

UEFA stands against G14

REUTERS, Budapest

Clubs participating in European competitions could soon be asked to declare their support for the sport's administrators or face exclusion.

The proposal was made at the UEFA Congress on Thursday when European soccer's governing body sought new ways to tackle the perceived threat of the G14 group of wealthy clubs.

Earlier, the 52 national associations had unanimously approved a resolution that formalised their opposition to G14, vowing to defend the sport's interests in the face of recent challenges from "a self-appointed group of clubs".

"Football is about fairness, opportunity, excitement and variety," insisted the resolution, which was brought to the Congress by UEFA's Executive Committee.

"It is not a closed shop, where only the richest and most powerful are invited to the table."

The group, comprising 18 European clubs including Real Madrid, Manchester United, Bayern Munich and Juventus, is pitted against UEFA, world governing body FIFA and the national associations in a court case in Charleroi, Belgium.

G14 wants the regulations surrounding the compulsory release of players for international matches changed and clubs to be compensated if players are injured playing for their countries.

It also wants executive representation within UEFA and more cash from the game's governing bodies as well as from the European Championship and World Cup.

ITALIAN CUP Palermo, Inter on advantage

REUTERS, Milan

Palermo came from a goal down to beat AS Roma 2-1 while Inter Milan beat Udinese 1-0 in their Italian Cup semifinal, first-leg matches on Wednesday.

Roma, fielding a first-choice lineup, took the lead after just 48 seconds when midfielder Simone Perrotta slotted home a low cross from Honduran Edgar Alvarez.

Palermo were level within three minutes through Franco Brienza after Roma keeper Gianluca Curci failed to hold a shot and Brienza drove in the loose ball.

The Sicilian club took the lead in the 69th minute when Massimo Mutarelli slid in at the back post to beat Curci with a low shot after Denis Godeas headed down.

Inter also have a single goal advantage to defend in the second leg of their tie after Argentine Santiago Solari gave them a 1-0 win over Udinese.

Solari, one of a number of players given a rare start by coach Roberto Mancini, produced a delicate backheel at the near post to smartly convert a low cross from Nigerian Obafemi Martins.

Udinese keeper Morgan De Sanctis produced a number of good saves in the second half, one diving effort keeping out a strong shot from Dejan Stankovic.

The return legs of the semifinals will be played on April 12.

Dhaka spoil

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notched up a fifty and was the only player to show some substance from Barisal.

Earlier, Chittagong batsman Faisal Hossain, another national discard, scored 55 runs off 76 balls which included nine hits across the ropes.

SCORES IN BRIEF
DHAKA: 285 for 8 in 50 overs (Uttam 41, Mehra 32, Kadir 55, Forhad 27/1).

RAJSHAH: 159 all out in 39.2 overs (Naeem Islam 44, Mosharrif 3/25)
Result: Dhaka beat Rajshahi by 126 runs.

SYLHET: 316 for 6 in 50 overs (Rahman 77, Imtiaz, 76, Mowla 57, Salahuddin 2/45).

KHULNA: 263 for 9 in 50 overs (Sazzadul 106, Ziaur 65, Zakwan 4/32).
Result: Sylhet beat Khulna by 53 runs.

CHITTAGONG: 242 for 9 in 50 overs (Faisal 55, Ghosh 40, Monir 3/35)
BARISAL: 178 all out in 42.5 overs (Sarker 53, Arafat 3/43, Sunny 3/21)
Result: Chittagong won by 64 runs.

Shaun boost

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unlikely to change the team that won in Cape Town, where they opted for a three-man pace attack, with no place for leg-spinner Stuart MacGill.

TEAMS
SOUTH AFRICA (likely team): Graeme Smith (c), AB de Villiers, Herschelle Gibbs, Jacques Kallis, Ashwell Prince, Jacques Rudolph, Mark Boucher, Shaun Pollock, Andrew Hall, Makhaya Ntini, Andre Nel.

