



Manchester United winger Nani shoots to score in their Premier League match against Bolton at The Reebok Stadium yesterday.

# Owen spares blushes

AFP, London



Michael Owen scored his 200th goal in club football as Manchester United twice came from behind to snatch a 2-2 draw against Bolton in the English Premier League on Sunday.

Former Liverpool and England star Owen glanced in a 74th-minute header to give United a share of the points at the Reebok Stadium after Bolton had twice taken the lead through Zat Knight and Martin Petrov.

The draw saw United leapfrog Arsenal into second place in the table, three points behind league leaders Chelsea. However United boss Sir Alex Ferguson will be disappointed that his side missed an opportunity to reduce Chelsea's lead to only point after the champions were beaten 1-0 by Manchester City on Saturday.

Bolton had taken a shock lead after six minutes when Knight punished some slack marking from United centre-half Jonny Evans to flick home a Petrov corner with the outside of his right boot.

The goal stunned a sluggish United into action, Darren Fletcher producing a fine low save from Jussi Jaaskelainen on 14 minutes after a surging run.

Yet Bolton had alarm bells ringing in the United defence shortly afterwards, when Johan

Elmarder just failed to get a touch on to a Kevin Davies flick which exposed the visitors' back four once again.

By this stage Ferguson had seen enough, rising from the bench to berate his defence, which was missing the fit-again Rio Ferdinand.

United finally got back on level terms though midway through the half with a scintillating individual effort from Nani.

After gathering the ball on halfway, the Portuguese international set off on a weaving run that took him to the edge of the Bolton area, and as the home defence backed off, the winger unleashed a hard low shot past Jaaskelainen.

Yet though United controlled possession thereafter they struggled to seriously threaten, with an out-of-sorts Wayne Rooney eventually being substituted after an hour with what looked like an ankle knock.

United were then rocked by Bolton's second goal on 67 minutes, Petrov rounding off a superb counter-attack which he had started by scoring with a rasping effort that took a big deflection off Fletcher.

Bolton should have made it 3-1 shortly afterwards, when Elmarder cleverly eluded Nemanja Vidic to go clear on goal only to blaze his shot over the bar.

Wanderers were left to rue their profligacy moments later when Owen, who had replaced Fletcher, glanced in his landmark goal in club football.

## RESULTS

Bolton 2 (Knight 6, Petrov 67) Man Utd 2 (Nani 23, Owen 74)
Arsenal 2 (Nasri 75, 90) West Brom 3 (Odemwingie 50, Jara 52, Thomas 73)
Birmingham 0 Wigan 0
Blackpool 1 (Phillips 85) Blackburn 2 (Adam 20-og, Emerton 90)
Fulham 0 Everton 0
Liverpool 2 (Kuyt 5, Gerrard 64) Sunderland 2 (Bent 25-pen, 48)
Man City 1 (Tevetz 59) Chelsea 0
West Ham 1 (Piquionne 29)

# Alarm bells ringing at Munich

AFP, Munich

Bayern Munich sporting director Christian Nerlinger blasted his team's 2-1 home defeat against Mainz on Saturday as "pathetic" and said it had "set the alarm bells ringing".

"It was a pathetic performance," said Nerlinger after Bayern's second defeat of the season left them 10 points behind leaders Mainz, who have won all of their six matches.

Bayern, who were Bundesliga and German Cup winners last season before reaching the Champions League final, are eighth in the table and have now suffered their worst start to a season since 1977-78.

"Mainz were extraordinary today and played very well, but our situation is precarious," added Nerlinger.

"The alarm bells are ringing and we need to see how the team reacts."

Coach Louis van Gaal added: "A lot of our players performed well below their usual level. I believe Mainz can go far this season and why not think about the title?"

Saturday's defeat was Bayern's first against Mainz in eight meetings.

# 'Chelsea still the best'

AFP, Manchester

Roberto Mancini claimed Chelsea will still win the Premier League title, despite seeing his Manchester City side hand the London club their first defeat of the season.

The defending champions, winners of their five opening league games, were defeated 1-0 at Eastlands thanks to a second half goal from City's new captain and Argentina international forward Carlos Tevez.

The result came just 24 hours after City manager Mancini had claimed Chelsea would win the title "easily" although the result did nothing to alter the Italian's prediction.

