



PHOTO: AFP

NOT TOO HEAVY: Italy's World Cup winning skipper Fabio Cannavaro is presented to the press after signing with Spanish giants Real Madrid at the Santiago Bernabeu in Madrid on Tuesday.

## Cannavaro targets Champions League

Football

REUTERS, Madrid

Italy's World Cup-winning captain Fabio Cannavaro completed his move to Real Madrid on Tuesday when he signed a three-year contract.

"He was our number one target from the day sports director Predrag Mijatovic and coach Fabio Capello started planning the team," Real president Ramon Calderon said at the player's presentation in the Bernabeu.

Cannavaro was signed from Juventus along with Brazilian midfielder Emerson as the Italian club were forced to unload players following their relegation after the Serie A match-fixing scandal.

Spanish media reported the combined fee to be about 20 million euros (\$24.99 million).

"He is an example for all young

players. He was a ballboy at the World Cup finals in Italy in 1990 and since then has had an extraordinary career," Calderon added.

"He is the first signing of my presidency and is an authentic number one, a great leader."

In this year's World Cup the former Napoli and Parma player produced a series of peerless displays at the heart of Italy's superb defence, winning admiration for his reading of the game, anticipation, athleticism and ice-cool temperament.

He was also praised for keeping the players' minds fixed on the tournament despite the distractions of the match-fixing scandal and produced another top drawer performance when he won his 100th cap in the penalty shoot-out win over France in the final.

"I had good times with Juventus but when you are offered the chance to come to Real at almost 33 years of age it is a great opportunity," said Cannavaro.

"I think it would have been difficult to move if Juve were still in Serie A. I didn't think there was much chance of this happening and Juve also saw it as an opportunity for the club."

Linking up with former Juve boss Capello was another impetus for Cannavaro to swap Turin for Madrid.

"The Capello factor is very important. We both know each other very well," he added.

"My maximum objective now is to win the Champions League. This kind of target gives me the inspiration to keep training and fighting."

Cannavaro is the latest in a long and expensive line of players bought by Real in attempt to replace centre back Fernando Hierro, who left in June 2003.

Since then they have spent around \$90 million bringing Walter Samuel, who has since been sold, Jonathan Woodgate and Sergio Ramos to the club.

## Jockey headbutts horse!

BBC ONLINE, undated

Jump jockey Paul O'Neill is being investigated after TV coverage showed him apparently headbutting his mount before a race at Stratford.

The Horseracing Regulatory Authority (HRA) will hold an inquiry after examining footage of the incident.

A spokesman for the RSPCA said O'Neill's behaviour at Sunday's meeting was "totally stupid and irresponsible."

The 26-year-old jockey was wearing his riding helmet when the incident took place before the race at 1510 BST.

HRA spokesman Owen Byrne said a disciplinary hearing would be held.

"We haven't got a date set but we are going to go for some time next week - our inquiry day is usually on the Thursday," he said.

City Affair, trained by John O'Shea, was unruly before the start of a novices' selling hurdle and unseated O'Neill.

The jockey got to his feet and grabbed the reins, pulling his mount to him, before lowering the butt of his helmet towards the horse.

The pair eventually went on to finish fourth in the race.

"We trust the racing authority will deal appropriately with the jockey," the RSPCA spokesman told BBC Sport.

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## Maradona's no to Boca

AFP, Buenos Aires

Argentinian legend Diego Maradona on Monday ruled himself out of the coaching job at his beloved former club Boca Juniors, saying he did not have enough experience.

Maradona, a vice-president at Boca, had been linked to the position after club boss Mauricio Macri urged the 1986 World Cup-winning captain to consider taking the helm following the departure of Alfio Basile.

But Maradona was adamant the time was not right for him to take over at Boca, where he played for three seasons in two separate spells at the beginning and end of his career.

"I'm happy where I am," Maradona said. "Whoever replaces Basile must be somebody with more experience than me, and with a big personality, because the dressing room is pretty fiery."

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## Torres keeps the faith

REUTERS, Madrid

Spain striker Fernando Torres has ruled out a move away from Atletico Madrid.

"I am here for the pre-season just like last year and have no intention to leave. I want to stay here," Torres told a news conference on Tuesday.

The 22-year-old international, Atletico's top scorer in each of the last four seasons, had remained quiet over his future since returning from the World Cup finals.

