

Super strikers face off



AFP, Paris

It's Christian Vieri against Alan Shearer as Newcastle seek to complete their Houdini escape act in the Champions League against Inter Milan on Tuesday.

The two powerful strikers hold the key to the tie at the San Siro which neither side can afford to lose if they want to reach the quarter-finals.

Newcastle have dragged themselves back into contention after losing their first two games in the competition.

Bobby Robson's side are third in Group A, a point behind Inter, after two victories over last year's struggling finalists Bayer Leverkusen.

Vieri has struck 21 times in Serie A this season, but is yet to open his European account, while Shearer has 15 in the Premiership and four in Europe.

Newcastle defender Titus Bramble has never forgotten the havoc Vieri wreaked as he scored a hat-trick when Inter beat Bramble's former club Ipswich 4-1 last season.

"I'm looking forward to going back to the San Siro," Bramble told the Newcastle Sunday Sun newspaper.

"I had a bit of a nightmare the last time I was there as Vieri ran me ragged that night. Now by coming to Newcastle I have got the chance to go back against Inter Milan and try to put the record straight."

Inter coach Hector Cuper meanwhile describes Shearer as "one of the best strikers in the competition".

And if Vieri fails to find the net, Uruguayan striker Alvaro Recoba reminded everyone he can score too when he hit both goals in the 2-1 win over Bologna on Saturday.



BTVCricket Super Six
Australia vs New Zealand
Live at 1:45 pm

ESPN
Primera Liga
Valencia vs Atletico Madrid
Repeat at 10:30 am

Taking Guard Super Six Match-5
WC Cricket Programme
Live at 1:00 pm

Western Union World Football
Repeat at 8:00 pm
Sportscentre Hindi
Sport News
Live at 8:30 pm

Follow Through Super Six Match-5
WC Cricket Programme
Live at 10:00 pm

UEFA Champions League
Inter Milan vs Newcastle United
Live at 1:30 am (Wednesday)

STAR Sports
Taking Guard Super Six Match-5
WC Cricket Programme
Live at 1:00 pm

Sportscentre Hindi
Sport News
Live at 8:00 pm

Follow Through Super Six Match-5
WC Cricket Programme
Live at 10:00 pm

Star WHIZZ KID
COMPETITION 191
Tick the correct answers, post to The Daily Star
Win attractive prizes
Competition closes at 8 pm
March 21, 2003 and draw shortly afterwards

1. Who clinched the Shahjalal Bank International Rating Chess title?
Lovlu Rajib Zia

2. New Zealand beat South Africa in a World Cup Group B match by:
102 runs 9 wkts 5 wkts

3. How many runs did Bangladesh score against South Africa in the World Cup Group B match?
120 108 110

4. Bangladesh lost to Canada in the World Cup Group B match?

Name
Class Roll No.
School Address
Phone: (if any)

Cuper said: "Now we go into Tuesday's match high in confidence. A lot rests on the game and we are expecting a very tough battle."

"Newcastle have a good blend of youth and experience."

Arsenal meanwhile face the prospect of going into the most crucial game of their treble-chasing season so far without top scorer Thierry Henry as they prepare to host AS Roma at Highbury.

Henry's chances of playing were rated as 50-50 by manager Arsene Wenger after the French striker was substituted with a calf injury in Arsenal's 2-2 draw with Chelsea in the FA Cup quarter-finals on Saturday.

"His calf cramped up, so he is a big doubt for Tuesday night," Wenger



CHRISTIAN VIERI

added.

Henry hit his 26th goal of the season before being taken off - and three of those came in Arsenal's 3-1 away win over Roma in November which seemed to have put the reigning English Premiership champions on course for a trouble-free passage into the quarter-finals.

But a draw with Valencia and two stalemates with Ajax have left Arsenal second to the Dutch side in Group B, although both have six points.

So Henry's match-winning talents would be keenly missed against Roma.

"He is fantastic. He is the best passer and scorer in the Premiership," said Wenger.

