

WOLFSBURG COACH TELLS MARCELO 'STOP ACTING'

WOLFSBURG: Wolfsburg coach Dieter Hecking has told Real Madrid defender Marcelo to "cut out the acting" following his antics during his team's 2-0 Champions League quarter-final first-leg defeat in Germany.

The Brazil left-back thrust his head towards Wolfsburg midfielder Maximilian Arnold's chest in the 69th minute of Real's shock defeat, then crumpled to the turf,

clutching his face.

Arnold, who scored Wolfsburg's second after a penalty from Ricardo Rodriguez, was shown a yellow card, while Marcelo escaped a booking for the incident. "Marcelo is an actor," fumed Hecking. The Wolfsburg coach sought out the Real star at Wolfsburg's Volkswagen Arena stadium after the game to tell him not to try anything similar for the return

leg in Madrid on Tuesday. "I told Marcelo to cut his acting out. He couldn't have complained if he'd found himself no longer on the pitch after that scene," added Hecking. "Arnold got a yellow card he didn't deserve. That annoyed me, because there was no need."

Arnold gave a tongue-in-cheek answer when asked about the incident following his heated exchange with Marcelo on the

pitch. "We ended up talking about our haircuts," said the German with a grin. Marcelo's theatrics were ridiculed on social media and drew comparisons to his fellow Brazilian Rivaldo's play-acting at the 2002 World Cup. Swiss full-back Rodriguez converted a penalty in the 18th minute before Arnold slotted home on 25 minutes to leave Real with it all to do next week in Madrid. — AFP

PELLEGRINI: CITY MUST CUT OUT THE MISTAKES

PARIS: Manchester City manager Manuel Pellegrini admitted his side must not repeat the defensive errors that marred their Champions League quarter-final, first leg with Paris Saint-Germain on Wednesday despite the 2-2 draw giving them the edge.

Away goals by Kevin De Bruyne and Fernandinho at the Parc des Princes mean City have the upper hand ahead of next Tuesday's return, but those strikes sandwiched a farcical goal gifted to Zlatan Ibrahimovic and an Adrien Rabiot effort for PSG. The French champions also saw Ibrahimovic have a penalty saved by Joe Hart early on with the game still goalless, so the evening could have gone far worse for Pellegrini's men.

"In the first half we made an important mistake that we cannot continue to do if we want to stay in the competition," said Pellegrini of the awful mix-up between Hart and Fernando that allowed Ibrahimovic to score. "The second goal of PSG was offside. It was not a mistake of the defense but of the linesman.

"But it is important also to keep that mentality because when you receive the goal that we conceded in the last minute of the first half and then you concede a goal that is off-side, it is not easy to try to recover, but I think this team has the personality and they believe in what they do. "They always try to attack and we scored the second goal."

Nevertheless, Pellegrini refused to label his side as the favorites to advance now as City eye a first ever Champions League semi-final and the Chilean also said it was "very difficult to answer now" if captain Vincent Kompany will be back in time for the second leg in six days.

Selection headache

However, his opposite number Laurent Blanc is left with a selection headache for the return after both David Luiz and Blaise Matuidi picked up bookings that mean they will be suspended for the second leg. Marco Verratti and Javier Pastore will also miss the game due to the injuries that prevented them from featuring in Paris as PSG go to England having to overcome the handicap of those away goals.

"It's not the first time we have conceded goals at home but we have shown that we can score goals away from home," said Blanc, whose side eliminated Chelsea in the last 16. "I think if we can do better defensively we can create chances and score goals in Manchester." He added: "When you talk about the two players who will be suspended you can add that to the negatives tonight. — AFP



PARIS: Manchester City's Spanish midfielder David Silva (L) vies with Paris Saint-Germain's French midfielder Adrien Rabiot during the UEFA Champions League quarter final football match between Paris Saint Germain (PSG) and Manchester City. — AFP



WOLFSBURG: Real Madrid's French coach Zinedine Zidane (L) looks on as Wolfsburg's Brazilian midfielder Luiz Gustavo controls the ball during the UEFA Champions League quarter-final, first-leg football match between VfL Wolfsburg and Real Madrid. — AFP

ZIDANE FUMES AS REAL CRASH AT WOLFSBURG

WOLFSBURG: Zinedine Zidane admitted Real Madrid suffered an El Clasico hangover as they crashed to a 2-0 Champions League quarter-final, first-leg, defeat at Wolfsburg on Wednesday. Just five days after ending Barcelona's 39-game unbeaten run with a 2-1 away win, Real were humbled as Wolfsburg ignored their struggling mid-table form in Germany's top flight.

Real never recovered as first-half goals from Swiss defender Ricardo Rodriguez and Maximilian Arnold put the hosts 2-0 up at the Volkswagen Arena with 25 minutes gone. Wolfsburg now have the upper hand ahead of Tuesday's return leg at the Bernabeu. "I'm not happy, above all with the first-half. This can happen if you don't play with intensity from the start," said coach Zidane, who made just one change from the team which beat Barca. "We wanted to play here just like we did on Saturday, it was an intensive game for us (in Barcelona) and we were flat in the first-half here. "Now we have a chance in the return leg and it's good we've got a game in three days (at home to Eibar) to get over this defeat.

"We had our problems, not just in the intensity, but also in our movement. "We didn't expect the 2-0 defeat and we need to analyze where we went wrong and make corrections." Zidane even said he was proud of his players and took full responsibility for the result. "I have to find the reasons for the defeat and the solutions," he added. Real's six-game winning streak was ended as Wolfsburg picked up their first win in four games since beating Gent in the last 16 of the tournament. It was a poor performance from Real's star forwards as Gareth Bale was kept quiet and Cristiano Ronaldo rarely shook of his markers.

'Obviously frustrating'

France forward Karim Benzema went off on 41 minutes after a knock. Bale was left frustrated at not being awarded a first-half

penalty after a heavy challenge in the area from Luiz Gustavo. "I felt I got to the ball first and he hit me, so it is obviously frustrating, but we have another game," said the Welshman. "We just have to make sure now that in the return we win by three goals."

Wolfsburg coach Dieter Hecking gambled by starting inexperienced Brazilian Bruno Henrique on the right wing, who set up Arnold's goal. Centre-back Naldo played his first game since dislocating his shoulder in February and helped subdue the Real attack. There was little hint of the drama to come when Real's Cristiano Ronaldo put the ball in the Wolfsburg net after just 74 seconds, but the offside flag went up. The hosts took a shock lead on 18 minutes when Real midfielder Casemiro put in a clumsy foul on Wolfsburg striker Andre Schuerrle and Rodriguez nailed the spot kick. Arnold then slotted home on 25 minutes as Wolfsburg capitalised on some woeful Real defending. "When Madrid leave the door open, you have to take the chance to go through it," said Hecking. "There was contact (on Schuerrle) and it was a clear penalty.

"In Henrique, we had a weapon which Real hadn't bargained for. "I have to give my team their due, they did everything we talked about, annoyed Real and put ourselves in a good position for the return leg." But goal-scorer Arnold insists nothing has been decided yet.

"There is no point getting carried away. We'll have to play just as well in Madrid or maybe even better," he said after scoring his first Champions League goal. Defender Pepe said Real had been badly punished for leaking both goals in the opening 25 minutes. "We have to comeback, we had 20 bad minutes they took advantage of," said the centre-back. "We didn't take our chances. In a competition as important as the Champions League you pay for that. "The tie is not over yet, we have another game at home with the fans on our side." — AFP