# The Daily Star

## Mastercard sues FIFA

#### AFP, New York

Mastercard International filed a suit against FIFA in a New York court on Thursday, seeking to block a sponsorship deal between world soccer's governing body and credit card rival Visa.

In court papers Mastercard argued that an agreement for Visa to sponsor the 2010 and 2014 World Cups violated its contractual right of first refusal to continue to be the category-exclusive sponsor of those events.

"This action by FIFA is a blatant and deceitful violation of our right of first refusal," said Mastercard lawyer Noah Hanft.

Mastercard was an exclusive sponsor of the last World Cup in Japan and South Korea and retained that role for the upcoming tournament in Germany.

The lawsuit seeks an injunction to prevent the deal with Visa moving forward.

## Owen back in Magpies squad

#### AFP, London

Michael Owen has been included in Newcastle's squad for Saturday's Premiership match against West Brom after being told by his surgeon that he can finally resume full training, four months after breaking a bone in his foot.

Any role for Owen in Saturday's match will be extremely limited, his inclusion in the squad having come iust hours after caretaker boss Glenn Roeder had said he would not be ready before next weekend.

And even if he gets a few minutes under his belt on Saturday, the 26year-old will still face a race against time to regain full match sharpness in time for England's World Cup campaign

Providing he suffers no further setbacks. Owen will have the opportunity to play up to five matches before England head for Germany. After Saturday, Newcastle have two Premiership matches to play -against Birmingham and Chelsea.

Owen will also hope to be involved in Alan Shearer's testimonial and England's warm-up friendlies against Hungary and Jamaica.

Roeder had said earlier on Friday that Owen had been given a huge boost by the clean bill of health he received from his surgeon.

"When you speak to Michael he is always a positive person. You always get a feeling that nothing worries him. But when I spoke with him this morning, I could hear in his



Steaua Bucharest's Petre Marin (R) and Middlesbrough's Massimo Maccarone vie for a stray ball during the UEFA Cup semifinal clash in Bucharest on Thursday.

# Steaua, Sevilla gain edge

shot after a defensive lapse

save out of Carlos Fernandes.

# 🚱 U E F A C U P REUTERS, London

A terrific strike from midfielder

Nicolae Dica gave Steaua Bucharest a 1-0 win over Middlesbrough while Schalke 04 drew 0-0 at home to Sevilla in UEFA Cup semifinal first-leg ties on Thursday.

Steaua, the 1986 European the return at the Riverside next champions, only had Dica's first-half strike to show for their dominance as keeper Mark Schwarzer kept iniurv-hit Boro in the tie. Steaua coach Cosmin Olaroiu

said: "Before the match I would have been content with a 1-0 win, but now the victory has a bitter taste.'

Australian Schwarzer, who had no chance of saving Dica's wellstruck shot on the turn after 30 minutes, made two fine saves in the second half as Steaua pressed strongly

He tipped over Dorin Goian's vollev from close range and minutes later got down well to smother Dica's

FA CUP

making a first appearance in the last Boro, who went into their first four of a European competition European semifinal with a rewere grateful to keeper Andres Palop who made a series of fine shuffled defence, enjoyed their best spell late in the first half. Nigerian saves.

Schalke's Serbian defender Yakubu Aiyegbeni's downward Mladen Krstajic was sent off for header bounced up and hit the bar and then James Morrison forced a elbowing Jesus Navas 10 minutes from time

PHOTO: AFP

"We can't really be satisfied with Steaua's uncompromising style brought four first-half bookings, the 0-0 result but we've been strong ruling out midfielders Sorin most of the season in away Paraschiv and Banel Nicolita from matches," said Schalke coach Mirko Slomka. "Everything is still wide open for the second leg.

