## C'Ron warns Barca

AFP, Madrid



Barcelona will face a "very different" Real Madrid when the two sides clash next month for the first time since Jose Mourinho took over as coach, Real star Cristiano Ronaldo has warned.

"Barca is always a difficult and complicated rival but this year's Madrid is not the same as last year's, it is completely different,"

the Portuguese international said in an interview published Friday in sports daily Marca. "We have changed in many ways: in terms of discipline, playing style, aggressiveness, we all play together for the same goal. Mourinho is a

great coach with enormous experience, he very well." knows what you have to do to win." Real Madrid will travel to Barcelona on the weekend of November 27-28 in the most

eagerly anticipated match of the season. Mourinho in May replaced Chile's Manuel Pellegrini to become Real's 11th coach in the past seven years.

The 47-year-old won the Champions League with Porto in 2004 and Inter Milan last season. He also won two domestic titles with Porto, two with Chelsea and two with Inter.

Under his watch Real are first in the Spanish league with 20 points after eight matches, a point clear of Barca and Villarreal.

Ronaldo, who signed for Real in 2009 for 94 million euros, scored a quadruple on Saturday during his side's 6-1 home win over Racing Santander that knocked Barcelona off the top of the Spanish first division.

He has scored a total of eight goals during his last three league matches.

"I feel good and confident, I am in a good moment and I want to stay that way. There are always points you can improve but I am good," he said.

"It is true that I did not start off very well this season, but I think it is normal. You can't always be at your top level. I have scored some goals in the last few matches and I feel

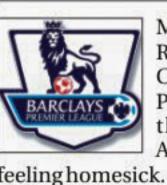
The 25-year-old has been criticised in the past for his "selfishness" on the pitch, notably by Sara Carbonero, a Spanish television journalist and girlfriend of Madrid goalkeeper Iker Casillas, a charge he flatly rejected.

"If the cameras were not here I would respond differently," he said when asked about the claims he is a selfish player.

"I listen to the opinion of everybody and I may agree with them or not. I don't care what people say, I know I am not a selfish player."

## Tevez feeling homesick

AFP, London



Manchester City manager Roberto Mancini expects Carlos Tevez to stay with the Premier League club even though he conceded the Argentina striker may be

City striker Roque Santa Cruz sparked renewed speculation about Tevez this week when he was quoted as saying the former Manchester United star wants to be back

"among his people" in Argentina and will return to his homeland in the next few years. Mancini has given Tevez permission to travel to Argentina to visit his family after City's captain was ruled out of Saturday's trip to

Wolves with a thigh injury. The Italian agrees that Tevez, who still speaks little English, may well be eager to spend more time in Argentina but Mancini insisted on Friday that he has no fears about the 26-yearold quitting early.

Referring to reports of his star striker being homesick, Mancini said: "He never talks to me about this, but I think it is normal.

"When you are in another country for a long time, it is normal that sometimes you need your country or your family.

"But he has his job here and it is a fantastic job. I don't think we have a problem."

Asked if he was worried Tevez might not see out the whole of his contract at City, Mancini

replied: "No, not at all."

It has been suggested that Tevez is growing disillusioned with football and particularly the dual demands of playing for club and country.

Mancini believes it would be beneficial for the player if he was able to curb his commitments with the Argentina national side. "It is impossible, I think, but maybe some-

times when they have a friendly match it would be better for him to stay here to recover," Mancini said.

"If it is possible, it would be better for us and better for him. But when they are important games with the national team, it is difficult."

# Rooney out indefinitely



AFP, London

Manchester United striker Wayne Rooney could be out of action for longer than the initial prognosis of three weeks, manager Sir Alex family, who own United, made

Ferguson said on Friday. Rooney, who signed a new five-year contract at Old Trafford last week after first shocking the club by saying he wanted to leave, is currently on holiday recovering from an

ankle injury. When asked at a press conference Friday if three weeks was still the prognosis for his return, Ferguson said:

"I think it may be longer." Rooney was injured in training last week following a challenge with team-mate

Paul Scholes. The 25-year-old has since been given permission to travel to Dubai to recuperate and celebrated his birthday

there with wife Coleen last weekend while United were winning 2-1 at Stoke. Ferguson has no plans to rush Rooney back and he believes a longer than

expected period of rest is the

best cure for the England

striker. "There is no recovery, it is just rest," Ferguson said. "Before he went away we did his remedial in terms of what we could do at the time. Thereafter, rest - we're quite happy with that."

