

Barca misfire again

AFP, Madrid



4-1 home win over Recreativo

Huelva on Sunday.

The Spanish season has only just started but Barcelona manager Frank Rijkaard will not be happy at playing catch-up with a 0-0 draw in Osasuna on

Sunday leaving his team four points behind pacesetters Real Madrid.

Barcelona may have Thierry Henry, Ronaldinho and other attacking gems but they failed to score for the second time in three games and surrendered another two points.

With Real having their best start since 1992 - winning their opening three matches - the pressure was on Barca but they failed to respond with an ineffective display at Osasuna.

It does not get any easier for Barcelona who face French champions Lyon in the Champions League on Wednesday and then high-flying Sevilla next weekend the first title clash of the new season.

Sevilla, who have played one game less, also have a perfect record and showed they are in fine shape ahead of Wednesday's tough Champions League match against Arsenal with an impressive

at Arsenal - who are unbeaten and lead the English Premiership - on Wednesday.

"Right from the start you could sense Sevilla's superiority and I think 4-1 was a fair result," said Sevilla coach Juande Ramos.

"Arsenal know that Sevilla are a good team and they will respect us just like we will respect them."

Another boost for Sevilla was the brilliant performance of Brazilian Daniel Alves who appears to have healed his rift with the club after they denied him a summer move to Chelsea.

Ivory Coast striker Aroua Kone

also made his debut on a night of many positives for Sevilla.

Last season Sevilla were in the title race until the closing stages and they have started this season like potential challengers winning their first two games scoring eight goals in the process.

Russian Alexander Kerzhakov,

who also missed a penalty, and

Mali international Frederic Kanoute

both scored twice to sink

Recreativo.

It was Sevilla's first league match

since the tragic death of their former

Spanish international defender

Antonio Puerta and they offered a

fitting tribute with a terrific display of

attacking football.

It was the perfect preparation for

the UEFA Cup winners ahead of the

testing Champions League match

against Arsenal with an impressive

4-1 home win over Recreativo

Huelva on Sunday.

With the deadlock still not broken Rijkaard gave a late debut to 17-year-old forward Bojan Krkic, a star for Spain in the recent Under-17 World Cup, but to no avail.

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