# Take it easy

Football

Asian football chiefs have issued a warning to clubs thinking of bolstering their squads ahead of next month's AFC Champions League quarter-finals

Saudi Arabian giants Al Hilal and Al Sad of Qatar have both reportedly made big-name signings in recent weeks, with Al Sad picking up Brazilian star Romario and Al-Hilal luring former Manchester United winger Andrei Kanchelskis.

But the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) warned Thursday that any new signings would be scrutinised carefully and that if their paperwork was not in



**ROMARIO** 

order the players would be barred from competing in the last 16.

AFC general-secretary Peter Velappan said players must have signed for their new clubs by February 9, and that their contracts must be for a minimum duration of six months.

Al Sad are believed to have signed Romario on a three-month contract earlier this week, which could mean he misses out on an appearance in Asian club football's showpiece tournament. Romario has reportedly signed a 1.5 million

Romario flew out from Rio de Janeiro on Wednesday for his new job in Qatar promising to act as an ambassador for his country.

The mercurial sriker was overlooked by then Brazil coach Luiz Felipe Scolari for last year's World Cup, an omission that caused a public outcry amongst Romario's fans at the time.

He remains under contract to Brazil first division side Fluminense until the end of the year.

"I'm going there intending to do my best as I'm representing Brazil," claimed the 37-year-old who is

better known for a hectic lifestyle. He added that his main aim now was to score "a thousand goals" estimates currently put him 138 shy

of the magic four figure target. Velappan meanwhile reminded



BTV Cricket World Cup 2003 **Preliminary Round** Sri Lanka vs West Indies

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1. Who clinched the Shahialal Chess title?

Bank International Rating Rajib Zia

2. New Zealand beat South Africa in a World Cup Group B match 9 wkts

wkts 3. How many runs did Bangladesh score against South Africa in the World Cup Group B match

120

4. Bangladesh lost to Canada in

20 runs 60 runs 

Class. . . . . . . Roll No. . . . . .

School Address . . . . . . . . .

Sacchi. discuss



"Therefore, to avoid any undue complications, it is best that they comply fully with the regulations. All documents will be closely scrutinized at the team managers meeting before the start of the competi-

barred from competing." Velappan

"It is necessary for all clubs to produce a copy of the original contract for any new players to be eligible to play in the Champions League. "We will not bend the rules for

anyone and clubs are forewarned to ensure that all documentation pertaining to their registered players is in order," he added.

The AFC Champions League, which was launched last August replaced the Asian Club Championship, Asian Cup Winners' Cup and Asian Super Cup.

The 16-team group stage takes place from March 9-15 followed by semi-finals in April and the final in May, with the winners taking home a first prize of 500,000 dollars.

## It's beyond

FROM PAGE 16

Frayed tempers unmask the

stifling pressure on the players. Miandad was so irritated with Indian wicket-keener Kiran More's incessant jumping and appealing in the 1992 World Cup match in Australia that he instantly produced a carbon copy, more eye-catching than the original

The picture of the Pakistani batsman jumping like a frog and velling back at the Indian wicketkeeper still bemuses viewers.

During the 1996 World Cup in Bangalore, Pakistani opener Aamir Sohail struck Indian paceman Venkatesh Prasad for a boundary and asked the bowler to go fetch the hall. His concentration lost, Sohai was bowled next ball.

India won that match and maintained their World Cup stanglehold over their arch-rivals with a victory four years later in England even as soldiers from both sides fought the Kargil war over the disputed

Kashmirregion. Burly Pakistani batsman Inzamamul Haq was once so incensed at an Indian fan in Toronto for calling him a potato that he leapt at him with bat in hand before secu-

rity stepped in to cool tempers. Inzamam has since lost weight but the pressure to score will be no less on Saturday. In four matches so far at the World Cup, Pakistan's premier batsman has scored just 10

## Bring on Pakistan

having sprained an ankle after bowling just one ball in the 181 run hrashing of Namibia on Sunday.

"That was one of the best performances in a one-day international since I started playing for India," Ganguly said. "He bowled a good line and length and moved the ball." But the Delhi-born quick almost missed the match of his life.