Rooney appeared to be on his way out of Old Trafford last week when he criticised the club's lack of ambition.

He was eventually persuaded to stay after being handed a massive wage increase, while the Glazer personal assurances that there would be increased investment in new players.

Rooney's prolonged absence puts pressure on Bulgarian forward Dimitar Berbatov and young Mexican striker Javier Hernandez to lead United's attack until he

returns to fitness. "We are all pleased with Javier," admitted Ferguson. "Everyone's excited by him at the club. He's done really well.

"He's got the right desires and trains very well. He's very receptive to coaching and has a good pedigree. "He's a young boy who has

come from Mexico and a different culture. But he speaks the language which is important. "We are not surprised as we

identified a lot about him before we signed him. We did a lot of work on him. Therefore after seeing him in the preseason and in training, we thought he would do well."

Although Rooney has been out of form this season, scoring just once for United, he will still be sorely missed at a time when United forward Michael Owen also faces an extended spell on the side-



WAYNE ROONEY

# Ribery on the mend



AFP, Munich

Bayern Munich winger Franck Ribery said on Friday that he is close to making a return from injury, as coach Louis van Gaal expressed his regret at letting Miroslav Klose return too soon.

Ribery, who has been sidelined since September with ankle ligament damage, declared he would be fit for the game against Borussia Moenchengladbach on November 6.

"I think there's a big possibility that I'll be there against Gladbach, at least on the bench. But against Nuremberg (the following weekend) I want to play at all costs," Ribery told the

Munich daily tz. But the French international could face opposition from van Gaal, who said he should never have listened to Klose's insistence he stronger.

was fit to return. The Germany striker is set to spend more time on the sidelines after aggravating a thigh muscle injury training for Friday's game

against Freiburg. "Miro really wanted to be on the bench against Freiburg, he trained and it went badly because he aggravated his thigh injury and will be out for at least two weeks," said van

"Obviously we went too fast. I made a mistake. It's the first time that I've listened to a player. At 32, you'd think that a player would know better, but a player always wants to

Klose tore a muscle in his thigh in Germany's 3-0 win over Kazakhstan in a Euro 2012 qualifier earlier this month.

Bayern have also been hit by injuries to Mark van Bommel, Arjen Robben and Brazilian defender Breno.

Meanwhile, van Gaal admitted he could have trouble holding onto much sought-after German international midfielder Bastian Schweinsteiger.

"I'm dreading big clubs coming forward to make him enormous offers," said van Gaal. "We're aware that with each great match he plays the interest is becoming stronger and

"There are clubs who need a Schweinsteiger, he could play at Real Madrid." Schweinsteiger, 26, is under contract with

the Bavarian club until 2012. Club bosses are trying to get the 83-times

capped midfielder to extend his contract. "It's up to him, I'd like him to stay and I think it would be good for him to stay," added van Gaal.

their Euro 2012 qualifier three weeks ago was cancelled because of crowd trouble. The Serbian Football Federation (FSS) were ordered to play two home matches in an

**UEFA** awards

Italy 3-0 win

UEFA on Friday ordered

Serbia to play a home match

behind closed doors and

awarded Italy a 3-0 win after

AFP, Geneva

empty stadium, with one match suspended for two years. The Italian Football Federation (FIGC) were also sanctioned with one home match behind closed doors but the penalty was suspended for two years, European football's governing

body said in a statement. "The Control and Disciplinary Body has decided to award the match as a 3-0 forfeit win to Italy," they added.

"The Football Association of Serbia has been ordered to play its next two home matches behind closed doors. From this sanction, a one-match ban is deferred for a probationary period of two years."

The FSS was fined 120,000 euros while their Italian counterparts suffered a 100,000 euro fine.

The Group C game in Genoa on October 12 was delayed then abandoned by the referee after just six minutes due to Serbian fans throwing flares onto the pitch and at rival Italy supporters.

Sixteen people were hospitalised after Serbian fans then clashed with Italian police, while at least 17 Serbian supporters were arrested.

Serbian police also arrested 35 away fans when they returned from Italy.

The FSS claimed their Italian counterparts were responsible for the crowd disorder, saying they had informed them of away supporters who were planning to cause trouble.

Under UEFA's rules, the sanctions available had ranged up to a stadium closure or disqualification from Euro 2012 as well as exclusion from future competitions.

### Zidane set for C League role

AFP, Madrid

Former Real Madrid star Zinedine Zidane is set for a more hands-on role at the Spanish giants, especially during Champions League matches, the club's director general Jorge Valdano said on Thursday.

