



France striker Karim Benzema is about to score the all-important goal from a penalty during their friendly match against Turkey at the Gerland Stadium in Lyon on Friday.

France ride on Benzema

Football

AFP, Paris

France signed off before the summer recess with a much-needed 1-0 victory over Euro 2008 semi-finalists Turkey in a rain-soaked friendly here on Friday.

Jeered throughout their 1-0 defeat to Nigeria on Tuesday, Raymond Domenech's side responded with a more industrious display against a side reduced to 10 men for over 50 minutes following Uzulmez Ibrahim's dismissal.

Karim Benzema's goal from the ensuing penalty was enough to decide the match, which was held up in the closing stages when visiting fans hurled missiles onto the pitch before being placated by Turkey coach Fatih Terim.

"I scored and we won, that's good but we have to continue working," said Benzema.

He added: "There were lots of Turkish

fans, it was more than a friendly. Now we can go on holiday, rest before coming back to tackle the new season."

Driving rain made for a slippery pitch and sloppy touches, despite France's best attempts to atone for the loss against Nigeria in Saint Etienne that was marred by enthusiastic barracking from their own fans.

It took the hosts until the 32nd minute to fashion a clear sight at goal, but Nicolas Anelka shot wastefully wide of the near post after being set free by Yoann Gourcuff.

Within a minute Turkey had spurned an even more gilded chance, when Nuri Sahin sidefooted Mevlut Erding's cut-back past the left-hand post from 15 yards.

The game turned eight minutes before half-time, Ibrahim seeing red for dragging Anelka back after the Chelsea striker exploited the defender's weak back-header to surge past visiting goalkeeper Volkan Demirel and advance on an

unguarded goal.

Benzema's penalty found the bottom-left corner via Volkan's right hand, but the Fenerbahce man had better luck when Benzema's half-time replacement Andre-Pierre Gignac shot straight at him after a clever dummy from the enterprising Florent Malouda.

In-demand Bayern Munich winger Franck Ribery joined the fray in the second half, and he twice drew agile saves from Volkan before home goalkeeper Hugo Lloris reacted sharply at the other end to kick away a goalbound touch from team-mate Philippe Mexes.

France finished strongly, with Volkan saving from Gourcuff, Gignac and Bacary Sagna, while Sidney Govou curled the ball against the post and Jean-Alain Boumsong had a header cleared off the line.

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