

Rio wears anti-racism T-shirt

AFP, London

Rio Ferdinand followed the example of younger brother Anton by wearing a 'Kick It Out' anti-racism T-shirt prior to Manchester United's game at Chelsea on Sunday.

Both brothers had boycotted the campaign prior to last weekend's Premier League matches, in protest at perceived leniency from the football authorities when dealing with racism in the game.

Anton Ferdinand donned the T-shirt ahead of Queens Park Rangers' 1-0 loss at Arsenal on Saturday, and his brother followed suit at Stamford Bridge the following day. However, United winger Ashley Young -- recalled to the starting line-up by coach Alex Ferguson -- did not wear a T-shirt.

Rio Ferdinand also shook hands with Chelsea's Ashley Cole prior to the game, despite Cole having testified in support of John Terry after the Blues captain was accused of racially abusing Anton in a match last year.

EPL, NBC sign TV deal

AFP, London

The English Premier League and US broadcaster NBC on Monday said they had signed a new, three-year rights deal, capitalising on the growing popularity of the world's most popular football league in the United States.

The agreement, reportedly worth some \$250 million, will see the broadcast of 380 matches from the 2013/14, 2014/15 and 2015/16 seasons, according to a joint statement published on premierleague.com and nbcports.com.

Premier League chief executive Richard Scudamore said the broadcaster would help showcase the best of English football across the United States via its network of channels across the country, including in Spanish.

NBC Sports Group chairman Mark Lazarus said the league was "on the cusp of exponential popularity growth" in the United States and promised "the broadest programming and promotional commitment" the sport has seen across the Atlantic Ocean.

"This is a perfect match," he added. The NBC Sports Group is one of the world's largest broadcasters but was criticised recently for broadcasting many Olympic events from London, including the opening ceremony, on a time-delay to secure more prime-time viewers and advertising revenue.

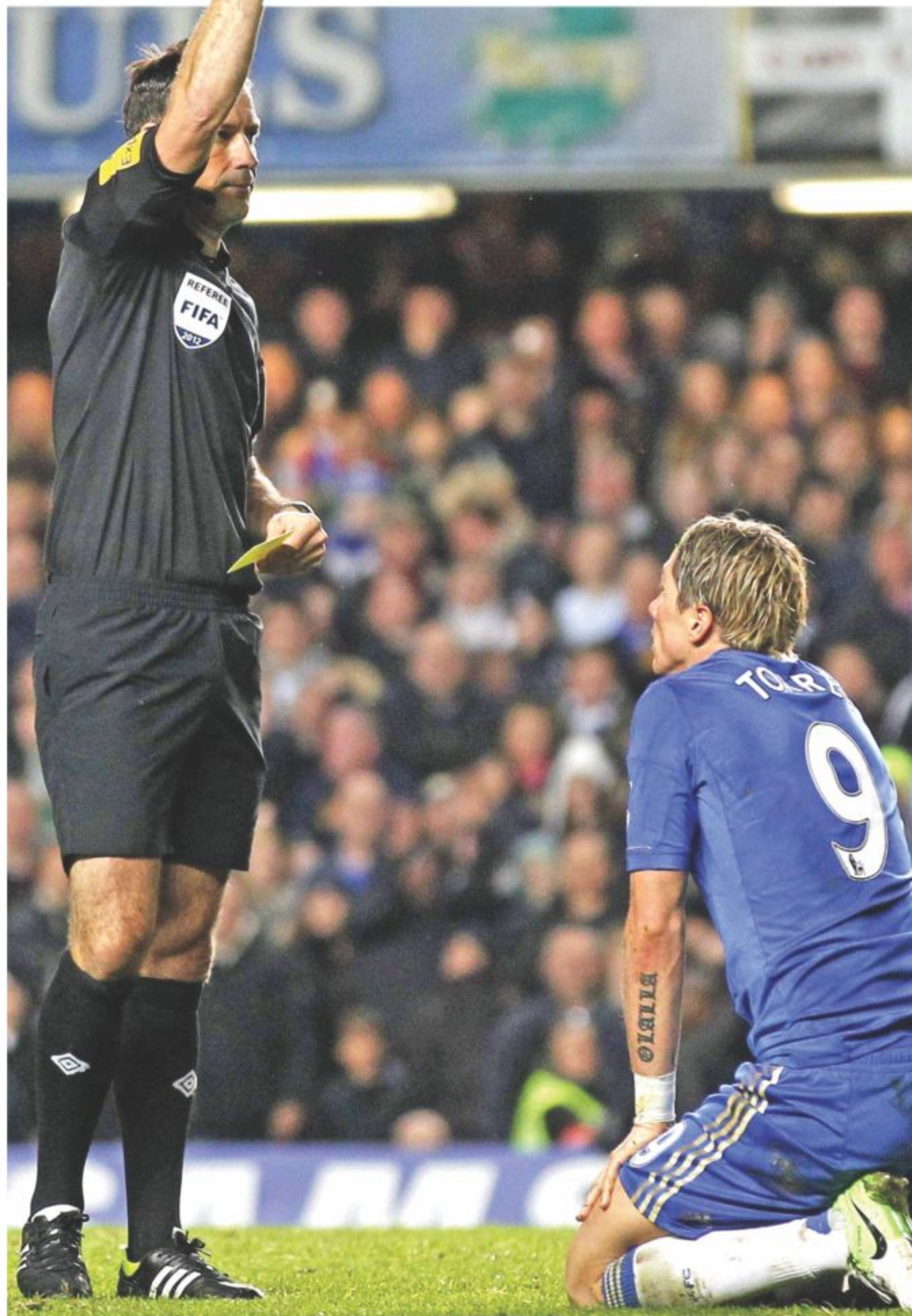
English Premier League matches are currently broadcast in the United States on Fox and ESPN.



