Chievo, riding high in fifth posi-

Milan boss Carlo Ancelotti said a

"There was little to choose

Chievo coach Luigi Del Neri,

"When you come to Milan and

regarded as one of the best young

coaches in Italy, agreed with his

get a draw you have to be happy but

I think the result was about right," he

On Wednesday Lazio host resurgent Serie B side Bari, con-

querors of Inter Milan in the previous

round, while reigning Italian league

champions Juventus welcome

place in Serie A, travel to Piacenza

Second-leg ties will be played on

AS Roma, languishing in ninth

Perugia to the Stadio Delle Alpi.

between the two teams and very few

chances," he told RAI television.

tion in the league, host the return leg

in Verona next week

draw was a fair result.

opposite number

on Thursday.

January 22.

Planning with Cafu, Rivaldo

Football

REUTERS, Rio de Janeiro

Newly appointed Brazil coach Carlos Alberto Parreira has refused to rule out taking Cafu and Rivaldo to the 2006 World Cup even though they will have a combined age of 70



by the time the tournament starts. "Experience is important but

Cafu today is 32 and Rivaldo is 30," Parreira told reporters. "It will depend on their desire,

I intend to talk to both of them." Attacking midfielder Rivaldo, who refused to make himself available for last November's match in

their will and their performances, but

Parreira, who led Brazil to their fourth World Cup win in 1994, was recalled for a third stint in charge of the team last week to replace Luiz Felipe Scolari, who resigned in August.

will think hard about whether to

team which won an unprecedented

fifth World Cup in Japan and South

Fullback Cafu captained the

continue his international career.

Korea last year.

Brazil have also brought back veteran Mario Zagallo as technical director. Zagallo, 71, was Parreira's assistant in 1994 and coached the team in his own right at the 1970, 1974 and 1998 World Cups.

Parreira, whose first match will be away to China on February 26, said he intended to use the team which won the 2002 World Cup as his base and would phase in younger players such as teenage Santos pair Robinho and Diego.

"To start the job, we will use the team which won the fifth world title,"



Real Madrid youngster Raul Bravo (R) going past Terrasa's Cristian (C) and Besora (L) during their Spanish King Cup 3rd round 2nd leg match at the Santiago Bernabeu Stadium in Madrid on January 14. Real Madrid won 4-2 and qualified for the quarter-finals 7-5 on aggregate.

League One

Marseille return to top

Football

Marseille re-ignited their title challenge following last week's loss at Lyon with a 2-0 home win over Rennes on Tuesday to move back above Nice at the top of the French

Alain Perrin's side were workmanlike from the outset and assured themselves of full points with early goals from Ibrahima Bakayoko and Newcastle target Daniel Van Buyten, who scored in the sixth and 19th minutes.

A Manuel Dos Santos cross was meat and drink to Ivory Coast forward and former Everton striker Bakayoko, who finished expertly before Van Buyten knocked home from close range after Fernandao headed on a Fabio Celestini

Football

Under-fire Liverpool manager

Gerard Houllier has hit back at

"unfair criticism" after his team went

11 Premiership matches without a

win but insists he can resist the

especially hurt by jibes from former

unfairly. When people give their

vou respect then

Houllier in the new edition of the club

written which are unfair, then they

hurt. But I really don't care.

Football

AFP, Seoul

"But when things are said and

"If this means some of the pres-

sure is taken off the players then all

The Korean Football Association

confirmed Wednesday that former

Portugal coach Humberto Coelho

would take over as South Korean

coach from Guus Hiddink, the

Dutchman who steered the side to

Coelho will lead the team for at

least 18 months until August 31 next

year, the association said, though

the contract could be extended until

month for a four-day visit for talks

Coelho said he had agreed to take

over as South Korean coach from

you are in competitive football you

Coelho is expected in Seoul next

Speaking Tuesday in Lisbon,

"For me it is an honour. When

the 2006 World Cup in Germany

the World Cup semi-finals.

with KFA officials

The Frenchman said he was

"Nobody likes being treated

AFP, London

pressure

magazine.

Liverpool players.

Houllier hurt

Thereafter Marseille were content to take their foot off the pedal and they handed a debut to new Russian signing Dimitry Sychev in the final six minutes as he came on for Cyril Chapuis.

