

Ronaldo to star in TV reality show

AFP, Rio de Janeiro

Brazil football great Ronaldo who, like half of his country's population, is overweight, is to star in a television reality show that will chronicle his battle against the bulge.

For three months the portly ex-striker, now a member of Brazil's 2014 World Cup organizing committee, will submit to a series of physical exercises and dietary re-education which will be aired every Sunday.

"I have problems with the weighing scales. It's a real trauma," the Globo channel's G1 website quoted the 35-year-old star as saying.

"I have already tackled many challenges and this one will not be easy. Those who have already tried to lose weight know that. But I am getting on with it in high spirits," added Ronaldo.

He retired last year and disclosed that he had long been suffering from thyroid problems, which caused him to gain a great deal of weight.

Ronaldo said he wanted to be fit for an annual charity match in which he will take part along with his ex-Real Madrid teammate and French soccer legend Zinedine Zidane in the southern Brazilian city of Porto Alegre this year.

Ronaldo played for Brazil in 98 international matches, scoring 62 goals and was part of the national squad that won the 1994 and 2002 World Cups.

He retired prematurely after suffering many knee injuries.



Napoli striker Edu Vargas is ecstatic after scoring one of his three goals against AIK Solna during their Europa League Group F match at the San Paolo Stadium on Thursday.

PHOTO: AFP

Vargas destroys Solna

REUTERS, Bern

Yuto Nagatomo scored a stoppage time equaliser to spare Inter Milan a humiliating home defeat against Russia's Rubin Kazan as the Europa League's 48-team group stage got under way on Thursday.

Titleholders Atletico Madrid won 3-0 at Hapoel Tel Aviv but Athletic Bilbao, the side they beat in last season's final, struggled to a 1-1 draw at home to Hapoel Kiryat Shmona, another Israeli side.

Among the other matches of the 24 played, Liverpool won 5-3 at Young Boys in an enthralling but blunder-prone tie and Tottenham Hotspur had two goals harshly disallowed in a goalless draw at home to Lazio.

The outstanding individual performances were from Chile striker Eduardo Vargas, who grabbed a hat-trick in Napoli's 4-0 win over AIK Stockholm, and AEL Limassol goalkeeper Matias Degra who extended his remarkable run of not conceding from the penalty spot.

Inter's 2-2 draw means that neither they nor rivals AC Milan have managed a win at the San Siro this season in seven attempts between them.

Inter appeared set for defeat when Venezuelan forward Jose Rondon put the Russians ahead in the 84th minute, however Nagatomo popped up to turn in Diego Milito's cross for the hosts in the second minute of stoppage time.

Rubin had also taken a first-half lead through Aleksandr Ryazantsev with Marko Livaja levelling six minutes before the break.

