

Foe remembered

Football

REUTERS, Lyon

Cameron beat an All-Stars team in a match played on Tuesday in memory of Marc-Vivien Foe, who died at the same Gerland ground in Lyon in June after a Confederations Cup semi-final.

The African champions won 3-1 but the result against former team mates of Foe was secondary to the emotion shared by the players on the pitch and the 23,962 spectators in the stands of one of his clubs.

The former Cameroon midfielder died of heart failure shortly after collapsing during Cameroon's semifinal against Colombia on June 26.

Patrick Mboma, who flew from Japan to celebrate the memory of his friend, Paris-St Germain's Modest Mbami and Samuel Eto'o of Real Mallorca scored Cameroon's goals in this memorial game shown on French television.

The "Friendship team", comprising the likes of Thierry Henry, Robert Pires, Sylvain Wiltord and Nicolas Anelka, scored through Brazilian Sonny Anderson, a former team mate of Foe's at Olympique Lyon.

The income from the game will go to

a charity fund chaired by Foe's wife Marie-Louise. Television viewers were also asked to buy T-shirts signed by some of the game's most famous names.

"It's a special day today, and I ask you to give all your support to Marc-Vivien and his family," said England captain David Beckham in a recorded message broadcast on television.

"Some 25,000 persons and a field of great players, it was the best homage we could pay to Marco," said former French international Basile Boli, who organised the game with the French Professional League (LFP).

"I'd like to thank all the people who supported me and all those who were present today. It's a mark of love for Marc-Vivien," said Marie-Louise on television.

The "Friendship" team was coached by Manchester City's Kevin Keegan, Lyon's Paul Le Guen and former RC Lens trainer Daniel Leclercq. Foe, who was on loan at

City last season, won French league titles with Lens and Lyon.

The match was played under the motto "a lion never dies, it sleeps" and a banner in the stands read "another star now shines above Gerland".

Foe, who made 65 appearances for Cameroon, played in two World Cup tournaments in 1994 and 2002 and twice won the African Nations Cup, in 2000 and 2002.



MARC-VIVIEN FOE



WE WILL NEVER FORGET YOU: (L) Fans recall Marc-Vivien Foe during memorial match to honour the Cameroon footballer. (R) Sony Anderson talks to the son of the late player before the kick-off at Gerland Stadium in Lyon on November 11.



PHOTO: AFP

Solskjaer makes no predictions

SKY SPORTS, London

Manchester United striker Ole Gunnar Solskjaer is being cagey about any comeback date as he recovers from a knee operation.

The Norwegian international was playing through the pain barrier before going under the knife, and United have missed his cutting edge on occasions this term, despite the fact that Sir Alex Ferguson seems to be converting the former Molde marksman into a right-sided midfielder.

"It is five weeks since the operation," he told MUTV.

"So it has been about patience, working in the gym and working hard. It had to happen because I was playing on with it and it wasn't doing me any good."

"I have been lucky with injuries in the past so it is a learning experience."

"I will just start with walking I suppose. And then it will be a case of taking it one day at a time."

Viduka fine erased

AFP, Leeds

Australian striker Mark Viduka has been let off a 130,000-pound (215,000 dollar) fine imposed by sacked Leeds boss Peter Reid.

Eddie Gray, the man who has taken over at Elland Road on a caretaker basis, moved immediately to mend fences with the temperamental Viduka, who has not played in Leeds' last two matches following a series of bust-ups with Reid.

Gray restored Viduka to the Leeds side for a testimonial match against Cambridge on Tuesday and later confirmed he would be waiving the fine of two weeks' wages the striker received from Reid last week.

"I'll be taking no action against Mark," said Gray, a former Leeds coach who is hoping to be given the manager's job on a permanent basis.

"That situation developed last week when I wasn't there. It is a clean slate as far as I'm concerned."

SEE PAGE 14 COL 6

Owen leaving Liverpool?

Football

THE GUARDIAN/REUTERS, London

Michael Owen has warned Liverpool they must qualify for the Champions League if he is to follow Steven Gerrard's lead by pledging his long-term future at Anfield.

The news comes as Liverpool captain Steven Gerrard has signed a new contract that will keep him on Merseyside until 2007, the club says.

