

Sports

McIlroy wins European season finale, tops money list again



Hertha beat Hoffenheim to reclaim fourth place



MONDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 2015

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LONDON: West Ham United's English striker Andy Carroll (R) jumps to win a header during the English Premier League football match between Tottenham Hotspur and West Ham United at White Hart Lane in north London yesterday. — AFP

KANE BRACE SETS SPURS ON ARSENAL'S TAIL



LONDON: Harry Kane scored his seventh and eighth goals in five matches as Tottenham Hotspur dispatched West Ham United 4-1 yesterday to close on the Premier League's top four. Defenders Toby Alderweireld and Kyle Walker also found the net at a chilly White Hart Lane as Mauricio Pochettino's side equalled the club record of 12 successive Premier League games without defeat. Spurs now trail fourth-place Arsenal by just two points and leaders Leicester City by four, leaving them ideally placed for an assault on the Champions League berths ahead of next weekend's home game with spluttering champions Chelsea, who will not relish the trip to

north London.

Kane, who has scored 12 goals in 14 London derbies, branded the display Spurs' best of the season and Pochettino said: "It was a high-level performance. It was fantastic and we feel very proud. "It was a brilliant effort. We showed how we can play and we need to keep the whole season the performance that we showed." The only disappointment for the Spurs manager was the booking collected by rising star Dele Alli following a shoving match with Mark Noble, which rules the England newcomer out of the Chelsea game.

It was only a second defeat in 10 league games for Slaven Bilic's West Ham, who replied late on through Manuel Lanzini, and left them three points adrift of Spurs in sixth place. "The performance matches the result, to be fair," Bilic told BBC Sport. "They were better than us."

The visitors badly missed injured playmaker Dimitri Payet, whose place was taken by Diafra Sakho in West Ham's only change. Bilic strung his midfielders across the pitch in a 4-1-4-1 system, with Sakho wide on the right, in an attempt to stop Spurs' centre-backs sliding

passes into the feet of Alli, Christian Eriksen and fit-again Son Heung-Min, who replaced the suspended Erik Lamela.

Victor Moses gave Spurs early concern by skipping past Mousa Dembele and crossing from the left, but Spurs were in control and after Eriksen had warned Adrian's palms from range, they took a 23rd-minute lead.

Alli's shot from the edge of the box was partially blocked and fell to Kane, who easily rolled Carl Jenkinson before rifling a left-foot shot into the roof of the net for his seventh goal of the league campaign. West Ham threatened to reply immediately when Cheikhou Kouyate volleyed acrobatically against the crossbar after Noble's blocked shot ballooned into the air.

But in the 33rd minute the hosts added a second, Alderweireld outjumping Andy Carroll at the near post and nodding in Eriksen's corner. Spurs should have put the game out of sight before half-time. Alli headed against the bar after Adrian had thwarted Son and moments later Kane was sent clean through, only to

miscue horribly and bobble a left-foot shot well wide.

It did not take long for him to atone, however, as an ill-advised attempt to play the ball out from the back by West Ham gifted Spurs their third goal five minutes after the change of ends.

The reluctant recipient of a throw from Adrian, Tomkins passed the ball straight to Eriksen, who moved it on to Kane, and the England striker drove a low strike through Adrian from outside the box.

Adrian should have done better than allow the ball to slip beneath him, but he provided a firmer barrier shortly after, blocking from Son at his near post and then parrying Eriksen's volleyed follow-up.

Walker was booked after a needless face-off with Sakho, but the right-back made amends in the 83rd minute by using the outside of his right foot to curl Son's lay-off around Adrian's forlorn dive and into the net.

Lanzini denied Hugo Lloris a clean sheet by flummoxing Walker with a step-over and slamming home left-footed, but Spurs finished strongly, with substitute Ryan Mason hitting the post. — AFP

NAPOLI, FIORENTINA SHARE LEAD AHEAD OF INTER GAME

MILAN: Title-chasing Napoli were left provisionally top of Serie A on goal difference yesterday after a Nikola Kalinic-inspired Fiorentina were held 2-2 by Empoli in Florence. Earlier, Gonzalo Higuain hit his 10th goal of the campaign to take the lead in Serie A's scoring charts and fire Napoli one-point clear of Fiorentina after a 2-0 win at struggling Verona.

