Week 27 review: Five-star PSG hammer OM as top four win

PSG’s 5-1 romp in Marseille surely boosted the reigning champions’ confidence, but with Monaco, Nice and Lyon also victorious, the title race remains poised, with the principality club still three points clear at the top.

Paris Saint-Germain went into Sunday's clash in Marseille having won their last three matches at the Stade Vélodrome and on a run of 13 matches unbeaten in the fixture, but few would have predicted that OM owner Frank McCourt's first Classique would see his resurgent side so utterly outdone by their capital-club rivals.

From Marquinhos’ early opener (6’) to Blaise Matuidi’s deft finish from a Marco Verratti lay-off (72’), Paris Saint-Germain played the kind of football that had seen them demolish Barcelona 4-0 and gave every indication that they are just now unleashing their full potential as the final stretch of the season approaches.

"I think the team are very good, we are enjoying a good phase at the moment," beamed PSG boss Unai Emery, whose side have won all but one of an unbeaten run of 13 matches in all competitions in 2017. "However, it is necessary to keep this level of performance up, to maintain our consistency and our desire. This game was good for our confidence. However, once this match is over it is over - we have to play again next week!"

Meanwhile for OM boss Rudi Garcia, it was far from what he had hoped for, especially with a Coupe de France round of 16 clash with Monaco looming in mid-week: "It's a huge disappointment. We just couldn't rise to the occasion. We showed the drive we needed to at the beginning, but we conceded two early goals from the kind of situations we had worked on. We knew what we needed to do to stop them, and we failed to do that."

OM will certainly need to do better as they face Monaco on Wednesday night, especially as Leonardo Jardim's side bounced back from their spectacular 5-3 Champions League reverse against Manchester City - their only defeat in all competitions in 2017 - with a 2-1 victory away to Guingamp, which ensured them of ending the weekend still in top spot.

"I think the team played a great game. We dominated well, we read our opponents' strengths well: direct play, transitions. We defended high, and that helped us a lot," said Jardim, for whom Poland stopper Kamil Glik broke the deadlock (24’) before Fabinho clinched the result from the spot (86’, pen.).

"It was very important after the Champions League match to stay focused with a match like that."

The title race’s third player, OGC Nice, also kept their iron in the fire. With star striker Mario Balotelli suspended and injured 11-goal top scorer Alassane Pléa out for the rest of the season, substitute Mickaël Le Bihan stepped into the breach with a brace to clinch a come-from-behind 2-1 win over a Montpellier side who had won three of their last four under new boss Jean-Louis Gasset.

"Le Bihan - what a remarkable story," said OGC Nice boss Lucien Favre of the 26-year-old who was made his return to action off the bench on the hour-mark after 17 months out with a foot injury. "He told me that he was ready and came on for the final 30 minutes. Congratulations to him."

With the top three all winning to, fourth-placed Lyon needed to follow suit to stay within 13 points and keep their slim hopes of a podium finish alive, and Bruno Genesio’s men duly obliged, handing promoted Metz a 5-0 hammering at the Parc OL to move four points clear of their nearest rivals.

"Is this our best run of form? We also had a good phase at the end of last year, but it is true that we're scoring and creating a lot just now,” said Genesio, for whom newly signed Dutch international Memphis Depay starred with a brace. “Memphis had been threatening to have a game like that. When you don't pay for a long time it can be difficult to regain your rhythm, but he is fit again and is showing all his qualities as an attacking player.”

Meanwhile OL’s arch-rivals Saint-Etienne continued to founder, losing their fourth in a row in all competitions, 1-0 at home to Caen, a result that...
allowed Bordeaux to leapfrog them into fifth place on the back of a see-sawing 3-2 win away to a Lille side who ended the match with just nine men.

Super-sub Adam Ounas struck twice to leave Les Girondins three points clear of European rivals ASSE and OM.

Angers made it three wins in a row just for the second time this season, prevailing 3-0 over Bastia to climb to 11th, while eight-placed Rennes maintained their place in the top half of the table as Giovanni Sio's lone strike secure a 1-0 Brittany derby win over bottom club Lorient.

