

# Real break APOEL hearts

AFP, Nicosia



A Karim Benzema double helped nine-time winners Real Madrid to a 3-0 away win over Cypriot surprise package APOEL in their Champions League quarterfinal first-leg clash here on Tuesday.

APOEL put up a stubborn rearguard action in a contest they were as expected largely outplayed by their illustrious and more famous opponents.

It took three goals in the final 15 minutes to seal victory and all but likely a berth in the semifinals barring a miracle.

The Spanish millionaires left it late against the unheralded Cypriot minnows who failed to muster a shot on target.

It seemed only a matter of time before Real would stamp their superiority over the Cypriots but the killer blow didn't come until the 74th minute when Benzema headed in a delightful cross from substitute Kaka.

And Kaka put the game -- and maybe the tie -- beyond doubt when he slotted in from close range after fellow Brazilian and substitute Marcelo raced into the box and found him unmarked.

Benzema got his second on a quick counter scoring from close range from a Mesut Ozil cross on 90 minutes.

Real could have scored a hatful but they spurned a series of golden opportunities.

Miss of the game and maybe this Champions League saw Benzema put the ball over the bar from two yards out with an open goal at his mercy.

He was set up perfectly by a cross from Nuri Sahin following some trademark trickery from Cristiano Ronaldo on 33 minutes.

And the Cypriot defence found it hard to cope with the Portuguese superstar who had several attempts on goal without finding that killer touch that has seen him score a 100 goals for Real in record time.

His best chance of the first half saw him flash a shot wide of the far post just before the interval.



Real Madrid playmaker Kaka runs with the ball before scoring the second goal during their Champions League quarterfinal against APOEL at the GSP Stadium on Tuesday.

PHOTO: AFP

## Moratti slams Gasperini

AFP, Milan

President Massimo Moratti blamed former coach Gian Piero Gasperini for Inter Milan's disastrous season after firing Claudio Ranieri and replacing him with the untried and unheralded Andrea Stramaccioni.

Ranieri was dismissed on Monday after a run of just one win in 10 league games which left the nerazzurri down in eighth and 10 points off a Champions League qualification position.

In the last month he had overseen the club's exits from the Champions League and Italian Cup.

Ranieri took over from Gasperini a month into the season and while Moratti paid tribute to the dignity of the former Chelsea and Juventus boss, he turned his anger on Ranieri's predecessor.

"Ranieri is a fantastic person, very intelligent, I thought he would tell me where to go (after being fired) but instead he offered his services as a consultant, he's a true gentleman," said Moratti.

"Given his method of coaching he needs another type of team, a different project.

"But it's Gasperini's fault for the disaster that is this season.

"He ruined everything, he stripped the atmosphere of determination and complained constantly of the players."

## Advantage Chelsea

AFP, Lisbon



Chelsea took a big step towards the last four of the Champions League here on Tuesday after scoring a 1-0 victory over Portuguese giants Benfica in their quarterfinal first-leg match.

A 75th-minute strike from Salomon Kalou gave Chelsea a hard-fought win at the Stadium of Light after Benfica had carved out the better chances but failed to land the knockout blow against their Premier League opponents.

The result also represented vindication for interim Chelsea manager Roberto Di Matteo, who had taken a huge gamble by surprisingly omitting veterans Frank Lampard, Didier Drogba and Michael Essien from his starting line-up.

The win puts Chelsea firmly on course to reach their sixth Champions League semifinal in nine seasons heading into the return leg at Stamford Bridge next week.

A subdued first half saw neither side manage to get a grip on the game, with Chelsea failing to get a shot on target until Raul Meireles tested Artur with a fierce low strike on 40 minutes.

Benfica were scarcely much better, although the movement of Oscar Cardozo and Nicolas Gaitan had hinted at the home side's attacking threat.

Cardozo had been the first to draw a save from Petr Cech on 11 minutes, but his tame header from Gaitan's cross on the left was comfortably gathered by the Chelsea goalkeeper.

Gaitan was back in the thick of it on 20 minutes, threatening the Chelsea area following a quick free-kick only to shoot wide after getting goal-side of John Terry.

Chelsea forays into Benfica territory were few and far between, with Fernando Torres's high and wide shot on 22 minutes the sum total of their early efforts.

Benfica had one of the few attempts on goal in the 33rd minute when Bruno Cesar cut in from the right and shot, but again Cech was equal to the challenge, collecting the effort with relative ease.

It looked as if Chelsea were going to go an entire half without testing the Benfica goal before Meireles finally found his range five minutes before the break.

Ashley Cole picked out the Portuguese midfielder in space near the edge of the area and he unleashed a powerful low drive that Artur parried behind.

Benfica came out for the second half with a far greater sense of purpose and threatened the Chelsea goal twice in the opening five minutes.

Only a desperate goal-line clearance from David Luiz prevented a Benfica goal on 48 minutes, the Brazilian defender blocking Cardozo's thumping shot from the edge of the area.

Two minutes later Benfica were back on the attack, Pablo Aimar jinking forward and feeding Cesar, who tested Cech with a dipping long-range shot.

Yet Chelsea also had a golden opportunity to open the scoring on 53 minutes.

Torres curled in an inviting cross from the left but the unmarked Kalou could only head over from six yards with the goal begging.



Chelsea forward Salomon Kalou (R) celebrates his all-important goal with teammate Fernando Torres during their Champions League quarterfinal against Benfica at the Luz Stadium on Tuesday.

