



A Porto fan joins the party with his car in downtown Lisbon on May 21.

# Fergie wants Ronaldinho

Football

AFP, Manchester

Manchester United manager Alex Ferguson has put Brazil World Cup star Ronaldinho at the top of his wish list but realistically expects to sign a French defender, Portuguese forward and English goalkeeper in the close season.

Ferguson told United's official website on Monday: "There won't be massive dealings. But hopefully there will be two, maybe three, that will come in."

The Manchester Evening News said Thursday the top three on his wanted list were French Under-21 international full-back Julien Escude, who plays for Rennes, Sporting Lisbon's 19-year-old Ricardo Quaresma and Leeds United goalkeeper Paul Robinson.

Ferguson tried to sign the four million pound (six million dollar)-rated Escude last August.

The five million pound-rated Quaresma is said to be the best thing to come out of Portugal since Luis Figo.

His chances of coming to Old Trafford were rated good because

of United coach Carlos Quieroz's links with Sporting.

Ferguson could probably get Robinson for eight million pounds from cash-strapped Leeds as a replacement for French keeper Fabien Barthez.

Paris St Germain new coach Vahid Halilhodzic has already said



RONALDINHO

he does not want to lose Ronaldinho but the indebted French club would probably take 15 million pounds.

New club chairman Francis

Graille has told United to come back after the French Cup final on May 31.

But Spanish sides Barcelona and Valencia are also interested.

Ferguson was said to have been put off by the 15 million pounds Blackburn Rovers have demanded for their Irish winger Damien Duff

And Leeds' Australian forward Harry Kewell was reported to be unimpressed about a move to Manchester who have offered seven million pounds.

That could let in Joe Cole now that West Ham have been relegated.

Ferguson wanted to sign the eight million-pound-rated 21-year-old as a youngster but he preferred to stay at home in London.

Juventus' French international defender Lilian Thuram, Dutch striker Roy Makaay, the leading scorer in Spain with Deportivo La Coruna, and Sunderland's 20-year-old French forward David Bellion are other possibilities.

The chances of Bellion moving to Old Trafford look high because Fergie tried to sign him in January and he is a free agent at the end of June.

# Chelsea chase Batigol

Football

AFP, London

Chelsea manager Claudio Ranieri was reported Thursday to be poised to sign Argentine striker Gabriel Batistuta from Roma.

The 34-year-old striker, on loan to Inter Milan, becomes a free agent in June and has already said he would like to play in the English Premiership.

Batistuta, nicknamed 'Batigol', started his Italian career in 1991 with Fiorentina, but was loaned out to Inter after a disappointing third term with Roma.

His 54 goals in 78 appearances for Argentina show his pedigree but recent months have suggested his predatory powers are on the wane.

However, Ranieri told The Sun: "We need players with more experience so we can do better in the



GABRIEL BATISTUTA

# Kahn open for talks

Football

AFP, Berlin

Bayern Munich's German international goalkeeper Oliver Kahn insisted Wednesday that he is ready for a move abroad despite the Bundesliga champions determination to hold on to their star.

"I've already explained my reasons for a transfer, in order to experience something else," Kahn said in his column in the Sport Bild weekly.

"In order to clarify things I want to have talks with Bayern bosses," said Kahn, whose contract runs until 2006.

"I stress once again, I'm in good form, Bayern is a great club, but it



OLIVER KAHN

wouldn't be normal not to ask questions after nine successful years. At nearly 34 years these

thoughts are legitimate," he added.

Bayern coach Ottmar Hitzfeld on Monday ruled out a move saying that "no money in the world could purchase Oliver Kahn."

Kahn, who made his name with Dortmund before joining Bayern in 1994, earns a reported 7.65 million euros (dollars) a year.

The keeper, who starred in Germany's run to last year's World Cup final, has recently been in the limelight after separating from his wife and taking up with a 21-year-old girlfriend. He was also caught speeding.

Bayern president Karl-Heinz Rummenigge, meanwhile, told Sport Bild that he was considering extending the contract of French defender Bixente Lizarazu beyond 2004.

