



Borussia Dortmund forward Robert Lewandowski slots home the opening goal during their Bundesliga clash against Hanover at the Signal Iduna Park on Saturday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Suarez on fire

AFP, Wigan

Liverpool manager Brendan Rodgers believes in-form striker Luis Suarez should be named player of the year after the Uruguayan grabbed a hattrick in the 4-0 win at Wigan.

Suarez took his Premier League goal tally for the season to 21 -- and 28 in all competitions -- as the Merseysiders moved into seventh spot in the table. "For me there is not a better striker at the moment," said Rodgers. "He is clearly the player of the year for myself and for many people around the country. He is absolutely incredible. Forget

RESULTS

Chelsea 1 (Ba 28) West Brom 0
Everton 3 (Fellaini 42, Pienaar 59, Mirallas 66) Reading 1 (Robson-Kanu 84)
Manchester Utd 4 (Kagawa 45, 76, 87, Rooney 90) Norwich 0
Southampton 1 (Ramirez 45) **QPR 2** (Remy 14, Bothroyd 77)
Stoke 0 **West Ham 1** (Collinson 45)
Sunderland 2 (Gardner 37-pen, Sessegnon 70) Fulham 2 (Berkatov 16-pen, Rietter 35)
Swansea 1 (Moore 85) Newcastle 0
Wigan 0 **Liverpool 4** (Downing 2,

about his quality, it is his hunger and desire. "He never wants to have an easy day and every time he comes onto the pitch he produces stunning performances and gives his maximum. "It was a brilliant hattrick for him and a great day for the team: to get the goals and a clean sheet was terrific." Stewart Downing's headed opener put Liverpool in front inside two minutes and Suarez struck twice before half-time and then early in the second half to pull in front of Robin van Persie in the top scorers chart.



STAR Cricket
India v Australia
Second Test, Day 3
Live from 10:00am

ESPN
Sportscentre India
Sports News
Live at 8:30pm

English Premiership
Aston Villa v Man City
Live from 2:00am (Tuesday)

STAR Sports
La Liga
Sevilla v Celta de Vigo

Dortmund bounce back

REUTERS, Berlin



Borussia Dortmund striker Robert Lewandowski scored twice in a 3-1 Bundesliga victory over Hanover 96 on Saturday as Juergen Klopp's side put their midweek German Cup exit to Bayern Munich behind them. Dortmund, who host Shakhtar Donetsk on Tuesday for a spot in the Champions League last eight, consolidated second spot on 46 points with third-placed Bayer Leverkusen, who scored twice in the last eight minutes to beat VfB Stuttgart 2-1, a point behind.

Lewandowski, on the pitch only after he had his three-game suspension for a red card reduced to two matches late on Friday, fired the hosts into an eighth-minute lead from close range after a cutback from Kevin Grosskreutz.

Klopp, who apologised before the game to Bayern coach Jupp Heynckes for saying the leaders had

copied Dortmund's style this season, deployed Lewandowski in an unusual position behind forward Julian Schieber.

The Poland forward, linked with a transfer to Bayern after refusing to extend his contract with the champions beyond 2014, was unaffected by the switch and added another in the 20th to make it a joint league-leading

RESULTS

Dortmund 3 (Lewandowski 8, 21, Schieber 72)
Hanover 1 (Abdellaoe 40)
VfL Wolfsburg 1 (Olic 50) **Schalke 4** (Draxler 33, 63, Farfan, 79, Huntelaar 86)
Werder Bremen 0 **Augsburg 1** (Werner 29)
Nuremberg 1 (Simons 33-pen) Freiburg 1 (Schmid 83)
Hamburg 1 (Beister 21) Furth 1 (Djurdjic 14)
Bayer Leverkusen 2 (Kiessling 82-pen, L

16 goals for the season.

Hanover, playing without injured midfielder Szabolcs Huszti and top striker Mame Diouf, pulled one back through Mohammed Abdellaoe just before the break but Schieber killed any hopes of a comeback when he threaded in from 15 metres for his

first goal of the campaign.

Leverkusen needed two late goals to come from a goal down and beat visiting Stuttgart. Stefan Kiessling's 82nd minute penalty cancelled out Stuttgart's first half lead through Vedad Ibisevic's spotkick.

Kiessling, who joined Lewandowski on 16 goals this season, almost got another one but keeper Sven Ulreich punched away his effort only to see Lars Bender nod in the winner from the rebound in the 86th, leaving Leverkusen seven points ahead of fourth-placed Eintracht Frankfurt.

