WC WARM-UP AT BAKU

Ukraine sans Shevchenko

Ukraine are without their top player Andriy Shevchenko for the World Cup warm-up against Azerbaijan in Baku on Tuesday.

The AC Milan striker was allowed to miss the match which coach Oleg Blokhin hopes will help him with decisions concerning his squad for the World Cup in

"I am just testing the players. I want to see them in a friendly match as we have not had everyone together for some time," Blokhin said in an interview on Dynamo Kiev's official website.

Ukraine meet Spain, Tunisia and Saudi Arabia in Group H at the World Cup which starts on June.

Local media said Blokhin believed Shevchenko's abilities were beyond question and he was not strictly required in Baku. Shevchenko was due to take part in a publicity event in Kiev organised by a mobile phone company sponsoring the team.

Ukraine are also without two key players, goalkeeper Oleksander Shovkovsky and midfielder Anatoly Tymoshchuyk, who are both

Players Blokhin will be taking particular notice of are goalkeeper Bogdan Shust of Shakhtar Donetsk, midfielders Sergei Serebrynanikov of Charleroi and Maxim Kalinichenko of Spartak Moscow and defender Oleksander Kucher of Kharkiv Metallist, Ukrainian media said.

Blokhin was concerned, however, that the poor state of the Baku pitch might hinder his players.

"This is no pitch," he said. "It's nothing more than a vegetable

Ashraful keeps

Chittagong Divisional Stadium on

BANGLADESH: First innings Omar c Samaraweera b Malinga Iqbal b Bandara Basharlbwb Bandara Ashraful c Tharanga b Muralitharan Mashud Ibw b Muralitharan Kapali c Tharanga b Muralitharan Rafique b Malinga Shahadat not out Rasel b Malinga Enamul not out

Extras: (b-11, lb-4, w-3, nb-15) 33 Total: (For 9 wkts in 90 overs) 315 Fall of wickets: 1-4, 2-76, 3-81, 4-145, 5-210, 6-248, 7-293, 8-308, 9-

314				
Bowler	0	M	R	W
Malinga	16	3	55	3
Maharoof	11	3	37	1
Fernando	17	4	50	0
Muralitharan	31	8	85	3
Bandara	13	0	61	2
Dilshan	2	0	12	0
SRI LANKA:	Jay	awa	rde	ne,
Sangakkara, Th	aran	ga, '	Vand	ort,
Dilshan, Samar	awee	ra, l	Band	ara,

Muralitharan, Maharoof, Fernando, Malinga. Toss: Bangladesh.

Umpires: Asad Rauf and Steve

Perez parts with Real class players, such as Luis Figo, Zinedine Zidane, Ronaldo and Football David Beckham and helped make

club in the world. Florentino Perez resigned as Real The policy also acted as the Madrid president on Monday, a day springboard which allowed Real to after his side lost 2-1 to struggling become a global leader in the marketing stakes and overtake Manchester United as the richest cessive season without a major football club in the world. trophy.
"I decided to call an urgent

Real the most glamorous football

On the sporting side Perez met with early success, with the club winning the Champions League in



FLORENTINO PEREZ

2002 and the league title in 2001 and 2003.

But the team's fortunes suffered a decisive downturn after Perez decided to discard Vicente del Bosque as coach the day after they won the league title and shortly after England captain David Beckham was signed.

Real have got through five coaches since then, but have not managed to win any major silver-

If they fail to win anything this season it will be the first time in 52 years that they have gone three

consecutive seasons without winning a significant trophy.

Real were knocked out of the King's Cup by Real Zaragoza earlier this month after suffering a humiliating 6-1 defeat in the first leg and have an uphill task to make the quarter-finals of the Champions League after losing 1-0 at home to

Sunday's league defeat at Mallorca left them 10 points behind arch-rivals Barcelona with 13 games left to play.

Perez made it clear that his decision to quit was not only down to poor results, but also due to the attitude of the players and the rifts that were emerging in the squad.

"I think we have played some spectacular football in these years, but maybe some of the players may have begun to get confused and I may have contributed to that confusion.

"The club needs a profound renewal and I think that someone else will be a more appropriate figure to oversee that process.

Perez said he was in agreement with defender Sergio Ramos's comments about the lack of team spirit at the club after the 19-yearold complained about his team against Mallorca.