Middlesbrough manager Steve Slomka's counterpart Juande McClaren, whose side play an FA Ramos said the Bundesliga side still Cup semifinal against West Ham had the edge despite the Spaniards United on Sunday, was content to having home advantage for the escape with a single-goal defeat. second leg. "The 1-0 defeat is not a bad "The 0-0 draw was about the

of Ashes win

Australia captain Ricky Ponting is

confident his team is heading in the

right direction to win back the Ashes

**REUTERS**, Sydney

result," he said. "We are even best we could come away with delighted with it, because it could here," he said. "We've got a good chance at home, although I would "At home, it will be another atmosay at this point Schalke has a slight advantage (because of the away Schalke, the 1997 winners, could goal rule) find no way to break down the

AufSchalke Arena Sevilla. like Middlesbrough

## Zidane on celluloid

## AFP, Madrid

SPORT

World Cup winner Zinedine Zidane is to star at Cannes, where he began his stellar career, but this time on celluloid, at the French town's famed film festival, the Spanish giants said Thursday. Zidane will be the star of "Zidane,

a 21st Century portrait," the club said on its official website in announcing that the movie directed by Douglas Gordon and Phil Parreno had been selected for the gala's out-of-competition section.

The club said the film, appropriately enough lasting 90 minutes, would show Zidane "at his most authentic" and feature footage shot on April 24 last year of his showing in league match against Villarreal at the Bernabeu. "We were looking to produce a portrait of a man of the 21st Century

and it turned out Zidane was this man," said Gordon. "He can represent something

important for many football fans and at the same time represents something that goes beyond that."

"Nobody should expect a documentary as it's more a psychological portrait, the reflection of a state of mind."

# Gerrard rubbishes Real rumours

AFP, London

want me."

despite the club having made it clear that the player, who signed a new four-year contract last summer, is not for sale.

# Juve move for Joaquin

from England on home soil later this **INTERNET**, undated PRIMERA LIGA

Football

Athletic Bilbao on Sunday.

**REUTERS**, Madrid

match.

Sevilla game

ment of fit players.

the Sevilla match.

Barca beat the Italians 1-0 at the

San Siro on Tuesday but they have

suffered a string of injuries recently.

Defender Oleguer is the latest to join

the absentee list and Rijkaard is

likely to take a cautious approach to

# **Barca look for Valencia** slip-up

His team enjoy a 11-point lead over Valencia at the top of the table

with only five games left and he knows the title will drop into Barcelona's lap sooner or later. Striker Samuel Eto'o would like

Barcelona will be presented with their first chance to claim the league the issue settled as soon as possible "We all want to win the league as title this weekend if rivals Valencia soon as we can," the Cameroon fail to beat relegation-threatened international said this week. "If we get the chance why shouldn't we As long as Valencia lose or draw

take it? against the Basque side in the early "As for being rested, I feel more match, the Catalans will be able to tired if I don't play. I need to play to secure their second successive feel right." league crown with victory at sixth-

As well as Oleguer, Barca will placed Sevilla in Sunday's late also be without Sweden striker Henrik Larsson and Argentine With bigger European fish to fry, forward Lionel Messi who have Barca coach Frank Rijkaard may decide to rest some players for the thigh injuries.

In view of his shortage of resources up front Rijkaard may The Dutchman's most pressing give Messi's Argentine colleague concern is to ensure his side head Maxi Lopez a run against UEFA Cup into the second leg of their semifinalists Sevilla Champions League semifinal Valencia have edged two points against AC Milan with a full comple-

clear of Real Madrid in the race for the runners-up spot, which quarantees an all-important berth in the Champions League group stage, after winning their last three games. Bilbao, who are just two points above the relegation zone after last week's 1-0 defeat at Atletico Madrid,

#### are in desperate need of a win to stop them dropping out of the top flight for the first time in their history. Fellow strugglers Malaga, who

DHAKA SATURDAY APRIL 22, 2006

are seven points adrift at the bottom of the table, will be trying to cling on to their last hopes of survival when they take on Real Madrid at the Bernabeu

Real have won one and drawn six of their last seven games and will be keen to stave off further criticism with an emphatic victory in front of their home fans.

## FIXTURES

SATURDAY (1500 GMT kick-off unless stated) Villarreal v Real Sociedad (1600), Alaves

v Atletico Madrid (1800), Celta Vigo v Real Zaragoza (2000) SUNDAY Cadiz v Deportivo La Coruna, Espanyol

v Real Betis, Athletic Bilbao v Valencia Racing Santander v Getafe Real Mallorca v Osasuna, Real Madrid v Malaga (1700), Sevilla v Barcelona (1900)

# Milan in hot pursuit

Serie A leaders Juventus can illafford another slip-up when they face Lazio in Serie A on Saturday with rivals AC Milan playing lowly Messina

Juve's lead over Milan was cut to five points with four games remaining after Fabio Capello's side were held to a draw at Cagliari while Milan

won their derby clash with Inter. Less than a month ago the title looked in the bag for Juventus who had a 10 point advantage, but following their exit from the Champions League guarterfinals at the hands of Arsenal, the defending champions have struggled and are without a win from their last six domestic and European games.

