

# Real edge derby

## Pedro Barca's hero

AFP, Barcelona



Ten-man Real Madrid survived a late fightback by Atletico Madrid to win 3-2 and keep the pressure on Spanish league leaders Barcelona on Saturday.

In an action-packed derby at the Calderon, Kaka gave Real the lead after just five minutes although there were suspicions of a foul on Cleber Santana in the lead-up.

Chances came and went for both sides but Real were more clinical with Marcelo doubling the advantage with an acute drive with his weaker right foot.

Still not fully fit, Sergio Aguero was introduced in the second half and after running through on goal was brought down by Sergio Ramos who was dismissed.

However, Real went further ahead through Gonzalo Higuain after 73 minutes before Atletico launched an assault which saw Diego Forlan and Aguiar both score.

Real coach Manuel Pellegrini said: "In the first half, Atletico hardly caused us any trouble and then we still had everything controlled until Ramos was sent off."

"We have to improve because we lack consistency but I have a good feeling about the team."

Atletico coach Quique Flores admitted that the result leaves the team in a precarious position in the league.

"The alarm bells are ringing for us but with fight and character we have to take on the next few games and start moving up the table," he said.

Youngster Pedro Rodriguez scored a brace as Barcelona kept up a one-point lead over Real with a 4-2 win over Real Mallorca.

Barcelona coach Pep Guardiola sent out a second-string side with Xavi Hernandez, Andres Iniesta, Leo Messi and Dani Alves all missing from the starting line-up.

Barcelona dominated the game and went ahead through Pedro after a delightful back-heel from Zlatan Ibrahimovic.

Jose Nunes levelled for Mallorca, heading home at the far post from a corner but Barcelona scored twice in the run-up to half-time.

Pedro scored again and then Thierry Henry grabbed his first goal after an injury-plagued start to the season.

Mallorca were unable make any real inroads after the break and substitute Messi increased Barcelona's advantage from the penalty spot. There was still time at the end for a consolation from Alhassane Keita.

"It wasn't all bad," said Guardiola. "Last year nobody gave us any chance and each step that we made was met by surprise, but this year there is no room for surprises."

A battling performance by Deportivo La Coruna saw them keep up their push for a place in Europe with a 2-0 win at Getafe despite being reduced to nine men.

Getafe had only lost once at home so far to Barcelona but they went behind after 14 minutes when Miguel Mista headed home a cross from full back Luis Felipe.

Deportivo remained solid despite the loss of Riki Sanchez for two yellow cards and extended their lead after 58 minutes with Mista providing the assist for Luis Felipe.

The visitors then saw Sergio Gonzalez dismissed after receiving his second booking but Deportivo held on for the win.

Struggling Malaga picked up an important point against Tenerife who will consider they should have won the game.



PHOTO: AFP

Real Madrid star Kaka (R) shoots from outside the box to score in their Primera Liga match against Atletico Madrid at the Vicente Calderon stadium in Madrid on Saturday.

# Juve's enthralling show

AFP, Rome



Juventus closed the gap on Inter Milan at the top of Serie A to four points on Saturday after a thrilling 5-2 win against Atalanta in Bergamo.

Mauro Camoranesi scored twice in as many minutes to give the Bianconeri a 2-0 lead at half-time.

Valdes reduced the deficit early in the second half, but a Felipe Melo scorching restored the two-goal advantage four minutes later.

Fabio Ceravolo set up a grandstand finish on 71 minutes, but late goals from Diego and David Trezeguet left the scoreline looking slightly harsh for a valiant Atalanta.

Hoping to banish memories of their last outing in Serie A - a 3-2 loss to Napoli - Juventus began in positive fashion on a difficult, rain-drenched surface.

Camoranesi, scorer of the Champions League winner in midweek against Maccabi Haifa, set his sights on 10

minutes with a scuffed shot which was turned around the post by a diving Andrea Consigli.

After Trezeguet had a header ruled out for offside, Atalanta almost snatched the lead on 33 minutes as Cristiano Doni turned sharply 12 yards out but could only flash his shot inches wide.

