



AC Milan left-back Theo Hernandez celebrates after scoring a sensational goal during their penultimate Serie A fixture against Atalanta at San Siro on Sunday. The Rossonneri won the fixture 2-0 to close in on their first league title in 11 years.

PHOTO: TWITTER

## Milan on cusp of Serie A title after 11 years

REUTERS, Milan

AC Milan closed in on their first Serie A title in 11 years on Sunday after goals from Rafael Leao and Theo Hernandez earned them a 2-0 win over Atalanta, a victory that kept them two points clear at the top of the standings.

With second-placed Inter Milan not in action until later on Sunday against Cagliari, league leaders Milan knew they could pile the pressure on their rivals with victory over Atalanta.

But Stefano Pioli's team looked nervy and devoid of ideas in the first half, failing to create a clear-cut chance in the entire opening 45 minutes.

Their quality shone through in the second half, however, as a fine finish from in-form Brazilian forward Leao and a superb solo effort from fullback Hernandez saw Milan home, much to the relief of an expectant San Siro.

Inter went on to win 3-1 in Sardinia, meaning the title race will be decided on the final day next Sunday, where even a draw for Milan at Sassuolo will see the Scudetto return to the red half of the city.

"I had to say goodbye to the fans, it's a year that excites me," Pioli told DAZN. "It's not over yet, we must be determined and calm."

"I am very satisfied, because we played against a strong team that created difficulties for us. We did well in the attacking phase and we found solutions. We never lost our clarity and we always believed in it, so the victory is a well-deserved reward."

"I'm living very normal weeks, because I see the positive attitude of my players. We have an important background, derived from two years together. The boys make me proud."

Sunday's win was Milan's fifth league success in a row and they stretched their unbeaten Serie A run to 15 matches.

Substitute Junior Messias supplied a fine pass into Leao, who took a touch before slotting home his 11th league goal of the season in the 56th minute.

Eighth-placed Atalanta, who are still hoping to qualify for Europe next season, rarely threatened an equaliser.

Hernandez then produced a stunning effort that could be a goal-of-the-season contender. He picked the ball up in his own half 15 minutes from time, and ran and ran, bypassing several challenges before drilling into the net to seal a crucial victory in Milan's final home game in front of a raucous crowd.

Elsewhere in Serie A on Sunday, Napoli made sure they will finish third ahead of Juventus after a 3-0 win over Genoa.

## Djokovic delights in 'sunshine double'

REUTERS

Novak Djokovic said his seven-year-old son Stefan had won his first tournament on the same day the Serb lifted his first crown in more than six months at the Italian Open, describing their success as a "sunshine double".

Djokovic beat Stefanos Tsitsipas 6-0 7-6(5) to triumph in Rome on Sunday, ensuring a perfect week for the world number one before the French Open starting on May 22, but the 20-times Grand Slam winner was equally pleased for his son.

"The journey started successfully. My son won a

tournament today. A sunshine double," Djokovic said, adding that his son's victory at the small club tournament would stick in his memory.

"I wanted him to enjoy it on the court... He was on cloud nine with the family, my parents, my wife's parents, everybody supporting him. It's nice."

Djokovic said he would fully support his son if he decided to pursue a career in tennis.

"He's only seven... He shouldn't feel any pressure or expectations yet, though he's going to because it's part of his family. He's going to attract a lot of attention if he's

playing tennis, particularly in our country," Djokovic added.

Turning the focus onto himself, the 34-year-old said he was hitting top gear as he aims to defend his Roland Garros crown and go level with Rafa Nadal on 21 major titles.

"I'd rate myself as one of the favourites. I don't spend much time thinking who's going to win it or who might have the best chance. I always think about myself," Djokovic said.

"I go there with the highest ambitions. I like my chances. The way I've been feeling on and off the court in the last few weeks, I can go far."



Serbia's Novak Djokovic celebrates with the winner's trophy after beating Greece's Stefanos Tsitsipas in the final of Rome Open in Rome on Sunday.

PHOTO: AFP

## Decision on Mbappe future 'almost' made

AFP, PARIS

Kylian Mbappe says he has "almost" made up his mind about whether to stay at Paris Saint-Germain or leave the French champions for Real Madrid.

"Yes, yes almost" he replied when quizzed about whether he had made a choice yet after picking up his third straight best player of the season award in Paris on Sunday.

The waiting to see whether the 23-year-old moves to the Spanish capital or stays with PSG to help them in their protracted quest to land the Champions League "is almost over" he added.

He plans to "announce" his decision before France play Denmark in the Nations League on June 3.

Refusing to divulge anything further despite being given ample opportunity to do so at the awards ceremony he thanked "PSG, which enabled me to be here, my teammates and

coach."

He added: "My story goes on, I keep on winning, I'm never satisfied, and that's good."

Also attending the awards dinner was his PSG captain Marquinhos whose only comment on the issue keeping PSG fans and their Real counterparts awake at night was: "I hope that next season he will win this trophy again."

Mbappe has made no secret of his desire to play one day for Real, who are in the Champions League final after securing a 35th Spanish title.



## Ten Hag excited to work with 'giant' Ronaldo

AGENCIES

Cristiano Ronaldo was labelled a "giant" by incoming Manchester United boss Erik ten Hag, who is itching to work with the Portugal great.

Veteran forward Ronaldo returned to United from Juventus on a two-year deal, with the Red Devils retaining an option to extend that by a further 12 months.

Despite scoring 18 Premier League goals in 30 top-flight appearances this term there have been rumblings Ronaldo could cut short his return at the end of a hugely underwhelming season for the club.

United are sixth heading into their final game of the campaign against Crystal Palace on Sunday, with defeat giving West Ham the chance to leapfrog them in the standings.

But Ten Hag, speaking to Dutch publication De Telegraaf, stated in no uncertain terms he is excited by the prospect of working with one of the all-time greats.

"I am looking forward to working with him," said Ten Hag. "Ronaldo is a giant, because of what he has already shown, and I think he is still very ambitious."

"Of course I want to keep him in. He has been very important for Manchester United this year and can show great statistics."

Ten Hag has won three Eredivisie titles at Ajax and the KNVB Cup twice, as well as leading the team to the Champions League semifinals once.

That success is something United fans will be desperate for him to emulate in Manchester, with the club's last trophy arriving in 2017.

Ten Hag also stated that he will begin work with United from Monday.

"We have agreed that I will be employed by Manchester United from 16 May," he said. "In the preparation for the season there are still a few things to be done."



Lautaro Martinez scored twice as Inter Milan kept up the pace with their city rivals a 3-1 win away to Cagliari.

PHOTO: REUTERS



**পুবালী ব্যাংক লিমিটেড**  
PUBALI BANK LIMITED

সম্মানিত গ্রাহকবৃন্দের দোরগোড়ায়  
আধুনিক ব্যাংকিং সেবা পৌঁছে দেয়ার প্রত্যয় নিয়ে  
পুবালী ব্যাংক লিমিটেডের  
আর্টিবাজার শাখার আওতাধীন

**আরশিনগর উপশাখা**  
সেলিম প্লাজা, আরশিনগর মেইন রোড  
কেরানীগঞ্জ, ঢাকা।

সর্বাধিক শাখা | সর্ববৃহৎ অনলাইন নেটিওয়ার্ক  
সর্বাধুনিক তথ্য প্রযুক্তি | সর্বাধুনিক তথ্য নিরাপত্তা ব্যবস্থা

**আরশিনগর উপশাখা**  
**শুভ উদ্বোধন**  
১৭ মে ২০২২ মঙ্গলবার