"Thierry is so physically strong, he has a very clean line, so he usually recovers 'very quickly', said the French boss.

"I think at the moment it's 50-50. He's not out of it just yet."

After a terrible start to both their domestic and Champions League campaign, Roma have drawn inspiration

from the death of one of their lifelong fans, Italian comic actor Alberto Sordi.

Since he passed away aged 82 at the end of February, the club honoured him with a minute's silence and a pre-match screening of his films before promptly rediscovering the kind of form that saw them lift the Italian league title in 2001.

They beat Valencia 3-0 in Spain to keep alive their chances of qualifying for the last eight of the Champions League and kicked off two crucial matches in the space of four days with a 1-1 draw against Lazio in

Saturday's Rome derby.

Roma coach Fabio Capello sensed a sea change after Antonio Cassano's late equaliser earned his side a point against Lazio.

"I hope this is a good sign that our season is turning around as we have recaptured that fight we were lacking earlier in the season," he said.

"I must give credit to my players for not giving up."

Italian pride is at stake as their teams have trembled alarmingly in recent years when the going has got tough in Europe's premier cup competition.

Everything is still to play for in the other Group B game, in which a young and exciting Ajax side await the visit of Valencia, who have reached the final in two of the last



ALAN SHEARER

three seasons.

With the Spaniards sitting on five points, one behind Ajax and Arsenal, the visit to Ajax is crucial.

"This is already our final," noted Valencia striker Mista.

In the second Group A game, Barcelona go in search of the single point they need from their last two games to be sure of qualifying as they host the hapless Leverkusen. The Germans are rock bottom of the group, without a point.

Barca, unbeaten since the arrival of new coach Radomir Antic, go into battle missing former Spanish international Luis Enrique, who suffered a left thigh injury in his side's 1-1 league draw against Valladolid on Saturday.

Also out of service are Dutch midfielder Philippe Cocu (left knee problem) and defender Carlos Puyol (checkbone).

To add to Antic's woes a host of regulars have questionable marks over their fitness, including Thiago Motta, Patrick Kluijvert and Brazilian Fabio Rochemback.

TUESDAY'S FIXTURES	
Group A	<i>At Barcelona</i>
Barcelona (Spa) v Bayer Leverkusen (Ger)	<i>At Milan</i>
Inter Milan (Ita) v Newcastle (Eng)	
Group B	<i>At Amsterdam</i>
Ajax (Ned) v Valencia (Spa)	

Serie A Juve go clear



AFP, Rome

Juventus opened up a three point lead at the top of Italy's Serie A on Sunday after ending Udinese's unbeaten home record with a 1-0 win at the Friuli stadium.

France international striker David Trezeguet, Italy's top goalscorer last season with 24 goals, came off the bench to volley home Gianluca Zambrotta's cross six minutes from time.

Udinese's misery was compounded by the second-half dismissal of Giampiero Pinzi for an ugly challenge on Juve's Dutch midfielder Edgar Davids.

Juventus' victory saw them move clear of second-placed Inter Milan who won 2-1 at Bologna on Saturday.

Two goals from Uruguayan striker Alvaro Recoba either side of Julio Cruz's strike ensured Inter kept the pressure on the leaders.

Juventus have 54 points from 24 matches, three more than Inter and six more than third-placed AC Milan who were held to a 0-0 draw at home to Chievo.

Juve coach Marcello Lippi admitted his side were not at their best, but welcomed three valuable points as they bid to retain their league title.

At the San Siro, Milan failed to break down a stubborn Chievo side

TOP SIX							
Italian football league table after Sunday's matches (played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, goals against, points):							
Juventus	24	16	6	2	45	16	54
Inter	24	16	3	5	48	27	51
Milan	24	14	6	4	44	19	48
Lazio	24	10	12	2	40	24	42

Across Africa

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next month, and a tour to India in October-November.

Snedden added that the Test match still to be played between New Zealand and Pakistan, in lieu of that match in Karachi last year which was abandoned after the terrorist bomb blast outside the New Zealand team's hotel, had not been placed on the match calendar yet.

