SPORT

The Daily Star

Pernia joins Atletico

AFP, Paris

Atletico Madrid announced the signing of Spain international defender Mariano Pernia from Spanish first division rivals Getafe on Thursday.

"It was a dream (to play for Atletico), a goal I wanted to achieve," said Pernia when he was presented to the Madrid media.

The 29-year-old Argentine-born full-back was part of the Spain squad that crashed out of the World Cup at the hands of France on Tuesday.

He was called up as a late replacement after Asier Del Horno of English Premiership champions Chelsea was forced to pull out of the squad.

The left-back, who was born in Buenos Aires and only received Spanish citizenship shortly before the World Cup kicked-off, scored 10 goals in the Primera Liga last sea-

He becomes the sixth close season signing for Atletico, joining Mexican coach Javier Aquirre. Argentine forward Sergio Aguero, Portuguese defender Ze Castro, Greek defender Georgios Seitaridis and Portugual midfielder Costinha, who is still in Germany at the World Cup.

Juninho, Silva FROM PAGE 19

win over Japan in which he scored a fine goal.

He also came on as a substitute against Ghana in the last 16 success.

If the Lyon star does find himself retained again Parreira will likely ask him to carry out more defensive duties than Kaka, who scored against Croatia, allowing the so-far relatively quiet Ronaldinho to operate further forward.

Down memory

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really hard to deal with that situation. "I'd done everything not to go through that again by retiring after 2004 (before he was persuaded to return with Zidane and Claude Makelele a year later).

"But qualifying from our group with that win over Togo released something in me and the team.

Now or never

FROM PAGE 22

can beat anybody on our day but now it's time for us to deliver. "There is great expectation but it is

an expectation that I think is right and correct and we shouldn't shy away from it."

Neville is the first to admit that England have made hard work of a straightforward route into the last eight.

French defender Lilian Thuram speaks at a press conference at the Rattenfanger Halle in Hamelin on Thursday.

French society.

history or society.

'We are all Frenchmen'

have been a bit more careful".

for America? What's going on?'

WORLD CUR GERMAN 2006

INTERNET, undated

Lilian Thuram, France's most capped player, last night hit back at suggestions by Jean-Marie Le Pen that there were too many "players of colour" in the national side, denouncing the National Front leader as being ignorant of the make-up of his country's society.

The 34-year-old Juventus centre-half won his 118th cap against Spain on Tuesday and, hailing from the French Caribbean island of Guadeloupe, is one of 16 nonwhites in France's 23-man squad. He and his teammates learned of Le Pen's comments immediately prior to the second-round match in

Hanover, which Les Bleus won 3-1, with the 2007 French presidential candidate having reheated his criticisms of the 1998 side -- which he denounced as "artificial" -- by arguing it was not reflective of

they were celebrating us as Le Pen, who was runner-up to Frenchmen, not black men or white Jacques Chirac in the 2002 presimen. It doesn't matter if we're black dential elections having beaten the or not, because we're French, I've Socialist candidate Lionel Jospin to just got one thing to say to Jean the second round, had insisted that Marie Le Pen. The French team are France "cannot recognise itself in all very, very proud to be French. If the national side" and that "maybe he's got a problem with us, that's the coach exaggerated the propordown to him but we are proud to tion of players of colour and should represent this country. So Vive la France, but the true France. Not the What can I say about Monsieur France that he wants.' Le Pen?" said Thuram ruefully.

PHOTO: AFP

That brought a round of applause "Clearly, he is unaware that there from the assembled media, with are Frenchmen who are black, Thuram equally baffled by Le Pen's Frenchmen who are white, criticism that some of the players, Frenchmen who are brown. I think and primarily the World Cupthat reflects particularly badly on a winning goalkeeper Fabien man who has aspirations to be Barthez, are failing to sing La president of France but vet clearly Marseillaise. "Whether you sing it or doesn't know anything about French not doesn't make you any more or "That's pretty serious. He's the less French," he said. "Maybe we type of person who'd turn on the should invite Monsieur Le Pen to television and see the American celebrate our next victory with us. basketball team and wonder: 'Hold Then he'd see that we are fiercely on, there are black people playing proud to be French and he might change his mind. Actually, he's got "When we take to the field, we do too much to lose by changing his

so as Frenchmen. All of us. When mind, hasn't he?' people were celebrating our win,

Tea and cricket scores at 'Camp England'

Tactics FROM PAGE 19 four games but has given some plodding performances despite

scoring two goals. Robinho was a breath of fresh air against Japan but was injured for the Ghana match. FRANCE Defence: Domenech started pair-

Brazil's injured

"We hope to prepare him so he

can play without any worries," said

FROM PAGE 19

took penalties.

