

## Chile scrape past Peru

REUTERS, Santiago

Two headed goals gave injury and suspension-hit Chile a 2-1 win over neighbours Peru in a bad-tempered World Cup qualifier on Tuesday.

Substitute Arturo Norambuena scored Chile's winner in the 70th minute, three minutes after coming on. The goal was allowed to stand even though he appeared to climb on a defender.

Mauricio Pinilla had given Chile a first-half lead before Andres Mendoza equalised after the break with his second goal in successive qualifiers.

Chile, who opened with a 2-2 draw in Argentina on Saturday, have four points from two games while Peru, who beat Paraguay 4-1 on Saturday, have three.

The game was littered with vicious fouls and flare-ups for which Argentine referee Horacio Elizondo took no effective action.

Chile were without defender Cristian Alvarez and striker Reinaldo Navia, both sent off against Argentina, and injured striker Marcelo Salas.

The game degenerated as referee Elizondo allowed the feet to fly.

Chile went in front in the 35th minute as they exploited the Peruvian defence's weakness in the air.

Rodrigo Perez sent over a long cross from the left, Pinilla, the third choice striker after Salas and Navia, beat two defenders to the ball at the far post and his header looped over the stranded Erick Delgado into the net.

Peru hit back with a brilliant Mendoza strike 12 minutes into the second half.

Russian-based left-back Martin Hidalgo sent a long ball forward out of defence and the ball fell to the Club Brugge player, who fired a left-foot shot past Tapia on the turn.

Chile striker Hector Tapia had a goal disallowed for handball almost immediately afterwards after Peru again were caught out by a cross from the right.

In the 70th minute, Chile won a free kick from the right, David Pizarro floated a free kick across and Norambuena headed home.

## 20-team Serie A next season

AFP, Rome

Italy's Serie A will be expanded from 18 to 20 teams next season, the Italian Football League (Lega-Calcio) announced on Tuesday.

The decision was made to end a strike by Italy's Serie B clubs who have boycotted the start of the current season in a row over the expansion of their division from 20 to 24 teams.

This season there will be five promotions from Serie B and three relegations from Serie A, plus a play-off between Serie B's sixth highest side and Serie A's fourth from bottom side.

That will see Serie A expanding to 20 teams for the 2004/05 season while Serie B will be reduced to 22 teams.

Serie B will return to action on Thursday. Only two fixtures have so far taken place this season.

Italian football has been in chaos since May when Catania turned to a regional court to overturn their relegation. The court ruled in their favour and the Sicilian club demanded they be reinstated in Serie B.

Last month the Italian football federation (FIGC) bowed to Catania's demands and placed them back in the division along with fellow relegated clubs Genoa and Salernitana.

## 30,000 watch world champs practice

REUTERS, Manaus

A crowd estimated at over 30,000 people watched world champions Brazil train on Tuesday, one day before their World Cup qualifier against Ecuador.

The five-times World Cup winners enjoyed a light-hearted practice session in an atmosphere of near hysteria at the 35,000 capacity Vivaldao stadium, which appeared to be completely full.

Fans paid three Real (around \$1.02) to watch in the city of Manaus, located in the heart of the Amazon rain forest.

The session appeared to indicate that Cruzeiro midfielder Alex would have to make way for Barcelona's Ronaldinho, who missed Sunday's 2-1 win in Colombia through suspension.

Ronaldinho was included in the first team for the practice while Alex started in the reserves.

"Everything indicates that it will be me," Alex told reporters before the session when asked who would make way.

Coach Carlos Alberto Parreira is not expected to make any other changes to the side which started in Barranquilla.



CHEERING WASN'T ENOUGH! (L) A Venezuelan fan cheers her team prior to the match against Argentina at Caracas on September 9. But it was Argentina (R) who ran out comfortable winners. Here, D'Alessandro (extreme R) and Hernan Crespo congratulate goal-scorer Pablo Aimar (C).



PHOTOS: AFP

# Argentina back on track



REUTERS, Caracas

Argentina bounced back from Saturday's disappointing 2-2 home draw against Chile to outclass Venezuela 3-0 in a one-sided World Cup qualifier on Tuesday and

relieve the pressure on beleaguered coach Marcelo Bielsa.

Pablo Aimar set Argentina on their way when he started and finished a move in the seventh minute as Venezuela gave away a soft early goal for the second game running.

Two more goals in a seven-minute spell before halftime, from much-criticised forward Hernan Crespo and his striking partner Cesar Delgado, effectively ended the match as a contest.

Venezuela coach Richard Paez, whose team were unbeaten in 11 previous home games in a run stretching back nearly three years, was sent off in the second half for insulting the referee.