The win moved Marseille, who are chasing a first league title in ten years, onto 38 points from 22 games, one clear of Nice who should score an away win Wednesday at relegation-haunted Montpellier

In other games Wednesday Lyon, the reigning champions, travel ross the water to Corsica to face Bastia hoping that Peguy Luyindula and Sidney Govou will strick up a potent partnership in the continued injury absence of Brazilian hotshot Sonny Anderson.

Brazilian World Cup winner Ronaldinho is meanwhile out of the Paris Saint Germain side to host Le

Houllier insisted that his young

GERARD HOULLIER

Liverpool, who led the Premiership

earlier this season, have slipped to

Coelho appointment confirmed

have to be ready for these

Coelho said his first priority

would be to ensure South Korea

qualifies for the Asian Cup in 2004.

changes," he said.

team were not as bad as the statis-

tics showed despite the fact that

22-year-old has been expected to return after benig frozen out since he returned five days late from his winter holiday in Brazil.

Instead PSG, who have looked insipid in his absence, must bid to move up from their current ninth place without his inspiration.

Two contenders on the fringes of the title race, seventh-placed **TOP SIX**

French league table after Tuesday's match (played, won, drawn, lost, goals

Marseille			_	_	23			
Nice			-	-	26			
Lyon	21	10	6	5	37	25	36	
Monaco	21	9	7	5	32	20	34	
Guingamp	21	10	4	7	32	26	34	
Sochaux	20	9	6	5	23	14	33	

'There is a fine line between

winning and losing. Imagine that we

had taken just six more points

during this run - even though we

were capable of taking more - then

we would be second. If we had got

that we lost five points against

Sunderland. We could have drawn

against Charlton, Fulham and

Middlesbrough. We could have

even got something out of the

Liverpool's poor goal rate had been

games where we have had enough

opportunities to win them three times

over. Now it's time for us to put a

positive sequence of results

Coelho led Portugal to the semi-

finals of Euro 2000 before being

defeated by eventual winners

France. He has also coached

Morocco and played for Portuguese

giants Benfica and French glamour

be almost one million dollars,

but the annual salary is in line with

common expectations." said KFA

General Secretary Cho Chung-Yun.

finals of the World Cup it co-hosted

with Japan last year before losing to

South Korea reached the semi-

Hiddink became a national hero

in South Korea for leading the

unfancied team to the last four. The

Dutchman quit after the World Cup

and is now coach of Dutch club PSV

Eindhoven, although he retains

links with Korean football.

Yonhap news agency said here.

His annual salary is believed to

'We cannot disclose the amount

club Paris St Germain.

But Houllier admitted that

He added: "There have been

Manchester United game.

disastrous.

There is no escaping the fact

15 points then we would be first.

seventh place.

out in China Football competitive match since a brief spell with First Division Burnley ended last year, admitted before flying to AFP, Beijing China on Tuesday that he knew little

Gazza to try

Former England international Paul

Gascoigne arrived in China

Wednesday in his quest to find a

The much-travelled former

Lazio, Spurs, Newcastle and Everton star transitted chilly Beijing

on his way to sunnier climes in

Haikou, the capital of southern

lous country for a trial with Beijing-

based Liaoning -- one of China's biggest clubs who are training in

A club official told AFP he was

"He has been in China but only

stopped over in Beijing. He's now in

Haikou, the capital of southern

Hainan province to join the camp

training," said the female official

"It's a probation period for him."

known. will sign for Liaoning in the

next 48 hours if he likes what he

Word is that Gazza, as he is

There was no indication however

on now much he might be paid to

play in a nation where football is

enjoying a major boom and needs

The club official said after the

"Only then will the financial

probation period the coach and club

will decide whether they want him.

details be decided." she said.

who didn't want to be named.

He is in the world's most popu-

club willing to take him.

Hainan province.

"on probation".

Haikou.

about the country. "I'm looking forward to it, I'm going into it with an open mind," he told Sky Sports News.

"I haven't a clue what's going to happen. I don't know what it's going



PAUL GASCOIGNE

Reminded that China was a football-crazy nation, Gascoigne responded: "I'm crazy as well so the two of us might go together well. "This is a nice challenge for me. A

few things have gone wrong over the last few months.

The wayward star, capped 57 times by England, said negotiations to join clubs in England had broken

"I had clubs in England but things went wrong," he said

Gascoigne, who has not played a

Media irks Biagio

Football

Inter Milan midfielder Luigi Di Biagio has hit back at the Italian journalists who reported he and Christian Vieri were dropped for Sunday's league match against Modena due to disciplinary reasons.

