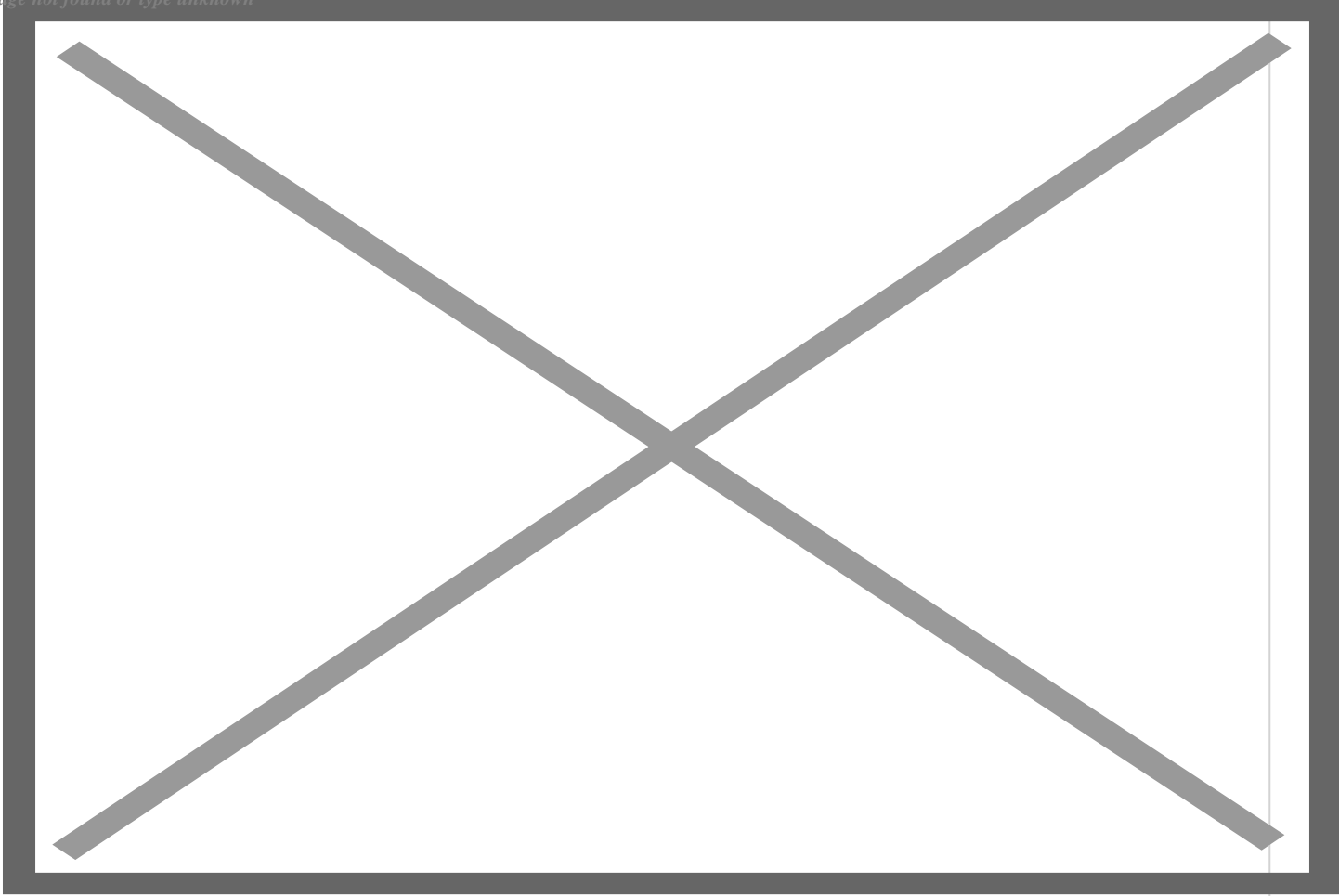


Sevilla loses ground in Spanish title race

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Sevilla lost ground in the fight for the Spanish soccer league title with a 1-1 draw against RCD Espanyol on matchday 25.

Havana, February 21 (RHC)-- Sevilla lost ground in the fight for the Spanish soccer league title with a 1-1 draw against RCD Espanyol on matchday 25.

Rafael Mir gave the Andalusians the lead in the 36th minute, taking advantage of a pass from Argentine Alejandro "Papu" Gómez. However, the Periquitos equalized in the 50th minute with a goal by Sergi Darder.

The Sevillian team, second in the championship, started the day four points behind leaders Real Madrid. They now find themselves six points behind, as the Merengue side beat Alaves 3-0 on Saturday (19), which allowed them to come out stronger at the weekend.

Barcelona regained fourth place on Sunday with a 4-1 win over Valencia with three goals from Gabon's Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang in the 23rd, 38th and 63rd minutes and another from Dutchman Frenkie de Jong (52nd).

Carlos Soler scored for the defeated side, ranked 12th, with a header in the 52nd minute.

The azulgrana squad has 42 points, the same as Atletico Madrid (fifth), who beat Osasuna (ninth) 3-0 away on Saturday.

Betis, third in the league, beat Mallorca (16th) 2-1, with a decisive goal by Brazilian Willian José, who converted a penalty in the 83rd minute.

In Sunday's final match, the big Basque derby, Athletic (eighth in the standings) defeated Real Sociedad (seventh) 4-0 in front of their home fans in Bilbao to close to within just one point of the day's opponents.

Daniel "Dani" Vivian opened the scoring in the 68th minute, followed by goals from Oihan Sancet (72nd), Iñaki Williams (80th) and Iker Muniain (89th).

Results of matchday 25:

Friday:

-Elche - Rayo 2-1.

Saturday:

-Granada - Villarreal 1-4.

-Osasuna - Atlético de Madrid 0-3.

-Cadiz - Getafe 1-1.

-Real Madrid - Alavés 3-0.

Sunday:

-Espanyol - Sevilla 1-1.

-Valencia - Barcelona 1-4.

-Betis - Mallorca 2-1.

-Athletic - Real Sociedad 4-0.

Monday:

-Celta - Levante.

Standings:

Team PJ PG PE PP GF GC Pts.

1-Real Madrid 25 17 6 2 51 20 57.

- 2-Sevilla 25 14 9 2 37 17 51.
- 3-Betis 25 14 4 7 47 30 46.
- 4-Barcelona 24 11 9 4 42 28 42.
- 5-Atlético de Madrid 25 12 6 7 45 34 42.
- 6-Villarreal 25 10 9 6 42 24 39.
- 7-Real Sociedad 24 10 8 6 24 25 38.
- 8-Athletic 25 9 10 6 29 21 37.
- 9-Osasuna 25 8 8 8 9 25 30 32.
- 10-Celta 24 8 7 9 28 25 31.
- 11-Rayo 24 9 4 11 28 29 31.
- 12-Valencia 25 7 9 9 9 37 42 30.
- 13-Elche 25 7 8 8 10 28 34 29.
- 14-Espanyol 25 7 8 8 10 30 35 29.
- 15-Getafe 25 6 8 11 24 28 26.
- 16-Mallorca 24 6 6 8 10 23 38 26.
- 17-Granada 25 5 9 11 11 27 40 24.
- 18-Cádiz 25 3 3 11 11 21 21 39 20.
- 19-Alavés 25 5 5 5 15 19 42 20.
- 20-Levante 24 2 8 14 24 50 14.

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