ESPN
Sportscentre India
Sports News
Live at 8:30pm

STAR Sports
Serie A
Palermo v AC Milan
Live from 2:00am (Wednesday)

TEN Sports
Copa del Rey
Alaves v Barcelona



Chelsea striker Fernando Torres (R) is shown the red card by referee Mark Clattenburg during their Premier League encounter against Manchester United at Stamford Bridge on Sunday.

PHOTO: AFP

Red happy ref robs Chelsea

AFP, London



Chelsea have made a formal complaint about the language, reportedly racial, allegedly used by referee Mark Clattenburg to two of their players during the controversial 3-2 home defeat to Manchester United.

The dramatic development, which came after a stormy top of the table clash at Stamford Bridge on Sunday, will add fire to Wednesday evening when the two sides meet again in London in the League Cup.

"We have lodged a complaint to the Premier League match delegate with regard to inappropriate language used by the referee and directed at two of our players in two separate incidents during today's match," said a Chelsea statement.

"The match delegate will pass the complaint to the football association. We will make no further comment at this time."

Sky Sports News claimed late Sunday that one of the players involved was Chelsea's Nigerian star John Obi Mikel.

It was reported by the Daily Telegraph on Monday that Mikel accused Clattenburg of directing a comment of a racial nature at him.

Professional Game Match Officials (PGMO), the body which represents Premier League referees, released a statement which read: "PGMO is aware of the allegations

and they are being treated with the utmost seriousness.

"Mark will co-operate fully and welcomes the opportunity for the facts to be established."

All four officials -- the referee, his two assistants and the fourth official -- wore microphones and ear pieces that allowed them to hear what each other was saying throughout the match.

But under FIFA guidelines, what is said between them is not recorded.

The complaint came after a highly-charged encounter in which Clattenburg dismissed two Chelsea players before Javier Hernandez secured the points for United with a goal that Chelsea manager Roberto Di Matteo insisted should have been ruled out for offside.

Goals from Spaniard Juan Mata and Brazilian Ramires had earlier hauled Chelsea back in the game after an own-goal from defender David Luiz and a Robin van Persie

strike had put them 2-0 down early on.

Branislav Ivanovic and Fernando Torres were sent off but it was the decision of Clattenburg to issue Torres a second yellow card for diving after a challenge by Jonny Evans that was the focus of much of Di Matteo's frustration.

The Spanish international had been booked for an earlier challenge on Tom Cleverley before his 68th minute clash with Evans.

"He played the ball between his legs, then he gets kicked on his shin and goes down -- it's as simple as that," said Di Matteo. "It's a free-kick for us and might even be a sending off for Evans as he is through to the goal. I was shocked. I thought it was going to be a free-kick for us and a foul for us, not against us."

"And the decisive goal was an offside goal. It's a shame that game like this has to be decided in that manner by officials."

"I have spoken to the referee. Surely when he's going to watch the images he's going to realise that he made big mistakes."

United manager Alex Ferguson viewed things differently.

"Did Torres intend to dive? He could have gone on and he didn't," he said.

"I thought he went down. I think Jonny may have just caught him a little bit but you can carry on running and he chose to go down."

"He could have carried on and scored. That is what I can't understand."

RESULTS

Everton 2 (Osman 22, Naismith 35) Liverpool 2 (Baines 14-og, Suarez 20)
Newcastle 2 (Ba 35, Cisse 90) West Brom 1 (Lukaku 55)
Southampton 1 (Rodriguez 66) Tottenham 2 (Bale 15, Dempsey 39)
Chelsea 2 (Mata 44, Ramires 53) Man Utd 3 (Luiz 4-og, van Persie 12, Hernandez 75)
Saturday
Arsenal 1 (Arteta 84) QPR 0
Aston Villa 1 (Benteke 27) Norwich 1 (Turner 79)
Man City 1 (Tevez 61) Swansea 0
Reading 3 (Leigertwood 26, McCleary 85, Robson-Kanu 90) Fulham 3 (Ruiz 61, Baird 77, Berbatov 88)
Stoke 0 Sunderland 0

Juve deny conspiracy

AFP, Milan



Juventus director general Beppe Moratta has moved to quash claims of a conspiracy after the Serie A champions' controversial win at Catania on Sunday.