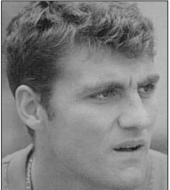
Italy international Di Biagio insisted he and striker Vieri were both suffering from flu, and were not left out by coach Hector Cuper as punishment for

Appiano Gentile (Inter's training ground), and it was particularly upsetting to be accused of playing a part in Crespo's injury," said Di Biagio at Tuesday evening's hastilyarranged press conference.

"These allegations are very serious and I would like to know who spread these rumours.

"Most of all I find it difficult to talk about a situation that does

"What is important is that president (Massimo) Moratti, Cuper and my colleagues know



CHRISTIAN VIERI

"On Saturday afternoon Vieri and myself had influenza and both of us had high tempera-

"The following morning we met with Cuper and agreed it was not worth taking the risk to play in such cold weather. We then went home.'

Di Biagio said he and Vieri were hoping to return for

FIFA world rankings No catching Brazil

REUTERS, Zurich						
Leading FIFA world soccer rankings issued on Wednesday (December's position in brackets):						
. (1) Brazil 856 points						
2. (2) France	. 787					
3. (3) Spain	780					
4. (4) Germany	765					
5. (5) Argentina	750					
6. (6) Netherlands	746					
7. (9) Turkey	736					
8. (7) England	734					
9. (8) Mexico	732					
10. (10) United States	723					
11. (11) Portugal	710					
12. (12) Denmark	707					
13. (13) Italy	705					
14. (14) Ireland	697					
15. (15) Czech Republic	687					
16. (17) Belgium	686					
17. (16) Cameroon	684					
18 (18) Paraguay	679					

Joaquin interests Roma

19. (19) Yugoslavia

20. (20) South Korea

AFP, Rome

are interested in signing Real Betis' 21-year-old winger Joaquin Sanchez Rodriguez, according to an Italian press report on Wednesday. The Corriere dello Sport said

Roma coach Fabio Capello is a big admirer of the Spain international believed to be worth around 50 million euros (dollars). Joaquin would be an ideal

replacement for Brazilian World Cup winner Cafu who is expected to leave at the end of the season, the paper said. Ajax striker Zlatan Ibrahimovic, a

Swedish international, is also reported to be high on Capello's wanted list as is Real Madrid marksman Fernando Morientes. Along with Cafu, Roma are also

expected to offload veteran striker Gabriel Batistuta and Spanish playmaker Josep Guardiola in the summer. Roma, Italian champions in

2001, are currently languishing in ninth place in the table and have lost both of their second phase matches in the Champions League which restarts in February

37 Dutch

bloom

41 Puts into

43 Illustra-

tions 44 En-

grossed 46 Acclaim

50 Singer Mitchell

53 Prior to

55 Totenburg

56 Opposite

57 Wet

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58 Chows

CROSSWORD

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11 Right

13 Furrow

15 Unadul

16 Scratch

17 Benevo-

18 "Horse in

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24 Hoboes

tie up

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33 Rood

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1 Most

Ruud reveals! "Honestly, what we earn is not

Chievo hold Milan

Football

Italian Cup

AFP, Milan

here on Tuesday.

Serie A league leaders AC Milan

in their Italian Cup quarter-final, first

leg tie at an icy San Siro stadium

Both coaches selected second-

string teams but it was Chievo who

had the better of the chances

against a Milan side still boasting

Chievo midfielder Luigi Beghetto

Cossato's point-blank header was

Milan, four-time winners of the

AFP, Manchester

Dutch star Ruud van Nistelrooy has described the wages earned by Manchester United's top players as "obscene" and "astronomical"

"If you play in the first team at



RUUD VAN NISTELROOY

United, your wages are astronomical," the striker told Dutch magazine Voetbal International in an interview reproduced on Man United's official just a whacking amount of money by Dutch standards, it's obscene when the rest of Europe.

"As a player you choose a club and you pick the ideal country where you want to play, but I admit that the size of your wage packet plays a

Van Nistelrooy also revealed that United's players regularly play cards for money when travelling to away "The players spend a lot of time

travelling. Oh, and maybe I shouldn't say this, but a lot of them play cards," van Nistelrooy said.

"Yes, they play for money. I can see them writing stuff down all the time when they are playing. "They play on the train when we

go to London, in hotels or on the plane and the manager is fine as ong as he is winning.

A United spokesman said only small amounts of money were

"Our players do play cards for fur to pass the time and the amounts of money involved are small. It's really just for fun and to pass the time as they are travelling," he told The

Romario staying

Football

REUTERS, Rio de Janeiro

who turns 37 at the end of the month, said on Tuesday that he would stay at Fluminense for



another year.