"He will accompany us always during Champions League matches, and in some league matches," Valdano told reporters when asked about what the former French international's new role at the club alongside coach Jose Mourinho will be.

"He will not sit on the bench and will help Mourinho in his relationship with the first team; not in technical work, but bringing his experience by being close to the three league matches and Cristiano Ronaldo's coach and the team."

#### Brutal battle awaits Chelsea With Rooney recovering Redknapp's side can end that AFP, London unfair criticism. from injury in Dubai, "We can't just go there and barren run. expect to pick up the three "Why not go there and try



Chelsea captain John Terry has warned his team-mates to expect a

Real Madrid coach Jose Mourinho (L) takes evasive action against a Cristiano Ronaldo shot during a training session at sport city yesterday.

brutal battle when the Premier League leaders travel to Blackburn on Saturday.

Blackburn were one of the

teams criticised by Fulham's Danny Murphy recently for deliberately going out to intimidate opponents with their tough-tackling style. But Terry has no com-

plaints about Blackburn's aggressive approach and the England defender is relishing the prospect of a physical encounter at Ewood Park. Carlo Ancelotti's reigning

champions are five points clear at the top of the table, but they have failed to score in their last two away league matches and Terry knows they want to choose competitions. will have to fight to end that run this weekend. "I think it (the criticism) is

very unfair, especially against the likes of Wolves and Blackburn," Terry said.

"We know going to Blackburn is going to be a tough game. That's part of football. I think they get a lot of

Football Club. We need to go there and be prepared to have a scrap." Meanwhile, Arsene Wenger insists Arsenal have a strong enough squad to challenge for

points because we're Chelsea

every major trophy this season. The Gunners, who host struggling London rivals West Ham on Saturday, moved into second place in the table after last weekend's 3-0 rout of Manchester City -- a result

Wenger believes was proof of

his team's hunger for success. Even the League Cup -normally treated with disdain by Wenger -- is a serious target this season as Arsenal look to end a five-year trophy drought and the French coach admitted: "I said to the players we will go for everything we can, as simple as that. We don't

"I believe we have a squad good enough to win trophies, that's why I think: 'OK, let's go as far as we can'."

Manchester United will once again look to young Mexican striker Javier Hernandez to fill in for Wayne Rooney in Saturday's clash with Tottenham.

Hernandez has taken the chance to display his predatory instincts as United try to

keep pace with Chelsea.

He scored twice in last Modric said. weekend's win at Stoke and "It's the best stage to play, then came off the bench to net the best stadium and it will be the last-minute winner that a great game for us." sunk Wolves in the League Cup. United's bitter rivals

Michael Owen has been Manchester City need an impressed by his United teamimmediate response to their mate and the former England defeat against Arsenal when striker said: "It's obviously they face Wolves at Molineux. early days for him but he's made a really good impression missed a chance to close the at the club. He's young, sharp gap on Chelsea against and a good finisher." Arsenal, but the City boss is

Spurs travel to Old Trafford

Saturday

Arsenal v West Ham, Blackburn v

Chelsea, Everton v Stoke, Fulham v

Wigan, Man Utd v Tottenham

(1630GMT), Wolves v Man City

Sunday

Aston Villa v Birmingham (1200GMT)

Newcastle v Sunderland (1330GMT),

Bolton v Liverpool (1600GMT)

Monday

looking for their first win there hangover from that result. since December 1989 and "There is no feeling that we Croatian midfielder Luka are dispirited by what hap-Modric is confident Harry opposite," he said.

pened on Sunday, it is just the "This game can be impor-

to win? I know Tottenham

haven't won at Old Trafford for

a long time, so why not now?"

Roberto Mancini's side

confident there will be no

tant because now we understand that we are a very strong team, that we play together and we have the right spirit in the team." On Sunday, Liverpool aim

to climb out of the relegation zone when they visit Bolton, while two fiercely contested local derbies see Aston Villa host Birmingham and Sunderland make the short trip to Newcastle.

Ronaldinho

## Sevilla's toughest test

Saturday

Valencia v Real Zaragoza (1600GMT),

Hercules v Real Madrid (1800GMT),

Barcelona v Sevilla (2000GMT)

Sunday

Monday

(2000GMT)

AFP, Madrid



Champions Barcelona have taken the plaudits over the past two seasons for their stylish football but Jose Mourinho's goal-plundering Real Madrid have bagged the limelight of late while Barca look a shadow of the side that has won back-to-back league

Barcelona lie a point behind Real Madrid in Mourinho's Real. third place, but Pep Guardiola's side have a tough test on Saturday at home to Kings Cup holders Sevilla while Real are at promoted Hercules.

