

Indian elected USSF president

AFP, Nevada

Sunil Gulati, a native of India who teaches economics at Columbia University and long-time US Soccer executive, was elected president of the US Soccer Federation here on Saturday.

Gulati, a US Soccer vice president who ran unopposed, replaced Robert Coniguglia, who served eight years in the post. Gulati already serves on several committees for world football governing body FIFA.

The switch at the top comes three months before the US team plays its opening World Cup match against the Czech Republic on June 12.

Gulati, a former deputy commissioner of Major League Soccer, announced plans for diversity and international relations programs.

Temperament due to parents: Dravid

PTI, London

Indian skipper captain Rahul Dravid will be the sixth Indian to play 100 Tests in the third match of the series against England in Mumbai beginning March 18.

"To reach 100 Tests is a huge honour and something I never imagined when I started in my first Test," Dravid said.

The Bangalore batsman, who is also jostling with Ricky Ponting and Jacques Kallis for the highest contemporary average in Tests, all over 57, says he got some of his temperament from his parents.

The focus, tenacity and intelligence that personify his batting may be characteristics handed down from his mother Pushpa, who at the age of 55 did a doctorate PhD in art. The Sunday Telegraph wrote today.

She has now retired but taught architecture at Bangalore University for 30 years. "She's very determined woman so I guess that's something that rubbed off," he said. "I got some of my temperament from my dad as well, who's a relaxed sort of person. He's retired now but he was a food scientist for a company that made jams and juice, that sort of stuff; he worked there for 30 years."

Zia removed from top

SPORTS REPORTER

Grand Master Ziaur Rahman slipped from the top of the table when the defending champion crashed to his old pal International Master Reefat Bin Sattar in the third round of the Mercantile Bank 30th National Chess Championship at the BCF hall-room yesterday.

Zia's previous-round co-leaders FIDE Masters Sheikh Nasir Ahmed and Rezaul Haque shared the top spot with maximum three points after beating Abdul Maleq and Enayet Hossain respectively.

IM Abdullah Al Rakib was at the second place with 2.5 points after beating Delwar Hossain.

In other third round games, GM Niaz Mursheed defeated FM Mehdi Hassan Parag, IM Enamul Hossain Rajib beat Hassan Imam and Abu Sufian Shakil beat Syed Mahfuzur Rahman.



Real Madrid striker Ronaldo (R) being tripped inside the penalty box by Valencia goalkeeper Santiago Caizares during their Primera Liga clash at Mestalla Stadium in Valencia on Saturday.

PRIMERA LIGA

Real earn tame draw

Football

REUTERS, Madrid

Real Madrid had to settle for a 0-0 draw at Valencia in the Primera Liga on Saturday after substitute Ronaldo spurned a golden opportunity to give his side victory when he missed a last-minute penalty.

The Brazilian, who was dropped to the bench by Real coach Juan Ramon Lopez Caro, earned the spot-kick after he was fouled by Santiago Canizares but the Valencia goalkeeper atoned for his error when he saved Ronaldo's low shot.

"Things aren't going well at the moment but I can only get out of this situation with enthusiasm and hard work," the striker told reporters after the game.

The draw played into the hands of leaders Barcelona, who have an opportunity to extend their nine-point lead at the top when they travel to fourth-placed Osasuna on Sunday.

Barca top the table on 61 points, Valencia and Real have 52 and Osasuna are six further back with 46.

Earlier, Celta Vigo missed their

chance to move into the Champions League places when they lost 2-0 at 10-man Espanyol.

The defeat meant the Galicians, who had won four of their last five games, remain fifth a point behind Osasuna.

Real Sociedad eased their relegation worries by taking their first points in five games with a 1-0 win at Deportivo La Coruna, whose last victory at the Riazor was three months ago.

Sociedad are now five points clear of the relegation zone, although their immediate rivals have yet to play this weekend.

Real coach Lopez Caro made the surprise decision to leave Ronaldo on the bench after his failure to find the net as Real slipped out of the Champions League in the first knockout round on Wednesday following a goalless draw at Arsenal.

He also left out forwards Antonio Cassano and Robinho, choosing instead to play Raul and Julio Baptista up front.