"Sergio Ramos was right in what he said and I would like to see our players celebrate goals in the same way that Mallorca celebrated their goals," said Perez.

mates' lukewarm celebration when he scored the opening goal

Ramos's remarks came less than

a week after Real Madrid captain Raul publicly reprimanded Brazilian striker Ronaldo for his criticisms of the club's fans on the eve of their Champions League

Spanish fed soft on racism announcement over the public are here to work and if things carry

Football

REUTERS, Madrid

of Real Madrid.

my mind to leave.

next season.

overinhis place.

victory in July 2004.

Real Mallorca and with his club

facing the prospect of a third suc-

board meeting today because I

believe that the club needs a

magnate said that director

Fernando Martin, a leading prop-

erty speculator, had been the unan-

imous choice of the board to take

Perez was elected president by

club members in 2000 and

returned once again in a landslide

He was responsible for ridding

the club of its massive 270 million

selling it's city-centre training

ground for a reported 480 million

euros soon after he came to power.

bered for his "Galacticos" policy

which brought in a string of world-

However he will be best remem-

euros (\$319.8 million) of debt by

Racism again reared its ugly head in Spanish football as Barcelona's Samuel Eto'o suffered sustained abuse at Real Zaragoza.

The three-time African Footballer of the Year and the Spanish first division's leading scorer decided that he had had enough and tried to leave the field 14 minutes before the end. Eto'o was persuaded to continue

by his team mates, principally Ronaldinho, and Real Zaragoza's Ewerthon, who are both black Brazilians, but it left a nasty taste despite Barca's 2-0 win which kept them on top of the Spanish first

"It was a shame. Samuel is a human being and he felt bad on the pitch, but I was pleased with the attitude of his team mates who told him to continue," said Barcelona coach Frank Rijkaard Saturday.

"He proved he was able to overcome the circumstances and he made a valuable contribution to our victory. It's sad that things like this happen as it is thanks to players like Samuel that the fans come to the stadium to be entertained.

"I would also like to say that the referee behaved very well," added Rijkaard, paving tribute to referee Victor Esquinas Torres.

Esquinas Torres stopped the game in the second half, before Eto'o made his protest, to ask for an

address system to call a halt to the

"Every time he touched the ball there were the chants," confirmed BarcelonagoalkeeperVictorValdes. Players from both sides were quick to condemn the abuse, and

support Eto'o. "It's perfectly normal that he was angry with a situation like that. These sort of things are very offensive, had he actually left the field then we would have followed him," said Barcelona's Mexican international Rafa Marquez.

"It's lamentable that these things happen in football and it's not the first time that this happens on this "Samuel said he didn't want to

continue but we wanted to convince him that he should not let them (theracists) get to him," added Barcelona club captain Carles

"It was a bit of moral justice that got the goals," said Puyol, reflecting on the fact that both of Barca's goals came in the last 10 minutes.

Home players were equally incensed at the behaviour of their own supporters.

"I'm black too. I'm a Zaragoza player and totally opposed to the fans who did this. I've been abused too at other grounds in Spain but we need to rise above this," said Zaragoza striker Ewerthon.

The Spanish federation have to start taking proper measures and we as black players also have to act. We

on like this it will be impossible," It is not the first time that Eto'o

has been the butt of racist behaviour by Zaragoza fans, although he has also been abused at a number of other Spanish first division grounds and the problem is far from isolated.

Zaragoza were fined a paltry 600 euros by the Spanish football federation last season after a section of their fans directed similar monkey noises and grunts at Eto'o.

Racist behaviour by Spanish crowds has been a problem for many years but it came under the spotlight when the England national team visited Real Madrid's Santiago Bernabeu stadium in November 2004 for a friendly match against Spain.

England's black players, including Chelsea's Shaun Wright-Phillips and Arsenal's Ashley Cole, were the targets of racists which television pictures showed covered all age soon after everything happened, we groups and backgrounds, not just the stereotypical young hooligan

Barcelona football club hosted a UEFA anti-racism conference earlier this month but Spanish football federation president Angel Maria Villar didn't do much to create an impression that his organisation was taking racism

"Why blow it all up, why make a mountain out of a molehill?" said Villar, leaving delegates in stunned silence and drawing condemnation around the world for his compla-

Ruud wants his place back

Ruud van Nistelrooy has demanded a recall to the Manchester United starting lineup but attempted to play down reports of a bust-up with Sir Alex

The Dutch striker looked miserable after being left out of United's 4-0 League Cup final win over Wigan on Sunday and reports have claimed his relationship with Ferguson is at breaking point.