FC Nantes saw Colombian midfielder Felipe Pardo score a spectacular lob to clinch a 3-1 win over Dijon while, after holding Paris Saint-Germain to a 0-0 draw in Week 26, Toulouse were at it again, ensuring an identical stalemate away to Nancy on Saturday evening and slipping to ninth.

**Week 27 Reactions - Emery: 'Personality and confidence'**

PSG coach Unai Emery was delighted with his side after their 5-1 win over Marseille; OM midfielder Grégory Sertic refused to dwell on the defeat.

Sunday, 26 February, 2017

Olympique de Marseille 1-5 Paris Saint-Germain

Rudi Garcia (Olympique de Marseille coach): "It's a huge disappointment. We just couldn't rise to the occasion. We showed the drive we needed to at the beginning, but we conceded two early goals from the kind of situations we had worked on. We knew what we needed to do to stop them, and we failed to do that."

Unai Emery (Paris Saint-Germain coach): "I think the team are very good, we are enjoying a good phase at the moment. However, it is necessary to keep this level of performance up, to maintain our consistency and our desire. This team has personality and confidence on the ball. This game was good for our confidence. However, once this match is over it is over - we have to play again next week!"

Grégory Sertic (Olympique de Marseille midfielder): "It may sound strange but I think the first five or six minutes were good from us, with good pressing. The second goal killed the game, though. It was difficult to come back. It's a shame because we wanted to play a big game. You can see the gap between us and them. There's still a long way to go. We have a very big project but it has only just begun."

Olympique Lyonnais 5-0 FC Metz

Bruno Génésio (Lyon coach): "You regain faith in yourself when you score goals. It makes things easier. Is this our best run of form? We also had a good phase at the end of last year, but it is true that we're scoring and creating a lot just now. We will have to see how things go now against Bordeaux and Roma, to see if we are ready for such teams. I think we could have scored more today if we'd focused. Memphis Depay had threatened to have a game like that. When you don't pay for a long time it can be difficult to regain your rhythm, but he is fit again and is showing all his qualities as an attacking player."

Philippe Hinschberger (Metz coach): "Looking at the game as a whole it is logical that we conceded goals. We could have conceded even more, in the second half especially. What is a shame is that we could have opened the scoring. We had two or three chances to score. At 2-0 we could still hope, but at 3-0 the game was over."

AS Saint-Etienne 0-1 SM Caen

Christophe Galtier (Saint-Etienne coach): "In the first half we weren't even close. After half-time, with a tactical change, I thought we could come back. Unfortunately it wasn't to be. We found our feet in the second half and created chances without taking them. Some players were exemplary, like Kévin Monnet-Paquet. Others are still a way off, like Robert Beric who must find a way to gel with his teammates. The important thing now is to get to 44 points, then we can take stock."

Patrice Garande (Caen coach): "This victory is beautiful. It does us good. Of course, we were very good defensively, but at the end of the game we
Week 28

could have widened the gap. Now we are 14th with 31 points, but the league is tight and we are only four points above the relegation zone. That's significant and insignificant at the same time. This win is important for the players and the club, but we will not stop there. This season, unlike in previous seasons, we will fight to the end.*

Saturday, 25 February, 2017
EA Guingamp 1-2 AS Monaco
Antoine Kombouaré (Guingamp coach): “We started the game well, in spite of everything. We had planned on quickly threatening their defence and shaking them up a bit. We didn't do that enough. You have to highlight the quality in this Monaco side, who came here determined, solid, very disciplined and rigorous, an impenetrable defence, and we struggled to break that down. That was disappointing. We wanted to play more quickly, with more rhythm. We knew that we had to hurt them physically and mentally, and we weren't able to do that.”