But the changes failed to add more spark to the Real attack and scoring chances were scarce in the first half as the sides battled hard in midfield and got plenty of men behind the ball.

The first clear opportunity did not

come until just before the break when Valencia striker David Villa had a goal-bound free kick tipped over the bar by Iker Casillas.

Valencia continued their pressing game in midfield in the second half and although Real had more possession they had problems getting near the opposition area.

Lopez Caro sent Ronaldo on in place of Raul just after the hour, although it was his strike partner Baptista who almost opened the scoring a few minutes later.

The Brazilian looked certain to find the net when he got his head to a Zinedine Zidane cross but Canizares produced a great reflex save to scoop the ball off the line.

Cassano and Robinho added new life to the Real front line when they too were thrown into the mix in the final 15 minutes.

The Italian had a hand in winning the penalty when he exchanged a neat one-two with Ronaldo a minute from time.

The Brazilian was felled by Canizares as he burst towards goal but was then denied his 11th goal of the season when the Valencia keeper went the right way to save his spot kick.

PREMIERSHIP

Rooney double downs Magpies

AFP, Manchester

Wayne Rooney warmed up for this summer's World Cup by scoring both goals as Manchester United strengthened their grip on automatic Champions League qualification by brushing aside Newcastle 2-0 at Old Trafford on Sunday.

Rooney, who is expected to spearhead Sven Eriksson's England attack in Germany, produced two sublime finishes to take his Premiership tally for the season to 12 during a one-sided contest.

It was Manchester United's fourth straight league win as well as one of their easiest.

Newcastle have shown great promise under caretaker manager Glenn Roeder following Graeme Souness's exit last month, but they should have left Manchester on the back of a much more emphatic defeat.

United, thanks to Rooney's exceptional finishing, were 2-0 up inside the first 15 minutes, a suicidal piece of defending by Peter Ramage helping Sir Alex Ferguson's side on the way.

The Newcastle defender was guilty of seriously under-hitting a ninth minute back-pass and instead of finding his keeper Shay Given, the ball ended up at the feet of Rooney who required just one look before finding the net with an inch-perfect lob into the net.

Rooney once again illustrated why he will be one of the players to watch at the World Cup as he found the net with ease after John O'Shea had carved open the Newcastle defence.

The visitors were much better after the interval.

Lee Bowyer, a replacement for Shola Ameobi at the start of the second-half, forced Edwin van der Sar into his only meaningful save of the game in the 56th minute but Newcastle were no match for a rampant Manchester United side which now lies 15 points behind leaders Chelsea.

Spalletti sees strong Roma

INTERNET, undated

Luciano Spalletti insists Roma have not lost their way after the end of their incredible winning streak, although they face a tough test at Ascoli.

"I don't see my team any different in their attitudes and approach to games," assured the Coach. "Clearly we can and must do better."

The Giallorossi set a new all-time Serie A record with 11 straight wins, but the 1-1 draw with Inter and the midweek 1-0 defeat at Middlesbrough showed signs of tiredness.

"The only problem with our performance in England was the result. The lads were disappointed, but reacted the right way in training the next morning. Unfortunately, Doni has this problem with his shoulder, even if I have always counted on Gianluca Curci to do the job in goal."

Simone Perrotta is also not 100 per cent fit, while they must deal with long-term injuries to Francesco Totti, Vincenzo Montella and Shabani Nonda.

Gaibandha cricket

OUR CORRESPONDENT

Munshipara Krija Sangstha defeated Chamok Sporting Club by seven wickets in the Naheed Cotton First Division Cricket League held at Gaibandha Stadium yesterday.

Winning the toss, Chamok batted first and were all out for 117 runs in 38 overs. In reply, Munshipara scored 118 runs for the loss of three wickets in 27.4 overs.

Suva of Munshipara was declared man-of-the-match as he scored an unbeaten 33 and got 3 wickets.

Dhaka fight

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SYLHET: First innings 166 all out in 56.1 overs (Imtiaz 28, Mawla 54 n.o., Ejaz 16, Murtuza 14, Hasibul 20, extras 16, Shafaq 4-60, Mushfiq 2-35, Alamgir 2-35).

