

Treble of losses for Dortmund

REUTERS, Berlin



Club World Cup winners Bayern Munich stayed seven points clear at the top of the Bundesliga on Saturday after title rivals Bayer Leverkusen and Borussia Dortmund lost their final matches before the winter break.

Leverkusen, in second spot with 37 points from 17 games, went down to a 74th-minute goal on the break from Santiago Garcia as Werder Bremen won in the league for the first time since November.

It was an even worse day for third-placed Borussia Dortmund who slumped to their third straight home defeat as promoted Hertha Berlin came from behind to win 2-1.

Bayern, who beat Raja Casablanca in the Club World Cup final in Morocco 2-0 on Saturday, will play their game in hand in January as the Bundesliga takes a five-week break.

Visiting Leverkusen, through to the last 16 in the Champions League, controlled possession against Werder but lacked offensive spark as they slid to their second consecutive defeat.

Werder's win lifted them to 11th and offered coach Robin Dutt some breathing space after a string of bad results.

Hertha looked to be in for a tough afternoon when 18-year-old keeper Marius Gersbeck, replacing the injured Thomas Kraft, completely misjudged his charge out of goal and allowed Marco Reus to score after seven minutes.

Injury-hit Dortmund were then sent reeling as goals from Adrian Ramos and Sami Allagui, after mistakes from home debutant Marian Sarr and fellow youngster Erik Durm, turned the game for the visitors.

RESULTS

Borussia Dortmund 1 (Reus 7) Hertha Berlin 2 (Ramos 21, Allagui 45)

Werder Bremen 1 (Garcia 74) Bayer Leverkusen 0

Freiburg 2 (Mehmedi 25, 36) Hanover 96 1 (Bittencourt 90+3)

Hamburg 2 (Calhanoglu 21, Van der Vaart 79) Mainz 05 3 (Okazaki 47, N Mueller 50, 90+2)

Eintracht Braunschweig 1 (Oehrl 29+pen) Hoffenheim 0

Nuremberg 0 Schalke 04 0

Barca move atop

AFP, Madrid

Barcelona ensured they will finish 2013 on top of La Liga as a Pedro Rodriguez hattrick helped them come from 2-0 down to win 5-2 at Getafe on Sunday.

The hosts had got off to a flying start as goals from Sergio Escudero and Lisandro Lopez put them 2-0 up inside 14 minutes.

However, the Catalans responded like champions as Pedro scored three times in eight minutes before the break.

Cesc Fabregas gave Barca breathing space when he volleyed home Pedro's cross 22 minutes from time and the former Arsenal captain doubled his tally from the penalty spot moments later.

Barca's comeback means they edge ahead of Atletico Madrid on goal difference at the top of the table, whilst Real Madrid can cut the gap on the top two to five points with a win at Valencia later on Sunday.



Bayern Munich's Brazilian defender Rafinha (C) holds up the 2013 FIFA Club World Cup trophy after beating Raja Casablanca in the final at Marrakesh, Morocco yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Mission 5 accomplished

AFP, Marrakech



European champions Bayern Munich claimed their fifth title of 2013 as they lifted the Club World Cup with a 2-0 win over Raja Casablanca in Saturday's final.

The Bavarian giants had few problems against Moroccan champions Raja as Bayern grabbed both goals inside the opening 22 minutes from Brazil centre-back Dante, then midfielder Thiago.

Having become the first German team to win the treble of Champions League, Bundesliga and German Cup titles last season, Bayern now add the Club World Cup to the UEFA Super Cup title they won in August.

This was the third time Bayern coach Pep Guardiola has won the Club World Cup after lifting the trophy with Barcelona in 2009 and 2011.

"2013 is now finished and it's behind us," said Guardiola.

"Five titles is really a great achievement. I am proud of this club and for all the people involved."

He added: "Since my arrival I have tried to care

for the heritage of the club.

"Now I will try and add other things that I hope will be positive for the club. We have to turn to the future."

Raja coach Faouzi Benzarti said he was proud of his team's efforts.

"To lose to Bayern by only 2-0 is very honourable."

Bayern winger Franck Ribery was voted player of the tournament. The France winger must wait until January 13 to find out if he has beaten Lionel Messi and Cristiano Ronaldo to the Ballon d'Or.

Even without injured Germany star Bastian Schweinsteiger and Netherlands winger Arjen Robben, Guardiola's Bayern had too much fire-power for Raja at the 45,000 sell-out Marrakech Stadium.

Just as they had done in Wednesday's 3-0 semi-final win over Asian champions Guangzhou Evergrande, the Germans dominated throughout.

Bayern took the lead after only seven minutes when Germany star Jerome Boateng found his centre-back partner Dante onside with the goal at

his mercy.

The Raja offside trap had failed and with his second touch, Dante hit the back of the net.

Munich doubled their lead on 22 minutes when left-back David Alaba won the ball, then laid it back for Thiago, who blasted his shot into the top right-hand corner from the edge of the area.

The Moroccans have earned admirers for a tremendous run which saw them beat Auckland City, Monterrey and Atletico Mineiro en route to the final where they had plenty of home support.

With time running out, they so nearly grabbed a consolation goal.

After substitute Vianney Mabide's shot was parried by Neuer, Raja's captain Mouhcine Moutouali fired the rebound over the bar six minutes from time.

Bayern are on course to defend all their titles in 2014, having reached the Champions League knock-out phase as group winners.

