



Arsenal striker Robin van Persie (L) scores the opening goal from a penalty against Newcastle during their Premier League encounter at the Emirates Stadium on Saturday.

## Vintage Gunners

AFP, London



Emmanuel Adebayor believes Arsenal can make a serious challenge for silverware if they show the quality and spirit that swept aside Newcastle 3-0.

Arsene Wenger's side made a spluttering start to the campaign but they followed last Wednesday's demolition of FC Twente with another impressive display at the Emirates Stadium.

Adebayor, restored to the team after being rested by Wenger in midweek, played a key role as he set up two of the goals on Saturday and the Togo striker is convinced the Gunners are firing on all cylinders again.

"I believe in our quality and I think we got our fans back with this performance," Adebayor said. "When we all play together like that and show our spirit we have a chance to win."

"It was very important to show that. If we play like this we have a lot of chances to win something."

Robin van Persie who opened the scoring with an 18th minute penalty after Charles N'Zogbia handled Adebayor's cross.

Arsenal were in complete control and increased their lead in the 42nd minute with a typically flam-

boyant goal. Adebayor was the provider with a neat backheel to Van Persie, who lashed home from close-range.

Denilson underlined Arsenal's superiority when the young Brazilian midfielder flicked home from close range on the hour for his first Premier League goal.

Paul Ince suffered a miserable return to West Ham as Blackburn were thrashed 4-1 at Upton Park.

Rovers boss Ince, a former West Ham midfielder, must have known it wasn't going to be his day when Calum Davenport scored with a powerful header from a 12th minute corner.

Christopher Samba's own goal made it two before Jason Roberts gave Blackburn a lifeline in the 22nd minute with a fine turn and finish.

Carlton Cole handled Steven Reid's free-kick in the West Ham area early in the second half but Roberts' penalty was well saved by Robert Green.

That was the turning point as Craig Bellamy's late goal killed off Rovers before Cole's 90th minute strike added to Ince's agony.

The victory eased the pressure on Hammers boss Alan Curbishley, who said: "I've been around long enough to know that when the vultures are around it gets difficult."

"I've never had it before but you just have to deal with it. I'd rather it

was directed at me than the players."

Portsmouth won for the first time this season as Jermain Defoe's double-strike clinched a 3-0 victory over Everton at Goodison Park.

Peter Crouch's partnership with Defoe finally sparked into life in the 12th minute. Crouch flicked on a long punt and Defoe worked space to drive home a low strike for his first goal in nine games.

Johnson played a one-two with Defoe and surged into the penalty area before flicking a sublime finish past Tim Howard.

David James preserved Portsmouth's two-goal lead early in the second half when he saved Ayegbeni Yakubu's penalty. Defoe put the result beyond doubt in the 69th minute.

Redknapp said: "Jermain was great. The goals were two excellent bits of skill from a top-class striker."

"We worked hard on our system all week and getting this result should give the players a lot of belief."

Middlesbrough striker Tuncay Sanli finally killed off 10-man Stoke to snatch a late 2-1 victory at the Riverside Stadium.

Gareth Southgate's side went ahead in the 37th minute after Stoke defender Andy Faye was sent off for a two-footed lunge on Mohamed Shawky.

From the resulting free-kick, Brazilian forward Alves bent a fine strike into the top corner.

Stewart Downing missed a second half penalty and Stoke levelled when Justin Hoyte turned a Liam Lawrence cross into his own net. But Tuncay stole the points in the 85th minute.

Hull's dream start to life in the Premier League came to an end as the newly-promoted Tigers were thrashed 5-0 by Wigan.

Phil Brown's side had taken four points from their first two matches but Wigan gave them a reality check and collected their first league win this season at the KC Stadium.

The Latics got off to the perfect start when Hull defender Sam Ricketts scooped Kevin Kilane's corner into his own net after five minutes.

Antonio Valencia doubled Wigan's lead in the 13th minute. Egypt striker Amr Zaki struck in the 63rd minute before Emile Heskey rounded Boaz Myhill for the fourth five minutes later. Zaki smashed in a superb effort to put the seal on a stunning performance.