By Eugene Sheffer

60 Dict.

4 Get

6 Walk

8 Spoon-

Geller

explana

Romario, controversially left out of Brazil's World Cup squad last year, joined the club in July and scored 15 goals as the "Tricolor" surpassed expecta-

tions by reaching the semifinals of the Brazilian champion-

He had also been considering an offer to return for a third stint at Fluminense's local rivals Flamengo until they pulled out of negotiations at the weekend.

"To be honest, I still think I owe Fluminense something," he told reporters. "I thought we could win the title last year but it didn't work out. Maybe we'll have better luck this year.

"I'm honoured that clubs like Flamengo and Fluminense still want me to play for them."

Romario, who has also played for Vasco da Gama in Brazil, PSV Eindhoven in the Netherlands and Barcelona and Valencia in Spain, has not made it clear how long he intends to continue playing but says he will not change clubs again

The often outspoken striker has also said that he is still hopeful of an international swansong

Romario was Brazil's hero when they won their fourth World Cup in 1994, scoring five goals in seven games.

German only!



REUTERS, Berlin

Hertha Berlin trainer Huub Stevens ordered his multi-national team on Tuesday to speak German even though 16 of his most important players are foreigners and several speak only little of the local language. Stevens, from the Nether-

lands, said it was "German only" on and off the field from now on and he was tired of interpreters relaying orders to Brazilian stars Marcelinho. Luizao and Alex Alves as well as other foreigners from Poland, the Netherlands

Bulgaria, and Hungary.

"From now on German is the official language," Stevens told Bild newspaper. "All my players are going to have to communicate with each other in German. I don't want a group to talk to each other in Portuguese any more and another group using Dutch.

HUMBERTO COELHO

His first match in charge of the

team will be a friendly against

Colombia in South Korea on March

Stevens, who speaks broken German with a heavy Dutch accent, has in his squad Hungary goalkeeper Gabor Kiraly, Belgian striker Bart Goor, Poland midfielder Bartosz Karwan, Croatia defender Josip Simunic, and Dick van Burik of the Netherlands.

While some of the foreign-

ers, such as Iceland's Eyjolfur Sverrison, are fluent in German, others, such as Luizao, speak "practically no German", according to Bild.

Stevens, who won back-toback German Cup titles with Schalke before moving to Berlin this season, experienced a frustrating first half of the season with the team playing well below expectations. They are currently in ninth

place in the Bundesliga, 16 points behind table-toppers Bayern Munich. The league resumes on January 25 when Hertha host champions Borussia Dortmund

LUIGI DI BIAGIO

leaving the club's training complex on Saturday night. Di Biagio, 31, also took a

swipe at the reporters who said the pair's absence forced Argentine striker Hernan Crespo, still not fully recovered from a thigh strain, to play. Inter won the match 2-0 at an

icy San Siro but lost Crespo after 30 minutes when he suffered a recurrence of the injury. The former Lazio forward is now expected to be out of action for three months. "Bobo (Vieri) and I were

disappointed to read in the

press about our escape' from

tures.

Sunday's trip to Umbria. "Now Bobo and I are focused on the match against Perugia,"

pajamas" **59** Dog 9 Half a sawbuck 10 Craze hassle 22 Under the Solution time: 24 mins weather 28 Might they 32 Ongoing 34 Computer 36 - podrida

61 Part of UCLA 21 Mono-DOWN 23 Got the ball rolling 1 Mercedes 25 Double 2 Sheltered agent 26 Survey chunk 27 Command

12 Hit the

iackpot 19 Every last

to Rover 28 Nursery ready to denizens rumble 5 Two-way 29 Touch 30 Soft-drink proudly flavor 7 Hit the 31 Brillo rival jackpot

35 Hot tub **38** Pod 40 Clumsy boat 42 Bullock/

Reeves movie 45 Geneal ogy chart 47"— M for Murder"

48 Aware of 49 Back talk 50 Pugilistic **51** Eggs 52 Bottom



DINHDHS QR KOHUY UJM OAADXMHUOPPR

X M - K P M O U M X Saturday's Cryptoquip: I WONDER IF TOP-NOTCH BAKERS TRADE FINE BREAD

RECIPES ON A KNEAD-TO-KNOW BASIS. Today's Cryptoquip Clue: X equals D

The Cryptoguip is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error