



Real Madrid forward Cristiano Ronaldo (L) celebrates with teammate Pepe after scoring in their La Liga match against Getafe at the Santiago Bernabeu in Madrid on Saturday.

PHOTO:  
AFP

# Real ahead as Barca slip

REUTERS, Madrid



LFP

Barcelona blew a two-goal lead to draw 2-2 at Real Sociedad and Real Madrid took advantage of the slip-up with a 4-2 home win over Getafe in La Liga on Saturday.

European champions Barca were cruising after early strikes from Xavi and Cesc Fabregas but they eased off and the Basques levelled with two goals in three second-half minutes.

France striker Karim Benzema led Real to victory, scoring either side of a disputed Cristiano Ronaldo penalty, but it needed substitute Gonzalo Higuain to settle the match for Jose Mourinho's men.

Real have a perfect six points, the same as Valencia who were 1-0 winners at home to Atletico Madrid.

Barca have four points along with Sociedad and Sevilla who grabbed a 2-2 draw at 10-man Villarreal.

Roberto Soldado powered a header in off the bar for Valencia in the 52nd minute and tops the scoring charts with Ronaldo, on four goals from two games. Villarreal had goalkeeper Diego Lopez harshly sent off after 22 minutes at the Madrid and Alvaro Negredo saw his penalty saved but scored on the rebound to put Sevilla ahead.

Giuseppe Rossi levelled with a penalty at the other end and Marco Ruben fired Villarreal ahead in the 73rd before Alexis Ruano headed a late equaliser.

Perhaps with the midweek Champions League fixture against AC Milan in mind, Barca coach Pep Guardiola left Lionel Messi, David Villa and Andres Iniesta on the bench and at first they were not missed.

Fabregas dinked a ball over the top for Xavi to score in the 10th minute and the former Arsenal player also set up Pedro a

minute later, putting away the rebound when the latter's shot was blocked.

Barca lost new signing Alexis Sanchez to a thigh injury, which could keep the Chilean sidelined for up to eight weeks, and the game began to get away from them in the 59th minute.

Striker Imanol Agirretxe headed one back for the home side and almost immediately the same player intercepted a poor back pass from Villa and fired against the bar.

Antoine Griezmann followed up to head into the open net, however, and Barca were lucky not to lose Sergio Busquets who had tipped Agirretxe's original shot on to the woodwork with his hand.

Guardiola threw Messi and Iniesta into the fray but it was a despairing last-minute defensive header from Dani Alves that denied the hosts a shock winner.

"It was two defensive errors ... that have proved very expensive," Barca captain Xavi told Spanish television.

Benzema fired Real ahead at the Bernabeu after a slick passing move in the 14th minute and after Miku had levelled for Getafe just before the break, Ronaldo tumbled on the edge of the

area in the 60th.

The referee signalled a penalty which the Portuguese forward scored, though television replays showed the incident occurred outside the area.

"Being totally objective it was not a penalty," Mourinho said.

Benzema scored from a Ronaldo cross in the 69th but Miku unsettled Real again with a cool finish in the 73rd and it took a late goal from Higuain to make sure of the points.

"I didn't like the way my team played. We could have scored seven or eight because we made a lot of chances but we let them play and Getafe were very well organised," Mourinho said.

"I like it when my team play well and in a compact way and today was not like that."

## RESULTS

Real Madrid 4 (Benzema 14, 69, Cristiano Ronaldo 59-pen, Higuain 88)  
 Getafe 2 (Miku 38, 73)  
 Valencia 1 (Soldado 52)  
 Atletico Madrid 0  
 Real Sociedad 2 (Agirretxe 59, Griezmann 60) Barcelona 2 (Xavi 9, Fabregas 11)  
 Villarreal 2 (Rossi 35-pen, Ruben 73)  
 Sevilla 2 (Negredo 24, Ruano 86)

## Eto'o surprised at reception

AFP, Dagestan

Cameroon football star Samuel Eto'o admitted to being "pleasantly surprised" by the huge welcome he was given in Makhachkala a day ahead of making his debut for big-spending Russian Premier League club Anzhi.

While his new teammates took part in an open training session around 5000 people turned up to get a glimpse of the African star.

"I'm a citizen of the world," said Eto'o.

"I left Cameroon with a unique dream: to become a footballer.

"Right now, the only thing that concerns me is being happy wherever I am, and with this kind of welcome how could I not be happy?"

# Juve race off the blocks

AFP, Rome



LEGA CALCIO

Juventus delivered new coach Antonio Conte a flying start to the season in their new stadium with a 4-1 thrashing of Parma on Sunday.

Stephan Lichtsteiner and Arturo Vidal on their debuts alongside Simone Pepe and Claudio Marchisio scored the goals to hand the Old Lady of Turin the ideal start.

Former Juve forward Sebastian Giovinco scored an injury-time consolation from the spot after Paolo De Ceglie had been sent off for bringing him down in the box.

Having spent heavily in the summer on a number of recruits, Juve handed debuts to Andrea Pirlo, Lichtsteiner and Emanuele Giaccherini whilst Mirko Vucinic and Vidal both came off the bench to also make their first appearances in the black and white shirt.

Even though Juve's new 41,000 capacity stadium wasn't quite full,

there was a scorching atmosphere inside the ground for its first official match.

And the hosts didn't disappoint, coming out of the traps with energy and desire.

They were ahead on 16 minutes after a moment of genius from Pirlo, who scooped the ball over a static backline for right-back Lichtsteiner to run onto and take around Antonio Mirante before slotting into the empty net.

Moments later Mirante had to be alert to block a shot from Alessandro Matri with his feet.

