



Valencia players (L-R) David Navarro, Roberto Soldado, Juan Mata and Pablo Hernandez do warm-up exercises during a training session at the Paterna Stadium yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

## Rossi to the rescue

AFP, Madrid



Villarreal needed a stoppage time penalty from Giuseppe Rossi to salvage a 1-1 draw at Sporting Gijon on Sunday as they lost ground on Spanish league leaders Real Madrid.

Italian international forward Rossi, 23, celebrated his 100th league appearance for Villarreal by converting a spot-kick in the dying seconds for his sixth league goal of the season to cancel out Diego Castro's 68th minute opener.

Third-placed Villarreal extend their unbeaten league run to eight games but fall three points behind pacesetters Real Madrid and two behind Barcelona in second.

"We deserved to win when you look at the game as a whole," said Villarreal coach Juan Carlos Garrido. "Sporting have a good coach and good players and it is never easy to win here."

In other matches, Atletico Madrid drew 1-1 at home to strugglers Almeria on Sunday and lie down in sixth ahead of next weekend's derby against leaders Real Madrid at the Santiago Bernabeu.

Argentine Sergio "Kun" Aguero put Atletico in front on 33 minutes but compatriot Pablo

Piatti levelled for the visitors on the stroke of half-time.

Atletico had no response and the draw means the Europa League holders have taken four points from the last 12 in the league and lie nine points behind city rivals Real.

Colombian defender Luis Perea sustained an injury against Almeria that is set to rule him out of the Real derby and coach Quique Sanchez Flores cursed his side's injury woes this season.

### RESULTS

Sporting Gijon 1 (Castro 68)	Villarreal 1 (Rossi 90-pen)
Deportivo La Coruna 3 (Adrian 28, Lopo 76, Colotto 87)	Espanyol 0
Racing Santander 4 (Kennedy 26, Rosenberg 35, 61, Torrejon 85)	Osasuna 1 (Nekounam 58-pen)
Malaga 1 (Juanmi 77)	Real Sociedad 2 (Griezmann 43, Lorente 55)
Atletico Madrid 1 (Aguero 33)	Almeria 1 (Piatti 45)
Athletic Bilbao 3 (Iraola 6, Dominguez 12-pen,	

and centre-backs Alberto Lopo and Diego Colotto helped Depor to their maiden win and moved them off the bottom of the table at the expense of winless Real Zaragoza.

Elsewhere Athletic Bilbao defeated Getafe 3-0 at San Mames in Sunday's late match largely thanks to early goals from Andoni Iraola and Mikel San Jose in the first 12 minutes. Bilbao go above Getafe into eighth with their fourth win of the season.

## Lazio open healthy lead

AFP, Rome



Lazio earned a hard-fought 1-0 win at Palermo on Sunday to open up a four-point lead at the top of Serie A ahead of next weekend's Rome derby.

Brazilian centre-back Andre Dias scored the only goal of the game with a somewhat fortunate volley to condemn the lacklustre Sicilians to defeat and dent their own Champions League aspirations.

Lazio lead champions Inter Milan by four points with AC Milan a single point further back in third.

Inter won 1-0 at Genoa on Friday night while Milan were downed 2-1 at home by fourth-placed Juventus on Saturday.

After this latest victory, Lazio's seventh in nine games this season, it would be hard to argue that they are not genuine title contenders.

But coach Edy Reja still insisted their primary aim would be to avoid relegation.

"We have 22 points, we're getting great results and we have character and fight and we know how to suffer, like we did today," he said.

"We'll keep going and lets say we still need another 18 points for that famous 40 (point safety mark).

It was also the perfect preparation for next weekend's derby against Roma, who beat Lecce 2-0 on Saturday but had captain Francesco Totti dismissed, meaning he will miss the Lazio game.

Although Palermo played some pretty football, they lacked cutting instinct in the first half.

A mistake by Giuseppe Biava handed Jospil Ilicic the ball just outside the area, he fed Pastore but the Argentine's finish was weak.

The hosts created several other shooting opportunities from distance but never troubled Fernando Muslera, with Ilicic, Mauricio Pinilla and Pastore again trying their luck with speculative efforts.

The only chance of real note in the first period fell to Lazio, who duly took the lead.

Christian Ledesma swung a free-kick over from the right and Dias lost his marker Cesare Bovo before shining a volley into the top corner to give Salvatore Sirigu no chance in the Palermo goal.

