

CUP THRILLER PART II
**Chelsea 5
Man Utd 4**

Football

AFP, London

Chelsea claimed partial revenge for their stormy loss to Manchester United at the weekend by prevailing 5-4 when the teams resumed hostilities in an end-to-end fourth-round League Cup tie on Wednesday.

United led three times at Stamford Bridge, but each time Chelsea responded, with Eden Hazard's 94th-minute penalty taking the game to extra time before goals from Daniel Sturridge and Ramires put the hosts in the quarterfinals.

"It was a very exciting game -- a typical cup game," said Chelsea coach Roberto Di Matteo, whose side face Leeds United in the last eight.

"We could have finished off the game earlier, but we showed what fantastic character we have to come back from behind three times."

There were shocks in the night's other ties, meanwhile, as Swansea City won 3-1 at Liverpool to knock former coach Brendan Rodgers out of the competition and Norwich City came from behind to eliminate Tottenham Hotspur.

United's controversial 3-2 win in the Premier League on Sunday ended with claims that referee Mark Clattenburg had abused Chelsea's John Mikel Obi, but Wednesday's game was a gripping contest more in line with Arsenal's astonishing 7-5 win at Reading the night before.

United made 10 changes to the side that won on Sunday, but they went ahead in the 22nd minute when Anderson robbed the dallying Oriol Romeu on the edge of the box and Ryan Giggs coolly shaped a shot past Petr Cech.

The lead last only 11 minutes, David Luiz equalising from the penalty spot, but more defensive sloppiness from the home side allowed the visitors to restore their lead just before half-time.

Luiz lost the ball after one of his trademark romps up the pitch and when Anderson fed Javier Hernandez, the Mexican held his nerve to beat Cech and claim his sixth goal in nine games against Chelsea.

Gary Cahill replied with a 52nd-minute header, but United soon moved ahead again, as Nani exchanged passes with Anderson, skipped past Luiz and then delicately lofted the ball over Cech.

Chelsea were aggrieved that referee Lee Mason declined to award a penalty after an apparent handball by Michael Keane, but redemption arrived with the last kick of normal time.

Keane's centre-back partner, Scott Wootton, was penalised for blundering into the back of Ramires, and Hazard belied the pressure of the situation to roll a cocksure penalty down the centre of the goal.

Wootton, 21, was also at fault for Chelsea's fourth goal, misusing an attempted back header and then watching on in horror as Sturridge rounded Anders Lindegaard before tucking the ball home.

Ramires made the game safe four minutes from the end, collecting Hazard's pass, rounding Lindegaard, and slipping the ball into the net, before Giggs scored from the spot to take the incredible goal tally to nine.

Liverpool's season encountered fresh disappointment at Anfield as they were outplayed by Swansea, who reached the last eight for the first time.

Chico, Nathan Dyer and Jonathan de Guzman found the net for the Swans, with Luis Suarez on target for Rodgers' side.

Meanwhile, a quick-fire pair of goals in the last six minutes saw Norwich come from behind to win 2-1 against Tottenham at Carrow Road.



PHOTO: AFP

Chelsea midfielder Ramires (L) is about to score the winning goal against Manchester United during their League Cup fourth round match at Stamford Bridge on Wednesday.

RESULTS

Chelsea 5 (Luiz 31-pen, Cahill 52, Hazard 90+4-pen, Sturridge 97, Ramires 116) Manchester United 4 (Giggs 22, 120-pen, Hernandez 43, Nani 59) -- after extra time

Norwich City 2 (Vertonghen 84-0g, Jackson 87) Tottenham Hotspur 1 (Bale 66)

Liverpool 1 (Suarez 76) **Swansea City**

Juve leave it late

AFP, Milan

LEGA CALCIO
Former Manchester United forward Paul Pogba struck in injury time to hand Juventus a 2-1 win over Bologna on Wednesday as the champions opened up a six-point gap on Napoli.

Juventus looked set for a share of the points until Pogba got his head to a superb cross from the left from Sebastian Giovinco to beat Federico Agliardi from close range in the dying seconds.

Pogba had the ball in the net earlier in the game only to be ruled offside and he then hit the post with an exquisite shot on 16 minutes.

Juve finally broke the deadlock in the 54th minute through Fabio Quagliarella, but were brought level when French midfielder Saphir Taider latched on to a cross 15 metres out and beat a diving Gianluigi Buffon with a dipping angled drive.

The Turin-based giants' ninth win in 10 games extended their unbeaten run to 49 games and stretched their lead over Napoli to six points after Walter Mazzarri's side suffered a shock 1-0 defeat away to Atalanta.

Elsewhere, Inter Milan moved into second - four points adrift of Juve - with a

come-from-behind 3-2 win over Sampdoria while Roma suffered a shock 3-2 defeat away to Parma and Lazio had to settle for a draw at home to Torino.

Cagliari celebrated their biggest win of the season when they beat Siena 4-2 to consolidate their mid-table position, while second-from-bottom Chievo grabbed only their third win of the season with a 2-0 defeat of Pescara.

In another mid-table battle Udinese drew 2-2 with Catania.

