



PHOTO: REUTERS

Barcelona players celebrate with coach Pep Guardiola following their World Club Cup win against Santos in Japan yesterday.

Clanger stops Chelsea run

AFP, London

A Petr Cech blunder brought Chelsea's recent revival to a halt on Saturday as relegation-threatened Wigan snatched a late 1-1 draw against the Londoners.

Third-placed Chelsea appeared to be coasting to a victory which would have seen them move to within four points of leaders Manchester City after Daniel Sturridge's 59th-minute strike put them 1-0 up at the DW Stadium.

But with just two minutes of normal time remaining, Cech made a dreadful hash as he stooped to gather Hugo Rodallega's low cross and Spanish midfielder Jordi Gomez was on hand to jab home the equaliser.

It was a bitterly disappointing outcome for Chelsea, who had beaten leaders City last week and who looked to be heading for a fourth consecutive league victory after Sturridge's goal.

"It's a disappointing result," Chelsea manager Andre Villas-Boas said. "Just a few minutes from the end we conceded a goal."

"In the last moments if we'd kept the ball a bit better we could have taken the three points, but Wigan pushed hard and they got the goal they deserved. It was a fair result."

"I think it's always a battle in the Premiership. We didn't get the three points we thought we could get."

Wigan boss Roberto Martinez meanwhile praised his struggling side's team spirit.

"Today the performance was perfect. This was a real reward for all the hard times over the last few months," Martinez said.

The world is now Barca's oyster

Lift World Club Cup after 4-0 win

Football

REUTERS, Yokohama

Lionel Messi scored two wonder goals as European champions Barcelona thrashed Brazil's Santos 4-0 to win their second Club World Cup in swashbuckling style on Sunday.

Argentine wizard Messi put Barcelona ahead in the 17th minute, exquisitely clipping a left-foot shot over goalkeeper Rafael Cabral after a clever ball from Xavi.

Only seven minutes later it was 2-0 when Xavi himself latched on to a pinpoint pass from Dani Alves, beating one defender before smashing the ball home.

Cesc Fabregas hit the post and then stabbed home Barca's third on the stroke of halftime as the Spanish giants, winners in 2009, threatened to run riot in front of a crowd of 68,000 in Yokohama.

The former Arsenal midfielder came within a whisker of another goal moments after the restart, forcing a magnificent save from Cabral.

Player of the tournament Messi made it 4-0 eight minutes from time, bursting past

Cabral at breath-taking speed to slip the ball into the net and complete the rout.

Santos, who lifted their third Libertadores Cup in June almost 50 years after Pele led them to back-to-back titles in 1962 and 1963, had no answer to Barcelona's brilliance.

"It may have looked easy but it certainly wasn't," said Barca captain Carles Puyol after his side became the first to win the Club World Cup twice since it became a seven-team FIFA competition.

"The early goals made it easier for us," added Puyol, who dedicated victory to Spain striker David Villa after he broke his leg in Barca's 4-0 semi-final win over Qatar's Al Sadd.

"We never doubted ourselves and kept their forwards under control. It was a complete performance."

The quality and speed of Barca's play was bewildering at times.

"It's impossible to stop Barcelona," shrugged Brazil's teenage sensation Neymar. "They are the best team in the world with fantastic players."

"But we are the second-best team in the world and for us that is a great reward."

Milan take Serie A lead

AFP, Rome



Antonio Nocerino and Zlatan Ibrahimovic scored second-half goals as AC Milan defeated Siena 2-0 on Saturday to knock Juventus off the top of Serie A.

Milan now have 31 points, one ahead of Juventus who can reclaim pole position when they tackle struggling Novara on Sunday.

Milan dominated the first half but had to wait until the 54th minute to clinch the breakthrough when Robinho created the opening for Nocerino to score his sixth goal of the season.

Ibrahimovic added the second nine minutes later courtesy of a controversial penalty.

It was the big Swede's 10th goal of the season and fifth from the spot, but was after Kevin-Boateng theatrically collapsed to the challenge of Brkic.

