

## Fahad in 9th place

SPORTS REPORTER

FIDE Master Fahad Rahman shared the joint ninth position with five points after beating CM Ngo Duc Tri of Vietnam in the sixth round match of the World Youth Chess Championship (U-10 group) in Al-Ain, UAE on Sunday. Fahad was scheduled to face Saberi Mahan in the seventh round board yesterday.

## Fellaini faces long layoff

AFP, London

Manchester United midfielder Marouane Fellaini could be out until February after undergoing wrist surgery, it was reported on Monday. According to Britain's Press Association the Belgium international has had an operation to cure the problem which has been troubling him for some time. Fellaini has also been struggling with a back injury which has forced him to miss five games since the December 4 outing against his former club Everton. United hope Fellaini will be back for the first leg of the Champions League last 16 encounter with Olympiakos on February 25.

## Verbeek firm on Santa clause

AFP, Berlin

Nuremberg's Dutch coach Gertjan Verbeek has vowed not to shave until his side pick up their first win of the season -- even if he ends up looking like Santa Claus. Verbeek's Nuremberg finish 2013 as the only team in any of Europe's top leagues without a win this season. The ranconians are second from bottom in the Bundesliga with six defeats and 11 draws. Having dominated Schalke on Saturday in their goalless draw, the 51-year-old Verbeek has said his white stubble stays until Nuremberg earn their first win. "As long as we don't win, my beard stays -- even if it means next year I could play Santa Clause," joked the Dutchman.



PHOTO: AFP  
Real Madrid superstar Cristiano Ronaldo jumps for joy after scoring the second goal against Valencia during their Primera Liga encounter at the Mestalla on Sunday.

# Real keep up chase

AFP, Madrid



Real Madrid shrugged off the loss of the injured Gareth Bale as they beat Valencia 3-2 on Sunday to move back to within five points of Barcelona and Atletico Madrid at the top of La Liga. Barcelona were also victors on Sunday as an eight-minute hat-trick from Pedro Rodriguez helped them come from 2-0 down to win 5-2 away at Getafe. Bale's replacement Angel di Maria put Madrid in front with a fine left-footed drive on 28 minutes, but Pablo Piatti headed home an equaliser for the hosts six minutes later. Cristiano Ronaldo then headed home Di Maria's free-kick put Madrid back in front five minutes before half-time, only for Valencia to level once more when Jeremy Mathieu met Dani Parejo's corner.

## RESULTS

**Espanyol 4** (Sergio Garcia 5-pen, Stuani 37, 70, Sanchez 68) **Valladolid 2** (Javi Guerra 75, Perez 88) **Getafe 2** (Escudero 10, Lisandro 14) **Barcelona 5** (Pedro 35, 41, 43, Fabregas 68, 72-pen) **Athletic Bilbao 2** (San Jose 33, Mikel Rico 66) Rayo Vallecano 1 (Bueno 61) Valencia 2 (Piatti 34, Mathieu 62) **Real Madrid 3** (Di Maria 28, Ronaldo 40, Jese 82) Celta Vigo 1 (Fernandez 34) Osasuna 1 (Armenteros 17)

However, Madrid were not to be denied as substitute Jese Rodriguez grabbed the winner with a low drive that beat Vicente Guaita at his near post 10 minutes from time. With Bale sidelined for a second consecutive game by a calf injury, Di Maria had another chance to impress and made his presence felt in style as he controlled Marcelo's cross-field pass before firing past Guaita into

the far corner.

Valencia, buoyed by the news earlier in the day that Singaporean businessman Peter Lim may be on the verge of taking over the club, responded almost immediately as the diminutive Piatti found space inside the area to head home Juan Bernat's cross. Madrid were back in front six minutes later in somewhat controversial circumstances as Ronaldo's goal was allowed to stand despite the Portuguese appearing to be slightly offside as Di Maria delivered a free-kick from wide on the right. The hosts were level once again, though, just after the hour mark when Mathieu outjumped Sergio Ramos to flick home Parejo's corner. However, Madrid found the goal they desperately needed to get their title hopes alive as Luka Modric picked out Jese inside the area and his fiercely driven effort slipped through the grasp of Guaita.

