

# Almost a St-r-oke for MU

REUTERS, London

Manchester United dropped their first points of the season in a 1-1 draw at Stoke City on Saturday but ended the day top of the Premier League while Chelsea striker Fernando Torres scored and was sent off in his side's 4-1 win over Swansea City.

Manchester City temporarily led the standings after winning their lunchtime kickoff 2-0 against Everton at the Etihad Stadium, but United went back to the summit despite only drawing their evening game at the Britannia Stadium.

United and City both have 16 points from six matches with last season's champions ahead on goal difference.

United led at Stoke with a first half goal from Nani but were pegged back when Peter Crouch headed home a corner. City overcame Everton with goals from second-half substitutes Mario Balotelli and James Milner.

Chelsea stayed third after brushing aside Swansea at Stamford Bridge where their record 50.0 million pounds (\$77.0 million) signing Torres scored and was sent off within 10 minutes in the first half, dismissed with an instant red card after a flying lunge at Swansea's Mark Gower.

Ramires scored twice for Chelsea and Didier Drogba the other on his return from injury.

Newcastle United maintained their unbeaten start and stayed fourth with Senegal international Demba Ba scoring a hat-trick in their 3-1 home win over Blackburn Rovers who finished with 10 men after Martin Olsson was sent off.

Liverpool moved up to fifth after beating Wolverhampton Wanderers

2-1 at Anfield where a Roger Johnson own goal after 11 minutes and a second from Luis Suarez after 38 gave the hosts the points. Steven Fletcher pulled one back for Wolves.

Tottenham Hotspur, who lost their opening two league matches to United and City and were bottom of the table two weeks ago, climbed to sixth with their third straight league victory, winning 2-1 at Wigan Athletic. Spurs took command with first half goals from Rafael van der Vaart and Gareth Bale.

## RESULTS

**Arsenal 3** (Van Persie 46, 71, Song 89) Bolton 0  
**Chelsea 4** (Torres 29, Ramires 36, 76, Drogba 90) Swansea 1 (Williams 86)  
**Liverpool 2** (Johnson 11-og, Suarez 38) Wolves 1 (Fletcher 49)  
**Man City 2** (Balotelli 68, Milner 89) Everton 0  
**Newcastle 3** (Ba 27, 30, 54) Blackburn 1 (Holleitt 37)  
Stoke 1 (Crouch 52) Man Utd 1 (Nani 27)  
West Brom 0 Fulham 0  
Wigan 1 (Diamie 50) **Tottenham 2** (Van der

Arsenal, struggling at the wrong end of the table after their worst start for 58 years, moved up five places to 12th with a 3-0 win over Bolton Wanderers. Robin van Persie scored his 99th and 100th goals for Arsenal and Alex Song grabbed a late third to leave Bolton bottom.

United, who had won all six league matches between the sides since Stoke gained promotion to the Premier League in 2008, took the lead with a well-struck drive from Nani after 27 minutes, but Alex Ferguson's side, without striker Wayne Rooney who was suffering a hamstring strain,

never gained total control.

They paid for that after 52 minutes when Stoke equalised with a Crouch header, his first goal for the club since his 9.0 million pounds (\$13.9 million) transfer from Spurs last month. The lanky England striker could have scored three while Ryan Giggs wasted a great chance to win it for the visitors in stoppage time.

It was Crouch's first league goal against United in his 11-year career and he told ESPN: "It's always great to score your first goal for a new club and to score it against United is really pleasing for me.

"We worked so hard, I've never known a team spirit like it to be honest, I've been at a few clubs now and the willingness to work is amazing that's why we got the result today."

Although Chelsea ended up beating promoted Swansea conclusively at Stamford Bridge, they had to do so with 10 men after their Spanish international striker Torres had another "hero to zero" afternoon.

Last Sunday he scored a stunning first goal of the season against United at Old Trafford, but then missed an open goal which would have put Chelsea back into the game.

On Saturday he scored another well taken goal after 29 minutes when he chested down a Juan Mata ball and fired home, but later in the half he was dismissed for flying in on Gower with both feet raised, although there was minimal contact.

By then Chelsea were 2-0 ahead following Ramires' first goal after 36 minutes before he added a third in the second half.

Ashley Williams pulled one back before Drogba, returning after suffering concussion against Norwich City on Aug.27, scored Chelsea's fourth in stoppage time.



PHOTO: AFP

Chelsea striker Fernando Torres celebrates after scoring the opening goal in their Premier League clash against Swansea at Stamford Bridge on Saturday. Torres' evening then got sore as the striker was sent-off for a two-footed lunge.

