



Chelsea star Frank Lampard (2nd from R) celebrates with teammate Michael Essien after winning the Community Shield against Manchester United at Wembley on Sunday.

COMMUNITY SHIELD Chelsea overcome MU

Football

AFP, London

Chelsea and Manchester United launched the English season in explosive fashion as the Blues' 4-1 penalty shoot-out win in Sunday's Community Shield was marred by an ugly clash between Michael Ballack and Patrice Evra.

With United keen to prove a point to the critics questioning their ability to cope without Cristiano Ronaldo and Carlos Tevez and Chelsea trying to impress new boss Carlo Ancelotti, there was a definite edge to a match that finished 2-2 after 90 minutes.

The bubbling tension boiled over in the second half when United defender Evra fell to the Wembley turf in pain after a cynical body-check from Chelsea substitute Ballack.

Referee Chris Foy waved play on but United's players wanted Chelsea to kick the ball out so Evra could get treatment.

Chelsea refused and Frank Lampard took advantage to score, much to the frustration of Evra who became involved in a row with Ashley Cole and then scythed down Ballack to earn a booking.

Sir Alex Ferguson's team had taken an early lead when Nani drove home from the edge of the area. Ricardo Carvalho equalised after half-time before Lampard's controversial strike, but Wayne Rooney levelled for United in stoppage time.

For Ancelotti the feisty encounter was an ideal introduction to the no-holds-barred nature of English football, while United could take heart from a determined display that showed they won't give up their three-year reign as champions without a fight.

After a disappointing start to his career at Old Trafford, Nani has the chance to make amends this year. Ronaldo's departure has opened up a berth for the Portuguese winger on the left and he gave a glimpse of his potential with a fine strike to put United ahead in the 10th minute.

Collecting Darren Fletcher's long pass, Nani shifted away from Bransilav Ivanovic and Michael Essien before firing in a powerful drive that flashed past unsighted keeper Petr Cech into the far corner.

If Cech could have done better with that one, there was no questioning his agility when he plunged to his left to claw away Park Ji-Sung's shot and then kept out Dimitar Berbatov's flicked effort.

Just as he did at Milan, Ancelotti used a midfield diamond formation that saw Frank Lampard deployed just behind Didier Drogba and Nicolas Anelka, while John Obi Mikel shielded the back four.

But the system may need some work judging by the way United, and Nani in particular, were able to find holes in Chelsea's defence in the first half.

United goalkeeper Ben Foster, selected ahead of Tomasz Kuszczak as the stand-in for the injured Edwin van der Sar, had a chance to underline his England credentials, but he looked nervous at times and twice dallied dangerously over back-passes when a quick clearance was needed.

Fletcher's curling effort forced a brilliant tip-over from Cech before half-time, but it took Chelsea just seven minutes of the second half to equalise.

When Florent Malouda lobbed a cross towards Drogba, the Ivory Coast striker collided with Foster and accidentally floored the United keeper, giving Carvalho time and space to direct a diving header into the empty net.

Lampard's controversial strike arrived in the 70th minute. Ballack clearly blocked off Evra but Foy didn't give the foul and Chelsea broke through Drogba, whose pass allowed Lampard to drive home via a post.

United protested furiously that play should have been stopped as Evra had a head injury and the French star became involved in an argument with Blues defender Ashley Cole.

Evra was clearly incensed and made a crude attempt to seek revenge on Ballack with a lunging tackle that earned a booking.

That wasn't the end of the drama. With just a minute of stoppage time to go, Rooney ran onto a Ryan Giggs pass, held off Jose Bosingwa and planted a low shot past Cech to send the match to penalties.

Cech saved from Giggs in the shoot-out and then easily kept out Evra's weak effort before Salomon Kalou slammed home the winner.

Bommel out for month

AFP, Berlin

Bayern Munich, who could only manage a draw at Hoffenheim in their opening Bundesliga match, received a blow Sunday with Dutch midfielder and skipper Mark van Bommel ruled out for a month with a broken toe.

Van Bommel will undergo surgery Monday, the club, desperate to go one better than last season's runners-up finish, said on their official website.

The 32-year-old left the action ten minutes before the end of Saturday's game which saw the Bavarians fortunate to escape with a point and he was left to rue his ill fortune.

"It's infuriating to get injured like this when I'd started the season so well," the veteran said.

Van Bommel now joins Argentine defender Martin Demichelis (ankle) and Italian striker Luca Toni (Achilles tendon) on the sidelines while Frenchman Franck Ribery is at least back in training following his problems with first blisters, then tendonitis.

Former Bayern coach Felix Magath, who last season led unfashionable Wolfsburg to the title, was able to celebrate a win with new club Schalke after German international Kevin Kuranyi struck twice to earn a 2-1 opening win at Nuremberg.