Leonardo Jardim (Monaco coach): “I think the team played a great game. We dominated well, we read our opponents' strengths well: direct play, transitions. We defended high, and that helped us a lot. It was very important after the Champions League match to stay focused with a match like that, with a lot of challenges, a lot of second balls. I had watched two or three Guingamp games when they played the big clubs in the league: Paris, Lyon, Marseille. Those teams had problems, because to play against Guingamp, you also have to win challenges, because they’re very strong in that area. You can't let them bring the ball out, they're very good at transitions, you mustn't let them play direct. That's why we had worked on pushing the defensive line high.”

LOSC Lille 2-3 Girondins de Bordeaux
Franck Passi (LOSC coach): “We made a real mess of the first half, we lacked spontaneity and confidence, but we knew that beforehand. This team is not used to finding itself in this area of the table, and we're going to have to battle right to the last day of the league.”

Jocelyn Gourvennec (Bordeaux coach): “It was a strange how it worked out, but overall it was a deserved win. We were punished for not being able to give ourselves a two-goal lead. We could have done it in the first half, and in the second. Lille didn't give up and turned the game round in two minutes. I think the three substitutes were key in our ability to stay in the match and keep on hurting Lille. Lille were hurt by the red cards, and in this kind of game, you can’t lose your cool. We didn't play too relaxed, but we weren't precise enough in our finishing. Even so, we had chances with eight or nine shots on target. We could have paid dearly for not scoring more, but we're still improving. We have a squad with a lot of youngsters and they've been taking on responsibility recently. Even when Lille led, the team didn't give up.”

AS Nancy Lorraine 0-0 Toulouse FC
Pablo Correa (Nancy coach): “What I want to highlight is that we played the game we had planned on playing, but the ball didn’t want to go in. There are evenings like that. I'm very happy with the performance overall. I would have liked to have opened the scoring, especially in the first half when we were on top. In the last two days, we had worked tactically, because defensively I hadn't liked the last two matches at all. The only thing that was lacking was a goal.”

Pascal Dupraz (Toulouse coach): “We got a point. It's not easy to play against a team that's battling for survival. We know what that's like: barely a year ago, we were fighting to stay up. We didn't play well in the first half, we were a little better in the second. I thought we weren't good going forward, weren't unselfish enough. We're going to settle for the point.”

Angers SCO 3-0 SC Bastia
Stéphane Moulin (Angers coach): “There were several objectives in the same game: beat a direct rival, win a second successive home game and record a third straight victory. The players played very well. I think the scoreline was fair, and could even have been bigger with 24 shots, 15 on target. That’s quite exceptional, and shows the quality of the play that there was at times. It’s great to have 33 points, and we have to enjoy it, because two-and-a-half months ago, it wasn't the same tune. We’ve been able to turn things round all together.”
François Ciccolini (Bastia coach): “We lacked a lot of things. It’s difficult to accept after the match against Monaco. How can we go from a match like that last week against Monaco to this evening’s performance? We lacked control, we lost the ball too easily. When you do so little, you can’t win. We were below par. Our best player was our goalkeeper, Vincensini. It’s difficult because we don’t have a central striker. We have to deal with that.”

Stade Rennais FC 1-0 FC Lorient
Christian Gourcuff (Rennes coach): “It was a difficult game. We needed to take the three points to calm things down a bit. It was a moment that we had to handle well, show combative ness, and they can’t be criticised for that. We have played better in recent times without picking up points. We played a bit more direct than usual given the players I had available. We didn’t control the game, it was too open. We have to try and find a good balance between dominating and penetrating. It was forbidden this evening to not put in the effort. In the context, we needed a team that would fight.”
Bernard Casoni (Lorient coach): “We played well until the 20th-minute. We conceded from their first shot. We were always chasing the game. After that body blow, we were too hasty. I’m sick of talking about frustration! There’s always a lapse for which we pay dearly, it’s becoming annoying too. We weren’t precise enough in our passing, and we lacked quality in this match. We’re not able to turn things in our favour, even if the boys dig in, even if they put energy into it. What’s frustrating is not to open the scoring and to have to chase the game. We could have kept a clean sheet, but we didn’t. We have to turn things round, we don’t have a choice.”