Schalke 04 teenager Julian Draxler scored twice and set up another goal as the Gelsenkirchen club continued their domestic recovery with a 4-1 demolition of VfL Wolfsburg for their second straight win.

Germany international Draxler struck either side of an Ivica Olic equaliser and then provided an assist to Peruvian Jefferson Farfan. Klaas-Jan Huntelaar drilled in from a tight angle in the 86th minute to help Schalke move up to sixth place on 36 points.

Barca seek a tonic

REUTERS, Madrid



LFP

Barcelona face a daunting task to overcome AC Milan in the Champions League this month and must quickly recover their form after being dumped out of the King's Cup and beaten in La Liga by Real Madrid in five days.

Although Barca still have a 12-point lead in the Spanish league, they have stuttered at a crucial point in the season and losing to Real is not the way to prepare for the visit of Milan, who hold a 2-0 lead, in the last 16, second leg tie on March 12.

Barcelona have lost their way without coach Tito Vilanova, who is in New York recovering from a December throat operation, and recent performances have been littered with defensive errors and marked by an uncharacteristic lack of cutting edge up front.

Failure against Milan would end Barca's bid for a third Champions League crown in five years and leave them facing a disappointing end to the season by their high standards.

Barcelona's 2-1 La Liga defeat at Real on Saturday was the fifth 'Clasico' in a row that they have failed to beat Jose

Mourinho's side, who clearly have the measure of the Catalans having won three and drawn two of those last five meetings.

Real humiliated Barca at the Nou Camp in Tuesday's King's Cup semifinal second leg, as the 2011 winners eliminated the holders 4-2 on aggregate.

Real's recent domination is a significant turnaround from Mourinho's early days in Spain when Barca were close to unbeatable under Pep Guardiola.

The Portuguese coach's record against the Catalans since he joined Real from Inter Milan is five wins, six draws and six defeats in 17 official matches.

The form of Barca's World Player of the Year Lionel Messi has also dipped in recent weeks although he did score his 18th goal in 25 'Clasico' appearances on Saturday, equalling the record set by Real great Alfredo Di Stefano.

With some of Messi's team mates underperforming and failing to provide him with the impeccable service he is used to, it would be unfair to blame him alone for Barca's woes.

That the Argentine is singled out is a measure of how much Barca rely on him. His strike at the Bernabeu marked the 16th straight La Liga match in which he has scored, his 39th league goal of the season and his 50th in all competitions.

Kagawa owes it to fans

AFP, Tokyo

A modest Shinji Kagawa has credited his fans for his weekend hattrick for Manchester United, the first Asian player to achieve the feat in the history of England's Premier League.

The Japanese midfielder helped secure United a 4-0 victory over Norwich City on Saturday, a result that opened up a 15-point gap for them over Manchester City at the top of the league.

"I appreciate your great supports which gave me today's goals!" the 23-year-old Kagawa wrote in English in his official Twitter page.

"The next match is coming soon, so I am going to bed to have a good rest :)" he wrote in his brief message after the game.

Kagawa, who has attracted more than 127,600 followers since he opened his authorised Twitter account Tuesday, said: "I started twitter and feel you much closer than before. Thank you all!"

Kagawa had previously scored just two league goals for United since his £12 million (\$18 million, 13.9 million euros) close-season move from Borussia Dortmund.



PHOTO: INTERNET

Real Madrid star Cristiano Ronaldo poses alongside ex-Argentina legend Diego Maradona after Saturday's El Clasico clash. Maradona watched the game at the Santiago Bernabeu as a special guest of the Portuguese.

Klopp sorry for jibe

AFP, Berlin

Borussia Dortmund coach Jurgen Klopp on Saturday apologised to his Bayern Munich counterpart Jupp Heynckes for his "copy-cat" jibe in the wake of the holders' German Cup quarterfinal defeat in midweek.

"The last thing I want to do is criticise a renowned colleague. Jupp Heynckes is an excellent coach," Klopp told German broadcaster ARD before Dortmund's 3-1 home win against Hanover 96 in the Bundesliga.

"If he thinks what I said refers to him, then I want to apologise. So if you're listening to this, sorry Jupp."

He later told German Sky: "I just got chatting during one of the 100,000 press conferences we had in the last eight days.

"I do not begrudge Heynckes his success. We have no right to expect to be the first."

Klopp stirred the rivalry between Germany's top two clubs with some barbed comments after holders Dortmund were knocked out of the German Cup by Bayern's 1-0 quarterfinal victory in Munich last Wednesday.