

Mbappe scores as PSG thrash Amiens for perfect 10

AFP | Paris

Paris Saint-Germain continued the blistering start to their Ligue 1 title defence with a record-extending 10th straight win as Kylian Mbappe scored in a 5-0 thrashing of Amiens yesterday.

Coach Thomas Tuchel left key men Neymar, Thiago Silva and Thomas Meunier out of the squad altogether at the Parc des Princes with Wednesday's Champions League clash with Napoli in mind, but PSG had more than enough to see off Amiens.

"Everyone thinks that Ligue 1 might be too easy to prepare for the Champions League, but it's not like that," insisted Tuchel, who took over the reins from Unai Emery in the close-season.

"That would mean you're blaming the other teams, but we focus on ourselves. Nobody won 10 games in a row, and we did it.

"It's not (easy). We will be ready (for Napoli), because we're setting our own limits."

Dovizioso snatches Japan pole as Marquez match point looms

AFP | Motegi, Japan

Ducati's Andrea Dovizioso kept his fading MotoGP title hopes alive yesterday by snatching pole for the Japanese Grand Prix in a frantic late dash.

The Italian, who realistically needs to emulate his 2017 victory in Japan to delay Marc Marquez's coronation, clocked a fastest lap of one minute, 44.590 seconds, with his Spanish rival sixth quickest.

Marquez, Dovizioso or Jorge Lorenzo have topped qualifying at the last nine races.

That streak was almost brought to a halt as Jack Miller roared to the top of the timesheets late on, but after the Australian subsequently skidded off, Dovizioso and Yamaha's Johann Zarco produced some sudden-death fireworks to demote him to third.

"We did what we expected to do," said Dovizioso. "We were able to improve this afternoon and make a really good lap time.

"But Marc has a really good pace for the race and he's well placed too, so it will be a hard battle."

Cal Crutchlow (Honda), Andrea Iannone (Suzuki) and Marquez (Honda) will start Sunday's race from the second row of the grid, with Maverick Vinales (Yamaha), Alex Rins (Suzuki) and Valentino Rossi (Yamaha) behind them.

Marquez, who leads Dovizioso by 77 points with a maximum 100 points available from the final four races this season, can capture his third straight world crown if he finishes ahead of the Italian.

Ten-man Bayern end winless streak

AFP | Wolfsburg, Germany

Ten-man Bayern Munich ended their four-match winless streak yesterday as Robert Lewandowski scored twice in a 3-1 win at Wolfsburg, a day after the club's hierarchy launched an extraordinary attack on the German media.

After back-to-back league defeats, Bayern leapt from sixth to second in the Bundesliga behind Borussia Dortmund who routed Stuttgart 4-0 with Paco Alcacer claiming his seventh goal in four Bundesliga games.

Bayern got back to winning ways in Wolfsburg the day after chairman Karl-Heinz Rummenigge and president Uli Hoeness slammed the media in Germany for "disrespectful and disgusting" reporting on star-studded Munich.

Bayern worked for the win, playing the last half an hour with ten men after Arjen Robben was sent off after receiving two yellow cards.

Head coach Niko Kovac left Thomas Mueller and Franck Ribery on the bench as Bayern broke their four-game winless streak in all competitions.

Lewandowski gave Bayern an early lead when he tucked away Thiago Alcantara's dummed pass past Wolfsburg goalkeeper Koen Casteels.

It was the Poland striker's first goal after drawing blanks



Wolfsburg's Dutch defender Paul Verhaegh (L) vies with Bayern Munich's Polish forward Robert Lewandowski (2ndL)

in his last five games for club and country.

With half-time approaching, Robben earned his first booking for a blatant dive in the area before Lewandowski struck again just after the break.

The Polish striker latched on to William's misplaced back pass and dribbled around Casteels to poke his shot into an empty net to make it 2-0.

There were nervous looks in the Bayern ranks on 57 minutes when Robben was dismissed

after a foul on midfielder Elvis Rexhbecaj.

Wolfsburg pulled a goal back five minutes after Robben's dismissal when Dutch striker Wout Weghorst buried the hosts' first clear chance.

James Rodriguez calmed any nerves in the Bayern ranks with a stunning shot inside the post 18 minutes from time.

Sancho nets in Dortmund romp

In Stuttgart, Dortmund remain four points clear after their

attack of Jadon Sancho, Marco Reus and Alcacer ran riot with the trio all claiming first-half goals.