AUSTRALIA: Ricky Ponting (c), Justin Langer, Matthew Hayden, Damien Martyn, Michael Hussey, Adam Gilchrist, Andrew Symonds, Shane Warne, Brett Lee, Michael Kasprowicz, Stuart Clark.



German players celebrate Michael Ballack's goal against the US during their friendly match in Dortmund on Wednesday.

Germans regain respect

Football

AFP, Dortmund

World Cup hosts Germany crushed the United States 4-1 here on Wednesday for a much-needed morale boost ahead of this summer's footballing extravaganza.

Germany coach Jurgen Klinsmann was hammered in the press after a 4-1 drubbing by Italy in Florence 21 days ago and was relieved to lift spirits by recording the same scoreline over a weakened United States team.

"We are delighted to get the win tonight. It has not been pleasant getting so much criticism but you have to live with it," a relieved Klinsmann said.

It was the last game before Klinsmann names his 23-man World Cup squad on May 15 and several players stated their case.

"The door is still open as there is always the chance of injuries," said Klinsmann after a replay of the

2002 World Cup quarterfinal between the two teams which Germany won.

Bayern Munich midfielder Bastian Schweinsteiger took just 46 seconds to have an impact after coming on as a second half substitute, with his inswinging free-kick evading everyone and finding the back of the net.

It has been a turbulent time for the 21-year-old Schweinsteiger who was wrongly named in connection with a match-fixing scandal by a Munich newspaper.

Bayern goalkeeper Oliver Kahn also had room for personal celebration, pulling off a brilliant low save from an Eddie Johnson header.

Kahn's save was vital as it stopped the visitors from levelling at 1-1 but thereafter Germany took control scoring three times in six minutes.

Oliver Neuville, an outside bet for a place in Klinsmann's final squad, curled a brilliant volley past Borussia Monchengladbach team-

mate Kasey Keller to make it 2-0 on 73 minutes.

The inexperienced US defence collapsed with Miroslav Klose netting in the 75th minute and captain Michael Ballack was on target four minutes later.

It was a slightly flattering scoreline, although Steve Cherundolo scored late on to put the US on the scoresheet, but that did not bother Klinsmann or the bulk of the 66,000 fans at Dortmund's Westfalen Stadium.

"We played well in the first half and then at the beginning of the second half we made a terrible mistake for their goal," said US coach Bruce Arena.

"In the end we made a lot of mistakes and deserved to lose."

Germany have now won 12 of their 13 matches in Dortmund which is turning into something of a fortress for the national team.

Klinsmann will hope it stays that way with the World Cup group match against Poland being played here.

Capello dreams of England

REUTERS, Milan

Juventus coach Fabio Capello says his dream is to coach England.

"Within three years I will pack in coaching at club level and then I want to realise the dream I have always had inside me -- England," Capello said in an interview with the weekly magazine L'Espresso to be published on Friday.

England are looking for a new coach to replace Swede Sven-Goran Eriksson who leaves after June's World Cup. Capello recently said he intends to stay with Juventus for the coming season.

Italian champions Juventus lead Serie A by 10 points from AC Milan and face Arsenal in the Champions League quarterfinals next week.

Capello, who won league titles with AC Milan and Roma, has recently been linked with a return to Real Madrid.

The coach said that if he succeeded in achieving his dream he would then consider retiring from coaching.

"After that I might get away from it all. I have bought a house on (the island of) Pantelleria for that reason," he said.

Beckhams not for Bayern

AFP, Munich

Bayern Munich manager Felix Magath insists the German champions are not interested in bringing in glamour players, such as Real Madrid ace and England captain David Beckham, as they look to replace Michael Ballack next season.

"We do not need (David) Beckham types," Magath told Bild daily. "It is important that the new player wants to lead the team, that he integrates, and of course is a good footballer."

German international captain Ballack, out of contract in June, is expected to join Chelsea on a free transfer in the summer after Bayern admitted they could not compete financially with the English champions.

Midfielder Ballack is Bayern's joint top-scorer with 12 league goals this season and Magath admits he will be difficult to replace.