## Juve go top of league

AFP, Rome

Turin giants Juventus share the Serie A lead with Udinese after both earned a point from away fixtures on Sunday while Genoa lost 2-1 at Chievo.

Juve are top on goals scored following a 1-1 draw at Catania while Udinese were held 0-0 away to Cagliari.

The visitors wasted glorious late chance to win in rainy Sicily when Chile midfielder Arturo Vidal skied a chance from 15 yards with the goal at his mercy.

Juve fell behind midway through the first half as Alejandro Gomez crossed from the right and Gonzalo Bergessio got in front of his marker to turn it in at the near post.

Milos Krasic equalised for the visitors just four minutes after the restart with a shot from 20 yards that Mariano Andujar should have saved.

The Serbian winger had another opportunity after a mazy dribble but this time

## RESULTS

**Chievo 2** (Pelissier 74, Moscardelli 90) Genoa 1 (Palacio 48)  
**Atalanta 2** (Schelotto 34, Cigarini 59) Novara 1 (Porcari 89)  
Cagliari 0 Udinese 0  
Catania 1 (Bergessio 21) Juventus 1 (Krasic 49)  
Lazio 0 Palermo 0  
**Siena 3** (Destro 6, Calais 53, 70) Lecce 0  
Bologna 1 (Diamanti 66-pen) **Inter Milan 3** (Pazzini 39, Milito 81-pen, Lucio 87)  
**AC Milan 1** (Seedorf 5) Cesena 0

the goalkeeper was alert to the danger.

Udinese kept their unbeaten run going as they held on for a point in a largely uneventful game in Sardinia.

Earlier in the day Davide Moscardelli scored with a flying header with virtually the last touch of the game to knock 10-man Genoa off the Serie A summit.

Genoa had led the table on goals scored at the start of the day but now trail the two leaders by a point.

They took the lead through Argentine Rodrigo Palacio but succumbed to an equaliser from Sergio Pellissier before substitute Moscardelli's dramatic late intervention.

Pellissier also missed a penalty after Genoa had Dario Dainelli sent off for a foul on the forward inside the box.

Having beaten Napoli 1-0 at home in mid-week, it was the second game in a row Chievo had defeated the league leaders.

"It's true but that's just coincidence," said Chievo coach Domenico Di Carlo. "It was a great win against an excellent side and playing good football."

## Milanese off the mark

AFP, Rome



AC Milan and Inter Milan both earned their first wins of the season on Saturday to surge clear of the relegation zone.

Claudio Ranieri's Inter reign began successfully after two goals in the last 10 minutes secured a 3-1 victory at Bologna.

And neighbours Milan also secured three points as veteran midfielder Clarence Seedorf scored the only goal in a 1-0 win at home to rock-bottom Cesena who are still without a point.

For Ranieri it was the ideal start since replacing Gian Piero Gasperini, who was fired in midweek after losing four out of five games, and drawing the other.

Giampaolo Pazzini gave Inter a first-half lead before Alessandro Diamanti equalised from the spot.

The winner came from a somewhat generous penalty award in which Bologna's Archimede Morleo was dismissed after the slightest of contact with Diego Milito in the box.

Milito converted the 81st-minute spot-kick before Brazil centre-back Lucio added a third, three minutes from time.

"It was important to start off on the right foot, the lads need to rediscover the path to victory and their self-confidence," said Ranieri.

"The first half was good, we used the ball well and played some good football in certain situations with Coutinho. In the second half they (Bologna) started to push forward and I tried to tighten things up (by withdrawing Coutinho).

"They're a good group, they're winners and those that have known sweet things cannot get used to bitter ones."

Milan coach Massimiliano Allegri wasn't entirely convinced by his team.

"We were a bit tired but we should have closed out the game because at the end we could have conceded given Cesena were dominating territorially," he said.

The other game saw Napoli fail to move back to the top of the standings as they were held to a 0-0 draw at home to Fiorentina.

## Sizzling Bayern go top

REUTERS, Berlin



Bayern Munich eased past Bayer Leverkusen 3-0 on Saturday for a sixth straight league win that kept them two points clear at the top of the Bundesliga.

First-half goals from Thomas Mueller and Daniel van Buyten and a stoppage-time goal from Dutchman Arjen Robben, in his first appearance since late August, saw them move up to 18 points from seven matches.