But Fiorentina maintained their hopes in what continues to be a thrilling battle for this season's scudetto and were unlucky not to go two points clear after spurning a series of late chances at the Artemio Franchi.

Inter Milan, in fourth one point off the pace, can return to the top of the table with a win over Frosinone at the San Siro in Sunday's late game. In the meantime, Napoli will enjoy at least a few hours as the Serie A leaders, although Fiorentina are only in second due to inferior goal difference and Roma are just one point adrift in third after being held 2-2 at Bologna on Saturday.

Empoli travelled to Florence looking for their fourth win in six league outings and were well on their way after taking a 2-0 half-time lead thanks to goals from Marko Livaja and Marcel Buchel.

Livaja put the visitors ahead with a crisp strike that beat Ciprian Tatarusanu at his top corner on 18 minutes, although there were clear signs of offside. Buchel doubled Empoli's lead nine minutes later and for the remainder of the opening half Fiorentina struggled to find the breakthrough.

Paulo Sousa had rested his most potent strike pair, Kalinic and Josip Ilicic, with one eye on Thursday's Europa League clash against the coach's former club, FC Basel.

But the canny Portuguese handler soon changed tack, Kalinic and Federico Bernardeschi replacing Mario Suarez and Ante Rebic for the start of the second half. The impact was almost immediate, Croatia marksman Kalinic reducing arrears with a finely-taken header from just outside the six-yard box that Lukasz Skorupski could only swipe at in the 56th minute.

Kalinic had his brace inside five minutes when he squeezed between two defenders to slot Babacar's low delivery home after the Senegalese striker had been given acres of space on the right.

Kalinic could have secured his second hat-trick of the season, after his triple in a 4-1 win at Inter Milan, 13 minutes from the end but



VERONA: Napoli's Gonzalo Higuain, left, and Hellas Verona defender Evangelos Moras vie for the ball during a Serie A soccer match at Bentegodi stadium in Verona, yesterday. — AP

saw his first-timer from eight yards out glance off the top of the crossbar.

Babacar made way for Giuseppe Rossi moments later but the American-born striker was eclipsed as Kalinic, and then Matias Vecino, came closest to securing all three points. — AFP

TERRY HOPES NORWICH SUCCESS WILL SPARK WINNING STREAK

LONDON: Chelsea captain John Terry expressed his relief after the West Londoners chalked up only their fourth league win of the Premier League campaign on Saturday at Stamford Bridge. Diego Costa's second half strike was enough to defeat Norwich 1-0 as the defending champions finally had something to celebrate after an appalling start to the season.

Terry, who had a strong game at the heart of the Chelsea back-four, says the win was a welcome boost to the squad who still lie a distant 14 points behind surprise leaders Leicester down in 15th position.

"We're delighted to win," Terry told Chelsea TV ahead of the Champions League trip to Maccabi Tel Aviv tomorrow. "Relieved as well. Picking up three points has been a really good feeling.

Good performance to top it off as well. "Hopefully we can put ourselves on a good run of games now and climb up this table. The victory was also a much needed boost for under-fire manager Jose Mourinho who had overseen three straight league defeats for the

first time since owner Roman Abramovich took over the club 12 years ago.

A victory in Israel combined with a Porto success over Dynamo Kiev the same evening will see the 2012 European champions qualify for next year's knockout phase. "We can build on this now and hopefully get another win tomorrow," continued the 34-year-old. "We have three points on the board now in the Premier League and switch focus to the Champions League again," Terry added. "With that in mind and the importance of qualifying it's all there for everyone to see and to go and do."

"Anyone who has been to the games and watched the last five, six games has seen the performances have been there," Terry added. "(Against Norwich was) very much the same. Creating chances, shots on goal, crosses into the box. It could've been four or five. It wasn't. "We'll certainly take the 1-0 and we have something to build upon now," said Terry after the team's third clean sheet of the season. — AFP