



PHOTO: REUTERS

Liverpool striker Daniel Sturridge (C) flicks a header into goal during their crunch Premier League game against Manchester United at Anfield on Sunday.

Real 3 for 3

AFP, Madrid



Real Madrid continued their unblemished start under new manager Carlo Ancelotti as they beat Athletic Bilbao 3-1 at the Santiago Bernabeu on Sunday to move alongside Villarreal at the top of La Liga.

After a promising start from the visitors, who had also won their opening two games, Madrid began to take control midway through the first-half and went ahead when Isco collected Karim Benzema's lovely scooped pass and lifted the ball beyond Iago Herrerin.

Cristiano Ronaldo then registered his first goal of the season when he nodded Angel Di Maria's free-kick home in first-half stoppage time and Isco made it 3-0 with a deflected strike in the second period before Ibai Gomez scored a consolation for Athletic late on.

With all the transfer speculation surrounding Gareth Bale's imminent arrival in the Spanish capital, it was the absence of one of those rumoured to be leaving the Bernabeu that was the big news pre-match as Mesut Ozil was dropped to the bench by Ancelotti.

Ander Herrera was also only a substitute for Athletic following Manchester United's bid for the midfielder earlier this week as Mikel Rico came in to make his debut.

And Rico nearly had the perfect start as he pounced on a slack header by Alvaro Arbeloa but pulled his shot wide of the target.

Di Maria then had Madrid's first real opening in 16th minute from a ball over the top but he failed to connect properly as he tried to lob Herrerin with his first touch, and the goalkeeper made an easy save.

Ronaldo then saw a low drive tipped around the post from Herrerin and from the

RESULTS

Real Madrid 3 (Isco 26, 72, Cristiano Ronaldo 45+1) Athletic Bilbao 1 (Gomez 79)
Celta Vigo 1 (Rafinha 29) Granada 1 (Piti 62)
Valladolid 1 (Valiente 47) Getafe 0
Osasuna 0 **Villarreal 3** (Perbet 23, Aquino 30, Uche 75)

resulting corner Pepe just failed to turn in Sergio Ramos's header.

However, the hosts had to wait just a few minutes more for the opener as Benzema picked out Isco and he controlled and finished calmly to register his second goal in as many games at the Bernabeu since joining from Malaga.

Athletic were enraged moments after the opener, though, as Benat Extebarria's free-kick struck Sami Khedira's arm in the wall and referee Carlos Clos Gomez awarded another free-kick just outside the box rather than a penalty. Benat stepped up again and this time saw his effort whistle just past Diego Lopez's left-hand post.

Madrid were continuing to look the more threatening, however, and it was no surprise when they doubled their lead just before the break as Ronaldo rose highest to power home Di Maria's in-swinging free-kick.

Ronaldo was then only denied his second of the afternoon by an excellent stop by Herrerin as the keeper got down low to parry the Portuguese's free-kick, but Isco did complete his double 20 minutes from time as he controlled another pass from Benzema and saw his volley from the edge of the box deflect in off an Athletic defender.

The visitors did finally get some recompense for their efforts six minutes later when Ibai swept home De Marcos's cut-back.

Juve rout Lazio again

AFP, Milan



Carlos Tevez scored his second Serie A goal in as many weeks as champions Juventus thumped Lazio 4-1 to sit second in the early standings behind Napoli, 4-2 winners earlier at Chievo.

Juventus put four unanswered goals past Lazio on their way to winning the Italian Super Cup two weeks ago, when Tevez scored his maiden goal for the Bianconeri.

Having secured all three points for Antonio Conte's side in a 1-0 win over Sampdoria last week, the Argentine capped a dominant display by the hosts - marked notably by a brace from Chilean Arturo Vidal - with a fine individual effort in the 80th minute.

Lazio started in positive fashion, Hernanes picking up a loose ball from Juve defender Andrea Barzagli to test Gianluigi Buffon with the 'keeper parrying for a corner.

But it served only to waken Juventus from their slumber and until Vidal's 14th minute opener they consigned the visitors to their own third of the pitch as they launched assault after assault.

Vidal broke the deadlock in style, timing his run onto Paul Pogba's sumptuous ball perfectly to beat a poor Lazio offside trap and then flick the ball past onrushing goalkeeper Federico Marchetti.

Barely 10 minutes later the Chilean attacking midfielder, Juve's top scorer last season, doubled the hosts' lead thanks to another well-timed move as Lazio's defence fell asleep.

Lazio reduced the arrears barely a minute later through their big Greman striker Miroslav Klose.

RESULTS

Chievo 2 (Paloschi 24, 40) **Napoli 4** (Hamsik 13, 64, Callejon 27, Higuain 70)
Juventus 4 (Vidal 14, 26, Vucinic 49, Tevez 80) Lazio 1 (Klose 28)

Kop, Gunners take derby spoils

AFP, London



Daniel Sturridge sent Liverpool top of the Premier League with a 1-0 win over Manchester United on Sunday, while Arsenal clipped Tottenham

Hotspur's wings in the north London derby. New United manager David Moyes was without Wayne Rooney due to a head injury that looks set to rule him out of England's World Cup qualifiers and in his absence, the Scot's poor record at Anfield continued.

Sturridge, who could benefit from Rooney's absence for England against Moldova and Ukraine, scored the only goal in the fourth minute, having also been the match-winner in 1-0 wins over Stoke City and Aston Villa.