There were also dramatic finishes at

RESULTS	
Udinese (ITA) 1 (Di Natale 90+1) Anji Makhachkala (RUS) 1 (Traore 45)	Young Boys (SUI) 3 (Nuzzolo 38, Ojala 53, Gonzalo Eulogio 63) Liverpool (ENG) 5 (Ojala 4-og, Wisdom 40, Coates 67, Shelvey 76, 88)
Hapoel Tel-Aviv (ISR) 0 Atletico Madrid (ESP) 3 (Cristian Rodriguez 37, Diego Costa 40, Raul Garcia 63)	Viktoria Plzen (CZE) 3 (Horvath 47, Duris 58, Rajtoral 80) Academica Coimbra (POR) 1 (Wilson 19)
AEL Limassol (CYP) 0 Borussia Moenchengladbach (GER) 0	Fenerbahce (TUR) 2 (Erkin 28, Alex 57) Marseille (FRA) 2 (Valbuena 83, A. Ayew 90+4)
Bordeaux (FRA) 4 (Sane 13, Gouffran 27, Engels 47-og, Jussie 66) Club Brugge (BEL) 0	Maritimo Funchal (POR) 0 Newcastle (ENG) 0
FC Copenhagen (DEN) 2 (Claudimir 20, Cornelius 74) Molde (NOR) 1 (Pape Pate Diouf 45+1)	VfB Stuttgart (GER) 2 (Ibisevic 5, Niedermeier 85)
Steaua Bucharest (ROM) 2 (Chipciu 6, Rusescu 80-pen)	Dnipropetrovsk (UKR) 2 (Matheus 50, Hutchinson 58-og) PSV Eindhoven (NED) 0
Napoli (ITA) 4 (Vargas 6, 46, 68, Dzemal 90)	AIK Solna (SWE) 0
Genk (BEL) 3 (Vossen 22, Buffel 78, De Cuelar 90+2) Video Fehervar (HUN) 0	Sporting Lisbon (POR) 0 FC Basel (SUI) 0
Inter Milan (ITA) 2 (Livaja 39, Nagatomo 90+2) Rubin Kazan (RUS) 2 (Ryazantsev 17, Rondon 84)	Partizan Belgrade (SRB) 0 Neftchi (AZE) 0
Athletic Bilbao (ESP) 1 (Suseta 40) Hapoel Kiryat Shmona (ISR) 1 (Ruchet 14)	Lyon (FRA) 2 (B. Gomis 59, Lisandro 62) Sparta Prague (CZE) 1 (Krejci 77)
Maribor (SLO) 3 (Beric 25, Ibrami 62, Tavares 88-pen) Panathinaikos (GRE) 0	Tottenham (ENG) 0 Lazio (ITA) 0
Bayer Leverkusen (GER) 0 Metallist Kharkiv (UKR) 0	Rapid Vienna (AUT) 1 (Katzler 66) Rosenborg (NOR) 2 (Elyounoussi 18, Dorsin 60)

Udinese, where Antonio Di Natale struck in stoppage time to give them a 1-1 draw at home to big-spending Russians Anzhi Makhachkala, and at Fenerbahce, who conceded two late goals in a 2-2 draw with Olympique Marseille.

Borussia Moenchengladbach should have taken three points from their trip to Cyprus to play AEL Limassol but Oscar Wendt smashed a

penalty against the crossbar in the eighth minute of injury time.

According to the Cyprus Mail, it was the ninth time in a row that Limassol's Argentine goalkeeper Degra, who foiled Gladbach earlier with some outstanding saves, had survived a penalty against him.

Liverpool, fielding a reserve team in Switzerland, were gifted a fourth minute lead with a bizarre own goal when Christoph Spycher headed the ball straight at Juhani Ojala and it ricocheted into the net.

Liverpool returned the present when Enrique lost the ball in the penalty area and Raphael Nuzzolo fired into the roof of the net in the 38th minute.

Liverpool led again and Young Boys turned it around to 3-2 before a Sebastian Coates header, aided by more shambolic defending, and two strikes from Jonjo Shelvey gave the visitors the points, maintaining a 41-year unbeaten record against Swiss opposition.

Clint Dempsey and Steven Caulker both had goals ruled out for Tottenham, who were shunted out of the Champions League qualifiers to make way for holders Chelsea, while Alvaro Gonzalez thumped a shot against the bar for Lazio at White Hart Lane.

Napoli were the only Italian side not to draw as Vargas, signed from Universidad de Chile in January amid high expectations, scored his first goals since his move.

Vargas latched on to a through ball from Alessandro Gamberini to open his account after six minutes and scored from another pass from the same player at the start of the second half.

Marek Hamsik set up Vargas's third but was given a straight red card shortly afterwards.

Rapid Vienna lost 2-1 to Norway's Rosenborg behind closed doors as a punishment for the crowd trouble which preceded their qualifying tie in PAOK Salonika.

Man Utd head to Anfield Real aim to rebound

AFP, London

Michael Carrick has pleaded with Manchester United fans to keep the peace when his side face bitter rivals Liverpool in an emotionally charged clash at Anfield this weekend.

