bayern Munich goalkeeper of improper conduct during a doping test which was carried out after the Champions League last sixteen match against Real Madrid last week," UEFA announced in a statement.

UEFA's disciplinary committee will examine the case on March 22.

## Palladino living Juve dream

INTERNET, undated

Juventus starlet Raffaele Palladino says it's a dream come true to play alongside his childhood hero Alessandro Del Piero.

"Playing for this club has been a dream I have held within me since I was a little boy. I wished so hard to one day be able to work with such a great champion as Del Piero and now I'm doing it," beamed the Under-21 international.

"As a kid I had two posters on my wall, of Del Piero and Zinedine Zidane. I remember the Del Piero one most fondly, as I never got the chance to meet the Frenchman.

"When I joined Juventus and got to have my first training session with Ale, I was so emotional. He gave me some great advice, as he is a wonderful man off the field as well as a champion on it."

The two players combined last week for Palladino's winner in the hard-fought 1-0 victory over Treviso, as Del Piero took a free-kick quickly to catch the defence unawares.

"I called for the ball as I was clear, but all the credit for the goal goes to Del Piero. It was a wonderful feeling to score. I should have given him the assist instead, as we all want him to be crowned Serie B Capocannoniere."

Palladino had been on loan to Livorno last season, but upon their demotion in the Calciopoli scandal, Juve recalled the young talent.

# Makelele in a quandary



Football

AFP, London

Chelsea have indicated they will not begin negotiations over a new contract for Claude Makelele until November at the earliest and hinted that any deal will depend on the midfield enforcer quitting international football. Makelele has only one more year remaining on his contract at the London club after the end of this season and Chelsea's failure to offer a new deal has led to speculation about his future.

Now Chelsea manager Jose Mourinho has explained there will be no talks until next season and suggested Makelele's promise to retire from international football could be the key to successful negotiations.

He said: "One thing is Makelele playing for Chelsea and another is

Makelele playing for Chelsea and for France. It's different. One thing is for example after the game against Tottenham on Monday I could give him 10 days off and he can go and relax to recharge his batteries and be back strong again to play."

"Another thing is when a 34-year-old man should be resting he's playing international matches. And when he comes back to Chelsea he's not coming back to play he's coming back to rest."

"My opinion is we respect the fact that he wants to play for his national team, it's his choice and his decision. We respect the fact his national team wants him there because he's a very good player so there is no conflict, so please don't say there is."

"But he's not playing any more with Chelsea the number of matches he normally would be doing. At this age, still playing with the national team, my opinion is he has still one

more year of contract, which ends in 2008.

"And there is no reason in March 2007 to think about July 2008, it's too early."

"At his age it's time to analyse his performance month after month and year after year. And next year around this moment, between November 2007 and March 2008, I think Chelsea should analyse his future."

"But in this moment he has one more year of contract so he's in a safe situation and Chelsea is very happy to have him."

"For instance I think in the last game against Manchester City he was our best player. But the game before he didn't play, and that's the kind of work we have to do with Maka at this moment."

# Bari searching a saviour



Football

AFP, Bari

Barman Michele Lo Russo had more on his mind than the Italy-Russia business summit taking place in his native city this week.

He was just desperate for a rich Russian visiting the city for the summit to buy his ill-starred local football club and rescue it from a downward plunge in Italy's football league.

"Football makes us sick here. The team needs money," said the 43-year-old, as he swept a marble counter at the Di Savoia cafe in Bari on a chilly morning in this southern Italian city.

The Bari team has failed to win a single one of its last 11 games and sport columnists warn that the club is now verging on relegation to Italy's third division.

At its last 2-0 thrashing by Cesena on Tuesday, the San Nicola stadium in Bari was virtually empty. Fans booed after the game, players argued and the coach apologised for the team's performance.

"Bari Disaster," ran a headline on Wednesday in the Gazzetta del

Mezzogiorno, a regional daily newspaper for southern Italy. "Unwilling and empty, Bari melted at the first hurdle," Gazzetta said.