Despite the win, Magath was not happy with his side's showing.

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Zenit sack Advocaat

AFP, Saint Petersburg

Zenit St Petersburg have sacked their Dutch manager Dick Advocaat, the club announced Monday.

The 2007 Russian champions' defeat at home to minnows Tomsk on Sunday was the last straw for the Zenit management, who decided to sack the 61-year-old former Glasgow Rangers coach.

"After a series of poor matches in the Russian league the Zenit board of directors decided to sack the club manager," the club's statement said.

"Zenit achieved a run of success under Advocaat including the 2007 domestic league title and UEFA Cup win in 2008."

"But after Advocaat decided to take over the Belgium national side the club's performance and results have seriously deteriorated. The fans and the club management are not satisfied with Zenit's current place in the table."

Zenit reserve team coach Anatoly Davydov, who led Zenit to the 1999 Russian national cup, was named the club's interim coach.

Fergie fumes at ref

Football

INTERNET, undated

Manchester United manager Alex Ferguson was furious with referee Chris Foy after watching his side lose the Community Shield to Chelsea.

United lost on penalties after a 2-2 draw, but Ferguson said the second Chelsea goal should not have stood because of a foul on Patrice Evra by Michael Ballack.

Manchester United manager Alex Ferguson: (On the Evra-Ballack incident) "If the referee sees it properly it's a red card. He's elbowed him clearly, he was lucky. The referee was in line and should have seen it."

"I'm disappointed because he has stopped the game twice before that. Once when Ballack went down he jumped up and was back on his feet again in seconds. That decision cost us the game. We've said it time and again, all we want is consistency."

"But it's hard to blame the Chelsea players for carrying on. It's a professional game."

(On Nani's dislocated shoulder): "We could not put the shoulder back in, so that is the worrying part for us. He had done very well, and we are very pleased with his performance."

Chelsea manager Carlo Ancelotti: "I think

that I'm very happy, it was an important match and a very difficult match. They had a very strong start to the game and we found it very difficult to play in the first half. But we played better after that and we deserved to win."

"It's an important start to the season because we have changed the way the team plays a bit. I'm very happy not only for this month but also for this past month."

"I now know the players, I like their mental attitude and I like the organisation of the club. We're ready to start a very important season for us and we are ready to do our best."

"The match was balanced. Maybe they were a little bit better in the first half and Chelsea were a little bit better in the second half."

"Manchester are our most important opponents in the Premiership because they are a great team, they have great experience. So this gives us a bit more trust. But now the game is finished we have to think of the season and the next matches."

(On the goal scored by Frank Lampard when United defender Patrice Evra had been flattened by a crude body check by Michael Ballack) "The referee can stop the play and also the players can put the ball out. But they didn't see Evra on the pitch so they continued... for sure if they had seen him on the pitch they would have put the ball out."

Spain mourns Jarque

Football

AFP, Madrid

Spanish football was in mourning Sunday following the sudden death of Espanyol captain Dani Jarque from a heart attack.

Real Madrid captain Raul led the tributes to the 26-year-old who died Saturday in a hotel room in the Italian town of Coviciano where his team were on a pre-season training camp.

Raul said: "As captain and

in representation of Real Madrid I want to show all our sympathy and to be by the side of the player's family."

"We want to give encouragement to all the Espanyol family at such a hard time, which has left us all filled with dismay and pain."

"Such a young lad, a great professional and sportsman, who suffered this has left us all very hurt."

"From here our most sincere sympathies."

Another Real Madrid player, Manchester United recruit Cristiano Ronaldo,

described the day as "very sad for everyone".

Jarque was discovered in his room after failing to appear for dinner with his teammates.

The club said that team doctors as well as Italian paramedics tried to revive the midfielder but without success.

Carles Puyol, captain of Barcelona, Espanyol's city neighbours, echoed Raul and Ronaldo's sentiments, telling his club's website: "It's a sad day for us all and for football."

"Our thoughts are with his family and his friends."

A minute's silence was observed at the start of the second half of a pre-season friendly at the Mestalla Stadium where Valencia were taking on English side Arsenal. Players from both sides also wore black armbands.

Valencia issued a statement presenting their "condolences".

Atletico Madrid declared that "the world of football is once again in mourning," a reference to the fact that this tragedy occurred just two years after the death, also from heart failure, of Sevilla defender Antonio Puerta.

Puerta died aged 22 after collapsing during the opening game of the Spanish La Liga season.

Both the Spanish football federation and the league expressed their support for Jarque's family and club.