Bolton manager Gary Megson was frustrated as Kevin Davies had a late goal disallowed in his side's 0-0 draw against his former club West Bromwich Albion at the Reebok Stadium.

### SUNDAY'S SCORES

**English Premier League**  
Chelsea 1-1 Tottenham Hotspur (Belleri 28 - Bent 45)  
**Italian Serie A**  
Atalanta 1-0 Siena  
Cagliari 1-4 Lazio  
**Goalscorers:** (Larrivey 31 - Zarate 62 (p) 70, Foggia 75, Pandev 83)  
Torino 3-0 Lecce  
Catania 1-0 Genoa  
Roma 1-1 Napoli  
**Goalscorers:** (Aquilani 29 - Hamsik 55)  
Milan 1-2 Bologna  
**Goalscorers:** (Ambrosini 41 - Di Vaio 17, Valiani 78)  
-Ronaldinho made his Serie A debut  
-Shevchenko played as a second-half substitute

## Zabaleta moves to Man City

AFP, London

English Premier League outfit Manchester City announced on Sunday they had clinched the transfer from Spanish side Espanyol of Argentinian defender Pablo Zabaleta.

"Manchester City FC can confirm that Argentinian defender Pablo Zabaleta has signed for the club today from Espanyol for an undisclosed fee," the club said on its mcfc.co.uk website.

Zabaleta signed a five-year contract following the completion of a medical and agreeing personal terms.

He will join new coach Mark Hughes at City fresh from winning a gold medal for his country at the Beijing Olympics. He has also been capped for the full international side during his career.

The purchase of Zabaleta makes it two big signings for Hughes in the last few days following the return of winger Shaun Wright-Phillips from Chelsea on Thursday.

"We feel the addition of Pablo is another great signing for Manchester City," said Hughes, who joined city from Blackburn in the close season.

"He's young and a winner, with an Olympic gold medal to prove that, but more so he will provide us with great balance in the side."

## Marseille atop

AFP, Paris

Marseille keeper Steve Mandanda made two crucial saves in the last five minutes to ensure a 2-1 victory at home to Sochaux, keeping them top of the French league championship on Saturday.

Marseille were cruising to victory through goals by Karim Ziani and Bakou Kone but Mevlud Erding pulled one back on a counter attack and the same player, through and one-on-one with Mandanda with a chance for an equaliser, saw his shot brilliantly saved by the leg of the France international keeper.

Then just before the final whistle, Mandanda made a reflex save low down to his right on the goaline, from an Erding header, to once more keep Marseille's one-goal advantage.

Paris Saint Germain put last week's stuttering draw with Sochaux behind them with a 1-0 defeat of Caen to place Paul Le Guen's side in sixth spot.

PSG jumped from 11th to sixth, two points behind second-placed Le Mans who handed out a 4-1 drubbing to Nantes to make it three wins from three.

Nice, 2-0 victors over Valenciennes, and Grenoble, who beat Monaco with a 19th minute goal from striker Daniel Morela, are also unbeaten and lying third and fourth on goal difference.

Elsewhere Auxerre came away from their visit to Lorient with a 2-0 win and Nancy came from behind to see off Le Havre 2-1.

## C'Ron could be back in weeks

AFP, London

Cristiano Ronaldo believes he could be back playing for Manchester United by the end of September after completing his recovery from ankle surgery.

The Portuguese winger went under the knife in July following the Euro 2008 tournament and initial forecasts were that he could be out of action until late October and possibly November.

But Ronaldo, who scored 42 goals last season to fire United to the Premier League title and Champions League, has been told his rehabilitation is ahead of schedule and he is on track for an early return to action.

"I am feeling fine. I am feeling really good and my recovery is going well," the 23-year-old said.

"I am more than happy with my progress and I hope to be back playing for United by the end of September - that is my target and it is a realistic one."

"It has been frustrating to miss the start of the Premier League season but I am pleased with my rehabilitation and, hopefully, I'll be ready soon."

# Schalke reach summit

AFP, Berlin



Schalke 04 went top of the Bundesliga on Saturday thanks to a superb header from Germany defender Heiko Wester.

mann to seal a 1-0 win over VfL Bochum to knock Hoffenheim from top place.