In the third-place play-off earlier Saturday, Atletico Mineiro defeated Guangzhou 3-2 thanks to a last-minute strike from substitute Luan.

Fahad wins

SPORTS REPORTER

FIDE Master Fahad Rahman beat Maache Jawad of France in the fifth round match of the World Youth Chess Championship (U-10 group) in Al-Ain, UAE on Saturday to collect four points from five rounds. Fahad, who is in 21st position, was scheduled to take on CM Ngo Duc Tri of Vietnam in the sixth round yesterday.

Biltu Club win opening game

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj

Biltu Club registered a 30-run victory over Katigram Sporting Club in the opening match of the Khan Real Estate First Division Cricket League at the Shaheed Miraz-Tapan Stadium here yesterday.

In the low-scoring match, Biltu Club scored 141 runs in 29.5 overs.

In reply, Katigram were bundled out for 111 in 24.5 overs.

Russel picked up four wickets and Sakib took three wickets to script Biltu Club's easy win.

TT ropes in SEBL

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Table Tennis Federation yesterday inked a two-year deal with Southeast Bank to run the National Table Tennis Championship in 2014 and 2015.

The private bank handed over half of the contract money of Tk 15 lakh for next year's national championship.

Swann calls it a day

AFP, Melbourne

England spinner Graeme Swann announced his retirement from international and first-class cricket with immediate effect on Sunday, in a bombshell just days before the beleaguered tourists meet Australia in the fourth Ashes Test.

Swann, who took 255 wickets in 60 Tests in just five years and is sixth on the list of Test wicket-takers for England, said defeat in Perth last week, where Australia sealed the Ashes, had cemented his decision to call it a day.

His abrupt announcement further unsettles England, who trail 3-0 in the series after three heavy defeats and are battling to avoid a humiliating 5-0 series whitewash.

"I know I'm making a decision for the right reasons. I made the decision after the Perth Test. It was probably halfway through that Perth game, to be honest," Swann, 34, told a press conference in Melbourne.

"My body doesn't like playing long forms of cricket, my arm doesn't cope with bowling 30-40 overs in the first innings and then repeating it in the second innings a day later."

The off-spinner, a jovial and popular character within the England team, has been under pressure to keep his place in the squad after taking just seven wickets at an average of 80.00 in the three Tests in Australia.

Swann, a key member of the English team that won the previous three Ashes series, will miss the fourth Test starting in Melbourne on Thursday and the final Test in Sydney, with fellow spinner Monty Panesar likely to take his place for the Boxing Day Test.

Swann's withdrawal means further disruption for England following the departure



STATS

BATTING & FIELDING									
M	Inns	Runs	HS	Ave	100	50	4s	6s	
Tests	60	76	1370	85	22.09	0	5	181	19
ODIs	79	48	500	34	13.88	0	0	48	4
T20Is	39	16	104	34	20.80	0	0	9	1

M	Inns	Balls	Runs	Wkts	Ave	4w	5w	10
Tests	60	109	15349	7642	255	29.96	14	17
ODIs	79	76	3809	2888	104	27.76	3	1
T20Is	39	38	810	859	51	16.84	0	0

of batsman Jonathan Trott earlier in the tour with a stress-related illness.

"With two games to go in Australia and then a fiercely competitive summer against Sri Lanka and India, I feel that it is a great time for someone else to strap themselves in and hopefully enjoy the ride as much as I have," Swann said.

"It was very difficult decision. This England team has been my family for the best part of a decade now, and you spend so much time with guys you absolutely love to pieces."

"There are things I will genuinely miss and I am nervous about that, but to carry on just for those reasons would be really selfish and I'm not prepared to do that."

Swann said in hindsight he could have retired after the previous Ashes series in

Hafeez stars in Pak win

AFP, Sharjah

Mohammad Hafeez demonstrated his all-round skills to guide Pakistan to a convincing 113-run win over Sri Lanka in the third day-night international on Sunday.

The 33-year-old right-hander smashed a career best unbeaten 140 to steer Pakistan to an imperious 326-5 before Hafeez the bowler took 2-35 to dismiss Sri Lanka for 213 in 44.4 overs at Sharjah Stadium.

The win gives Pakistan a 2-1 lead in the 5-match series.

Hafeez accounted for the dangerous Dinesh Chandimal (36) and Seekkuge Prasanna (22) in an incisive spell to thwart any hopes Sri Lanka had harboured.

Paceman Umar Gul, playing his first match since March this year after a knee operation, gave Pakistan a sound start by dismissing Kusal Perera (seven) and Dimuth Karunaratne (nought) in his first spell of five overs and then had the last man Lasith Malinga to finish with 3-19.

Pakistan had once again been helped by Hafeez and Shehzad after they were put into bat.

SCORES IN BRIEF

PAKISTAN: 326 for 5 in 50 overs (Hafeez 140, Shehzad 81, Misbah 40; U Akmal 23 not out; Thisara 2-58)

SRI LANKA: 213 all out in 44.4 overs (Dilshan 59, Mathews 44, Chandimal 36, Prasanna 22; Gul 3-19, Hafeez 2-35, Junaid 2-40)

Result: Pakistan won by 113 runs and lead the series 2-1.

Player-of-the-match:

Mohammad Hafeez.



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Jamal's poor finish

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Despite heading the leaderboard for two