

What to WATCH

STAR Sports 1

India v West Indies

Third ODI

Live from 9:30am

TEN Cricket

South Africa v Pakistan

Second ODI

Live from 2:00pm

TEN Action

UEFA Champions League

CSKA Moscow v Bayern Munich

Live from 11:00pm

Leverkusen v Man United

Live from 1:45am (Thursday)

TEN Sports

UEFA Champions League

Real Madrid v Galatasaray

Live from 1:45am (Thursday)

TEN HD

UEFA Champions League

Man City v Viktoria Plzen

Live from 1:45am (Thursday)

Ronaldo blow for Real

REUTERS, Madrid



Real Madrid's Cristiano Ronaldo is out of Wednesday's Champions League Group B match at home to Galatasaray due to a leg muscle strain, coach Carlo Ancelotti said on Tuesday.

The Portugal forward limped off at the start of the second half of Saturday's La Liga victory at Almeria and a scan on Monday confirmed he had damaged a hamstring.

The injury was not serious and Ronaldo might recover in time to feature in Saturday's La Liga match at home to Real Valladolid, Ancelotti told a news conference.

"Cristiano cannot play tomorrow," the Italian said. "He has picked up a very small problem. I think tomorrow he will start to work on his own on the pitch and we'll see if he can be available for Saturday.

"It's a muscle strain but the player is very confident he can play on Saturday.

"If there is a risk he could injure himself we will not use him. If he is fine then he'll play."

Ronaldo has netted 14 goals in his last seven games for club and country and his injury comes after a demanding start to the season during which he has played every match.

If Real avoid defeat against Galatasaray, whom they thrashed 6-1 in Istanbul in their opening game in September, they will qualify for the last 16 in first place.

The nine-times European champions top the group on 10 points from four of six matches. Galatasaray and FC Copenhagen each have four points and Juventus, who host Copenhagen on Wednesday, have three.

Ancelotti said Argentina winger Angel Di Maria or Spain under-21 forward Jese could replace Ronaldo in the starting lineup on Wednesday.

"It could be that we can play with Di Maria or Jese who played very well as a replacement for Cristiano against Almeria," he added. "We have two options and I will decide tomorrow."

Real's France centre back Raphael Varane was also unavailable for Wednesday as he needed to rest the knee that was operated on earlier this year, Ancelotti added.



Real Madrid players Luka Modric (L), Gareth Bale (C) and Marcelo take part in a training session at the Valdebebas ground yesterday on the eve of their Champions League match against Galatasaray.

PHOTO: AFP

MU can seal it tonight

AFP, Leverkusen



Rio Ferdinand wants Manchester United to book their place in the Champions League's knock-out stages by beating Bayer Leverkusen away on Wednesday so they can focus on the Premier League.

United slipped to a disappointing 2-2 draw at Premier League new-boys Cardiff City on Sunday which left them sixth in the table and seven points adrift of leaders Arsenal.

David Moyes's side are unbeaten in their last ten matches but the Cardiff draw cost them a top four place in the Premier League.

Now Ferdinand wants United to win at Leverkusen's BayArena to confirm their progression in Europe, so they can return their focus on the Premier League until next year's knock-

out stages.

"We want to finish the job, get it done early so we can get back to the Premier League and have nothing else distracting us," said Ferdinand.

"They're a well-equipped team and it's not going to be easy but we're more than capable."

Moyes's United top Group A with eight points, just one ahead of hosts Leverkusen, and both sides would guarantee their place in the knock-out stages with a win.

Should Ukraine's Shakhtar Donetsk lose at home to Real Sociedad in the section's other game, United and Leverkusen would progress with a draw.

"We've got a really important game coming up on Wednesday and we know we need to get our heads up and make sure that we qualify," said United midfielder Tom Cleverley.

"It's good we've got that game

because you want to try and get a rhythm going and bounce back from a disappointing result.

"Wednesday can't come quick enough for us."

Dutch striker Robin van Persie (groin) and Nemanja Vidic (concussion) are both hoping to feature in Leverkusen after missing the Cardiff match.

Rafael da Silva (ankle), Shinji Kagawa (bruised foot) and Phil Jones (abductor) are all rated doubtful, while Michael Carrick is definitely out with an Achilles tendon injury.

Since losing 4-2 at Old Trafford in September in their opening match, Leverkusen have picked up seven points from their three games with home victories over Real Sociedad and Shakhtar Donetsk.

Bayer's director of sport Rudi Voeller has described United's visit as "the game of games" for Leverkusen.

Villa snatch a point

AFP, Birmingham



Ashley Westwood capped a superb second half fightback from Aston Villa as the visitors rescued a 2-2 draw at local rivals West Bromwich Albion on

Monday.

Paul Lambert's side looked destined for a derby defeat at the Hawthorns after Albion reduced the deficit before Westwood's first goal for the club ensured the two midlands teams remain level on 15 points in the Premier League table.

But Villa struck twice in the space of nine minutes after the break as Karim El Ahmadi reduced the deficit before Westwood's first goal for the club ensured the two midlands teams remain level on 15 points in the Premier League table.

