

### Tougher British laws against betting cheats

AFP, London  
Tough new laws to help stamp out betting cheats were unveiled by the British government on Wednesday with the full backing of major sporting organisations ranging from football to horse racing.

Sports Minister Richard Caborn launched the 10-point plan, which has seen a code of practice introduced, at an anti-cheating summit at Twickenham, the home of English rugby union on Wednesday.

Under the new measures convicted betting cheats will for the first time face a prison sentence of up to two years.

The Football Association, Rugby Football Union, England and Wales Cricket Board and the Horserace Regulatory Authority have all agreed to adopt the code, as have the governing bodies of rugby league, greyhound racing, motor sport, snooker and darts.

It is hoped the new code of practice will see unprecedented levels of co-operation between authorities and the betting industry, with the Government's Gambling Act about to come into force in September 2007.

The new Act has tightened up the definitions of cheating.

Caborn said: "Sports betting has changed dramatically in recent years. Advances in technology and increasing popularity mean there are now more ways to place a bet than ever before."

"Internet and phone accounts now enable people to place a bet at any time from any place, even after sporting events have started."

"We can't let a few unscrupulous cheats drag the good name of sport through the mud. That is why I am pleased that from football to snooker, sport now recognises the importance of working with betting operators and the authorities to crack down on betting cheats."

### Spearman strikes first county ton

AFP, London  
Former New Zealand batsman Craig Spearman scored the first century of the new English County Championship season to help Gloucestershire to 262 for four on the opening day of their second division clash with west-country neighbours Somerset at Bristol on Tuesday.

Spearman made 109 on a rain-affected day and was twice reprieved on his way to three figures by England's Marcus Trescothick.

Trescothick had a fraught comeback after returning home early from the tour of India, the Somerset opening batsman twice dropping the New Zealander at slip when the batsman had made 36 and then 92.

Spearman, though, was not complaining after hitting two sixes and 14 fours in his 177-ball innings.

In the day's other Championship match, last season's first division runners-up Hampshire collapsed to 139 for seven on a rain-marred day against Lancashire at Old Trafford.

The home side's 20-year-old seamer Tom Smith led the Lancashire attack with three for 29.

### Valdez wants Dortmund move

AFP, Berlin  
Werder Bremen's Paraguayan international striker Nelson Haedo Valdez said Wednesday that he wants to join Bundesliga rivals Borussia Dortmund at the end of the season.

Bremen want to extend Valdez's contract - due to expire in June 2007 - but the talented forward refuses to pen a new deal saying he needs a new challenge.



The football that will be used for the opening match of the 2006 Football World Cup is displayed during an unveiling ceremony in front of the Brandenburg Gate in Berlin on Tuesday. Hosts Germany play Costa Rica in the match in Munich on June 9.

## BITS AND BOBS

### This is Brazil's World Cup: Ronaldo

AFP, Berlin  
Two-time World Footballer of the Year Ronaldo believes Brazil can live up to their billing as World Cup favourites and defend the trophy at this summer's finals in Germany.

Barcelona midfielder Ronaldo, 26, was part of the Brazil team that lifted the 2002 in Yokohama with a 2-0 win over Germany and predicts a sixth World Cup win for the Selecao four years on.

"I think that it will be Brazil's World Cup," Ronaldo said in an interview with German broadcaster Deutsche Welle.

"I don't think about standing out or being more or less the best. I simply want to do my best so that Brazil will be the world champions." Ronaldo admits the three group opponents Croatia, Japan and Australia will need no firing up.

"It will be hard to advance past the first stage because everyone will be aiming for us," Ronaldo said. "They will all have a bit of extra motivation."

For Brazil the motivation is appealing their demanding 174 million football fans back home but Ronaldo believes the mixture of new players and past winners from 2002 could drive the team on.

"Those who won in 2002 know how good it is to win a World Cup and are motivated," Ronaldo said.

added. "Those who haven't played in a World Cup have heard the whole time how great it is to win one."

### We should reach quarters: Kaiser

AFP, Berlin  
Host nation Germany should make a quarter-final spot the minimum target at this summer's World Cup, German icon Franz Beckenbauer said Wednesday.

Beckenbauer, head of the 2006 World Cup Organising Committee, says the current German team, under the guidance of manager Jurgen Klinsmann, is on a par with the teams of 1994 and 1998 that reached the last eight of the World Cup.

"We are certainly no worse than the 1994 and 1998 teams when we crashed out at the quarter-finals. It should not be worse than that," Beckenbauer said in Sport Bild magazine.

"We can expect to reach the quarter-finals or even the semi-finals with home advantage."