"Without him (Ballack) we do not have a fixed point in attack and we will have to find a different approach to score goals," Magath admitted.

"It is possible that we will switch to a 4-3-3 formation instead."

Barcelona's Dutch international Mark van Bommel and Werder Bremen's German international Tim Borowski have emerged as the top two targets to fill the Ballack void.

"I am optimistic that we will find the right players to help us," Magath added.

"But we have to be realistic. We will not be getting Ronaldinho."

Sunny joins

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"(Opener Virender) Sehwag, bad back or no bad back, has been in poor form and lacking in confidence for quite a while and (Sachin) Tendulkar is in the worst form of his career," he wrote about two of India's batting stars. Sehwag could not field during England's second innings because of back spasm and batted at number seven on the last day.

Tendulkar has a shoulder injury that will keep him out of action for at least eight weeks. Boycott was also critical of coach Greg Chappell for going in with five bowlers in the match. "Chappell's theory of using five bowlers looks good on paper because the team has more bowling options. But when India play five bowlers, it looks as though Chappell is trying to make up for a lack of quality with quantity. "Playing five bowlers weakens the batting, so you need much better batting from the top five batsmen, and at the moment, they are not in good form, which makes a good case for the inclusion of (Venkatesai) Laxman.

Former England skipper Nasser Hussain felt the Indian side lacked the "ruthlessness required to reach the top in international cricket" but praised the visiting side for the comeback win. "I put this victory second only to the Ashes triumph of a few months ago," he wrote in a column in The Times of India.

"This win has been possible due to the meticulous planning of coach Duncan Fletcher and the captaincy of Andrew Flintoff, along with exemplary performances by youngsters like (Alastair) Cook, (Owais) Shah, (James) Anderson, (Monty) Panesar, as also older players like Shaun Ural." Hussain was singular in his praise of Flintoff. "He has come of age and is turning into a world-class all-round cricketer," he wrote about Flintoff, who had to take over the reins after regular skipper Michael Vaughan returned home because of a knee injury.

PRIMERA LIGA

Ronaldo saves Real blushes

Football

REUTERS, Madrid

Ronaldo ended his goalscoring drought by grabbing a last-gasp equaliser to earn Real Madrid a dramatic 1-1 draw at Real Zaragoza on Wednesday.

The Brazilian drilled home from 10 metres after proucing on a loose ball in the area a minute into stoppage time to score his first Primera Liga goal in seven games and cancel out a second-half strike from Argentine forward Diego Milito.

It was Real's first goal in four games in all competitions but did not stop them dropping to third place, a point behind Osasuna who had earlier notched up their third win in a row with a 2-0 victory at home to struggling Real Sociedad.

"I scored again and it will allow me to be a little more relaxed in the forthcoming matches," Ronaldo told Canal Plus television.

"We fought to the end. The team is showing its character. We are fighting despite all the bad luck at the moment surrounding us. We must keep it going like this."

Valencia slipped to fourth spot

after being held to a 1-1 draw by regional rivals Villarreal, who could have snatched the win had Santiago Canizares not saved a late penalty from Juan Roman Riquelme.

Osasuna gained the edge in the race for runners-up spot behind Barca after a stunning sixth-minute volley from midfielder Inaki Munoz and a late penalty from Patxi Punal.

Sociedad's defeat saw them slip into the relegation zone two points adrift of Real Betis, Alaves and Athletic Bilbao.

Betis got a vital 1-0 home win over Racing Santander, Bilbao scraped a last-gasp draw against visiting Espanyol and Alaves sneaked a late 1-0 victory at home to high-flying Celta Vigo.

Real Madrid coach Juan Ramon Lopez Caro recalled Ronaldo and David Beckham to the starting lineup as his side went in search of their first goal in three league games.

But it was Zaragoza who enjoyed the better of the first half with strike pair Milito and Ewerthon causing constant problems for the Real back four with their darting runs into the area.

Milito, who scored four goals against Real when Zaragoza crushed them 6-1 in the King's Cup

last month, was denied a goal by a sharp block from Iker Casillas late in the first half but the Argentine made no mistake at the start of the second.

