



Manchester United's Swedish striker Zlatan Ibrahimovic (c) scores a goal



Ibrahimovic sends United into Q-finals

Blackburn
Paul Pogba and Zlatan Ibrahimovic combined to score the winning goal that carried Manchester United through to the FA Cup quarter-finals in a 2-1 win at Blackburn Rovers. United will face Chelsea in a mouthwatering last-eight tie at Stamford Bridge next month as victory maintained Jose

Mourinho's interest in all four competitions in which his side have competed this season. The FA Cup holders were facing the prospect of an unwanted replay after Marcus Rashford equalised Danny Graham's opening goal for the Championship side which prompted Mourinho to bring the high-profile pair off the bench early in the second half. On 75 minutes the gamble paid off as Pogba, from just inside his half, played a pass for Ibrahimovic to chase. The Swedish striker timed his run to perfection, avoiding the offside trap before coolly rolling his 24th goal of the season into the corner of the net from six yards. There was almost a dramatic late equaliser for Rovers after Sergio Romero spilled a shot from Connor Mahoney, recovered to keep out Marvin Emnes' rebound then saw

Anthony Stokes tap the ball in only to be flagged offside. Earlier, Blackburn had taken the lead through a superbly-executed 17th minute move that even had Mourinho sportingly applauding from his position in the United technical area. Emnes carved out the opening with a strong run and skilful move past Marcos Rojo before he slipped through a brilliant pass for team mate Graham who beat Romero with a superb left-foot finish. It was the first goal conceded by United in 471 minutes of league and cup football and Graham, a journeyman 31-year-old with the 13th club of his career, threatened to join the list of this weekend's FA Cup heroes.

Rashford replies

But United had other ideas and took just 10 minutes to draw level as Henrikh Mkhitaryan, continuing his impressive form over the second half of the season, sent Rashford racing away with a magnificent pass from around halfway. His speedy team-mate chased

onto the ball and calmly rounded goalkeeper Jason Steele before converting into an open net. Just before the opening goal, Emnes had already tested United's stand-in goalkeeper with a 25-yard shot that Romero handled easily. And before half-time a long pass from Charlie Mulgrew picked out Craig Conway who held off full-back Ashley Young before firing over from a promising position. But United were also making use of the space that was beginning to appear in the home defence. An Ander Herrera free-kick picked out Jesse Lingard although his header lacked the power to trouble Steele. Herrera was also responsible for a defence-splitting pass which allowed Lingard a shot, which was blocked before Herrera himself tested Steele with a follow-up effort that was well saved. Mkhitaryan tried his luck with a couple of long-range shots that came to nothing and Herrera wasted a free-kick from a dangerous position by passing directly to an opponent in the Blackburn area. (AFP)