ALL FINALS			
UEFA Cup finals since the competition began in 1971-72:			
Season	Winners	Runners-Up	Agg Score
1971-72	Tottenham	Wolverhampton	3-2
1972-73	Liverpool	Moenchengladbach	3-2
1973-74	Feyenoord	Tottenham	4-2
1974-75	Moenchengladbach	Twente Enschede	5-1
1975-76	Liverpool	Club Bruges	4-3
1976-77	Juventus	Bilbao	2-2*
1977-78	PSV Eindhoven	Bastia	3-0
1978-79	Moenchengladbach	Red Star Belgrade	2-1
1979-80	Frankfurt	Moenchengladbach	3-3*
1980-81	Ipswich Town	AZ Alkmaar	5-4
1981-82	IFK Gothenburg	SV Hamburg	4-0
1982-83	Anderlecht	Benfica	2-1
1983-84	Tottenham	Anderlecht	2-2
(4-3 on penalties)			
1984-85	Real Madrid	Videoton	3-1
1985-86	Real Madrid	Cologne	5-3
1986-87	IFK Gothenburg	Dundee United	2-1
1987-88	Leverkusen	Espanyol	3-3
(3-2 on penalties)			
1988-89	Napoli	VfB Stuttgart	5-4
1989-90	Juventus	Fiorentina	3-1
1990-91	Inter Milan	AS Roma	2-1
1991-92	Ajax	Torino	2-2*
1992-93	Juventus	Borussia Dortmund	6-1
1993-94	Inter Milan	Salzburg	2-0
1994-95	Parma	Juventus	2-1
1995-96	Bayern Munich	Bordeaux	5-1
1996-97	Schalke 04	Inter Milan	1-1
(4-1 on penalties)			
1997-98	Inter Milan	Lazio	3-0
1998-99	Parma	Marseille	3-0
1999-00	Galatasaray	Arsenal	0-0
4-1 on penalties)			
2000-01	Liverpool	Alaves	5-4
(aet 4-4 at 90 minutes).			
2001-02	Feyenoord	Borussia Dortmund	3-2
2002-03	Porto	Celtic	3-2
(aet; 2-2 at 90 minutes)			
Notes:			
* Scores marked by * denote won on away goals.			
** From 1997-98 finals were decided on one match and not over two legs.			

# 'Take it easy' says Enrique

Football

AFP, Barcelona

Barcelona captain Luis Enrique has urged the Spanish giants to resist offloading any of their stars to wipe out debts of 98 million euros (114 million dollars).

Interim-president Enric Reyna, who will step down in June 22 elections, said last month the club would be forced to sell to clear debts.

But Luis Enrique called on the new board to bolster the squad. "What's important to me is that Barca has a strong team next year whether I'm here or not," he told the Barcelona website.

"It's logical that there will be changes in the squad because a club like Barca has to keep freshening up the squad, especially after a bad year.

"When a team doesn't come up with the goods, there are more changes than usual. Every year there are players that have to leave. Up to now I've been lucky, but one day it'll be my turn to go."

The former European champions crashed out of the Champions League in the quarter-finals and look like missing out on European football next season for the first time in their history as they struggle in the Spanish first division.

Luis Enrique admitted it will be difficult to reach the UEFA Cup

places.

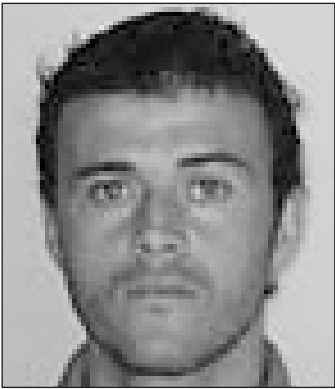
"We have to make a huge effort and win the four remaining games, which is something we haven't managed all season," he said.

Reyna, who took over from Joan Gaspart who quit in February because of the team's poor form on the pitch and dire financial situation off it, said last month the club could recoup 47 million euros in transfers.

Barcelona's Dutch striker Patrick Kluivert could be the first to go.

The 26-year-old, who recently equalled Dennis Bergkamp's record of 37 goals for Holland in a 1-1 draw with Portugal, is in the middle of talks over a new contract.

His current contract runs to 2005 but Barcelona believe they could get 36 million euros for him.



LUIS ENRIQUE

# Oporto partying

UEFA CUP

REUTERS, Oporto

Oporto exploded with joy and popping champagne corks late on Wednesday to celebrate Porto's dramatic 3-2 victory over Glasgow's Celtic in Seville to win the UEFA Cup for the first time in its history.

Screaming fans, many with faces painted in the blue and white of their beloved Dragons, jammed the central Humberto Delgado Plaza, the customary site to celebrate Porto wins.

An enormous caravan of cars packed with cheering fans waving the green, yellow and red Portuguese flag and Porto banners snaked through the downtown streets of the industrial capital.

"We knew we were going to win!" an overjoyed Porto supporter, Manuel Torres Iglesias, said as he rushed with friends to join the cheering crowd.

Chants of "We're the champions!" and "Porto is the nation!" thundered through the warm spring night. Many fans vowed to

stay up all night to welcome back Porto from Spain.

"We suffered a lot, it was a great game that Porto deserved to win," another fan told state TV.

Derlei Silva's second goal of the night five minutes from the end of extra time secured the win over Celtic, which twice came from behind to leave the score at 2-2 by the end of normal time. Russian Dmitri Alenitchev was Porto's otherscorer.

"Porto deserve the admiration of all Portugal," another young Porto fan said in a TV interview.