He got between the Real keeper and centre-back Alvaro Mejia to steer into the empty net after Ewerthon had steamed down the right flank and squared the ball into the area.

Beckham almost levelled with a well struck free-kick in the dying minutes and had a hand in Ronaldo's injury-time equaliser.

Cesar failed to gather when he lofted the ball into the area and the Brazilian was on hand to rifle home and earn his side a barely deserved draw.

TOP SIX

Team	P	W	D	L	G/F	G/APts
Barcelona	29	21	4	4	69	26 67
Osasuna	29	17	4	8	41	32 55
Real Madrid	29	16	6	7	51	27 54
Valencia	29	14	11	4	39	24 53
Deportivo Coruna	29	13	7	9	40	33 46
Celta Vigo	29	14	3	12	29	29 45

FA CUP

Chelsea squeak into semis

Football

AFP, London

John Terry kept Chelsea's bid for a league and Cup double on track with the only goal in a 1-0 win over Newcastle in their FA Cup quarterfinal here on Wednesday.

An uninspiring contest was settled by the England centre-back's fourth-minute strike, allowing the runaway Premiership leaders to join West Ham and Liverpool in the last four.

Chelsea had been handed a perfect start when Terry met Damien Duff's low corner with a sweetly struck left foot volley.

Shay Given appeared to have the danger covered but the ball found its way into the net with the

aid of a deflection off Nolberto Solano's unhelpfully outstretched boot.

It should have been a killer blow but Chelsea appeared to lack the cutting edge required to build on it while Newcastle refused to buckle.

It took a fine save from Carlo Cudicini, standing in for Petr Cech, to keep out Lee Bowyer's low drive from the edge of the area and a Solano free-kick drifted inches wide as the champions struggled to assert their authority on the game.

Shola Ameobi also went close for Newcastle, five minutes before the break, but Chelsea were to spurn a much better chance a minute later.

Scott Parker pulled down Asier del Horno and, from the resulting free-kick, Portuguese centreback

Ricardo Carvalho contrived to divert Frank Lampard's inch-perfect delivery wide of the target from barely three yards out.

Given had to produce two good stops in quick succession to deny Didier Drogba and Eidur Gudjohnsen's low cross skidded across the goalmouth with Joe Cole arriving fractionally too late.

Australian defender Craig Moore, who joined Newcastle last summer, finally made his debut for the club seven minutes into the second half as a substitute for Celestine Babayaro.

Moore did a good enough job of shackling Didier Drogba for what remained of the match, but Newcastle's forwards were equally impotent at the other end as the contest drifted to a predictable conclusion.

India in drugs shadow

AFP, Melbourne



team.

Pittman easily retained her 400 metres hurdles title to regain the respect she had lost after a series of public gaffes which culminated in an unpopular decision to pull out of the Queen's Baton relay on the eve of the Games.

"It's the most amazing experience of my life," said the 23-year-old, dubbed 'Jana the drama' by local media.

"It's a bit of a relief. I was very, very nervous going into the race but I wanted it so much it was ridiculous."

"I had a job to do and everything happened the right way but the Commonwealth Games is a stepping stone, the ultimate is the

Olympics." But away from the Melbourne Cricket Ground track and field action, two Indian weightlifters brought new doping shame to their country.

The scandal came on a day when India should have been celebrating three shooting golds, which took their overall total to 19, seeing their women's hockey team make the final and three of their boxers marching one step closer to gold.

Team sources said that Edwin Raju, who finished fourth in the men's 56kg weightlifting category, and Tejinder Singh, who withdrew from the 85kg on Monday, tested positive for performance enhancing drugs just before the Games started.

"The two lifters have been told verbally that they have been caught for drug abuse. They have already left the Games village," the Indian team source told AFP.

India has a chequered history in the sport.

Their weightlifting federation was suspended for one year in 2004 when three female lifters -- Kunjirani Devi, Pratima Kumari and Sanamacha Chanu -- tested positive at the Athens Olympics.