## Palacio stuns Milan

AFP, Milan



A cheeky backheeler from Argentinian striker Rodrigo Palacio four minutes from time secured a 1-0 win for Inter against Milan in the Derby della Madonnina in Italy's Serie A on Sunday. Inter, claiming their eighth win of the season, had dropped to sixth after Verona's 4-1 win earlier but reclaimed fifth spot to sit five points off Napoli in the third Champions League qualifying spot and 15 behind leaders Juventus. Sitting in 13th place and 17 points behind third place, Milan had plenty of incentive and enjoyed the lion's share of chances and possession throughout. It took Inter until the final 20 minutes to pile on some pressure and when Palacio sent a backheel beyond the reach of Milan 'keeper Christian Abbiati in the 86th minute the Rossoneri were soon lamenting their earlier misses. Brazil coach Luiz Felipe Scolari was also among the crowd and is likely to

Inter now boast 60 wins and 50 draws in 159 derbies between the sides

have been buoyed by Kaka's performance as the forward continues his quest to secure a World Cup place. Despite Milan's dominance, Massimiliano Allegri's men lacked the slice of luck that could have made all the difference. Kaka set up Mario Balotelli in the opening minutes but the striker's effort was blocked and the former Inter star then sent a half-volley over while under pressure on the edge of the area. Barely a minute later, Balotelli was beaten to the rebound from Kaka's strike by Esteban Cambiasso after it had been blocked by 'keeper Samir Handanovic. Inter were struggling to find any rhythm, their only half-chances a long distance drive from Fredy Guarin which dipped over, while Yuto Nagatomo's header from Saphir Taider's weighted free kick was wide of the upright. Milan's dominance had silenced the largely Inter crowd but they were in uproar on 40 minutes when claims for a penalty went unheard after Palacio

tumbled under pressure from Cristian Zapata. Inter finished the half showing more promise, Cambiasso's header from a well-struck Taider free kick going wide of Abbiati's far post. Despite the mediocrity, Inter coach Walter Mazzarri kept faith with his starting XI for the restart but it was Milan who showed more promise initially. On 53 minutes Balotelli's angled strike was palmed away, with Andrea Poli failing to connect with the rebound. **Bologna 1** (Diamanti 57) **Genoa 0** **Atalanta 1** (Moralez 15) **Juventus 4** (Tevez 6, Pogba 46, Llorente 75, Vidal 79) **Verona 4** (Toni 5, 78, Iturbe 44, Romulo 63) **Lazio 1** (Biglia 27) **Roma 4** (Benatia 18, 59, Destro 55, Gervinho 80) **Catania 0** **Sampdoria 1** (Eder 44) **Parma 1** (Lucarelli 64) **Sassuolo 0** **Fiorentina 1** (Rossi 82) **Torino 4** (Immobile 45+2, 65, Vives 80, Cerci 90+3) **Chievo 1** (Thereau 9) **Inter 1** (Palacio 86) **Milan 0**

## Alonso suffers perforated eardrum

AFP, Madrid

Real Madrid midfielder Xabi Alonso suffered a perforated left eardrum when he took a knock in Sunday's game against Valencia, the club said Monday. "After undergoing medical tests it has been found that Xabi Alonso has a perforated left eardrum as a result of a blow received in the match against Valencia," said a club medical report released online. Real Madrid gave no details on Alonso's outlook beyond the fact it depended on the player's progress. Perforated eardrums usually heal on their own within two months but surgery is sometimes performed in severe cases. Alonso was elbowed by Valencia's French player Jeremy Mathieu in the 58th minute of Sunday's match.

# Double delight for Ribery

AFP, Berlin



Less than 24 hours after being voted player of the tournament at the Club World Cup, France's Franck Ribery has again been named Man of the Year in Germany. After he also won the title in 2008, German football magazine Kicker voted the 30-year-old France star their man of 2013 for his outstanding displays for Bayern Munich. The France winger joins some prestigious previous winners including Borussia Dortmund coach Jurgen Klopp in 2012 and Germany boss Joachim Loew, the 2011 recipient. On Saturday, Ribery picked up the top player award at the Club World Cup as Bayern beat hosts Raja Casablanca 2-0 in the Marrakech final to collect their fifth title of 2013. "This year he has taken the step up to the level of absolute world class," Bayern's chairman Karl-Heinz Rummenigge. Ribery was a key factor in Bayern becoming the first German team to win the treble of Champions League, Bundesliga and German Cup last season, as well as the UEFA Super Cup. In August, Ribery was voted European Player of the Year and will discover next month if he has been voted world player of the year. The 2013 winner of the Balloon d'Or will be announced in Zurich on January 13 and Ribery has been shortlisted along with superstars Lionel Messi and Cristiano Ronaldo. Having joined Bayern from Olympique Marseille in July 2007, Ribery has not always had an easy time at Bayern and struggled under previous coach Louis van Gaal. "Of course, I have my own style, many individuals need their freedom and that particularly applies to me," he told Monday's edition of Kicker.

### তুমি জাগলেই জাগবে বাংলাদেশ

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