

DEAR FOOTBALL FANS

BY DFF STUDIO / THE BEAUTIFUL GAME. THE UGLY DRAMA. THE GLORIOUS BANTER.

WEEKEND ROUNDUP / 24–25 OCTOBER

MADRID BROUGHT RECEIPTS. THE REST BROUGHT EXCUSES.

Dear Football Fans, Barcelona ordered a tenth straight league win. Mbappé cancelled the booking and charged them twice. Chelsea, United and City also lost, but this edition starts with the man who ruined the reservation.

Barcelona 1–2 Real Madrid. Mbappé scored twice, Raphinha replied, and the late winner ended Barça’s perfect league start. Madrid left Camp Nou with three points and enough material to ruin several family WhatsApp groups.



BARÇA / THE RETURN DESK

NINE WINS. NO REFUND.

Nine straight league wins had Barcelona dreaming of ten. Mbappé supplied a different number: two. Raphinha’s equaliser reopened the argument; Madrid closed the till.

Barça still lead Madrid by three points. The title race is alive. The victory speeches need editing.

UNITED / OLD TRAFFORD

HOME COMFORTS. FOR VISITORS.

Manchester United 0–3 Bournemouth. Rayan, Marcus Tavernier and Evanilson provided the goals. United provided the venue.

Carrick needs answers bigger than another promise to improve. When the visitors look this comfortable, is it a football project or a hospitality business?

CHELSEA / STAMFORD BRIDGE

THE BRIDGE CHARGED NO TOLL.

Chelsea 0–2 Tottenham. A Mike Penders own goal broke the deadlock before Mathys Tel sealed it. Spurs took the points; Chelsea took the scenic route through embarrassment.

The clean sheet at Everton was a lovely souvenir. Apparently it was not a subscription.

CITY / VILLA PARK

PERFECT START. TERMS APPLY.

Aston Villa 2–1 Manchester City. City’s perfect Premier League start finally met a cancellation policy.

One defeat does not make a crisis. It does make the group chat considerably less pleasant. Manchester’s red and blue halves can finally agree on something: no football talk at work.

NEXT UP / THE GROUP CHAT IS OPEN.

Carrick’s next explanation needs a football plan attached. Barça’s response needs defending attached. And the rest of us need to stop calling every good weekend a title parade.

Jade Cole’s verdict: Madrid earned the headline. Bournemouth and Spurs earned their applause. Losing clubs do not get to call it “banter” only when somebody else is the punchline.