United's visits to Liverpool are always potentially explosive given the animosity between supporters, but the build-up to this season's clash is especially tense as it is the club's first home game since the release of an explosive report into the Hillsborough tragedy.

The report cleared Liverpool fans of any blame for the deaths of 96 of their own supporters during crushing on the terraces before and during the 1989 FA Cup semi-final against Nottingham Forest at Sheffield Wednesday's Hillsborough stadium.

But United fans, who have often taunted their rivals about Hillsborough in the past, engaged in anti-Liverpool chants during last weekend's win over Wigan, raising fears they would do the same at Anfield and potentially spark serious crowd disorder.

Carrick, who scored United's winner in their 1-0 Champions League victory over Galatasaray in midweek, admits there is huge responsibility on both players and fans alike to ensure there are no ugly incidents on Sunday.

"After what has gone on there is added responsibility on the players for everything to go smoothly. We will be doing our utmost to make sure that is the case," Carrick said.

"It is a heated game because it is a great football match. It is a rivalry of two great clubs with great histories and traditions. It is what makes the game so special, a classic game worldwide.

"Hopefully it will be a cracking game of football because it is vital that after

FIXTURES	
(1400GMT unless stated)	
Saturday	
Chelsea v Stoke, Southampton v Aston Villa, Swansea v Everton (1145GMT), West Brom v Reading, West Ham v Sunderland, Wigan v Fulham	
Sunday	
Liverpool v Man Utd (1230GMT), Newcastle v Norwich, Man City v Arsenal (1500GMT),	

gluing at the wrong end of the table after opening the season without a win in their first four league games.

Also on Sunday, champions Manchester City will aim to bounce back from their misery in Madrid when they host in-form Arsenal.

City threw away a 2-1 lead in the closing minutes against Real Madrid, eventually losing 3-2 in the Bernabeu on Tuesday to open their Champions League campaign on a low note.

However, Yaya Toure, City's midfield powerhouse, believes the experience of taking on a European giant like Real will be invaluable in the long run.

"I think we played against a fantastic team. Real Madrid have a big history, they are a big club. It was quite good for us to play against them to see what level we are at now," Toure said.

While City were losing in Madrid, third-placed Arsenal secured their third successive victory in all competitions thanks to a 2-1 win over French champions Montpellier.

Arsenal's Spanish midfielder Mikel Arteta believes one of the keys to that run is the good form of unheralded full-backs Carl Jenkinson and Kieran Gibbs.

"I think they've been very consistent," Arteta said. "Gibbs has been playing really well. I think he's finding himself more comfortable going forwards.

"Carl's had four or five games under his belt and you can see he's confident."

AFP, Madrid

Champions Real Madrid aim to get their La Liga campaign back on track away to city rivals Rayo Vallecano following a dismal start which has seen a Lionel Messi-inspired Barcelona open up an eight-point lead over them

with the season little over a month old.

Many reasons have been offered for the run of just one win in four games, from a demanding pre-season tour to claims that Jose Mourinho has lost the control of the dressing room.

But Real did offer the motivation and fight that had been missing to come from behind to beat Champions League opponents Manchester City at the Bernabeu on Tuesday.

Defeat away to Sevilla last weekend, however, means that Real have only picked up four points so far and afterwards an angry Mourinho was particularly disappointed with the manner of the defeat where the players appeared to lack interest.

Sergio Ramos, one of the heavyweights in the Madrid dressing room and has stood up

to Mourinho in the past, appeared to be the one to pay the price as he was dropped against City and Raphael Varane came in to partner Pepe at centre half.

The pressure on the shoulders of the Portuguese coach would really have increased with a further defeat which looked quite possible at 2-1 down with six minutes to go but Karim Benzema and Cristiano Ronaldo turned the game around.

Most of the question marks at the start of the season were over how Barca would be able to overturn Madrid with their new coach Tito Vilanova, and with Messi leading the way they have made a storming start with four straight wins in the league and now play Granada at the Camp Nou.