"I agree that there was a refereeing mistake yesterday but there have been other mistakes in previous matches and last year Juve was on the receiving end," said Moratta.

"But we categorically reject any idea of a conspiracy, that Juve somehow affected the result yesterday."

Arturo Vidal's 57th-minute winner helped Juve extend their lead at the top of Serie A and took their unbeaten streak to 48 matches but the Sicilian side had earlier scored a perfectly good goal that was chalked off by the referee for offside.

Furious Catania president Antonino Pulvirenti was ordered off the bench and later complained that protests from the Juve bench had influenced the officials' decision to disallow the goal.

Pictures of Bergessio's goal showing he was not offside were splashed on the front

of both Gazzetta dello Sport and Corriere dello Sport, Italy's biggest sports dailies.

The front pages also showed that for his goal Vidal was offside, reinforcing Catania's claims that Juve had twice been given a helping hand by officials.

On what was an extraordinary day for controversial refereeing decisions, Lazio also complained after they finished their 2-0 defeat at Fiorentina with nine men, having also seen a goal knocked off.

Serbian Adem Ljajic gave La Viola the lead in first half injury time and despite Stefano Mauri levelling with a diving header in the 59th minute he was flagged offside despite Juan Cuadrado appearing to play him onside.

Lazio coach Vladimir Petkovic praised Fiorentina but felt aggrieved by the referee's decision not to award Mauri's goal.

"The goal was clearly not offside," he told Sky Italia. "I also failed to understand some of the cautions (yellow cards) we had, but overall we should have done better."

The incidents have raised questions over the standard and professionalism of refereeing in Italy.

RESULTS

Catania 0 Juventus 1 (Vidal 57)
Bologna 1 (Cherubin 58) Inter 3 (Ranocchia 27, Milito 53, Cambiaso 64)
Fiorentina 2 (Ljajic 46, Toni 90) Lazio 0
Pescara 0 Atalanta 0
Sampdoria 0 Cagliari 1 (Dessena 47)
Torino 1 (Basha 90+2) Parma 3 (Sansone 72, Amauri 73, Rosi 88)
Napoli 1 (Hamsik 58) Chievo 0
Roma 2 (Lamela 22, 24) Udinese 3 (Domizzi 32, Di Natale 50, 88)
Saturday
Siena 0 Palermo 0

Bayer stun Bayern

AFP, Berlin



Bayer Leverkusen claimed a shock 2-1 win at Bayern Munich on Sunday to claim their first win at the Bavarians for 23 years as the Bundesliga leaders' record winning streak

came to an abrupt end.

Having set a German league record last weekend with their eighth straight win since the start of the season, Bayern were left stunned as defender Jerome Boateng scored a late own goal to give Leverkusen the three points.

Despite the defeat, Bayern still enjoy a four-point lead at the top of the table, while Leverkusen are fifth.

The visitors took the lead when Leverkusen captain Simon Rolfes found Andre Schuerrle on the wing, who threaded his pass through the Munich defence for striker Stefan Kiessling to tap in on 42 minutes.

Bayern levelled on 77 minutes thanks to a header from striker Mario Mandzukic,

but Leverkusen were not be denied their first win in Munich since October 1989.

Boateng managed to get his head in the way as Leverkusen attacked, but the ball flew into the top left-hand corner and past goalkeeper Manuel Neuer on 86 minutes.

There was also drama in Hanover as Borussia Moenchengladbach came from 2-0 down to score three goals in nine minutes to enjoy a 3-2 win and claim only their

third league victory of the season to go ninth with Hanover tenth.

Earlier, VfB Stuttgart striker Vedad Ibisevic headed a late winner to seal his team's 2-1 home victory over Eintracht Frankfurt.

Ex-Germany midfielder Christian Gentner played a big part in Stuttgart's win, which lifts them up to eighth, after he scored the opener in the sixth minute, then provided the final cross for Ibisevic's 84th-minute header.

Frankfurt equalised when captain Alexander Meier curled the ball inside the far post on 67 minutes before Bosnia and Herzegovina's Ibisevic hit his fifth goal of the season to leave Frankfurt third in the league.

