



Liverpool striker Fernando Torres (R) scores the opening goal against Chelsea during their Premier League encounter at Anfield on Sunday.

Torres sinks Chelsea

AFP, London



Fernando Torres returned to form in stunning fashion as his double-strike inspired Liverpool's 2-0 win over champions Chelsea, while Andy Carroll gave Newcastle a surprise 1-0 victory at Arsenal on Sunday.

Torres had scored just twice this season before Chelsea's visit to Anfield, fuelling talk that his lacklustre displays were a sign he is keen to leave the Reds.

But the Spain striker was back to his predatory best as he netted with a cool finish from Dirk Kuyt's pass in the 11th minute and then curled a brilliant second past Petr Cech from the edge of the penalty area just before half-time.

Those two lethal finishes condemned Chelsea to their second league defeat this season and left Carlo Ancelotti's league leaders just two points ahead of second placed Manchester United.

Liverpool's victory extended their recent revival to four successive wins in all competitions and lifted Roy Hodgson's team into mid-table.

"He is a vital player for us and would be any club. You can't have success if you don't have front players who do a good job for you," Hodgson said of Torres.

Ancelotti added: "Liverpool played very well and at 2-0 down it was difficult to come back in the game. Torres played very well and scored two fantastic goals.

"We are still top of the table. It's impossible to win every game, sometimes you lose but the team showed the same mentality and strength. We don't

have to react - we have to win the next game."

At the Emirates Stadium, Newcastle's Carroll finally made headlines for the right reasons as the striker gave the Magpies a shock victory over Arsenal.

Carroll, who along with team-mate Kevin Nolan had been the subject of lurid newspaper allegations about his private life hours before kick-off, netted the winner when he rose superbly to beat Arsenal keeper Lukasz Fabianski to Joey Barton's free-kick moments before the interval.

That was enough to ensure Newcastle claimed a third successive league victory, while Arsenal's title challenge was dented by their third defeat of the season.

The Gunners failed to offer enough of an attacking threat despite dominating long periods of possession and a miserable afternoon was summed up by the dismissal of Laurent Koscielny in added time.

Mario Balotelli eased the pressure on Manchester City manager Roberto Mancini by scoring twice before being sent off in the 2-0 win against West Bromwich Albion.

Balotelli netted twice in six minutes in the first half at The Hawthorns before he made a rapid transformation from hero to villain with a straight red card in the second half for a reckless kick at Youssouf Mulumbu, who was also later sent off.

City had lost their last three matches but were more menacing thanks to the return of Carlos Tevez and his cross allowed Balotelli to bundle the ball over the line in the 20th minute.

Balotelli ruthlessly capitalised on suspect Albion defending from Gabriel Tamas six minutes later to beat Scott Carson with a low drive.

RESULTS

Arsenal 0 Newcastle 1 (Carroll 45)
Liverpool 2 (Torres 11, 44) Chelsea 0
West Brom 0 Manchester City 2
(Balotelli 20, 26)

Real looking ominous

AFP, Madrid



Real Madrid maintained their ominous form Sunday with a 2-0 derby victory over Atletico which keeps them at the top of the Primera Liga.

Coach Jose Mourinho arrived at the Bernabeu with the reputation as a defensive tactician but in their last five games they have now scored 21 goals.

Atletico haven't won away to Real for eleven years and they were immediately under pressure from the surging runs of Cristiano Ronaldo and Mesut Ozil.

But it was a defender, Ricardo Carvalho, who gave them the lead though after a foray forward, finishing coolly in front of goal.

Higuain missed an excellent chance with just keeper David De Gea to beat but Real did extend their lead courtesy of some poor defending. An Ozil freekick was crossed in, missing everyone, and creeping into the corner.

With a two-goal cushion in the opening quarter, Real began to play more deeply and while Atletico had more possession they created few chances.

The game was becoming more and more scrappy. Atletico went closest when a Diego Forlan shot from the edge of the area came back off the upright while Ozil could have given Real a third when put through on goal but he finished tamely.

Barcelona played some of their best attacking football of the season as they beat Getafe 3-1 to keep the pressure on Real.

David Villa should have put Barca in the lead after just four minutes but Messi, at the

heart of the majority of their best moves, put them on their way mid-way through the first half, slotting home from a Villa pass.

Villa was flagged off-side in front of goal after a delightful move involving Messi and Andres Iniesta but he did get on the score sheet minutes later.

Getafe attacked more in the second-half but Cata Diaz was caught in possession by Messi who set-up Pedro Rodriguez for Barca's third. Manu Del Moral pulled a goal back from the penalty spot after Gerard Pique handled in the penalty area and was given his marching orders for a second bookable offence.