Klinsmann has set the target of lifting the World Cup in the Berlin final on July 9.

At the last World Cup in 2002 Germany reached the final against the odds before losing 2-0 to Brazil.

### Spain arrange Egypt friendly

AFP, Madrid  
Spain have set up a friendly international against African champions Egypt as part of their World Cup build-up, the Spanish Football Federation said Tuesday.

The match will be played in the eastern city of Elche on June 3, a week after another warm-up match against Russia in Albacete and just six days before the World Cup starts in Germany.

Spain's first-round rivals in Group H are Tunisia, Ukraine and Saudi Arabia.

### Points to be deducted for racism

INTERNET, undated  
FIFA want to clamp down on racism at the World Cup finals, with points being deducted from guilty nations.

Rules to be introduced in Germany will mean perpetrators facing the immediate loss of three points.

"The regulations will be applied for this World Cup," FIFA president Sepp Blatter told the Daily Mail. "At the first sign of racism there will be a deduction of three points, then we are finished with problems of discrimination."

## United plan Chelsea spoiler

AFP, London  
Chelsea may need just a point to retain their Premiership title when Manchester United arrive at Stamford Bridge a week on Saturday but that won't stop the second-placed visitors from going all out to erase a bitter recent memory.

Last season United, on the instruction of manager Sir Alex Ferguson, former a guard of honour to applaud the newly-crowned champions on to the Old Trafford pitch.

Being part of someone else's party is not part of what anyone who joins the Red Devils signs up to and the current team are determined to avoid being relegated to a walk-on role when they arrive in west London.

"The feeling in the camp is that they cannot be celebrating after the game against us," said United goalkeeper Edwin van der Sar. "We do not want to be part of that."

"We are playing well, especially away from home and there is a lot of spirit. We are positive about what we are doing and we can use it to give us a good feeling for next season," the Dutchman added.

United's 2-1 win away to Tottenham Hotspur not only kept the title race alive but ensured Ferguson's men stayed six points ahead of old rivals Liverpool in the race for the runners-up spot and automatic entry into the Champions League proper.

But van der Sar admitted it was vital United made a better start to their campaign next season if they are to challenge for the title.

The Reds managed just eight points from seven league games in September and October. By contrast, their victory against Tottenham was their 10th win in 11 matches.

"The key to it is starting better and not dropping as many points at home as we have done," said van der Sar. "This season we have dropped too many."

"We are happy with the result against Tottenham. It was very

important to win, more because of the result Liverpool got against Blackburn than the title. We have put six points between us and Liverpool.

Meanwhile Tottenham's setback only added to the fear that the fourth place, and the Champions League spot that goes with it, which has been theirs for so long would be taken away from them at the last by Arsenal, who they face in what is likely to be a fiery north London derby this Saturday at Highbury.

"They are very strong at home," said Tottenham manager Martin Jol. "It will be very difficult and ideally we would have had a bigger gap."

"Every game between now and the end of the season is going to be a battle. We cannot afford to be found wanting in meeting that challenge head on and nor will we be," the Dutchman insisted.

"Everybody here is up for it. Each player knows that they are not the star; it is not about individuals, it is about the club."

### Real eyeing star trio

REUTERS, Madrid  
Real Madrid's director of football Benito Floro has proposed the club buy Liverpool's Steven Gerrard and Inter Milan's Adriano, and suggested Bernd Schuster as the next Real coach.

Floro, who replaced Arrigo Sacchi in December, said he had presented his proposals to new president Fernando Martin and the board.

"As a priority I recommended the signing of a powerful centre forward like Adriano, and a quality midfielder should Zinedine Zidane leave," Floro told radio station Cadena Ser.

"Gerrard is a player I included on the list and is someone the club have wanted to sign in previous seasons."

Zidane, 33, has hinted he may retire after the World Cup finals in Germany though he has a contract with Real until 2007.

Martin has spoken openly about his desire for a new coach to replace Juan Ramon Lopez Caro at the end of the season and last month listed seven high-profile figures as his preferred targets.

Floro said he had proposed another option, not mentioned by Martin - former Real Madrid and Germany midfielder Schuster, currently the boss of modest neighbours Getafe.

"Schuster's name was on the list because if Lopez Caro does not continue I think the ideal person is someone who knows Spanish football well. Also he tries to play the type of football Real want to see."

### Shearer fears the worst

AFP, London  
Alan Shearer admitted Tuesday he "fears the worst" after a scan on his injured knee had to be delayed.

Shearer, set to retire as a player at the end of the current season, suffered a suspected tear of his medial ligament during Newcastle's 4-1 north-east derby win away to Sunderland at the Stadium of Light on Monday.