The issue of New Zealand's withdrawal from the tour is before

the International Cricket Council's disputes resolution committee at the moment and Snedden said he expected that Pakistan's administrators were waiting for that to be sorted out before discussing the matter with New Zealand.

"It is up to them to approach us," Snedden said. "It may be as part of the disputes resolution process that it is discussed."

Pakistan are due to tour New Zealand for a short tour at Christmas this year.

Primera Liga Sociedad hot on Real's heels

AFP, Madrid

Real Sociedad showed that they have far from given up on lifting their first Spanish league title in 21 years with a comfortable 3-1 win over Basque rivals Alaves on Sunday.

The San Sebastian side had only taken four points from their previous five matches before Sunday, and relinquished the league leadership to Real Madrid last week after being on top for four months.

However, on Sunday they rediscovered the form that saw them go undefeated for the first half of the season to stay second, just one point in arrears of Madrid.

First half goals from Sociedad's deadly overseas trio of Darko Kovacevic, Nihat Kahveci and Valery Karpin had the game wrapped up by the break and maintained their unbeaten home record this season.

In the second half, Sociedad stepped off the gas and Alaves got a consolation goal from a Ruben Navarro penalty six minutes from time but it was too little, too late to save them from another humiliating defeat.

Alaves have now conceded 14 goals in their last three league games and they are just one place above the relegation zone.

Real Madrid ensured they would not be toppled from their perch with a convincing 4-1 victory over Racing Santander on Saturday.

The European and world club champions have 51 points from 25 games.

Deportivo La Coruna lie third with 48 points after beating Villareal 2-1 on Saturday.

At the other end of the table, struggling Rayo Vallecano may have found a ray of light in the darkness of their season-long fight against relegation after their 1-0 victory over Celta Vigo.

The defeat means Celta stay in fifth with 38 points from 25 games but they are now eight points adrift of a place in next season's Champions League and look ever more likely to be contesting the UEFA Cup for their sixth consecutive season rather than playing for the first time in Europe's premier competition.

Real Betis' similar dreams of Champions League competition for the first time also took a dive with a 2-1 defeat at Real Mallorca on Sunday.

Sevilla edged up to eighth, just one point and one place behind local rivals Betis, after a comfortable 2-0 win over Osasuna.

Relegation-threatened Recreativo Huelva and Espanyol fought out an entertaining 0-0 draw, although it ultimately did neither side any good in their bid to avoid second division football next season.

TOP SIX							
Spanish league table on Sunday (played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, against, points):							
Real	25	14	9	2	58	26	51
Sociedad	25	14	8	3	43	31	50
Deportivo	25	14	6	5	41	27	48
Valencia	25	13	7	5	41	19	46

Ligue 1

Ronaldinho rules



AFP, Paris

Paris St Germain inflicted a painful third defeat on their arch rivals Marseille Sunday thanks to Jerome Leroy and some Brazilian magic courtesy of Ronaldinho.

Marseille have twice been beaten by PSG this season - 3-0 in the league and 2-1 after penalties in the French Cup.

However the Parisians, thanks to two goals from former Marseille man Leroy and one from Ronaldinho, left the title-chasing southerners wondering just how to reinforce the ramparts at their Velodrome fortress.

Ronaldinho's mazy runs, which made his name at last year's World Cup, proved just too much for the hosts and Leroy simply appeared to be enjoying playing at his club.

The result left Marseille second behind leaders Monaco, who slipped up 1-0 against Bordeaux on Saturday, on goals difference while PSG moved up five places to sixth.

The hosts, at least until Leroy's stunning opener in the 28th minute, had the early pressure.

Leroy ran on to a ball kept in play by the head of Nigerian Bartholomew Ogbene, and while his sprint down the right wing was being closely monitored by the Marseille defence, their keeper was elsewhere.

Vedran Runje was paying closer attention to Ronaldinho and as a result Leroy simply looked up and fired the ball into a virtually empty net.