The chance seemed to spark Juventus into action.

Fabio Grosso turned and crossed for Camoranesi to bury a header at the near post to give Juve the lead on 36 minutes.

The two combined a minute later with Grosso's centre, this time from the left, cleared straight to Camoranesi and the Argentina-born player picked the same spot perfectly from the edge of the area to double the lead.

Stunned temporarily, Atalanta responded five minutes into the second half when Tiberio Guarente threaded a delightful ball to Valdes whose shot found its way past Gianluigi Buffon to cut the deficit.

Juve hit back immediately. Within four minutes,

Christian Poulsen and Felipe Melo had goals disallowed for offside before the Brazilian picked up the ball on 55 minutes and arrowed in an unstoppable strike from 25 yards.

The home side kept battling.

On 70 minutes, Valdes turned Caceres on the edge of the box and bent a shot just wide of the angle.

A minute later and Fabio Ceravolo practised the same trick on Grosso on the right, this time finding the net with a curling left-foot shot to reduce the deficit to 3-2.

Atalanta pushed for the equaliser but they were caught twice in the last six minutes as first Diego collected a Camoranesi centre to stab expertly home, then Trezeguet fired home a fifth from close range to make it 5-2.

In Saturday's early game, Napoli were held to a goalless draw at Catania, leaving the Azzurri in sixth position in Serie A ahead of Sunday's fixtures.

Catania, who had the better chances in a dull game, remain one off the bottom.

# Toni walkout impresses none

AFP, Berlin

Bayern Munich coach Louis van Gaal said Saturday he will speak to Italian World Cup winner Luca Toni after the striker drove home at half-time having been replaced in his side's 1-1 draw with Schalke.

According to reports, Toni left Bayern's Allianz Arena at half-time having been substituted for Dutch winger Arjen Robben and van Gaal says he will speak to the Italian about the issue.

"If it happened, then that is not good," said the Dutchman.

"We will certainly speak about it."

Bayern defender Philipp Lahm has also looks to have landed himself in hot water with the German giants after an interview in a daily newspaper criticising Munich for their policy of buying in talent with no clear playing philosophy.

# Adiyah heads for Milan

AFP, Rome

Italian giants AC Milan are close to completing the signing of 20-year-old Ghanaian striker Dominic Adiyah, who was top scorer with eight goals in the recent World Under-20 championship in Egypt.

"Being the best player at the Under-20 world championship is really something," said Milan coach Leonardo.

"He'll be here from January and is one for the future."

# Fergie reveals foreign offers

AFP, London

Sir Alex Ferguson revealed Sunday how he turned down numerous offers to manage foreign clubs during his Manchester United career.

The 67-year-old, who has won two Champions League trophies and 11 Premier League titles, said that he had never been seduced by any of the offers.

"I've had offers from clubs to go abroad, but I've never been tempted by them," Ferguson told the News of the World.

"I am not going on record to say who they are, but you'd be surprised by the names."

"It flies over your head and you get on with life. You don't leave Manchester United."

The United manager has spent the past 23 years at Old Trafford.

# Gunners down Wolves

AFP, London



Arsenal swept Wolves aside to climb to second place in the Premier League on Saturday as a fifth consecutive draw resulted in Manchester City being ejected from

the top four.

The Gunners' 4-1 win at Molineux lifted them above Manchester United on goal difference ahead of the champions' meeting with leaders Chelsea at Stamford Bridge on Sunday.

Arsenal had ended their contest with Wolves by half-time as own goals from Ronald Zubar and Jody Craddock were followed by Cesc Fabregas finishing off a trademark passing move on the stroke of the interval.

Andrey Arshavin made it 4-0 after the interval before Craddock claimed a late consolation side for Wolves, who slipped into the relegation zone.

Arsenal have now scored 36 goals in 11 league matches this season -- eight more than Chelsea -- and manager Arsene Wenger believes his squad is starting to look like a title-winning outfit.

"I don't know what other people think - the most important is what we believe and our belief if there," the Frenchman said. "I know we have great potential and we go from strength to strength."