Bielsa was surprisingly kept on by Argentine despite their shock first

round exit from the finals in Japan and South Korea last year but both he and some of his players have been eyed with distrust by the team's supporters since.

The home draw with Chile, in which Argentina threw away a two-goal lead in the opening match of the qualifying competition, did nothing to boost public confidence.

With Venezuela keen to prove they are no longer the ugly ducklings of South American football, an upset appeared to be in the making.

The home team, who have never beaten Argentina, made a lively start but, as in Saturday's 2-0 defeat by Ecuador, gave away a sloppy early goal.

Delgado crossed from the right, Crespo's first shot was saved by

Gilberto Angelucci and Aimar, who had started the move by winning possession in midfield, knocked in the rebound.

Venezuela fought hard but were killed off by two quick strikes.

Crespo, a player singled out for criticism since 2002, headed in a Delgado cross in the 25th minute after left-back Jorge Rojas had lost possession.

Seven minutes later, Delgado skipped past a succession of defenders to convert the third.

Venezuela enjoyed more possession in the second half but could not make their final pass count.

Argentina midfielder Juan Sebastian Veron, booed throughout by his own fans against Chile, had a solid game on Tuesday but picked up a second yellow card and earned

an automatic one-match suspension.

Bielsa said that Tuesday's victory would bring some much-needed relief.

"We needed this result," the introverted, eccentric coach told reporters.

"The fact that we drew with Chile (2-2 on Saturday) increased that need."

"The game was over pretty quickly. It seems like a fair result and perhaps we could have won by a bigger difference."

Paez said he was proud of his team despite the defeat.

"The team never lost its style and never lost its identity," he said. "We're getting better with every game."

But Paez criticised the organisa-

tion of the sport in a country which still prefers baseball.

"We go into every game with a handicap. We've got to improve the infrastructure in this country."

## RESULTS AT A GLANCE

South American qualifying results for the 2006 World Cup:

**Santiago**  
Chile 2 (Mauricio Pinilla 35, Arturo Norambuena 69) Peru 1 (Andres Mendoza 56)  
**H-t: 1-0**

**Caracas**  
Venezuela 0 Argentina 3 (Pablo Aimar 7, Hernan Crespo 25, Cesar Delgado 31)  
**H-t: 0-3**

## Cafu targets fourth final



AFP, Manaus

Brazil World Cup winning skipper Cafu admitted Tuesday his dream was to reach his fourth consecutive World Cup final with the five-time champions in Germany in three years time.

The 33-year-old AC Milan player said he has lost none of his hunger for success during his nine years with the national team, and wanted to lift a third world title.

"I'm working towards this but only time will tell if I'm in condition for this," said Cafu who holds the record for Brazil caps with 122.

Cafu has played in three consecutive World Cup finals, of which he has won two, but the thirst for success is difficult to quench, added Cafu, who is the only player to appear in three successive finals of the World Cup.

"These are all achievements of which I am proud. They are in the past but they will never be forgotten by the player or his country."

But he said that his greatest pride was the social work that he does in deprived areas of Sao Paulo of which he rarely talks about publicly.

"We're not going to solve everyone's problems but we, the athletes, feel proud to help without waiting for something in return."

Cafu signed a two-year contract in June with Milan after ending his six year stay with AS Roma with whom he won a league winners medal in 2001.

Meanwhile, Brazil's under-fire midfielder Emerson hit back at his critics on Tuesday and said the only opinion he was interested in was his coach's.

Emerson, the designated captain for Brazil in last year's World Cup, missed the finals after dislocating his shoulder on the eve of the opening match, making way for Cafu to wear the armband.

He has been labelled technically limited by Brazil's media, who say he is not good enough to play for the five-times world champions.

The AS Roma player has also been criticised for giving away too many free kicks and getting booked too often.

"In the last match (against Colombia), my role was mainly marking at the request of the coach," he told reporters before training on Tuesday.

"Those are things which people who say they understand football don't see."

"The most important thing for me at the moment is to have the confidence of my coach and the recognition of my team mates."

"Playing for Brazil, the role I perform often doesn't get any recognition."

World champions Brazil began the defence of their title by beating Colombia 2-1 away on Sunday in their opening qualifier for the 2006 World Cup finals in Germany.

They are at home to Ecuador on Wednesday in the second match of the marathon 18-match campaign.



PHOTO: AFP

Brazilian captain Cafu holds the hand of physically disabled Marcio da Costa at Manaus, north of Brazil on September 9. The motorised wheelchair used by da Costa was donated by Cafu.

