



Manchester United striker Wayne Rooney scores the second goal from a free-kick during their Premier League encounter against Crystal Palace at Old Trafford yesterday.

## Pakistan drop to sixth in rankings

As if the stunning loss to minnows Zimbabwe was not enough, Pakistan were pushed two rungs down the ladder to sixth in the latest ICC Test rankings issued on Saturday.

Zimbabwe pulled off a historic 24-run win in the second and final Test of the series against Pakistan at the Harare Sports Club.

The two-match series was drawn 1-1 with Zimbabwe finishing at 34 ratings points, ahead of 10th ranked Bangladesh.

Zimbabwe had entered the series unranked and irrespective of the result of the series would have finished ninth on the table, the ICC said in a statement.

Zimbabwe had pulled out of playing Test cricket in January 2006 and, since its return to the Test arena in August 2011 after a gap of five years, it had been unranked, having not played the requisite eight qualifying Tests to be part of the rankings table.

In sharp contrast, Pakistan conceded five ratings points and dropped behind Australia and West Indies.

Misbahul Haq's side had moved to the fourth position only last month following the conclusion of the Ashes, which England retained after defeating Australia by 3-0.

AFP, Dubai

# Chelsea stutter at Goodison Park

AFP, London



Wayne Rooney returned to give Manchester United manager David Moyes his maiden win at Old Trafford as the champions beat Crystal Palace 2-0, while Jose Mourinho suffered the first Premier League defeat of his second spell at Chelsea.

Rooney had missed United's defeat at Liverpool and England's World Cup qualifiers against Moldova and Ukraine after suffering a gashed head in a training ground collision with team-mate Phil Jones.

But Rooney marked his return to action with his first goal of the season in the 81st minute. Robin van Persie had struck from the spot to give United the

lead in first-half stoppage-time after Palace's South African midfielder Kagisho Dikgacoi was sent off for fouling Ashley Young. United sealed their first win in three league games thanks to Rooney's fine free-kick.

Meanwhile, Mourinho's Chelsea, who have taken seven points in his first three matches, paid the price for failing to convert their early chances as Steven Naismith's goal in first half stoppage-time gave Everton a 1-0 win at Goodison Park.

Naismith headed in after Chelsea debutant Samuel Eto'o and winger Andre Schurrle both squandered golden opportunities.

At Sunderland, Mesut Ozil, Arsenal's club record signing, made an instant impact during his 79-minute appearance, while team-mate

Aaron Ramsey continued his fine start to the campaign in the Gunners' 3-1 victory. Ozil produced a brilliant touch to control a long ball and then squared for Olivier Giroud, who

## RESULTS

Aston Villa 1 (Benteke 67) Newcastle 2 (Ben Arfa 18, Gouffran 73)

Everton 1 (Naismith 45) Chelsea 0 Fulham 1 (Sidwell 22) West Brom 1 (Mcauley 90)

Hull 1 (Davies 40) Cardiff 1 (Whittingham 59)

Manchester United 2 (Van Persie 45-pen, Rooney 81) Crystal Palace 0

Stoke 0 Manchester City 0

Sunderland 1 (Gardner 48-pen) Arsenal 3 (Giroud 11, Ramsey, 67, 76)

made no mistake with a cool finish in the 11th minute.

Sunderland drew level when Laurent Koscielny needlessly fouled Adam Johnson in the penalty area and Craig Gardner drove home the resulting spot-kick in the 48th minute.

But Ramsey restored Arsenal's advantage in the 67th minute with a superb volley and wrapped up the win with a slick move nine minutes later. The win put Arsenal on top of the table on goal difference.

Tottenham started the post-Gareth Bale era with a 2-0 win against Norwich at White Hart Lane. They were ahead when Danish winger Christian Eriksen, signed from Ajax to fill the gap left by Bale, slid the ball perfectly into the path of Gylfi Sigurdsson, who hammered home in the 28th minute. Iceland

midfielder Sigurdsson killed off Norwich with his second goal, from Paulinho's cross, four minutes after half-time.

Stoke manager Mark Hughes frustrated his former club as Manchester City were forced to settle for a 0-0 draw at the Britannia Stadium.

Yoan Gouffran was Newcastle's star as the Magpies won 2-1 at Aston Villa.

Alan Pardew's team moved in front when Hatem Ben Arfa lashed home in the 18th minute.

Christian Benteke brought Villa level in the 67th minute. But Newcastle took the points thanks to French midfielder Gouffran six minutes later.

Hull and Cardiff shared a 1-1 draw in a clash between the two clubs who won automatic promotion from the Championship last season.

## PSG win at a canter

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AFP, Paris



Paris Saint-Germain went top of the French league table on Friday night with a comfortable 2-0 away win at Bordeaux.

The champions are assured of occupying top spot for at least a further 24 hours, with Marseille visiting bottom club Toulouse on Saturday night.

But the biggest threat to the defence of their crown comes from fellow-big spenders Monaco, who entertain Lorient on Sunday and should logically leapfrog the Parisians.

PSG, who have an important midweek date with Greek side Olympiacos in the Champions League coming up, were always in control of the game and their fluid football meant the result was never in doubt.

But they still had to wait until half-an-hour in to breach the Bordeaux defence for the first time, when Blaise Matuidi collected a deft through ball from Zlatan Ibrahimovic to beat Bordeaux goalkeeper Cedric Carrasso.

