

25 All Blacks batter Aussies 37-20 to complete Bledisloe sweep



26 Kohli's third straight ton in vain as West Indies level series



27 Svitolina, Stephens grind out three-set wins to reach Singapore final



Mane sends Liverpool to the top

Bournemouth, Watford continue their fine starts to the season



LIVERPOOL: Liverpool's Senegalese striker Sadio Mane (L) scores their fourth goal during the English Premier League football match between Liverpool and Cardiff City at Anfield in Liverpool, north west England yesterday. — AFP

LIVERPOOL: Sadio Mane scored twice as Liverpool took advantage of their title rivals' inactivity to go three points clear at the top of the Premier League with a 4-1 win at home to Cardiff yesterday as Bournemouth and Watford both continued their fine starts to the season. Liverpool were the only club who started the weekend among the top five in action yesterday, with reigning champions Manchester City not facing Tottenham Hotspur until tomorrow.

Meanwhile midweek European commitments also meant that Chelsea, like City and Liverpool yet to lose in the Premier League this season, were playing Burnley on Sunday, when in-form Arsenal travel to Crystal Palace and Manchester United welcome Everton to Old Trafford.

Mohamed Salah, now putting a stuttering start to the season behind him, fired Liverpool into a 10th-minute

lead. From a cross into the Cardiff box, Mane's shot was blocked by Sean Morrison but Egypt forward Salah pounced on the rebound for his 33rd goal in 35 games at Anfield.

But as long as the lead was just 1-0, Cardiff were still in the game. Mane, however, doubled Liverpool's lead in the 66th minute when, running on to an Alberto Moreno pass, he smashed a shot into the top corner.

But Liverpool's hopes of a club record 10th successive home clean sheet were dashed in the 77th minute when Callum Paterson turned in a cross deflected by Reds defender Virgil van Dijk. However, two goals inside the final 10 minutes from substitute Xherdan Shaqiri and Mane put the result beyond doubt.

Bournemouth closed on fifth-placed Tottenham with a 3-0 win away to Fulham. Callum Wilson won and then scored a 14th-minute penalty after he was brought

down by Timothy Fosu-Mensah. David Brooks then scored his third goal in four games to double the Cherries' lead in the 72nd minute.

Minutes later, Fulham's day went from bad to worse when captain Kevin McDonald was sent off for a second bookable offence following a late challenge on Brooks.

Wilson rounded out Bournemouth's victory when he scored his second goal five minutes from time at Craven Cottage. Watford were far too strong for Huddersfield in a 3-0 win at Vicarage Road.

They were 2-0 up inside 19 minutes thanks to two well-struck goals. Roberto Pereyra broke the deadlock in the 10th minute with a superb solo effort, collecting the ball out wide on the left and beating six Huddersfield defenders as he cut inside before shooting from the edge of the area.

The Hornets doubled their lead nine minutes later when more dire defending by the visitors allowed Gerard Deulofeu to dribble past Chris Lowe, beat another attempted challenge and then score from a tight angle 15 yards out.

The aptly-named Isaac Success sealed Watford's win 10 minutes from time. Defeat dropped Huddersfield to the bottom of the table after Newcastle, previously propping up the division, managed a point in a goalless draw at home to Southampton.

Elsewhere, Brighton striker Glenn Murray, fresh from being taken off after suffering concussion against Newcastle last week, returned to score his 100th goal for the Seagulls in a 1-0 win at home to Wolves. Bruno fired the ball across goal and Murray side-footed in from close range in the 48th minute. Leicester face West Ham in a late kick-off. —AFP

Ronaldo scores twice as Juve overcome fright to win at Empoli

EMPOLI: Cristiano Ronaldo scored twice, the first a penalty and the second a booming long-range shot, to give Juventus a 2-1 win at Empoli in Serie A yesterday after their lowly opponents took a shock first-half lead.

Promoted Empoli, with one win all season and 18th in the 20-team table, stunned the visitors with a Francesco Caputo goal—the first time Juve had trailed at halftime this season. But the champions turned the match around after the break as Ronaldo took his league tally to seven and left his side top with 28 points out of a possible 30, seven points clear of second-placed Napoli who play today.

Juventus defender Giorgio Chiellini, who was named in the starting lineup, suffered a problem in the warm-up and was replaced by Daniele Rugani.

Empoli played some enterprising football which belied their lowly position and took a shock lead in the 28th minute. Afriyie Acquah

ran half the length of the pitch and his pass was deflected by Juve's Rodrigo Bentancur into the path of Caputo, who curled his shot past Wojciech Szczesny.

Miralem Pjanic fired against the post as Juventus came roaring back in the second half and it was no surprise when they equalised in the 54th minute.

Empoli's Ismael Bennacer lost possession in the box to Paulo Dybala, both players went to ground, the referee awarded a penalty amid Empoli protests and Ronaldo fired a low spot kick past Ivan Provedel.

Sixteen minutes later, the Portuguese forward collected a pass outside the area and fired a dipping, swerving shot past Provedel from 25 metres. — Reuters



EMPOLI: Juventus' Portuguese forward Cristiano Ronaldo jumps for the ball during the Italian Serie A football match Empoli vs Juventus yesterday at the 'Carlo Castellani Stadium' in Empoli. — AFP