There was more of the same slow-paced action in the second half until the 65th minute when finally the hosts seriously threatened.

Pinilla hit an acrobatic volley goalwards that Muslera saved one-handed before Stefan Radu charged down Pastore's follow-up.

But still they failed to put sustained pressure on their opponents and Lazio's Mauro Zarate knocked a free-kick over the wall but Sirigu was well placed to save.

Biava then received his marching orders for a second booking and Lazio were forced to try and hold on.

Eight minutes from time substitute Massimo Maccaroni met a Pastore cross with his head but couldn't direct the ball either side of Muslera.

Palermo's attacks started to

get frantic in the final five minutes with Muslera tipping a powerful Pinilla header onto the bar and then parrying a fierce near post shot from Mattia Cassani.

In later games, Napoli and Sampdoria both earned crucial 1-0 away victories -- at newly promoted sides Brescia and Cesena respectively -- to keep their Champions League hopes alive.

Napoli are fifth, one place ahead of Samp, who played without Antonio Cassano, suspended by the club for arguing with and insulting his president in midweek.

Parma climbed off the bottom following a 0-0 home draw with Chievo while Udinese moved up to eighth following a fifth win in a row, 2-0 at Bari.

The northerners were adrift at the bottom until starting their winning run, which includes four league games and an Italian Cup match.

## Olic out for six months

REUTERS, Berlin

Bayern Munich striker Ivica Olic is set to undergo knee surgery that will sideline the Croatian international for six months, the club said on Monday.

"Naturally I am very disappointed," said Olic, who last season scored 19 goals in 41 games in all competitions.

"I expected to continue the good run of last season and had high hopes this season," he said in a brief statement.

Bayern said Olic would fly to the United States where he would most likely have surgery on his left knee this week.

Olic suffered meniscus damage playing for Croatia in August.

## Cassano begs forgiveness

AFP, Rome

Bad boy Antonio Cassano has begged his employers Sampdoria to let him stay at the club following a spat with club president Riccardo Garrone.

Sampdoria have asked Italian footballing authorities for permission to terminate the Italy striker's contract after he apparently argued with and insulted Garrone on Tuesday.

But now Cassano, who has often fallen out with coaches, team-mates and footballing authorities in the past, has begged for a second chance.

"I'm sorry for what happened and I've already apologised to Mr Garrone, who I'm very fond of, in the presence of my team-mates," Cassano told Ansa.

"I've read that there's a lot of speculation surrounding the transfer market but I repeat, as long as there is this possibility, I want to stay at Sampdoria."

"No-one realises the delicate time I'm going through with my wife."

"If I want to stay close to her as much as is possible, given my many sporting obligations, then there's a reason, but I don't want to make my private life public."

Italian press reports claim the 28-year-old Cassano refused to join Garrone at an awards event on Tuesday night, after which Sampdoria dropped him from the match day squad for Sunday's visit to Cesena.

"Referring to the episode on Tuesday 26th (October) at the Gloriano Mugnaini training centre during which the footballer Antonio Cassano behaved in a seriously offensive and disrespectful way in his meeting with the president Riccardo Garrone, Sampdoria have asked the relevant organisations to begin disciplinary proceedings," said a club statement on Friday.



### TEN Cricket

Pakistan v South Africa  
Third ODI  
Live from 5:00pm

### TEN Sports

UEFA Champions League  
Rubin Kazan v Panathinaikos  
Live from 11:30pm  
Copenhagen v Barcelona  
Live from 1:45am (Wednesday)

### TEN Action

UEFA Champions League  
Tottenham v Inter Milan  
Live from 1:45am (Wednesday)

### ESPN

Sportscentre India  
Sports News  
Live at 8:30pm



### Nat'l Cricket League

Rajshahi v Sylhet at Bogra  
Khulna v Chittagong at Rajshahi  
Dhaka v Barisal at Mirpur

# Inter, Barca eye last 16

AFP, Paris



Holders Inter Milan, 2009 champions Barcelona and last season's semifinalists Lyon can all reach the last 16 of this season's Champions League with victories in the group stage on Tuesday.

Inter, who ended a 45-year wait for Europe's top club prize in May, face perhaps the most difficult assignment of the three in the shape of a trip to competition debutants Tottenham in Group A.

The sides shared seven goals when they met in Milan 12 days ago, but despite Inter having led 4-0 after 35 minutes, Spurs emerged from the game with real credit thanks to a stunning second-half hat-trick by Gareth Bale.

