

February 28, 2010

SOCCER ROUNDUP

Manchester City Ends Chelsea's 37-Game Run

By **REUTERS**

Manchester City defeated [Chelsea](#), 4-2, to end its 37-match unbeaten record at Stamford Bridge in an early game Saturday in the English [Premier League](#).

First-place Chelsea, beaten at home for the first time in all competitions since November 2008, finished with nine men after having Juliano Belletti and Michael Ballack sent off late in the second half.

City climbed from fifth to fourth place after two goals from Carlos Tévez, one from the penalty spot, and two from Craig Bellamy after Frank Lampard opened the scoring for Chelsea early in the match.

Lampard scored a second for Chelsea on a penalty kick as the match moved into stoppage time, but it was too little, too late.

Chelsea leads [Manchester United](#) by 1 point. United does not play a league match this weekend as it prepares for Sunday's League Cup final against Aston Villa at Wembley Stadium.

The prematch buildup was dominated by the first meeting between the former Chelsea teammates John Terry and Wayne Bridge since they became the focus of news media attention after allegations that Terry had an extramarital affair with Bridge's former girlfriend. Bridge refused to shake Terry's hand in the customary prematch greeting ritual between the two teams.

CACAU STAYS HOT Striker Cacau continued his scoring run with two more goals in VfB Stuttgart's 2-1 home win over Eintracht Frankfurt in the Germany Bundesliga.

The Brazilian-born Cacau, included in Germany's squad for next week's friendly against Argentina, also scored four times in the 5-1 victory at Cologne last week and was on target in the 1-1 Champions League draw with visiting Barcelona last Tuesday.

Stuttgart climbed to eighth place after winning for the seventh time in nine league matches since the former Tottenham Hotspur coach Christian Gross took over in November.

All the Stuttgart goals came last in the first half.

First-place Bayer Leverkusen played Cologne in a later match, and second-place Bayern

Munich hosts Hamburg on Sunday.

UNITED MAY FACE SANCTIONS Manchester United will be punished by the English Premier League if Manager Alex Ferguson keeps boycotting the [BBC](#) in the coming season.

Ferguson has refused to speak to the BBC for six years since an investigation was broadcast questioning the business dealings of his son Jason, who was then working as a soccer agent. He was not found guilty of wrongdoing.

The Premier League is introducing the new rule, which will take effect at the start of the season in August. It will force Ferguson, 68, to speak to the BBC, which pays to show highlights of matches on its popular evening "Match of the Day" show, and BBC Radio Five Live, which airs live commentaries.

The potential penalty has not been revealed, but it could be financial. Ferguson also refuses to speak to newspaper reporters after Premier League matches.

United is the only top-flight club to boycott postmatch news conferences.

Ferguson does fulfill his obligations for the UEFA Champions League by attending news conferences before and after matches. (AP) **NIGERIA HIRES LAGERBACK** Nigeria has hired the Swedish coach Lars Lagerback to lead the Super Eagles at the World Cup. The Nigerian Football Federation announced the hiring on its Web site.

Nigeria fired Coach Shaibu Amodu after the team came in third during the African Cup of Nations. Lagerback resigned as Sweden coach in October after his team failed to qualify for the World Cup. (AP) **NEW SOCCER CHANNEL** DirecTV, DISH Network and Verizon FiOS have agreed to carry Fox Soccer Plus when it starts Monday. Time Warner Cable will start carrying the network in select markets in the near future.

The new network, a companion to Fox Soccer Channel, is taking over many of the rights that had been held by Setanta USA, which shuts down Sunday night. Fox Soccer Plus will carry the European Champions League, the English Premier League, English F.A. Cup, English League Championship, English national team and the Italy's Serie A. (AP)

MESSI, BARCA MOST VALUABLE [Lionel Messi](#) and Barcelona are the world's most valuable news media brands, while [Real Madrid](#)'s unprecedented spending on players has lifted it to second from fifth, according to a new study by a Spanish university.

The University of Navarra's Economics, Sport and Intangibles Research Group calculated media value by monitoring Internet presence and the volume of articles, and gave Messi, a forward from Argentina, the top ranking for players.

Real's record signing, the Portuguese international [Cristiano Ronaldo](#), was second, and Manchester United's England striker Wayne Rooney was third.

Barcelona topped the clubs' ranking after winning six trophies in 2009, followed by Real, Manchester United, Chelsea, [A.C. Milan](#) and Liverpool. (REUTERS)

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