

Ramos brace saves Madrid

Fans target Ronaldo

Madrid

Sergio Ramos struck twice to get Real Madrid back to winning ways as the home fans targeted Cristiano Ronaldo in a 2-1 victory over Malaga at the Santiago Bernabeu yesterday.

The European champions' 40-game unbeaten run had come to a crashing halt with back-to-back defeats to Sevilla and Celta Vigo in the past week, but after a nervy start skipper Ramos ensured they opened up a four-point gap at the top of the table.

The Spanish international opened the scoring with a towering header from a Toni Kroos corner on 35 minutes.

And Ramos soon took his career tally to 50 La Liga goals by bundling home another Kroos delivery despite standing in an offside position.

Juanpi got Malaga back into the game just after the hour and could even have snatched a point but for a fine save from Keylor Navas to deny Chory Castro soon after.

However, victory came at a cost with Marcelo and Luka Modric limping off injured just four days before Real attempt to overturn a 2-1 Copa del Rey

quarter-final first-leg deficit at Celta Vigo. Second-placed Sevilla and Barcelona, a further point adrift in third, can close the gap when they travel to Osasuna and Eibar respectively on Sunday.

Whilst Ramos was riding to Real's rescue, off-colour Ronaldo endured another forgetful afternoon in front of goal and was even whistled by the Madrid fans early on after a sluggish start to 2017.

Ronaldo shot straight at Carlos Kameni with just the Cameroonian to beat and Karim Benzema headed over as Madrid started brightly.

"Sometimes when you have difficulties you need the fans' help and to be behind you," said Madrid boss Zinedine Zidane.

"I am not going to criticise the fans because they pay their money. But with so many games and a lot of injuries, the players need to feel that love sometimes. The coach does too." (AFP)

Real Madrid's Portuguese forward Cristiano Ronaldo stands on the pitch

Real Madrid's defender Sergio Ramos celebrates after scoring

Spanish La Liga results

Espanyol	3	Granada	1
Real Madrid	2	Malaga	1
Alaves	2	Leganes	2
Villarreal	0	Valencia	2

Today

Osasuna	v	Sevilla
Athletic Bilbao	v	Athletic Madrid
Real Betis	v	Sporting Gijon,
Real Sociedad	v	Celta Vigo
Eibar	v	Barcelona

Friday

Las Palmas	1	Deportivo La Coruna 1
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