Two men's weightlifters

Krishnan Madasamy and Sateesh Rai tested positive at the Manchester Commonwealth Games in 2002, while Shaileja Pujari, a gold medal hopeful here, failed a doping test before the Games and didn't travel to Melbourne.

Ironically, Devi returned to action here and took gold in the 48kg class.

The latest scandal is particularly embarrassing as New Delhi will host the next Commonwealth Games in 2010.

Furthermore, under international rules, the Indian federation could face another year's ban for having three lifters return positive tests in the space of 12 months.

Meanwhile, in front of 80,000 people at the MCG, the Jamaican sprint juggernaut powered on by Omar Brown winning the men's 200m and Sherone Simpson taking the women's equivalent.

South Africa notched up two more titles with Anika Martin, just 19, winning the women's high jump and Louis van Zyl taking an impressive win in the men's 400m hurdles.

Kahn or Lehmann?



AFP, Dortmund

After rotating his two leading goalkeepers for 20 months Germany manager Jurgen Klinsmann must now make a final decision before naming his 23-man World Cup squad on May 15.

Oliver Kahn and Jens Lehmann have both had a chance to stake a claim for the number one jersey and Klinsmann must decide soon who is first choice for the finals.

"The decision on the number one

goalkeeper is far from easy," Klinsmann said. "We have two world class goalkeepers at the moment."

Kahn, with 84 international caps to his name, has been Germany's number one for some time and expects to be between the posts when the World Cup starts on June 9.

"I've achieved everything that was expected of me these past two years. I've consistently played at a high level. Jurgen knows that he can have confidence in me," said Kahn.

The 36-year-old Kahn has the advantage of playing in three major tournaments - two European championships (2000, 2004) and the 2002 World Cup - while Lehmann has yet to appear in a finals.

However Arsenal custodian

Lehmann, capped 29 times, has been in the form of his life helping his club reach the quarterfinals of the Champions League.

"I think I have a good shout," Lehmann told Kicker magazine. "I would be delighted if he (Klinsmann) revealed the decision now."

"I have turned in some good performances and I am in good form at the moment."

Klinsmann has given no indication of who he will pick, although Kahn is the favourite, but the feeling is whoever misses out will refuse to travel to the finals out of disappointment.

Tigers sweat to see off Kenya

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manace is the best one against them because we are now a Test playing nation that's why a defeat in the match could be immense," said Rafique.

"I am mentally strong which is the key to my success. I always love to compete with my young colleagues to be successful in the international level. I also never felt any pressure on the field and that too helped me a lot," he added.

There was bad news for Bangladesh though in that Alok Kapali is likely to miss the fourth and final one-day game against Kenya to be held on Saturday at the same venue.

Kapali, who made valuable 55 as a super-sub player, twisted his ankle during fielding and had to leave the field.

"We will know his exact condition after his X-ray tomorrow. But he is now looking good and I think he will be okay," said captain Habibur Bashar.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard of the third one-day international between Bangladesh and Kenya at the Fatullah Stadium on Thursday.

BANGLADESH			
Javed c Obuya b Odoyo	1		
Nafees c Obuya b Tikolo	57		
Aftab c Modi b Ongondo	24		
Ashraf c Mishra b Ongondo	3		
Bashar c Mishra b Ongondo	0		
Rafique b Kamande	33		
Kapali b Tikolo	55		
Mashud c Obuya b Odoyo	39		
Mashrafe c and b Tikolo	2		
Razzak not out	0		
Rasel run out	0		
Extras (b-1, lb-5, w-8, nb-3)	17		
Total: (All out in 45.5 overs)	231		
Fall of wickets: 1-7, 2-27, 3-71, 4-77, 5-85, 6-156, 7-207, 8-210, 9-210			
Bowler			
Mashrafee	9.2	2	38 3
Rasel	10	4	32 0
Razzak	10	0	44 1
Rafique	10	0	47 5
Kapali	10	1	3 0