

Natale reaches century of goals

AFP, Rome

Alessandro Matri returned to haunt his former club Cagliari on Saturday when he scored twice in Juventus's 3-1 win.

The victory ended a run of three straight defeats and eased the pressure on Juve coach Luigi Delneri.

Matri's goals sandwiched a strike from Cagliari's Rob-

RESULTS

Udinese 2 (Sanchez 18, Di Natale 40) Sampdoria 0
Cagliari 1 (Acquafresca 51)
Juventus 3 (Matri 20, 75, Toni 84)

ert Acquafresca before Luca Toni scored a late clincher.

Udinese continued their bid for a Champions League finish as they beat Sampdoria 2-0 to move to within a point of the top four.

It was their fifth win, alongside two draws, since the turn of the year and only Inter Milan have gained more points than them in 2011.

Striker Antonio Di Natale reached 100 league goals for the club as he notched the second following Alexis Sanchez's opener.



Newcastle United midfielder Cheik Tiote celebrates after scoring a stunning 30-yard volley to equalise in their stunning match against Premiership rivals Arsenal at St James' Park on Saturday. Tiote's goal was Newcastle's fourth after they had fallen 4-0 behind within 26 minutes.

PHOTO:
AFP

8 GAMES, 41 GOALS

MU beaten as Magpies rain on Gunners

AFP, London



Manchester United crashed to their first defeat of the season in a shock 2-1 loss at bottom club Wolves on Saturday after a day of drama and record goal-scoring across the Premier League.

League leaders United, who had started to entertain dreams of emulating Arsenal and Preston North End as the only clubs to go through a whole season unbeaten, saw their run end abruptly at Molineux.

A superb individual goal by winger Nani had fired United ahead on three minutes but Wolves equalised with a fine header by fullback George Elokobi.

Five minutes before half-time Kevin Doyle was deemed to have got the final touch on a Nenad Milijas free-kick to put Mick McCarthy's side 2-1 up.

Despite furious late pressure from Sir Alex Ferguson's side, Wolves held on to record a victory which gives the rest of United's title rivals hope.

"We are disappointed obviously. It's been a long run for us. The players have done us all proud but today in the second half we didn't really get going," Ferguson told ESPN afterwards.

The result reduced United's lead over second-placed Arsenal to four points with both sides having played 25 games each. Wolves however remain bottom, behind West Ham on goals scored.

The Gunners would have narrowed the deficit even further had they not squan-

dered a 4-0 lead in an extraordinary game against Newcastle at St James Park which finished 4-4.

Arsenal looked to be cruising after goals from Robin Van Persie (2), Theo Walcott and Johan Djourou put them 4-0 up after 26 minutes.

However the sending off of Arsenal midfielder Abou Diaby gave Newcastle a way back into the game and the Magpies produced a stun-

RESULTS

Aston Villa 2 (Panttil 13-og, Walker 72)
Fulham 2 (Johnson 52, Dempsey 78)
Everton 5 (Saha 20, 47, 76, 84, Beckford 80) Blackpool 3 (Baptiste 37, Puncheon 62, Adam 64)
Man City 3 (Tevéz 17-pen, 22, 39-pen) West Brom 0
Newcastle 4 (Barton 68-pen, 83-pen, Best 75, Tiote 87) Arsenal 4 (Walcott 1, Djourou 3, Van Persie 10, 26)
Stoke 3 (Carew 32, Huth 83, 90)
Sunderland 2 (Richardson 2, Gyan 48)
Tottenham 2 (Van der Vaart 6-pen, Kranjcar 90) Bolton 1 (Sturridge 55)
Wigan 4 (McCarthy 35, 56, Rodallega 50, Watson 65-pen) Blackburn 3 (Roberts 23, Samba 58, Dunn 81-pen)
Wolves 2 (Elokobi 10, Doyle 40)

ning fightback to draw courtesy of two Joey Barton penalties, a Leon Best strike and a rasping volley from Cheik Tiote on 87 minutes.