Yet it was all but over in the 64th minute when the impressive Lucas doubled the score with his first goal for the club, beating the offside trap to a through ball from Verratti and leaving Carrasso stranded waiting for the cutback for the lurking Ibrahimovic.

"I needed that goal, not only to prove to the others what I'm capable of but also for myself," Lucas said.

The hapless Carrasso conceded that Bordeaux were always second best on the night.



Paris Saint Germain winger Lucas Moura celebrates his goal against Bordeaux during their League One match at the Chaban-Delmas Stadium on Friday.

## El-Shaarawy sidelined

AFP, Milan

Milan forward Stephan El-Shaarawy is expected to be out of action for two to three weeks after suffering a thigh strain, the Serie A club have confirmed.

El-Shaarawy, who has started the new campaign warming the substitutes' bench, suffered the injury in training on Friday.

He will miss Saturday's game against Torino as well as the Champions League group game at home to Celtic on Wednesday.

A Milan statement issued late Friday said: "Over the coming days the player will undergo further tests to determine a prognosis and recovery time."

# Roy buries the hatchet

AFP, London



England manager Roy Hodgson has buried the hatchet with Gary Lineker following the former Tottenham star's criticism of Tuesday's 0-0 draw against Ukraine, he revealed on Friday.

Lineker, the second-highest goalscorer in England history, was scathing of the negative performance of Hodgson's team as they played for a draw in their World Cup qualifier in Kiev.

Although Lineker subsequently backtracked and insisted he was right behind Hodgson, he remains convinced England must do better when they are in possession.

However, Lineker on Friday indicated he had spoken to Hodgson and the former Liverpool boss confirmed

he has made his peace with the BBC television presenter.

"I have no problem with Gary at all," Hodgson told talkSPORT radio. "I have known him a long time and I understand him as well."

"Reflection changes things and makes us look at other aspects of a performance."

"I am looking at the criticism that we didn't attack as well as we could. I am accepting that as fair criticism."

"Gary is saying we defended well and the discipline is good."

Hodgson conceded that, with passions running high in the aftermath of a result that could turn out to be crucial in the battle to reach next year's World Cup finals in Brazil, he had reacted in too extreme a manner when he was critical of Lineker after being told of his comments during the post-match press conference.

"These things always happen because it is so close to the end of the game," he said.

"It is not a reflective reaction. Once you see the game again you put things in a different perspective."

Chief among the wider complaints was that England had shown little inclination to attack after half-time, and seemed happy to settle for a point rather than chase a victory that would have put them within touching distance of automatic qualification.

Instead they must now beat Montenegro and Poland at Wembley next month to make certain of reaching the final 32.

"We were so much in control I might have been tempted to throw more attackers on," Hodgson conceded.

"On another day we might have thought let's have a go."

## Lilian accused of domestic violence

AFP, Paris

The ex-partner of Lilian Thuram has filed a complaint of domestic violence against the most capped player in French football history.

Karine Le Marchand, a 45-year-old television presenter, registered the complaint with police in the upmarket 16th district of Paris on September 4, police sources said Saturday.

According to the ONDRP watchdog body, a total of 53,868 incidents of domestic violence against women were registered in France in 2011, resulting in 122 deaths.

# Moyes defends Fellaini price

AFP, Manchester



David Moyes has defended Manchester United's decision to pay £27.5 million (\$43.6 million, 32.8 million euros) for Marouane Fellaini just weeks after the Belgium midfielder was available for a lower price.

Fellaini, 25, became United's only major summer signing when he made the move from Moyes's former club to Old Trafford on transfer deadline day.

Fellaini's contract at Goodison Park included a clause which expired on July 31 that ensured he could have joined any club that offered £23 million for him.

But Moyes failed with two joint bids for Fellaini and Everton teammate Leighton Baines, who he made a key transfer target.

After missing out on several high-profile players, including Thiago Alcantara, Cesc Fabregas, Ander Herrera and Fabio Coentrao, since his arrival at Old Trafford, Moyes was criticised for paying over the odds for Fellaini.

But the United manager insists that his attempts to keep Fellaini and Baines as part of a package was the best chance of signing both players.

"We had chosen to do it because we wanted to get Leighton Baines and we didn't want to give up on that until the last minute. Only at the last minute did we split the deal," Moyes said on Friday.

Asked about his feelings on the transfer window, Moyes added: "Very happy, yes. I feel good that it's all over."

Moyes believes that the addition for Fellaini will give United plenty of different midfield options after targeting that as an area in need of improvement.

"When I brought him to Everton he was someone not a lot of people knew about," Moyes said.

"We'd seen him in the Europa League and come away thinking 'wow this boy has got a chance', and he never let us down at Everton."

"He's continued to improve, he's well known in the Premier League, can do several jobs and he's effective in different areas."

"If he can continue to improve we could have a top player on our hands."

"He's someone we knew and we knew it was an area we had to strengthen, but with Marouane being able to play further forward it can give us different alternatives as required."

"He's matured and when you watch the Belgium team I always come away thinking he's the best player."

Fellaini is not concerned about the pressure of becoming the club's fourth most expensive signing ever and is also untroubled by suggestions he was not United's first choice.

The Belgium international also believes he can emulate some of the biggest names to have played for the club.

"Of course Manchester United want big players but I wanted to stay fit and see what happened at the end of the transfer window," he said.

"The transfer fee is not my problem. £25 million or £30 million or £20 million -- whether you are expensive or not, players are just players."