"Nehra had to go for a fitness test in the morning. But hats off to him, he was more determined than anyone to play."

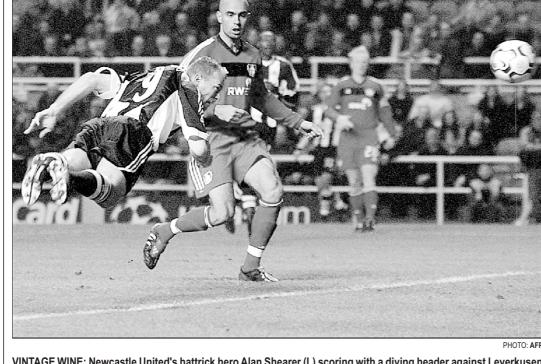
First-change Nehra, despite attending the post-match press conference with his left ankle strapped, said he was in good

"It's a great feeling. I'm really excited. There was no pain in me." His figures were way in excess of his previous best at this level three for 30 against New Zealand in

Colombo in 2001 but Nehra, who said he was a "great fan" of Pakistan left-arm speedster Wasim Akram played down his achievement.

"Zaheer (Khan) and (Javagal) Srinath bowled really well in the first

"I think it was a good wicket to bowl on, I just concentrated on line



VINTAGE WINE: Newcastle United's hattrick hero Alan Shearer (L) scoring with a diving header against Leverkusen at St. James' Park on February 26.

# **Magpies' Shear delight**

CHAMPS LEAGUE

Alan Shearer's first hat-trick for Newcastle in over three years fired them to a 3-1 win over last season's bedraggled Champions League finalists Bayer Leverkusen on Wednesday and gave the Magpies a real chance of making the last

One of Newcastle manager Bobby Robson's former clubs, Barcelona, are virtually assured of a place in the last eight after a 0-0 draw away at Inter Milan left them needing just one point from their last two matches.

The draw meant Barca failed to break Ajax's all-time winning streak in European competition of 11 set in the Cup Winners Cup campaigns of 1986/87 and 87/88.

In what could turn out to be a delicious twist Barcelona's match in Newcastle could decide whether it is the English side or Inter who prog-

ress with them from Group A. Group B is a far tighter affair after AS Roma roused themselves from their slumber and stunned Valencia 3-0 in Spain - captain Francesco Totti aettina two - to inflict their hosts first ever Champions League home

defeat. Ajax's 0-0 draw at home to Arsenal meant both of them moved up to six points with two matches to play while Valencia - finalists in two of the last three seasons - have five

and Roma three. It was Shearer's night though as he struck three times in the opening 36 minutes at St James' Park, two of them headers thanks largely to the terrible defending of Brazilian Cris, who looks a long shot to add to his 11 caps for his country given his last two performances for Leverkusen. Shearer's third came from the

penalty spot. While his 15th career hat-trick was pleasing, the former England captain was even more delighted to have at last scored a Champions

League goal from open play. "It was a record I wanted to end and it's great to do it in style even if their defence helped a bit!" said

Robson was delighted with the way his side carried out his instructions to try and exploit their opponents' lack of confidence from the outset, as they had done in Germany last week but he admitted to being worried at certain moments.

"We became a bit complacent at 2-0 and I was worried that we were

going to let it slip," he admitted. "However we got our rhythm back with the third goal and them missing a penalty was a relief.

"I wanted to take Alan (Shearer)

and Gary (Speed) off with 25 minutes to go but at 3-1 I didn't know whether we could hold on without their experience." the 70-vear-old added.

Bayer coach Thomas Horster admitted he was at a loss to explain how his defence could have performed so badly

"We had no defence, all we had was nerves," he said. "It is hard to take anything positive from a 90minute game that is over after ten

Despite Barcelona's near certain qualification, their coach Radomir Antic was not a happy man.