Van Nistelrooy however has insisted that he accepted the rationale behind the manager's decision to pick Louis Saha for the final given the French striker's five goals earlier in the competition.

"The manager told me before the game that I wasn't playing," said van Nistelrooy, who is on international duty with The Netherlands this week

"I was very disappointed but I could understand why he wanted to play Louis because he has been playing very well in the competition this season."

Australian duo

FROM PAGE 12 pretty well, so I'm very optimistic I will play a part in the game, hopefully sooner rather than later.

Vaughan said he would not try to rush his comeback.

"If it is possible in three weeks I can come back and play the one-day games I will do that, but I certainly won't do that if there's any chance I could end up like I did today (Tuesday)," he added.

England enter the first Test starting on Wednesday without fast bowler Simon Jones, who pulled out with a left knee injury suffered in the nets on Monday, while Marcus Trescothick has already returned home for personal reasons.

Vaughan was confident allrounder Andrew Flintoff would do well captaining the side for the first

"Andrew is the right choice," he said. "It's going to be difficult because he's got an inexperienced team to take out with him but I'm sure he'll go out and give it his best shot as he does when he's a player."

First lest

FROM PAGE 12

I think the captaincy will bring the best out of him (Flintoff). What he has achieved in the past couple of years is really exceptional. I wish him well.'

India will bank on their spin duo of Anil Kumble and Harbhajan Singh to seize an early initiative in the three-Test series. "We have two proven match-

winners in Kumble and Harbhajan

and I think it will be a challenge for oung England players. But I do not believe England are weak against spin," said Dravid. India lost their last Test here on a bouncy pitch against Australia in

2004, but Dravid said the track "The wicket had grass on it

when we played here two years ago, but it may help spinners early this time," said Dravid.

TEAMS

INDIA (from): Rahul Dravid (captain), Virender Sehwag, Wasim Jaffer, Sachin Tendulkar, Venkatsai Laxman, Suresh Raina, Mohammad Kaif, Mahendra Dhoni, Irfan Pathan, Anil Kumble, Harbhajan Singh, Rudra Pratap Singh, Piyush Chawla, Vikram Singh, Sri Sreesanth.

ENGLAND (from): Andrew Flintoff (captain), Andrew Strauss, Alastair Cook, Ian Bell, Paul Collingwood, Kevin Pietersen, Geraint Iones, Ian Blackwell, Shaun Udal, Steve Harmison, Matthew Hoggard, Monty Panesar, Liam Plunkett, Matt Prior, Owais Shah, James Anderson. Umpires: Ian Howell and Aleem Dar.

Bangladesh

watch. He can also play as a forward," added the Hong Kong Bangladesh skipper Joy said that they do not want to commit the

same mistakes they had done in Uzbekistan.

match was a great experience. I hope we use that to beat Hong Kong for the first time because we have been gradually improving. We need to be mentally strong to overcome the challenge. The coach has been repeatedly saying this to us,"

told that they would miss Cruciani at the bench but he will fill in the

Meanwhile, the gallery tickets would cost Tk 20 each and only



Brazilian star players Ronaldo (L) and Adriano show their Jersey at a press briefing in Moscow yesterday on the eve of their friendly match against Russia.

Italy, Germany's pre-test



AFP, Florence

European superpowers Italy and Germany square up here Wednesday in an eagerly-anticipated friendly that will help gauge their World Cup

Both countries are among the favourites in Germany this summer given their rich international pedigree, with three World Cup wins apiece and four European championship triumphs between them.

Italy coach Marcello Lippi is relishing the opportunity to pit his wits against the tournament hosts.

"They are a great team with a wonderful history, and as hosts of the World Cup they are very ambitious," "For usit's one of the last real tests

that we hope will build our confi-Lippi said he hoped the Italy fans would get behind his team at the

Artemio Franchi stadium, home of

the people are passionate about football and a lot will depend on their support."

Germany coach Jurgen Klinsmann is playing down his side's chances of victory against the

"Italy have quality in every position, and Lippi's squad is more mature and more experienced than ours," said the 41-year-old, who took

control of Germany in July 2004. "They have a team full of champions while we are a young side looking for its identity, one that plays aggressive, attacking football."