Bale's performance at the San Siro prompted his coach Harry Redknapp to label the 21-year-old Welshman one of the world's top left-sided players, and his late cameo gave Inter boss Rafael Benitez plenty of food for thought.

"The return match in London will be tough," said Benitez, who spent six years at the helm of Spurs' Premier

League rivals Liverpool.

"Tottenham are a quality team and despite their bad start they showed what they are capable of in the second half."

Spurs were beaten 2-0 at Manchester United on Saturday, but of more concern to Redknapp will have been a hamstring injury to Rafael van der Vaart that forced the in-form Dutch playmaker to go off in the second half.

Inter have had an extra day to prepare for the match following their 1-0 win at Genoa on Friday, but they could be without goalkeeper Julio Cesar and holding midfielder Esteban Cambiasso after both players sustained thigh strains.

Werder Bremen and FC Twente meet in the other group game in Germany, with both sides conscious that victory would take them into second place if Inter prevail at White Hart Lane.

Barcelona visit FC Copenhagen in Group D, fresh from a stunning 5-0 demolition of Sevilla in the league on Saturday inspired by the return from injury of midfielder Inchi Xavi.

"We're not better than we were before because we've won 5-0, but we are on the right track," tempered Barca midfielder Andres Iniesta,

after a game in which both Lionel Messi and David Villa scored twice.

"Tuesday's game is important for our future and we have to play very well."

Lyon brought an end to a turbulent week by beating Sochaux 2-1 at the weekend, under president Jean-Michel Aulas ended weeks of speculation by confirming that Claude Puel will stay on as coach until the end of the season.

The 2002-2008 French champions, eliminated by Bayern Munich in the semi-finals last season, have won all three of their group phase games to date but Tuesday's trip to Benfica will be their most taxing assignment yet.

Pablo Aimar scored a stunning solo goal as the Portuguese champions beat Pacos de Ferreira 2-0 in the league on Friday and Aulas

says he would be happy to return from the Stadium of Light with a point.

"A draw in Lisbon and we could start thinking about finishing top of the group," he said. "We definitely can't afford to lose."

In the group's other game, Hapoel Tel-Aviv must win at home to second-placed Schalke to avoid elimination.

Group C leader Manchester United travel to Turkey to tackle bottom side Bursaspor, having edged the Turkish champions 1-0 in their last outing.

Sir Alex Ferguson's team are yet to concede a goal in this season's competition and victory would give them 10 points from four games, taking them to the brink of the knockout phase.

"We are on a run that suggests we have recovered our old tenacity and composure," said Ferguson after the defeat of Spurs at Old Trafford.

"We have come through well in three different competitions, so it's been a morale-boosting run that I hope will be the launch pad for demonstrating that there is nothing materially wrong."

Valencia, meanwhile, can leapfrog Rangers into second place if they beat the Scottish champions at the Mestalla.

### FIXTURES

#### Tuesday

(1945GMT unless otherwise stated):  
Tottenham Hotspur (ENG) v Inter Milan (ITA), Werder Bremen (GER) v FC Twente (NED), Hapoel Tel-Aviv (ISR) v Schalke 04 (GER), Benfica (POR) v Lyon (FRA), Valencia (ESP) v Rangers (SCO), Bursaspor (TUR) v Manchester United (ENG), Rubin Kazan (RUS) v Panathinaikos (GRE) (1730GMT), FC

## Last-gasp Torres

AFP, London



Liverpool climbed out of the Premier League relegation zone after a moment of magic from Fernando Torres helped set up a hard-fought 1-0 victory over Bolton.

The English giants looked to be heading for another desperately disappointing day at the Reebok Stadium as they struggled to break down a determined Wanderers outfit.

But a sublime backheel from Torres -- who had missed several chances during another out-of-sorts performance -- created an 86th-minute winner for Maxi Rodriguez that sealed Liverpool's first away win since April.

The result also sealed back-to-back victories for Roy Hodgson's men following their win over Blackburn last week.

After languishing in the relegation zone for weeks following their worst start to a season in more than 50 years, Liverpool are now 12th with 12 points, still five points off the

coveted top four.

"It's just nice to be out of that bottom three, we've been in there a while so it's been difficult to look at the table,"

relieved Liverpool defender Jamie Carragher told Sky Sports afterwards.