For the visit of Dario Rossi's Lazio, Juve will be without Italy

Camoranesi who is suspended and there are injury doubts over three midfielders -- Czech Pavel Nedved. Frenchman Patrick Vieira and ex-Lazio player Giuliano

Giannichedda. Capello is hoping that striker David Trezeguet is fit and is reported to be considering a threepronged attack with Alessandro Del Piero operating behind Zlatan Ibrahimovic and the Frenchman.

Milan will have their minds, partially at least, on next week's Champions League semi-final, return leg away to Barcelona following their 1-0 loss to the Spanish side at the San Siro.

Without striker Filippo Inzaghi, who was bed-ridden with a virus, Milan lacked sharpness in front of goal and Inzaghi could play some

part in the game in Sicily. Ancelotti has no serious iniurv

international winger Mauro problems and will probably adjust his side to rest any players feeling the strain ahead of the trip to

Barcelona. Third-placed Inter Milan are at home to Reggina but the battle for fourth place -- which brings a gualifying round spot for next season's

Champions League -- continues to provide an interesting side-plot. Fiorentina have a point lead over AS Roma and on paper an easier game on Saturday at home to Empoli while Roma host Sampdoria at the Olympic stadium.

# FIXTURES

SATURDAY Ascoli v Cagliari, Fiorentina v Empoli

(1300 GMT kick-off)

Inter Milan v Reggina, Juventus v Lazio, Lecce v Treviso, Livorno v Palermo Messina v AC Milan, Parma v Siena Roma v Sampdoria, Udinese v Chievo

Football

Gerrard's statement will come as

#### Steven Gerrard has dismissed suggestions he could be tempted away from Liverpool by a big-money offer from Real Madrid this summer. The Spanish giants have made

transfer target but Gerrard, who came close to joining Chelsea in the last two close seasons, has ruled out joining David Beckham in Spain. "I'm settled and happy at Liverpool and I am not going to go

through another summer like the last two," Gerrard told local newspaper, the Liverpool Echo, on Friday.

day someone tells me they don't

Aus optimistic

**REUTERS**, Milan

"I will be staying here until the

a huge relief for Liverpool fans,

SERIE A

the England midfielder their top

voice a little extra bounce following the meeting with his consultant," Roeder said.

"He's obviously not going to be involved on Saturday but he feels there is a genuine chance of playing some part in the Birmingham game. "If that is too soon, then you can

be sure with an extra seven days under his belt he would make the final game of the season."

Owen, 26, has not played this year after suffering a fracture of a metatarsal bone in a match at Tottenham on December 31.

### SL ready FROM PAGE 12

ball will move around."

Jayawardene said the return of left-arm paceman Chaminda Vaas, who missed the recent series against Pakistan because of injury, would boost the side. Sri Lanka have also recalled another left-arm fast bowler Nuwan Zoysa.

"Vaas is a guy who is invaluable in England," he said. "He will be a great asset."

## Aussies value

FROM PAGE 12 said.

"We expect the whole country will be gripped by Ashes fever when the Ashes series begins later this year."

An in-form Australia will attempt to avenge its first Ashes loss in 16 years this southern hemisphere summer when England travel Down Under for the five-Test series

### WC grounds FROM PAGE 12

host venue is working not only on the completion of their stadia but on all the other infrastructural elements required to support the hosting of the tournament.

"We have just over 300 days to go, including weekends and public holidays, and everyone concerned is working assiduously to ensure that no time is lost.

Dehring also said that a revised plan had now been submitted for Sabina Park, which would ensure it was ready on time. Warner Park in St Kitts is almost finished, and work on the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium in Antigua is ahead of schedule. Guyana's Providence Stadium is also set to be ready ahead of the organisers' deadline.

Football **REUTERS**, London

L'pool aim to

sink Chelsea

Jose Mourinho's Chelsea, one point shy of their second successive title. need to overcome familiar foes Liverpool on Saturday to keep alive their bid for a coveted league and FA Cup double.