Gerrard, who like Owen had 18

months to run on his previous deal, signed a new four-year contract. But, while Liverpool hoped 23-year-old Gerrard's eagerness to commit to the club would encourage Owen to do likewise, the England striker remains distinctly non-committal.

"I don't want to be just a normal professional," said Owen, whose contract expires in the summer of 2005. "I aim to reach the top and, to do that, you have to play well against the best teams in the world."

"It's impossible to say about my future at Liverpool. If they were win-

ning the league every year there would not be any decision to make about playing abroad.

"There is no problem now. In an ideal situation Liverpool would do really well this season and challenge for the league. I really need to be playing in the Champions League and that is something we have to remedy."

Rumours persist as to Real Madrid's interest in the striker, and he has made no secret of his desire to play on the continent at some stage.

Liverpool's stuttering start to the season -- they are 13 points from the summit in eighth place having lost at home to the top three -- will hardly have improved the prospects of Owen signing up, though Gerrard insisted the Merseysiders remain on track to challenge for domestic honours.

"If I didn't feel the club was going forward or I couldn't fulfill my ambitions here then maybe I would have thought about not re-signing for Liverpool," said Gerrard.

"We've got the ingredients in the squad to be successful challengers for the title over the next four or five years."

"The club is going in the right direction and I'm sure we will get stronger. I feel we can challenge for the Premier League. Losing to the top three hasn't changed my opinion on what we've got at Liverpool at all. We can match those teams, beat them and finish above them in the league. We just need to find consistency."

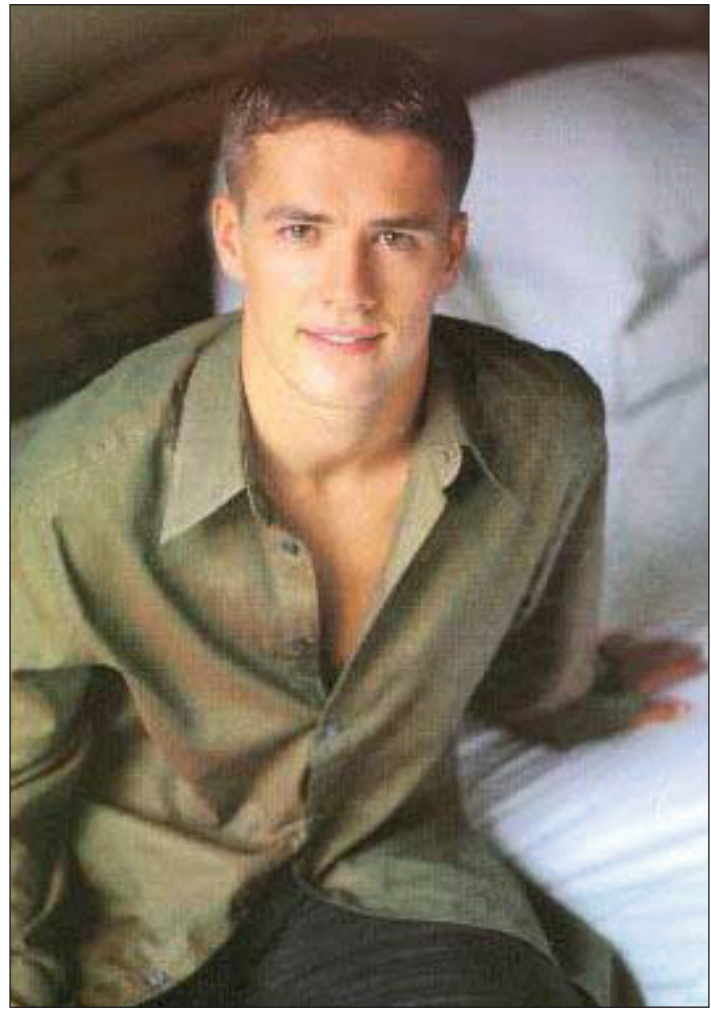
Confirmation of Gerrard's deal will come as a huge relief to Gerard Houllier, who celebrates five years in sole charge at Liverpool on Wednesday just as his reign appears to be stuttering.

