



PHOTOS: AFP
An incident-packed day in the Premier League was marred late on by a shocking injury to Arsenal starlet Aaron Ramsey as the midfielder (L) broke his leg in a horror tackle with Stoke's Ryan Shawcross, which left the whole team distraught. (Above) However, the drama was biggest at Stamford Bridge where Wayne Bridge refused to shake hands with John Terry at the pre-match. Bridge then gained a measure of revenge thanks to Carlos Tevez (R) scoring a brace along with Craig Bellamy to thump Chelsea 4-2 and open up the title race.

Wenger furious and upset

AFP, Stoke
Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger said he was left sickened by the horrific broken leg suffered by Aaron Ramsey that will rule the teenager out of the game for months.
Wales international Ramsey was stretchered off in the second half of Arsenal's 3-1 win at Stoke, which moves Wenger's team to within three points of Premier League leaders Chelsea, after an ugly challenge by Ryan Shawcross.
Wenger has already seen Eduardo and Abou Diaby suffer career-threatening injuries during his time at Arsenal and he wants an example made of Shawcross, who learned just hours after the incident that he had been called up for England's mid-week friendly against Egypt.
"Is a three-match ban enough? It is just ridiculous," Wenger said. "It's beyond words. It was an horrendous tackle."
"I'm very sad. To lose a player of that quality at 19-years-of-age

when he's just started his career is just horrendous.
"It's the third player we have lost to tackles that are just not acceptable and I'm shocked.
"It's not football for me and it's not what I like in the game. If we have to live with that, I refuse to do that.
"Of course (the Football Association need to act), I can do nothing about it. The players are professional and they have to respect the rules and respect each other.
"Players who don't do it need to be punished. This is a young fantastic talent and it's sad that a player of his talent has been kicked out like that."
"I cannot even enjoy this victory because of what has happened. I am shocked because that is not football," the Frenchman said.
Meanwhile, Ramsey has undergone surgery after breaking his right leg in two places, the club announced on Sunday.
"The operation successfully reduced the fractures and whilst it is too soon to state an exact timescale for recovery, Aaron will certainly miss the remainder of this season," said a statement on the club's website.

City blow title race open

INTERNET, undated
The English title race became a three-way fight once more on Saturday after leaders Chelsea were humbled 4-2 at home by Manchester City on Saturday and Arsenal snatched two late goals at Stoke to triumph 3-1 and move to within three points of the top. Victory for Chelsea would have sent them four points clear of Manchester United at the top but City gave local rivals United renewed hope with a superb performance.
With 10 games to go, Chelsea remain one point clear of United, while City climbed to fourth place, boosting their hopes of claiming the remaining Champions League spot next season.
Cesc Fabregas scored a penalty in the last minute of normal time and Thomas Vermaelen hit the third as Arsenal snatched all three points at Stoke, but their joy was tempered by a horrible injury to Wales teenager Aaron Ramsey, who appeared to suffer a serious leg injury with Ryan Shawcross.
At Stamford Bridge, Chelsea took the lead late in the first half through Frank Lampard but Carlos Tevez and Craig Bellamy scored two goals apiece to seal a famous win.
The match began in contentious fashion when Wayne Bridge refused to shake the hand of Chelsea captain John Terry, after the scandal revolving their personal lives that prompted Bridge to make himself unavailable for England in this summer's World Cup.

Some sections of Chelsea fans booed every touch Bridge made and the home side looked like they were on course for victory when Joe Cole fed Lampard and the England midfielder slipped the ball across Shay Given into the far corner.
But City were level almost before Chelsea could settle again. Terry and Ricardo Carvalho made a hash of things in defence and Tevez turned them inside and out before his miscued shot somehow slipped under Chelsea goalkeeper Hilario.
Hilario was also at fault for the City second goal early in the second half. Bellamy's shot from an acute angle was a good one but the goalkeeper again misjudged his angles.
The match was over on 76 minutes when substitute Julian Belletti got the wrong side of Gareth Barry and bundled over the midfielder in the box, handing City a penalty and resulting in a red card for himself.
Tevez made no mistake with the penalty for his second of the game and after Michael Ballack was sent off for a second booking, Bellamy side-footed home after good work from another substitute Shaun Wright-Phillips.
Lampard pulled one back with his second goal, from the penalty spot, after Barry fouled Nicolas Anelka, but it was too little too late.
City manager Roberto Mancini took Bridge off with 15 minutes to go - sparing him another attempted handshake - and was full of praise for the left back.
"Wayne Bridge has been playing well and this team has a fantastic spirit and for this reason we won this game," Mancini said.