Friday, 24 February, 2017
OGC Nice 2-1 Montpellier Hérault SC
Lucien Favre (Nice coach): “We conceded an avoidable goal. We didn’t battle hard enough and lost several duels. However, the team showed character. (Mickaël) Le Bihan - what a remarkable story. He told me that he was ready and came on for the final 30 minutes. Congratulations to him. A thought for as well, for (Alassane) Pléa. He will be out for a long time. As for luck? You have to believe it will be on your side sometimes.
Jean-Louis Gasset (Montpellier coach): “We’re disappointed. We struggled to cope on the counter-attack and obviously I’m disappointed. Our hard work went unrewarded. Our game was to pack the midfield and get forward quickly. This sapped our energy. We were less comfortable after half-time. We did not put Nice in enough danger apart from a Ryad Boudebouz free-kick. Tonight the players are disappointed. But in February, we have only lost against Monaco and Nice, two teams on the podium that are superior to us.”

FC Nantes 3-1 Dijon FCO
Sergio Conceicao (Nantes coach): “I’m not surprised that we scored three goals for the second time in a row at La Beaujoire. We struggled in the first half because of their 5-3-2 system. We chased after the ball and I changed my formation to a 4-3-3. We had more of the ball after that, created dangerous chances with crosses, and it was perhaps the best we have played this season. Did I shout at the payers at half-time? Perhaps a little. Not much, as it was not a problem with motivation or lack of ambition. It’s just that tactically we were not right. We’re all in the same boat. Together with the fans, we’re stronger.”
Olivier Dall’Oglio (Dijon coach): “In the first half we weren’t too bad. We reacted well to equalise. However, in the second half it was difficult to keep the ball. Nantes taught us a lesson in possession. It is out of the question to blame the referee. If we are going to save ourselves we have to do so on our own. The players have to remain humble. Regarding our ball control and technique, I am a little upset because we know how to do it, we just didn’t. We need to be a bit more forceful - that much is obvious!”
Rui Almeida replaces Ciccolini at Bastia

SC Bastia have announced that Portuguese coach Rui Almeida will take over from ex-coach François Ciccolini with immediate effect, the relegation-threatened Corsican club looking to turn it around before the end of the season.

SC Bastia’s 3-0 loss in Angers on Sunday was the club’s ninth match without a win in all competitions - and the sixth defeat in that run - and the club’s directors opted to take action, announcing on Monday that François Ciccolini, in charge of the senior team since taking over from Ghislain Printant in January 2016, would be replaced by Rui Almeida.

The Portuguese presided over his first training session on Monday afternoon, directly after putting pen to paper on a two-and-a-half-year deal that also entailed the arrival of assistant coaches Gabriel Santos and Benoît Tavenot and goal-keeping coach Hervé Sekli. The 47-year-old former Red Star FC boss's first mission is to get Sporting Club de Bastia back to winning ways and out of the drop zone, starting on Wednesday night at home to FC Nantes in their rescheduled Week 24 clash.

Bastia are currently in 19th place, four points shy of 18th-placed Dijon but a win in Almeida's first match in charge could change the complexion of Bastia's predicament, leaving them just three points shy of 15th-placed LOSC in a tightly packed bottom half of the table.

Nantes deny Bastia at the death

FC Nantes scored a late equaliser to salvage a 2-2 draw from their trip to SC Bastia on Wednesday and deny the struggling hosts’ new coach Rui Almeida a debut win.

THE MATCH

Five points adrift of safety at kick-off of this rearranged Week 24 fixture and winless in eight league outings, Bastia needed a good start. They didn't get one. Alexander Djiku's foot was high when he went into a tackle with Adrien Thomasson, and he was shown a red card just ten minutes in.

It would have been worse still had Jean-Louis Leca not pushed out Emiliano Sala's shot (20') as Nantes, who found themselves in the same position as Bastia before their Sergio Conceiçao-inspired renaissance, sought to press home their advantage.