It means that Liverpool are the only team to have won their opening three fixtures, after big-spending Spurs lost 1-0 at Arsenal later in the day.

Although the season remains young, it was a painful defeat for United, who already trail their old rivals by five points.

There were less than four minutes on the clock when Liverpool struck, with Sturridge stepping off the line to glance Daniel Agger's header past David de Gea and mark his 24th birthday with an 11th goal in nine games.

The visitors improved in the second half, but Liverpool goalkeeper Simon Mignolet repelled a Ryan Giggs header and a rasping drive from substitute Nani before Robin van Persie slashed a late chance wide.

At the Emirates Stadium, Spurs included new record signing Erik Lamela on the bench; the star recruit of a close-season splurge in which they have spent around

£110 million (\$170 million, 129 million euros) on new players.

It was a familiar combination that saw Arsenal take a 23rd-minute lead, however, with Theo Walcott crossing for Olivier Giroud to beat France team-mate Hugo Lloris with an exquisite near-post finish.

Mathieu Flamini, who has returned to the club from AC Milan, made his second Arsenal debut as a substitute for Jack Wilshere, but fears about the injury-prone England midfielder's fitness were allayed by the news he had only been suffering from stomach cramps.

After Lloris's fingertips prevented Giroud from doubling Arsenal's lead in the second half, Spurs manager Andre Villas-Boas sent on Lamela and Sandro, who came on after an injury to Etienne Capoue.

Roberto Soldado vainly appealed for handball after his shot was blocked by Giroud, but while Nacho Monreal was unable to add a second after Lloris saved from Walcott, it did not stop Arsene Wenger's side stealing into the top four at Spurs' expense.

RESULTS

Arsenal 1 (Giroud 23) Tottenham Hotspur 0
Liverpool 1 (Sturridge 4) Manchester United 0
West Bromwich Albion 0 **Swansea City 2** (Davies 22, Hernandez 83)
Saturday
Cardiff City 0 Everton 0
Crystal Palace 3 (Gabbidon 9, Gayle 79-pen, O'Keefe 90) Sunderland 1 (Fletcher 64)
Manchester City 2 (Negredo 65, Toure 90) Hull City 0
Newcastle United 1 (Ben Arfa 86) Fulham 0
Norwich City 1 (Redmond 68) Southampton 0
West Ham United 0 **Stoke City 1** (Pennant 82)

India beat Pakistan

SPORTS REPORTER from Kathmandu



Six-time champions India beat rivals Pakistan 1-0 in the second match of Group A of the 10th SAFF Championship at the Dasarath Stadium in Kathmandu yesterday. A 14th-minute own goal from Pakistan captain and defender Samar Ishaq made the difference in the game.

Pakistan enjoyed better ball possession and launched more attacks in the opposition backline in the first half, but were unlucky as confusion between two defenders and the goalie made them concede a goal. Defenders Samar, Mohammed Ahmed and goalie Yousaf Ejaz Butt converged to foil a cross from Indian midfielder Francisco Fernandes, but the shot deflected off Samar's legs and went into the net, catching the goalie out of position.

Pakistan were unlucky not to get on level terms as Hasan basher saw his shot hit the far post in the 35th minute. An Ahmed Adil Kalimullah shot in the 44th minute was brilliantly tipped over by Indian goalkeeper Subrata Paul.



Real Madrid starlet Isco celebrates his second goal during their La Liga win over Athletic Bilbao at the Santiago Bernabeu on Sunday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Respite for Schalke

AFP, Berlin



Bayer Leverkusen blew their chance to go top of the Bundesliga on Saturday as they lost their 100 percent record with a 2-0 defeat at resurgent Schalke 04.

Defending champions Bayern Munich stay top of the league despite dropping their first points of the season with a 1-1 draw at Freiburg on Tuesday before their dramatic 5-4 win on penalties over Chelsea in Friday's UEFA Super Cup final.

In the battle between the Bundesliga's other two Champions League representatives, Schalke hauled themselves up into mid-table and left Leverkusen joint-third behind Bayern and second-placed Dortmund, who are at Eintracht Frankfurt on Sunday.

Both Germany left-back Dennis Aogo, who has joined Schalke on loan from Hamburg, and Ghana midfielder Kevin-Prince Boateng, who signed a four-year deal from AC Milan on Friday, started as the Royal Blues picked up their first league win of the season.

Schalke recovered from losing their opening two Bundesliga games against Wolfsburg

RESULTS

Borussia Muenchengladbach 4 (Arango 36, Raffael 53, Kruse 74, Herrmann 85) Werder Bremen 1 (Nordtveit og-69)
Hanover 96 4 (Diouf 31, Sobiech 37, Ya Konan 80, Prib 83) Mainz 05 1 (N. Mueller 12)
VfL Wolfsburg 2 (Olic 42, Diego 45+2) Hertha Berlin 0
Nuremberg 0 Augsburg 1 (Vogt 84)
Hamburg 4 (van der Vaart 7, Zoua 17, Calhanoglu 80, 90+1) Eintracht Braunschweig 0
Schalke 04 2 (Hoeger 30, Farfan 83-pen) Bayer Leverkusen 0

and Hanover 96 to qualify for the Champions League group stage at the expense of Greek club PAOK on Tuesday and built on that success with what was a convincing home league win against Leverkusen.

Keller's side took the lead with half an hour gone when a free-kick went in off midfielder Marco Hoeger's right shoulder before Peru forward Jefferson Farfan made sure of the win when he drilled home an 83rd-minute penalty after being hauled down in the area.