Villa have now gone six matches without a win against Albion, with their last success coming three years ago.

Steve Clarke's hosts will be kicking themselves for finishing with just one point

after a blistering start threatened to blow Villa away.

Only three minutes had been played when Republic of Ireland striker Long showed sublime technique to control Chris Brunt's long pass with one touch before flicking the ball away from Villa's Nathan Baker and firing into the net from the edge of the penalty area.

Long produced another memorable strike eight minutes later when he pounced on a misplaced pass from Leandro Bacuna and accelerated away from Baker before clipping a chip over Villa goalkeeper Brad Guzan and in off the crossbar.

Villa were shell-shocked and Stephane Sessegnon should have added to their misery moments later, but he somehow managed to fluff his lines when presented with a simple close-range chance by Morgan Amalfitano.

The visitors finally sparked into life before half-time when Libor Kozak hit the bar from Christian Benteke's flick.

Budget haircut for Jose

INTERNET

Chelsea manager Jose Mourinho jokes about his new haircut saying that he did it himself because it was 'cheap'.

He was speaking before his side's UEFA Champions League clash with Basel at St. Jakob-Park in Switzerland.

Bored and lonely with only four players to coach during the international break Jose Mourinho borrowed a set of hair clippers from Fernando Torres and shaved his own head in his office at Chelsea's training ground.

"Some people can't do what I did. In a couple of months I'll have hair again. Some other people cannot do it," said Mourinho.

"I decided to do it. I asked Fernando to give me his machine and I did it myself in front of the mirror. It's nice and cheap.

"Mrs Mourinho? I sent her a picture before I arrived at home to see if I could go in the house... Yes, no problem."

Baines suffers fractured toe

REUTERS, London

Everton and England left back Leighton Baines faces up to six weeks on the sidelines after fracturing his toe in the 3-3 draw with Liverpool on Saturday, his club said on Tuesday.

Everton manager Roberto Martinez, however, hopes Baines will be back sooner.

"It has been confirmed that Leighton has got a fracture in one of the bones in his right foot, which is the phalange," Martinez was quoted on Everton's website.

"We need to treat that now and see how it develops. It could mean anything from missing six weeks to being back in 10 days because it depends how the fracture heals.

"It is in such a specific spot and we are going to see how it (the injury) reacts."

Ribery makes his case for Ballon d'Or

REUTERS, Paris

Franck Ribery said he was confident of winning the World Player of the Year award because he "made the difference" and "set defences on fire".

"I have no fear, I am confident. I have done all I had to," the Bayern Munich and France winger told French daily Le Monde in an interview on Monday.

"If you look at my performances all year long, I have made the difference. I may not score in every match but I set the defences on fire," he said.

The 30-year-old Ribery, who helped Bayern to win an unprecedented Champions League, Bundesliga and German Cup treble last season, was crowned UEFA Best Player in Europe in August and is in contention for FIFA's world-wide Ballon d'Or award.

"So far this year, I have never failed. I have been good during the whole year with my national team and my club. What we did with Bayern last season was historic," said Ribery, who also helped France to qualify for next year's World Cup.

FIFA will announce a three-man shortlist from the candidates. The winner will be announced on Jan. 13.



Roma forward Gervinho (R) vies with Cagliari defender Luca Rosettini during their Serie A encounter at Rome's Olympic Stadium on Monday.

PHOTO: AFP

Roma fire blanks

AFP, Milan



Juventus remained top of Serie A after long-time leaders Roma spurned the chance to overtake the champions following a scoreless home draw to struggling Cagliari on Monday.

Juventus's 2-0 away win at Livorno on Sunday sent Antonio Conte's men top of the pile for the first time this season with a two-point lead on Rudy Garcia's men.

Roma were widely expected to retake the lead but despite dominating the Sardinians at the Olympic Stadium the Giallorossi were left counting the cost for failing to get the ball past impressive Cagliari 'keeper Vlada Avramov.

Roma welcomed Gervinho back to the fray following a month on the sidelines and after just five minutes the Ivorian striker broke through the defence only to be denied by Avramov at the keeper's near post.

Maicon saw a shot stopped five minutes later and the Brazilian defender was later involved in a move which set up Miralem Pjanic, only for the Bosnian to miss the target.

Cagliari had shown some threat earlier in the half but came closest when Victor Ibarbo's header was met with a superb one-handed save by Morgan De Sanctis.

Roma then spurned two chances just before the break, Gervinho hitting the upright with a header from close range and then Alessandro Florenzi seeing his half-volley blocked by Avramov.

Six minutes after the restart Maicon came close again but saw Avramov pull off a superb save to deny his swerving strike.

Roma were frustrated for almost the remainder of the half and Cagliari were next to threaten five minutes from time, only for De Sanctis to parry Sebastian Eriksson's drive.

Roma then spurned the chance for a late winner when Avramov parried Leandro Castan's goalbound header.

Roma's setback, following two draws, means Juventus remain leaders thanks to a 2-0 win away to Livorno on Sunday courtesy of second-half strikes from Fernando Llorente and Carlos Tevez.