Runco.

play on Saturday."

ing William Gallas with Lilian Thuram in the centre of defence in the build-up to the tournament. Gallas, who had peviously been made to play at left back, adapted in no time and the new formula works perfectly.

Right back Willy Sagnol likes to get forward. Eric Abidal, on the left, is a little more cautious. France's tight, flat back four has

satisfied Domenech so far but will be really tested by Brazil's unpredictable forwards. Midfield: Patrick Vieira and Claude

Makelele play in front of the defence, covering plenty of ground. Zidane sticks to his playmaker's role with Franck Ribery and Florent

tute so far and is expected to play

Drop Beckham!

FROM PAGE 22 over his selection of Arsenal teenager Theo Walcott.

"And why he has taken this young kid (Walcott), I don't know. He has not even played in the Premier

League," fumed Whelan. "To make a mistake in taking this young boy is unforgivable. It's an insult and I'm sure it's embarrassing for the lad because basically he is the ball boy. He is never going to get

on. Despite his criticism, Whelan hopes Eriksson can prove him wrong by leading England to World Cup glory for the first time since 1966

"Having said all that, I want Mr Eriksson to make me and the rest of the critics eat our words.

"I'd love to say to him well done because for England to win would be fantastic for the nation."

English worry

Beckham fires passion pain, they they will be declared fit to Robinho, who suffered his injury in the changing room during shooting practice last Saturday, took part in Thursday's training session although he sat out the final part when his teammates

tion for England but they do not have the option of taking pride in their own displays. Improvement, however, is now mandatory in view of the opposition in tomorrow's quarterfinal. "We've done well to get this far with the way we've been playing," Beckham The president of FIFA Sepp said. "Now we're coming up to Blatter is far from the first person teams like Portugal and, if we play to scorn England's style at the like we have done, we might not World Cup but he is certainly the have a chance of getting through. most highly placed. While the It has to click." side's captain cannot disagree

The midfielder has had particular experience of misfiring and there were calls for him to be able point to make in reply: "There dropped, after which he scored have been better performances the only goal of the match with by other teams in this competition Ecuador from a free-kick. Apart from enjoying that riposte to the It is a peculiar sort of satisfaccritics. Beckham also took "a lot of

personal satisfaction from being the first English player to score in three consecutive World Cups."

There would be a deeper pleasure in success for the team as a whole at the World Cup and the return of Garv Neville may help. with Beckham having an overlapping full-back to drag away one of the two markers customarily assigned to him. England's pattern should be improved in the

process but they also have to raise their level of performance. Beckham is one of those who gives a team talk. "Yes I do shout and swear," he said. "It's a very passionate changing room and it

needs that to lift players. You have to say what you're thinking.

He could pick up some lessons in

the Fan Zones, the free public

viewing areas around Germany that

Beckenbauer said up to 700,000

Berlin's landmark Brandenburg

"Going to these Fan Fests,

people of all different color, creed,

religion -- they meet, they get along

and have a great time ... in peaceful

coexistence," he said. "That is what

the world should be like. It will have

successful, we've been good hosts.

Now we're looking forward to the

Beckenbauer said he'd love to

see a Brazil- Germany final, a

rematch of the 2002 final won by

Brazil to extend its record to five

"Up to this date we've been

giant TV screens.

a lasting impression.

last eight matches.

'Players should share blame'

Beckenbauer said, his work over the last nine years would have a positive legacy. "Der Kaiser," a World Cup winner

have been the unexpected success in 1974 and coach of the champion of the tournament. team in 1990, was widely credited with securing the hosting rights for people flooded into a fan zone near the tournament. And he's the public face of it. Gate to watch some matches on

Since the World Cup kicked off with Germany's 4-2 win over Costa Rica at Munich on June 9, Beckenbauer has attended 38 of the 56 games, crisscrossing the country in a helicopter, sometimes to three venues a day.

In between, he managed to sneak off to the Austrian Alps to get married in a quiet family ceremony and return to work the next day.