Manchester City surrendered their coveted spot in the top four to Tottenham after being held to a 3-3 draw at home to Burnley.

It was a fifth consecutive draw for City, who slip back to fifth after a run that has cast doubt on their ability to break into English football's Champions League elite.

"I said before the season that there will be times when we look like what we are, a team coming together and trying to gel," said City's manager, Mark Hughes.

"And on other occasions it will happen for us and we will look an outstanding team but I am frustrated, and disappointed as well."

Robbie Keane and Tom Huddlestone were on the mark for Tottenham as Harry Redknapp's side moved up to fourth with a 2-0 win over Sunderland at White Hart Lane.

Elsewhere, Aston Villa overran struggling Bolton in a 5-1 rout at Villa Park while Blackburn lifted themselves out of the relegation zone with a 3-1 win over bottom side Portsmouth.

Burnley's draw at Manchester City was their first point on the road since their return to the top flight.

An even better outcome had looked on the cards when a Graham Alexander penalty and a Steven Fletcher strike gave the visitors a 2-0 lead.

But Shaun Wright-Phillips reduced the deficit two minutes before the break and second half strikes from Kolo Toure - his first league goal for City - and Craig Bellamy had City on track to claim the points before Kevin McDonald snatched an 87th-minute equaliser for the visitors.

Sunderland striker Darren Bent's return to Tottenham proved to be an unhappy one with the England striker

having a second-half penalty saved by Heurelho Gomes.

That would have cancelled out Keane's 12th-minute strike for Spurs and been just reward for Sunderland's long periods of domination.

Instead Tottenham finished comfortable winners after Huddlestone smashed a 68th-minute shot in off the bar.

Redknapp admitted his side had been lucky, but insisted there was no reason they could not stay in the top four.

"We were very fortunate, the keeper's had a fantastic day but that's how it goes," he said.

"We got three points, you can play well and get nothing. We've got Aaron Lennon and Luka Modric to come back and when they come back we'll play differently again."

England duo Ashley Young and Gabriel Agbonlahor put Villa in control against Bolton.

Johan Elmander gave the visitors hope on the stroke of half-time but Villa were too slick after the break with John Carew, James Milner and Carlos Cuellar all finding the net in the final 20 minutes.

On-loan Tottenham midfielder Jamie O'Hara gave Portsmouth a 15th-minute lead against Blackburn, raising the prospect of a win that would have lifted Pompey out of the drop zone themselves.

Instead it was Blackburn who took the points with Jason Roberts scoring twice either side of a strike from New Zealander Ryan Nelsen.

# Schalke miss chance

AFP, Berlin



Schalke 04 missed the chance to claim second in the Bundesliga behind leaders

Leverkusen on Saturday after they were held to a 1-1 draw at struggling Bayern Munich.

Bayern defender Daniel van Buyten put the hosts ahead at Munich's Allianz Arena before Schalke's Joel Matip's header just before half-time gave his side a point which keeps the Royal Blues fourth while Bayern drop to eighth.

Having seen their Champions League aspirations effectively ended after their 2-0 defeat at home to Bordeaux last Tuesday, Bayern have now dropped further down the German league table leaving coach Louis van Gaal visibly unimpressed.

The hosts took the lead when Munich defender Holger Badstuber swung in a free-kick, the ball spun off the back of Schalke's ex-Germany striker Kevin Kuranyi into the path of Bayern's van Buyten, who tapped home on 31 minutes.

But Schalke, now unbeaten in their last seven games, fought back when defender Matip jumped the highest of a posse of players when a long-ball flew in to header past Bayern goalkeeper Hans-Joerg Butt on 43 minutes.

With second-placed Werder Bremen and Hamburg, third, playing Sunday, both Schalke and Hoffenheim missed their chance to claim second place after Leverkusen had routed Frankfurt 4-0 on Friday.

Hosts Hoffenheim took a 1-0 lead only to see the three-points snatched off them after

conceding two goals in five second-half minutes to hand Wolfsburg a 2-1 win to go fifth in the table.