The prize for the semifinal victors at Old Trafford will be a Millennium Stadium final on May 13 against Middlesbrough or West Ham who

meet on Sunday at Villa Park. It will be the 10th time in two seasons the English champions

have met the European champions with Liverpool winning just once, at last year's Champions League semifinal home leg.

Rafael Benitez's men have secured three other draws in European competition against Chelsea but lost all four league games and last year's League Cup final

After this season's Champions League disappointment for both sides, Europe's most prestigious domestic knockout trophy has assumed added importance

United who also lifted the League Cup. Chelsea, backed by ambitious owner Roman Abramovich's bil-

have been worse.

sphere and a different match.'

resilient Spaniards at the

lions, completed a league and League Cup double last season as well as reaching the Champions League semifinals. Despite their Premier League dominance, a poorer showing this season would

Liverpool, third in the league,

trailing second-placed Manchester

nave something to prove

look like failure. Frank Lampard, who has already beaten the Premier League record for goals by a midfielder with 16 and is looking for his 20th in all competitions on Saturday, said Chelsea

were determined to secure both trophies. "The aim is the double. We have...a huge game against a very

good team in the semi-final and that will be a big battle. Our battle is on both fronts and we won't let up," he said The double has been won only

10 times in more than 120 years of competition, including by Liverpool in 1986.

cer's premier event.

mood "Our Test cricket can't be faulted really since the last Ashes Test match," Ponting told the Australian Associated Press on Friday. "Everything we have done has

been very, very good quality, the areas that we needed to address I think after England we have addressed.

"We have certainly turned a number of things around and we are heading in the right direction."

Ponting cited the return to form of fast bowlers Jason Gillespie and Michael Kasprowicz as a big reason for his optimism

"It is great to see Jason back and bowling well and it is great to see Michael back and bowling well," he said.

"Brett (Lee) is in career-best form and Matty Hayden is in as good a form as he has ever been." Ponting is also happy with his

own batting

German players. And that does not

trast sharply with the opinions of

more respected members of the

football community, such as

Brazilian legend Pele who once

described the sport as "o jogo

Lovers of the more physical

bonito" -- the beautiful game.

The Austrian's comments con-

strike me as very nice.

The Australians have beaten West Reports in Spain maintain that Indies, South Africa and Bangladesh Juventus have made Real Betis a since losing to England for the first time formal offer for midfielder Joaquin. since 1987, and Ponting is in upbeat

The 24-year-old has been linked with the Turin giants in the past given the high esteem which boss abio Capello has for the player. Now sources suggest that

Juventus have contacted the Liga outfit with an official bid for the Spanish international. Betis' 18million pound valuation

of Joaquin wasn't met with great satisfaction by transfer guru Luciano Moggi who has no intention of offering that kind of money. However, it is thought that he has

offered Betis cash plus the services of Mauro Camoranesi and Marcelo Zalayeta. The Liga club are said to be

considering the proposal and the move could even be completed before the World Cup Finals. Joaquin's present contract runs

until 2010 and Juventus are allegedly prepared to offer him a fouryear agreement.

#### Malik to undergo FROM PAGE 12

have become loose. So when he bowls one gets the impression there is a problem with his action," Pakistan Cricket Board chairman Shaharyar Khan told Reuters on Friday.

"The operation is being carried out to loosen his tendons so that his arm extension improves and he faces no more problems with his action. Malik has been sent to Australia

for biomechanical tests on his action after which he was cleared by the International Cricket Council (ICC). A number of Pakistani bowlers

have faced problems with their actions recently with seamer Shabbir Ahmed currently serving a one-year suspension from international cricket. Fast bowler Shoaib Akhtar has been reported three times since 1999.

## Premier v'ball

#### **UNB**, Dhaka

Bangladesh Police beat Water Development Board by straight 3-0 sets in a match of the United Commercial Bank Premier Volleyball League at the Volleyball Stadium on Friday. In the day's other match, also played at the same venue, Wari Club beat Sonali Bank Club by 3-2 sets.

# Federer seals semi spot

# Tennis

#### AFP, Monte Carlo

Roger Federer erased one of the few minor blemishes on his spotless career record Friday, reaching a semi-final at the Monte Carlo Open for the first time.