With millions of people in town for the annual Oktoberfest beer festival, Bayern had their own reasons to celebrate on Saturday, having kept a clean sheet for nine consecutive games in all competitions.

"We were dominant throughout and scored at the right times," said Bayern coach Jupp Heynckes.

Early season form side Borussia Moenchengladbach kept up with Bayern's pace, moving into second

place with a 1-0 win over Nuremberg courtesy of a Filip Daems penalty while Borussia Dortmund snatched a last-gasp 2-1 win at Mainz 05.

Expert penalty-taker Daems converted from the spot for his third goal of the season in the 76th minute to lift

## RESULTS

**Bayern Munich 3** (Mueller 5, Van Buyten 19, Robben 90)  
Bayer Leverkusen 0  
**Schalke 04 4** (Farfan 33, Huntelaar 62, Holtby 67, Raul 75) SC Freiburg 2 (P. Cisse 3, Jendrisek 83)  
FC Augsburg 0 Hannover 0  
**M'gladbach 1** (Daems 76-pen) Nuremberg 0  
Mainz 05 1 (Muller 33) **Dortmund 2** (Perisic 64, Pizczek 90)

Gladbach, who had to come through a relegation playoff last season to stay up, to 16 points.

Werder Bremen, third on 13 points, host Hertha Berlin on Sunday.

Last season's champions Dortmund needed a 90th minute goal from Lukas

Piszczek to beat battling Mainz and snap their two-game losing streak to move up to eighth.

Piszczek, whose poor back pass was to blame for Mainz's 33rd minute lead through Nicolai Mueller, made amends when he rifled in from outside the box seconds before the final whistle.

Dortmund, who had playmaker Mario Gotze returning from suspension and welcomed back striker Lucas Barrios from injury for the first time this season, had levelled in the 64th minute with Ivan Perisic's first Bundesliga goal, a clever low drive.

Schalke 04 overcame Freiburg 4-2 to fulfil their promise of putting in a stellar performance for coach Ralf Rangnick who surprisingly stepped down on Thursday citing exhaustion.

VfL Wolfsburg beat Kaiserslautern 1-0 despite having 10 men for the entire second half following the dismissal of defender Sotiris Kyrgiakos with Ashkan Dejagah's diving header just past the hour mark securing the points for Felix Magath's team.

## Mourinhista or Madridista?

REUTERS, Madrid



The subject of coach Jose Mourinho prompted passionate debate between members at Real Madrid's general assembly on Sunday, with some saying his behaviour had damaged the club's image.

"If you have a tiger as your mascot you have to keep him tied up to stop him eating your neighbour's daughter," said club member Rafael Vareos who prompted catcalls and whistles from the largely pro-Mourinho crowd.

The colourful and combative Portuguese coach, who joined the Spanish giants from Inter Milan at the end of the 2009-10 season, has repeatedly clashed with officials and rival coaches and has created a siege mentality around the club by suggesting there is a conspiracy favouring bitter rivals Barcelona.

During a Spanish Super Cup match against Barca last month, he jabbed a finger into the eye of the Catalan club's assistant coach Tito Vilanova during a mass brawl, for which he faces disciplinary proceedings.

Mourinho won a power battle with Real director general Jorge Valdano, who was sacked in May, and has been handed enhanced powers by president Florentino Perez.

Perez has overseen the spending of hundreds of millions of euros on players and coaching staff as he bids to win a 10th European title.

Vareos told assembly delegates the decision to give what he called "absolute power" to Mourinho was dubious and the pictures of the finger in the eye that flashed around the world were bad for the club's image.

"Mourinho is not a Madridista he is a Mourinhista," Vareos said.



PHOTO: AFP

Bayern Munich forward Thomas Mueller (2nd from L) nudges the ball past Leverkusen goalkeeper David Yell Dell (R) during their Bundesliga clash in Munich on Saturday.

**SPORTS POLL**  
**WEEKLY QUESTION**  
Do you think Mushfihar  
Rahim is a good choice as  
skipper?  
Visit the sports page of  
[www.thedailystar.net](http://www.thedailystar.net) to cast vote  
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**What to WATCH**  
**ESPN**  
Champions League T20  
Mumbai Indians v  
Trinidad & Tobago  
Live from 9:00pm  
Sportscentre India  
Sports News  
Live at 11:30pm  
**STAR Sports**  
English Premiership  
Norwich City v Sunderland

**DAY'S EVENT**  
**BCB Red v BCB Green**  
Four-Day Practice Match, Day 1  
Time: 9:30am  
Venue: Sher-e-Bangla National