Houllier said: "I'm proud of how Stevie has developed and maybe one day he could win the award that Michael (Owen) won -- the European Footballer of the Year trophy."

Sunday's 2-1 league defeat to Manchester United was the Merseysiders' fifth of the season to date, prompting further grumbling at a perceived lack of progress over the last two years.

"I think the criticism [of the manager] is very unfair," added

SEE PAGE 14 COL 8



MICHAEL OWEN



Ronaldo splitting

AFP, Rio de Janeiro

Real Madrid's Brazilian star Ronaldo and his wife of four years Milene Domingues are in the process of divorcing, his spokesman Rodrigo Paiva said.

"The relationship between the two has deteriorated for some time," Paiva told the Agencia Brasil news agency on Tuesday.

Paiva said that although the couple continued to live under the same roof and shared the same room they "no longer had a husband-wife relationship."

A Rio tabloid on Tuesday carried a photograph of Real Madrid player David Aganzo, who is currently on loan to second division Levante, and claimed that he was having a relationship with Domingues.

Paiva denied the report. He said that in the event of a separation the couple's three-year-old son Ronald, would remain with his mother.

Ronaldo, 27, the current World Player of the Year, is training with the world champions in Brazil before 2006 World Cup qualifiers against Peru on Sunday followed by Uruguay on Wednesday.

Domingues, 26, has played club football since the age of 14, and holds the world record for keepie-uppies (55,187 touches in nine hours and six minutes). The couple married in December 1999.

Ferdinand's uncertain future

Football

AFP, London

England defender Rio Ferdinand's future hung in the balance on Wednesday as the deadline neared for him to respond to charges of missing a doping test which could result in a two-year ban.

Ferdinand had been given two weeks to explain why he left his club Manchester United's training ground on September 23 when UK Sport's doping control officers were waiting for him to provide a urine sample.

The English Football Association (FA) is under pressure to announce a decision on any sanctions quickly following criticism from FIFA president Sepp Blatter and World Anti-Doping Agency chairman Dick Pound over the length of time it has taken to deal with the case.

The FA have already suspended Ferdinand from international matches but he has been allowed to play on for Manchester United pending the outcome of his case.

The club are supporting Ferdinand's claim that he simply forgot about the test, partly because he was preoccupied with moving house on that day.

A number of holes have however appeared in his story and the player is widely expected to be banned for between three months and two years.

England coach Sven-Goran

Eriksson, who has offered to testify as a character witness for Ferdinand, will be keeping his fingers crossed that any ban does not affect the player's chances of being included in England's squad for the 2004 European Championship finals in Portugal in June and July.

Ferdinand's claim to have been too



RIO FERDINAND

busy moving house was undermined when he was photographed shopping in Manchester city centre later on September 23.

The FA's decision on any sanction is likely to hinge on whether Ferdinand can show, with the help of his mobile phone records, that he was not contacting immediately

SEE PAGE 14 COL

England wait on Becks, Rooney

REUTERS, London

England have fitness doubts over captain David Beckham and Wayne Rooney, but will definitely be without central defender Gareth Southgate for Sunday's friendly against Denmark.

Southgate has a thigh injury and will be replaced in the squad by a first senior call-up for Anthony Gardner of Tottenham Hotspur, the Football Association said on Tuesday.

Southgate was himself a stop-gap for the game at Old Trafford, his recall on Monday being due to the unavailability of Sol Campbell and Jonathan Woodgate.

Beckham, who suffered a back injury in Real Madrid's 4-1 defeat by Sevilla at the weekend, will be assessed by England's medical staff when he reports for duty on Thursday.

Having been advised by club doctors to rest until Wednesday, Beckham has been left out of Real's squad for a friendly against Valladolid on Tuesday.

England's medical staff will speak to their Everton counterparts on Wednesday about Rooney, who missed their defeat by Blackburn Rovers on Monday due to flu.

Coming to America

AFP, New York

English champions Manchester United are to return to play three more games in the United States next summer, manager Sir Alex Ferguson said Tuesday.

Ferguson said that one of the reasons for an encore performance was because his players had enjoyed unlimited privacy during their visit last summer which allowed them to prepare for the English Premier League.