Klinsmann expressed his sadness over the injury to Italy's talismanic number 10 Francesco Totti, whose chances of featuring in Germany are hanging in the balance after he broke abone in his left leg.

"I'm sad to see him injured, he's an exceptional player," he said.

"However, Alessandro Del Piero can replace him or Lippi can change before we fly out to Germany, one his system. He has players who can

The last time Germany saw off one of the game's so-called football heavyweights was back in October 2000, when they beat England 1-0 in a 2002 World Cup qualifier and Klinsmann is desperate to put that

'We want to put an end to our negative run against big name opposition," he said

Klinsmann knows what it takes to unlock an Italian defence having played for Inter Milan from 1989 to

He scored 36 goals in 103 years appearances and helped Inter win the UEFA Cupin 1991. Germany's first-choice goal-

keeper Oliver Kahn has been ruled out due to a thigh strain, so Arsenal's Jens Lehmann will deputise. Stuttgart keeper Timo Hildebrand will act as Lehmann's understudy. With Italy's left-sided defender

Fiorentina defender Manuel Pasqual could make his first appearance for the Azzurri in front of his home Wednesday's match revives

Gianluca Zambrotta unavailable,

memories of the classic 1982 World Cup final in Spain which Italy won 3-The most memorable image of

the tournament was Marco Tardelli's wild celebrations -- wild eyes and pumping fists -- after scoring Italy's

Ballack denies Chelsea deal

Football

Serie Aside Fiorentina.

Germany captain Michael Ballack refuted a British newspaper report on Tuesday that he has signed a four-year deal worth 25 million Bayer Leverkusen reach the 2002 pounds (43 million dollars) to join Chelseanextseason

The Bayern Munich midfielder, in Florence for Germany's World Cup warm-up against Italy on Wednesday, issued a statement through German FA spokesman Harald Stenger saying: "I have not signed anything and I was also not

Earlier on Tuesday Ballack's agent Michael Becker had also denied the claim that the player had signed a deal that would make him the world's highest-paid player. Britain's Daily Mail reported that

Ballack, who is out of contract after

four years with Bayern Munich at the end of the season, had agreed to move to the big-spending London club on a weekly wage of 121,000 pounds (210,500 dollars). "This is all starting to get boring

and tiring," Becker told Germany's Spiegel Online: "I can only say that

38 Toper

40 Craft

43 Sets up

shelter

47 Writes in

cipher

50 Sicilian

52 Way out

53 Yuletide

DOWN

1 Singer

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Solution time: 21 mins.

3 Frisbee.

refrain

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lles, e.g. 55 Frost

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CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

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eagle

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17 Fuel

22 "CSI"

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cartel ..

19 ... and its

product

evidence

23 Leading

lady?

24 Stannum

from 38-

Across?

8 More

logo

29 Take

town

36 Brit's

out

42 Derma-

tology

43 Harrow's

45 Decorous

46 Appease

48 Sch.

subject

6 Sea

Michael has not signed anywhere." In Munich, Bayern officials declined to comment. Chelsea's policy is not to discuss

any potential transfers until a contractis signed. The Daily Mail said that Ballack, who joined Bayern after helping



MICHAEL BALLACK

Champions League final against Real Madrid, met Chelsea officials, including manager Jose Mourinho,

twice last month in London. Although Mourinho generally steers away from signing superstar

players, the lure of Ballack, one of the most complete midfielders in the game, could persuade him to bend that policy.

Earlier this season Ballack had an offer from Bayern for a four-year contract worth a reported total of 36 million euros (43 million dollars). It would have been the most lucrative deal in Bundesliga history.

The club withdrew the offer in November after Ballack failed to meet their deadline

Bayern still want to persuade the 29-year-old to sign a new deal but have said on different terms to the previous offer they tore up in anger over his failure to make up his mind. They are aware they will receive

nothing for him if he moves on a Bosman free transfer once his contract expires in July. Ballack, Germany's Player of the

Year in 2005, has long hinted he would like to spend the next segment of his career abroad with a team capable of winning the Champions League. Clubs who have reportedly have

been in the running for his services have included Real Madrid, Barcelona, Manchester United, AC Milan, Inter Milan and Juventus.