Bastia held firm, however, and then did better still. Prince Oniangué found Lenny Nangis, and his cross was met by Gaël Danic at the back post - the former Olympique Lyonnais man lunged to turn the ball past Rémy Riou (69').

Better was to come as Oniangué was on hand to force the ball over the line after Lindsay Rose had headed a Pierre Bengtsson cross against the Nantes crossbar (75').

With just 15 minutes left and trailing 2-0, the outlook was bleak for Nantes, despite their numerical advantage. However, Conceiçao has instilled an unwavering self-belief in his side that again came to the fore.

Sala quickly volleyed them back into the game (78') and they were then gifted the ideal opportunity to level when Mariusz Stepinski, who had scored the only goal in the duo's meeting earlier in the season, was brought down inside the penalty area with four minutes left.

Lucas Lima, Nantes' set-piece specialist, took the ball, but failed to hit the target from 12 yards. Bastia's celebrations were short-lived, though, as another Nantes defender, Diego Carlos, latched onto a Sala flick deep in added time before firing past Leca to earn a point.

THE PLAYER: Emiliano Sala

The former Girondins de Bordeaux forward's form under Conceiçao has been like that of the team: stunning. He has now scored four times under the Portuguese tactician, one more than he managed under René Girard.

THE STAT: 4

Nantes are now unbeaten in four league games, and have lost just twice - and won six times - in their 11 matches under Conceiçao.
Almeida: 'Save this magnificent club'

Brand-new SC Bastia coach Rui Almeida was upbeat about leading his side to safety despite having been caught in a 2-2 draw at home to Nantes in their rescheduled Week 24 clash.

SC Bastia 2 - 2 FC Nantes

Rui Almeida (SC Bastia coach): "We deserved all three points. It was a tough match, different from what I expected. They changed their approach after the sending off. I'm happy with the frame of mind my players showed. We have grounds for regret. We're sad - victory slipped through our fingers with ten seconds to go. But I'm sure that at some stage we will also win a match with ten seconds left. That's what our fans deserved - there was a fantastic atmosphere tonight. We have 11 matches to left to save this magnificent club's Ligue 1 skin."

Sergio Conceicao (FC Nantes coach): "I have a lot of respect for the Bastia fans, they are full-on. We managed to avoid defeat away from home once more. That's a real positive, given that this was a very important game for Bastia. We took a point and we deserved it. Sometimes it's tough to play against a side who are a man down. They defend deep and there is less space. But we're a pragmatic side, and we gave it our all. It's a point won with a strong spirit. It's a good sign that we levelled the score. It was a difficult match, a bizarre match."

COUPE DE FRANCE

Laborde brace boosts Bordeaux, Angers go through

Girondins de Bordeaux moved through to the Coupe de France quarters with a Gaëtan Laborde-powered 2-1 win over FC Lorient, while Angers clinched a 1-0 win away to third-division CA Bastia to claim their place among the final eight.

Tuesday, February 28, 2017
Coupe de France round of 16
Girondins de Bordeaux 2 - 1 FC Lorient

THE MATCH

It was Ligue 1's fifth-placed side playing host to the wooden spoon contenders but, had it not been for Laborde's efficacy in the box, Lorient could have come away with something to smile about.

The home side took a while to get going in the match and, despite chances for Jérémy Ménez (38') and Younousse Sankharé (44'), they received a real shock when Lorient striker Benjamin Jeannot pounced on an error from Bordeaux 'keeper Cédric Carrasso before the second half was two minutes old (47').

However, half-time sub Jérémy Toulalan added the security in Bordeaux's midfield that allowed his side to get forward in numbers, and when Ménez's shot hit the post, Laborde was on hand to turn home and level matters (61').

The 22-year-old again took advantage of Ménez's ground work as he struck a second from the former PSG, Roma and Milan man's assist (72') and, although he could have bagged another two (74', 87'), it proved enough to book Jocelyn Gourvennec's in-form side a place in the final eight.

