

Ibra suffers muscle problem

Paris Saint-Germain coach Laurent Blanc said he was concerned after top scorer Zlatan Ibrahimovic came off injured in Wednesday's Champions League clash with Chelsea.

The Swede had to be substituted midway through the second half of PSG's 3-1 quarterfinal first-leg victory at the Parc des Princes after appearing to hurt his right thigh while playing a pass to Christophe Jallet in midfield.

"It's a muscular problem. He will see the doctor tomorrow (Thursday)," confirmed Blanc, who immediately decided to replace the striker with Brazilian winger Lucas.

"He wanted to continue but I thought honestly that it wasn't reasonable. I hope he comes back as soon as possible because we need him."

Barcelona to appeal FIFA transfer ban

Barcelona will lodge an appeal to try to overturn a ban on participating in the transfer market for breaching rules on the international transfer of foreign under-18 players, the club said on Wednesday.

FIFA, soccer's world governing body, announced earlier on Wednesday that it had banned Barca from the transfer market for two consecutive windows and fined the club 450,000 Swiss francs (\$507,900).

"FCB will present the corresponding appeal to FIFA and if necessary will submit the resulting resolution to the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS)," Barca said in a statement on their website.

Joypurhat, Jessore in semis

SPORTS REPORTER

Jessore Municipal School and Khanjanpur School of Joypurhat moved into the semifinals of the First Security Islami Bank National School Hockey Championship beating their respective rivals in the quarterfinals at the Maulana Bhasani Hockey Stadium yesterday.

Jessore Municipal School beat Chittagong Municipal School 4-3 in the shootout after the regulation time produced a goalless draw in the first quarterfinal while Khanjanpur School defeated Nawab Habibullah School 3-0 with Ayub Rakib scoring two goals and Mehdi netting the other in the day's second match.



Real Madrid superstar Cristiano Ronaldo celebrates his goal against Borussia Dortmund during their Champions League quarterfinal at the Bernabeu on Wednesday.

PHOTO: AFP

Real, PSG cruise to wins

AFP, Paris



Real Madrid and Paris Saint Germain both gained convincing victories on Wednesday in their respective Champions League quarterfinal first leg matches to give themselves the upper hand ahead of next week's second legs.

Real, who have reached the semifinals in the past three seasons, avenged in part last season's semifinals defeat to Borussia Dortmund by beating the German side 3-0 while PSG -- who reached the quarterfinals last term -- saw off 2012 winners Chelsea 3-1.

It was, however, a tale of contrasting fortunes for Real and PSG's leading scorers.

Real's world footballer of the year Cristiano Ronaldo scored their third to equal Barcelona's Lionel Messi (2011/12) and Brazilian Jose Altafini's 'Mazzola', in 1962/63, record haul of 14 goals in a season in the European Cup/Champions League and on his 100th appearance in the competition proper to boot.

For PSG's Zlatan Ibrahimovic, though, it was a night to forget on a personal level as he failed to score and then pulled up clutching his right hamstring shortly after the hour mark.

Ronaldo too had to go off early, with pain in a knee -- unlike last

Saturday where he was booed by the home crowd for not passing to a team-mate, this time it was to a standing ovation.

Real got off to a dream start as Gareth Bale scored in the third minute for his fifth in the competition this season.

Ronaldo added to their lead later in the first-half. Isco, who had come in for the sick Angel di Maria, scoring with a neatly taken shot.

Ronaldo knocked in the third in the 57th minute taking him to 64 in total for the competition, just seven off record holder and former Real darling Raul -- Messi lies second with 67.

PSG too got off to a flying start with the outstanding Ezequiel

Lavezzi scoring in the fourth minute with a divine half volley.

However, Chelsea levelled when Eden Hazard stroked home a penalty on the ground where three years ago he secured the Ligue 1 title with Lille.

The hosts, though, restored their one goal lead in the 61st minute as a freekick by Lavezzi caused havoc in the Chelsea defence and David Luiz put the ball into his own net.

Mourinho threw on Frank Lampard for his 100th Champions League appearance but his only real contribution was to be one of the two players fooled by Javier Pastore's trickery in time added on that saw the Argentinian give the hosts their third goal.

C'Ron's injury minor

AFP, Madrid



Real Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti insisted he was not concerned by an injury that forced Cristiano Ronaldo to be withdrawn 10 minutes from time as his side edged towards the Champions League semifinals with a 3-0 win over Borussia Dortmund on Wednesday.

The Portuguese scored a record-equalling 14th Champions League goal of the season to all but seal Real's place in the last four after first-half strikes from Gareth Bale and Isco had put Los Blancos in command.

However, uncharacteristically, Ronaldo didn't finish the 90 minutes as he was forced off by a minor knee injury that has bothered him for the last couple of weeks.

"We will wait and see what the problem is, but at the moment we are not worried. We are not thinking about giving him a rest," said Italian Ancelotti, suggesting Ronaldo will start Saturday's crucial La Liga visit to Real Sociedad.

