Revamped PSG see off Toulouse before Bayern clash

AFP- A revamped Paris Saint-Germain dominated Toulouse 3-0 at home on Friday to maintain their cushion on Ligue 1 rivals Monaco before next week's Champions League trip to Bayern Munich.
The French champions are six points clear of Monaco, who earlier beat Brest 3-2, but languish outside the top 24 in the new single-table format in Europe, with a trip to Munich coming up next Tuesday.

"It's important to arrive full of confidence," said coach Luis Enrique.

"In Ligue 1 our statistics are exceptional but in the Champions League we are far from our level. You have to be good in the important moments."

The Parisians' proved efficient on front of goal despite top players including Marquinhos, Pacho, Nuno Mendes, Gianluigi Donnarumma and Vitinha rested or on the bench.

Luis Enrique reshuffled with Yoram Zague, 18, coming in at left-back in place of Nuno Mendes, Milan Skriniar and Lucas Beraldo in central defence, Desire Doue in midfield and Matvey Safonov in goal.

Portuguese midfielder Joao Neves opened the scoring with a volley served up from captain Achraf Hakimi after 35 minutes at the Parc des Princes where the home fans terracing was partially closed after homophobic chants last month.

PSG were never under threat with Lucas Beraldo doubling their advantage after 84 minutes and Vitinha adding a third seven minutes later to keep the champions unbeaten in Ligue 1.

Despite the convincing win Luis Enrique said his team needed

to up their game against Bayern Munich who won 3-0 in the Bundesliga on Friday after a Harry Kane hat-trick.

“It was important tonight but there are four Champions League finals left,” said the Spaniard.

Toulouse, who won three games without conceding a goal before the international break and the only team to beat PSG in their previous 40 league matches, stay in 10th place.

Monaco tightened their grip on second place against Brest, who like the hosts, face a demanding Champions League match on Tuesday.

Maghnes Akliouche scored twice on the counter-attack and Aleksandr Golovin hit his first of the season for Monaco, who sit third in the Champions League and entertain Benfica on Tuesday.

But Brest, who are fourth in the Champions League and visit Barcelona next week, dominated the second half and fought to the end.

“It was a tough fight until the end,” said Monaco coach Adi Hutter pointing out his team would need “a better performance” to beat Benfica.

Monaco started strongly, Akliouche finished a counter-attack after five minutes and hit a post four minutes later. Golovin added the second after 24 minutes.

By then the visitors had lost playmaker Pierre Lees-Melou, who was later walking with crutches.

Abdallah Sima cut the lead with a 50th-minute header.

Brest coach Eric Roy was shown a 67th-minute red card. As his team pressed for a late equaliser, Monaco struck on the break in added time. Akliouche finished the move with a piledriver.

Brest kept fighting and Ludovic Ajorque replied as time expired.

Monaco increased their advantage over third-placed Marseille to six points. Marseille travel to Lens on Saturday.

Brest stayed 12th but are only three points ahead of Saint-Etienne in the relegation playoff spot.

AFP