Chelsea manager Carlo Ancelotti said his side lost balance in the second half.
"That meant Manchester City were very able to counter-attack, and did a fantastic counter-attack in the second half," Ancelotti said. "It is the first time we lost balance during the game."
Arsenal are now just three points behind Chelsea after a last-gasp penalty by Fabregas, after Danny Pugh handled the ball, and a third by Vermaelen.
Pugh had given Stoke the lead on eight minutes but Nicklas Bendtner headed the equalizer just after the half-hour mark.
But on 65 minutes, Arsenal's players were visibly shocked as Ramsey suffered a horrendous injury in a challenge with Shawcross, who was sent off.
For 10 minutes, few players made a single tackle but gradually Arsenal made the extra man pay and Fabregas showed his nerve as he converted from the spot after Pugh's handball and Vermaelen secured the win with the third in injury time.
In-administration Portsmouth ended probably the worst week in the history of the club with a fabulous 2-1 win at Burnley.
Frederic Piquionne put them ahead on 25 minutes and though Martin Paterson equalized a few minutes later, a second-half penalty from Hassan Yebda sealed a vital win for the bottom side.
James McFadden's first-half penalty gave Birmingham City a 1-0 win over Wigan and lifted them to eighth, while Bolton scored their first goal in six Premier League games to beat Wolves 1-0 thanks to Zat Knight's goal.

Shawcross gets call-up

AFP, London
Fabio Capello handed a surprise call-up to Ryan Shawcross for England's friendly against Egypt just hours after the Stoke defender was sent off in tears during his club's win over Arsenal.
Shawcross was dismissed for a late tackle on Aaron Ramsey at the Britannia Stadium on Saturday that left the Arsenal midfielder with a serious leg injury and the centre-back, who walked off the pitch in tears, was reportedly still crying when he was driven away from the ground by his mother.
On a bitter-sweet day for the former Manchester United trainee, moments later Shawcross learned that Capello has drafted him into the squad for Wednesday's match at Wembley.
He has been a key figure in Stoke establishing themselves in the Premier League over the last two seasons and had never previously been sent off in his short career. With first choice left-back Ashley Cole out with

SQUAD

Goalkeepers: David James (Portsmouth), Robert Green (West Ham), Joe Hart (Birmingham)

Defenders: Wes Brown (Man Utd), John Terry (Chelsea), Matthew Upson (West Ham), Joleon Lescott (Man City), Ryan Shawcross (Stoke), Leighton Baines (Everton), Stephen Warnock (Aston Villa)

Midfielders: James Milner (Aston Villa), David Beckham (AC Milan), Theo Walcott (Arsenal), Frank Lampard (Chelsea), Gareth Barry (Man City), Steven Gerrard (Liverpool), Michael Carrick (Man Utd), Shaun Wright-Phillips (Man City), Stewart Downing (Aston Villa)

Strikers: Emile Heskey (Aston Villa), Jermain Defoe (Tottenham), Wayne Rooney (Man Utd), Peter Crouch (Tottenham), Carlton Cole (West Ham).

Shawcross claims 'no malice'

SOCCERNET
Stoke defender Ryan Shawcross insists there was "absolutely no malice" in the challenge on Aaron Ramsey which led to the Arsenal player suffering a badly broken leg during the Premier League clash at the Britannia Stadium.
Ramsey was taken to hospital after a tackle by Shawcross, who was later called up to the England squad to play Egypt next week, as the Gunners came from behind to win 3-1.
Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger was enraged by the tackle, which he described as "horrendous", but in a statement issued by Shawcross, the player is adamant there was no intent.
The statement read:
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Domenech upset at successor talk

AFP, Paris
France coach Raymond Domenech said on Sunday that the decision to name his successor prior to this summer's World Cup could have a disruptive effect on his team.
"Everything that comes from outside can disrupt, undermine and create weaknesses that could prove harmful during a long competition," he told French TV station TF1.
"For one match, no, but for one month, with substitutes who won't play or who will only play a bit, it could be complicated and it could

create tension. But I've got nothing to say about it, I'll deal with it when it happens."
The World Cup begins on June 11, with the final to take place on July 11.
France, who only qualified after beating the Republic of Ireland in the European zone play-offs, have been drawn in a group alongside Mexico, Uruguay and the hosts, South Africa.
The president of the French Football Federation, Jean-Pierre Escalettes, has announced that France's next coach will be named in late April or May.
Some members of the France squad, including

Arsenal centre-back William Gallas and Chelsea midfielder Florent Malouda, have already expressed reservations about the decision to name Domenech's successor before the start of the World Cup.
Domenech has proved a divisive figure during his time at the helm of the French national team since his appointment in 2004.
He led Les Bleus to a surprise runners-up finish at the 2006 World Cup, having persuaded iconic midfielder Zinedine Zidane to cut short his international retirement, but oversaw a disappointing group-stage exit at Euro 2008.