## **RESULTS AT A GLANCE**

Collated Champions League second group phase results on Wednesday

Inter Milan (Ita) 0 Barcelona (Spa)

Newcastle United (Eng) 3 (Shearer 5, 11, 36-pen) Bayer Leverkusen (Ger) 1 (Babic 73)

Group B At Amsterdam Ajax (Ned) 0 Arsenal (Eng) 0 At Valencia, Spain Valencia (Spa) 0 AS Roma (Ita) 3 (Totti 24, 30, Emerson 36)

"I am not satisfied with the

result." the Serb handler said. "What was missing? Taking our ances though I wa the way we handled their attack, added Antic, who has restored Barca's fortunes in the Spanish league since he replaced Louis van

Gaal last month. His Inter counterpart Hector Cuper, responsible for guiding previous club Valencia to their two Champions League finals was happy with the result despite the

increasing danger of Newcastle in the group.

We gave everything and showed character in the light of several injuries during the match," the Argentinian said.

"It still leaves us in charge of our

destiny," he added. Ajax had the best chance of a disappointing match to take the three points when Cristian Chivu's freekick was headed off the line by Ashley Cole in the 38th minute - but it left both managers happy, particularly Arsenal's manager Arsene Wenger.

"We hold all the cards as regards our progress in the competition," said the Frenchman, whose side host Roma in a fortnight.

Koeman gleaned a far more positive message from the performance of his youthful and hugely talented Ajax side.

"We are the leaders of this group at the moment. If people had said Ajax would be at the top of the group, everybody would have laughed," said Koeman, whose free kick in 1992 handed his then club Barcelona their only ever European

Cup title. Totti's goals and one from Brazilian Emerson in a 12-minute period in the first half was enough to hand Roma their first points of the

second phase. Totti, who had missed the 1-0 defeat last week by Valencia, struck in the 24th minute as he headed home - for his first goal in three appearances this campaign - and added a second six minutes later with a right-footed shot from Brazilian World Cup captain Cafu's

Emerson, who would have been Brazil skipper but for injuring himself prior to the finals, added a third in the 36th minute to leave last week's goalscorer John Carew regretting his promise to the Valencia fans that the Spaniards would give them

'something to remember' In the end it was Shearer who delivered on that promise.

### STANDINGS

European Champions League tables after Wednesday's second phase group matches (played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, against, points)

3 (	, <b>, ,</b> ,	,	, 3	,,	,, ,	,,.	
		Gro	up A				
Barcelona	4	3	1	0	8	2	10
Inter Milan	4	2	1	1	7	6	7
Newcastle	4	2	0	2	8	9	6
Leverkusen	4	0	0	4	5	11	0
		Gro	up B				
Arsenal	4	1	3	0	4	2	6
Ajax	4	1	3	0	4	3	6
Valencia	4	1	2	1	2	4	5
AS Roma	4	1	0	3	5	6	3

Note: Top two teams in each group qualify for quarter-finals.

Barcelona Inter Milan Newcastle Leverkusen	4 4 4 4	Gro 3 2 2 0	1 1 0 0	0 1 2 4	8 7 8 5	2 6 9 11	10 7 6 0
		Gro	up B				
Arsenal	4	1	3	0	4	2	6
Ajax	4	1	3	0	4	3	6
Valencia	4	1	2	1	2	4	5
AS Roma	4	1	0	3	5	6	3

# For love's sake!

Football

AFP, London

spare

Manchester United winger Ryan Giggs has pleaded with Old Trafford boss Alex Ferguson not to sell him to Inter Milan.

Giggs turned in his best performance of the season on Tuesday to score twice as United romped to a 3-0 win over Juventus in Turin to seal a place in the European Cup quarterfinals with two group games to

But the Welsh star's Old Trafford future is in doubt, amid reports that the club are hoping to sell him in a summer swap deal involving Inter's Brazilian striker Adriano The 21-year-old Brazilian is part-

owned by Inter, who intend to buy the striker outright at the end of the season. Reports suggest that United boss Ferguson has already met

Parma's general manager Arrigo And United chief executive, Peter Kenyon, is also thought to have visited Milan on Monday to

Inter president Massimo Moratti has made no secret of his desire to bring Giggs to the San Siro.