Before kick-off, Dortmund's sports director Michael Zorc revealed Borussia are set to make Alcacer's loan stay from Barcelona permanent.

The Spaniard demonstrated why with his 11th goal this season for Dortmund and Spain to become the league's joint top-scorer.

Fresh from making his senior

England debut, Sancho, 18, put Dortmund ahead on just three minutes when he fired home after Reus' shot was deflected into his path.

Reus then made no mistake with his second chance for his fifth league goal of the season.

Alcacer made it 3-0 after 25 minutes when his sublime chip beat the Stuttgart goalkeeper.

The hosts tightened their defence after the break, but Dortmund deserved the win as Maximilian Philipp slammed home their fourth six minutes from time.

Elsewhere, England junior international Reiss Nelson, on loan from Arsenal, scored twice as Hoffenheim warmed up for their Champions League game at home to Lyon with a 3-1 win at Nuremberg.

RB Leipzig are third after a goalless draw with Augsburg which cost them their fourth straight win.

Brazil defender Felipe was Hanover's hero, then villain after scoring their second goal, but was then sent off in their 2-2 goal at Bayer Leverkusen, whose Karim Bellarabi scored a late equaliser.

On Friday, Serbia striker Luka Jovic, 20, became the youngest player to score five goals in a Bundesliga match as Eintracht Frankfurt romped to a 7-1 win over bottom side Fortuna Dueseldorf.

Thai cave survivors train with Galaxy, Ibrahimovic



The Thai youngsters, aged between 11 and 16, were retrieved from the Tham Luang cave complex in July after a dramatic rescue effort

AFP | Los Angeles

The Thai junior football team who were rescued from a flooded cave after being trapped for more than two weeks trained with the Los Angeles Galaxy and their star striker Zlatan Ibrahimovic on Friday in the latest stop of an international tour.

The Wild Boars team, who earlier this month were guests at the Youth Olympics in Buenos Aires, were given a tour of the Galaxy's StubHub Center

stadium before training with members of the MLS team at a nearby pitch.

The Thai youngsters, aged between 11 and 16, were retrieved from the Tham Luang cave complex in July after a dramatic rescue effort.

Friday's visit to the Galaxy was set up by US television star Ellen DeGeneres, who hosted the team on her show on Monday.

Former Sweden international Ibrahimovic had also appeared as a surprise guest to meet the team on the show.

Vettel acknowledges 'mutual respect' in Hamilton rivalry

AFP | Austin

Sebastian Vettel yesterday acknowledged the "mutual respect" in his world championship fight with Lewis Hamilton ahead of this weekend's potential title showdown.

The four-time champion German said his relationship with the defending champion had always been respectful, despite their lifestyle differences.

"I think the respect between us has always been there despite the fact that maybe we are very different.

"We appreciate the job that the other guy is doing. I think it's a mutual respect that we have for each other. I think very respectful."

Ferrari driver Vettel needs to prevent Hamilton out-scoring him by eight points in Sunday's United States Grand Prix if he is to keep his title challenge alive.

But he will start the race with a three-place grid penalty following a controversial stewards' ruling for speeding under red flags in opening practice.

The stewards' decision, made in wet conditions, had reduced Vettel's slim title chances according to Ferrari team boss Maurizio Arrivabene and means that he cannot start on the front row of the grid for a race in which he knows another



Ferrari driver Sebastian Vettel (5) of Germany during practice for the United States Grand Prix at Circuit of the Americas

Mercedes one-two will give Hamilton his fifth drivers' title.

Vettel was penalised for failing to slow down sufficiently after Charles Leclerc's Sauber had left gravel on the track after a spin.

Rival drivers felt the three-place punishment was too strong.

"It's quite a harsh penalty," said Pierre Gasly of Toro Rosso. "If you've been really careful... It's a shame, especially looking at the situation, still fighting for the championship. And now he gets a penalty, it's not so exciting."

Gasly's team-mate Brendon

Hartley agreed and pointed out that it is more dangerous to brake hard in treacherous slippery conditions.

"I think in the wet, when a red flag comes out, it's potentially dangerous to slam on the brakes," he said.

"If Sebastian backed off straight away, as you would in a red flag, I think the penalty is extremely harsh."

Romain Grosjean of Haas also sympathised.

"You only have a couple of milliseconds to slow down and sometimes you get it in the right place, sometimes you don't...It's so tricky," he said.