



Messi named in Barca squad

AFP, Madrid
Barcelona star Lionel Messi has been named to the squad to travel to Russia for the Champions League match at Rubin Kazan on Wednesday, more than a week after being sidelined with an ankle injury. The Argentine striker was stretchered off in the final minute of the September 19 league match against Atletico Madrid following a robust tackle from Czech defender Tomas Ujfalus. He has missed Barca's last two league matches after suffering ligament damage to his ankle. Messi, the reigning FIFA World Player of the Year, returned to training on Friday, but apart from the first-team squad. He has still not yet been given the all-clear by medics. But on Monday he was in the 19-man squad announced by coach Pep Guardiola for Wednesday's match in Russia. Also travelling will be French defender Eric Abidal, who was allowed to miss Barca's last three matches for personal reasons.

Sevilla sack Alvarez

AFP, Madrid
Sevilla have sacked their coach Antonio Alvarez over the club's disappointing start to the season and replaced him with former Real Mallorca boss Gregorio Manzano, it announced Monday. Sevilla lost 2-0 on Sunday to newly promoted Hercules and currently stand seventh in the Primera Liga with eight points from five games. That follows the club's exit to Portugal's Braga in the qualifying round of the Champions League in August and a home defeat to Paris Saint-Germain in the Europa League this month. Alvarez, who replaced Manolo Jimenez at Sevilla last season and brought the club the Spanish Cup, is the first Primera Liga coach to lose his job so far this season. Manzano guided Real Mallorca to fifth place in the Spain's top league last season before leaving the club.

Almunia out of Partizan clash

AFP, London
Arsenal will be without under-fire goalkeeper Manuel Almunia for their Champions League tie away to Partizan Belgrade on Tuesday after he was ruled out with an elbow injury. Lukasz Fabianski will take over between the posts. Almunia was much criticised for his performance in Saturday's shock 3-2 loss at home to West Brom in the Premier League where he injured himself while conceding a penalty. But Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger insisted Monday he would have played Almunia if the keeper had been fit. "We have Manuel Almunia out," Wenger said. "He has a problem with his elbow. He caught it when he made the penalty on Saturday. The French boss added: "(The goalkeeper) is always the easy target, the easy scapegoat. "But we win together and we lose together even if people think he made a mistake on the second goal."

Hercules hero Trezegol

AFP, Madrid
Veteran French striker David Trezeguet scored twice as promoted Hercules took another big league scalp defeating Sevilla 2-0 on Sunday. Hercules caused the sensation of the season when they beat champions Barcelona 2-0 a fortnight ago and followed that by downing Sevilla, regulars on the Champions League circuit and fourth last season. It was a first league defeat of the season for Sevilla who lie sixth, five points off leaders Valencia with Hercules now just a point behind them. A World Cup winner with France in 1998, Trezeguet struck a penalty on 21 minutes to put Hercules ahead and grabbed a second on 38 minutes after great work from Dutch midfielder Royston Drenthe who is on loan from Madrid. Trezeguet, 32, has now scored three times for Hercules having made a surprise free transfer move to the league newcomers after a decade with Italian giants Juventus. Elsewhere Atletico Madrid moved above Sevilla and up to fourth with a 1-0 victory over Real Zaragoza at the Vicente Calderon. Atletico had collected one point from the last six but got back to winning ways with Brazilian debutant Filipe Luis - a 12-million-euro signing from Deportivo La Coruna - setting up Diego Costa for the winning goal on 20 minutes. Atletico sit three points behind pacesetters Valencia while Zaragoza have yet to win and prop up the table. Earlier Espanyol maintained their 100 per cent home record with a 1-0 victory over 10-man

Osasuna at the Cornella El Prat Stadium to go sixth in the Spanish top-flight. Osasuna had to play 69 minutes of the match with one man fewer after defender Manuel Lolo was sent off on 21 minutes for a second yellow card and Espanyol went in front three minutes later through Alvaro Vazquez. Espanyol, beaten 3-0 at Real Madrid on Tuesday, could not extend their advantage but held on to make it three wins out of three and move sixth two points behind third-placed Real Madrid. In other matches, Almeria won their first game of the season with a brace from Nigerian striker Kalu Uche ensuring a 2-0 win over 10-man Deportivo La Coruna 2-0 at the Riazor stadium. Uche scored a quick-fire double, after four and 18 minutes, to put Almeria in control and Depor were reduced to ten men shortly before half-time when Argentine defender Diego Colotto was given a straight red card for hauling down compatriot Pablo Piatti. Depor are yet to win this season and sit second from bottom of the table after scoring just two goals in their first five league matches. In other matches, Real Mallorca defeated newcomers Real Sociedad 2-0 at home thanks to a brace from Fernando Cavenaghi. Argentine striker Cavenaghi struck in the fifth and 62nd minute as Mallorca continued their unbeaten home record and have collected all seven of their points in front of their own fans. Valencia are the new league leaders after defeating Sporting Gijon 2-0 on Saturday to make it 13 points from a possible 15 and lie a point ahead of second-placed Barcelona. Barcelona triumphed 3-1 at 10-man Athletic Bilbao on Sunday to move above rivals Real Madrid who drew 0-0 with Levante on Sunday to fall to third two points behind leaders Valencia.

