



Bayern Munich forward Thomas Muller (C) celebrates after scoring against Fortuna Duesseldorf during their Bundesliga clash on Saturday.

PHOTO: AFP

Brilliant Bayern

AFP, Dortmund



Bayern Munich set a new Bundesliga record on Saturday when they claimed their eighth straight victory since the start of the season with a 5-0 hammering of Fortuna Duesseldorf to stay top of the league.

Bayern in 1995, Mainz in 2010 and Kaiserslautern in 2001 had all previously held the joint record of seven successive wins.

It was also the 300th Bundesliga victory for Bayern coach Jupp Heynckes thanks to goals by Croatia's Mario Mandzukic, Brazil's Luiz Gustavo and Rafina, plus two from Germany's Thomas Mueller.

"Of course, I am delighted," said Heynckes. "We played fantastic football from start to finish."

Despite second-placed Eintracht Frankfurt and Schalke 04, third, also winning, Bayern remain five-points clear at the top.

Bayern went ahead on 28 minutes after a Franck Ribery pass split the defence and found striker Mandzukic unmarked on 28 minutes to slot home.

Enjoying 80 percent possession, Bayern doubled their lead on 36 minutes.

Mueller fired the ball into the box and Brazil midfielder Gustavo enjoyed a simple tap in with Duesseldorf goalkeeper Fabian Giefer at his feet, desperately trying to scramble away the danger.

RESULTS
Eintracht Frankfurt 3 (Matmour 5, Jung 18, Meier 82) Hanover 1 (Abdellaoue 43)
Fortuna Duesseldorf 0 Bayern Munich 5 (Mandzukic 28, Gustavo 36, Mueller 55, 86, Rafinha 87)
Borussia Dortmund 1 (Lewandowski 55) Schalke 04 2 (Afellay 14, Hoeger 48)
Bayer Leverkusen 2 (Kiesling 43, Castro 87) Mainz 05 2 (Szalai 58, Risse 76)
VfL Wolfsburg 0 SC Freiburg 2 (Caligiuri 40-pen, Schuster 84)
Werder Bremen 4 (Petersen 37, Arnautovic 45, Fuellkrug 76, Junuzovic)

Mueller grabbed Bayern's third on 55 minutes after a good pass from Ribery.

Fortuna's defence folded again as Mueller grabbed his second on 86 minutes and Rafinha claimed the fifth a minute later.

Schalke enjoyed a rare 2-1 win at title-holding neighbours Borussia Dortmund in the

141st Ruhr derby.

The Royal Blues took an early lead when Dutch forward Ibrahim Afellay volleyed home on 14 minutes at Signal Iduna Park stadium in front of 80,645 fans.

Schalke doubled their lead two minutes into the second half when an excellent pass from Lewis Holtby on the halfway line put midfielder Marco Hoeger away.

The 23-year-old sprinted clear of the Dortmund defence and drilled the ball past Borussia's despairing goalkeeper Roman Weidenfeller.

Having started with a 4-4-2 formation, Borussia then switched back to a 4-2-3-1 attack which paid off when Poland striker Robert Lewandowski headed home on 55 minutes to put the hosts back in the game, but it was not enough.

"We were a bit surprised that Dortmund changed their formation, but we coped well with it," said Schalke coach Huub Stevens.

"After it was 2-1 the whole team fought well and deserved the win."

Defeat leaves Dortmund 12 points behind Bayern and four behind Schalke.

Barca edge nine goal thriller

REUTERS, Madrid



Lionel Messi scored a brilliant hatrick as Barcelona survived Javier Mascherano's red card to claim a thrilling 5-4 win at Deportivo Coruna on Saturday that put them three points clear at the top of La Liga.

Real Madrid climbed to fourth after Gonzalo Higuain and Cristiano Ronaldo (penalty) struck in a 2-0 win at home to promoted Celta Vigo.

Barca raced into a three-goal lead after 18 minutes in an action-packed clash at the Riazor. The home side pulled two goals back before Messi scored his second of the night to make it 4-2 at the break.

In a frenetic start to the second half, Pizzi curled in a stunning 47th-minute free kick and Mascherano was harshly shown a second yellow card two minutes later.

Barca coach Tito Vilanova reacted by replacing the excellent Cesc Fabregas, who provided three goal assists, with Xavi before Messi appeared to have killed the game when he made it 5-3 with a trademark run and clinical finish in the 77th minute, his 15th La Liga hat-trick.

A bizarre own goal from Barca full back Jordi Alba, when he lobbed keeper Victor Valdes from inside his own penalty area, gave Depor fresh hope but they were unable to make some late pressure count.

Unbeaten Barca have 22 points from eight matches, three ahead of Atletico Madrid who play their game in hand at Real Sociedad on Sunday.

Malaga are third on 17 points after Joaquin made amends for missing a penalty with the winner in a 2-1 triumph at home to Real Valladolid.

Valencia scored two late goals to snatch a 3-2 victory against struggling Athletic Bilbao who had Ander Herrera sent off midway through the second half.

RESULTS
Deportivo La Coruna 4 (Pizzi 26-pen, 47, Alex 37, Alba 79-og) Barcelona 5 (Alba 3, Tello 8, Messi 18, 43, 77)
Malaga 2 (Isco 37, Joaquin 88)
Valladolid 1 (Manucho 9)
Real Madrid 2 (Higuain 11, Ronaldo 67-pen) Celta Vigo 0
Valencia 3 (Soldado 26-pen, Tino 88, Nelson Valdez 90) Athletic Bilbao 2

Bonera worried by fragility

INTERNET, undated

AC Milan defender Daniele Bonera admits he is concerned about how fragile his side look after their fifth league loss of the season.