"It would be impossible for things to have been much better," Beckenbauer said of the first two rounds. "We've triggered so much euphoria inside and outside the stadium."

Some saw a successful World Cup as a good launching pad for Beckenbauer to become a future FIFA president. That came into focus Thursday, when a local newspaper quoted Blatter saying that

Beckenbauer could not do the job. Blatter qualified that, via a spokesman, by stipulating he said Beckenbauer would not have time to fit the work into his already heavy schedule.

"He's right in principle," Beckenbauer said. "I speak some Bavarian, German and my English could use some improving. In that job, it's important to speak several anguages.

Not having Spanish or Portuguese languages could be a barrier, he added, given the strength of the sport in South America.

World Cup titles. And he thought the German team had a good chance of beating Argentina in Friday's quarterfinals. Local organizers say all 64 matches have been sold out and have revised their revenue targets from 538 million dollars to more than 563 million dollars for the tourna-

ment. "The sporting highlight is yet to come." said Horst Schmidt, a Germany 2006 vice president. "We can't rest on our laurels. Everything has gone well so far, but we have to

stay very attentive."

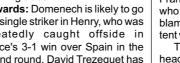
that role again.

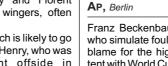
Malouda acting as wingers, often switching sides. Forwards: Domenech is likely to go for a single striker in Henry, who was

repeatedly caught offside in

France's 3-1 win over Spain in the second round. David Trezeguet has been used mostly as a late substi-

AP, Berlin Franz Beckenbauer thinks players who simulate fouls should share the





blame for the high level of discontent with World Cup referees. The German soccer great and head of the local organising committee said referees had been too guick to issue yellow cards, but players diving and faking injuries hoping to

INTERNET, undated

and they're out."

get rivals cautioned were making it "extremely difficult for referees to do their job. "The players aren't making it

easy when they fall over," he said. "It's so exaggerated now -- players simulating -- we must protect the referees.

Some matches here have turned on contentious refereeing decisions when players have exaggerated falls after challenges or faked injuries in collisions. Beckenbauer said FIFA, the sport's governing body, should review the problem after the World Cup and try to stamp it out.

FIFA president Sepp Blatter has been critical of referees for being inconsistent, reflecting a typical complaint from players, coaches and fans at the World Cup.

Beckenbauer said Valentin Ivanov, who handed out a World Cup-record 16 cautions and four ejections in Portugal's 1-0 secondround win over Netherlands, was "too generous with the cards and ... lost control of the match."

But if complaints about refereeing decisions are the extent of trouble at the World Cup,

 \bigcirc Security Sec GERMAN

completely with the verdict, David

Beckham does have one irrefut-

But enced 31-yearbelieves England will be fresher for not having had a contest against a major side in the first phase or second round.

"We sort of almost feel that we haven't been tested in a way, like we've played three or four friendlies," he said.

"To get to this stage without playing a massive match has been good in one way and in another way it makes us aware that we have to step up against Portugal and we have to perform."

Looking to break

FROM PAGE 22

together for moments -- that has to happen for the whole of the match." Beckham's loyal lieutenant Neville

said that there could be no more excuses if England failed again.

"I believe there is a time and a moment for players to deliver, and I believe it is Saturday." said Neville.

"If we fail then we have to hold our hands up and say, 'we haven't delivered, that the talk about us being potential world champions was rubbish.' So this is it for us.'

Eriksson has drilled into his players the need for discipline against Portugal, with John Terry, Jamie Carragher and goalkeeper Paul Robinson all just one yellow card away from suspension.

Portugal's players were involved in what was officially the dirtiest match in World Cup history on Sunday, when they downed Holland 1-0 in a brutal encounter that saw 16 yellow cards and four sending off.

Among those to see red were key playmaker Deco and midfield enforcer Costinha, both of whom will be suspended against England

Despite the blood-curdling nature of Portugal's second round win over the Dutch, Eriksson is not expecting a similar contest on Saturday.

"I'm not afraid of the behaviour of Portugal's footballers," Eriksson said. "I would be very surprised if there's a problem. Portuguese football is not known as violent or unfair and I worked in that country for five years. "But we have to be careful. Four years ago you could do some tackles that you would get away with but today you don't get away with anything.