KHULNA: 265 and 324 all out in 104 overs (Sadat 24, Aslam 54, Sadik 44, Sahagir 24, Tushar 62, Monirul 39, Sajjadul 27, Salim 26 n.o., extras 12, Hannan 1-32, Salahuddin 2-43, Monir 3-61, Nadif 1-80).

BARISAL: 265 and 0-0 in 1 over.

Smith made

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the pressure off his team but, well, he didn't make 50 in the series. He should have worried about himself. So if he wants to keep making those statements and making a fool of himself like he did in Australia, then that's fine," Warne said.

"I don't have any big statements to make. We'll just go out and keep performing like we have. They've never beaten us - that's just fact. And I hope we can continue that."

SERIE A

Adriano sinks Sampdoria

Football

AFP, Rome

Brazilian striker Adriano ended his 10-match goal drought by scoring the winner for Inter Milan in their narrow 1-0 home victory over Sampdoria on Saturday.

Inter remain in third place in Serie A on 62 points, one behind city rivals AC Milan and 11 adrift of leaders Juventus.

Reigning champions Juventus entertain AC Milan in a potential Scudetto decider at the Delle Alpi Stadium on Sunday night.

Returning from a two-match suspension for slapping Livorno defender Alessandro Grandoni last month, Adriano hit the post before ending his barren spell in the 40th minute.

His powerful header from Luis Figo's cross was tipped on to the underside of the bar by Francesco Antonioli, but the ball came back out to the 24-year-old Brazil international who nodded the loose ball over the line.

It was his first goal since he scored twice in a 3-2 win over Cagliari on January 15.

Adriano, who spurned several chances to add to his tally, spoiled an otherwise satisfying evening by picking up a yellow card for diving in the second half.

Defeat for Sampdoria, their 12th of the season, left them in ninth position.

Inter next face Dutch giants Ajax in the Champions League on Tuesday at the San Siro, where a victory will clinch a quarterfinal place. The first leg of the last 16 tie ended 2-2 after

Inter had trailed 2-0 at half-time. In Saturday's early match, Erjon Bogdani's late headed goal sealed a 1-0 home win for Siena against Treviso.

The Albanian striker struck four minutes from time to lift Siena two places up to 10th and heap further misery on the bottom club.

Enrico Chiesa missed a first-half penalty for the home side while his strike partner Tomas Locatelli hit a post.

Treviso remain anchored to the foot of the table on 15 points, nine adrift of fourth-from-bottom Messina. Three teams will be relegated to Serie B.

Wenger leaves door open for Beckham

Football

AFP, London

Arsenal boss Arsene Wenger revealed Sunday that he would love to entice Real Madrid's England captain David Beckham to join his London outfit.

Wenger said that even 30-year-old Beckham's superstar status would not prove a handicap to his fitting in at the Premiership side.

"The only baggage here is his stardom status. That's not a problem," Wenger was quoted as saying in the News of the World.

"Of course I would take him with all his baggage. I personally believe that Beckham has no big baggage."

Wenger added: "We're not desperate to buy anybody. But if you find an exceptional player who can add a little class where we need it, we'll do it. He could be one of them."

Arsenal's youngsters showed up Real Madrid's ageing super-

stars midweek when the English side dumped the Spanish giants out of the Champions League at Highbury.

And Wenger believes that Beckham could do better to play elsewhere.

"You ask me 'do you rate him as a player?' I say yes. Could he play for Arsenal? Yeah, I think he has the qualities to do it," said Wenger.

"Have I been in for him? I say no. Do I know what his intentions are? I don't know. Only Beckham can create that answer. I cannot speak for him."

Wenger also insisted he would not bring Beckham in a bid to convince Thierry Henry to commit his future to the club.

The 28-year-old Henry has refused to sign a new deal for months as he considers his long-term future.

But Wenger added: "Thierry will make up his mind and when he is ready he will let me know. I don't know if winning the Champions League will be enough."

Riquelme talks up Messi

INTERNET, undated

Juan Roman Riquelme has backed Lionel Messi to become the world's best player, rating the Argentine teenager above Wayne Rooney.

