

EVERMARCH
A better economical alternative
TONER, INK & RIBBON CARTRIDGE
HOT LINE : 988 3450, 717 3730, 815 8759

EVERMARCH
I'm a business executive, I take smart decisions that's why I use Evermarch™
Ahmed H. Shah Nawaz
NASCOM (PVT) LTD.

Ballack finds his feet

INTERNET, undated
The 2006 World Cup began quietly for Germany skipper Michael Ballack as he was forced to sit out the Opening Match against Costa Rica with an ankle injury.

That, at least, was the reason given by coach Jurgen Klinsmann, despite a statement from the Chelsea-bound midfielder on the eve of the game that he was 100 per cent fit and raring to go. Ultimately, that difference of opinion has turned out to be no more than a minor irritation in Germany's increasingly imperious progress to a quarterfinal berth.

A convincing 2-0 victory over Sweden in the Round of 16 has unleashed a wave of optimism and euphoria, as hindsight would seem to prove every single one of Klinsmann's decisions correct. Indeed, the Germany captain appears to be nearing peak form as the knockout phase approaches boiling point.

The Ballack who stamped his authority all over the meeting with the Scandinavians on Saturday was the playmaker so many German fans would like to see rather more often. Patrolling the midfield in the manner of a general, Ballack's passing was crisp and precise. His focus was fixed firmly on the opposing goal, and his appearances in dangerous attacking positions were more frequent than of late. His final appearance at the FIFA World Cup Stadium Munich, formerly his home ground with Bayern Munich, was marked by a battery of long-range shots in the direction of the Swedish goal.

The Germany captain came off best in his first head-to-head duel before kick-off, as he won the toss

for ends against Sweden skipper Olof Mellberg. Ballack's first physical duel with the Aston Villa defender arrived after just two minutes; when he rose to head clear of the danger zone. Ballack, once again a truly inspirational figure for his side, frequently teed up his team-mates with inch-perfect passes, a shining example arriving just a few minutes after Lukas Podolski's opening goal. The youthful striker gleefully accepted Ballack's lay-off but fired narrowly over the bar.

Ballack was in no mood to stand idly by during Germany's chance-a-minute opening phase. The stadium clock showed 11 minutes when his fierce 25-yard drive missed the post by a matter of inches. That effort ushered in a string of long-range shots unleashed by the man earning his 68th cap, but he was not in luck on this particular afternoon.

"I'm frustrated about not scoring," the player admitted afterwards, adding: "Their keeper made a number of great saves." Andreas Isaksson in the Swedish goal certainly earned the laurels as his side's best player with a textbook display.

Isaksson pulled off a fine reaction stop to deny another Ballack effort on 18 minutes, before the 29-year-old's luck deserted him after 55 minutes when his shot on the turn rebounded from the upright. Eleven minutes from time Ballack was again in the thick of the goalmouth action, firing in from 15 yards only to see his effort deflected for a corner.

Isaksson yet again got the better of the home skipper on 81 minutes, finally prompting Ballack to vent before kick-off, as he won the toss

SEE PAGE 18 COL 5

banglalink goal **banglalink picture of the day**



OSCAR WINNING ACTING! Italy defender Fabio Grosso rolls over Australia's Lucas Neill (on the ground) moments before falling on the ground to win a last gasp-penalty during their round of 16 World Cup match at the Fritz-Walter Stadion in Kaiserslautern yesterday.

HSBC
The world's local bank

THIRD EYE
KAZI ZULQUARNAIN ISLAM

When I turned on the TV the other day to watch England take on Ecuador in the Round of 16 of the World Cup, I was completely shocked to find after a little while that it was not England and Ecuador that were playing but Scunthorpe having a Saturday afternoon kick-about in the park for a mid table Third Division clash against Oxford.

No, I am not being literal. And yes, the football on show was indeed that bad. But thank God we had the Battle of Nuremberg to compensate. But we will come to that later.

I will run out of adjectives to describe what for viewing experience is quite possibly the worst football match I have ever witnessed. Never mind the World Cup. Of all the football matches that I have so far watched in my life none was so shorn of quality, passion or verve as the England and Ecuador match. And they say that the World Cup is the be-all and see-all of every footballer's life!

Stuttgart's Gottlieb-Daimler stadium doesn't play host to the

SEE PAGE 18 COL 2

Penalty wrong, groans Guus

AFP, Kaiserslautern

Australia coach Guus Hiddink said the penalty for Italy which knocked his team out of the World Cup 1-0 here on Monday should not have been awarded.

Francesco Totti smashed home the spot kick in the final seconds of the last 16 match after Fabio Grosso appeared to have tripped over Australian defender Lucas Neill.

"I think it was a questionable penalty, but the referee gave it. He fell, it was just a normal challenge," Hiddink said.

"The real problem was that the Australian team played well here but at the end of the day we were not dead enough in the penalty area."

"I am proud of this team, not only of the way they played today but in previous games."

Hiddink led Australia to the second round for the first time in their history.

LEADING SCORERS

AFP, Berlin

World Cup leading scorers after Monday's Australia-Italy match:

- 4: Klose (Germany)
- 3: Crespo (Argentina), Fernando Torres (Spain), Maxi Rodriguez (Argentina), Podolski (Germany)
- 2: Bosacki (Poland), Bravo (Mexico), T Cahill (Australia), Delgado (Ecuador)

SEE PAGE 18 COL 5

Controversial final kick sees Italy thru'

Italy 1 Australia 0

AGENCIES, Kaiserslautern

Substitute Francesco Totti converted a controversial penalty in the fifth minute of stoppage time to give 10-man Italy a dramatic 1-0 win over Australia and a place in the World Cup quarterfinals here Monday.

