Vinicius hat-trick saves Real Madrid in Champions League, Villa go top

AFP – Real Madrid came from behind to beat Borussia Dortmund 5-2 in the Champions League on Tuesday with Vinicius Junior scoring a hat-trick, as Aston Villa maintained their 100 percent record to go top of the table.

Vinicius struck three times in the second half as Madrid bounced back from two goals down to inflict further anguish on Dortmund – in the repeat of last season's final which Real won 2-0.

First-half goals in quick succession by Donyell Malen and Jamie Gittens had given Dortmund a two-goal lead at half-time.

"Things were very quiet when we got to the dressing room 2-0 down at half-time," Vinicius, 24, told Movistar.

"But we listened to the boss (coach Carlo Ancelotti) and agreed one simple thing: if we can score first then we'll fight back and win once again."

The 15-times champions duly struck back early in the second period via Antonio Rudiger and Vinicius, before Lucas Vazquez sent Real ahead and the Brazilian netted two more inside the final 10 minutes.

After the surprise defeat at Lille last time out, Madrid's hunt for a record-extending 16th Champions League crown is back on track as they move to ninth in the standings, on six points.

Malen swept the Germans into the lead on the half-hour following a deft pass from Serhou Guirassy that split open the defence.

Madrid defender Eder Militao was then left beating the turf in frustration four minutes later when Gittens flew in at the back post to double Dortmund's lead.

Rudiger halved the deficit with a powerful header from a Kylian Mbappe cross on 60 minutes.

Vinicius equalised two minutes later by tucking away a stray ball, the goal being awarded by VAR after Mbappe was shown to have been onside in the build-up.

A rare Dortmund foray forward resulted in a fine Thibaut Courtois save, with the holders then racing straight down the other end and Vazquez lashing home on 83 minutes.

Vinicius then completed his hat-trick in the 86th and 93rd minutes, his second coming after a lung-busting sprint down the line from inside his own half.

Arsenal emerged 1-0 winners at home to Ukraine's Shakhtar Donetsk thanks to an own-goal from the visitors' goalkeeper.

Dmytro Riznyk could only grasp at thin air after Gabriel Martinelli had cut in from the left and smacked the ball against the near post before it rebounded back off the goalie and over the line.

Leandro Trossard missed a penalty near the end, but Arsenal had already done enough to secure their second win of the tournament.

– Table-topping Villa –

Fellow Premier League side Aston Villa are enjoying an excellent return to European football's top table after 41 years as they won their third match in three Champions League outings this term with a 2-0 victory against Bologna.

"We are playing seriously, we are playing focussed, responsible and the team is progressing and mature in

everything," manager Unai Emery told TNT Sports.

John McGinn opened the scoring at Villa Park 10 minutes after the interval and Jhon Duran wrapped up the points in the 64th minute, sending Emery's side to the top of the league phase table on nine points with zero goals conceded.

Stuttgart sank Juventus 1-0 in Turin, thanks to a stoppage-time winner by El Bilal Toure.

The Italians were reduced to 10 men when Danilo picked up a second yellow while conceding a penalty in the 84th minute.

Mattia Perin looked to have saved his side when he stopped the resulting spot-kick from Enzo Millot, but Toure slammed home in the 92nd minute for Stuttgart.

PSV Eindhoven surprised Paris Saint-Germain with a Noa Lang goal against the run of play in the first period, before Achraf Hakimi hit back on 55 minutes to ensure the points were shared.

AC Milan beat 10-men Club Brugge at the San Siro with Christian Pulisic and a Tijjani Reijnders brace giving the Italians a 3-1 victory.

Monaco won 5-1 at home to Red Star Belgrade, while Sporting Lisbon beat Sturm Graz 2-0 in Austria.

Last season's Spanish league surprise-packages Girona picked up their first points in the competition with a 2-0 win at home to Slovan Bratislava.

On Wednesday, five-time winners Barcelona host six-time champions Bayern Munich and Liverpool visit RB Leipzig.

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