"Chelsea are still the best team in the Premier League and probably they will still win the title," he said.

"It's not possible for them to score four or five goals every game and sometimes they will have days like today. I know that."

"For us, it is important we stay focused and think of the next game. We are without a lot of important players at the moment because they are injured."

"We must continue to work hard every game and not think, because we have won this one game, that everything is okay."

"But this should help us work better and realise that if everyone works hard, anything is possible."

The victory by English football's wealthiest club came at the end of a frustrating week in which they had exited the League Cup at West Brom.

City have also had setbacks in the league, losing at Sunderland and dropping home points against Blackburn.

"This is football and this is why football is a fantastic sport," said Mancini. "We deserved to win at Sunderland, we deserved to win against Blackburn but instead we lost and drew."

# Mainz beat Bayern to continue fairytale

AFP, Berlin



Leaders Mainz stunned Bayern Munich 2-1 at the German giants' Allianz Arena home on Saturday to preserve their perfect record and condemn the champions to their worst league start in over 30 years.

The result handed Louis van Gaal's struggling side a second league defeat and left them in eighth place, 10 points behind Mainz, who lead Borussia Dortmund by two.

"It was a pathetic performance," fumed Bayern sporting director Christian Nerlinger after a defeat that means the Bavarian giants have made their worst start to a season since 1977-78.

"Mainz were extraordinary today and played very well, but our situation is precarious. The alarm bells are ringing and we need to see how the team reacts."

Coach Louis van Gaal added: "A lot of our players performed well below their usual level. I believe Mainz can go far this season and why not think about the title?"

Mainz, who now have a perfect six wins from six games, were in front after 15 minutes when 20-year-old Lewis Holtby swept past Daniel Van Buyten to cross for Sami Allagui.

The Tunisian international then beat German international full-back Philipp Lahm before scoring past goalkeeper Jorg Butt with a cheeky backheel.

Bayern, looking a shadow of the team that reached the Champions League final last season, and without the services of Franck Ribery for a month, settled as the half progressed and

Miroslav Klose came close with a header in the 43rd minute.

They drew level on the stroke of half-time when Mainz's Danish defender Bo Svensson headed past his own goalkeeper.

But Mainz grabbed the winner thanks to another Bayern defensive error in the 77th minute when Adam Szalai drove the ball home.

"We didn't play well. It was all due to Mainz, we just didn't create enough chances," said van Gaal.

Mainz coach Thomas Tuchel was delighted by his team's performance.

"It will take time for this to sink in," he said. "I always thought we could win here even after we conceded that goal before half-time. I am really proud of this team."

Mainz are closing in on the Bundesliga record for the best start to a season.

Victory over Hoffenheim next week will equal the record of seven straight wins set by Kaiserslautern in 2001-2002 and Bayern Munich in 1995-96.

Dortmund are second in the table with 15 points after defeating St. Pauli 3-1, with Kevin Grosskreutz scoring twice.

Schalke, runners-up last season, had celebrated their first win of this campaign in mid-week with a 2-1 win over Freiburg, but they were facing defeat when they trailed 2-1 at home to Borussia Moenchengladbach.

But former Real Madrid star Raul scored his first goal for Schalke when he netted with three minutes left to grab a point in a 2-2 draw.

The draw was enough for Felix Magath's side to move off the bottom of the table with Stuttgart, defeated 4-1 at home by Bayer Leverkusen, taking their place.

## RESULTS

Bayern Munich 1 (Svensson 45-og)
Mainz 05 2 (Allagui 15, Szalai 77)
Eintracht Frankfurt 2 (Gekas 17, Chris 88) Nuremberg 0
Schalke 04 2 (Huntelaar 51, Raul 87) M'gladbach 2 (Daems 15-pen, Bradley 43)
VfB Stuttgart 1 (Kuzmanovic 52) Bayer Leverkusen 4 (Hyypia 19, Vidal 21, Ballitsch 69, Sam 88)
St Pauli 1 (Hennings 25) Dortmund 3 (Grosskreutz 17, 60, Kagawa 50)
Werder Bremen 3 (Demel 25-og, Almeida 28, 85) Hamburg 2 (van

# Beckham sues US magazine

AFP, Los Angeles

Former England football captain David Beckham has filed a lawsuit against a US celebrity weekly that published allegations that he slept with a prostitute.

