



Home comforts fire Dortmund

BUNDES LIGA
Newly-crowned German champions Borussia Dortmund are hoping to keep hold of their homegrown stars after their young guns dominated the season under the guidance of coach Jurgen Klopp.

Dortmund's 2-0 win over Nuremberg on Saturday handed Borussia their seventh German league title and puts Klopp's team in the Champions League having led the Bundesliga since October.

Their eight-point lead means they can not be caught with two games left.

In the Ruhr valley city, 100,000 fans partied into the early hours of Sunday morning to celebrate their first title since 2002.

But some of the happiest

Dortmund fans had been celebrating on the pitch.

Teenage midfielder Mario Goetze, 18, is the son of a professor at Dortmund's technical university while fellow Germany teammate Kevin Grosskreutz, 22, is a Borussia fan who was watching from the terraces just two seasons ago.

"It's an outstanding feeling to achieve this with my club in the city where I was born," beamed Grosskreutz.

"Two years ago, I was still on the south terrace and went as a fan to the away games. This is amazing."

He certainly allowed the success to go to his head.

Having vowed last October to skip the barbers until Dortmund were German champions, Grosskreutz allowed himself to be shaved bald on the pitch in front of 80,000 fans once his side were confirmed title winners.

TOP SCORERS

- 24: Gomez (Bayern Munich)
- 22: Cisse (Freiburg)
- 16: Gekas (Frankfurt), Novakovic (Cologne)
- 14: Barrios (Dortmund), Lakic (Kaiserslautern)
- 13: Konan (Hanover), Scuerle (Mainz)

In just his third season in charge, the team Klopp assembled suddenly came of age with Turkey midfielder Nuri Sahin and rising Germany star Goetze helping produce some eye-catching football.

The results have been impressive as previous champions Bayern Munich were beaten both home and away while Bayer Leverkusen posed a serious threat to Dortmund's domination of the league.

The squad was assembled with an annual budget of 35

million euros and many come from the surrounding Ruhr valley.

"The title is fully deserved and everyone in Germany, Europe and perhaps even the world can see that," said Sahin, who also hails from western Germany.

Dortmund's success has been acknowledged by Germany coach Joachim Loew with a group of rising stars being promoted to the senior national side.

Defenders Mats Hummels and Marcel Schmelzer, plus midfielders Goetze and Grosskreutz have all played for Germany this season -- and have all been handed contract extensions by Borussia until 2014.

The Ruhr valley club are optimistic of keeping their stars for next season after the club's director of sport Michael Zorc said reports Real Madrid are interested in signing Sahin are unfounded.

"When and if the issue arises, we will concern ourselves with it, but for now, that is not the case," Zorc told German television channel Sport1.

Klopp, 43, has also been signed up until 2014 and the coach who nearly joined Bayern Munich in 2008 has watched his team mature under his mantra "new start every day".

Despite seeing their 12-point lead at the start of March slip to just five points towards the end of April, Dortmund kept their nerve and conceded just 19 goals all season and four league defeats.

The challenge will be to defend the title and impress on the Champions League stage while Japanese midfielder Shinji Kagawa showed plenty of promise with eight goals in 17 games before a foot injury kept him out of the team.

But for now Dortmund's

RESULTS

Borussia Dortmund 2 (Barrios 32, Lewandowski 43) Nuremberg 0
 Hamburg 0 Freiburg 2 (Cisse 16, 87)
 Mainz 05 3 (Ivankovic 26, Soto 38, 45) Eintracht Frankfurt 0
 Hoffenheim 1 (Mlapa 14) VfB Stuttgart 2 (Cacau 63, Kuzmanovic 68-pen)
 Cologne 2 (Novakovic 67, 82) Bayer Leverkusen 0
 Hannover 96 0 Borussia M'gladbach 1 (Reus 76)
 Bayern Munich 4 (Robben 6, T. Mueller 13, 84, Gomez 19)
 Schalke 04 1 (Badstuber 8-og)
 Werder Bremen 0 VfL Wolfsburg 1 (Riether 22)
 Kaiserslautern 2 (Tiffert 28, Abel 68) St. Pauli 0

Real, Barca both lose

AFP, Madrid

Italian striker Giuseppe Rossi scored his 18th league goal of the season as Villarreal put their mid-week Europa League disappointment behind them with a 2-1 comeback win over Getafe at El Madrigal on Sunday.