## Lift gets on Ecuadorian nerves!

REUTERS, Rio de Janeiro

Ecuador are to lodge a protest after five of their players were stuck in a hotel lift in the Brazilian city of Manaus, where they face the five-times world champions in a World Cup qualifier on Wednesday.

The incident happened during a power cut in the early hours of Tuesday morning, the Ecuadorean Football Federation (FEF) said on its official website.

"Five Ecuadorean players went through moments of panic when they were trapped in the hotel lift at the Taj Mahal hotel in Manaus, where the delegation is staying," said the FEF.

It named the players as Giovanni Espinoza, Edison Mendez, Kleber Chala, Carlos Tenorio and Otilio Tenorio.

"The players were extremely upset about this bad experience," it added.

"The power cut affected a large part of the city of Manaus at first, but then curiously was only in the Taj Mahal," the FEF added.

"A lot of players had to walk up 11 floors of stairs which could have caused an injury."

The FEF said the problem was aggravated by the heat and humidity of Manaus, a city located in the heart of the Amazon rain forest.

The FEF said it would protest to the South American Football Confederation (CSF) and the Brazilian Football Confederation (CBF).

Ecuador and Brazil both won their opening matches in the South American World Cup qualifying group, which started at the weekend and continues until October 2005 with 18 rounds of matches.

Brazil boycotted the media conference after their match in Barranquilla in a row over advertising hoardings and complained the water was cut off in their changing rooms, preventing half the team from taking a shower

## English fans not allowed!



AFP, Istanbul

English fans will be barred from the potentially explosive Euro 2004 qualifier in Istanbul on October 11 even if they managed to buy tickets, Turkish soccer officials said Wednesday.

"Their fans will in no way be allowed into the stadium, even if they happen to have tickets. This is the agreement we have reached" with English football authorities, Turkish team manager Can Cobanoglu told AFP.

The English Football Association has not taken up any tickets for the match and has urged supporters to stay at home because of fears of a repeat of the violence that has marred encounters between the two countries in the past.

But authorities fear that fans might travel independently to Turkey and pick up tickets for the match locally.

England-Turkey matches have been marred by violence.

The most serious incident between the two sides came in April 2000, when two Britons were killed in a street brawl in Istanbul just ahead of a UEFA Cup tie between Galatasaray and Leeds United.

When the two national teams met in Sunderland in April, England's victory was tarnished by pre-match violence, two pitch invasions and racist taunting of the Turkish fans by the home side.

## Bayern's route to Japanese hearts

AFP, Tokyo

Kicking off late in its bid to promote itself here compared to European rivals, German football club Bayern Munich vowed Wednesday to get down to the business of winning Japanese fans by building solid ties between coaches and players from the two countries.

"We would like to do it a bit different from what was done this year by Real Madrid," FC Bayern Munich chairman Karl-Heinz Rummenigge told a news conference, referring to the star-studded Spanish team's promotional tour to Asia last month.

"We try to earn some money, of course, but we would like to come here as a guest who tries to help develop Japanese football," Rummenigge said.

He said his club is now considering exchange programmes between players and coaches from the two countries, and it is planning to invite Japanese and other sides to play in Germany.

Rummenigge also said he would be able to announce in a few weeks time a plan for Bayern to play matches in Japan at the end of this season.

German sports equipment manufacturer adidas, which holds a 10 percent stake in Bayern Munich, will back the club by expanding its sales promotion of kit and other goods sold under the Bayern Munich brand.

The German club and adidas aim to achieve the largest sales of goods licensed by any professional football team in Japan in five years, said Christophe Bezu, executive president adidas Japan.

Among other joint efforts between Bayern and adidas is a Japanese version of the club homepage www.fcbayern.de, which was launched on Wednesday.

"We know (Japan) is now very competitive area because all the great clubs like Real Madrid, Manchester United, AC Milan and so on are coming here for business reasons," Rummenigge said.

"We are here also for business reasons, but not just for business reasons alone. We are here especially for football reasons to have partnership with adidas and close partnership with Japanese football association as well as the J-League."

At the conference, Bayern's deputy chairman Uli Hoeness, said the club was still interested in signing a contract with Japanese international Junichi Inamoto now playing for Fulham.

"We still believe that he could be a player for a club like Bayern," Hoeness said. "We will see what happens in the future. We will have to watch his development in Fulham. Maybe he could be a player we can discuss."

Rummenigge said he hoped to recruit teenage footballers in Japan.

"If we can find 17 or 18 (year-old) young football players in Japan, who can be developed by Bayern Munich itself, that would be fantastic and helpful not just for Bayern Munich. It would be helpful for the Japanese football national team," he said.