Bayer held to a draw

SOCCERNET
Cologne frustrated Bundesliga leaders Bayer Leverkusen by stealing a point with a 0-0 draw in the Rhine derby at the BayArena.
The result sets a new league record of 24 games unbeaten for Leverkusen, but only puts them one point clear of Bayern Munich at the top of the table.
Bayer have the opportunity to move two points clear at the top by beating Hamburg on Sunday.
Stuttgart striker Cacau followed last week's heroics against Cologne with both goals as his side came from behind to earn a 2-1 win over Eintracht Frankfurt.
The Brazil-born Germany striker scored four times in last week's 5-1 rout, trebling his season's tally of league goals in the process. And he was in clinical form again after his
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Duo shares spoils

AFP, Rome
Lazio and Fiorentina drew 1-1 in the capital's Stadio Olimpico on Saturday in a result that helped neither team in their respective Serie A battles.
Lazio remain one place above the relegation zone and now sit three points ahead of 18th-placed Livorno, although having played a game more.
Fiorentina, meanwhile, saw their hopes of qualifying for the Champions League for a third year in a row hit as the draw leaves them six points off fourth-placed Juventus, but again having played a game more.
Lazio led almost from start to finish as Sebastiano Siviglia gave them a seventh minute

Hleb not staying at Stuttgart

SOCCERNET
Alexander Hleb insists he is not considering staying with Stuttgart when his loan spell from Barcelona ends in the summer, after admitting his relationship with coach Christian Gross has deteriorated.
The Belarus international was withdrawn again by Christian Gross in yesterday's 2-1 win over Eintracht Frankfurt, leaving the field before the end of the match for the ninth time since the Swiss coach took over from Markus Babel in December.
"Obviously my contract states that I may only play for 60 minutes," Hleb joked afterwards. "But the team clearly plays far better without me so the coach has done everything right."
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Barca hang on to lead

INTERNET, undated
A late 2-1 home win over Malaga keeps Barcelona two points ahead of Real Madrid, who thrashed Tenerife 5-1 earlier Saturday. Barca needed a winner seven minutes from time from FIFA World Player Lionel Messi, straight after Valdo had given Malaga a shock equalizer.
"We really suffered a lot tonight," Messi said.
"It was important for us to win. We know that we can't afford to drop any points at all, with Real Madrid so close to us."
Pep Guardiola's world champions now have 61 points from 24 games, two more than in-form Real.
As expected, Barca dominated from start to finish, enjoying 74 per-cent possession. However, they looked physically and mentally tired after Tuesday's Champions League exertions in Stuttgart and struggled to create clear chances.
Malaga had few problems in a disjointed first half.
In the 61st minute, with Barca increas-

ing the tempo, defender Weligton cleared a Zlatan Ibrahimovic header off the line.
Eight minutes later, Pedro made it 1-0 with a near-post drive that Malaga keeper Gustavo Munua could have saved. Andres Iniesta then hit the Malaga woodwork.
Ten minutes from time, Valdo silenced the Camp Nou with a classy equalizer after playing a clever one-two with Victor Obinna.
But Messi made it 2-1 just three minutes later, finishing a lovely move between Xavi and Dani Alves. He is now level on 17 goals with David Villa of Valencia.
Ibrahimovic then had a goal harshly disallowed for pushing Weligton.
Earlier Saturday, Real turned on the style, thrashing second-from-bottom Tenerife 5-1.
Real have scored 22 goals in their last six league matches, all victories.
Gonzalo Higuain was Real's hero in windy Santa Cruz, with two sharp first-half goals, leaving him just one goal behind Messi and Villa.
"I am very happy with the goals and the result," Higuain said.
Higuain shot Real ahead in the 20th minute with his supposedly weaker left foot, after good work down the left by Marcelo.

Three minutes before half-time, Higuain made it 2-0 by turning in a centre from Ezequiel Garay, this time with his right foot.
Ayoze Garcia pulled back a dubious goal for Tenerife at the start of the second half, after apparently fouling keeper Iker Casillas. But Kaka straight away made it 3-1 after being set up by Higuain.
The Argentine came close to completing his hat-trick three times, as the weary Tenerife defence fell apart. Eleven minutes from time, Ezequiel Luna handled in the area, and Cristiano Ronaldo made it 4-1 by putting away the resulting penalty.
Veteran striker Raul, now a substitute, completed the rout in injury time after being set up by fellow sub Rafael Van der Vaart.
Earlier Saturday, Zaragoza won 2-0 at Getafe, keeping them just above the drop zone.
Zaragoza's hero was Chilean newcomer Humberto Suazo, who sank Getafe with two early goals.
Suazo dedicated the win to the victims of Saturday's earthquake in Chile.
"Today's win is not so important for me," he said, "as what is happening in Chile... I feel so sorry for the people there who are suffering."

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Real Madrid striker Gonzalo Higuain (R) shoots to score his second goal during their Primera Liga match at the Rodriguez Lopez Stadium on Saturday.