The peerless Swiss top seed defeated Spain's David Ferrer, 6-1, 6-3, stopping the eighth-seeded grinder for the second time in a month after beating him in the Miami semis.

"I'm very proud to have finally gotten into the semis here." a satisfied Federer said as he waited for fourth seed Ivan Ljubicic and Chile's Fernando Gonzalez to square off to

determine his next opponent. "I got off to a good start - he won the first five games - and put pressure on David. But at the start of the second set. He raised his level.

"I had to do the same. It was a tough match but a good win for me."

Federer now stands 32-1 on the season with four titles after winning his 28th straight match at the Masters Series level.

The Swiss managed 25 winners and broke five times.

His main rival, world number two defending champion Rafael Nadal, rolled over a struggling Guillermo Coria to advance, claiming 12 of the last 13 games to win 6-2, 6-1.

Coria, far from his best and weighed down by a serve which has not worked all week, was seen by the trainer early in the second set. The Argentine, had his blood

pressure taken and swallowed a tablet before returning to his fate on court

The rout lasted 69 minutes, with Coria limiting his double-faults to eight, but committing 28 unforced errors. Nadal broke his opponent seven times.

"I felt poorly but after they told me it was normal, I felt a bit better," said Coria, who blamed the three-hour matches he played in the two previ-

ous rounds for sapping his fitness Nadal will line up in Saturday's semi-final against the Argentine who preceded him as Roland Garros champion, seventh-seeded Gaston Gaudio

Gaudio, the 27-year-old Argentine world number eight, put out Spain's 15th seed Tommy Robredo in an equally one-sided encounter which finished 6-1, 6-3

The Spaniard has now won 40 matches on clay, the fourth-longest run in post-1968 Open era history. His last loss on the surface came in the Valencia quarter-finals in April, 2005.

"I'm building confidence at my first clay tournament of the season," said Nadal. "I want to play good, but I don't think about repeating," he said of his runaway success of 2005.

PHOTO: AFP Spaniard Rafael Nadal plays a forehand against Argentina's Guillermo Coria during their Monte Carlo Masters Series guarterfinal on Friday

nature of the English version, however, might empathise with his assessment of South American Football is a bastion of chauvanism players, who he equated to balleriand primitive behaviour that has nothing to do with art, according to "Football slightly resembles the Austrian given the job of organisdance, but that has little to do with ing the opening and closing ceremothe teams, and some South

nies of the World Cup finals in Americans can be compared with ballerinas." said Heller. "But in Andre Heller, the artist chosen by general, it has nothing to do with football's world governing body FIFA to head the cultural and artistic

Heller, who openly admits he programme of the June 9 to July 9 would rather listen to a piano piece tournament, launched a scathing by Schubert than watch a football attack on the hand that feeds him in match between Bayern Munich and an interview with Suddeutsche Real Madrid, also accused FIFA of draconian rule.

Zeitung newspaper on Friday. "Football is surely the last bas-"The whole world is subservient tion of tribalism where people can to the leaders at FIFA who swan allow their chauvanism and primiaround with a flashing light," he said. tive character to roam free," said

"I have the impression that it (the World Cup) is essentially about victory for Germany, in Germany, in front of the German public and with

# Çõ

FROM PAGE 12 the attention of Lippi because he is a player who never stops believing on

the field of play," said the midfielder. "He chases every ball until the very last kick of the game. He is a very important player for every team in which he plays.'

The pressure is certainly on Lippi to select Inzaghi given the problems affecting the national strikers at the minute

#### laquinta is also struggling for form, while Christian Vieri and Francesco Germany Totti are iniurv doubts.

### Female ref's hopes dashed AP, Germany

Frenchwoman Nelly Viennot failed a sprint test Friday, ending her hopes of becoming the first female World Cup official

The 44-year-old Viennot was among 80 candidates tested on Heller. physical fitness and knowledge of rules at a four-day FIFA workshop for assistant referees. Eight failed, including Viennot.

#### Sixty officials will be selected early May for World Cup duty in Germany. FIFA has already announced the names of the 23 referees who will officiate at soc-

BITS AND BOBS

#### **Artist bemoans** 'barbaric football'

AFP, Berlin Although Luca Toni continues to

ripple nets, Alessandro Del Piero and Alberto Gilardino haven't been at their best lately. Udinese striker Vincenzo