

## Silvio wants Robinho

AFP, Rome

AC Milan president Silvio Berlusconi, the Italy Prime Minister, wants to add Brazilian forward Robinho to his team's attacking resources having already landed Zlatan Ibrahimovic, according to reports.

Milan landed a transfer coup over the weekend, bringing the 28-year-old Sweden striker to the club on an initial loan from Barcelona with the view to a 24-million-euro permanent deal at the end of the season.

And now Berlusconi is after Manchester City's out-of-favour forward Robinho as well.

"It's not down to us, if it was down to us, well that's our intention," he told reporters and fans outside a restaurant on Sunday night.

As for where Robinho would fit into the Milan team, which is likely to comprise a forward trident of Ronaldinho, Ibrahimovic and Pato, Berlusconi added: "Well we've got many possibilities and anyway, it's better to have three players for two positions."

Whether Robinho arrives or not, one player who might be heading out the exit door is Italy forward Marco Borriello, who expressed his dissatisfaction at the Ibrahimovic signing following the 4-0 victory over Lecce.

On whether the 28-year-old will be leaving, Berlusconi said: "Borriello will decide, he knows what the situation is and he'll decide what's best for his career."

However, there is no doubt who the president expects to be playing week in, week out.

"In a certain sense it's the best (attack) we've had since (Marco) Van Basten," he said.

"Ronaldinho is the best player in the history of football, Pato is a great player and Ibra has won eight national titles."

Ibrahimovic actually has six titles: three with Inter, one with Barca and two with Ajax but Berlusconi was also counting the two titles Juventus were stripped of for match-fixing in 2005 and 2006 when the Swede was their attacking spearhead.

## Japan appoint Zaccheroni

AFP, Tokyo

Japan have named former AC Milan and Juventus coach Alberto Zaccheroni as their new national football coach following their best-ever World Cup on foreign soil in South Africa.

The Japan Football Association announced the appointment Monday without giving any details, including the length of the contract.

It said it would hold a news conference in Tokyo on Tuesday with the 57-year-old Italian.

Zaccheroni won the 1998-99 Serie A title with Milan and will be the sixth foreign manager of the national side, replacing home-grown Takeshi Okada who guided the Blue Samurai to the World Cup last-16 round in late June.

## Cassano an injury doubt

AFP, Florence

Italy coach Cesare Prandelli on Monday expressed his hope that Sampdoria forward Antonio Cassano will recover from a back problem he picked up at the weekend.

Italy travel to Estonia on Friday for their opening Group CEuro 2012 qualifying match.

The team met up at their Coverciano base just outside Florence on Monday but Cassano was missing due to the back problem he picked up against Lazio, a match Sampdoria won 2-0, and he stayed in Genoa to undergo tests.

But Prandelli, whose team lost 1-0 to Ivory Coast in a friendly on his debut on the bench earlier this month, is confident that his talented playmaker will be available.

"Antonio will undergo tests today (Monday) and 99 per cent sure he will be at Coverciano tomorrow (Tuesday) morning where we will be able to evaluate whether or not to keep him with us in his condition," he said.

"I spoke to him and he was motivated, I think we'll get him back from his back problem."

Cassano's club team-mate Daniele Gastaldello, a surprise inclusion in Prandelli's squad, suggested that if Cassano couldn't make Friday's date in Tallinn, he may well be back for next Tuesday's clash with the Faroe Islands here.



Barcelona striker David Villa is ecstatic after scoring the third goal against Racing Santander during their Primera Liga encounter at the Sardinero Stadium on Sunday.

## Sunderland stun City

AFP, London



Sunderland striker Darren Bent scored a 90th minute penalty to hand big-spending Manchester City a 1-0 defeat at the Stadium of Light on Sunday.

After splashing out over 100 million pounds on new players during the close-season, City are expected to do great things, but Roberto Mancini's side suffered their first defeat of the season against a resolute Sunderland.

Togo striker Emmanuel Adebayor came close to putting City ahead late on but his flick was brilliantly tipped over by Simon Mignolet.

That set the stage for Bent's match-winning moment. Micah Richards was penalised for climbing on the England international, who picked himself up to drive his spot-kick under Joe Hart.

Fernando Torres fired Liverpool to their first Premier League win of the season as the Reds defeated West Bromwich Albion 1-0 at Anfield.

Roy Hodgson's side had drawn against Arsenal and lost to Manchester City in their first two league games under their new manager, but Torres lifted the early-season gloom around Anfield with his first goal in 10 matches.