RESULTS

Racing Santander 0	Getafe 1
(Sanchez 16)	
Espanyol 1	(Vazquez 24)
Osasuna 0	Real Mallorca 2
(Cavenaghi 5, 62)	
Real Sociedad 0	
Deportivo La Coruna 0	Almeria 2
(Uche 4, 18)	
Hercules 2	(Trezeguet 21-pen, 38)
Sevilla 0	
Atletico Madrid 1	(Costa 20)

Zarate fires Lazio

AFP, Rome
Lazio joined reigning champions Inter Milan at the top of Serie A on Sunday after a second-half goal from Argentine striker Mauro Zarate brought a 1-0 win at fellow high-riders Chievo. Zarate, who had a spell in the English Premier League with Birmingham, ought to have calmed the visitors' nerves prior to his neat low finish past keeper Stefano Sorrentino with a brace but missed a simpler early chance from point blank range. Chievo had been looking for a win which would have taken them top after winning three of their opening four games - but Zarate instead ensured that Lazio moved onto ten points from four games, level with Inter after the latter's 1-0 loss Saturday to Roma. Chievo stay third, a point off the pace, as do promoted Brescia, whose own hopes of snatching top spot were dashed by a 2-1 reverse at Bari, Emanuel Rivas and a penalty from Brazilian Barreto cancelling out a Panagiotis Kone strike. AC Milan meanwhile moved to within two

points of the top after new arrival from Barcelona and former Inter favourite Zlatan Ibrahimovic settled Saturday's game at the San Siro against Genoa with a delightful 49th-minute chip, following on from his goal in Wednesday's draw at Lazio. Juventus, coming off a dreadful home loss to Palermo, moved into midtable in Sunday's late match after a hat-trick from Milos Krsic gave them an exciting 4-2 home success over Cagliari, a result which took the Old Lady into midtable after having taken only four points from their opening four games. Serbian playmaker Krsic, signed from CSKA Moscow in the summer, was on fire with goals in the 13th - a piledriver past keeper Michael Agazzi - 34th and 70th minutes while Leonardo Bonucci also hit the target for the hosts. Alessandro Matri hit a brace for Cagliari as Juve warmed up in style for their midweek Europa League meeting with big spenders Manchester City, coached by former Inter Milan boss Roberto Mancini. In other Sunday action, Fiorentina won 2-0 against Parma to win for the first time in the league this season while Udinese managed their first point of the campaign with a goalless draw at Sampdoria but remain bottom.

RESULTS

Juventus 4	(Krsic 13, 34, 70, Bonucci 57)
Cagliari 2	(Matri 20, 81)
Cesena 1	(Parolo 49)
Napoli 4	(Lavezzi 72, Hamsik 81-pen, Cavani 88, 90+2)
Sampdoria 0	Udinese 0
Bari 2	(Rivas 16, P Barreto 55-pen)
Brescia 1	(Kone 27)
Chievo 0	Lazio 1
(Zarate 69)	
Palermo 2	(Pinilla 52, Maccarone 90+3)
Lecce 2	(Giacomazzi 8, Corvia 46)
Fiorentina 2	(Ljajic 61-pen, De Silvestri 77)
Parma 0	Catania 1
(Britos 66-og)	
Bologna 1	



Juventus midfielder Milos Krsic (R) scores his second goal past Cagliari defender Alessandro Agostini during their Serie A clash at the Comunale Stadium on Sunday.

Good start for Houllier

AFP, London
New Aston Villa manager Gerard Houllier's first league match in charge of the Birmingham club saw them move up into fifth place as they won 2-1 away to Midlands rivals Wolves. Houllier was indebted to Emile Heskey for the second time in a week as the former England striker's late goal sealed victory after he inspired a midweek comeback League Cup win over Blackburn Rovers. It seemed Villa would have to settle for a point until Heskey -- signed by then Liverpool manager Houllier for 11 million pounds a decade ago -- headed in Stephen Warnock's cross two minutes from time for what was his third goal in four games. Stewart Downing put Villa ahead at Molineux before Matt Jarvis equalised just after the hour mark. In the day's other Premier League match, Stoke came from behind to win 2-1 away to Newcastle. Kevin Nolan put the Magpies ahead from the penalty spot after Robert Huth fouled Andy Carroll before Stoke striker Kenwyne Jones equalised with a 67th minute header. But the visitors secured victory five minutes before full-time when Newcastle's James Perch headed into his own net from a Stoke corner.

