

Inter Milan's team celebrate the "Scudetto", the major league Italian Championship at San Siro Stadium in Milan, on May 18.



Inter Win 3rd Consecutive Title

Inter Milan won its third straight Italian league title on Sunday by beating Parma 2-0 on the final day of the season. Zlatan Ibrahimovic, returning from a six-week injury layoff, scored both goals to help Inter finish the season with 85 points, three more than AS Roma, which tied 1-1 at Catania.

"All of Italy was rooting against us, which gives us even more pride," Inter president Massimo Moratti told AP.

Ibrahimovic was out injured when Inter wasted chances to clinch the past two weekends, first with a loss against city rival AC Milan and then last week with a tie against Siena.

"After we lost the derby a lot of (negative) things were written about us," Inter captain Javier Zanetti said. "Everyone was rooting for

Siena and everyone wanted Roma to win, but unfortunately the party is still going to be in Milan. This was a group response."

The Sweden striker came on in the 51st minute in driving rain at Parma and scored one goal with each foot. In the 62nd, he used his right foot to connect on a low shot from beyond the penalty area. He then volleyed in a cross from Maicon with his left foot in the 79th.

Inter fans were barred from attending the game in Parma, but thousands of supporters celebrated outside the stadium, and fans back in Milan chanted in front of the city's Duomo cathedral.

Roma needed to win and hope for help from Parma. It looked good for the Giallorossi when Mirko Vucinic scored in the eighth minute, but

Roma let up after news of Ibrahimovic's goals reached Catania and Jorge Andres Martinez tied the score for the Sicilians in the 85th.

Fiorentina beat Torino 1-0 to secure fourth place and Italy's final Champions League berth. AC Milan finished fifth despite a 4-1 win over Udinese, and will miss out on the top European competition next season.

Juventus finished third with 72 points and was followed by Fiorentina with 66 and Milan with 64.

Alessandro Del Piero finished as the league scoring leader, getting two goals in Juventus' 3-3 tie with Sampdoria on Saturday. Del Piero finished with 21 goals, teammate David Trezeguet had 20 and Genoa's Marco Borriello ended with 19.

Empoli, Parma and Livorno were relegated.

Tevez Must Stay At Old Trafford

Wayne Rooney wants Manchester United strike partner Carlos Tevez to stay on at Old Trafford when his loan period expires next year.

The Argentina international has already indicated he would be keen to stay on at the club and Rooney believes there is no reason why that should not be the case.

"I don't see why that shouldn't happen," Rooney told AFP. "Carlos enjoys playing his football here."

"He's got his wife and child with him, who don't live too far away from me."

"He's a nice, quiet lad who gets on with his job and he's enjoying his life."

Tevez joined United last year after playing a major role in saving West Ham from relegation and he has been a huge hit in the northwest as the club successfully defended their title and reached Wednesday's Champions League final.

He has formed a good understanding with Rooney and the respect is mutual ahead of the Champions League final against Chelsea in Moscow on Wednesday.

"Carlos is a great player and works really hard for the team. I had no doubts at all we could play together," said the England striker.

"From his first day in training with us, you could see the qualities he had."



Carlos Tevez

Nadal Wins Hamburg Trophy

Rafael Nadal clinched his first Hamburg Masters title with a hard-fought 7-5 6-7 (3-7) 6-3 win over the defending champion and top seed Roger Federer.

The world number two needed two hours and 52 minutes to beat the world number one in a gruelling and tense match, BBC reported.

He came back from 5-1 down to clinch the first set, while Federer also let an advantage slip in the second before taking the set in the tie-break.

Nadal broke twice in the third as he claimed the 26th title of his career.

"It was important to win because it was the last big clay-court tournament I never won," said Nadal.

The Spaniard has now beaten Federer on eight of the pair's previous nine meetings on clay.

The Swiss star's solitary victory over the Spaniard came in last year's Hamburg final, when Federer ended Nadal's 81-match winning streak on clay.

This time, however, Nadal got his revenge and brought an end to four-time champion Federer's 41-match unbeaten run on German soil.

In the first set Federer seemed in total control at 5-1 but, as in last month's Monte Carlo final, the Swiss could not convert a lead.

Nadal fought back in typically aggressive fashion, aided by some unforced errors from Federer who twice served for the set.

McClaren Likely To Go Dutch

Steve McClaren is on the brink of a surprise return to football in the Netherlands with FC Twente. The former England head coach was in Amsterdam yesterday to see Twente qualify for the Champions League at the expense of Ajax.