Torres struck in the 65th minute with a volley from Dirk Kuyt's cross to condemn promoted Albion to their second defeat of the season.

But Johnson then gave away a penalty which Kevin Davies converted to reduce the deficit with 20 minutes to go, setting the stage for substitute Blake to curl home his first goal for the club.

The dramatic finish at the Reebok Stadium maintained Bolton's unbeaten start to the season and left Birmingham rueing their failure to push home their numerical advantage.

Aston Villa boosted caretaker manager Kevin Macdonald's hopes of landing the job on a permanent basis as Luke Young's goal secured a 1-0 win over Everton.

Villa have been without a full-time manager since Martin O'Neill quit just before the start of the season and Macdonald has been holding the fort with mixed results since then.

It remains uncertain whether Villa owner Randy

Lerner regards former Liverpool midfielder Macdonald, who has worked for the club as a coach for 15 years, as a serious candidate for the job.

But Young's ninth-minute goal at Villa Park and the determined performance that followed at least made his case.

The 34-year-old Juventus player had been in talks to join English Premier League side Birmingham City but the move fell through over tax issues.

Stuttgart have targeted the 2006 World Cup winner as a replacement for Sami Khedira, who has joined Real Madrid.

Sosa moves to Napoli

AFP, Berlin

Bayern Munich on Monday announced the transfer of Argentina midfielder Jose Ernesto Sosa to Italian Serie A side Napoli.

"Sosa is going to continue his career at the foot of Vesuvius," Bayern Munich confirmed in a statement.

Sosa won Olympic gold with Argentina in 2008, a year after joining Bayern, with whom he had one year of his contract remaining.

In three seasons in the Bundesliga he has competed in 35 games, scoring three goals.

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## Barca off to a flier

REUTERS, Madrid



Jose Mourinho's La Liga adventure got off to a limp start on Sunday when Real Madrid were held to a 0-0 draw at Real Mallorca while champions Barcelona cruised to a 3-0 win at Racing Santander.

Snapped up after last season's treble-winning exploits with Inter Milan, Mourinho's arrival as coach at the Bernabeu has raised expectations he can end Barcelona's two-year reign as champions.

While his new team were struggling to click in Mallorca, Pep Guardiola's well-drilled outfit banged in three goals thanks to Lionel Messi, Andres Iniesta and David Villa.

Real Madrid's Argentine striker Gonzalo Higuain was denied three times by home goalkeeper Dudu Aouate and Cristiano Ronaldo spurned a great chance as the visitors upped the pressure.

Mourinho's new signings Mesut Ozil, Sami Khedira, Angel Di Maria, Sergio Canales and Ricardo Carvalho all featured but despite a frantic finish Michael Laudrup's Mallorca were worth their point.

"We were good tactically and very good in defence," Real Madrid's keeper and captain Iker Casillas told Spanish television.

"We did well and little by little will get better. The ball just did not want to go in."

Barca had earlier thrown down the gauntlet, appearing unruffled by the contentious exit of Zlatan Ibrahimovic to AC Milan.

Messi, who grabbed a hat-trick in the Spanish Super Cup last weekend, only needed four minutes to rip open the defence and score with a delightful lob.

Iniesta followed up with a volley from outside the area and new signing Villa headed his first league goal in a Barca shirt, after Victor Valdes had saved a penalty before the break.

"We still lack a little continuity in our play but this will improve as the season progresses," Guardiola told reporters.

Second division champions Real Sociedad celebrated their return to La Liga after a three-year absence with a 1-0 win at home to Villarreal.

Xavier Prieto raced on to Joseba Lorente's backheel to score after 57 minutes, making them the only promoted club to win in the opening round of matches.

Levante and Hercules were beaten on Saturday.

A double strike from Pablo Osvaldo helped Espanyol overcome Getafe 3-1 while the games between Deportivo Coruna and Real Zaragoza and Osasuna and Almeria ended 0-0.

## Zlatan points finger at Pep

AFP, Rome

Zlatan Ibrahimovic again pointed the finger at Barcelona coach Pep Guardiola to explain his premature exit from the Catalan giants.

The 28-year-old signed for AC Milan over the weekend on an initial one-year loan with a pre-arranged 24-million-euro permanent deal arranged for the end of the season.

He had spent just one year in Spain following a 50-million-euro plus Samuel Eto'o switch from Inter Milan.

And the big Sweden forward said there was just one man to blame.