Both team's missed further openings while Derek Boateng was also dismissed after receiving a second yellow card.

"Generally the team played well although I think we could

have done better in the first half to finish off the game," said Barcelona coach Pep Guardiola.

"Getafe showed their qualities and they have a lot. The sending off (of Pique) changed the game but it is never easy to come here and it was the same last year, we had a lot of problems in the first half."

High-flying Villarreal came from behind to beat Athletic Bilbao 4-1 and maintain their 100 per cent home record.

Villarreal had not even conceded a goal at El Madrigal but went behind after just six minutes when Fernando Llorente headed home a cross from Jon Aurttenetxe.

The home side took the game to Athletic and Giuseppe Rossi had several chances to bring Villarreal level before eventually Nilmar scored with keeper Gorka Iraizoz coming and failing to reach a cross.

Santi Cazorla put

RESULTS

Real Madrid 2 (Carvalho 13, Ozil 19) Atletico Madrid 0
Villarreal 4 (Nilmar 39, Cazorla 45, Rossi 84, Montero 90+1) Athletic Bilbao 1 (Llorente 6)
Real Zaragoza 3 (Lafita 56, Bertolo 85, Gabi 90+5-pen) Real Mallorca 2 (Webo 19, Pereira 61)
Levante 1 (Juanlu G. 72) Deportivo La Coruna 2 (Riki 10, Aythami 52)
Osasuna 3 (Monreal 40, Lolo 56, Vadoz 90+2) Hercules 0
Almeria 1 (Garcia Perez Roldan 15) Sporting Gijon 1 (Nacho Novo 73)
Getafe 1 (Manu 70-pen) Barcelona 3

Villarreal ahead before the break and with Athletic reduced to ten following the expulsion of Aurttenetxe, Rossi finally found the back of the net and Jefferson Montero completed the scoring. Bottom side Zaragoza picked up their first win of the season in a 3-2 victory over Mallorca.

Angel Lafita equalised Pierre Webo's opener for Mallorca and while Michael Pereira restored the visitor's advantage, Nicolas Bertolo and Gabi Fernandez, from the penalty spot, earned Zaragoza the three points.

Deportivo la Coruna came out on top 2-1 in a relegation battle with Levante. The Galician's followed up their victory against Espanyol last weekend with goals from Ivan Riki and Aythami Artilles while Juanlu Gomez got Levante's consolation.

Osasuna were comfortable 3-0 winners over Hercules with goals from Nacho Monreal, Manuel Lolo and Kristian Vadoz while Sporting Gijon drew 1-1 with Almeria. Miguel Corona put the Andalusian side in front but Nacho Novo brought Sporting level.

Sepp pledges fair play

AFP, Seoul

World football chief Sepp Blatter praised South Korea Monday for its bid preparations for the 2022 World Cup but pledged a fair vote by decision-makers.

Blatter's comment followed talks with South Korean President Lee Myung-Bak, a Korean-language pool report said.

Lee called for help from football's governing body FIFA, saying staging the World Cup in South Korea would promote peace on the divided peninsula.

South Korea is vying with the United States, Qatar, Japan and Australia to host the 2022 tournament, with a decision to be made in Zurich on December 2.

Blatter said South Korea's preparations were proceeding well but said he would do his best for a fair FIFA vote, the report said.

FIFA last month launched an investigation into allegations of corruption in the bidding process as well as illicit collusion between some of the bidders.

Blatter has said that the verdict of an investigation into the 2018 and 2022 World Cup bidding race would be given on November 17.

England, Russia and joint bids by Spain-Portugal and Netherlands-Belgium are in the running to host the 2018 World Cup.

Samuel could miss season

AFP, Rome

Inter Milan centre-back Walter Samuel could miss the rest of the season after he was diagnosed with a torn cruciate knee ligament on Sunday.

The 32-year-old Argentinian international was stretchered off during Saturday's 1-1 draw with Brescia at the San Siro after hyper-extending his knee in the second half.

Inter said Sunday that Samuel will have to undergo an operation in the coming days to repair the damage.

Knee ligament injuries usually leave a player on the sidelines for around four to six months, meaning Samuel may not be fit again until May.

Magpies duo deny drugs claims

AFP, London

Newcastle duo Kevin Nolan and Andy Carroll have denied any knowledge of drugs being brought into the house they have been sharing following tabloid allegations on Sunday.

The News of the World claimed that cocaine was found on a table in Nolan's house after a night out, though the newspaper stressed there was no evidence either player had taken the drug.

A court ordered Carroll to stay at Nolan's family home until January after being charged with assaulting a former girlfriend. Carroll's lawyer has said the player will deny the offence and claim self-defence.