So bad is the swelling around Shearer's left knee that a scan originally scheduled for Thursday has been put back 24 hours until Friday, making it increasingly likely that the former England captain will not see out his final campaign as a player.

"I am fearing the worst unfortunately," said Shearer. "I have been injured before plenty of times so I know the scenario and I haven't got a great hope."

"It's a matter of time. We have to wait and see and let nature take its course and hopefully the scan will reveal on Friday the damage is not too bad. "Over the years my glass has always been half full and not half empty."

Whatever else happens, local hero Shearer plans to make one final appearance at Newcastle's St James' Park ground for his end-of-season testimonial match against Celtic.

"I will try hard to do it. Newcastle is my club and always has been. I've had 10 wonderful years here," Shearer said.

"I have not given up hope yet, hopefully I can play a small part in the testimonial. All the tickets are sold and the money is going to charity."

### Amol in semis

SPORTS REPORTER  
Top seed Amal Roy coasted to the semifinals in the men's singles event of the MA Jabbar Memorial Tennis Tournament yesterday.

Ranjan Ram, Dipu Lal, Laxman Lal also booked their places in the last four of the competition.

Japanese Hujio Fusoku defeated Ma Hi Chin to move into the women's semifinals.

Dhaka Club moved to the finals in the team-event.

## Ancelotti still hopeful

AGENCIES, Milan  
AC Milan coach Carlo Ancelotti insisted his team were still capable of reaching the Champions League final, despite their demoralising 1-0 home defeat to Barcelona on Tuesday.

Ludovic Giuly scored a precious away goal for Barca whose semi-final, first leg win makes them firm favourites to progress to the Paris final on May 17.

However, Ancelotti believes the tie is far from over, even though the six-time European champions have an almighty task ahead of them in the second leg at the Camp Nou a week on Wednesday.

"It's a bad result, but it doesn't mean we have no chance of reaching the final - anything could happen," he said.

"Paradoxically, this result allows us to be free to attack, whereas I think Barca will hold back a bit."

"Barcelona are very good at keeping possession, so it was tough to break through, but we created a good number of scoring opportunities and we can do so again at the Camp Nou."

Barcelona's victory leaves them well placed to reach the final, but their Cameroon striker Samuel Eto'o refused to get carried away.

"The important thing was to get the result and now we need to make sure we stay ahead," he said.

Captain Carles Puyol was equally reserved in his judgement.

"I can't see the top of the Eiffel Tower yet," he told reporters.

"I am well aware of the significance of such a win in the San Siro but we haven't won anything yet, and there are still another 90 minutes to go."

Goal scorer Guily said: "Ronaldinho's pass for the goal was fantastic. I am delighted because I hadn't scored for a while and it was a crucial goal for the team and for my confidence."

Milan's Dutch midfielder Clarence Seedorf found defeat difficult to accept.

"We created many chances and deserved to win," he said.

"For almost 60 minutes we had control of the match, but we didn't put away our chances."

Bayern Munich are locked in negotiations to sign Argentine starlet Sergio Aguero from Independiente.

Aguero is rated as the next big thing to emerge from Argentina and has expressed an interest in joining Premiership outfit Liverpool.

Spanish giants Barcelona and Real Madrid are also tracking the teenager, but Bayern are the sole club to make a formal offer for Aguero.

The German champions are aiming to strike a deal for the gifted playmaker, although Independiente are refusing to budge from their €20 million (£13.8 million) asking price.

Independiente accept they are likely to lose the attacking tyro, but are determined to be fully compensated by an eager Bayern.

"It's difficult, it's very difficult to make Aguero stay for more time at Independiente," said the Argentine club's president Julio Compadre.

"We had several meetings with the Germans."

"I have heard many types of amounts of money, but Independiente isn't going to change anything about that."

"They pay what we have asked for Aguero or Aguero stays with us."

Reports suggest that Aguero's family are anxious for an agreement with Bayern to be reached as they are aware they will be financially secure for life, if the forward moves to Europe.

## Steaua invoke God's help

AGENCIES, undated  
Steaua Bucharest's owner travelled to Greece this week to ask God to help his club win the UEFA Cup.

Steaua face Middlesbrough in the cup semi-finals on Thursday and Gigi Becali, a devout Orthodox Christian, paid a two-day visit to monasteries in Greece's Athos Mountains to pray for victory against the English team.

"I went there because God called me and wanted to talk to me before the match against Middlesbrough," Becali told reporters on Wednesday.

"I prayed to God to help Steaua reach the final and then win it."