The 25-year-old, who was in Germany's Euro 2008 squad, converted a cross from Brazilian team-mate Rafinha on 36 minutes which put the Royal Blues top after three games as previous leaders Hoffenheim were humbled 5-2 by Bayer Leverkusen.

Having earned their second promotion in two seasons, Hoffenheim had shocked the German league by taking an early lead at the top of the table with wins over Borussia Moenchengladbach and Energie Cottbus.

But two second-half strikes by Germany striker Stefan Kiessling ended Hoffenheim's hopes on Saturday despite a brief

fightback.

Hamburg are second in the table, and level on seven points with Schalke, after coming from behind in Bielefeld to claim a 4-2 win.

The north German club, who signed Germany defender Marcell Jansen for eight million euros (11.7 million US dollars) from Bayern Munich on Thursday, found themselves 2-1 down at Arminia Bielefeld at half-time.

But a second goal from Bastian Reinhardt on 50 minutes put Hamburg level before their Croatia striker Ivica Olic gave them the lead on 64 minutes with a right-footed shot past Bielefeld goalkeeper Dennis Eilhoff.

And Czech Republic midfielder David Jarolim sealed the win with a fourth goal on 77 minutes.

Despite being drawn with Inter Milan in Group B of this season's Champions League competition, Werder Bremen suffered the humiliation of being humbled 3-2 by newly promoted Borussia Moenchengladbach.

Bremen have got off to a slow

start this season with draws against Arminia Bielefeld and Schalke.

Having found themselves 3-0 down at Moenchengladbach, Bremen's Peru striker Claudio Pizarro scored 11 minutes from time before Diego's freekick in the 89th minute gave the home fans a nervous wait in the dying minutes.

Also on Saturday, Wolfsburg drew 2-2 with Eintracht Frankfurt while Borussia Dortmund are up to third in the table, also on seven points, with a 1-0 win over Energie Cottbus.

Cologne's Turkish defender Umit Ozat was given a clean bill of health by doctors and released from hospital on Saturday after collapsing during his side's 2-0 win at Karlsruhe on Friday night.

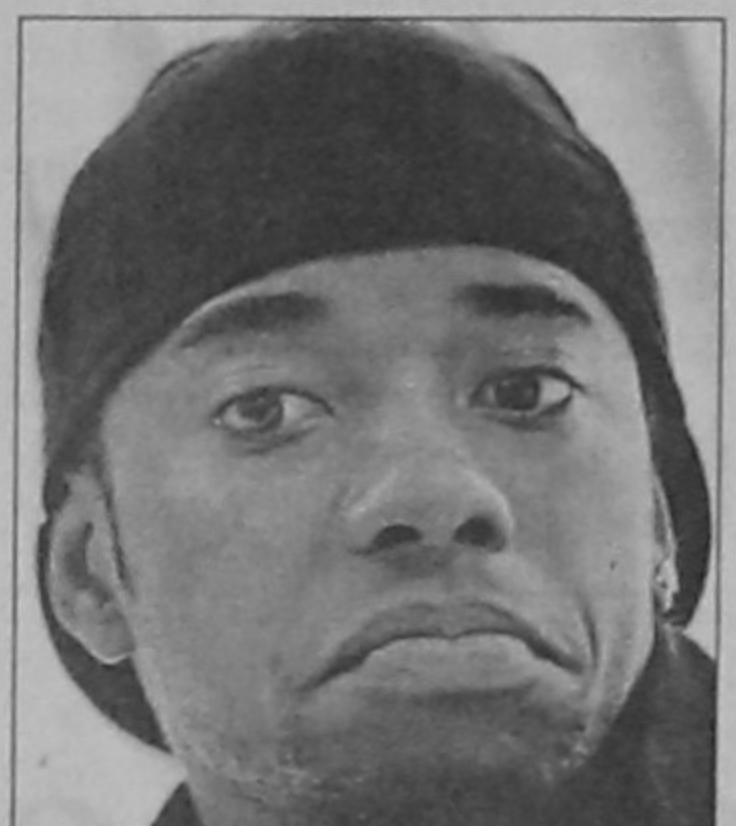
Ozat, 31, lost consciousness after 25 minutes of the match for no apparent reason and was stretchered off after teammates signalled to the bench he needed treatment. The match resumed five minutes later and Cologne went on to win 2-0.