Rossi scored a 74th minute winner that kept alive Villarreal's hopes of finishing third -- and claiming a Champions League place -- with the victory moving the club to within three points of third-placed Valencia, who fell to a 1-0 defeat to Osasuna.

Elsewhere Brazilian midfielder Renato scored a second half winner as Sevilla moved back up to fifth with a 1-0 win at 10-

RESULTS

Levante 0 Sporting Gijon 0
 Malaga 3 (Baptista 4, 75, Rondon 72) Hercules 1 (Valdes 3)
 Almeria 0 Sevilla 1 (Renato 57)
 Racing Santander 2 (Rosenberg 12, Kennedy 42) Real Mallorca 0
 Villarreal 2 (Cani 60, Rossi 74)
 Getafe 1 (Rios 31)
 Osasuna 1 (Cejudo 59) Valencia 0
 Real Madrid 2 (Ramos 62, Benzema 85)
 Real Zaragoza 3 (Lafita 41, 77, Gabi 54-pen)
 Real Sociedad 2 (Ifan 71, Prieto 81-pen) Barcelona 1 (Thiago 29)
 Deportivo La Coruna 0 Atletico Madrid 1 (Aguero 80)

man Almeria.

Barcelona and Real Madrid, set to face each other in Tuesday's Champions League semi final second leg at Camp Nou, both fell to surprise defeats on Saturday.

After going nine years without losing a league home match Real coach Jose Mourinho watched his side lose their second inside a month as Zaragoza triumphed 3-2 at the Santiago Bernabeu.

Barcelona could have moved to within touching distance of the title with victory at Real Sociedad, but fell to a 2-1 loss as their 32-game unbeaten league run came to an end.

Double champions Barcelona, eight points ahead of Madrid, need four points from the remaining four games to secure a third successive league title.

Let's finish them: Pep

AFP, Barcelona

Barcelona coach Pep Guardiola says his team's weekend defeat by Real Sociedad was a timely warning ahead of Tuesday's second leg of their Champions League semifinal with Real Madrid, who they lead 2-0.

Last week they came out on top in a stormy first leg in Madrid that was characterised more by cynical challenges and play-acting than on-pitch excitement.

even suggested that it was due to their promotion of the humanitarian charity Unicef.

The game's saving grace was the performance of Lionel Messi, who scored a double, the second being an excellent run where he slalomed through the heart of the Real defence before slotting past keeper Iker Casillas.

Barca are now in the driving seat to win a league and Champions League double, with an eight-point lead in La Liga after both they and Real surprisingly lost at the weekend.

"This was a lesson for us showing that nothing has been done yet," said

Sociedad scored the winner.

"It was a difficult match with a number of changes to the team and so I think we did relatively well but in the second half we were not controlled enough in our play," said Guardiola.

The Real players, still angered by the first-leg dismissal of Pepe, say they will go to Camp Nou full of belief despite needing to win by two clear goals to turn the tie around.

"We feel that we can do it and also in the (domestic) league. Until it is mathematically impossible we are not going to give anything up, although we cannot afford to



Milan owe it to Silvio

AFP, Rome

As AC Milan all but mathematically wrapped up an 18th Serie A title with a 1-0 defeat of Bologna at the San Siro, the club president's publicity machine clicked quickly into gear.

With Milan needing just a single draw from their three remaining games -- or for Inter Milan to fail to win all of theirs -- to be crowned scudetto kings, club official Adriano Galliani was quick to remind fans who the true hero of the show has been.

Not coach Massimiliano Allegri, who has delivered the title in his first season in charge, and indeed only his third in the top flight.

Nor star forward Zlatan Ibrahimovic, whose vital goals and assists in the first half of the season propelled the team to the league summit.

According to Galliani it's all thanks to club president and colourful Italy Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi.

"We said right from the start that our objective was the title and we confirmed that with our January signings," said Galliani.

"The team owes a lot to Silvio Berlusconi and the fans need to know that without his financial commitment we'd never have closed the gap to Inter."

