

PSG now
Neymar's
dream

AFP, Paris

Brazilian striker Neymar admitted Sunday that a move to French club Paris Saint Germain would be a dream come true for him.

"To play at PSG, maybe, it would be a great honour," the Santos player told the Telefoot programme on French television station TF1.

"It would be a dream to play with Zlatan Ibrahimovic, it's a dream to play with great players and he's one of them," said Neymar, adding that Brazilian midfielder Lucas Moura who will join PSG in January had "made the right choice".

"The city of Paris is wonderful ... but I'm at Santos, we'll see," he said.

Neymar has been linked with top European clubs including Spanish giants Barcelona, but his agent Wagner Ribeiro insisted the 20-year-old would be staying put for the next two years.

Ribeiro told Telefoot that Neymar did not want to leave Brazil "before the World Cup at home in 2014".

Bradley brings
Roma back

AFP, Milan

American midfielder Michael Bradley marked his recent return to action by scoring the second goal in Roma's 2-0 defeat of Atalanta at the Olympic stadium on Sunday.

Bradley has been sidelined through injury but in a rare start for Zdenek Zeman's side he pounced on the rebound from Mattia Destro's 62nd minute drive to beat 'keeper Andrea Consigli from close range.

Argentinian midfielder Erik Lamela had put Roma ahead on the half hour after a great through ball from playmaker Francesco Totti.

Roma's third win of the season moved them up to fifth in the Serie A table ahead of the afternoon fixtures and the Milan v Inter derby plus Udinese's visit to high-flying Napoli later Sunday.

Atalanta's fourth reverse of the campaign dropped the Bergamo-based side one place to third from bottom.

Row in the
past, say
Bayern

AFP, Munich

Bayern Munich chairman Karl-Heinz Rummenigge insisted Saturday the row between coach Jupp Heynckes and director of sport Matthias Sammer has been resolved amicably.

Matthias had annoyed Heynckes by criticising the team for an unconvincing first-half display in their 2-0 win at Werder Bremen last Saturday which was only decided by two late goals.

Heynckes hit back by saying any issues should be dealt with internally and the subject has been bubbling in the German media all week.

But Rummenigge attempted to draw a line under the episode by saying he moderated a frank discussion between the pair on Tuesday.

"We had a very good, very open and very honest conversation," he said.

"I am convinced the matter has been resolved and the media would be well advised to cease bringing up this feud. As far as we are concerned, it is not an issue internally."

"It is important that both work harmoniously and trust each other, I have the impression that this is the case after this conversation."

"We can now bury the matter."



A combo picture shows Barcelona's Lionel Messi (L) and his Real Madrid rival Cristiano Ronaldo celebrate their goals in El Clasico at the Nou Camp yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Get tough
Loew, says
Hoeness

AFP, Berlin

Germany coach Joachim Loew needs to get tough with his stars in the national squad, Bayern Munich president Uli Hoeness has said ahead of the Germans' World Cup qualifiers against Ireland and Sweden.

Germany play the Republic of Ireland at Dublin's Aviva Stadium on Friday then host Sweden at Berlin's Olympic Stadium on Tuesday October 16.

Loew's team began their Brazil 2014 campaign with a lacklustre 3-0 win over minnows Faroe Islands last month followed by a 2-1 win over Austria in Vienna, but Germany failed to shine on both occasions.

Hoeness says the mild-mannered Loew should rethink his attitude towards his players and toughen up in a bid to get more out of them.

"He has to put more pressure on them and not only be in a good mood," Hoeness told German magazine Der Spiegel.

Before Euro 2012 held in June by Poland and Ukraine, Loew took his players to meet German Formula One legend Michael Schumacher.

Walcott's timely
reminder

AFP, London



Theo Walcott sent a message to Arsene Wenger as the Arsenal star came off the bench to inspire his side's 3-1 win at West Ham on Saturday.

Not for the first time this season Walcott found himself left on the substitutes' bench, but the England international's second-half introduction played a key role in Arsenal's third Premier League win of the campaign.

Mohamed Diame had handed West Ham the lead in the first half before French striker Olivier Giroud ended his Premier League goal drought to equalise just before half-time.

Walcott, who is yet to sign a new contract after making it clear to Wenger he wants to be used as a forward rather than a winger, came on to put Arsenal ahead with a clinical finish in the second half before Santi Cazorla completed the win late on to lift the Gunners into fifth place.