The Magpies striker later made headlines for the right reasons when he gave Newcastle a shock 1-0 victory over Arsenal at the Emirates Stadium on Sunday.



Barcelona forward David Villa celebrates his goal against Getafe during their Primera Liga clash at the Alfonso Perez Coliseum on Sunday.

Derby honours Roma's

AFP, Rome



Roma reignited their Serie A title hopes with a pair of penalties to stun leaders Lazio 2-0 in the Rome derby at the Stadio Olimpico on Sunday.

Marco Borriello and Mirko Vucinic both netted from the spot to give Claudio Ranieri's men the honours.

AC Milan went second and closed the gap to Lazio at the top to two points as they won 3-2 at rock bottom Bari.

Roma are now seven points behind Lazio but perhaps more importantly just four behind champions Inter Milan in third.

Lazio coach Edy Reja complained that the referee had not been fair on his team.

"My players are saying, that's enough, you can't play against 12," he said.

"The game was decided by certain episodes. In the previous days Roma were complaining that they never got any decisions, well they can't do that now.

"We were denied a penalty at 1-0, (John Arne) Riise fouled (Stefano) Mauri.

"For the penalty for 2-0 (Julio) Batista had already

fouled (Guglielmo) Stendardo, which should have been given, and then Simplicio handled (in the area) near the end."

Roma coach Claudio Ranieri saw things differently. "I don't understand what they're complaining about, in the first half we were denied a valid goal," he said.

"If Lazio lost because of the referee then that will only please Roma fans even more, now they will be lapping it up like the rich."

The first half in Rome was a tight affair with few chances although Lazio captain Tommaso Rocchi was just inches away from converting Mauri's inviting centre.

Lazio opened up Roma again on 21 minutes but Brazilian playmaker Hernanes leant back as he connected with Stefan Radu's pull-back and smashed it high over the bar.

Simone Perrotta squeezed a shot inches wide for Roma before the visitors had the ball in the net on 43 minutes.

Riise released Borriello down the left and he crossed for Leandro Greco to slot home from close range but Borriello was hit with a narrow and debatable offside decision.

Into first half injury time

Borriello used his strength to bring down a ball on his chest but from eight yards couldn't hook his shot on target.

And yet just after the restart Roma were deservedly in front.

Simplicio's goal-bound shot hit Stephan Lichsteiner on the arm and although he could do little to get out of the way, the referee had no choice but to award the penalty.

Borriello's effort was weak but it somehow managed to squeeze under Fernando Muslera's body and over the line on 52 minutes.

Hernanes should have done better when Christian Brocchi's ball over the top sent him in one-on-one with Julio Sergio but his shot hit the goalkeeper's leg.

Milan were off to a good start in the south as Massimo Ambrosini and Mathieu Flamini put them in charge in the first half.

And Pato's goal after the break sandwiched by Vitally Kutuzov and Paulo Barreto efforts proved the winner.

Injury-hit Juventus remain fourth after they came back from a goal down to beat 10-man Cesena 3-1.

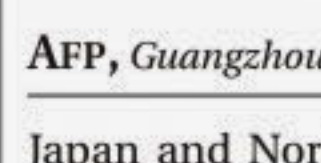
In the day's late game Palermo kept pace with the European challengers as Maurizio Pinilla's goal defeated Genoa 1-0.

RESULTS

Florentina 1 (Cerci 81) Chievo 0
Bari 2 (Kutuzov 65, Barreto 90) AC Milan 3 (Ambrosini 4, Flamini 31, Pato 72)
Juventus 3 (Del Piero 31-pen, Quagliarella 43, Iaquineta 88)
Cesena 1 (Jimenez 11)
Lazio 0 Roma 2 (Borriello 52-pen, Vucinic 87-pen)
Napoli 2 (Cavani 19, 85) Parma 0
Sampdoria 0 Catania 0
Udinese 1 (Floro Flores 44) Cagliari 1 (Conti 12)

China, Korea crash

AFP, Guangzhou



Japan and North Korea put China and South Korea to the sword at the Asian Games on Monday, inflicting demoralising defeats as the football tournament kicked into gear.

The Japanese humbled their bitter rivals China 3-0 while 10-man North Korea outlasted neighbours South Korea 1-0 to secure three precious points.

Hosts China are the perennial under-achievers of regional football and they were outplayed before a large crowd at the Tianhe Stadium, although many left early.

The writing was on the wall when Ryohei Yamazaki bundled the ball over the line after 10 minutes, with China immediately put on the back foot.

They held on till half-time before Kensuke Nagai picked up a loose ball in the penalty area and buried it in the net on 58 minutes.

China were stunned and Daisuke Suzuki put the game beyond their reach six minutes later to seal an impressive win for Japan.