Hoffenheim went ahead against the defending Bundesliga champions when hot-shot striker Vedad Ibisevic got on the end of a pin-point long-ball from Brazil striker Maicosuel to head home on 23 minutes.

But Wolfsburg hit back with two goals in five minutes when chief playmaker Zvezdan Misimovic bagged his sixth goal in 12 games on 52 minutes.

And Brazil striker Grafite put his side ahead when he enjoyed a simple goal on 57

minutes when his shot flew in off the ankle of a Hoffenheim defender which leaves the home side seventh in the table.

Stuttgart's under-pressure coach Markus Babel picked up his second point in as many Bundesliga matches after his side's goalless draw with Borussia Moenchengladbach.

But the result leaves his side 14th in the league and hovering just above the relegation zone.

In the day's other results, Mainz are up to sixth in the league after their 1-0 win at home to Nuremberg while Freiburg enjoyed a 2-1 win at Bochum.



PHOTO: AFP

KEEP YOUR EYE ON HIM: Hoffenheim striker Vedad Ibisevic makes a point after scoring in their Bundesliga clash against champions Wolfsburg in Sinsheim on Saturday.



PHOTO: AFP

Arsenal playmaker Andrei Arshavin (L) volleys goalwards to score against Wolves in their Premiership clash at Molineux on Saturday.

# A-Lahm bells at Bayern



AFP, Berlin

Germany defender Philipp Lahm on Saturday slammed his club Bayern Munich for their policy of buying in talent rather than nurturing home-grown stars.

Lahm, who captained Bayern at the start of the season when regular skipper Mark van Bommel was injured, says the German giants should not copy Europe's big-spending sides like Barcelona or Manchester United.

With team manager Uli Hoeneß and chairman of the board Karl-Heinz Rummenigge in charge of recruitment, Lahm's words are a thinly-veiled attack on the

club's senior bosses.

While Bayern's rising home-grown star Thomas Mueller was called into the Germany squad on Friday, the 20-year-old midfielder is the exception at a club which is not shy of recruiting top-names like Arjen Robben and Frank Ribery.

"Clubs like Manchester United and Barcelona have a system in place and they go out to buy a player who fits into that system," the 25-year-old told Munich-based German daily the Sueddeutschen Zeitung.

"In a strong side, you need at least eight players who know the club, know their position well, are self-confident and are competitive."

"I do not see those eight players with us and it is not just the current players fault, it is

the philosophy which has been missing over the last year."

And wing-back Lahm says Bayern are struggling in the centre-back positions and questioned the willingness of his fellow defenders to attack.

"Where are the players who can take the ball forward with authority and moves the ball forward to begin attacks?"

"It is not happening for us at the moment."

But Lahm says Dutch coach Louis van Gaal, who took over last summer, is the man to help build a strong team in Munich.

"I believe that we already have a coach who can build a team," said Lahm.

"He is probably sometimes difficult to handle for some players, he needs time, but I am firmly convinced he is a good coach."

## IN BRIEF

### Trezeguet enters Juve folklore

AFP, Rome

French striker David Trezeguet scored a record-equalling 167th goal for Juventus on Saturday as the Italian side defeated Atalanta 5-2 in Serie A.

The strike meant he equalled Omar Sivori's record for the Turin giants.

"I'm so happy to have reached this milestone. I never thought I'd do it when I first signed for Juve," said Trezeguet.

"But the most important thing tonight is that we played exceptionally well and showed we still have the desire. We are back."

### Zlatan out for a week

AFP, Madrid

Barcelona's Swedish striker Zlatan Ibrahimovic will be sidelined for a week after pulling a muscle in his left thigh, the Primera Liga club confirmed on Sunday.

The 28-year-old picked up the injury in Saturday night's 4-2 win over Real Mallorca, and will miss Tuesday's Spanish Cup tie against third division Cultural Leonesa.

There are no Primera Liga ties next weekend because of 2010 World Cup play-off matches. Sweden are already ruled out of the finals in South Africa.