On 39 minutes Juve had the ball in the net again as Matri headed in from barely a yard out, but it was ruled out for offside.

Although Matri may well have been onside when Andrea Barzagli headed the ball back across goal, two other Juve players in close attention weren't.

Parma showed nothing going forward in the first period with Giovinco particularly frustrating as he repeat-

edly tried to do too much on his own, losing the ball every time.

The second half followed a similar pattern to the first as Alessandro Del Piero released Matri into a gaping hole in the middle of the Parma defence but the forward's shot struck the upright before rolling agonisingly across the line and away to safety.

The killer second came only four minutes later as Del Piero fed the ball wide to Pepe who thrashed a shot across Mirante and inside the far post from 12 yards.

Chile midfielder Vidal then came on to score the third with an acrobatic volley from just outside the area.

The fourth was simply sublime as Pirlo played another sumptuous chipped pass over the top and Marchisio ran past ball-watching defenders to brilliantly flick the ball over Mirante on the stretch.

Parma did get on the scoresheet in injury time as De Ceglie brought down Giovinco, who picked himself up to score the spot-kick.

# Rest Rooney's secret

REUTERS, Manchester



BARCLAYS PREMIER LEAGUE

Manchester United striker Wayne Rooney has notched back-to-back hatricks to shake off last season's troubles and spearhead a dynamic start to his team's Premier League title defence.

It is a far cry from the wretched time he was enduring a year ago when off-field scandals, including the saga of whether he would stay at the club, and the loss of his scoring touch led to some critics questioning whether he was past his best.

Rooney now looks a different player not just because of his well-documented hair transplant and has put his return to form down to having a break after last season.

"I had a long time to rest and I had a very good pre-season, I stayed clear of injuries and it's obviously helped me for the start of this season," he told ESPN television.

Already closing in on the 11 league goals he managed last season, Rooney is showing the type of sharpness he had in the 2009/10 campaign when he scored 34 goals in all competitions.

He has notched seven hatricks since joining United from Everton in 2004, the total number achieved by the great Bobby Charlton although still some way short of Denis Law's club record 18.

# Sanchez out for eight weeks

REUTERS, Madrid

Barcelona forward Alexis Sanchez has torn a thigh muscle and may be sidelined for up to eight weeks, the European champions said.

The Chilean, signed from Udinese for around 37 million euros (\$50.73 million) in July, was carried off on a stretcher after falling awkwardly in a challenge during the first half of Saturday's 2-2 La Liga draw at Real Sociedad.

"Alexis could be out for six to eight weeks," Barca said on their official Twitter feed.

Barca entertain AC Milan in their opening Champions League Group H game on Tuesday.

# Gomez hit four as Bayern score seven

REUTERS, Berlin



BUNDESLIGA

Mario Gomez scored four times and Franck Ribery twice as Bayern Munich hammered Freiburg 7-0 on Saturday to storm back to the top of the Bundesliga.

Four days before visiting Villarreal of Spain in the Champions League, Bayern kept a clean sheet for the sixth straight match in all competitions as they chalked up 12 points from five Bundesliga games.

Germany striker Gomez, the top scorer last season, is again leading the way this term with eight league goals. Substitute Nils Petersen completed the rout in the last minute.

"I am extremely satisfied because my team ... were outstanding," Bayern coach Jupp Heynckes told reporters. "It was important we kept at it even after going 3-0

up that shows character."

Werder Bremen went level on 12 points with Bayern after Peruvian Claudio Pizarro struck twice in a 2-1 victory over their bitter rivals, bottom club Hamburg SV.

While Werder celebrated a third win in a row and the return of defender Naldo after a 16-month injury absence, Hamburg have yet to win any of their 12 matches under coach Michael Oenning stretching back to last season.

Borussia Moenchengladbach are third on 10 points after a 1-0 win over Kaiserslautern but champions Borussia Dortmund are down in 10th spot after slumping to a 2-1 defeat, their first at home in more than a year, against promoted Hertha Berlin.

Bayer Leverkusen also have 10 points following a 4-1 win at Augsburg on Friday. Hoffenheim jumped to fifth after romping to a 4-0 triumph at Mainz 05.

Schalke 04, on nine points with Hoffenheim, travel to VfL Wolfsburg on Sunday.

## RESULTS

Werder Bremen 2 (Pizarro 53, 78) Hamburg 0  
 Borussia Dortmund 1 (Lewandowski 88) Hertha Berlin 2 (Raffael 49, Niemeyer 81)  
 Bayern Munich 7 (Gomez 8, 52, 55, 71-pen, Ribery 26, 41, Petersen 90) Freiburg 0  
 Mainz 0 Hoffenheim 4 (Roberto Firmino 16, Babel 45+1-pen, 74, Noveski 85)  
 Stuttgart 3 (Okazaki 9, Kuzmanovic 79, Tasci 86) Hannover 96 0  
 Borussia Moenchengladbach 1 (Arango 58) Kaiserslautern 0

## What to WATCH

**TEN Cricket**  
 Sri Lanka v Australia  
 Second Test, Day 5  
 Live from 10:30am

**TEN Sports**  
 US Open  
 Men's Singles Final  
 Live from 2:00am (Tuesday)

**ESPN**  
 Sportscentre India  
 Sports News  
 Live at 8:30pm

## DAY'S EVENT

**BCB Cup**  
 Bangladesh v GP-BCB NCA  
 One-Day Match  
 Time: 9:00am  
 Venue: Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium, Mirpur



Bayern Munich striker Mario Gomez celebrates after completing his hatrick in their Bundesliga match against Freiburg in Munich on Saturday.

PHOTO: AFP