

Real thrash APOEL 6-0



Madrid

The 6-0 rout of APOEL Cyprus didn't change much for Real Madrid in its quest to once again be crowned Champions League winner, but it was crucial to boost the confidence of its top two strikers - Karim Benzema and Cristiano Ronaldo.

Benzema scored twice Tuesday to end his six-match scoreless streak, and Ronaldo added two to maintain his good run in the European tournament and fend off criticism of his disappointing performances in the Spanish league, where he has scored only once

in 12 games.

"Getting their names on the score sheet is good for Cristiano and Karim," Madrid coach Zinedine Zidane said. "It's good news for everyone and is particularly positive for them. They thrive on goals and they've both got braces to see us to victory. I'm delighted for Benzema, Cristiano and the whole team."

The victory in Cyprus secured Madrid second place in Group H with one round to go. Tottenham, which defeated Borussia Dortmund in Germany, has already guaranteed first place. Dortmund and APOEL were eliminated.

Benzema scored his goals just before halftime, first with a strike from inside the area and then

with a shot into the open net after a pass by Ronaldo in a fast breakaway.

"We scored six and didn't concede any, that boosts our confidence," Benzema said. "I'm a striker and it's always important to score goals, but I can also offer other things besides goals. If I can help my teammates with a pass or with my movement, I'll do so. I was fortunate enough to get two goals and that's good for me and the whole team."

The goals allowed Benzema to move into sixth place in the European tournament's all-time scoring list with 53 goals, surpassing Thierry Henry and becoming the top-ranked Frenchman. (AP)



Cristiano Ronaldo and Karim Benzema were both at the double in Nicosia

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