But the 29-year-old claims he does not want to go anywhere. "I am happy at United and I want to stay at this club, I've always said he told the Sun newspaper

Thursday. "When you are not playing so well, things like this can happen and you get linked to other clubs. If I start



**DAVINIA TAYLO** 

talking about that it only adds fuel to the speculation. "But I know I want to stay at the

club. Ferguson was understood to be ready to sell Giggs after a lapse in form and stories of dressing-room rifts with the other players.

off-field love triangle appeared to be affecting his relationship with some of the other players. His pregnant girlfriend Stacey Cooke is the former fiancee of players' pal David Gardner.

But the relationship has appar-

Giggs' form slumped when an

ently turned some players, including David Beckham, against their team-As part of the tangled romantic Gardner is now marrying Giggs' ex Davinia Taylor - with Beckham and Phil Neville joint best

But Neville has moved to quash rumours of a rift between some players and Giggs - while Beckham was the first to congratulate the Welshman after his wonderful second goal against Juve. "I think the way we celebrated

with Ryan after he scored said it all,'

Neville said. "It shows how popular

he is in this team.

"We are all the best of friends and for people to suggest we have fallen out is a big insult to us all. Ryan Giggs is a great lad and a great "Against Juventus he turned in a

world-class performance. Sections of the Old Trafford crowd had started to turn against Giggs - not least after his glaring

open-goal miss against Arsenal in the FA Cup this month. Giggs concedes he had dropped well below his usual standards but believes he is now back - and ready to inspire United to European glory again following their 1999 triumph.

"A lot has been made of my form and I admit I have not been playing well. The last 10 games I think I've been OK. but before that it was not good," he said. "I set high standards for myself

biggest critic. "I know some fans have not been happy and that's OK because they their money to see me perform and I have not been playing as well as I could.

and, when I drop below them, I'm my

"But I've been working hard and, hopefully, things have turned round

### Pak pride

FROM PAGE 16

year insurgency against Indian rule

The scenic Himalayan state with Muslim majority region is divided between Pakistan and India and claimed by both.

"I think both teams should bet on Kashmir and decide this issue once for all " said Javed Ahmed, 35, shopping at a local bazaar.

He was confident of a Pakistani victory, but nervous at the implications "I am a bit concerned about Muslims in India, because if India loses the match, extremist Hindus will

kill hundreds of Muslims in fury." Watching Pakistan play the Netherlands on a mini-TV in his Islamabad grocery store Tuesday shopkeeper Ahmed Zainab said he was ready to forgive the team's losses

as long as they beat India. "It's okay to lose against Australia and even England, but we can't lose to

Pakistan needs to beat India as well as Zimbabwe in Bulawayo next Tuesday to ensure a place in the

Super Sixes. What is important to cricket fans

here is national pride "This match is important just for the reason: because it is with India," said Muhammad Usman, an 11th grade student playing cricket with a tennis ball outside Islamabad's College for

Boys.
"Whenever the two teams plays against each other it's always a play for pride and there is always tremendous public interest and I'm sure that everything will stop on Saturday in India and Pakistan," said Khan, who led Pakistan to a breathtaking recovery in the 1992 tournament to clinch

The Islamabad Cricket Association believed a reshuffle of the batting line-

up will boost Pakistan's hopes. "Our team is better than India," secretary Irfan Manzoor said.

"We have some problems on the batting side, but in 1992 World Cup we had a similar situation. If the players are shuffled around then we can hope to win this match." Computer programmer Arshed Mehmood, lazing on the lawn at the

capital's F-7 cricket ground, said

chances were even, although he

considered India's batting and bowling lineup superior. "I think it depends on who wins the toss," Mehmood said, adding that he would not be watching the match because the tensions surrounding it

were too much. "This match is important to me because India is after our lives," said Naseer, 27, a groundsman at Islamabad's Shalimar Cricket Club at the foot of the Margalla hills.

He watched the team close up

when they played at his ground in an exhibition match with film and television celebrities on June 18. 'I know they can win.' Fans were low key about plans for watching the clash of the foes, choos-

## "God willing, Pakistan will win,"

cricket clubs for the big day

Mission Impossible FROM PAGE 16 very] well, hit the deck well there were no drive balls. But conditions did alter, the ball did start to zip off. That's not an excuse. We were lucky at Cape Town and unlucky today.