Massimiliano Allegri's men were once more undone as Lazio raced into a 3-0 lead at Stadio Olimpico on Saturday.

Bonera suggested the tactics of under-fire coach Allegri did little to help their cause against Lazio.

"We found (we were) playing solid with two midfielders, but tonight the coach decided to deploy de Jong in front of the defence with two players more offensive in (Antonio) Nocerino and (Riccardo) Montolivo," Bonera told La Gazzetta dello Sport.

"At the moment we are a bit fragile even in form, as well as mentally."

Meanwhile, striker Alexandre Pato remained positive, having made his first Serie A appearance of the season, coming on for Nocerino in the 51st minute.

"Now I just have to play as much as possible because I miss the pace (of the match). The team is growing, Milan will always be a successful club," he said.



BT
GP Federation Cup Final
Sk Jamal v Sk Russel
Live from 5:00pm
STAR Cricket
Champions League T20
Chennai Super Kings v Yorkshire
Live from 5:30pm
Sydney Sixers v Mumbai Indians
Live from 9:30pm
ESPN
Sportscentre India
Sports News



GP Federation Cup
FINAL
Sk Jamal v Sk Russel
Time: 5:00pm
Venue: Bangabandhu National Stadium
National Cricket League
(Four-day match, Day-3)
Rajshahi v Dhaka
Venue: Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium, Mirpur
Khulna v Barisal
Venue: Sk Abu Naser Stadium, Khulna
Sylhet v Rangpur
Venue: Rangpur Cricket Garden
Dhaka Metro v Chittagong
Venue: Shaheed Chandu

More misery for Milan

AGENCIES, Milan



Lazio heaped more misery on AC Milan by holding on to record a 3-2 victory over the struggling Rossoneri at the Stadio Olimpico on Saturday night.

The visitors fell behind to a deflected effort from Hernanes midway through the first half before Antonio Candreva doubled the Biancocelesti's advantage with a stunning strike just before the interval.

Miroslav Klose made it 3-0 early in the second half and although Nigel de Jong and Stephan El Shaarawy dragged Milan back into the game last season's runners-up were unable to complete what would have been a remarkable comeback. The under-pressure Massimiliano Allegri looked like he did not have a care in the world before kick-off.

The Rossoneri coach was given very little cause for concern during an opening quarter in which Milan coped comfortably with what little Lazio had to offer going forward, while at the same time threatening sporadically themselves.

However, when it comes to struggling sides, anything that can go wrong, usually does go wrong, and so it was that the visitors fell behind 25 minutes in when Hernanes twisted and turned his way past Daniele Bonera before unleashing a speculative effort which struck the defender's outstretched leg and looped up and over

the stranded Marco Amelia.

Fortune frowned on Milan again just moments later when El Shaarawy, having latched onto a through-ball from Antonio Nocerino, fired the ball through the legs of Albano Bizzarri only to see Andre Dias seemingly come from nowhere to clear off the line.

They were hit with another devastating psychological blow just before the break when Candreva unleashed a long-range drive that seemed to swerve in several different directions on its way past an understandably bemused Amelia.

Despite the benefit of 15 minutes' respite, Milan still appeared punch drunk at the start of the second half. It would be difficult to offer another credible explanation for the way in which they defended Lazio's third goal, with right-back Ignazio Abate missing in action

and a dazed and confused Daniele Bonera staggering about the box as Klose clinically volleyed home Candreva's measured cross from the right wing.

That looked like the knockout blow but Milan kept swinging and their fighting spirit was rewarded with a goal from De Jong, who did well to get his toe on Urby Emanuelson's low, in-swinging free kick.

Suddenly it was the hosts who looked fragile - both mentally and defensively - and Milan set up a fascinating finale when El Shaarawy cut in from the left with just over 10 minutes to go and curled the ball into the bottom corner.

Pogba yearned for Juventus

INTERNET, undated

Juventus teen prospect Paul Pogba said his desire to join the Serie A leaders blossomed over the off-season.

Fresh from scoring his first goal in Juve colours during the team's 2-0 victory over Napoli on Saturday, the 19-year-old highlighted the role former France and Juventus midfielder Patrick Vieira played in helping him select his destination of choice, once he decided to depart Manchester United.

"There were other teams interested in me over the summer, but I wanted to sign for Juventus," Pogba told Sky Sport Italia.

"Many French champions have played here. I spoke to Vieira and he advised me to come to Juventus.

"I'm really happy and proud of my first goal in the black and white stripes. In those moments you don't think about anything. You try to shoot and that's all."

RESULTS
Juventus 2 (Caceres 80, Pogba 82) Napoli 0
Lazio 3 (Hernanes 25, Candreva 41, Klose 49) AC Milan 2 (N. de Jong 61, Stephan El Shaarawy 79)

Ferguson slams Ferdinand



AFP, Manchester

Alex Ferguson has accused Rio Ferdinand of letting down Manchester United after the defender refused to take part in equality group Kick It Out's anti-racism day.

Every player in the Premier League had been issued with a Kick It Out T-shirt to be worn during pre-match warm-ups.

But Ferdinand infuriated Ferguson by failing to wear his ahead of Saturday's 4-2 win over Stoke at Old Trafford.

Ferdinand is thought to have been protesting at what he believes to be the

relatively weak punishment given to John Terry after the Chelsea defender was only handed a four-match ban despite being found guilty by the Football Association of racially abusing the United star's brother Anton during a match against QPR last year.

"I'm very disappointed, he has let us down," Ferguson said after the Stoke game. "I said yesterday that the players would be wearing it in support of the Professional Footballers Association and that every player should adhere to it. And he goes and lets us down."

"It is embarrassing for me. He will be dealt with, no doubt about that."