Sunday's edition of Marca, the main Spanish sports daily, printed the dead player's name in black on its front page while in Barcelona supporters gathered outside the number 21 gate, Jarque's shirt number, at Espanyol's stadium.

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City sweat on Tevez

AFP, Manchester

Manchester City are sweating on the fitness of Argentine striker Carlos Tevez ahead of the big-spending club's Premier League opener at Blackburn.

Tevez, plucked from Manchester United in the summer, has been struggling with a heel injury and has already been overlooked by Argentina coach Diego Maradona for the midweek friendly in Russia.

"I would like to think Carlos will play a part on Saturday although we will have to see how this week goes before we decide whether to start him or not," said City boss Mark Hughes.

Tevez played just 25 minutes of Saturday's 2-1 friendly win over Celtic, but Hughes was pleased with his new recruit's impact during his brief cameo.

"He has been a bit frustrated because he has not been able to put any weight on the heel for the vast majority of pre-season and has been chopping at the bit to play."

"But he looked really sharp when he came on. And the reaction he got from the crowd was fantastic."

"He is going to do great things for us. His energy gives the team a trigger and a focus for when we want to press and engage people. He is going to be really important."

Tevez said he was happy to be overlooked for international duty in Moscow.

"It was a decision taken by all of us," Tevez told www.mcfc.co.uk.

"It is important to be fit for Saturday and I have only managed two training sessions so far."

"I need to be able to train all next week so I can produce a really good performance on Saturday."

Real blank DC United

AFP, Washington

Argentina's Gonzalo Higuain scored two goals to power Real Madrid past DC United in an international football friendly here on Sunday before a vocal crowd of 72,368 in hot and muggy conditions.

Higuain scored in the 57th and 59th minutes and Dutchman Arjen Robben completed the scoring in the 69th minute for the star-studded Spanish side in a romp over the Major League Soccer squad.

Real Madrid began a four-day North American tour on Friday with a 5-1 rout of another MLS club, Toronto FC.

AFP, Paris



Unsettled Moroccan striker Marouane Chamakh and midfield inspiration Yoann Gourcuff steered champions Bordeaux to a 4-1 win over promoted Lens on Sunday to open their French title defence in style.

The victory was Bordeaux's 12th in succession, setting a new record for the French top flight.

Gourcuff scored twice while Chamakh added one and played a crucial role in two others.

Chamakh has been linked with a move to Arsenal and Bordeaux president Jean-Louis Triaud admitted there may be developments this week.

"I haven't heard the stories about (Arsenal coach) Arsene Wenger, but maybe tomorrow," said Triaud.

"I would imagine that if Arsene shows up at the start of the week then Marouane will come and see me. He has always dreamed of playing in England."

Bordeaux were in front after just 13 minutes. Brazilian star Wendel, put in the clear by Chamakh and Argentine striker Fernando Cavenaghi, turned inside two defenders before curling a sweet left-foot drive into the corner past Lens' Croatian keeper Vedran Runje.

Lens levelled five minutes from half-time through Tunisian international Issam Jemaa whose diving header, from a cross by Yohan Demont, comfortably beat Cedric Carrasso in the champions' goal.

Gourcuff restored Bordeaux's lead in the

52nd minute with a stinging drive from the outside of the box which took a wicked deflection.

Four minutes later Abdoulrazak Boukari thought he had equalised with a bullet header from a free-kick, but his effort was ruled out for offside.

Chamakh stroked in the third in the first minute of injury time before his cheeky backheel helped create Gourcuff's second, and Bordeaux's fourth, just before the final whistle.

On Saturday, there was early away day cheer for Marseille, but Lyon and Paris St Germain had to make do with draws.

Lyon were saved at the death by new signing from Porto Lisandro Lopez, who netted a freekick to salvage a 2-2 draw at Le Mans, who were twice ahead, while PSG stuttered to a 1-1 draw at Montpellier.

Former European champions Marseille, who have endured a 17-year wait for a league crown and were runners-up last season, were ahead after just two minutes at Grenoble thanks to Mamadou Niang.

Benoit Cheyrou secured the points with the second goal ten minutes from time to cheer new coach Didier Deschamps.

PSG, who last won the title in 1994, again showed their flaws in drawing 1-1 at Montpellier.

The hosts were down to 10 men for the last hour after Cyril Jeunechamp was dismissed for a second bookable offence for scything down PSG's Ludovic Giuly.

Giuly exacted revenge by firing home in the 71st minute but Bosnian Emir Spahic powered in a header on the stroke of time to deny the Parisians all three points.



Real Madrid's Brazilian star Kaka (L) squirms away from D.C. United's Mark Burch during their friendly tie at FedEx Field in Landover on Sunday.

PHOTO: AFP