

# Carlo Ancelotti reaching new heights with Real Madrid as he chases a managerial record

► Real coach bidding to win the league in a fifth country



► SIGN UP

## SPORT



Real Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti has masterminded a fine first half of the season. AP

**Liliane Tannoury**

Dec 25, 2021

Real Madrid's 46 points out of 57 possible in the first half of La Liga, eight more than second-placed Sevilla, has underlined once again the management skills of Carlo Ancelotti

The last time Real led the table at this stage was in the 2016-2017 season, one in which they ended up winning the title.

### READ MORE

[Sergio Ramos sees red again as frustrating start to Paris Saint-Germain career continues](#)

Ancelotti is looking to add to his record the only major league he has yet to win, having triumphed in Serie A with AC Milan, the Premier League with Chelsea, the Bundesliga with Bayern Munich, and Ligue 1 with Paris Saint-Germain.

When Real signed Ancelotti earlier this season, many were surprised. Not because he hadn't generated good memories during his first spell, but because the fans were looking forward to welcoming new faces in a cast that had been the same for many years. The names of Massimiliano Allegri and Antonio Conte seemed to convey more emotion and interest.

Perhaps they had forgotten how good Ancelotti is. I dare say that the 2021 model is better than the one who left the club six years ago. His first time at the club is remembered, of course for winning their tenth European Cup, but also for being a soft-handed manager.

Now, despite being equally open to dialogue with his players, he is more firm, with a more modern team, more concerned with physical preparation and with younger footballers to command.

Real win 2-1 at Bilbao



Real Madrid's Karim Benzema celebrates after scoring his side's opening goal during the 2-1 La Liga win at Athletic Bilbao. AP

Tactically Ancelotti has made his mark on this Real team. Their biggest problem last season was poor organisation in defence. The manager has used short passes and narrowing the spaces between the lines if possession is lost, trying to move quickly from defence to attack and not relying on long balls from the back.

In the first part of the season, they wobbled a little, but they suffered only two defeats, against Espanyol in La Liga and against [Moldova's Sheriff Tiraspol in the Champions League](#). It was a time they were missing key players like Luka Modric and Toni Kroos but when they both came back it was obvious that the team had a clear identity.

Ancelotti managed to inspire extra motivation from Modric, who is having an excellent season. Together with Kroos and Casemiro, they are in my opinion the best midfield in the world.

Ancelotti wants to make history as the first coach to win the top five European leagues in his career, while star striker Karim Benzema is looking to beat Alfredo Di Stefano's record and score more than 300 goals for the club.

All of this seems to be possible.

Updated: December 25th 2021, 6:45 AM

FOOTBALL   REAL MADRID   LA LIGA

RELATED ARTICLES



Real Madrid lead over Barcelona 'abysmal' but plenty of time to close gap, says Xavi