

Arsenal go five points clear

● VAR denies late equaliser

Hussain Almaskati
TDT | Manama

Arsenal took a massive step towards the Premier League title with a dramatic 1-0 win at West Ham yesterday. The result extends their lead at the top of the table to five points with a game in hand over Manchester City, though the match ended in extraordinary controversy after a late VAR intervention denied the hosts a stoppage-time equaliser.

Leandro Trossard scored the decisive goal in the 83rd minute, his first of 2026, finishing from close range after Martin Ødegaard combined with Declan Rice to create the opening. It came shortly after David Raya produced a crucial one-on-one save to deny Mateus Fernandes, keeping Arsenal level at a key moment.

The game was tight and tense throughout. Arsenal dominated early possession but wasted several chances. Trossard hit the post, while other efforts were saved or cleared off the line during a spell of sustained pressure.

West Ham slowly grew into the match after Ben White went off injured. They began to threaten more consistently,



Trossard celebrates the match-winner against West Ham

with Crysencio Summerville and Aaron Wan-Bissaka testing Raya, while Taty Castellanos forced another strong save before half-time.

The second half became increasingly scrappy and emotional, with both teams making changes. Arsenal introduced Ødegaard and Kai Havertz late on, and Ødegaard quickly in-

fluenced the game by helping to build the move that led to Trossard's winner.

The most dramatic moment came deep into stoppage time. West Ham thought they had equalised in a chaotic scramble when Callum Wilson struck and the home crowd erupted in celebration. However VAR intervened after Chris Kavanagh

reviewed the pitchside monitor and ruled that Pablo had fouled Raya in the build-up, disallowing the goal.

The decision triggered fury inside the London Stadium but confirmed Arsenal's victory, moving them one step closer to a first league title since 2004 with just two matches remaining.

Aston Villa held by Burnley

AFP | London

Aston Villa missed the chance to tighten their grip on Champions League qualification after a 2-2 draw at already-relegated Burnley.

Villa had secured a place in the Europa League final on Thursday with a 4-0 win over Nottingham Forest, but Unai Emery's side showed signs of fatigue at Turf Moor.

The result keeps Villa in a strong position, extending their lead over sixth-placed Bournemouth to four points and moving them six clear of Brighton in the race for Champions League places.

However, they face a demanding finish to the season, with fixtures against Liverpool and Manchester City either side of the Europa League final against Freiburg in Istanbul.

Jaidon Anthony gave Burnley an early lead after Emi Martinez spilled Lesley Ugochukwu's effort. Ross Barkley equalised for Villa before half-time with a header from a corner.

Ollie Watkins then turned the game around, finishing from Martinez's long clearance to put Villa ahead and lift them to fourth in the table.

Burnley responded to avoid a sixth straight defeat, with Zian



Flemming firing in from Hannibal Mejbri's clever flick to secure a point. Elsewhere, Everton's hopes of European qualification suffered another setback after a 2-2 draw at Crystal Palace.

David Moyes' side led twice through James Tarkowski and a fine solo goal from Beto, but were pegged back by Ismaila Sarr and Jean-Philippe Mateuta, as Palace finished strongly.

Everton rise to 10th but a five-game winless run has left their European hopes fading. At the City Ground, Elliott Anderson struck late against former club Newcastle to earn Nottingham Forest a 1-1 draw. Harvey Barnes had put Newcastle ahead, but Anderson's equaliser could yet prove decisive in Forest's survival battle, depending on West Ham's result against Arsenal.

Dubois climbs off the canvas to become two-time world heavyweight champion



Daniel Dubois celebrates his win

AFP | London

Daniel Dubois recovered from two early knock-downs to win a second world heavyweight boxing title with an 11th-round stoppage of Fabio Wardley in a brutal all-British battle in Manchester on Saturday.

Victory meant the 28-year-old deprived World Boxing Organisation champion Wardley of his belt, with Dubois having lost the International Boxing Federation version of the title to unified champion Oleksandr Usyk at Wembley in July last year.