During the game, fans unfurled a banner in garbled Russian that appealed to Russian businessmen visiting their city for the summit to buy the club.

Many here look to Russian billionaire Roman Abramovich, owner of Chelsea football club, as a potential saviour.

"That guy, he really understands football. If he came, I'm sure he would make a difference for us," Lo Russo said.

Italian newspapers reported earlier in March that a representative for Abramovich met with Bari boss Antonio Matarrese several months ago to discuss a potential purchase for "tens of millions of euros."

Even the city's mayor, Michele Emiliano, has got involved in the dispute in a city where many follow football passionately but cannot bear to watch their team lose again and again.

"In the light of the economic vitality of Russian entrepreneurs it could be interesting to check on their possible interest in buy-

ing Bari," Emiliano was quoted by Bari Live, a news website, as saying ahead of the summit.

In his comments, Emiliano even appealed to Bari's credentials as a city with Russian links because it is believed to hold the remains of Saint Nicholas, who is deeply revered by Catholics and Russian Orthodox.

The purchase of the club by a Russian "would further reinforce relations with Bari, which already feels itself the most Russian city in Italy," Emiliano was quoted as saying.

Sergio Fanelli, a local councillor in this port city of some 300,000 people and a diehard Bari fan, wrote an open letter to Emiliano last week to bring the point home.

Fanelli said that the team's performance was becoming ever more "indecorous" and complained that good games for Bari were a thing of the past. "There haven't been any in years."

Overcoming old Italian stereotypes about Russians is all part of the deal for Fanelli, who looks at the Moscow arrivals with admiration. "They're not communists, they don't eat babies any more and they have lots of rubles."

## CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS		44 Cattle call	3 Addict	26 Gumbo
1 Winter ailment	46 Caffeinated?	4 Ragtag		Ingredient
4 Low voice	50 Food expert,	5 I love, in mo.	28 "Spish Splash" site	
8 Cheer	perhaps	34-Across		
12 Part of UCLA	55 By way of	6 Sermon subject	29 Sandwich treat	
13 Leave out	56 Reed	7 Impale	30 25-Down locale	
14 Apiece	instru-	8 Library patron	31 Chinese (Prfl.)	
15 Indivisible	ment	9 Scull tool	35 Cancels out	
16 Waterloo loser	57 Lotion additive	10 Autumn mo.	38 Military vehicle	
18 Heron's cousin	58 Office-holders	11 Common-est	40 "Please explain"	
20 Future bloom	59 Taunt	12 Common-est	42 Miss Piggy's pronoun	
21 Young fellows	60 Contact, e.g.	13 Common-est	45 Elliptical	
24 Mortise's mate	61 Insecticide abbr.	14 Common-est	48 Benevolent	
28 Ritual conflagra-	DOWN	15 Common-est	49 Into the sunrise	
tions	1 Ice mass	16 Common-est	50 Swamp	
32 Garden implement	2 Fro-tracted	17 Common-est	51 Sapporo sash	
33 Exist		18 Common-est	52 San Francisco's — Hill	
34 Forum tongue		19 Common-est	53 Brewery product	
36 — -med		20 Common-est	54 "Smoking or —?"	
37 High- or low-follower		21 Common-est		
39 Nitwit		22 Common-est		
41 Nonsense		23 Common-est		
43 Thumbs down, NASA-style		24 Common-est		

Solution time: 21 mins.

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ACQUITTAL	TAN	
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AMATT	BASE	
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PLUNK	BLOT	
LEI	AQUITAINE	
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## CRYPTOQUIP

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WYUSX QE AGDSQF AGWIGURA?

D X P W J N O M W J Y U S X . Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF YOU HAPPENED TO BREW YOUR COFFEE TWICE, WOULD THAT GET YOU A TICKET FOR DOUBLE PERKING?

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: N equals A