# Robinho wants Chelsea

## Football

AFP, Madrid

Robinho wants to sign a new contract for him. "The club showed little interest in keeping me," said Robinho of



ROBINHO

Real who focused their efforts on their failed bid to sign Portuguese star Cristiano Ronaldo from Manchester United.

"The problem is that (Real Madrid) did not manage to recruit. "Schuster isn't my father, he's my coach. He can't make me do anything."

Real also recently failed in their bid to sign two Spanish internationals Santi Cazorla from Villarreal and David Villa from Valencia.

"I want to leave, nothing more," he added.

Chelsea's Brazilian coach Luiz Felipe Scolari has been keen to tie up a 27 million pounds (33.7 million euros) swoop for Robinho before the transfer window shuts at midnight on Monday.

But Real Madrid president Ramon Calderon insisted Saturday they would not be letting the striker go.

"He's going to stay here, I'm saying that," Calderon told the daily ABC, adding that the Brazilian was "a good boy, badly advised" by his entourage.

# Jose debuts with draw

AFP, Rome



Former Chelsea boss Jose Mourinho was left frustrated in his first Serie A match in charge of Inter Milan as the champions were held to a 1-1 draw at Sampdoria.

Zlatan Ibrahimovic gave the visitors a first half lead but Samp fought back after the break to earn a point through Gennaro Delvecchio.

Mourinho will not have been happy that his team surrendered a lead but the differing aspirations of the two sides were apparent after the final whistle as Inter trudged off the pitch while Sampdoria celebrated as if they had won silverware.

The Portuguese coach did not seem too upset after the game, though.

"The result was fair because we weren't able to close out the match but a draw at a difficult ground is not a big drama," he told Sky Sport. "I'm not super happy but the team didn't play badly."

Mourinho sprung a surprise by picking Argentina midfielder Esteban Cambiasso at centre-back while he opted for his favoured three-pronged attack, with Swede Ibrahimovic flanked by Brazilian Alessandro Mancini and Portuguese veteran Luis Figo.

Mourinho still wants to add Ricardo Quaresma to his squad to play on the wing but admitted that may not happen now.

"I expressed my (transfer) desires several months ago but with respect to the club if the decision to not bring them is taken it will come from the president (Massimo Moratti)," said Mourinho.

"I need a quick player on the flanks, my choice was Quaresma but Porto aren't selling the player, it's not a big problem."

Samp's Italy wild boy Antonio Cassano had the first effort on goal on six minutes but he failed to hit the target.

Inter gradually took control of the match and opened the scoring in controversial fashion on 33 minutes.

Ibrahimovic ran onto a flick from Mancini and took the ball down on his chest before scuffing a left-footed shot in off the post but television replays showed that he controlled the ball with his arm as well as his chest.

Despite the first half lead, Mourinho did not look impressed and often cut an impassive figure on the touchline.

However he was soon irked after the break following some sustained Sampdoria pressure as the home side equalised.

Substitute Marco Padalino crossed from the right for Daniele Franceschini who failed to make

proper contact with a stooped header under pressure from Maicon but the ball fell kindly to Delvecchio who prodded home on 68 minutes.

Moments later and Cassano should have done better when sent free by a long ball but with a free run on goal he got the ball stuck between his feet, allowing Marco Materazzi to get back and clear.

In the day's other game an Antonio Di Natale inspired Udinese got off to a fine start with a 3-1 victory over Palermo.

The Italy forward was in scintillating form and the Sicilians found him unstoppable in the first period.

He opened the scoring on nine minutes after cutting in from the left and shooting past goalkeeper Marco Amelia.

His second effort on 34 minutes was sublime as the nippy winger scored with a sumptuous chip over Amelia.

Australian midfielder Mark Bresciano briefly gave Palermo hope of salvaging something from the match when he bundled the ball home with 20 minutes left but Swiss midfielder Gokhan Inler restored the two-goal advantage a minute later.