"But it's how you use it (the conditions) that's important.' "Nehra was pretty good, he hit the deck hard. He nibbled the ball both ways a little and quicker than you think."

One good thing to emerge from

the match as far as England were concerned was the all-round performance of Andrew Flintoff The all-rounder's unchanged spell of two for 15 in 10 overs put the brakes on India and included the dismissal of Sachin Tendulkar

propel his side towards the 300 mark. That India finished on 250 for nine was mainly down to some expensive overs a the finish which left Hussain once again lamenting

whose run-a-ball-fifty threatened to

England's lack of a "death' bowler. But Flintoff, a hard-hitting batsman, then gave the India attack something to think about, posting the best score of the game, a 73-ball 64 although by that stage the game

was up. "Flintoff's had one good game. But let's not build him up, he has to do it again," cautioned the skipper.

"But he can do things other people can't do."

By Eugene Sheffer CROSSWORD **ACROSS** 38 Every 1 Funny remark crumb 5 Sense 39 Film 9 David brand 42 Vanna's James

cohort

44 Biblical

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36 Legendary

translation 40 Destroy 41 "M\*A\*S\*H" Solution time: 28 mins. transportation 43 "Heat of the Moment' band 45 Stead 46 Part of A&E 47 Network

DOWN

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20 4-Down's

10 Four

virtual pet

## Orange disorder plotted

off a surprise despite suffering heavy defeats to India, England, Australia and Pakistan. "The team has been very competitive and was not rolled over or thrashed by the big

"It is a big plus that we could take 19 wickets in the big matches against India and

The lack of pace bowling in the league back home and the high quality of spin in this World Cup have found us wanting a bit '

NETHERLANDS (from): Roland Lefebvre (captain), Luuk van Troost, Daan van Bunge, Jacob Esmeijer, Victor Grandia, Feiko Kloppenburg, Tim de Leede, Henk Mol, Klaus van Noortwijk, Adeel Raja, Edgar Schiferli, Reinhout Scholte, Jeroen Smits, Nick

Statham, Bas Zuiderent ZIMBABWE (from): Heath Streak (captain), Andy Blignaut, Dion Ebrahim, Sean Ervine, Andy Flower, Grant Flower, Travis Friend, Douglas Hondo, Douglas Marillier,

**Umpires:** Steve Bucknor (WIs) and Tyron Wijewardene (Sri)

Match referee: Clive Lloyd (WIs)

FROM PAGE 16

Feb 25 2003

Feb 20 2003

Feb 16 2003

Feb 12 2003

Sept 16 2002

Sept 21 2002

lost to Pakistan by 97 runs Paarl lost to Australia by 75 runs Potchefstroom lost to England by 6 wickets East London lost to India 68 runs Paarl

Note: There are no other recent matches for the Netherlands as they are associate members and there are no head-to-heads

# **BEST AND WORST**

Drifting in off the rope at long on, Drakes jack-knifed backwards and caught the ball one-handed. The television commentators had announced a six before Drakes got up with the hall in his hand. Drakes then took five for 44 to set up the

West Indies win. Brett Lee's dismissal of Andy Blignaut after the Zimbabwean had smashed a 25-ball half-century in Bulawayo came close. Blignaut cross-batted a lightning full toss straight back at the bowler who somehow reacted fast enough to catch the ball. Lee himself could not believe it. Lip-readers would have had no problems identifying his

## expletive.

Kenya's players jived away in a team huddle at the fall of each late wicket as they pulled off the biggest upset of the World Cup against the

### capabilities as a batsman, I'd rather

THE WORST INNINGS Inzamamul Haq, one of the world's leading batsman, dismissed for a golden duck against England, went n to bat against the Netherlands needing a confidence boost. Instead he barely moved from his crease to be trapped for a secondball duck by Tim de Leede's medium-paced floater. He averaged