After the interval Ronaldinho took matters into his own hands,

Now MU want Carlos!



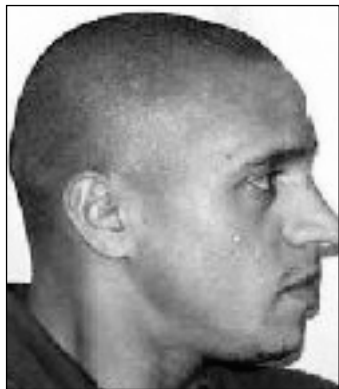
AFP, London

Brazil's World Cup winning full-back Roberto Carlos could be the subject of a bidding duel between Arsenal and Manchester United it was reported on Monday.

The 29-year-old Real Madrid star had said Sunday he would like a move to Arsenal when his current contract ends in two years but according to the Daily Mail Roberto Carlos could well be on Ferguson's wish list should Welsh winger Ryan Giggs move to Inter Milan in the summer.

The fiery Scot has been told in no uncertain terms by chief executive Peter Kenyon a second successive season without a trophy will not be good enough and the Champions League looks to represent their best chance of winning one.

They have reached the quarter-finals with two matches remaining of the second group phase, and still have a chance of dethroning cham-



ROBERTO CARLOS

pions Arsenal in the Premiership, whom they trail by five points.

However according to the Mail

Mind made up

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Saeed, who came into the World Cup without top-level cricket for five months, scored 101 against India eight days ago. It was his 20th one-day hundred but he finished on the losing side. He scored an unbeaten 40 in a rainout day game against Zimbabwe on Tuesday in his final match.

"I scored a hundred in my last Test against Bangladesh and I was hoping it would keep raining against Zimbabwe so I would then have scored a century in my last one-day

international also," Saeed said.

Inzy quits

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tional cricket. I am quite fit to play cricket more and will play cricket as long as I am fit."

Inzamam however resigned saying that his responsibility as vice captain contributed to his bad performance.

"I am resigning from the office of vice captain of the team as this responsibility might be one of the reasons for my bad performance."

"When I will be having no burden of responsibility, I hope I will be batting and performing well next time," the visibly dejected veteran batsman said.

Pakistani players returned home to an unceremonial welcome over the weekend.

In their six games in South Africa, Pakistan lost to Australia, England and India, suffered a washout in Zimbabwe and managed just two wins against minnows the Netherlands and Namibia.

It was the country's worst ever World Cup performance in the 28-year history of the tournament.

Angry mobs in Karachi and Lahore, burned effigies of pace bowler Wasim Akram and Waqar to register their anger.

Manager Khan, a seasoned veteran diplomat, spent most of the time defending the players.

Denying reports of internal bickering he said "the players fully observed discipline and unity. It is wrong to say that the team lacked discipline."



RONALDINHO

the World Cup-winning Brazilian latching on to a ball missed by a former World Cup winner, Frank Leboeuf, to fly down the left.

Ronaldinho's persistence paid off and he finally chipped the ball over Runje.

But he wasn't finished. Another mazy run on the right tore the Marseille defences to pieces and it was left to midfielder Brahim Hemdani to stop the charge.

After deftly rounding Runje, Ronaldinho stopped and simply rolled the ball towards the empty net. Although on its way towards the inside post, Leroy made sure by sliding the ball home.

TOP SIX							
French league table after Sunday's matches (played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, goals against, points):							
Monaco	30	14	10	6	46	24	52
Marseille	30	15	7	8	32	26	52

Ferguson is prepared to offload several players in the close season and bring in fresh talent with Spurs highly-rated winger Simon Davies one of his main targets.

Also on the list are Sunderland's young French striker David Bellion, who Ferguson has been an admirer of for some time, and compatriot Julien Escudé, who the Scot wanted to sign from Rennes last year before injury ruled him out.

United captain Roy Keane said it would be logical that several players would find themselves on the way out if they finished without any silverware.

