

A Sheriff with gunpowder; News in European soccer



By Fausto Triana

Havana, September 29 (RHC)-- He has gunpowder, no one doubts it, and on top of that a goalkeeper dressed as a hero, the until today unknown Greek Athanasiadis: the Sheriff without a defined country left Real Madrid speechless.

It was the news of the Champions League soccer, although not to overshadow the great goal of Argentine Lionel Messi, his first in the shirt of Paris Saint Germain and nothing less than against Manchester City.

Also, last-minute sparks from France's Antoine Griezmann and Uruguay's Luis Suárez from the penalty spot helped Atlético de Madrid turn their duel with AC Milan around and win 2-1 in extremis.

Jorge Valdano says that Athanasiadis saved 12 shots at Sheriff's goal. But the world champion with Diego Maradona's Argentina in 1986 and current Madrid manager seemed very overprotective when assessing his club.

Carlo Ancelotti, the Italian coach of Los Merengues, declared himself sad and blamed the unexpected 1-2 defeat against the grown-up club Sheriff of Tiraspol, from Transnistria, an internationally unrecognized territory, on bad luck.

They scored two excellent goals against the winner of 13 European Champions League crowns, the first after 25 minutes with a header by Uzbekistan's Jasurbek Yakhshiboev and a lethal left-footed strike by Luxembourg's Sebastien Thill in the 89th minute.

It happened at the Santiago Bernabeu in the midst of a modernization process and came as a bucket of ice water on a cool night. However, we are only at the beginning of the first phase of the Champions League.

Even so, Messi celebrated his goal in Paris against Guardiola's City, which sealed PSG's victory over their rocky English opponents. The score was 2-0, with the lethal trident in full swing, with the Argentine, Brazilian Neymar and Frenchman Mbappé.

The Parisians are now leading Group A, tied with Belgian side Brugge, while in Group B, Liverpool defeated Porto by a landslide to take the lead ahead of Atletico Madrid.

And the big surprise is that Sheriff dominates series D with six points after two victories, ahead of Real Madrid, which has three.

There is another 'electric' team in the air, Young Boys of Switzerland, another modest team that will face Atalanta of Italy on Wednesday.

However, the spotlight today will be on Barcelona, which will try to shake off the 3-0 defeat in its tournament opener against Bayern Munich, against a more manageable opponent, Benfica of Portugal.

Likewise, there will be interesting duels on the day such as the English Chelsea against the decimated Juventus of Turin, Sevilla vs Wolfsburg of Germany and Manchester United vs Villarreal.

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