For the English side, Australian striker Mark Viduka withdrew from the Middlesbrough squad with a thigh strain on Wednesday after picking up an injury in their 2-0 defeat of West Ham on Monday.

Also injured are midfielder Gaizka Mendietta and defender Emanuel Pogatz.

Meanwhile in the other semi-final, Schalke 04 have confirmed that playmaker Lincoln and Germany striker Kevin Kuranyi will

be on the bench for the first leg against Sevilla.

"These are two key players who are usually in our starting lineup," coach Mirko Slomka said on Wednesday. "Kuranyi and Lincoln are not in good form at the moment. We have to try something new."

Schalke have won only three points from their last five Bundesliga matches and suffered back-to-back 1-1 draws against relegation-threatened Duisburg and Cologne.

Lincoln, who has not played well since returning from injury on March 19, was replaced in the 57th minute of Schalke's match against Cologne and declined to shake Slomka's hand.

Kuranyi, who was also withdrawn, was booed by Schalke fans as he left the pitch. The two players declined to talk with reporters after training in Gelsenkirchen on Wednesday.

The poor run has left Schalke six points behind third-placed Werder Bremen with four matches left and probably cost them a chance of qualifying for the Champions League.

### Premier v'ball

SPORTS REPORTER  
Dilkhusha Sporting Club defeated a hapless Fire Service in straight sets in the United Commercial Bank Premier Division Volleyball League at the volleyball stadium yesterday.

Bangladesh Water Development Board and Titus Club also won in straight sets in their respective matches at the same venue. x

### Dravid, Sehwag

FROM PAGE 12  
Dhoni b Naved 59  
Yuvraj c Asif b Naved 24  
Raina run out 6  
Pathan not out 7  
Extras: (lb-2, w-1) 8  
Total: (For 5 wickets in 50 overs) 269  
Fall of wickets: 1-138, 2-228, 3-234, 4-255, 5-269  
Did not bat: Rao, Powar, Sreesanth, Agarkar, Harbhajan

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Asif	10	2	57	1
Naved	10	2	45	2
Ifthikhar	10	1	51	0
Razzaq	5	0	39	0
Afridi	10	0	39	1
Malik	5	0	31	0

PAKISTAN: Inzamam, Farhat, Malik, Younis, Yusuf, Akmal, Afridi, Razzaq, Toss: India.  
Umpires: Rudi Koertzen and Brian Jerling.

## Younis sees Pakistan thru'

Cricket  
AFP, Abu Dhabi  
Musharraf, was the first to be held at the 16,000-capacity Zayed Cricket Stadium which became the second venue after Sharjah to host one-dayers in the United Arab Emirates.

Off-spinner Shoab Malik also played a key role in his team's win, capturing three wickets to restrict India to a small total.

India, fresh from a recent 5-1 triumph against England at home, found runs hard to come by on a slow pitch where stroke-making was difficult.

Malik made the Indian batsmen struggle with his tidy line and length to finish with 3-40, including the wicket of in-form aggressive batsman Mahendra Dhoni.

Middle-order batsman Venugopal Rao top-scored for India with an unbeaten 61, his best in 14 one-day internationals. Even he was not allowed to score freely as he hit just three fours in his 93-ball knock.

Pakistan's fielders backed their bowlers remarkably well, bringing off four run-outs.

India's problems began when skipper Rahul Dravid (20) and Irfan Pathan (26) were caught short of the crease in quick succession. The innings also ended in a pair of run-outs, the victims being Harbhajan Singh and Shanthakumaran Sreesanth.

Rao gave a good account of himself on a difficult track, steadying

the innings with a 64-run stand for the fifth wicket with teenager Suresh Raina (40) after his team had been reduced to 72-4.

Proceeds from Tuesday's match will be donated to the survivors of the massive earthquake that hit Kashmir last October killing more than 73,000 people in Pakistan and 1,300 in India.

SCOREBOARD  
Scoreboard of the first one-day international between India and Pakistan at the Sheikh Zayed Stadium in Abu Dhabi on Tuesday:

INDIA: 197 all out in 50 overs (Rao 61 not out, Raina 40, Pathan 26, Dravid 20; Malik 3-40)  
PAKISTAN: 125 all out in 50 overs (Dhoni 48, Sreesanth 30, Farhat b Agarkar 1, Younis not out 71, Inzamam c Rao b Powar 40, Yusuf c Dhoni b Agarkar 24, Akmal not out 23, Extras: (lb-15, nb-1, w-7) 23, Total: (For 4 wickets in 48.3 overs) 201, Fall of wickets: 1-42, 2-60, 3-146, 4-149)

Bowler O M R W  
Pathan 9 1 46 0  
Sreesanth 9.3 2 34 1  
Agarkar 10 0 33 2  
Powar 10 1 27 1  
Harbhajan 10 1 46 0

Result: Pakistan won by six wickets.  
Man-of-the-match: Younis Khan.  
Toss: India.  
Umpires: Rudi Koertzen and Brian Jerling.