Villarreal playmaker Riquelme and Barcelona starlet Messi are set to team up for Argentina at this summer's World Cup finals in Germany.

Messi has already established himself as a key figure at Barcelona, despite being just 18-years-old, and will be one of the players to watch at the World Cup.

England ace Rooney is also expected to be among the stars of the tournament, but Riquelme is in no doubt who he would rather have in his team.

While Riquelme has praised the attributes of Riquelme, he expects Messi to surpass Ronaldinho as the globe's pre-eminent player.

"I don't think Rooney is as good as Messi," commented Riquelme. "Messi is in excellent form at the moment and playing some great football. He has a different style to most players."

"I like him a lot and I think he is on the way to becoming the best in the world. "Wayne Rooney is a very good youngster, but he is not Lionel Messi."

Bond puts NZ in charge

Cricket

AFP, Auckland

A devastating three-wicket spell by Shane Bond put New Zealand on the brink of an unlikely Test victory here Sunday as the West Indies squandered a 148-run opening partnership.

At the close of play they had been reduced to 246 for eight, still needing a further 45 runs from tailenders and with the new ball available when play resumes Monday.

West Indies openers Chris Gayle and Daren Ganga appeared to have set their side up for the first overseas Test win in more than two years as they played the good balls cautiously and punished anything loose to notch up half-centuries.

New Zealand captain Stephen Fleming dropped Gayle when he was on 58 and Ganga was caught on 42 off a no-ball from Chris Martin.

But the pair saw off the cream of the bowling and cruised to within 131 runs of the 291-run target, forcing Fleming to turn to part-time bowler Nathan Astle.

Astle's first ball was dispatched to the boundary, but with the second he had Gayle caught by Fleming for 82 to start the batting collapse. Bond came back and hit Ramnaresh Sarwan on the helmet, forcing him from the field. He followed immediately by bowling Brian Lara first ball to complete a disastrous welcome to New Zealand for the master batsman.

In the first innings, Bond had Lara caught first ball.

After rain had wiped out the first session of play, the West Indies went to tea on 160 for two and still hoping they could win the Test on the fourth day.

But two hours later and two overs before the scheduled close, they were thankful to be offered the light. Captain Shivnarine Chanderpaul reached 15 before he failed to get a blistering stroke off Daniel Vettori over the outstretched arm of the two-metre-plus Peter Fulton. Ganga played his way to 95 before being deceived by an Astle outswinger and edging to Jamie How in the gully.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at close of the fourth day of the first Test between New Zealand and the West Indies at Eden Park on Sunday:

NEW ZEALAND: First innings 275 (Styris 103 n.o., Astle 51; Smith 3-71, Bradshaw 3-73

WEST INDIES: First innings 257 (Sarwan 62, Bravo 59; Martin 3-80, Vettori 2-7)	EXTRAS: (b-1, lb-3, w-1, nb-5) 10	Total: (For 8 wickets in 94 overs) 246
NEW ZEALAND: Second innings 272 (McCullum 74, How 37; Gayle 4-71, Bradshaw 3-83)	Bowler	O M R W
WEST INDIES: Second innings 82 (Gayle c Fleming b Astle)	Bond	23 5 66 4
95 (Ganga c How b Astle)	Franklin	14 1 46 0
4 (Sarwan c Styris b Bond)	Martin	16 5 39 0
0 (Lara b Bond)	Vettori	31 10 78 2
15 (Chanderpaul c Fulton b Vettori)	Astle	10 4 13 2
17 (Bravo lbw b Bond)	Toss: West Indies	
0 (Smith c Fleming b Bond)	Umpires: Daryl Harper (AUS), Rudi Koertzen (RSA)	
15 (Ramdin c Franklin b Vettori)		
8 (Bradshaw not out)		
0 (Taylor not out)		

Kumble spins Eng

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England then faced resistance from an unexpected quarter as tail-ender Harbhajan chanced his arm to smash seven fours in an entertaining 41-ball knock.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at stumps on the fourth day of the second Test between India and England in Mohali on Sunday:

ENGLAND: First innings 300 (Flintoff 70, Pietersen 64, Jones 52; Kumble 5-76, Patel 3-72)