Beckham filed suit in Los Angeles Superior Court on Friday, accusing the magazine In Touch of libel and slander. He also alleges the magazine knowingly published false information.

In Touch wrote that Beckham, who plays for the Los Angeles Galaxy, had an affair with a prostitute in New York in August 2007. Their source was Irma Nici, 26, who described herself in the cover article as a high-class prostitute.

Beckham is also suing Nici for damages.

The football star has been married to his wife Victoria, a pop star and former Spice Girl, for 11 years. The couple has three children.

# Lyon retain patience in Aulas

AFP, Paris

Lyon president Jean-Michel Aulas said he will not be rushed into making a decision on whether to sack coach Claude Puel after the French club's disastrous start to the season.

"We're not going to rush into changing everything on a whim," Aulas told the Telefoot television programme on Sunday, a day after watching his team lose 1-0 to regional rivals St Etienne.

The result left Lyon, which hit the woodwork three times and had two shots cleared off the line, second-bottom in the Ligue 1 standings and the spotlight squarely on Puel, who has failed to win a trophy since joining the hugely successful club in 2008.

"We've recruited well over the last two years and we'll examine things after 10 matches in the championship and three in the Champions League," Aulas said.

"We'll then have a very precise idea of what's going to happen."

Lyon now turn their attention to a tricky away Champions League match against Hapoel Tel-Aviv on Wednesday.

# Giggs missing for two weeks

AFP, Bolton

Manchester United's Ryan Giggs is set to be out for a "couple of weeks" according to Sir Alex Ferguson after the veteran winger suffered a hamstring injury in Sunday's 2-2 draw with Bolton.

Both Giggs and England striker Wayne Rooney were substituted in the second half at the Reebok Stadium during a match which saw United leapfrog Arsenal into second place in the English Premier League.

"Ryan is the most serious, it's a hamstring and I'm afraid he will be out for a couple of weeks," Ferguson said before adding he expected Rooney to be ready for the midweek Champions League tie away to Valencia.

# Barca blitz, Real held

AFP, Madrid



Champions Barcelona leapfrogged rivals Real Madrid to go second in the Spanish first division thanks to a 3-1 win at 10-man Athletic Bilbao on Saturday.

Barca notched their third consecutive league victory with second half goals from Seydou Keita, Xavi and Sergi Busquets after Bilbao had been reduced to 10 men following the dismissal of Fernando Amorebieta on 33 minutes.

Barcelona also had David Villa sent off in the closing stages as Bilbao made it 2-1 but Busquets scored with the last kick of the game to seal the win.

Goal-shy Real had dropped two vital points in a 0-0 draw at promoted Levante so Barcelona moved a point above their rivals but stayed behind new leaders Valencia by a point.

Valencia warmed up for Wednesday's Champions League duel with Manchester United by winning 2-0 at Sporting Gijon to make it 13 points from a possible 15 in the league.

Real had been top on goal difference before the weekend but fired blanks against Levante lacking the killer instinct in front of goal.

"It is not normal for a team to need so many goalscoring chances," said Real coach Jose Mourinho.

"It is obviously something that worries me because you have to score goals to win games and we have dropped some points."

"The quality of the players is not the problem because they are used to scoring a lot of goals."

Real top-scored in the league last season with 102 goals but under Mourinho they have scored just six in the first five league games.

For Real the Champions League is the next priority as they travel to French side Auxerre on Tuesday.

Barcelona capitalised on Real's slip-up but

should have put 10-man Bilbao to the sword at San Mames hitting the post twice and missing other opportunities in their 3-1 triumph.

The visitors were sharp early on ignoring the torrential rain to play their passing game and had two golden chances in the opening quarter hour.

Keita latched onto a Xavi pass on 10 minutes but his shot lacked the necessary power and goalkeeper Gorka Iraizoz parried the effort.

Three minutes later Andres Iniesta produced a perfectly-weighted pass for Villa but he crashed his shot against the post.

Barca were on top and were given an extra edge on 33 minutes when Amorebieta was harshly sent off for a late lunge on Iniesta.

Amorebieta was stretching as he caught Iniesta late and his punishment of a straight red card was severe.