The defeat leaves China with a big job ahead to qualify for Group A after Malaysia earlier

beat Kyrgyzstan 2-1.

The game kicked-off with Japanese and Chinese spectators separated amid a simmering diplomatic row over Japan's arrest of a Chinese trawler captain and a history of bitter rivalry between fans.

But the match passed off peacefully with only a smattering of Japanese in attendance.

North Korea also scored an impressive win at a mostly empty Yuexiu Stadium.

Ri Kwang-Chon got the decisive goal, heading home nine minutes before half-time, with Hong Myung-Bo's men unable to find a reply despite playing against 10 men for the final 25 minutes.

It was a disappointing start for South Korea, who played without striker Park Chu Young, despite him being released by his French team Monaco at the weekend.

The Palestinian territories and Jordan are also in their group and they played out a 0-0 draw.

Only the top two and four of the best third-placed teams from the six groups advance to the round of 16.

Malaysia, meanwhile, got their Games off to the best possible start with a hard-fought 2-1 win against Kyrgyzstan, while Vietnam upset Bahrain 3-1.

Elsewhere, Iran beat Turkmenistan 4-1.

RESULTS

Malaysia 2 (Tahala 27, Suppiah 60)
Kyrgyzstan 1 (Sydykov 37)
China 0 Japan 3 (Yamazaki 10, Nagai 58, Suzuki 64)
Vietnam 3 (Dinh 34, Nguyen Trong Hoang 72, Nguyen Anh Duc 89) Bahrain 1 (Hashem 90+3)
Iran 4 (Seyed 26, 62, Ansari 85, Daghghelagh 90+4) Turkmenistan 1 (Hangeldiyev 50)
North Korea 1 (Ri Kwang-Chon 36)
South Korea 0

PSG climb to third

AFP, Paris



Paris Saint-Germain climbed to third in the French first division and prevented champions

Marseille from going top with a 2-1 win over their arch-rivals at the Parc des Princes on Saturday.

Top scorer Nene was the inspiration for the hosts, setting up first-half goals for latterly goal-shy strikers Mevlut Erding and Guillaume Hoarau, as PSG recorded their first home league win over Marseille since November 2004.

Lucho Gonzalez replied for Didier Deschamps's side, who never recovered from a sluggish start that was in complete contrast to the record 7-0 mauling they inflicted on MSK Zilina in the Champions League in mid-week.

PSG are now third, two points behind leaders Brest and a point shy of Rennes, with Marseille a point further back in fourth but with a game in hand.

A ban on away supporters meant the noise inside the stadium was all made in support of the home team, who began the game full of intent.

Marseille goalkeeper Steve Mandanda was called into action within three minutes, plunging to his left to push away Ludovic Giuly's low drive after Charles Kabore had given the ball away.

PSG's opener arrived six minutes later, with Erding bundling in his first home league goal since the season's opening day after Nene's skidding shot was spilled by Mandanda.

Erding and strike partner Hoarau have struggled for goals in recent weeks, but the latter found the net in grandiose style in the 19th minute.

The tall France international laid the ball off to Nene in midfield and when the

Brazilian inventively scooped a pass over the retreating Marseille defence, Hoarau burst through to volley home between Mandanda's legs.

Marseille looked half asleep but four minutes later they sprang to life to cut the deficit in half.

Lucho released Andre-Pierre Gignac on the right and when his attempt was parried by Apoula Edel, Lucho followed in to stab the ball into an unguarded net.

Gignac and Loic Remy threatened equalisers either side of the break, with Gignac smartly denied by the onrushing Edel and Remy blasting a half-volley narrowly over the crossbar.

Paris increasingly elected to play on the counter-attack as the game progressed, and coach Antoine Kombouare introduced Mathieu Bodmer

in place of Giuly to firm up the midfield, prompting a shift to a 4-3-3 formation.

Marseille looked worryingly short of ideas and their best chance of an equaliser was a deflected free-kick from Taye Taiwo that bobbed meekly into the grateful arms of Edrel.

Earlier on Sunday, surprise leaders Brest conceded their first goal in nine league games as they fell to a 3-1 defeat at Lille.

Relegation-threatened Monaco and Lens both moved to within a point of safety with much-needed victories.

Second-bottom Lens won 2-0 at home to Montpellier, while South Korean international striker Park Chu-Young was on target twice as Monaco, third from bottom, won 4-0 at Nancy.

Nice defeated Toulouse 2-0, sending them up to 12th.



Paris-Saint-Germain forward Mevlut Erding (R) celebrates his goal with teammate Nene during their League One tie against Marseille at the Parc des Princes Stadium on Sunday.