A total of 41 goals were scored across Saturday's eight games, shattering the previous record of 36 scored in a single day of the Premier League.

Third-placed Manchester City swept to a comfortable win over West Bromwich Albion at Eastlands, birthday boy Carlos Tevez netting a first-half hat-trick in a 3-0 victory.

Tevez's treble included two from the penalty spot as

the Argentinian took his goals tally for the season to 18.

In a dramatic match at White Hart Lane, Niko Kranjcar struck a 90th-minute winner for Tottenham in a 2-1 victory over Bolton.

Rafael Van der Vaart put Spurs ahead from the penalty spot on six minutes, and looked to have doubled his tally moments later when he buried a second spot-kick only for the kick to be retaken for encroachment. Van der Vaart shot the same way but his effort went wide.

Bolton looked to have done enough to earn a share of the points courtesy of a Daniel Sturridge equaliser but Kranjcar's strike settled it for Spurs.

Elsewhere, Fulham twice came from behind to grab a share of the points in a 2-2 draw away to Aston Villa.

At Goodison Park, Louis Saha struck four goals as Everton came from behind to score a dramatic 5-3 win over Blackpool.

At the DW Stadium, relegation-threatened Wigan scored a vital 4-3 victory over Blackburn in a see-saw battle.

In the early kick-off, Robert Huth scored two goals in the final 10 minutes as Stoke City came from behind to defeat Sunderland 3-2.

Bayern left bleeding

AFP, Berlin



Bayern Munich's title aspirations suffered a major blow on Saturday as relegation-threatened Cologne hit back from 2-0 down to inflict a 3-2 defeat on the defending champions.

Bayern were cruising after first-half goals by Germany striker Mario Gomez, his 16th in 19 league matches, and Turkey midfielder Hamit Altintop.

Gomez became the league's top-scorer after he latched onto a diagonal pass from Thomas Mueller to beat ex-Bayern goalkeeper Michael Rensing on 22 minutes, with Altintop doubling their lead shortly before half-time.

But Cologne refused to go down without a fight.

They pulled a goal back through midfielder Christian Clemens on 55 minutes, then equalised when Slovenian striker Milivoje Novakovic headed home seven minutes later.

Novakovic produced a superb solo effort for his second, his seventh goal in 15 league games, when he slotted home the winner on 73 minutes.

"We saw a completely different Cologne from the start of the second half with our fantastic fans behind us," said delighted Cologne captain Lukas Podolski.

"The way we came from behind to win was sensational."

Furious Bayern coach Louis van Gaal accused his side of throwing the game away.

"Today we wasted a big chance to move up the table because all our rivals lost except

Hanover," he said.

"If you play the first half time as masterfully as we did, it is unbelievable that we gave the game away. This is the fourth or fifth time we have done this. We tried everything after we went 3-2 down, but it was too late by then."

A win in Cologne would have put Bayern second as Bayer Leverkusen lost 1-0 at 10-man Nuremberg, but the defeat leaves the champions fifth and 15 points behind league leaders Dortmund.

Cologne remain in the bottom three, despite their heroics.

Second-from-bottom Stuttgart came from 2-0 down to steal a 3-2 win at bottom side Moenchengladbach in dramatic fashion after Timo Gebhart netted an 87th-minute penalty.

Veteran Michael Ballack was left fuming after being substituted in the second half of Leverkusen's defeat at Nuremberg, 24 hours after being left out of the Germany squad for next week's friendly against Italy.

The 34-year-old has not played for Germany since March 2010 and this was only

his second start after four months out with a fractured leg as his side lost, but stay second in the table.

Hanover are fourth and stayed in the fight for a European place for next season with a 1-0 win at Steve McClaren's Wolfsburg.

Ten-man Hoffenheim were given a fright at home as they beat Kaiserslautern 3-2 having held a 2-0 lead.

Bremen's ex-Chelsea striker Claudio Pizarro equalised in injury time to seal a 1-1 draw with Mainz which kept his team out of the bottom three.