Ancelotti insisted that his side still have work to do next week at the Westfalenstadion to progress to the last four, but was enthused by the balance his side showed between defence and attack.

"We know Dortmund will do everything to come back that is normal.

"We need to be careful and play our own game. If we play in the same way we did tonight then we will reach the semi-finals.

"In the first-half we pressured well high

up the field and were efficient in front of goal.

"Due to the intensity of our play in the first-half we took a step back in the second, but that allowed us to play more on the counter-attack and find space."

Dortmund boss Jurgen Klopp was left to rue his side's inability to take their opportunities as they created plenty of openings after the break, but too often took the wrong option with their final ball.

"There are many things we can learn. You have to do the right tactical things against the best teams in the world so that they can't do what they want. That was the problem tonight," he said.

"There are always different reasons why you lose the game and tonight it is pretty clear why. We were not cool enough in the box and that was the problem because we had the chances to score four or five goals."

Dortmund started the game with just four of the side beat Real 4-1 at home on their way to knocking out the nine-time winners in last season's semi-final.

And Klopp underlined the difference that Madrid's financial power in the transfer market had made to the two sides over the past 12 months.

"They are good at counting here," he said with a wry smile.

"They signed (Asier) Illarramendi, Isco, Bale and I don't think they lost any, maybe (Mesut) Ozil.

"Their second and third goals were very well executed and you cannot regulate for everything."

Roma keep slim hopes alive

AFP, Milan



Roma kept alive their slim hopes of wresting the Serie A title from Juventus with a 4-2 win over Parma in the capital on Wednesday.

The result left Roma eight points behind the champions with seven games remaining, although as Juve have dropped only 12 points in 31 matches so far, it would be a tall order to expect the Old Lady of Turin to falter from here.

But Roma did at least ensure that they need only one more point to secure one of Italy's three Champions League qualification positions for next season.

They also extended their lead over third-placed Napoli to nine points, leaving them in a great position to qualify directly for the continent's premier club competition's group stages.

Goals from Ivorian forward Gervinho and club legend Francesco Totti either side of Ghanaian Afriyie Acquah's strike gave the hosts a 2-1 half-time lead at the Stadio Olimpico.

Bayern ban British tabloids

AFP, Berlin

Bayern Munich have taken the unusual step of refusing two British tabloids accreditation for next Wednesday's Champions League quarterfinal second leg at home to Manchester United over headlines referring to midfielder Bastian Schweinsteiger.

"You dirty Schwein", wrote the Daily Mirror in a headline, while The Sun ran "You Schwein!" on their back page on Wednesday.

Reporters from both newspapers have now been refused accreditation for the return leg at Munich's Allianz Arena.

MSC edge Muktis

SPORTS REPORTER



A first-half header from Cameroonian Baybeck took Mohammedan to the semifinals of the Modhumoti Bank Independence Cup Football tournament with a single goal win over Muktijoddha Sangsad in the third quarterfinal at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

The Black and Whites will play against the winners of today's fourth quarterfinal between Sheikh Jamal DC and Abahani.

Mohammedan came into the match on the back of a 1-1 draw against arch-rivals Abahani in their last group match put up much improved performance against Federation Cup runners-up Muktijoddha Sangsad. Striking duo Zahid Hasan Emily and Towhidul Alam played upfront.

Mohammedan's defense was rock-solid with the inclusion of new-signing Nigerian Ubom Henry, who joined Bayback, Arup Kumar and Nahidul Islam.

Mohammedan's defenders kept Muktijoddha Sangsad's dangerous trio of attackers -- Eleta Kingsley, Nkowcha Kingsley and Sunday Chizuba -- at the bay.

Mohammedan came close to taking a lead in the sixth minute but a header from new-signing Nigerian defender Ubom Henry narrowly missed the target.

Muktijoddha Sangsad's midfielder Enamul Haque sent the ball wide of open net on ninth minute.

Mohammedan initiated a wave of attacks that saw a Henry drop-header come off the crossbar on the half-hour mark before Bayback brilliantly headed a Zahid Hossain free-kick home one minute from the half-time whistle to put Mohammedan ahead.

After resumption, Muktijoddha appeared in better shape but they were unable to break Mohammedan's solid defense while Sabuz squandered a chance to double the lead after floating over the crosspiece.

Muktijoddha had two good chances in the dying moment to level the margin when Nkowcha failed to convert a nice low-cross from Eleta while Sunday sent a set-piece over the crosspiece on the edge of the box in stoppage time.

Muktijoddha coach Shafiqul Islam Manik claimed that the match was taken away from them by referee Joshimuddin, who gave Muktijoddha a free-kick outside the box despite Mohammedan defender Bayback handled the ball inside the danger zone.

Mohammedan coach Capela stated that the match was a difficult one but he was happy because his chargers came out with a victory.

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