Iran set Brazil date

AFP, Tehran
Asian giants Iran will play five-time World Cup winners Brazil on October 7 in the United Arab Emirates, the ISNA news agency reported Monday. "Iran will play a friendly game against Brazil, featuring all its stars, in Abu Dhabi on October 7," the chairman of the Iranian Football Federation (IFF), Ali Kafashian, was quoted as saying. Kafashian said that the agreement to hold the match in the UAE, home to around 400,000 Iranians, was clinched on Sunday. He gave no details of the contract, but another IFF official said all costs were being met by the sponsor of the Brazilian team. "The Brazilian team's sponsor is paying all the expenses for our team. If we wanted to play against Brazil in Tehran it would have cost us around three million dollars," Abbas Torabian was quoted by the news agency as saying. Kafashian said that the Team Melli's squad will be determined after they finish their matches in the West Asia Football Federation cup now being played in Jordan, and in which Iran are seeking their fifth title. Kafashian added that Iran's US-trained coach Afshin Ghotbi had given the thumbs up for the match. Ghotbi is hoping to pilot his side to their first Asian Cup title in 35 years next year, when the tournament will be held in Qatar between January 7-29. Iran are grouped with current Asian Cup champions Iraq, North Korea and the United Arab Emirates in the 2011 finals.

Didier's Chelsea test

AFP, Paris
Didier Deschamps on Tuesday returns to Chelsea, the club where he spent one season, knowing his Marseille team face a stern Champions League challenge. Chelsea, although beaten 1-0 by Manchester City at the weekend, top the English Premier League and Deschamps branded the west London club a "very competitive European team". "Returning to Stamford Bridge will give me great pleasure," Deschamps, who captained France to victory in the 1998 World Cup final against Brazil, told UEFA.com. "Although the stadium itself is renovated and much bigger, the wonderful atmosphere which I experienced remains," said the 41-year-old Frenchman, who won the 2000 FA Cup with Chelsea under Gianluca Vialli. "English grounds always seemed full and at the Bridge there were always families in the stadium and a great match atmosphere. "But Chelsea now have a very competitive European team with something like 20 internationals - a great compensation if you have injured or suspended players." Deschamps is certainly imbued with European football, having twice won the Champions League as a player (with Marseille in 1993 and Juventus 1997) and as a coach led Monaco to the Champions League final in 2004 - a campaign that featured a semifinal elimination of Chelsea. "Without hesitation, the Champions League is the best of all competitions," he said. "Not only do Chelsea want to win this trophy, they are among four or five teams that can legitimately expect to do so. "They won the (Premier League) title last season and are already performing really well. I know their manager (Carlo Ancelotti) well. "He was my coach for six months at Juventus

and I also often played against him. I like his style of football and I'll also be pleased to see Carlo again." Marseille lost their opening Champions League Group F match, a Cesar Azpilicueta own goal handing Spartak Moscow a 1-0 victory. Marseille sit fifth in the French league with three wins from the opening seven matches of the season, in which they have leaked nine goals. With Chelsea having racked up 21 goals in their opening six matches and having seen off Slovakian side Zilina 4-1 in their opening match, Deschamps will have to ensure his side close down a side boasting talent throughout. Chelsea's London rivals Arsenal, whom they play in the Premier League next weekend, travel to Serbia to play Partizan Belgrade, unbeaten in their domestic league this season. Arsenal's buoyant confidence after a 6-0 thrashing of Sporting Braga will doubtless have been dented by a shock 3-2 home defeat to West Bromwich Albion on Saturday, but the Londoners should have enough class to bag three more points. Much will depend on how Arsenal's defence deals with Brazilian striker Cleo, the scorer of eight goals in Partizan's six Champions League qualifiers who last week was granted Serbian citizenship. In other matches, Group G giants AC Milan and Real Madrid travel to Ajax and Auxerre respectively. Real midfielder Alvaro Arbeloa insists Auxerre should not be underestimated despite their opponents lying fourth from bottom of the French first division. "Tuesday's match is going to be very difficult. Auxerre aren't doing that well in the Ligue 1 right now, but the fact that they are playing Real Madrid will motivate them," he said. "We are very focused and we hope to earn the three points in play." Basel play Bayern Munich and Roma host CFR 1907 Cluj-Napoca in Group E matches, Spartak Moscow are at home to MSK Zilina in Group F, and Braga entertain Shakhtar Donetsk in Group H.