Ibrahimovic joined Antonio Di Natale in on the goal chart, one behind Atalanta's German Denis who has 11.

Siena's main threat came from midfielder Francesco Bolzoni, who had chances in the 23rd and 78th minutes.

They are fourth from bottom and could slip into the bottom three on Sunday if Cesena, with Adrian Mutu on a hot streak of three goals in four matches, defeat Inter Milan.

"After the break and our opening goal, it was much easier," said Milan coach Massimiliano Allegri.

"Tonight was not an easy game and it was important to get the three points. When you play badly and still win, it's a good sign."

Allegri also backed Nocerino to keep scoring.

"I hope he gets to 15 goals. He has already got six and is proving he is a player who belongs at Milan."

Rooney leads MU to victory

AFP, London

Manchester United returned to the top of the Premier League, if possibly only for a few hours, with a 2-0 win away to Queens Park Rangers on Sunday.

Victory left the English champions a point in front of local rivals Manchester City, who can regain top spot when they face Arsenal later Sunday.

United needed less than a minute to take the lead at Loftus Road with England striker Wayne Rooney heading home a cross from Antonio Valencia after releasing the Ecuadorian down the right.

Sir Alex Ferguson's side had several other first half chances and were unlucky when Danny Welbeck was incorrectly ruled offside in the 23rd minute.

But United doubled their lead in the 56th minute when Michael Carrick intercepted a loose square ball from Rangers midfielder Joey Barton.

The England international was allowed to advance by the Londoners' retreating defence and then beat Radek Cerny at the goalkeeper's near post with a shot from the edge of the box for what was his first Premier League goal for United in nearly two years.

RESULTS	
Blackburn 1 (Dann 72)	West Brom 2 (Morrison 52, Odemwingie 89)
Everton 1 (Osman 81)	Norwich 1 (Holt 28)
Fulham 2 (Dempsey 32, Ruiz 34)	Bolton 0
Newcastle 0	Swansea 0
Wigan 1 (Gomez 88)	Chelsea 1 (Sturridge 59)
Wolves 1 (Hunt 17-pen)	Stoke 2

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RESULT	
Santos 0	Barcelona 4 (Lionel Messi 17, 82, Xavi 24, Fabregas 45)

SPORTS POLL
WEEKLY QUESTION
Who is Bangladesh's sports personality of 2011?
Visit the sports page of www.thedailystar.net to cast vote
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www.twitter.com/dssport

What to WATCH

BTV
Bangladesh v Pakistan
Second Test, Day 3
Live from 9:30am

ESPN
Sportscenter India
Sports News

DAY'S EVENT

Bangladesh v Pakistan
Second Test, Day 3
Time: 9:30am
Venue: Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium, Mirpur

National Cricket League
Time: 9:30am
Khulna v Sylhet, Day 2
Venue: Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium
Dhaka Metro v Rajshahi, Day 2

Ronaldo routs Sevilla

AFP, Madrid



Cristiano Ronaldo smashed a hat-trick as 10-man Real Madrid crushed Sevilla 6-2 on Saturday to storm back to the top of La Liga and a three-point lead over bitter rivals Barcelona.

Jose Callejon, Angel Di Maria and Halit Altintop were also on target in a match where Jose Mourinho's team were reduced to 10 men just before half-time when defender Pepe was red-carded.

Jesus Navas and Alvaro Negredo grabbed consolations for Sevilla while Madrid were also indebted to goalkeeper Iker Casillas for a wonder save when the advantage was only one goal.

Real are now guaranteed to end 2011 on top with Barcelona playing Brazilian side Santos on Sunday in Japan in the final of the Club World Cup.

"Sevilla played well but then so did we. Casillas made two important saves at an important time and then our reaction was good," said Real boss Jose Mourinho.

"I did not expect the result, we expected to win but not by so many, but we are now out on our own at the top."

Madrid were in front when Di Maria threaded a perfect ball through the Sevilla defence for Ronaldo to hit home first time.

Sevilla came back almost immediately and Casillas produced a candidate for save of the season on 13 minutes to prevent Manu del Moral from converting from close range.