PHOTO: AFP

## Goetze boosts Dortmund

AFP, Berlin

Highly-rated Germany midfielder Mario Goetze gave a huge boost to Bundesliga champions Borussia Dortmund on Tuesday by signing a two-year extension to his present contract.

The 19-year-old - rumoured to be the subject of a rejected 40 million euro bid from Arsenal last summer - has committed himself to the club till June 2016.

"Everyone knows how good I feel at Dortmund," said Goetze, who has been at the club since the age of nine and made his senior debut at 17.

The 12-times-capped Goetze's decision to remain will see Dortmund field two of Germany's brightest young talents next season as Marco Reus will join from Borussia Muenchengladbach.

Goetze is due to return to first team action, at the latest by April 11 when the league leaders face a potential title decider with Bayern Munich, after being out since January with a pubic bone injury.

## FA searches for technical director

AFP, London

England's Football Association are on the lookout for a new technical director -- 10 years after the only man to have held the job left the post.

The new technical director will work alongside Trevor Brooking, the FA's director of football development and a former England midfielder at the new national football centre at St George's Park in the Midlands town of Burton-on-Trent.

FA general secretary Alex Horne said Tuesday: "The role of technical director will be crucial as we continue to strive towards improving the technical ability and knowledge of our players and coaches, both now and in the future."

Howard Wilkinson, who left the technical director role to become Sunderland manager in 2002, said the post was important if England were to have a centre for coaching coaches and develop a style of football that could succeed on the international stage.

"Any federation needs someone who is responsible for the strategic direction in terms of technical matters and the FA is no different," Wilkinson said.

## Spurs, Everton in semis

AFP, London



This season's FA Cup will be won by a team from London or Liverpool after Tottenham and Everton triumphed on Tuesday to set up capital and Merseyside semifinal derbies at Wembley next month.

Spurs beat Bolton Wanderers 3-1 in an FA Cup quarterfinal after the original tie was abandoned following the collapse of Bolton's Fabrice Muamba.

They will now face fellow London club Chelsea in the last four.

Meanwhile, in a quarterfinal replay, Everton won 2-0 away to Sunderland to set up a semi-final match against local rivals Liverpool, who've already won the League Cup at Wembley this season.

At White Hart Lane, goals late on from New Zealand's Ryan Nelsen and Gareth Bale appeared to have settled Spurs' nerves before Bolton striker Kevin Davies pulled one back for the visitors in the 90th minute.

However, Louis Saha sealed Tottenham's win with the last kick of the match in stoppage time.

Bolton goalkeeper Adam Bogdan made several excellent saves for the visitors before Tottenham's pressure was rewarded when, 16 minutes from time, central defender Nelsen headed in from a corner.

And three minutes later, with Bolton chasing the game, Wales winger Bale fin-

ished off a counter-attack initiated by speedy striker Jermain Defoe.

The original tie, at White Hart Lane on March 17, was abandoned shortly before half-time after Bolton midfielder Muamba collapsed with a cardiac arrest in an incident that sparked worldwide concern.

"I think there was obviously an important football match to play in the end," said Bolton manager Owen Coyle.

"The events of 10 days ago were fresh and it was an opportunity for everybody to say thanks for the support.

"Our lads were brave, Bogdan was outstanding. At 2-0 it would have been easy to feel sorry but we kept going. It was a terrific advert for football.

"When the draw was made I thought we were paired with the best team in football and we will see if that proves to be true."

Bale, bidding to be a member of the first Tottenham team to win the FA Cup since 1991, said: "We've had a long hard season, we've shown how we want to get off the bad run and keep improving.

"Everybody wants to win the FA Cup. We have got a great chance, we've got tough opponents against Chelsea but we will give it our best shot to win."

In the north-east, after a 1-1 draw at Goodison Park, Everton won through thanks to a first half goal from Nikica Jelavic before Sunderland's David Vaughan turned Jelavic's cross into his own net at the Stadium of Light in the 57th minute.

The semifinals will be played at Wembley on the weekend of April 14-15.

### RESULTS

Tottenham 3 (Nelsen 74, Bale 77, Saha 90) Bolton 1 (Davies 90)  
Sunderland 0 Everton 2 (Jelavic 24, Vaughan 57-og)



## আকর্ষণীয় মুনাফা জাতীয় সঞ্চয় প্রকল্পসমূহ

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- পেনশনার সঞ্চয়পত্র (৫-বছর মেয়াদী); মুনাফার হারঃ ১৩.১৯% ।  
এক লক্ষ টাকায় প্রতি তিন মাসে নীট মুনাফা ৩,১৪৫ (তিন হাজার একশত পঁয়তাল্লিশ) টাকা ।
- ৫-বছর মেয়াদী বাংলাদেশ সঞ্চয়পত্র; মুনাফার হারঃ ১৩.১৯% ।  
এক লক্ষ টাকায় মেয়াদান্তে (৫-বছর) নীট মুনাফা ৬২,৯০০ (ষাষটি হাজার নয়শত) টাকা ।
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এক লক্ষ টাকায় প্রতি তিন মাসে নীট মুনাফা ৩,০০০ (তিন হাজার) টাকা ।
- ডাকঘর সঞ্চয় ব্যাংক মেয়াদী হিসাব (৩ বছর মেয়াদী); মুনাফার হারঃ ১৩.২৪% ।  
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