

Elizondo praises 'guardian angel'

World Cup final referee Horacio Elizondo on Friday described his fourth official at the centre of the Zinedine Zidane head-butt affair as his 'guardian angel'.

Dempsey ban reduced

Clint Dempsey, the New England Revolution midfielder who was the only US player to score a goal in this year's World Cup, had a Major League Soccer ban trimmed from two games to one here on Friday.



Juventus supporters react to the verdict of Serie A match-fixing allegations outside the club headquarters in Turin on Friday.

Angry fans protest

Fans of the three top soccer clubs found guilty in Italy's match-fixing scandal took to the streets on Friday after hearing the news that their teams will be playing next season in the second-tier Serie B.

Bringing to a head the biggest scandal in European soccer for decades, a sports tribunal in Rome sent Juventus, AC Milan and Lazio down to Serie B with points penalties.

Klinsi for USA?

United States coach Bruce Arena was dismissed Friday after a disappointing World Cup performance and former Germany boss Jurgen Klinsmann is among the candidates to take over.

US Soccer Federation president Sunil Gulati announced that Arena will not be retained once his contract expires at the end of the year.

Villa players slam chairman

Aston Villa's players on Friday launched a remarkable attack on the club's chairman Doug Ellis.

quarters to shout slogans against tribunal president Cesare Rupertto and AC Milan.

In Florence, Fiorentina coach Cesare Prandelli spoke of his "rage" against the verdicts, but the team's supporters made a largely peaceful demonstration, blocking roads in the city centre.

At first they limited their protests to anti-Juventus chants, but the mood turned uglier as the defence lawyers filed out of the hotel following the verdicts.

The lawyer representing former Juventus chief executive Antonio Giraudo, Luigi Chiappero, was surrounded and insulted by fans as he walked to his car.

Quotes on Calciopoli verdict

"If the clubs and some men running the clubs made mistakes and if they were found guilty they have to pay, even if we are world champions."

Quotes on Calciopoli verdict

"These players have shown that Italian football has values and among those values there is the moral part."

Italy coach Marcello Lippi, after the World Cup final.

"There are millions and millions of people who are waiting for the sentences. It's only right that the truth comes out."

Milan's UEFA hope

Football INTERNET, undated

Milan may still play European football next season, despite Calciopoli verdict.

Table with 3 columns: Club Name, Points, and Status (e.g., Relegated). Clubs include Inter, Roma, Chievo, Palermo, Livorno, Empoli, Parma, Milan, Ascoli, Udinese, Sampdoria, Reggina, Cagliari, Siena, Messina, Lecce, Treviso, Lazio, Fiorentina, Juventus.

Cole ties the knot

Football INTERNET, undated

England footballer Ashley Cole is to marry Girls Aloud star, Cheryl Tweedy on Saturday in what is being dubbed, "the celebrity magazine wedding of the year."

popped the question but now I can't wait to be a footballer's wife," she said afterwards. "We were on holiday in Dubai and Ashley got down on one knee. I was so

Armstrong renews French bashing

Lance Armstrong renewed his verbal attack on the French, bashing their World Cup team during an American awards show and using a derogatory word to describe the players.



A file photo shows Ashley Cole with his-to-be wife, the Girls Aloud singer Cheryl Tweedy, shopping in Germany recently. The couple got married yesterday.

Iraq's Olympic committee head kidnapped

Gunmen in army uniforms on Saturday raided a social club in Baghdad and kidnapped the head and other members of Iraq's Olympic committee, a security source said.

whose stars include Colombia's Juan Pablo Angel, Czech Republic striker Milan Baros and Sweden defender Olof Mellberg.

"At the end of last season, the chairman refused to pay 300 pounds for the pitches to be watered. The training ground development, which we were all looking forward to working in, has stopped."

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down words. Includes a solution time of 21 mins and a solution key at the bottom.

Cryptoquip puzzle grid with a message hidden in the letters. Includes the clue 'Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF YOU HAVE A PENCHANT FOR STAYING OVERNIGHT AT HOTELS, I'D CALL YOU INN-DISPOSED.'