"If things don't go according to plan then, come the end of the season, we have to face the music," the former Ireland captain said.

"That's the way it should be and I'm not frightened of it."

"That is what being a Manchester United player is all about," he added.

importing and exporting garments.

"I don't want to be involved in cricket," Saeed said.

"I've seen people in Pakistan who are hanging around in cricket and not having a good life."

Saeed experienced personal tragedy nearly two years ago when his baby daughter died after illness. He has since dedicated his life to Islam.

"My priorities in life have changed over the last couple of years," he said. "I now want to live a good religious life."

Campbell taken

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way of life, but insisted he had not let himself go physically.

"I haven't been eating pie and chips and drinking 20 pints."

Looking ahead to Wednesday's match, he said he expected a close encounter in what, with hosts South Africa as well as Namibia out of the tournament, is a contest between the last two African teams left in the World Cup.

"The Kenyans have got no world-beaters, but their bowlers bowl an irritating length, there are not too many balls to hit. And their batsmen are capable of posting a score."

"But the biggest thing about them is the way they bustle in the field. They're at you and you only

have to see how they react when they take a wicket.

"If you given them an opening they go for the jugular. You've got to put pressure on them early."

"This is a big game. If they beat us they are in the semifinal. It's a high stakes match."

"But we've just got to concentrate on what we do. If you talk about the pressure all the time you won't be doing the things you're meant to be."

Later on Monday, the ICC technical committee agreed to the replacement of Brian Murphy, who injured his calf in the nets on Saturday, and Mark Vermeulen with Stuart Matsikenyeri and Campbell respectively on medical grounds.

Fingers of fate

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Namibia's Bjorn Kotze during the February 23 match at Pietermaritzburg.

"I could have been killed," a relieved Dar told AFP.

"I got saved because of my good eye sight. I actually quite enjoyed the incident."

"Sachin was very apologetic about it and kept saying sorry for the next two overs."

Umpires have had to be equally able to dodge controversy in their careers.

Australian Darrell Hair once received death threats from Sri Lankan Tamil Tiger fighters after he became the first umpire to no-ball Muttiah Muralitharan for throwing.

Muralitharan is the only Tamil in the 15-man Sri Lankan squad. He was also no-balled by another Australian umpire, Ross Emerson who is not involved at this World Cup.

Hair is here, but he has not been assigned a Sri Lanka match.

English umpires Peter Willey and Neil Mallender reignited the Zimbabwe boycott controversy earlier in the tournament when they refused to officiate in the strife-torn country.

News of Willey's decision was greeted with anger by Zimbabwe Cricket Union (ZCU) chief executive Vince Hogg.

"Just what is the matter with these people?"

The same question could be asked of all the men in the middle here.

Symonds

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Symonds made a match-winning 143 not out against Pakistan in the first round and is averaging 101 after three innings. He hurt his groin last week, missing the first Super Six match against Sri Lanka.

FA Cup Leeds sent packing

AFP, London

Leeds United's miserable season was complete on Sunday as they went out of the FA Cup beaten 1-0 in the quarter-finals by First Division Sheffield United.

While Leeds exited - a goal by Steve Kabba who turned 22 on Friday ending their interest - another Premiership side Southampton saw off First Division Wolves 2-0 and deny their dignified manager Dave Jones a victorious return at his former club.

The other clash saw Watford beat fellow First Division side Burnley 2-0 to reach their first semi-final in 16 years, Stephen Glass's stunning freekick for the second goal totally out of keeping with the mediocre fare on offer.

Trescothick

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and I thought I never would. I've stopped enjoying it."

After weeks of debate, England refused to play their World Cup fixture against Zimbabwe in Harare because of safety concerns, and subsequently failed to reach the Super Six stage of the competition.

Trescothick believes England would have been among the contenders for the title had they progressed, but he defended the decision not to play in Harare.

He reflected: "In hindsight, forfeiting the points may have cost us a place in the Super Sixes and we would have felt very confident of going further. Bearing in mind how well we