With one man more Barcelona failed to make inroads and Mikel San Jose hit the post for 10-man Bilbao four minutes after the interval.

It stung Barca into action with Keita running onto a first time pass from Villa to slot home on 54 minutes.

A deflected shot from Xavi on 73 minutes gave Barcelona some breathing space although they needed a late goal from

Busquets to calm their nerves after Bilbao had pulled a late goal back.

Barcelona didn't have Lionel Messi due to an ankle injury but hope to have the Argentine back for the trip to Russia to face Rubin Kazan in the Champions League on Wednesday.

Valencia are also in Champions League action hosting Manchester United on Wednesday and are brimming with confidence after a 2-0 win at Gijon pushed them to the league summit with four wins and draw so far.

Turkish midfielder Mehmet Topal and Spanish international forward Roberto Soldado both scored their first league goals in the club's colours to clinch the win.

"The players are grasping that the most important thing is the team and not the individuals and that is the key to the good start," said Valencia coach Unai Emery.

## RESULTS

Sporting Gijon 0 Valencia 2 (Topal 7, Soldado 10)
Levante 0 Real Madrid 0
Athletic Bilbao 1 (Gabilondo 90)
Barcelona 3 (Keita 54, Xavi 73)

# Vucinic derails Inter train

AFP, Rome



AS Roma claimed their first win of the season in dramatic fashion when Mirko Vucinic's stunning stoppage-time header gave them a 1-0 home win over champions Inter Milan on Saturday.

Montenegro forward Vucinic, who came off the bench late in the match to replace Francesco Totti, dived to turn in Daniele De Rossi's cross from the right and put an abrupt halt to Inter's strong start.

European and Italian champions Inter remain top with 10 points from five games, although Brescia and Chievo can both overtake them if they win their respective matches at Bari and at home to Lazio on Sunday.

"Roma have taken a good dose of medicine because beating Inter is always good for you," said Roma coach Claudio Ranieri.

"It's a victory for us staying united right to the very end. The lads are the first to suffer when they aren't doing well and they can't see why."

Inter coach Rafael Benitez said: "The problem isn't that we conceded late on, but that we didn't score with any of the 15 shots we had on goal."

"Now we have to analyse why we didn't score and why we are sometimes weak in defence."

AC Milan are two points off the pace in fourth thanks to Zlatan Ibrahimovic, who settled their San Siro clash against Genoa with a delightful 49th-minute chip.

Nicolas Burdisso returning from a two-match suspension.

The champions were full of confidence after thrashing Bari 4-0 Wednesday, while Roma were fuming at the poor refereeing that contributed to their 2-1 defeat at Brescia.

The hosts had a penalty appeal turned down in the 19th minute when Lucio caught Marco Borriello's face with a high clearance and Inter's Dejan Stankovic hit the crossbar with a long-distance effort.

At the San Siro, Robinho was in Milan's starting lineup for the first time since arriving from Manchester City and he and Ibrahimovic and Ronaldinho tried to make things happen.

The hosts almost went behind in the 39th minute when keeper Christian Abbiati diverted a Rodrigo Palacio cross onto his own far post.

The deadlock was shattered soon after the break when Ibrahimovic resisted the attention of two markers to get his toe to Andrea Pirlo's pass from deep, with Portugal keeper Eduardo unable to save.

Ronaldinho almost made it 2-0 on the hour with a strike that sailed just over the bar and Robinho had a shot cleared away by Domenico Criscito with Eduardo beaten.

Mathieu Flamini squandered two good opportunities in the closing stages.

"This win counts for a lot because it's important to be in good shape psychologically," said Milan coach Massimiliano Allegri.

"When the results don't come, you always worry, even if you're a great team."

This weekend's Serie A action is taking place after Italian professional footballers union AIC postponed a strike called over a contract wrangle.

Juventus, who have so far shown few signs of improving on last season's miserable campaign despite an array of signings and the arrival of new coach Luigi Del Neri, take on Cagliari on Sunday.

## RESULTS

AC Milan 1 (Ibrahimovic 49) Genoa 0
Roma 1 (Vucinic 90+2)
Inter Milan 0



Mainz striker Adam Szalai is ecstatic after scoring against Bayern Munich in their Bundesliga match at the Allianz Arena in Munich on Saturday.