



Atletico go top after Real Madrid stumble at Betis



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The visitors took the lead at the Benito Villamarin stadium through Brahim Diaz but Betis struck back with a Johnny Cardoso header, as Real Madrid missed the suspended Jude Bellingham. Isco secured the Andalusian side a deserved win. "It's a big blow. We have to react," continued Ancelotti. "We started well, but later we did not have the same level of commitment, the game got out of control against a side that played better than us and deserved to win."

Isco returned to action in December after missing several months with a broken leg and has hit top form in recent weeks. "About halfway through the first half we stepped up our game, and I'm happy with the win against the best team around these days," said the playmaker, who won several major trophies with Real Madrid before departing in 2022. "The Rojiblancos have often relied on their substitutes making huge impacts this season and so it proved again as they opened the scoring."

Simeone brought on Marcos Llorente and Alvarez just before the hour mark and the duo combined to open the scoring after 66 minutes. Llorente delivered a fine low pass for the former Manchester City striker to run on to, and he finished with minimal fuss for his eighth league goal of the campaign.