THE PLAYER: Gaëtan Laborde
Laborde has been a near-ever present for Gourvennec this season, striking four times in the league, but it is in the cups that the Bordeaux youth product has shone. In fact, Tuesday night's brace was his third of the season, with the first two coming in the Coupe de la Ligue's round of 16 (a 3-2 win over OGC Nice) and quarter-finals (a 3-2 win over Guingamp).

THE STAT: 4

It has been four years since Bordeaux reached the Coupe de France quarters, and Gourvennec and his men have every reason to hope for the best: the last time they made it this far in the competition, they went all the way, beating Evian-Thonon-Gailllard 3-2 in the 2014 final.

CA Bastia 0 - 1 Angers SCO

CA Bastia had accounted for Ligue 1 side Nancy in the round of 32, but on Tuesday night there was no repeat of their giant-killing antics as Stéphane Moulin's side struck through Famara Diedhiou just before the break (40').

Despite the hosts' having carved out the better early chances, Angers' defence held sway in the second half and Les Scoïstes secured a comfortable win - albeit by the narrowest of margins - to book a spot in the quarter-finals.

Big two reach Coupe quarters

Ligue 1 big-hitters AS Monaco and Paris Saint-Germain made it through to the Coupe de France quarter-finals on Wednesday and will be joined in the last eight by En Avant Guingamp.

Olympique de Marseille 3 - 4 AS Monaco a.e.t.

Beaten 5-1 by arch-rivals Paris Saint-Germain last weekend and with memories of their recent 4-1 defeat to Monaco in Ligue 1 still painfully fresh, OM wanted - and needed - to make a positive start to bolster their fragile confidence.

Florian Thauvin did test Morgan De Sanctis (11'), but it was OM goalkeeper Yohann Pelé who would make the first significant contribution to the scoreboard - unfortunately for the hosts, it was to unwittingly divert Joao Moutinho's free-kick into his own net after the Portugal international's effort had ricocheted wickedly off a post (19').

OM did not crack though, and Dimitri Payet brought them level before the break, sending a half-volley beyond De Sanctis after the January signing from West Ham United had been picked out by Thauvin's cross (43').

Monaco seized the initiative again on 66 minutes when the irrepressible Kylian Mbappé found the net, nipping in front of Rolando to turn in Benjamin Mendy's cross (66') to embellish his flourishing reputation still further.

With six minutes left, OM took the game into an extra period thanks to Rémy Cabella's smart finish (84'), but Monaco - through the unlikely source of their left-back Mendy - went ahead again thanks to the former OM defender's strike on 104 minutes.

Still OM showed heart, and Cabella levelled once more on 111 minutes, but just two minutes later, Thomas Lemar found the net to take Leonardo Jardim's men, who had beaten amateur side FC Chambly 5-4 after extra-time in the previous round, into the quarter-finals.

Chamois Niortais 0-2 Paris Saint-Germain

The reigning champions remain on course to complete a hat-trick of successive Coupe de France wins following a solid performance in victory over Ligue 2 outfit Chamois Niortais.

Home goalkeeper Arthur Desmas was the busiest man on the pitch in the opening minutes as he denied Thomas Meunier (11') and then halted a Gonçalo Guedes shot deflected by Jérémy Choplin (23').

PSG's January signing from Benfica failed to take a handful of chances as Unai Emery's men appeared set to endure extra-time, which - with their fixture list already well-stocked - would not have been in their ideal script.
Javier Pastore’s finessed finish to Christopher Nkunku's free-kick 12 minutes from time spared PSG's tired limbs before Edinson Cavani got on the end of a cross from the Argentina international to give the scoreline a more flattering gloss (90+4').

Quevilly-Rouen 1-2 En Avant Guingamp

The top-flight side were given a real scare by their third-tier hosts, who tore into Antoine Kombouaré’s men from the off and were awarded a penalty early in the second half.

