

A matter of names, Barcelona is playing for the Champions League

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Havana, November 23 (RHC)-- The first of the two dates of the fifth round of the Champions League will have several protagonists, but today the morbidity is with Barcelona.

The azulgranas can virtually clinch a ticket to the next phase of the top European club soccer tournament or sink further in their duel with Benfica.

However, also in the spotlight is the name of Xavi Hernandez, their new coach and former star player. With Xavi, Barcelona beat Espanyol in the Catalan derby of the Spanish LaLiga, although with a lot of scares and few arguments to regain the status of a great team.

It is too early and for the moment what the former player has imposed as a coach is discipline. A midfield that continues to revolve around the veteran Sergio Busquets, the defense supported by old acquaintances like Piquet and Ter Stegen, and the attack more launched with the young Nico and Akhomach, the latter a 17-year-old striker, Spanish of Moroccan origin, who was Xavi's surprise.

Alongside them, the Dutchmen Memphis Depay and Frenki de Jong, to try to neutralize Benfica, who beat them 3-0 in the previous match.

On Tuesday's program in the European Champions League, Villarreal's duel against Cristiano Ronaldo's Manchester United, who have just lost their coach, stands out. The two rivals are evenly matched at the top of the F series.

With more urgency, Sevilla will face Wolfsburg of Germany this Tuesday, in the G key, to try to get out of the basement and have a remote chance of reaching the next stage of the tournament.

Julen Lopetegui's Andalusian team has soccer arguments, but with three points they must not only unseat the Germans, but also wait for the results of leaders Salzburg and Lille.

They will rely on the performances of Ocampo, Rakitic, Acuna, Mir, Jordan, Diego Carlos and Kounde.

The day will also see Chelsea and Juventus face off in a clash that gives the Italians the peace of mind of a three-point lead at the top of Group H, while Bayern Munich, led by insatiable Polish striker Robert Lewandowski, are on the verge of sweeping aside Dynamo Kiev.

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