Messi also proved his value on the European stage with two late goals as Barca too had to come from behind to beat Spartak Moscow on Wednesday.

The main concern for Vilanova is the number of players missing from the defence with Gerard Pique adding to the list against Spartak which saw Alex Song come on to partner Javier Mascherano at the back. Carles Puyol and Jordi Alba were also out along with long term absentee Eric Abidal.

Conte made to wait

AFP, Rome

Juventus coach Antonio Conte will have to wait until October 2 before discovering if he has any chance of seeing a 10-month worldwide touchline ban reduced, it was announced Friday.

Conte was suspended by the Italian authorities before the start of the season after being accused of failing to disclose knowledge of match-fixing during his time at Siena in the 2010-11 season.

The ban was endorsed by FIFA last week, meaning Conte cannot coach his team during domestic and international fixtures.

Conte has appealed the Italian football federation ban to the National Sports Arbitration Tribunal (TNAS) -- Italy's supreme sports court -- but in Rome Friday the body suspended the next hearing until October 2.

World football's governing body FIFA said last week any appeal would be monitored by them, including the one about to be heard by an Italian arbitration panel.

Conte's absence meanwhile only appears to have galvanised his team, whom he led to Serie A title glory last season.

'No Balotelli bust-up'

AFP, Manchester

Roberto Mancini on Friday insisted that there was no bust up with striker Mario Balotelli after the Italian was left out of Manchester City's squad for their Champions League tie with Real Madrid.

Mancini instead explained that he wanted to play with just one striker and did not want any more than two strikers on the bench with Sergio Aguero and Edin Dzeko favoured in front of Balotelli and Carlos Tevez starting.

The City manager was responding to questions following a newspaper report in Britain that suggested the striker was dropped because of a late night-out following the Blues' draw with Stoke City last weekend.

Mancini said that Balotelli was just like any other squad player at the Etihad Stadium and would have to accept being dropped from time to time.

"It is totally false what someone wrote yesterday (Thursday). It is not true. Mario went to the stand only because we decided to play with only Tevez," he told a news conference.

"Mario is a player like other players. When he is on the bench sometimes they don't understand."

City will be looking to bounce back from their European disappointment against Arsenal on Sunday, with Mancini adamant that they should put their experience at the Bernabeu behind them.