It was the perfect start for Udinese, who challenged for a top four finish last season and are considered dark horses for the title this year.

## Sosa inspired by Beijing gold

AFP, Berlin

Bayern Munich's Argentinian midfielder Jose Ernesto Sosa insists the gold medal he won at the Beijing Olympic Games will inspire him to help put the German giants back on top of the Bundesliga.

Schalke 04 went top of the German table on Saturday with a 1-0 win over neighbours VfL Bochum to give them seven points, but two draws from their opening two games have left defending champions Munich off the pace.

Regardless of Sunday's result against Hertha Berlin at the Allianz Arena, Jurgen Klinsmann's Bayern now need a run of form to challenge Hamburg, Dortmund and Schalke who are all locked on seven points at the top of the Bundesliga.

The 23-year-old attacking midfielder Sosa returned to Munich from Beijing last weekend.

But he signalled his intent to make his second season at Bayern a success by going directly from the airport to Munich's Saebener Strasse training ground.

After helping his country beat Nigeria 1-0 at Beijing's National Stadium on August 23, Sosa says he wants to transfer his Olympic success onto Bayern.

"The gold medal means I'm even more motivated," he declared.

"The gold is very significant to me, because I won it for my country."

"I've come back with my sights set high. I'm fit and feeling great."

Sosa made 25 appearances for Bayern last term, including ten starts and is now hoping to improve on that total.

"I'm in great shape and really fired up about football, although obviously it's Jurgen Klinsmann's decision whether to pick me or not," he said.

# Villa leads Valencia

AFP, Madrid



Villa, top scorer at Euro 2008, was the subject of intense interest from Real Madrid in the summer but signed a new deal at Valencia until 2014 and struck on 34 minutes as he continued his purple patch in front of goal.



Valencia striker David Villa (R) celebrates his goal with teammates David Albelda (C) and David Silva during their Primera Liga match against Mallorca at the Mestalla on Saturday.

"We showed the Valencia of last year (that finished 10th in the league) is a thing of the past," said Villa.

"The club wanted to keep me and I feel comfortable here so it is all fine. It is just nice to get back to scoring goals."

Juan Mata added a second three minutes later and Vicente struck late on to give new coach Unai Emery a winning start and help Valencia forget about their nightmarish Supercup defeat against Real Madrid six days ago.

Goalkeeper Timo Hildebrand paid the price for his poor Supercup displays with Emery leaving the German out of the squad and Brazilian Renan Brito made his debut between the sticks but had little to do.

Mallorca, who sold star striker Daniel Guiza in the summer, did hit the post but always looked shaky at the back.

Earlier Espanyol shrugged off the loss of departing first team stars Albert Riera and Pablo Zabaleta to defeat Valladolid 1-0 on Saturday in the curtain raiser of the 2008/09 Spanish league season.

Spanish international Riera is poised to join Liverpool while Zabaleta, part of the Argentina side that won Olympic gold, is bound for Manchester City in an eight-million-euro move.

Espanyol's Luis Garcia, still recovering from the disappointment of being dropped from the Spain squad shortly before Euro 2008, had the honour of scoring the first goal of the new season a minute after the break.

It proved enough as Espanyol won their first league match since mid-March while new coach Bartolome Marquez enjoyed a winning start in his first match in charge.

"The team did well and we won so I am happy although we suffered far too much in the final few minutes," explained Marquez.

## Hamburg seal Neves deal

AFP, Hamburg

Bundesliga side Hamburg confirmed on Sunday the arrival of the attacking midfielder Thiago Neves from Brazilian club Fluminense.

The 23-year-old is set to sign a five-year contract in Hamburg, providing he passes the medical for an undisclosed fee.

Neves will step into the midfield role vacated by Dutchman Rafael van der Vaart who quit Hamburg in the summer to play for Real Madrid.

"It is a dream for me to play in Europe, I want to really boost my career here," said the Brazilian, who won a bronze medal at the Beijing Olympic Games.



Inter Milan striker Zlatan Ibrahimovic (L) controls the ball under pressure from Sampdoria midfielder Marius Stankevicius during their Serie A tie at the Luigi Ferraris Stadium in Genoa on Saturday.