Ferguson said that whenever the Red Devils played outside of England the players were mobbed by fans, but during their four games in America they walked freely in large cities like New York, Los Angeles, Philadelphia and Seattle.

Money was not the central factor for the return visit, he said.

"The crowd response last year was fantastic," said Ferguson. "Manchester United did well financially, but we have a market."

Charles Stillitano, chairman of soccer management company Manchester United would face three different opponents and seven teams were expected to be involved in the exhibition games. He said the teams, dates and venues would be announced later.

"The dynamism and fame of teams such as Manchester United ignite the soccer fans of America," said Stillitano.

"Soccer is a major part of American society nowadays, and big events such as the Manchester United matches provide fans with lifetime memories and a chance to see the exploits of so many world famous athletes in person," he added.

Two of the three games will be played at Soldier Field, Chicago and Giants Stadium in New Jersey.

Last year the Red Devils were unbeaten in four games in the United States defeating the Glasgow Celtics, Club America, Juventus of Turin, and Barcelona, scoring a total of 14 goals and allowing just three.

Their game against Juventus at Giants Stadium attracted a crowd of 79,005.

Vogts plays mind games



THE GUARDIAN, Glasgow

Berti Vogts has told his Scotland players that they can play without fear in the Euro 2004 play-offs given that all the pressure will be on Holland's array of big-name players to perform.

The squad met yesterday ahead of Saturday's first-leg tie against the Dutch at Hampden Park with injury concerns over the Wolverhampton Wanderers midfielder Colin Cameron still disrupting Vogts' plans.

Yet, while the Scots will be overwhelming underdogs to reach Portugal, the German was in upbeat mood and insisted that his opposite number Dick Advocaat, the former Rangers manager, has more cause for concern.

"The pressure is on the Dutch, not

us," said Vogts, who returned from Ewood Park on Monday encouraged by the displays of four of his players on show during Blackburn Rovers' 2-1 victory over Everton.

"That's a fact and I'm not just resorting to mind games with Dick. It is a sensation that Holland have not qualified automatically for the finals

given the world-class players they have in their squad.

"Normally you'd expect a team boasting that much quality to walk qualification. They have very good players, but a great team? These days the team function is important in international football and that's our chance -- we have a great team spirit."

"This is a huge challenge for my team and we'll need a good result at Hampden Park on Saturday - whether that's 0-0, 1-0, or anything but a defeat -- but we can win this."

Everyone knows the problems besetting Scottish football when I came here, but I'm building up a new team and we are making progress. My target was a play-off place and we've achieved that. Now we'll see what else we can do."

Cameron's absence would come as a major blow to Vogts, with the coach awaiting news last night from a specialist in Edinburgh who was

SEE PAGE 14 COL 8



BERTI VOGTS

Adam, Ricky go on rampage

Cricket

AFP, Bangalore

Adam Gilchrist and skipper Ricky Ponting smashed explosive centuries to help Australia post an imposing 347-2 from 50 overs against India in the TVS Cup triangular one-day cricket series match here on Wednesday.

Ponting hit a 103-ball 108 not out and Gilchrist 111 off 104 balls as Australia put the Indian attack to the sword after electing to bat on a good pitch in the day-night game.

Wicketkeeper-batsman Gilchrist hit one six and 14 fours in his ninth century and the Australian captain seven sixes in his 15th hundred.

Damien Martyn also joined the run-feast, hammering an unbeaten 61

off 50 deliveries in a 149-run stand for the unfinished third wicket with his captain.

Gilchrist put on 119 with Matthew Hayden (44), the pair's ninth century-plus stand for the opening wicket and the fourth against India.

World champions Australia have already qualified for the final with four wins from five matches, followed by India (1/4) and New Zealand (1/5).

The fireworks began immediately after Ponting had won the toss as Gilchrist and Hayden plundered 15 runs in the opening over of the innings by left-arm seamer Ashish Nehra.

Nehra, playing his first match since the World Cup final against the same opponents in South Africa in March, failed to find his rhythm as

SEE PAGE 14 COL 6



PHOTO: AFP

IN FULL BLOOM: Australia opener Adam Gilchrist celebrates his century against India in their TVS Cup day-night match at Bangalore yesterday.