Giroud, a £12 million signing from Montpellier, almost ended his wait for a first league goal when his low shot was pushed aside by West Ham goalkeeper Jussi Jaaskelainen inside two minutes.

If that was warning sign, West Ham clearly hadn't learned their lesson as they rode their luck to remain on level terms.

Another sweeping move carved West Ham open once again as Lukas Podolski's first-time pass found Cazorla and the Spaniard's shot was deflected narrowly wide.

But for all Arsenal's superiority, it was West Ham who opened the scoring against the run of play in the 21st minute.

George McCartney's pass looked to have

sent Diame down a blind alley, but the Senegalese midfielder showed quick feet to drift inside Aaron Ramsey before curling home a fine opening goal.

Diame had been booked for his goal celebrations and the former Wigan midfielder threatened to go from hero to zero with a rash challenge on Mikel Arteta within minutes.

Referee Phil Dowd, however, let Diame off with a warning.

But Arsenal wouldn't have to wait long before they hauled themselves level.

Podolski's teasing cross left James Collins in no-man's land and Giroud timed his run perfectly to volley home from close-range in the 41st minute.

It was the least the Gunners deserved, but they still looked shaky defending set-pieces. That was evident when Kevin Nolan stole into yards of space, only to see his tame effort drift harmlessly wide on the stroke of half-time.

The pace of the game dropped in the second half and Ramsey's air kick allowed Matt Jarvis time before the winger shot over on the hour.

Arsenal goalkeeper Vito Mannone was fortunate to see Andy Carroll's header drift agonisingly wide as West Ham continued to press.

But Arsenal, despite not being at their best, took a 77th minute lead when Giroud's fine pass saw Walcott escape the offside trap to slide home.

Nolan wasted a chance when he fired over and with Wenger's side needing the breathing space Cazorla provided it, crashing home a thunderous long-range strike from Walcott's pass to clinch the win in the 83rd minute.

United crush
Newcastle

AFP, London

Manchester United surged into second place in the Premier League with a 3-0 demolition of Newcastle, while Liverpool manager Brendan Rodgers suffered another Anfield nightmare as his struggling side were held to a 0-0 draw by Stoke on Sunday.

Sir Alex Ferguson's team closed the gap on leaders Chelsea to four points thanks to first half goals from Jonny Evans and Patrice Evra before Tom Cleverley struck with a superb strike after the break.

United, who are above third placed Manchester City on goal difference, have lost twice already in the league this season and, with Chelsea winning on Saturday, they could ill-afford another set-back at St James' Park, where they were beaten 3-0 last season.

Newcastle never had a chance of emulating that result as United, playing some of their best football of the season, raced into a two-goal lead within 15 minutes.

Evans struck first with a powerful header from Wayne Rooney's corner in the eighth minute and French left-back Evra nodded home from another Rooney corner seven minutes later.

Newcastle were denied a goal when Demba Ba's effort was kept out by United goalkeeper David de Gea despite claims it crossed the line.

Messi, Ronaldo trade
blows in Clasico draw

AFP, Barcelona

Lionel Messi and Cristiano Ronaldo both scored twice as Barcelona and Real Madrid drew 2-2 in a politically-charged Clasico on Sunday which kept the Catalan giants eight points ahead of their bitter rivals.

Ronaldo put Madrid ahead after 23 minutes but Messi responded just after the half hour mark with Barca having shown little going forward.

The 98,000 capacity crowd of vociferous Catalans glimpsed the possibility of going 11 points clear after Messi struck a free-kick to put them ahead after the break but Ronaldo responded five minutes later.

In the dying stages, Barca had the chance to win it with Martin Montoya hitting the woodwork.

On a tense night at Camp Nou, fans created a mosaic of the Catalan flag, "The Senyera", in a clear demonstration of the nationalist fervour in the region where many want independence from Spain.

In a surprise move, Barca lined up with Adriano Correia in the centre of defence alongside Javier Mascherano with Carles Puyol and Gerard Pique both injured.

Real coach Jose Mourinho put his confidence in the side which won the league last season with Mesut Ozil returning to the starting line-up despite a poor start to the campaign where Luka Modric appeared to have moved above him in the pecking order.

In a cautious opening, Barca had possession but were generally too deep and the Madrid players were happy to sit on the halfway line, looking to pounce when their

moves broke down.

Despite their impressive winning streak, which had yielded six victories in the opening six La Liga matches, Barca have lacked their usual silky passing and their hesitation was made worse by a lack of confidence in their defence.