"You get a yellow card for the smallest thing. So it's important not to make bad tackles when you absolutely don't need to do.'



REUTERS, Buehlertal

If there is one place at the World Cup finals where you are sure to find a dearth of happy sporting internationalism it is at the England training camp and media centre. In Buehlertal, high above the

vineyards that tumble down the valley towards Baden-Baden, only one language is spoken, the press corps's favourite tea is shipped in from England and endless supplies of British crisps and biscuits are on offer.

While in cities like Stuttgart or Munich, sun-bleached fans in Tshirts boasting "I'll show you my Australian if you show me your Brazilian" have turned each game into a multinational frolic, the England party has created and retreated into its own little island.

British channels unavailable in soccer reporters -- of all nationalwith the latest score in the cricket

delightful, flower-scented and pastoral hamlet of natural serenity in southern Baden-Wurtenberg, there is scant evi-

dence.

wedding reception. England's base is not only difficult to reach up winding roads through heavily wooded

> tally both forbidding and hilarious. The enormous marquee-style

their exclusive rights.

sumptuous but, unlike those at other team camps, there are no translators available to look after German-speaking and other visitors.

German and English. Sweden conducted their presecond round clash news conferences in Swedish, German and English while Paraguay always made everyone available in any language that could be mus-

tered. On Thursday, two days before England played Portugal, several Portuguese visitors sat dumbfounded as David Beckham, Gary Neville and then Steven Gerrard were escorted in for group interviews with the

the opening five minutes.

The rest, to suit the workings

Portuguese reporters were

In a bizarre twist, one English

statement Gerrard had made

by another journalist because

The reporter was admonished

Compared to the dry, diffi-

earlier in the same room.

night or even the following day.

Friday evening at the earliest.

media. Not just one interview, however, but at least three -- one of which is supervised in such a way that certain agency reporters may only ask questions and

Flat screen televisions broadcast the news from England on of the British dailies, may be used but must be held until an local hotels, but ensure that agreed embargo later that day, ities -- who visit England's World Cup camp are kept up to date told -- in English only -- before Gerrard began his news confer-

series against Sri Lanka. Of the World Cup, beyond this

For visitors from Portugal, England's opponents in Saturday's quarter-finals, not to mention any German media interested in seeing what their old football enemies are up to, it is akin to arriving at the wrong

time-line, was not to be used until the following day. Outside, England's manicured training pitch, with turf

and steep hills, it is also accidenimported from the Netherlands and laid early in May, glistened in the morning sunshine.

structures in which the media centre has been accommodated cult surfaces used for the are tailored for English-speaking finals, with longer coarser media only and are packed with grass, it was like a billiard British journalists fighting for table, watered and cut for the England players, who descend The facilities on offer are from their nearby luxury

accommodation at the Schlosshotel for training.

For 15 minutes, their stretching and warming-up exercises are examined by the Even Togo laid on interpreters media and then the gates are who worked from French into closed.

The real World Cup work, tactical and technical, is to be done in private and so the pack, politely moved on by security officials, return to their marquee headquarters and the sumptuous hospitality, and check the cricket scores again.

Viduka, Yakubu staying at Boro

AFP, Middlesbrough

Middlesbrough manager Gareth Southgate insisted on Thursday that strike duo Mark Viduka and Yakubu will not be leaving the English report the answers taken from Premiership club.

Reports in the English media suggested Australia captain Viduka had been told he was no longer wanted at Middlesbrough, while Nigeria forward Yakubu has been linked with a move back to former club Portsmouth.

Viduka, 30, was one of his counence that all material must be try's most impressive performers at held back from publication until the World Cup and several clubs, including Blackburn, are thought to be interested in signing him. reporter innocently asked Beckham how he reacted to a

But Southgate is determined to keep both players at the Riverside Stadium and he told the club's website: "The reports about Mark being available are utter rubbish.

he had asked a question 'out "He is a big part of my plans for of turn' by using a Gerrard next season and beyond. I don't answer that, in Planet need to tell anyone how important England's news-managed he is to our team.

"He is enjoying a well deserved rest now following the World Cup but I look to welcoming him back to training in July."

Yakubu was Middlesbrough's top scorer last season and Southgate will not entertain any offers for the Nigerian international

He added: "He's 23 and he can only get better. Why would we want to sell him? The great thing with this job is I'm not under pressure to sell anvone.'