"We know we haven't had a great start, but there's still a long way to go and with the league so tight, with a few wins we can certainly climb to the top half of the table."

In Sunday's early games, Newcastle romped to a 5-1 victory over Sunderland in the Tyne and Wear derby while Aston Villa and Birmingham played out a goalless stalemate at Villa Park.

A hat-trick from captain Kevin Nolan and two goals from striker Shola Ameobi completed an emphatic derby win for Newcastle in a result which eased pressure on manager Chris Hughton.

A miserable afternoon for Sunderland also saw former Newcastle defender Titus Bramble given a straight red card early in the second half for a trip on Andy Carroll, much to the delight of the Toon Army.

The victory saw Newcastle

move up to seventh place with 14 points from 10 games and should quell intense speculation over Hughton's future.

Nolan struck in the 26th, 34th and 75th minutes while Ameobi slotted goals in each half to leave Steve Bruce's Sunderland shellshocked.

Nolan's first came from a Newcastle corner swung into the box. Ameobi beat Sunderland's defence to knock down, and Nolan, with his back to goal and sitting almost on the turf, hooked in a

### RESULTS

Aston Villa 0	Birmingham 0
Newcastle 5 (Nolan 26, 34, 75, Ameobi 45-pen, 70)	Sunderland 1 (Bent 90)
Bolton 0	Liverpool 1

superbly improvised overhead kick.

Eight minutes later Newcastle doubled their lead through Nolan, the Magpies' skipper suddenly finding himself unmarked and in acres of space after a miscued Joey Barton volley fell kindly in the Sunderland area.

Ameobi buried a penalty on

the stroke of half-time after Nedum Onuoha had brought down Jonas Gutierrez in the box.

Bramble's dismissal on 53 minutes left Sunderland with no way back and with the Black Cats in disarray, Newcastle added to their agony with two more goals.

Ameobi made it 4-0 on 70 minutes, volleying in acrobatically after Carroll's diving header crashed off the bar.

All that was left was for Nolan to complete his hat-trick, which he duly did 15 minutes from time, connecting with an Ameobi header from point-blank range.

Bent turned in a goal for Sunderland on the stroke of 90 minutes but it barely qualified as a consolation effort.

In Sunday's other derby game, Birmingham were left fuming after having strong appeals for a penalty turned down when Villa captain Nigel Reo-Coker appeared to handle in the area.

But neither side could engineer a breakthrough as the match ended in stalemate, leaving Villa and Birmingham stuck in 13th and 14th spot respectively after playing 10 games each.



Borussia Dortmund starlet Mario Goetze (2nd from L) celebrates his goal with teammates during their top of the table Bundesliga clash against Mainz 05 in Mainz on Sunday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

## Dortmund go top

AFP, Berlin



### Lucas Barrios

Dark-horses Mainz had a penalty saved but were ultimately outgunned by Jurgen Klopp's young team in a tense, sell-out affair at Mainz's Bruchwegstadion.

"We implemented our tactics well against strong opponents and it was a

good win for us," beamed Klopp.

"However, we should have taken the lead earlier and the penalty save was a key moment in the game. After that, we had luck on our side."

With only a quarter of the season gone, Klopp said thoughts of Dortmund winning a seventh Bundesliga title have not even entered his head.

"About the Bundesliga title, we are having exactly zero thoughts," he said.

The win gives Dortmund a one-point lead over Mainz, who drop to second, after ten league matches.

With the guests enjoying a few chances in the build up, Dortmund opened the scoring on 26 minutes when 18-year-old Goetze pounced on Mainz defender Niko Bungert's mistake and fired home.

Mainz battled to force the equaliser and were awarded a penalty by referee Michael Weiner on 47 minutes when Serbia defender Neven Subotic fouled Hungarian Adam Szalai in the penalty area.

But Mainz midfielder Eugen Polanski had his shot saved by Dortmund captain Roman Weidenfeller and Borussia cleared the danger.

Paraguay striker Barrios scored his fifth league goal of the season when he fired home from a tight angle on 67 minutes and although Mainz fought hard to get back in the game, they struggled against Dortmund's strong defence.

Later Hoffenheim went third in the Bundesliga as they hammered Hanover 96 4-0 with Iceland midfielder Gylfi Sigurdsson scoring twice.

### SPORTS POLL

#### TODAY'S QUESTION

Do you think the Tigers should have played in the ongoing NCL?

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