Angel Di Maria had an early shot wide and Adriano was forced into a last ditch clearance but the first clear opportunity fell to Karim Benzema after 12 minutes.

However, volleying the ball on the full from a Ronaldo cross, he blazed wide.

The general air of nationalism was again demonstrated after 17 minutes and 14 seconds when fans raised their Senyera flags and chanted for freedom for Catalonia.

The moment was chosen as a reference to the fall of Barcelona in 1714 during the War of Spanish Succession when Catalonia came under centralised rule from Madrid.

Sergio Ramos had the chance to put Madrid in the driving seat after 20 minutes but allowed a clear header from a corner he was unable to hit the target.

Madrid looked the more incisive side going forward and they got their reward when Ronaldo beat keeper Victor Valdes at his near post with a low left-foot drive after being played in by Benzema.

The Frenchman then failed to double the advantage, leaning back with his shot from 12 yards, and the ball came back off the post while Di Maria hit the follow-up wide.

It got worse for Barca with Dani Alves limping off to be replaced by youth product Montoya.

But forced out of their shells, the game opened up and they equalised with their first opening.



Bayern Munich's French midfielder Franck Ribery in his Oktoberfest garb gestures at the cameras, possibly indicating his brace against Hoffenheim yesterday in Munich.

Bayern bounce back

AFP, Berlin

Bayern Munich bounced back from their midweek Champions League defeat in Belarus as France star Franck Ribery scored both goals in their 2-0 win at home to Hoffenheim in the Bundesliga on Saturday.

Having lost 3-1 to BATE Borisov in Minsk on Tuesday -- their first defeat in 10 competitive games this season -- Bayern enjoyed a comfortable win at the Allianz Arena with their seventh straight domestic league victory.

With second-placed Eintracht Frankfurt at Borussia Moenchengladbach on Sunday, Bayern took the chance to go five points clear at the top of the table.

"The team played very smart, we were very clever," said Bayern Munich coach Jupp Heynckes.

Ribery was outstanding, not only because of the two goals, but because he has also backtracked and won balls for us in defence.

"If the whole team puts in work like that, then we are right where I want to be."

Ribery opened the scoring on 19 minutes after Thomas Mueller's pass down the left.

The Frenchman beat Hoffenheim

RESULTS

Bayern Munich 2 (Ribery 19, 47)
Hoffenheim 0
Schalke 04 3 (Farfan 33, Afellay 46, Neustaedter 58) VfL Wolfsburg 0
Freiburg 3 (Makiadi 36, Caligiuri 90+2-pen, Terrazzino 90+3) Nuremberg 0
Mainz 1 (Noveski 85) Fortuna Duesseldorf 0

defender Andreas Beck and fired the ball through the legs of goalkeeper Koen Casteels from eight metres.

Then after some good build up play

between striker Mario Mandzukic and

midfielder Toni Kroos, Ribery was the fastest

to react and beat Casteels again on 47 minutes.

Both Bayern captain Philipp Lahm and

Mueller picked up injuries ahead of Friday's

World Cup qualifier against Ireland in Dublin.

Lahm finished the match with heavy bruising on his left shin while Mueller had to

go off after 26 minutes following an accidental clash with team-mate Mario Mandzukic which left him with a cut cheek.

There was no happy return to Gelsenkirchen for

Wolfsburg's ex-Schalke 04

coach Felix Magath as the Royal Blues enjoyed a 3-0 win.

Magath spent two years at Schalke before

he was sacked in February 2011 when he

returned to Wolfsburg.

Magath's team were well beaten at

Gelsenkirchen's Veltins Arena thanks to

goals by Peru striker Jefferson Farfan, Dutch

forward Ibrahim Afellay and midfielder

Roman Neustaedter.

"We only fought for the first 45 minutes, then we gave the points away," said

Magath.

Cole told to
quit Twitter

SOCCERNET

Chelsea defender Ashley Cole has been advised to quit Twitter after derogatory comments he posted on the social network site risked putting his future with club and country on the line.

Cole labelled the Football Association a "bunch of t***s" on Friday for accusing him of "evolving" his statement supporting John Terry's defence against the charge he racially abused Anton Ferdinand.

The England left-back swiftly apologised for his remarks but is facing disciplinary action from both Chelsea and the FA.

DAY'S EVENT
GP Federation Cup
Muktijoddha v Noakhali Football Academy
Time: 4:0