The very first Wimbledon Championship was held in 1877 and was watched by some



Zinedine Zidane (French soccer superstar)

"The World Cup is not an important objective, it's the greatest objective. We'll go to Germany to win the World Cup.

Perez departure saddens Becks

AFP, Madrid

Real Madrid president Florentino Perez's surprise resignation was sad said England captain David

Beckham on Tuesday. Beckham, who was speaking ahead of England's friendly with Uruguay, did pledge his future to the meringues' but paid hommage to Perez, who was responsible for bringing players like himself Zinedine Zidane, Luis

Figo and Ronaldo to the club. "No not at all," Beckham said in response to a question about if it would affect his future at

Madrid. "It was a surprise, I only heard late last night. "I would like to thank

Florentino for having given me

the chance to play for such a great "He's very intelligent. I have only good memories. He has to be congratulated on bringing such

great players to the club.

"Obviously I don't know what is going to happen. 'However the club has already said they want me to stay. I am happy there and would like to stay there," added Beckham, who has had an up and down career with Madrid since he left

Manchester United. Perez resigned after an extraordinary meeting of the board on Monday which confirmed Perez would go and that Fernando Martin, a club vicepresident, would take over the hot seat.

Advocaat feels good

GERMANY 2006

South Korea's Dutch coach Dick Advocaat said Friday he had a "very good feeling" 100 days before the World Cup kicks off in Germany on

The South Korean World Cup

squad have just returned from a

gruelling five-week tour that has included nine games in Asia, the Middle East and the United States. He said the trip was a risky venture that included more games than any coach would reasonably ask players to undergo in such a short

was necessary and paid off hand-"To be honest we have a very good feeling about the last five to six weeks. Travelling with the team, playing with the team and spending every day with each other," he said.

Advocaat told a press conference

time. But with time running out

ahead of Germany, he said the risk

that he had yet to settle on a final South Korean squad for the World He took a 32-strong squad on the five-week tour which resulted in five

wins, three defeats and one draw. But he said that no player was guaranteed a place in Germany. "Everything is still open," he said.

The coaching staff will be monitoring the domestic league and foreign-based players prior to the team's departure for Europe in mid-

May, he said. "If the form is not there it will be very dangerous for them," he added. South Korea play their final friendly international here on Wednesday against fellow qualifiers Angola.

The South Koreans open their

World Cup Group Gaccount against

African debutantes Togo in

Frankfurt on June 13. The group also

includes 1998 champions France and Switzerland. Advocaat said that Angola and Togo were similar sides and the friendly on Wednesday would be a useful exercise. "It will give us an idea of what we

can expect in the first game in June,"

said Advocaat.

The former two-times Dutch national coach was drafted in to head South Korea's World Cup campaign only five months ago. In recent months the squad have made significant progress, he said. And Lee Young-Pyo, South

Korea's defender who plays for

Tottenham in the Premiership and

was unavailable for the marathon

tour, had noticed the difference. Lee

is now back with the squad and

training for the Angola game. "Young-Pyo, in training yesterday, said he could see the difference with the players from November and now. And that is the way the staffisfeelingtoo," said Advocaat.

FROM PAGE 12

naturalised Hong Kong citizen a month ago, would be our player to

"We were nervous but the

Manager Sayeed Hassan Kanan

"As an ex-national and a coach, I am aware of the duties. It is tough but we have to cope with it. I did it in Pakistan without trouble but in Uzbekistan, communication with the coach in the gallery was a problem. I think winning this match is very important ahead of the AFC Challenge Cup because that is a greater challenge for us than the SAFF competitions," said Kanan.

Gates 15 and 17 would be open for the spectators due to the ongoing renovation work at the venue.

26 History chapter 27 "Dream Team" 28 Clerical error? a shot symptom 31 Mel of Coopers-34 Starry 35 Optimistic raincoat 37 It gels the lead 39 Begin-CRYPTOOUIP 40 Existed DYTT YQHCZBYNQL XCTO BN 25 Remark 41 Aware

ZWMC EJ EUHNM UTTCMAJ

OMNVTCE? Y AWCLL YB'TT

rival DNMBX 44 Winter Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF A PERSON SELLS FLOWERS OUTSIDE ON THE CORNER, SHOULD skirt. maybe WE CALL HER A STREET PETALLER?

> Today's Cryptoquip Clue: T equals L The Cryptoquip is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for

another. If you think that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.