Wanderers from a regulation edge. Fleming went on to win the match for New Zealand with his unbeaten century, leaving the hosts in turmoil. For the next few days, arguments raged over Shaun Pollock's captaincy and whether Allan Donald should be axed.

dropped Fleming on 53 at The

Pedro Collins made as bad an error against South Africa, when he sauntered nonchalantly backwards to catch Lance Klusener at square leg only to realise he had stepped on the rope. Klusener, however, with 57 from 48 balls, was caught in the deep by Carl Hooper in the final over as West Indies sneaked home by

### three runs. THE WORST

**CELEBRATION** Bangladesh have not had the chance to celebrate anything after five defeats, the first to lowly Canada, and one wash-out. There was some clapping for Mohammad Ashraful's excellent 56 against New Zealand at Kimberley, the team's only half-century of the tournament, but it all paled into insignificance as the team extended their world

### record run of one-dayers without victory to 31 matches.

THE WORST QUOTE Nathan Shamuyarira, information secretary for the governing ZANU-PF party in Zimbabwe, reacting to a protest by players Andy Flower and Henry Olonga over the state of democracy in the country: "Olonga is not a Zimbabwean, he is a Zambian, but he has been allowed

### to play here. Flower is also not a Zimbabwean. He is British.

Jan 11 2003

Jan 8 2003

Jan 4 2003

Jan 1 2003

Dec 29 2002

Dec 1 2002

Nov 24 2002

22 Simpson

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of fashion

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Rules ...

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26 Will Smith

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Corners st. 35 Send

AFP, Harare Form guide for Zimbabwe and India ahead of their World Cup Group A

beat England (match forfeited) beat Namibia by 86 runs (D/L) beat Kenya by 9 wickets Dec 11, 2002 beat Kenya by 47 runs Dec 8, 2002 v Kenva NR lost to Pakistan by 70 runs Dec 1, 2002 Nov 30, 2002 lost to Pakistan by 8 wickets Nov 27, 2002

lost to Pakistan by 104 runs lost to Pakistan by 7 runs India (won 3 lost 7) Feb 15 2003 lost to Australia by 9 wickets Feb 12 2003 beat Netherlands by 68 runs lost to New Zealand by 6 wickets Jan 14 2003 beat New Zealand by 1 wicket beat New Zealand by 2 wickets lost to New Zealand by 7 wickets lost to New Zealand by 5 wickets

Kwekwe Harare Harare Harare Harare

Auckland

Wellington

Harare

Harare

Bulawayo

Queenstown Christchurch lost to New Zealand by 35 runs Napier lost to New Zealand by 3 wickets Auckland lost to West Indies by 135 runs Vijayawada

OL M LKHRBV BCOR XHKH

КПТЈПЕ LKMRB-OR-TFHOR Yesterday's Cryptoquip: WRITTEN NOTE HANGING ON DNA RESEARCHER'S OFFICE

The Cryptoquip is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for

give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Brian Murphy, Henry Olonga, Tatenda Taibu, Mark Vermeulen, Guy Whittall, Craig

TV Umpire: Nadeen Ghouri (Pak)

## FORM GUIDE

Netherlands (won 0 lost 6)

lost to Sri Lanka by 206 runsColombo lost to Pakistan by 9 wickets Colombo

### FROM PAGE 16 South Africa's Mark Boucher, snatching too eagerly at the ball,

### THE BEST CELEBRATION

Sri Lankans in Nairobi THE BEST QUOTE Namibian bowler Rudi van Vuuren, who has also represented his country at rugby union: "Knowing my

take on Jonah Lomu one-on-one than Brett Lee.'

2.25 in his first four innings.

THE WORST DROP

FORM GUIDE

match at the Harare Sports Club here on Wednesday Zimbabwe (won 4 lost 5 NR 1) Feb 13 2003 Feb 10 2003 Dec 15, 2002

lost to Pakistan by 48 runs Nov 24, 2002 Nov 23, 2002

Bulawayo Bulawayo Centurion Paarl Hamilton

**CRYPTOQUIP** 

ORFC M

another. If you think that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: H equals E

DOOR: "CLONES ARE PEOPLE TWO!"