RESULTS

Mainz 05 1 (Schuerrle 19) Werder Bremen 1 (Pizarro 90+2)
Hoffenheim 3 (Sigurdsson 28, Rudy 40, Ibisevic 62) Kaiserslautern 2 (Hoffer 58, Rodnei 60)
Cologne 3 (Clemens 55, Novakovic 62, 73) Bayern Munich 2 (Gomez 22, Hamit Altintop 43)
Hanover 96 1 (Pinto 5) VfL Wolfsburg 0
Nuremberg 1 (Eigler 60) Bayer Leverkusen 0
Borussia M'gladbach 2 (Dante 29, de Camargo 31) **VfB Stuttgart 3** (Pogrebnyak 51, Hamik 56,

Kubica in horror crash

AFP, Rome



Formula One star Robert Kubica has been seriously injured in a crash while heading to the start of the Ronde di Andora rally in Liguria, Italy, the

helicopter to the Santa Corona hospital in nearby Pietra Ligure, near Savona, suffering from multiple fractures and internal trauma.

His condition is said to be serious and subsequent reports claimed he may be at risk of losing a hand that was crushed in the crash.



ANSA news agency reported on Sunday.

The Lotus Renault GP driver from Poland was at the wheel of the Skoda Fabia he was to race in the rally when he left the road at high speed and crashed into a wall.

His co-driver, Jacob Gerber, is reported to have emerged from the wreck unhurt but Kubica remained inside.

Kubica is said to have been conscious when emergency services removed him from the vehicle.

He was then transferred by

Mueller disgusted with loss

AFP, Berlin

Bayern Munich forward Thomas Mueller said on Sunday that Bundesliga leaders Borussia Dortmund have nothing to fear from the defending champions after his team's shock 3-2 defeat at strugglers Cologne.

"It is hard to express how disappointed we are. Dortmund have absolutely nothing to fear from us at all," Mueller told German daily Bild.

"They can lose any games they want to and we also just throw points away. It was like we came out for the second half having taken sleeping tablets.

"We have just ruined out entire season.

"If we keep wasting our chances like that, we might as well talk about the relegation battle as much as the title hunt.

Hypnotic Messi fires Barcelona

AFP, Madrid



Lionel Messi hit a hat-trick as Barcelona made history on Saturday by winning a record 16th successive

Spanish League match to beat the previous best of Alfredo Di Stefano's 1960-1961 Real Madrid.

Messi scored all the goals in the 3-0 win over Atletico Madrid at Camp Nou as the defending champions opened up a 10-point lead over Real Madrid who face Real Sociedad on Sunday.

Argentine magician Messi waltzed through the Atletico defence to give Barcelona the lead in the 17th minute and, after wasting a further chance, he pounced again in the 28th minute.

Atletico came out of their shell at the start of the sec-

ond half but it was Barcelona who had the cutting edge with Messi scoring again from close range 11 minutes from time.

"We wouldn't be were we are if it wasn't for Leo in our team," said Barcelona coach



Pep Guardiola of his Argentine superstar.

"Without him we wouldn't have won so comfortably. You always need to have players who can do something different.

RESULTS

Osasuna 1 (Flano 8)
Mallorca 1 (Castro 37)
Almeria 3 (Silva 5, Uche 6, Bernardello 18) Espanyol 2 (Verdu 33, Alvaro 48)
Athletic Bilbao 3 (Lopez 15-pen, Toquero 26, Llorente 73)
Sporting Gijon 0
Getafe 4 (Colunga 19, 26, Miku 44, Rios 56) Deportivo La Coruna 1 (Riki 68-pen)
Real Zaragoza 1 (Boutahar 39) Racing Santander 1 (Christian 13)
Villarreal 0 **Levante 1** (Valdo 48)
Barcelona 3 (Messi 17, 28, 79)

"Real Madrid won 15 because they had Di Stefano. We have now won 16 because we have Messi."

Atletico coach Quique Sanchez Flores was full of praise for Messi.

"He is the best player I have seen - the Di Stefano of the 21st century. It was an amazing performance from Barcelona, they are the number one side and have the capacity to hypnotise the opposition."

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