Although barely a third of the way into the campaign, Inter -- coached by 36-year-old Andrea Stramaccioni -- are emerging as Juventus's biggest danger.

It could not have started worse, however, for the nerazzurri.

A high freekick towards the Inter goal in the 20th minute caused confusion and as Samuel and as Andrea Ranocchia tried desperately to get to the ball

Gianni Munari stole in to beat Samir Handanovic for Sampdoria's opener.

A trio of Latin American-inspired goals, however, soon had Inter well on their way to the win.

Argentine forward Milito levelled with his spot-kick in the 51st minute and after rattling the upright with a snap shot he turned provider for Inter's second goal on 68 minutes.

'I'm happy at Santos'

Football

REUTERS, Santos

European clubs are falling over themselves to get their hands on Brazilian prodigy Neymar but the 20-year-old said on Wednesday he was still not ready to leave his homeland.

"I'm happy here in Brazil, I'm happy at Santos. I have a dream of playing in Europe, but it's still not the right moment," the Santos forward told Reuters in an interview.

The timing of a move to Europe can be critical for Brazilian players.

Many leave too soon, struggle to adapt abroad, are pushed into reserve teams and then see their careers go downhill as they are shunted around clubs on loan.

The biggest worry for Neymar, on the other hand, is that he could stay too long in Brazil where defences are generous in the amounts of space they offer and referees award free kicks for the slightest of brushes.

Neymar struggled in arguably the two biggest games of his career, last year's Club World Cup final where Santos lost 4-0 to Barcelona and the Olympic Games final in August where Brazil were beaten 2-1 by Mexico.

He also had an unhappy experience at last year's Copa America where Brazil were knocked out in the quarter-finals by Paraguay.

"We were very upset about the Copa America," he said. "A lot of people were upset about the Olympic Games, but none more so than us. I am very proud to have taken part in the Olympics and won a medal."

Financially, there is little need for him to go abroad.

Although he could earn higher wages in Europe, in Brazil he has 11 sponsorship contracts and a Neymar shop selling licensed products ranging from mouse pads to cushions and toys.

Jobless Ballack seeks fine reduction

THE TELEGRAPH

A speed camera in Spain caught former German captain Michael Ballack going 131 mph (where the speed limit is 75 mph) with his Audi U7 in October and now he is trying to get his fine reduced because he is retired and has no income.

At his initial court hearing the day after his arrest, his legal team were told that he faced a two-year driving ban and an £8,000 fine.

But at a second hearing on Wednesday, which the 36 year-old did not have to attend because he is retired, he was released by a court.

Ballack has no income since he was released by Bayer Leverkusen in the summer.

"Just because he is a famous footballer doesn't mean he has any money coming in," said Rol, who also pointed out that driving at high speed is tolerated on German motorways.



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Berg fills Rovers vacancy

AFP, London

Henning Berg has returned to his old club Blackburn Rovers to fill the vacancy left by the resignation of former manager Steve Kean, the Championship side announced on Wednesday.

Berg, 43, won the Premier League title with Blackburn as a player in the 1994-95 season before going on to join Manchester United.

Following intense speculation about Berg's appointment, Blackburn announced a press conference scheduled for Thursday morning before confirming on their official Twitter account that the Norwegian would indeed be joining the club.

Blackburn can confirm that Henning Berg has accepted the role of manager.



PHOTO: AFP
Real Madrid striker Karim Benzema celebrates one of his two goals against Alcoyano during their Copa del Rey encounter at the Jose Rico Perez Stadium on Wednesday.

Benzema fires Real

Football

AFP, Madrid

A double by Karim Benzema and goals from Kaka and Jose Rodriguez saw Real Madrid to a 4-1 first-leg victory at Alcoyano on Wednesday and barring a major shock in the return leg a place in the Last 16 of the Spanish Cup.

Jose Mourinho turned to reserve team players Alvaro Morata and brothers Alex and Nacho Fernandez who all started in a side that also featured experienced internationals such as Ricardo Carvalho and Michael Essien.

Among the players left in Madrid for the trip to the 'Segunda B' side were Iker Casillas, Pepe, Sergio Ramos, Xabi Alonso, Mesut Ozil and Cristiano Ronaldo but it made little difference as the visitors controlled the game from the beginning.

Benzema headed home a long ball from understudy goalkeeper Antonio Adan on 20 minutes for the opener before Kaka doubled the lead before the interval with a left-footed strike.

Seventeen-year-old substitute Rodriguez curled home a right footed shot for the third on 66 minutes to make it a dream debut for the youngster.

Five minutes later Javi Lara got a deserved consolation for the home side direct from a free-kick.

However Benzema was able to walk through their tired defence and score with two minutes remaining and the team from the Alicante area face an uphill task in reversing the result in the Santiago Bernabeu in the second-leg.

DAY'S EVENT

National Cricket League

(Four-day match, Day-1)

Rajshahi v Barisal

Venue: Shaheed Kamruzzaman Stadium, Rajshahi

Khulna v Rangpur

Venue: Sk Abu Naser Stadium, Khulna

Sylhet v Chittagong

Venue: BKSP

Dhaka v Dhaka Metro

Venue: Sher-e-Bangla National