"I'm not going to bed tonight. After I go to the airport, I'm going to take a bath and then go right to the factory where I work."

The joy spread to Lisbon, where fans of the capital's clubs put aside their long-standing rivalry with Porto to revel in the Portuguese side's success.

Hundreds of honking cars with fans waving Porto banners jammed the central Marques de Pombal plaza. Streets in the night-club district on the banks of the Tejo River were alive with revelers.

"It's been a long time since I suffered so much," Prime Minister

Jose Manuel Durao Barroso told the Lusa news agency in Seville, where he watched the game next to President Jorge Sampaio.

"I am very happy because it was a drawn out victory, it was a game with dramatic moments and for this reason the joy at winning is even greater," he said after watching the match at the Estadio Olimpico.

"Portugal deserved this victory. I think we all have reason to celebrate in Portugal and the Portuguese can be proud of this great team," he headed.

"It is not easy to be winning twice, have the opponent catch up and then go on to win," said Durao Barroso.

Durao Barroso stopped off in Spain to attend the match while on his way to Morocco for the start of an official visit to the country.

Reflecting the almost unbearable tension in Seville, Porto Chairman Jorge Nuno Pinto told Lusa he had felt a sharp pain in his chest near the end of the game and had needed medical attention.

"I've recovered to celebrate the win," he said.

# O'Neil points at refereeing

UEFA CUP

AFP, Seville

Celtic boss Martin O'Neill claimed poor refereeing had robbed his side of the chance to lift the UEFA Cup.

O'Neill watched in dismay as his ten-man side were killed off by a 125th-minute winner by FC Porto's Brazilian striker Derlei here on Wednesday.

Celtic had twice come from behind to force the match into extra time but their prospects of snatching a winner were fatally undermined when Bobo Balde was ordered off four minutes into the first period.

O'Neill admitted Slovakian referee Lubos Michel had no option but to dismiss his big defender but claimed play should have been stopped just before his critical foul on Derlei.

"I think the sending off has had a very big effect on the outcome. Four seconds before Henrik Larsson has been fouled on the edge of their penalty area and the referee has waved played on."

"It is very, very disappointing because I thought we had done enough to win it. At the beginning of extra time we were beginning to look like the stronger team."

"Its changed the course of the game. At the time we were still going strong and if there was a goal to be scored we were going to get it."

Porto's coach Jose Mourinho hit back at O'Neill's claims, saying Balde was lucky to still be on the field after the wild lunge at Porto playmaker Deco which earned him his first yellow card, mid-way through the second half.

Asked what he thought of O'Neill's criticism of the referee, Mourinho responded with an attack on the physical approach Celtic had adopted.

"I prefer to ask if the behaviour



PHOTO: AFP

THAT DID IT: FC Porto's Brazilian recruit Derlei (L) scores the winning goal past Celtic goalkeeper Robert Douglas as Johan Mjallby (R) and Ulrik Laursen look on at the Olympic Stadium in Seville on May 21.

# Johansson wants 36 teams



AFP, Seville

The president of European football's governing body Lennart Johansson said here on Wednesday he was in favour of the 2006 World Cup in Germany being increased from 32 to 36 teams.

The comments came after the South American federation Conmebol proposed the increase in the wake of Brazil not qualifying automatically as champions and the continent losing a play-off place for the finals.

"The South Americans have lost on two accounts," Johansson said. "It's something a continent cannot accept. I do not want to run the risk of a confederation withdrawing from the World

Cup."

The sport's world governing body FIFA said at its last executive committee meeting it was in favour of the increase providing they could find a system which was not open to cheating.

The system at the finals in Japan and Korea last year had 32 teams or eight four-team groups giving a clean system where the two group winners qualified for the 16-team second round.

An increase to 36 teams would mean changing this neat system to one which could be open to problems.

For example, at the 24-team 1982 World Cup, Germany's 1-0 victory over Austria suited both teams who appeared to have an agreement, meaning Algeria were knocked out.

The 36-team format would probably mean nine groups of four with the group winners going through and the seven best second-placed teams, a system which many FIFA officials believe is not without risk.

FIFA president Sepp Blatter has however personally said he is against the proposal which has not pleased FIFA's first vice-president Julio Grondona of

Argentina.

The final decision will be made at a FIFA executive committee meeting on June 29 in Paris.

# Olsson to succeed Aigner

REUTERS, Nyon

UEFA's director of professional football and marketing, Lars-Christer Olsson, will succeed Gerhard Aigner as chief executive, UEFA said on Thursday.

Aigner, 59, said in March he would retire at the end of the year after 34 years with UEFA.

Olsson, 53, joined European soccer's governing body nearly three years ago after leaving his post as general secretary of the Swedish League and Swedish Football Association.

Born in Lovestad, Sweden, Olsson is a business management graduate, who was tournament director for the European Championships held in Sweden in 1992.