

Gakpo stars as Liverpool rout Ipswich, Arsenal survive red card drama to beat Wolves

AFP- Cody Gakpo struck twice as Premier League leaders Liverpool thrashed Ipswich 4-1 to maintain their six-point lead over Arsenal, who survived Myles Lewis-Skelly's controversial red card to snatch a 1-0 win at Wolves in the Premier League on Saturday.

Troubled champions Manchester City recovered from Abdukodir Khusanov's debut disaster to move into fourth place with a vital 3-1 win against top four rivals Chelsea.

At Anfield, Liverpool cruised to their second successive league victory thanks to a first half goal-spree.

Dominik Szoboszlai's 11th-minute opener fizzed past Ipswich goalkeeper Christian Walton from Ibrahima Konate's assist.

Mohamed Salah doubled Liverpool's advantage in the 35th minute with a fierce strike for his 23rd goal in all competitions this term.

It was also the Egypt forward's 100th Premier League goal at Anfield.

Gakpo killed off Ipswich before half-time when he bundled home after Walton parried Szoboszlai's shot in the 44th minute.

The Dutch forward netted again in the 66th minute, heading past Walton from Trent Alexander-Arnold's cross.

Jacob Greaves' stoppage-time diving header was little consolation for third-bottom Ipswich.

Liverpool's 16th win from 22 league games this season keeps

them on course for a first English title since 2020.

"I think about how can I make sure these players play in a style I would love them to play. And they have done that from the start. It's a joy to watch," Liverpool boss Arne Slot said.

The quadruple-chasing Reds have a game in hand on second-placed Arsenal, who left it late before keeping the pressure on the leaders.

Arsenal had Lewis-Skelly contentiously sent off for tripping Matt Doherty to stop a Wolves counter-attack in the 43rd minute.

Arsenal were furious, protesting that the 18-year-old defender's tackle was too far from goal to warrant a red card.

But Wolves were also reduced to 10 men in the 70th minute when Joao Gomes earned a second booking for a foul on Jurrien Timber.

And Italy defender Riccardo Calafiori won it for Arsenal in the 74th minute with a half-volley that went in off the far post.

– 'Difficult to accept' –

"It's obvious that it was very difficult to accept. I leave it to you guys because it's that obvious. You don't need my words. It was so obvious," Arteta told reporters of Lewis-Skelly's dismissal.

At the Etihad Stadium, Uzbekistan defender Khusanov, signed from Lens as part of struggling City's January overhaul, made a woeful start when his miscued header allowed Noni Madueke to give Chelsea a second minute lead.

But City, who also gave a debut to Egypt forward Omar Marmoush after his move from Eintracht Frankfurt, hit back to equalise

with Josko Gvardiol's 42nd minute strike.

Erling Haaland chipped out of position Chelsea keeper Robert Sanchez to put City ahead in the 68th minute.

Phil Foden sprinted clear to score his sixth goal in his last four league games in the 87th minute as Pep Guardiola's side climbed one point above sixth-placed Chelsea.

It was a much-needed win for City, who suffered a damaging loss at Paris Saint-Germain on Wednesday and must beat Club Brugge next week to have a chance of reaching the Champions League play-off round.

"Not the best start but we recovered emotionally and made a good performance," Guardiola said.

"Any player can make a mistake. Khusanov's so young. He will learn. The players were together. That was massively important."

Dango Ouattara hit a hat-trick as Bournemouth dented Nottingham Forest's top four charge with a 5-0 demolition at the Vitality Stadium.

Andoni Iraola's side are undefeated in their last 11 league games and up to seventh place after ending third-placed Forest's own impressive run of eight top-flight matches without losing.

Justin Kluivert bagged Bournemouth's opener and Ouattara completed a memorable treble before Antoine Semenyo sealed the Cherries' biggest victory this season.

Alexander Isak starred as fifth-placed Newcastle won 3-1 at bottom of the table Southampton.

Jan Bednarek put Southampton ahead but in-form Isak struck twice before Sandro Tonali scored Newcastle's third.

Everton boss David Moyes celebrated becoming the third manager to reach 700 Premier League games with a 1-0 win at Brighton secured by Iliman Ndiaye's 42nd minute penalty.

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