Totti had sensationally been left out of the starting line-up by coach Marcello Lippi due to his lacklustre performances in the three first round matches.

But the Roma striker, who broke his left ankle in February and has only recently returned to action, settled a fiercely-contested second round tie by firing home from the spot after defender Fabio Grosso

had tumbled over Lucas Neill's challenge. Totti sent the 12-yarder into the upper right-hand corner of Mark Schwarzer's goal and with it Spanish referee Luis Medina Cantalejo blew the final whistle, breaking the Soccerros hearts who fought gamely throughout the 90 minutes.

Italy had Marco Materazzi sent off shortly after half time, but the three-time champions held on defiantly for a place in the last eight where they will meet either Switzerland or the Ukraine.

"Now let the critics talk about me. Up till now they have massaged me. I am sure now they won't be happy," penalty hero Totti said.

Coach Lippi said: "We were not afraid of going out and we knew that there was always the possibility of extra-time or indeed penal-

ties." "We dictated the pace in the first half though we had few chances. In the second half it was ten against 11 so it was tougher and we had to go through the mill a little - Materazzi told me a straight red was a bit extreme."

The Australians were stunned as the final whistle blew immediately after the penalty drama.

"I don't know what I'm feeling. It's disbelief," said Everton midfielder Jim Cahill.

"We played well the first half and then we went out to get a goal. And then this guy falls down in the box and he gets a penalty."

Goalkeeper Mark Schwarzer said that Australia had been unlucky but had to accept they should have taken their chances.

"We put the Italians under a lot

of pressure. I'd say we were clearly the better team today. The problem was we didn't score a goal and, with the extra man after the sending off we should have taken our chance."

The victory, which extended Italy's unbeaten run to 21 internationals, went some way to making up for their second round defeat at the 2002 World Cup by South Korea, who were then coached by current Aussie manager Guus Hiddink.

Italy came close to opening the scoring in the third minute when Alessandro Del Piero's left-wing cross found Luca Toni at the back post, but the giant Fiorentina striker, Serie A's leading scorer last season with 31 goals, headed into the side-netting.

A superb sliding tackle by Luke Wilkshire on Alberto Gilardino snuffed out another Italy attack as

the Aussies came under early pressure, before Mark Schwarzer was called into action twice in the space of three minutes.

First the Aussie keeper tipped Gilardino's scissor-kick over the bar and then his outstretched leg kept out Toni's low drive.

Australia mustered their first real threat in the 24th minute when Marco Bresciano dinked a free-kick into the box, but Mark Viduka's weak header was comfortably gathered by Gianluigi Buffon.

The Aussies' confidence grew and Buffon came to Italy's rescue on the half hour, getting down low to deny Scott Chipperfield.

Toni spurned a good chance in the 34th minute, heading over the bar after Simone Perrotta had flicked Andrea Pirlo's chipped pass across goal.

Gilardino made way for Vincenzo Iaquinta for the restart before Toni spurned a glorious chance, blazing over the bar from 12 yards after Del Piero's effort was blocked.

A moment of madness reduced Italy to ten men in the 50th minute as Materazzi crunched into Bresciano and Toni was sacrificed for defender Andrea Barzagli.

Buffon kept Italy's goal intact by punching clear Chipperfield's rasping shot while at the other end Pirlo's curled free-kick was palmed over by Schwarzer.

Totti replaced Del Piero in the 75th minute as Italy tried to liven up their attacking options, and just as the match appeared to be heading for extra time, he decided the match.

SEE PAGE 18 COL 1

FIFA World Cup 2006 Quiz
Round 1 ends. Winners will be declared soon.
Join Round 2 (Scores of round 1 will not affect round 2)
Log on www.squarepharma.com.bd
Mega prize awaits at the end of round 2
SQUARE - The Leader of Bangladesh Pharma Market since 1985

TODAY'S MATCHES
ALL MATCHES LIVE ON ESPN. *ALSO LIVE ON BTV.
TEAM TIME VENUE
Brazil v Ghana* 8:50 pm Dortmund
Spain v France 12:50 am (Wednesday) Hanover

AccessTEL
THE BROADBAND COMPANY
www.accesstel.net

banglalink goal pick & win contest
pick the winner for today's matches and simply send us an SMS. the more correct SMS you send the better your chances of winning!
SMS before each match and get 15 points for each correct guess
SMS during the first 75 minutes of the match and get 10 points

keep playing! keep winning! every match! every day!
NOKIA handset + standard connection (with ISD) + free talktime worth tk. 4500

mega prize winners!!!
highest point winners throughout the world cup series will win fabulous prizes!
1st: NOKIA E 60 + connection + talktime worth tk. 5 lac*
2nd: NOKIA 9300i + connection + talktime worth tk. 3 lac*
3rd: NOKIA 9300i + connection + talktime worth tk. 2 lac*

tk. 1/min from 3Zam-3am to any operator, for all banglalink subscribers
for banglalink to banglalink calls only - tk. 2/500 - VAT applicable - conditions apply - See back page for details