INDIA: First innings (overnight 149-4)

Jaffer c Flintoff b Panesar	31
Sehwag c Jones b Harmison	11
Dravid b Flintoff	95
Tendulkar c Strauss b Flintoff	4
Yuvraj c Bell b Hoggard	15
Dhoni c Jones b Harmison	16
Pathan c Collingwood b Flintoff	52
Kumble b Plunkett	32
Harbhajan c Jones b Flintoff	36
Chawla c Collingwood b Hoggard	1
Patel not out	11
Extras: (lb-25, nb-8, w-1)	34
Total: (All out in 96.2 overs)	338
Fall of wickets: 1-18, 2-96, 3-103, 4-	

AUS-SA SCOREBOARD

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Fall of wickets: 1-3 (Dippenaar, 1.2 ov), 2-190 (Smith, 22.1 ov), 3-284 (De Villiers, 30.5 ov), 4-299 (Gibbs, 31.5 ov), 5-327 (Kallis, 37.4 ov), 6-355 (Kemp, 42.1 ov), 7-399 (van der Wath, 46.3 ov), 8-423 (Telemachus, 48.2 ov), 9-433 (Hall, 49.3 ov)

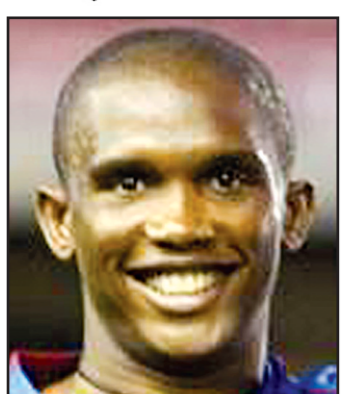
Bowler	O	M	R	W	Econ
Lee	7.5	0	68	1	8.68 (3nb, 1w)
Bracken	10	0	67	5	6.70
Clark	6	0	54	0	9.00
Lewis	10	0	113	0	11.30 (1nb, 1w)
Symonds	9	0	75	2	8.33
Clarke	7	0	49	1	7.00

Result: South Africa won by 1 wicket and series clinched 3-2. **Man-of-the-match:** Herschelle Gibbs and Ricky Ponting. **Man-of-the-series:** Shaun Pollock. **Umpires:** Aleem Dar (PAK), B Jerling (RSA).



Did U Know?

Anil Kumble of India took 5/76 in the first innings of the second Test against England. It took his aggregate to 501 wickets and he became the fifth player to exceed 500 wickets.



Samuel Eto'o

(Barcelona star striker)

"For me, Ronaldinho is like my brother. To talk is very easy and to lie still easier. I have never had a problem with Ronnie because I admire him and I feel a contributor to his triumphs."

Football

AFP, London

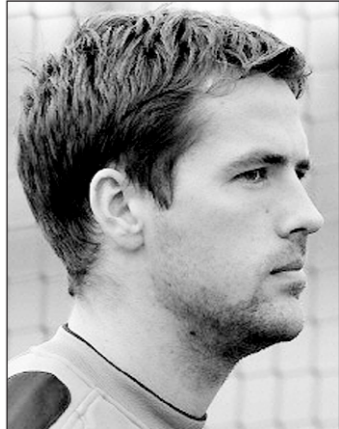
England and former Liverpool striker Michael Owen should be brought back to the club at all costs his good friend and Liverpool playmaker Steven Gerrard said on Sunday.

Liverpool lost out to Newcastle last summer when Owen left Real Madrid for 17 million pounds and they have paid a heavy price for that as all their frontline strikers have failed to score on a regular basis and up to Sunday they had failed to find the net collectively for 45 matches.

Gerrard was forthright in an interview with the Sunday Times in calling for manager Rafael Benitez to make a bid for Owen.

"I have a good enough relationship with Michael to know that he wanted to come here," said Gerrard. "I'm not going to disguise the fact we need a poacher, the problem we

have got is obvious." Liverpool have scored only eight goals in their last 13 matches and their failure to take chances cost them their Champions League title as they were eliminated by



MICHAEL OWEN

Portuguese side Benfica last week.