RESULTS

VfB Stuttgart 2 (Gentner 6, Ibisevic 84) Eintracht Frankfurt 1 (Meier 67)
Bayern Munich 1 (Mandzukic 77) Bayer Leverkusen 2 (Kiessling 42, Boateng 86-og)
Hanover 96 2 (Schlaudraff 48, Diouf 53) Borussia M'gladbach 3 (Alvaro Dominguez 70, Brouwers 77, Arango 79)
Saturday
Schalke 04 1 (Farfan 77) Nuremberg 0
Freiburg 0 Borussia Dortmund 2 (Subotic 54, Goetze 83)
Mainz 05 3 (Szalai 21, Szalai 46, Szalai 64) Hoffenheim 0
Greuther Fuerth 1 (Edu 8) Werder Bremen 1 (Petersen 44)
Fortuna Duesseldorf 1 (Langenke 70-pen) VfL Wolfsburg 4 (Dost 50, 64, Olic 53, Diego 78-pen)
Friday

Five-star Real

AFP, Madrid



Gonzalo Higuain and Cristiano Ronaldo both scored twice as Real Madrid cruised to a 5-0 victory at Mallorca on Sunday to keep up the

top of La Liga.

Jose Callejon got the fifth as Real remained in fourth position, a point behind Malaga in third, and eight behind leaders Barcelona, who crushed Rayo Vallecano 5-0 on Saturday, and second-placed Atletico Madrid.

Ronaldo has now scored in eight consecutive games for Madrid -- 14 goals in total and 11 in the league.

Meanwhile, Radamel Falcao scored to make it 10 in the league for him, as Atletico Madrid beat Osasuna 3-1 to stay level on points with Barca.

"Last season we were 10 points clear with fewer games to play and we said the

league was still open, so we have to think the same and keep on picking up points," said Real Madrid coach Jose Mourinho.

"Tonight was important because this is one of the most difficult trips in the calendar, but it's not just Barca we are catching, Atletico also have a big advantage on us but we'll continue."

Mourinho returned Higuain to the starting line-up after favouring Karim Benzema in Wednesday's 2-1 Champions League defeat at Borussia Dortmund.

The Argentinian striker did not take long to repay that faith when he pounced on a defensive error by Mallorca's Anderson Conceicao to hit the opener after only seven minutes.

Luka Modric also returned to the starting eleven, replacing the injured Sami Khedira, and he was involved in much of Madrid's better play.

Mallorca's best chance of the first period fell to Emilio N'Sue who almost surprised Iker Casillas from long range before Ronaldo doubled the lead on 21 minutes.

RESULTS

Real Zaragoza 2 (Postiga 36, Sapunaru 45) Sevilla 1 (Medel 70)
Levante 3 (Martins 12, 60, Rios 73) Grenade 1 (El-Arabi 84)
Athletic Bilbao 1 (Dominguez 90+4) Getafe 2 (Juan Rodriguez 12, Vazquez 58)
Atletico Madrid 3 (Miranda 31, Raul Garcia 35, Falcao 73) Osasuna 1 (Lamah 43)
Real Mallorca 0 Real Madrid 5 (Higuain 8, 70, Cristiano Ronaldo 22, 73, Callejon 90+1)
Saturday
Espanyol 0 Malaga 0
Real Betis 1 (Sevilla 9) Valencia 0
Celta Vigo 1 (Bermejo 8) Deportivo La Coruna 1 (Dominguez Lamas 29)
Rayo Vallecano 0 Barcelona 5 (Villa 20, Messi 48, 89,



Real Madrid superstar Cristiano Ronaldo exults after scoring against Mallorca during their Primera Liga clash at the Iberostar Stadium on Sunday.

PHOTO: AFP

Longest game in history

AFP, Manchester

Manchester City won the longest match in Premier League history on Saturday as the champions' 1-0 victory over Swansea lasted 102 minutes and 42 seconds.

The clash at Eastlands featured over 12 minutes of stoppage-time after Swansea goalkeeper Michel Vorm suffered a calf injury in a failed attempt to save Carlos

Tevez's second half goal, while City defender Micah Richards needed prolonged treatment on a knee problem.

That additional time added by referee Martin Atkinson meant the game beat the previous record of 102 minutes and 26 seconds set in Arsenal's 1-1 draw against Liverpool at the Emirates Stadium in 2011.

'We need to play more defensively'

AFP, Berlin

Germany need to play more defensively and aim for a clean sheet every match, the national team's goalkeeper Manuel Neuer said in an interview published on Monday.

"It's a fact that we have to concentrate more on defence," the Bayern Munich number one was quoted as saying by the football magazine Kicker.

Joachim Loew's team were 4-0 up with less than half-an-hour to play but threw away the lead for the game to finish 4-4, marking the first time in the 104-year history of the German Football Federation that a four-goal lead had been lost.

It was also the first time in three years that Germany had dropped points in a qualifying match.

Neuer said: "We've got great qualities in attack, we're always in a position to score at least one goal. But as a keeper, I'd like this idea of playing for a clean sheet to be our priority before every match."