The spot-kick smashed off the crossbar (49') and Guingamp exploited their luck, taking the tie away from their Norman opponents in the space of two minutes in which Alexandre Mendy (59’) and Nill De Pauw (61’) both found the net.

Pierre Vignaud pulled one back with a cleverly executed free-kick in added time (90+2’), but could not prevent the Ligue 1 side progressing.

Round of 16 reactions - Jardim: ‘Quality opponents’

Leonardo Jardim acknowledged the quality of Rudi Garcia’s Marseille side after his AS Monaco team won 4-3 at the Vélodrome to book a quarters berth; PSG boss Unai Emery hailed his side’s 2-0 heavy-weather win in Niort.

Wednesday, March 2, 2017
Olympique de Marseille 3 - 4 AS Monaco (a.e.t.)

Rudi Garcia (Olympique de Marseille coach): “That's not good enough. We didn't qualify, but I got my response from the team in terms of the performance, the football we played and our capacity to react - we came back three times after gifting tem the first couple of goals. And while Monaco didn't give us an inch, we scored three great goals. We can be proud that we bounced back, but the main thing was qualifying.”

Leonardo Jardim (AS Monaco coach): “We kept on reacting well and managed to always score one goal more - that's the sign of a team that loves to play football to win. I'm happy for the players who play less often - they give options for the team. Marseille are going through a tough period but have a lot of quality players. I didn't like conceding all those goals but still it's great to have scored as many as we did here in Marseille. They are quality opponents. I would have preferred to play just 90 minutes; the match against Nantes [in Ligue 1] is approaching fast. I wasn't going to come here with the reserve side; that would have shown a lack of respect for the Coupe de France and the image of the club. I made changes.”

Chamois Niortais 0-2 Paris Saint-Germain

Denis Renaud (Chamois Niortais coach): “It was the match that we expected, and we prepared with victory in mind. We're disappointed but we turned in an excellent performance. I think Paris doubted themselves here in Niort. We knew that if we could make it to the break on level terms that they would be in a somewhat tighter spot. I'm very disappointed for my players.”

Unai Emery (Paris Saint-Germain coach): “We're happy because the team battled well today. There was a great atmosphere and difficult weather conditions. We did what was necessary, and showed a great mentality and good spirit. The Coupe de France remains an objective for us. It's important we stay demanding.”

Quevilly-Rouen 1 - 2 En Avant Guingamp

Lucas Deaux (En Avant Guingamp midfielder): “We stayed focused, with a lot of respect for our opponents. In this kind of match, there is a psychological dimension that you have to be able to manage. They are human beings, just like us.”

Emmanuel Da Costa (US Quevilly coach): "What I'm saddest about concerning this match is that we conceded two goals very quickly. If I can reproof my players for anything, it's that. A Cup match can move very quickly. It was important to score a goal but, unfortunately, we did so too late."
Tuesday, March 2, 2017

Girondins de Bordeaux 2 - 1 FC Lorient

Jocelyn Gourvennec (Bordeaux coach): "We didn't take our two good chances of the first half. After that, we made a silly mistake, we needed to chase the game. But we had good spells in which we scored twice. We have started 2017 well, things are taking a turn for the better. Today, we're at it. This evening, when it was a bit difficult, we didn't doubt, which wasn't the case at the start of the season. The players have more self-belief. It takes time for things to come together. There's a certain logic to it."

Bernard Casoni (Lorient coach): "It was an improvement to get to half-time at 0-0, because we always concede a goal in the first 20 minutes. After that, we managed to score at the start of the second. But at 1-0, we sat back. Bordeaux were able to equalise and then take the lead. We should have been able to keep the ball more. We dropped off a bit physically. We have to learn lessons from that. We had two chances at the end, which shows we had energy. That's encouraging. It's up to us to turn matches in our favour."

CA Bastia 0 - 1 Angers SCO

Stéphane Moulin (Angers coach): "I think that our opponents deserve some credit for our below-par performance. I think they prepared well and I really think that our performance wasn't great. We managed to capitalise on one of the very few chances we created. My players weren't celebrating much after the game. We came here to qualify but they know very well that this isn't the kind of performance that will keep us winning matches. We enjoyed some good fortune tonight. We were well below the level we have been showing of late. But when you win without playing well, it's a rather encouraging sign."