"I only had problems with one person (Guardiola). I got on great with my team-mates and I want to take this opportunity to say that I had a great relationship with both the club and the fans," he told Monday's La Gazzetta dello Sport.

Ibrahimovic, who was due to undergo a medical on Monday, said it was like returning home as he comes back to the country where he spent five years with Milan's arch rivals Juventus and Inter.

"You live well in Barcelona but after Sweden, Italy is my adopted country," he added.

"In five years in Italy, myself and my family felt at home."

Now though comes the real business of trying to propel Milan back to the Serie A summit and end Inter's five-year domination of the scudetto.

"I've come back to Italy to win as much as possible and score even more goals than in the past," said the Serie A top goalscorer from 2008/09.

## Camoranesi poised for Stuttgart

AFP, Berlin

Veteran Italy midfielder Mauro Camoranesi is poised to join Stuttgart in a deal that could be concluded on Monday, media reports suggested here.

"We are waiting on the medical, but it's looking good for Camoranesi," Stuttgart's sporting director Fredi Bobic was quoted as saying.

The 34-year-old Juventus player had been in talks to join English Premier League side Birmingham City but the move fell through over tax issues.

Stuttgart have targeted the 2006 World Cup winner as a replacement for Sami Khedira, who has joined Real Madrid.

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RESULTS	
Espanyol 3	(Osvaldo 33, 54, Datolo 90)
Getafe 1	(Galan 61-og)
Deportivo La Coruna 0	Real Zaragoza 0
Osasuna 0	Almeria 0
Real Sociedad 1	(Prieto 57)
Villarreal 0	
Racing Santander 0	Barcelona 3
	(Messi 3, Iniesta 33, Villa 62)

## Milan thrash Lecce

REUTERS, Milan



AC Milan opened their Serie A campaign with a classy 4-0 win over Lecce but it was another bleak Sunday for defeated Juventus and the officials who wrongly awarded Napoli a goal in their 1-1 draw at Fiorentina.

Milan, third last term, had new recruit Zlatan Ibrahimovic in the San Siro stands and the former Inter Milan striker applauded when Alexandre Pato slammed in a 16th minute opener.

Swede Ibrahimovic was unavailable to new coach Massimiliano Allegri as he has not yet completed the formalities of his move from Barcelona but Milan did not need him as a promoted Lecce chased shadows.

Thiago Silva soon bundled in a corner and Pato netted again on 28 minutes by rounding the goalkeeper after a shrewd pass from Ronaldinho. Filippo Inzaghi made it four late on.

Milan owner Silvio Berlusconi, whose opinion on tactics led to coach Leonardo's exit at the end of last term, put former Cagliari boss Allegri under immediate pressure before kickoff.

"It's clear that with this squad Allegri has to win," said the Italian Prime Minister, whose side's last scudetto was in 2004.

Juve lost 1-0 at Bari as their problems from last term were again exposed despite a spending spree.



Milan forward Alexandre Pato (L) is about to score his second goal during their Serie A tie against Lecce at San Siro on Sunday.

## 'Gladbach run riot

AFP, Berlin



Cameroon striker Mohamadou Idrissou was both goal-scorer and provider for Moenchengladbach as they upset Leverkusen 6-3 on Sunday in a nine-goal thriller on a weekend of shock results in the Bundesliga.

Leverkusen's Germany goalkeeper Rene Adler had a day to forget as his defence capitulated leaving coach Jupp Heynckes furious.

"Gladbach played very well," admitted Heynckes. "We made a mess of our defensive organisation. We invited them to the party and they punished us."

After Bayern Munich were beaten at Kaiserslautern on Friday, Wolfsburg allowed a 3-0 lead to slip to a 4-3 defeat by Mainz on Saturday as Schalke went down at home to Hanover on a bad weekend for the German league's top teams.

Leverkusen fielded Germany star midfielder Michael Ballack -- who was booted off when he was replaced in the second-half -- as well as Adler and striker Stefan Kiessling.

But they were out-played by Gladbach as midfielder Patrick Herrmann netted twice for the guests which were both set up by Idrissou,

## Ronaldo out for three weeks

AFP, Madrid

Cristiano Ronaldo was out on Monday ruled out of Portugal's Euro 2012 qualifiers against Cyprus and Norway after he picked up an ankle injury that is likely to keep him out for three weeks.

The forward took a knock to his right ankle in Real Madrid's 0-0 draw at Real Mallorca on Sunday.

He underwent an MRI scan on Monday morning that revealed "a contusion on his right ankle," the club revealed in a statement.