Four minutes later Casillas was at full stretch again to finger tip wide a Piotr Trochowski shot.

With quick wing play from Jesus Navas on

the right and Del Moral on the left the home team were creating plenty of chances and looked the more likely to score.

But that was until the superb Di Maria chipped a delightful ball over the Sevilla defence that Callejon reached just ahead of Varas to clip home on 37 minutes.

Four minutes later a Ronaldo thunderbolt from 30 yards meant the victory was all but guaranteed as Madrid led 3-0 at half-time.

There was still time before the interval for Pepe to leave Madrid a man down when a stray arm connected with Alvaro Negredo giving him his second yellow.

Casillas was alert again on 56 minutes to block a shot from Ivan Rakitic and Gary Medel hit a spectacular volley just wide four minutes later.

Di Maria capped a match winning performance with his team's fourth on 66 minutes when put clear by Benzema.

Sevilla never gave up, providing much in an entertaining match and Navas got one back on 69 minutes, but they too were left with 10 men when Manu del Moral was shown a straight red for a foul on Alvaro Arbeloa five minutes later.

Benzema was tripped by Federico Fazio with five minutes remaining and Ronaldo converted the penalty for his 20th league goal of the season before substitute Altintop rounded off the rout with a minute remaining.

Negredo pulled one back for Sevilla in the 90th minute.

RESULTS	
Real Mallorca 1 (Ramis 10)	Getafe 2 (Barrada 28, 44)
Sporting Gijon 1 (Barral 61)	Espanyol 2 (Bifouma 2, Sergio Garcia 84)
Athletic Bilbao 2 (Susaceta 7, Toquero 87)	Real Zaragoza 1 (Ponzo 22-pen)
Sevilla 2 (Jesus Navas 69, Negredo 90+2)	Real Madrid 6 (Cristiano Ronaldo 10, 41, 85-pen, Callejon 37, Di



PHOTO: AFP

Real Madrid sensation Cristiano Ronaldo celebrates after completing his hat-trick against Sevilla in the Primera Liga on Saturday.

Bremen fall to Royal Raul

AFP, Berlin



Spanish veteran Raul issued Schalke 04 with a timely reminder of his considerable talent on Saturday with a hat-trick in the 5-0 rout of Werder Bremen to boost his hopes of a new deal with the club.

The 34-year-old is out of contract in June and Schalke are set to discuss his future in the Bundesliga's winter break which starts Sunday.

The Royal Blues have already said they are interested in signing Cologne's Germany striker Lukas Podolski as a possible replacement, but Raul was sublime as Schalke dismantled Bremen's defence in spectacular style.

The result leaves Schalke third in the table and level with defending champions Dortmund on 34 points while both teams are three points behind leaders Bayern Munich.

"I want to continue playing here but we will see next month," said Raul.

"For now, we have to stay focussed because we have an important match in four days time against Borussia Moenchengladbach in the German Cup."

Earlier, Japan's Shinji Kagawa played a starring role as Dortmund trimmed Bayern's lead to three points with a 4-1 win at Freiburg.

"It was an intense game with a fast pace and it was the most balanced display we have put in all season," beamed Dortmund coach Jurgen Klopp.

Goals by Poland striker Robert Lewandowski, who netted twice, plus Germany midfielders Ilkay Guendogan and Kevin Grosskreutz gave Dortmund a precious victory on the last weekend of the Bundesliga in 2011.

RESULTS	
Bayer Leverkusen 0	Nuremberg 3 (Didavi 8, Hegeler 22, Pekhart 73)
Augsburg 1 (Oehrl 62)	Hamburg 1 (Guerrero 67)
Freiburg 1 (Rosenthal 34)	Borussia Dortmund 4 (Lewandowski 7, 70, Guendogan 44, Grosskreutz 59)
Hoffenheim 1 (Salihovic 21)	Hertha Berlin 1 (Hubnik 90+1)
VfL Wolfsburg 1 (Polter 74)	VfB Stuttgart 0
Schalke 04 5 (Raul 16, 20, 63, Papadopoulos 67, Huntelaar 70)	