FROM PAGE 22 With midfielders Costinha and Deco

suspended and unable to play, Figo's role will become even more important to Portugal as they look to make a World Cup semi final for the first time since 1966.

He may well move into Deco's central midfield position with Benfica's pacy striker Simao filling the void on the left flank. "I think Luis is one of the best

players in the world and has been for a while. He's played for many big clubs and performed, and well, at the highest level for years," said Beckham.

"So he could cause problems for any team and any defences and he's one player that we always have to watch.

For his part, Figo said he respected Beckham as a friend and "one of the best players we have in football at the moment". But he added that it would all be

put to one side on Saturday with Brazil or France waiting for the winner in the semi-final.

Figo hoping

FROM PAGE 22 game that will see the winner play a

mouth-watering semifinal against either Brazil or France.

"I just expect that on Saturday night I'll be more happy than him, smiled the Portuguese midfielder.

TACTICS

FROM PAGE 22 General: England have done little to strike fear into any opponent so far but their tournament history is littered with slow starts followed by big displays when it really matters. They rarely excel against teams they are expected to beat but Portugal offer the sort

of opposition that brings the best out of them

Many players owe Eriksson a performance while England's vociferous supporters can be relied upon to deliver uplifting backing. Scolari has plotted victories over England in the guarterfinals of the 2002 World Cup with Brazil and Euro 2004 with Portugal but this is his toughest test as he is forced to remould his team because of the suspensions.

However, all his players know each other well, the system is tried and tested and the squad is no longer overawed by the world's big-name teams

Brazil don't impress Tostao



AP, Bergisch Gladbach

It's been 36 years since Tostao stood alongside Pele at the World Cup, helping Brazil win its third World Cup title.

The memories -- of attacking opposing nets and scoring "beautiful" goals -- haven't faded. And they look nothing like the way Brazil is plaving in this tournament, he says.

"It was the golden era of Brazilian soccer," Tostao said of the 1970 championship in Mexico. "We didn't just win, we also played beautiful soccer and the celebration when we won was the biggest ever."

In that tournament. Tostao and Pele played with Jairzinho and Rivelino to form one of the most formidable attacking teams in history.

"1970 remained as a reference of beautiful soccer," said the softly spoken Tostao, now 59. "But it wasn't just a show. It was also verv competitive and very efficient, individually and collectively."

As a columnist for the Folha de S. Paulo newspaper, Tostao has been watching Brazil closely. The four straight wins have done nothing to impress him, however,

"Brazil has had a few individually beautiful moments. But as a team they haven't yet played beautiful soccer. They can do a lot better," Tostao said.

He said coach Carlos Alberto deserves at least some of the blame.

"Parreira could do things differently." Tostao said. "He doesn't manage to get the best out of the players.

Tostao said it's also hard for players to live up to expectations because club soccer is totally different than the international game. Ronaldinho, who helped FC Barcelona win the Champions League title and the Spanish league this past season, is a prime exam-

"It's utopia to think Ronaldinho

can play the same as in Barcelona where he finds the ideal conditions.' Tostao said. "There have been lots of criticisms of him but he will never play like he does in Barcelona. I never played the same way with the national team as I did for my club."

After his playing days, Tostao

became a medical doctor and

returned to the World Cup in 1994

as a commentator for Brazilian

television. Brazil won its fourth title

spent such a long time away from

soccer," Tostao said. "It was incredi-

ble to relive what I had experienced

"It was very emotional. I had

when he was 23.

that year.

as a player."

square glasses perched on the end of his nose. Tostao looks like a man who has experienced much. And it's his soccer experience that people want to hear about in Germany.

He's happy to oblige.

"I don't just like the technical Tostao, which means "Little side of the game. I like watching coin," was given his nickname by the emotional side, and the teammates because of his size and show," Tostao said. "Soccer is appearance. But his career as a player was cut short when his retina not just a sport. A lot of other detached after being hit in the head things enter into it, especially psychological factors." by a ball during a match. He retired

Despite the years and experience -- and criticisms of Brazil's current team -- Tostao still feels pride when he watches Brazil play

When the game starts, the atmosphere in the stadium, seeing Brazil on the field, it makes me very emotional," Tostao said. "If I wasn't a commentator I would be like any other spectator, watching and

With his longish white hair and vibrating."



TOSTAO