



Things get heated between Manchester United defender Rio Ferdinand (L) and Liverpool forward Fernando Torres during their Premier League clash at Anfield on Sunday.

Kahn predicting silverware

AFP, Berlin

Bayern Munich will win plenty of silverware this season despite being the German giants only hanging onto top spot in the Bundesliga by virtue of goal difference, Oliver Kahn predicted Sunday.

Bayern will finish 2007 at the top of the German league despite being held to a 0-0 draw at Hertha Berlin as rivals Werder Bremen drew level with Munich on points.

Second-placed Bremen hammed Bayer Leverkusen 5-2 at home on Saturday to equal the league leaders' tally of 36 points, but a superior goal difference protects Bayern's place.

Bayern captain Kahn was suspended for the Hertha game and heavily fined after criticising team-mates Luca Toni and Franck Ribery for inconsistent performances in the wake of last weekend's 0-0 draw with struggling Duisburg.

Bayern are crowned autumn champions as the league breaks for winter to resume on February 1, but Kahn is still predicting plenty of silverware will head their way.

"You could see from the Berlin game the team lacked confidence," Kahn told German tabloid Bild on Sunday.

"But the important thing was to go into the winter break as leaders."

"During January's training period we will be able to work on our problems. I am sure we will win more than one title this season."

Bayern hope to have Toni back

AFP, Munich

Bayern Munich coach Ottmar Hitzfeld is hoping to welcome back Italian World Cup striker Luca Toni for Wednesday night's UEFA Cup Group F home game against Greek side Aris Saloni.

Victory would mean Bayern book their place amongst the knock-out stages where eight teams drop down from the Champions League to battle it out in Europe's second-tier competition.

Toni was missing for Saturday's 0-0 Bundesliga draw against Hertha Berlin with a thigh injury, but trained with the German league leaders on Sunday.

Midfielder Mark van Bommel sat out training on Sunday with a bruised leg, but defender Willy Sagnol had shaken off the back injury which kept him out of Saturday's trip to Berlin.

"I hope Luca can play," said Hitzfeld ahead of the game against the Greek side who broke a run of three defeats on Saturday with a 2-0 Greek super-league victory over AO Xanthi.

Goalkeeper Oliver Kahn is expected to be back between the posts after missing the Hertha game because after being suspended for criticising Toni and French midfielder Ribery the previous weekend.

The top three sides from the group will go through with Bolton Wanderers leading the table while Saloni are second with Bayern in third place.

Defeat would be a disaster for the home side as it would be the first time Bayern have been beaten on home turf in the UEFA Cup for ten years.

Bayern's Bundesliga rivals Hamburg have already qualified for the knock-out stages of the UEFA Cup and they take on Swiss side FC Basel at the HSH Nordbank Arena on Thursday night.

No new buys: Berlusconi

AFP, Rome

European and world club champions AC Milan will not be tempted into bringing in reinforcements during the winter transfer window, owner Silvio Berlusconi said on Sunday.

"It think it is the team that did not succeed, Boca Juniors, that needs to think about strengthening their squad, that's not the case with Milan."

Following Milan legend Paolo Maldini's confirmation on Sunday that he would retire at the end of the season, Berlusconi took a moment to pay tribute to the Milan club captain.

"Our objective is to always be at the forefront in Italy, Europe and the world," Berlusconi told Mediaset TV station.

"The formula is simple: forget quickly when you achieve one goal and find another to occupy you, this way you always remain ambitious."

Van Basten was one of the stars of the Milan side from 1987-1995 when he hit 90 career goals.

As for new signings, Berlusconi thinks that Milan have proved that they enough resources.

"It's strange when you're celebrating the victory of a team which has just confirmed itself as the best in the world and on the day that it's sitting on top of the world, you're thinking about reinforcements," added the former prime minister of Italy.

Berlusconi believes Milan have a couple of gems waiting in the wings in Brazilian forward Pato and French midfielder Yohann Mancini.

"We have two young men in which we have a lot of faith: one is Gourcuff, who I have dared to describe as the new (Zinedine) Zidane, I really believe in his qualities."

"The other is Pato. I have not seen him play myself but I've seen videos. I was amazed, astounded."

"That same effect only happened to me once before with another video, that of (Marco) Van Basten's goals."

Van Basten was one of the stars of the Milan side from 1987-1995 when he hit 90 career goals.

Inter Milan stretched their lead at the top of Serie A to seven points on Sunday after a comfortable 2-0 win at rock-bottom Cagliari while second-placed Roma were held to a 0-0 draw at Torino. Second-half goals from Latin American pair Julio Cruz and David Suazo allowed Inter to cruise to victory, despite top scorer Zlatan Ibrahimovic being unavailable through suspension.

Inter's Romania centre-back Christian Chivu hit the bar with a long range drive on 35 minutes and after the break the visitors took control.

Argentine Cruz opened the scoring on 57 minutes with a low shot from outside the area and Honduran Suazo bundled the ball home from close range 11 minutes from time.

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Plucky Roma clung on to a 0-0 draw in a game that Torino bossed from start to finish and which they should have won.

Despite their lucky escape, Roma were incensed that the referee did not award them a late penalty when Macedonia striker Mirko Vucinic went down in the box.

Simone Perrotta allegedly tried to confront the referee in the tunnel after the match but had to be held back by security staff.

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an emotional game, sometimes you can understand certain reactions when you see what happened before them," said Roma coach Luciano Spalletti.

"The derby is a special match. Their cup victory won't count for anything, nor will the fact that we are top of Serie A," he told Sky Sport.

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