"The fact that we have won (the previous) two titles doesn't mean we don't have any pressure to deal with," said Barca coach Guardiola. "It is a huge challenge for us this season." Barca's Spanish World Cup

with 44 goals, but the World Cup

sooner or later.'

stars have looked jaded and have been struggling for goals (1500GMT unless otherwise stated): with Argentine Lionel Messi the Sporting Gijon v Villarreal, Deportivo only striker on top of his game La Coruna v Espanyol, Racing with four goals in his last two Santander v Osasuna, Malaga v Real matches in all competitions. Sociedad, Atletico Madrid v Almeria David Villa may be Spain's (1700GMT), Athletic Bilbao v Getafe joint all-time leading goalscorer

winner has just two league goals to his name since joining Barcelona from Valencia. "We try not to judge him (Villa) because he has or hasn't scored a goal," said Guardiola. "He works hard and he creates for us from inside the pitch. The goals will go in

Sevilla are sixth, six points behind pacesetters Real, but must do without goalkeeper Andres Palop due to a foot injury.

However, Sevilla coach Gregorio Manzano can take heart from the return to form of Brazilian international forward Luis Fabiano, who scored his first goals of the season in last weekend's 4-3 win over Athletic Bilbao.

Real Madrid have scored 16 goals in their last

quadruple in the 6-1 win over Racing Santander took him onto nine league goals.

The Portuguese has been accused of being too individual in the past and has looked much more of a team player since Mourinho's arrival. "I wouldn't have scored the four goals with-

out the help of my team-mates and I am a team

player," explained Ronaldo. Hercules have already caused the biggest sensation of the season by defeating Barcelona 2-0 at Camp Nou and hope for another giant scalp by becoming the first team to beat

Mourinho had his name chanted by the fans during the Racing win and even a 0-0 Kings Cup first leg draw at Real Murcia on Tuesday - when a second string Real team took to the field

Sunday.

cannot dampen optimism in the capital.

Villarreal, level on points with Barcelona, have won six of their last seven games and aim to continue that unbeaten run at Sporting Gijon on

Coach Juan Carlos Garrido was a surprise choice to succeed Ernesto Valverde in February but has got the best out of Spanish internationals Marcos Senna and Santi Cazorla while strike duo Giuseppe Rossi and Nilmar have five goals apiece.

After going their first six games unbeaten to top the table Valencia have lost momen-

tum, losing to Barcelona and Real Mallorca. Valencia, four points behind Real, host bottom side Real Zaragoza on Saturday looking to get back to winning ways ahead of Tuesday's vital

Champions League home match against Rangers. Atletico Madrid, eighth, host Almeria on Sunday still dwelling on last weekend's 2-0 loss against Villarreal when they had three penalty claims ignored.

"I have never seen or played in a match

where the referee failed to award three penal-

ties," said Czech defender Tomas Ujfalusi. "It

wouldn't happen to Barcelona or Real Madrid."

Forwards: Robinho, Alexandre Pato (both AC

### recalled by Brazil

AFP, Rio De Janeiro

Friday named Ronaldinho in his squad for the prestigious friendly game against archrivals Argentina in Doha, Qatar on November 17. Ronaldinho, who was not

Brazil coach Mano Menezes on

selected for the World Cup by Menezes's predecessor Dunga, is joined in the squad by AC Milan team-mates Thiago Silva, Robinho and Alexandre Pato.

The 30-year-old Ronaldinho, a two-time FIFA World Player of the Year, has not represented his country since he played in a World Cup qualifier against Peru in April

### SQUAD Goalkeepers:

Victor (Gremio), Jefferson (Botafogo), Neto (Atletico Paranaense) Defenders: Daniel Alves (Barcelona/ESP), Rafael

(Manchester United/ENG), Adriano (Barcelona/ESP), Andre Santos (Fenerbahce/TUR), Thiago Silva (AC Milan/ITA), David Luiz (Benfica/POR), Alex (Chelsea/ENG), Rever (Atletico

### Midfielders: Lucas (Liverpool/ENG), Ramires

(Chelsea/ENG), Sandro (Tottenham Hotspur/ENG), Jucilei (Corinthians), Douglas (Gremio), Philippe Coutinho (Inter Milan/ITA), Ronaldinho (AC Milan/ITA), Elias (Corinthians)