### SA pace duo

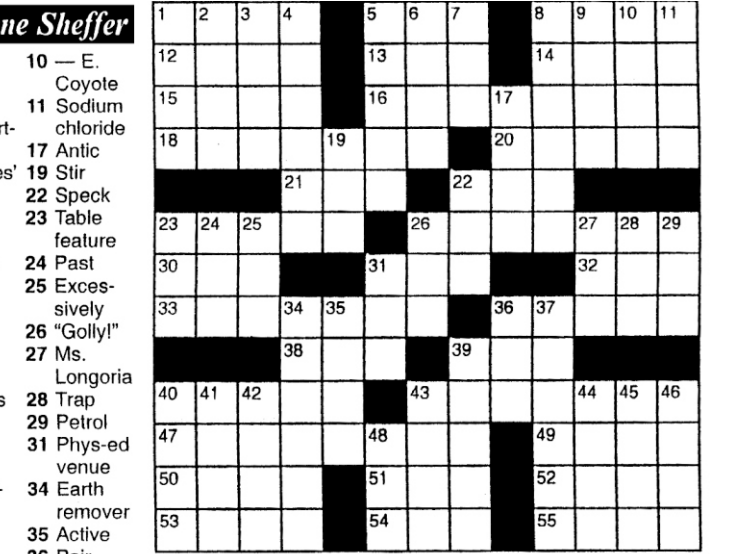
FROM PAGE 12  
NEW ZEALAND: First innings 327  
SOUTH AFRICA: Second innings 299  
NEW ZEALAND: Second innings (overnight 98-7)  
(Marshall c Boucher b Ntini 25, Fulton c Boucher b Ntini 4, Mills c Dippenaar b Ntini 0, Fleming c Kallis b Steyn 6, Styris c Boucher b Steyn 2, Astle c De Villiers b Ntini 2, Oram b Ntini 2, McCullum c Dippenaar b Steyn 33, Vettori c Boucher b Steyn 38, Franklin not out 0, Martin b Steyn 0, Extras: (lb-2, nb-6) 8, Total: (All out in 36 overs) 120, Fall of wickets: 1-5, 2-5, 3-17, 4-23, 5-26, 7-73, 8-119, 9-119)

Bowler O M R W  
Ntini 14 3 51 5  
Steyn 17 4 47 5  
Pollock 5 1 20 0

Result: South Africa won by 128 runs and take 1-0 lead in the 3-Test series.  
Man-of-the-match: Makhaya Ntini.  
Umpires: M Benson and D Harper.  
Second Test: Cape Town, Apr 27-May 1.

### CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS 36 Gearbox, 55 See to 10 — E. Coyote  
1 "American for short 11 Sodium chloride  
"Idol" quaff 17 Antic  
selection 39 Shock and — 2 Buckeyes' home  
5 Energy and — 19 Stir  
8 Cat's 40 Looks lasciviously 22 Speck  
dogs? 3 Forbidden feature  
12 Odin's son 43 Zoologist practice  
13 Historic Jane 4 Deep-seated resentment  
time 47 Vulcanization discoverer  
14 Largest of the seven 49 Familiar happens here  
15 Japanese native 50 A step up the ladder stays here  
16 Benevolence 51 Cambridge 6 Unyielding sch.  
18 Clarinetist 52 Skunk's defense 7 Long March  
Benny 53 Duel leader 37 Fashionable, anc  
20 Smaller map 54 Italian article repaired  
21 U.S. soldiers 8 Hocked 9 Un-  
22 A.E.S. opponent 39 Heart line?  
23 Type of paint 40 Shrek, e.g.  
26 Decent sort of person 41 Rise  
42 Solitary  
43 Profit  
44 Staffer  
45 French city  
46 Pie-crust ingredient  
48 Ostrich's cousin



CRYPTOQUIP  
H X B G H C P H C J U Y J U H C J  
U C F L V F Q G R H I B  
Q U X I B H X I Q U C . H X B G H L P  
F C R B H V I R U Y H B F S S !  
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF A COMPUTER USER HAPPENS TO LOSE AN ELECTRONIC DOCUMENT, I SUPPOSE HE IS DE-FILED.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: U equals O

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.