Lille earn Monaco date

LOSC claimed just their second win in five matches in all competitions - 2-1 away to CFA (D4) side Bergerac - to book their place in the quarter-finals, where they will travel to take on Ligue 1 leaders Monaco.

Thursday, March 2, 2017

Coupe de France round of 16

Stade Jean-Antoine, Libourne

Bergerac Périgord FC 1 - 2 LOSC

THE MATCH

LOSC may have got a scare when feisty amateurs Bergerac levelled the scores in injury time through captain Brahim Kamissoko (90'+2) but, as he did to help Portugal to win the final of Euro 2016, Eder bagged a last-gasp winner (90'+4) to give the northerners something to smile about after a rough month of February (one win and four losses in Ligue 1).

It was a cruel ending for CFA (D4) outfit Bergerac, who had held up well in the face of LOSC's domination in the first half and mixed it in the second - until Rony Lopes bagged the opener as he raced onto Yves Bissouma's deep pass and finished with a deft chip (70').

The stadium in Libourne threatened to erupt when an exhausted Kamissoko picked himself up to meet Evan Chevalier's corner at the near post nod home for an equaliser that seemed sure to bring on extra time.

However, as the seconds ticked down, the Bergerac faithful had the rug pulled out from under them. Eder, played in by Carlens Arcus, turned on the pace on the edge of the area and fired an angled shot past his man - and past 'keeper René Dollvet - but not past the post.

It was a second win in three matches for new LOSC boss Franck Passi and could prove a turning point as Les Dogues look to build a dynamic and rescue a difficult season, but they will need to show more going forward if they are to trump Monaco - in the principality - when the quarter-finals roll around.
THE PLAYER: Eder

With six goals in 24 appearances in all competitions, the Portugal striker may not be having the season he hopes for after outshining Cristiano Ronaldo with the winner in the final of Euro 2016. However, on Thursday, he showed that he still has the knack for scoring important goals, clinching a win that could prove the turning point for a club looking to get back on the rails after a tumultuous season so far.

THE STAT: 2

This is the second time that LOSC have reached the Coupe de France quarters since Rudi Garcia's prodigious side claimed gold in the final against PSG as part of a league and cup double with the likes of Eden Hazard, Yohan Cabaye, Gervinho and Moussa Sow.

Round of 16 reactions - Passi: 'Got the job done'

LOSC coach Franck Passi welcomed the morale-boosting 2-1 Coupe de France round of 16 win over CFA (D4) side Bergerac on Thursday, noting that confidence is his side's main issue at the moment.

Thursday, March 2, 2017
Coupé de France round of 16
Stade Jean-Antoine, Libourne
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Fabien Pujo (Bergerac Périgord FC coach): "I don't know whether cruel is the right word. You just have to accept that you can't afford to make the slightest mistake, or lose concentration or not think clearly as, against a Ligue 1 side, you will pay dearly. My only regret is that we didn't make it to extra time. In the end, we didn't make it - football decided otherwise. Congratulations to my players, we had a great campaign. The fans fell in love with this Bergerac team, and we'll be back next season. We really enjoyed our little run in the Coupe de France. Now it's back to league duties."

Franck Passi (LOSC coach): "Right now every match seems a bit epic. We managed to hit back right away, which was great. That's the charm of the Coupe de France. There's always a bit of tension: you have to be careful not to lose to the minnow but at the same time the little sides defend tooth and nail. Obviously we got the job done. It wasn't a great match but all we needed to do was qualify. We are a team who are below where we want to be because of a lack of confidence. Victory will bring us that confidence and be great for our morale. Congratulations to Bergerac, they did their club proud and I wish them the best for winning promotion to the National next season. Our quarter-final against Monaco is a long way away, for the moment we're focused on Toulouse."