"He will be unavailable for an estimated period of approximately three weeks," added the statement.

Portugal play Cyprus on Friday and Norway four days later.

Ronaldo is also likely to miss Real's next two La Liga matches, as well as their first Champions League group phase match at Ajax on September 15.

## RESULTS

Bari 1	(Donati 43)	Juventus 0
AC Milan 4	(Pato 16, 28, Thiago Silva 23, Inzaghi 90)	Lecce 0
Cievo 2	(Moscaredelli 14, Pellissier 83-pen)	Catania 1
	(Ricchiuti 22)	
Fiorentina 1	(D'Agostino 50)	Napoli 1
	(Casani 7)	
Palermo 0	Cagliari 0	
Parma 2	(Bojnovic 11, Morrone 45)	Brescia 0
Sampdoria 2	(Cassano 60-pen,	

First-half substitute Massimo Donati blasted in for Bari with his left foot from outside the area two minutes before the break.

Juve, Italy's most successful domestic club who finished a poor seventh last term, have already been in competitive action this season in Europa League qualifiers but still struggled.

Injuries meant Juve gave a start to striker Fabio Quagliarella, who signed from Napoli on Friday, as well as league debuts to six other new recruits who failed to gel.

"Clearly we have a lot to do," new coach Luigi Del Neri told Sky TV. "It will be a difficult season because everyone will battle especially hard against us."

Soccer's never ending debate over the use of technology was fuelled by debutant Edinson Cavani giving Napoli the lead at Fiorentina despite replays showing his early header bounced off the bar on to the line, not over it.

Gaetano D'Agostino's rocket grabbed a 1-1 draw for the hosts before both sides finished with 10 men.

Sampdoria, knocked out of the Champions League qualifiers in midweek, beat Lazio 2-0 while Sicily's Palermo drew 0-0 with Sardinia's Cagliari.

On Saturday, last season's runners-up AS Roma drew 0-0 with promoted Cesena.

Champions Inter Milan, hurt by Friday's European Super Cup defeat by Atletico Madrid, visit managerless Bologna on Monday as Serie A completes its first round of matches as a breakaway division from the rest of the league.

## Modeste earns a point

AFP, Paris



A late Anthony Modeste header earned Bordeaux a 1-1 draw at home to Marseille on Sunday and ensured the 2009 French champions avoided defeat in their first game since the sale of Yoann Gourcuff.

Gourcuff joined Lyon in a 22 million-euro deal earlier this week and in his absence Bordeaux looked set to slip to their third defeat in four games after Lucho Gonzalez gave the visitors a 12th-minute lead.

Marseille had to play for over an hour with 10 men following the first-half dismissal of Edouard Cisse and they were within two minutes of their first league win at Bordeaux since 1977 when Modeste struck.

Both sides now have four points from their opening four matches, the same as fellow pre-season title favourites Lyon, leaving all three teams eight points adrift of early leaders Toulouse.

Marseille coach Didier Deschamps handed a debut to striker Loic Remy, while fellow new recruit Andre-Pierre Gignac came on in the second half, but it was last summer's record signing Lucho who broke the deadlock thanks to a terrific assist from Brandao.

Cedric Carrasso.

The Bordeaux goalkeeper did well to claw away a deflected Teye Taiwo free-kick as the visitors increased the pressure, but Marseille were dealt a heavy blow in the 33rd minute when Cisse was contentiously sent off for sliding in from behind on Jaroslav Plasil.

Bordeaux's numerical advantage made for an open second half and the hosts were inches away from an equaliser when Modeste just failed to get a touch on Benoit Tremoulinas's cross.

Carrasso twisted to repel a well-directed Andre Ayew header on the hour and he kept his side in the game again in the 77th minute when he touched Remy's low drive onto an upright.

Steve Mandanda's command of his box at the other end had been equally solid but in the 88th minute Modeste got across his man to direct a powerful header inside the right-hand post from Plasil's inswinging cross.

Earlier, Paris Saint-Germain's defensive frailties were exposed again as they fell to a 3-1 defeat at Sochaux that sent the victors up to fourth.

Sochaux were 3-0 up at half-time after Modibo Maiga, Ideye Brown and Damien Perquis all exploited slack defending from the visitors, who had Jeremy Clement sent off late on for slyly raking his studs down Maiga's calf.

PSG have now conceded nine goals in their last three games, having lost 2-1 at Bordeaux last weekend and completed an aggregate victory over Maccabi Tel Aviv with a 4-3 defeat in the Europa League play-off round on Thursday.