Having signed Ibrahimovic, Robinho and Kevin-Prince Boateng in the close season and added Antonio

RESULTS

AC Milan 1 (Flamini 8) Bologna 0
 Catania 2 (Silvestre 78, Bergessio 82) Cagliari 0
 Chievo 1 (Rigoni 58) Lecce 0
 Fiorentina 5 (Vargas 9, D'Agostino 21, 51, Cerri 71, 86) Udinese 2 (Pinzo 29, Asamoah 57)
 Parma 3 (Dzemalili 2, Modesto 18, Candreva 89) Palermo 1 (Pastore 56)
 Sampdoria 3 (Pozzi 55, Tissonne 63, Mannini 90) Brescia 3 (Eder 50, Caracciolo 57, 84)
 Bari 2 (Bentivoglio 25-pen, Huseklepp 42) Roma 3 (Totti 30, 57-pen, Rosi 90+5)
 Cesena 1 (Budan 56) Inter Milan 2 (Pazzini 90+1, 90+5)
 Napoli 1 (Hamsik 83) Genoa 0

Cassano in January, Galliani would seem to have a point.

That is a group who could easily fetch more than 100 million euros in transfer fees but Milan forked out about eight million euros for the four players.

Take Ibrahimovic; just a year earlier he moved to Barcelona from Inter for 50 million euros and Samuel Eto'o (whose value must be considered to be at least 25 million euros).

Twelve months on and Milan snapped him up for a mere 24 million euros and zero up front.

Robinho arrived from Manchester City on a similar deal: 18 million euros -- less than half what City paid Real Madrid for him two years earlier -- to be paid over three installments.

Then there was Boateng. Milan convinced Genoa to buy him from Portsmouth and send him out on loan with the promise that Milan will pay a higher fee for him at the end of the year.

And Cassano, widely regarded as Italy's greatest natural talent, was prized from Sampdoria for a one third share of the five million euro sell-on fee due to his previous club Real.

It's a trend of financial dealing that Berlusconi has exploited in recent years.

Andrei Shevchenko was sold to Chelsea for 30 million pounds in 2006 and then loaned back for a season for free two years later.

Then there was Kaka. In January 2009 Berlusconi accepted a bid of more than 100 million pounds from Manchester City for the Brazilian.

Champions League
 Semi-finals - second leg

Tuesday 3 May

Barcelona (ESP) Real Madrid (ESP)
 (2-0 first leg)

Wednesday 4 May

Man. United (ENG) Schalke 04 (GER)
 (2-0)

Source: UEFA AFP

Guardiola after the 2-1 defeat at Sociedad.

"Madrid are a very good team and they have nothing to lose so we have to keep our heads. We are going to have some tough moments in the game and we will need the support of our fans."

Barca went into their match in relaxed mood, with Real having already lost 3-2 at home to a Real Zaragoza side fighting for their top-flight survival.

Guardiola introduced several youngsters and it was 20-year-old Thiago Alcantara who gave them the lead but Sociedad pulled level and then Javier Mascherano conceded a late penalty, from which

make mistakes like we did against Zaragoza," said Kaka.

Teammate Gonzalo Higuain added: "After a defeat no-one is happy but we now have to forget this and look forward.

"The league is almost over but we need to concentrate on the Champions League and we have a side which can reach the final."

Real will be without the suspended Sergio Ramos and Pepe, while German central midfielder Sami Khedira is injured.

For Barca, attacking midfielder Andres Iniesta and centre-back Carles Puyol are fighting to fit in time.

SPORTS POLL
 WEEKLY QUESTION
 Who do you think will be cricket's next chief selector?
 Visit the sports page of www.thedailystar.net to cast vote
 Follow The Daily Star Sport on twitter
 www.twitter.com/dssport

What to WATCH

SET Max
 Indian Premier League
 Deccan v Kolkata
 Live from 8:30pm

ESPN
 Sportscentre India
 Sports News
 Live at 8:30pm
TEN Action+

UEFA Champions League
 SEMIFINAL, 2ND LEG
 Barcelona v Real Madrid
 Live from 12:45am (Wednesday)

DAY'S EVENT

Bangladesh League
 Ctg Mohammedan v Mohammedan
 Time: 2:30pm
 Ctg Abahani v Abahani
 Time: 4:30pm
 Venue: Cox's Bazar Stadium
GP-BCB Academy v SA Academy
 Third One-Day Match
 Venue: Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium, Mirpur