According to the 'Times', McClaren will decide this week whether to rebuild his career overseas and is giving serious consideration to the offer from Twente. He has been out of work since he was dismissed by the Football Association in November after England's failure to qualify for Euro 2008 and is keen to return this summer. The usual post-season cull of managers is likely to provide openings in the Coca-Cola Championship, but McClaren has often expressed a desire to work abroad.

Twente finished fourth in the Dutch league, ten points behind PSV Eindhoven, the champions, but secured the second Champions League place through the play-offs with a 0-0 draw in the Amsterdam Arena yesterday. They will join in the third qualifying round and the promise of European football is one of the lures for the Yorkshireman.

There is also the chance to rebuild his reputation without some of the baggage that would inevitably follow him around England because of his failure with the national side.



Steve McClaren

News in Brief

Roudaki to Vie At Olympic 2008



Captain of National Judo Team Mahmoud Miran on Monday failed to show up for his Olympic 2008 selection match against Mohammad Reza Roudaki in the +100-kg category.

According to ISNA, due to Miran's absence, Roudaki was selected to represent Iran in the Olympic competitions.

The technical staff of the team had decided that Miran, because of his vast experience, and Roudaki, due to his latest accomplishments, should compete against each other twice for a berth in the Olympic 2008. On Sunday, Miran lost the first contest.

Deputy Head of Judo Confederation Ali Reza Amini said, "We have plans for Miran. I think that it was tough for Miran to accept that a qualifying match should be held. At any rate, the decision was made after consulting the technical staff. I personally like Miran who deserves to be on the national team's roster. He is one of our men for the Moscow international competitions and we will not eliminate him."

France MotoGP for Rossi



Yamaha's Valentino Rossi followed his win in China with victory at the French MotoGP to move to the top of the world championship standings.

The seven-time world champion never looked back after overtaking Casey Stoner on lap eight, becoming the first rider to win two races this season.

Jorge Lorenzo did superbly to finish in second place ahead of Colin Edwards, despite having two fractured ankles.

James Toseland crashed out on lap three after colliding with Andrea Dovizioso.

Rossi controlled the race perfectly to move to the top of the championship standings on 97 points, three clear of Dani Pedrosa and Lorenzo, who are tied in second place.

He then celebrated by doing a lap of honor with the legendary Angel Nieto, whose mark of 90 career victories Rossi had equalled.

Nieto had special leathers made up for the occasion—the pair lie second to Giacomo Agostini in the all-time rankings.

"It's a long time since I won two races in a row, it means we are back in business and back on pace," Rossi told BBC Sport.

"It has been a difficult period for the team but now we are so strong. We are now at the top of the championship so we must stay concentrated and have more wins like this. I had quite a lot of pressure because Angel was waiting with the special leathers to join me on the bike, so I really needed to win."

Lorenzo rode through the pain barrier after fracturing his ankles during free practice for the Chinese Grand Prix two weeks ago and suffering another crash in practice at Le Mans.

Boston Reach Eastern Conference Final



The Boston Celtics beat the Cleveland Cavaliers 97-92 in a thrilling Game Seven on Sunday to reach the NBA's Eastern Conference finals.

Boston hung on for victory to clinch a 4-3 series triumph and set up a meeting with the Detroit Pistons.

The Celtics were 50-40 up at halftime but the game got down to a single point during the fourth quarter after LeBron James led a Cleveland fightback.

James scored 45 points and Paul Pierce inspired Boston with 41. "Both of them had a hell of a game offensively," Cleveland head coach Mike Brown told reporters.

"To score 86 points between the two of them is an amazing feat, you have two amazing basketball players in Pierce and James." The late drama came after a game in which every time Boston seemed to be building up a decisive lead Cleveland clawed back. With eight seconds remaining, James set up Sasha Pavlovic for a three-pointer that brought the score to 95-92 but after two free throw points from Pierce it was desperation time.

Bennati Secures 9th Giro Stage



Italian Daniele Bennati prevailed in a tight sprint finish to claim the ninth stage of the Tour of Italy.

Bennati won by less than half the width of a wheel from compatriot Paolo Bettini. Australia's Robbie McEwen was third across the line. It was the Liquigas rider's second stage win of the event, following his victory in the third leg, BBC wrote.

His compatriot Giovanni Visconti, of the Quick Step team, retained the overall lead.

"I took a few risks but the important thing is I won," said Bennati.

"I was going to put my arms up to celebrate before the line but when I saw Paolo coming up I threw my bike at the line and just got it. I'm sorry I beat him because I know the stage is close to his hometown, but I wanted to win because it's the only stage in Tuscany where I live. We congratulated each other during the sprint. We're enemies during the race but we're good friends when we're not shoulder to shoulder."