FIXTURES

Tuesday (1845GMT)

Basel (SUI) v Bayern Munich (GER),	Roma (ITA) v CFR 1907 Cluj-Napoca (ROM),
Chelsea (ENG) v Marseille (FRA),	Spartak Moscow (RUS) v MSK Zilina (SVK),
Ajax (NED) v AC Milan (ITA),	Auxerre (FRA) v Real Madrid (ESP),
Braga (POR) v Shakhtar Donetsk (UKR),	Partizan Belgrade (SRB) v

Lack of goals a worry

AFP, Madrid
Manager Jose Mourinho promised attacking football and goals when he took over at Real Madrid in the summer but under his guidance Real have scored a meagre six goals in their first five league matches firing blanks again in Saturday's 0-0 draw at promoted Levante. It was the second time Real failed to score this season having drawn 0-0 at Real Mallorca on the opening day of the season and left Mourinho at a loss to explain why his side failed to convert their chances. "I am worried because we have now dropped four points through not scoring," said Mourinho. "We are not scoring the number of goals we should in terms of chances. "It is not normal to need so many opportunities. If you score two or three from six chances fine. Against Levante we had so many chances and some great ones but we didn't score and we are not happy with a point." Real are unbeaten in their six league games but the two 0-0 away draws leave them down in third two points behind Valencia and a point behind archrivals Barcelona. At the back Real have no such problems, conceding just one league goal, and Mourinho hopes it is a question of time before things click at the other end of the pitch. "We are controlling all the games and there is nothing that

needs solving tactically," added the former Chelsea coach. "It is certainly not to do with the quality of the players. We all know that these are players with high goal tallies for a number of seasons. "The team was solid at the back and we have conceded just one goal in six games. (Iker) Casillas only had one save to make, however, if you don't score you don't win." Cristiano Ronaldo and Gonzalo Higuain, who scored 53 league goals between them last season, had Madrid's best chances but for once could not apply the finishing touch and Real surrendered top spot to Valencia. "Last season we scored more than 100 goals and this is a team with some firepower," insisted defender Alvaro Arbeloa. "It would be absurd to doubt that. "We are fortunate to have Higuain and Cristiano in our team as they are two of the best strikers in world football. "Last season I think they got around 60 goals in the league and I don't know how many in the Champions league." Last season Real were top-scorers with 102 league goals and had 16 goals from their first five matches under departed coach Manuel Pellegrini compared with the six goals under Mourinho. Mourinho caused a storm by criticising the Levante players from the touch-line and midfielder Juanlu Lopez hit out at the Portuguese coach. "He told me not to dive," fumed Juanlu. "He provokes all the players. He should keep his mouth shut and stop provoking people." Mourinho's next task is a Champions League trip to Auxerre on Wednesday where his side hope to follow up their opening 2-0 group win over Ajax. "The truth is I don't know much about Auxerre," said Arbeloa. "I know they are not doing too well in the league at the moment and this will be a big game for them."



Real Madrid star Cristiano Ronaldo jogs during a training session in Madrid yesterday on the eve of their Champions League tie against Auxerre.

Lampard still not fit

AFP, Cobham
Frank Lampard will miss Chelsea's Champions League clash with Marseille on Tuesday as he continues to recover from hernia surgery which could also sideline him for England's Euro 2012 qualifier against Montenegro. Lampard has missed five matches since the operation on August 31 and Blues boss Carlo Ancelotti admitted the midfielder needs further rest before he will be ready to return to action. That means Lampard is certain to miss the visit of the French champions to Stamford Bridge and this weekend's match against Arsenal. Ancelotti also hinted that the 32-year-old, who has been feeling pain from the surgery scar tissue, will be unable to play for England in their next qualifier against Montenegro at Wembley on October 12. "He can't play on Tuesday. We need to have more time than we expected for his rest,"

Ancelotti said on Monday. "In a few days there will be an international break and he will be ready for the first game after the break. "He didn't play with us so I don't think he is able to play for the national team." Lampard's prolonged absence is a further blow to Ancelotti, who is already without Salomon Kalou and Yossi Benayoun due to injuries. Brazil's Ramires, a recent signing from Benfica, deputised for Lampard against Manchester City and looked slightly overwhelmed by the pace and power of the match. But Chelsea midfielder John Obi Mikel is adamant his team-mates are coping well with the challenge of filling in for Lampard. "I think Frank is an important player for this team. We all know that. Over the years he has shown his consistency," Mikel said. "He is a massive loss but I think we are coping well without him. We have only lost one of the games he has missed. "Right now he is injured and we have other players who can do a similar job."