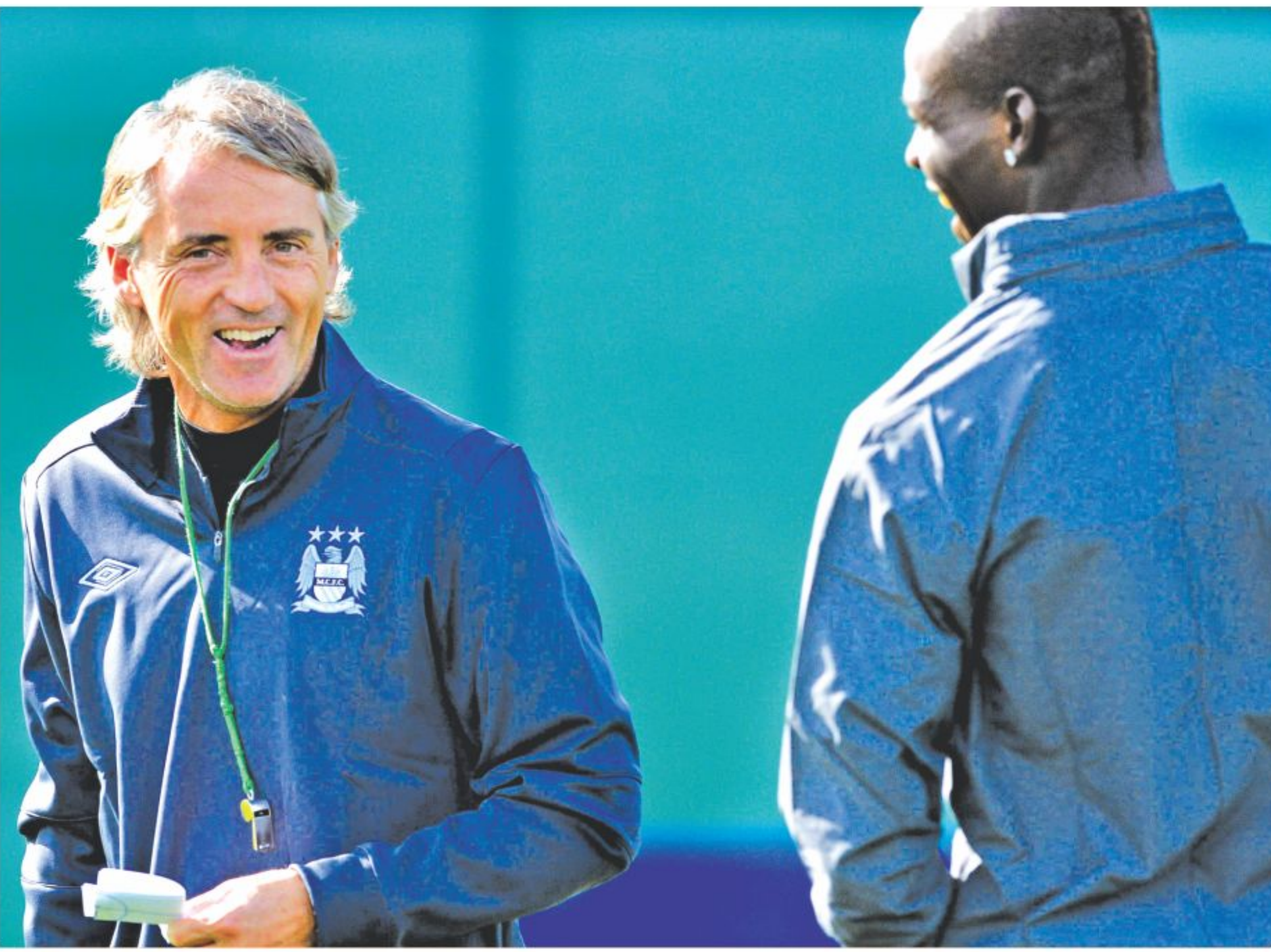
The Premier League champions were leading 2-1 with just five minutes to go but goals from Karim Benzema and Cristiano Ronaldo swung the game back into Madrid's favour and City were denied any points from their opening Champions League game.

But Mancini is confident City will be able to overturn the result when Jose Mourinho's side visit the Etihad stadium later this year.

"I think we should be frustrated for what happened in the last five minutes but also happy because we did a good performance. It is not easy to score two goals in Madrid and to have a chance to win. I think next time will be a different game.

"In this moment, maybe they are better than us and probably they deserved to win but when you are 2-1 with five minutes to go in the Bernabeu, it is difficult to watch this. I am confident in this group and for this Champions League."

Mancini criticised goalkeeper Joe Hart for being outspoken following the Madrid defeat but backed the England number one and said he had no problem with the player.



Manchester City manager Roberto Mancini (L) shares a joke with forward Mario Balotelli during a training session in Manchester last Monday.

PHOTO: AFP

What to WATCH

BTV & STAR Cricket

- ICC World T20
- Sri Lanka v South Africa
- Live from 4:00pm
- Australia v West Indies
- Live from 8:00pm

ESPN

- English Premiership
- Swansea City v Everton
- Live from 6:00pm
- Chelsea v Stoke City
- Live from 8:00pm

STAR Sports

- English Premiership
- West Bromwich v Reading
- Live from 8:30pm
- Primera Liga
- Celta de Vigo v Getafe
- Live from 8:30pm
- Real Betis v Espanyol
- Live from 12:30am (Sunday)