Wardley dropped Dubois to the canvas within barely 10 seconds of the opening bell at the Co-Op Live arena.

And in the third round Wardley, making his maiden title defence, landed a huge overhand right on Dubois, who took a knee before beating the count again.

But from then on Dubois connected with a series of

crushing blows to leave Wardley's face a bloody mess and referee Howard Foster could easily have stopped the fight long before the 11th round of a scheduled 12.

Dubois, who now has a professional record of 23 wins and three defeats, with 21 knock-outs, had been angered by an apparently casual comment made by Wardley in a pre-fight interview.

Wardley (21-0-1, 19 KOs) said Dubois would be a "bin man" if the London heavyweight was not a boxer.

That led Dubois to respond by saying: "Well, I am going to take out the trash. I am the dustman, he is the trash, mate. I'll take out the trash."

Yet he was full of respect for Wardley following Saturday's gruelling bout, with Dubois telling broadcaster DAZN: "It was a war, we went through the sticky moments. Thank you Fabio for that, thank you. I know I've got heart, bundles of heart. I'm a warrior in there."

Barcelona Seal 29th La Liga Title With El Clásico Win

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Barcelona have been crowned La Liga champions for a second straight season after a dominant El Clásico victory over Real Madrid at Camp Nou yesterday. Hansi Flick's side only needed a point but secured the title in style, racing into a 2-0 lead inside 18 minutes through Marcus Rashford and Ferran Torres.

The result confirmed an unassailable 14-point lead with three games remaining, sealing Barcelona's 29th Spanish league crown and reinforcing their domestic dominance.



Barcelona players celebrate with head coach Hansi Flick

The achievement has come despite ongoing financial difficulties at the club, with Barcelona leaning heavily on La Masia graduates. A strong core of academy players, including Pedri and Gavi, has been central to maintaining consistency and identity during rebuilding.

European success, however, remains out of reach. Barcelona exited the Champions League at the quarter-final stage this season, highlighting the gap still to close at continental level.

Flick will now aim to extend Barcelona's domestic dominance while pushing for European progress in the coming campaigns.

Slavia fans hit with lifetime bans after derby chaos

TDT | Manama

Slavia Prague have issued lifetime bans to supporters following violent scenes that forced the abandonment of their derby against Sparta Prague on Saturday, in what is being described as one of the most serious incidents in recent Czech football history.

Slavia were leading 3-2 deep into stoppage time when the match descended into chaos. In the seventh minute of added time, sections of the home support breached security and entered the pitch, prompting officials to halt the game before the final whistle.

Footage shared on social media appeared to show flares being directed toward the Sparta section, while pyrotechnics were also thrown into the stands. Sparta goalkeeper Jakub Surovcik was reportedly struck in the face by a flare thrown



Chaos erupts during Slavia vs Sparta derby

from close range during the disorder.

Slavia confirmed that one individual has already been identified and handed a lifetime ban following a review of surveillance footage and cooperation with authorities. The club added that further investigations are ongoing and additional sanctions may follow.

Club chairman Jaroslav Tvrdik condemned the events, calling them "the most difficult moment in the modern history of the club," and issued an apology to Sparta Prague, visiting supporters, match officials, and "all decent Slavia supporters."

"The values of Slavia are not hatred and violence," he said. "What happened is a disgrace

that has no place in football."

The club also announced the temporary closure of the stadium's North Stand while police and security teams work to identify those involved. Slavia confirmed full cooperation with investigators, including the provision of CCTV footage, ticketing data, and internal reports.

The League Football Association (LFA) described the incidents as "absolutely unacceptable" and confirmed that disciplinary proceedings have been opened against both clubs, with sanctions expected to be announced in the coming days.

Meanwhile, Surovcik said he intends to pursue legal action against those responsible.

Despite the fallout, Slavia are scheduled to resume league action on Wednesday against FK Jablonec, though the incident is expected to overshadow the club's title celebrations.