Manchester United and Inter Milan were reported to have been interested in signing Torres but the striker said he was only focused on Atletico.

"We need to forget about last season's disappointments. We have a new coach (Javier Aguirre) in whom I have confidence and he does in me," Torres added.

"We have signed some great new players and I am really looking forward to working with them next season."

Torres, who has 34 caps with Spain, has a contract with Atletico until 2008. Atletico finished 10th in Primera Liga last season.

## UEFA extends Italian deadline

REUTERS, Geneva

UEFA has extended the deadline for the submission of the names of Italian clubs eligible to take part in the 2006-07 European club competitions until Wednesday.

European soccer's governing body said in a statement issued from their headquarters at Nyon on Tuesday that it had received a letter from the Italian FA (FIGC) asking UEFA for an extension of one day from Tuesday's original deadline.

Appeal verdicts in the Italian soccer scandal involving Juventus, AC Milan, Fiorentina and Lazio are expected at 1830 GMT (2030 CET) on Tuesday.

"After having carefully analysed the request, UEFA's Emergency Panel decided to grant the requested extraordinary extension of the deadline," UEFA said in a statement.

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## Dunga new Brazil coach

Football

AFP, Rio de Janeiro

Former Brazil captain Dunga was appointed as the five-time World Cup winners' new coach here Monday, the Brazilian Football Confederation (CBF) said.

Dunga, who skipped Brazil to victory at the 1994 World Cup, replaces Carlos Alberto Parreira who resigned last week following the South Americans' disappointing campaign at this year's finals in Germany.

The 42-year-old has been entrusted with leading Brazil to the 2010 World Cup in South Africa and possibly beyond, said CBF President Ricardo Teixeira.

"The appointment of Dunga satisfies the desire of Brazilian fans who want to see a vibrant coach," said Teixeira. Dunga's first match in charge will be a friendly against Norway in Oslo on August 16.

While Teixeira said Dunga's appointment was calculated to inspire, the decision to give the former defensive midfielder the job could signal the return of a more disciplined approach to the Brazilian national team.

Parreira's relaxed approach was blamed as one of the reasons for Brazil's failure to advance beyond the quarter-finals at the World Cup, where they were beaten 1-0 in the last eight by France.

As a player Dunga was famously intolerant of indiscipline and almost came to blows with striker Bebeto during a first-round match against Morocco at the 1998 World Cup, where he also captained his country.

Nicknamed 'Dopey' after the character in Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs, Dunga's relaxed demeanour off the pitch masked a steely determination on it.

After spending the early years of his career in Brazilian football with Internacional, Corinthians, Santos and Vasco da Gama, Dunga moved to Italy in 1987 after signing for Pisa.

Spells at Fiorentina and Pescara

were followed by a stint with VfB Stuttgart in the Bundesliga before he finished his career in Japan with J-League side Jubilo Iwata.

A veteran of three World Cups -- he also played at the 1990 finals in Italy -- Dunga also won a silver medal at the 1984 Olympic Games in Los Angeles during an international career that spanned 91 caps and six goals.



DUNGA

## Platini FFF's man for UEFA presidency

AFP, Paris

The French football federation (FFF) officially submitted France legend Michel Platini as a candidate for the UEFA presidency on Monday.

FFF president Jean-Pierre Escalettes sent a letter to UEFA general secretary Lars-Christer Olsson confirming the submission.

Platini, a former French captain and coach, who is now vice-president of the FFF and an executive member of UEFA, originally announced his candidature in March 2005 and was approved by the FFF a month later.

The decision over the new president will be made in January in Dusseldorf, Germany, during UEFA's congress.

Current incumbent Lennart Johansson, a 76-year-old Swede who has been in the post since 1990, is the only other candidate.

## Bayern confident of RvN capture

AFP, Berlin

German champions Bayern Munich are confident of capturing the signature of unsettled Manchester United striker Ruud van Nistelrooy within the next 10 days, a German press report said on Tuesday.

Bayern have upped their offer for the Dutch striker to 17 million euros (21.5 million dollars), Bild newspaper reported.

Although Bayern may have to go higher still to meet the English club's asking price of 22 million euros, general manager Uli Hoenes believes it is only a matter of time before the 30-year-old Dutch international makes the move to southern Germany.

"It could take another eight to ten days. I've just got a feeling about it," Hoenes told Bild.

Van Nistelrooy reported for training with United on Monday but appears to be determined to leave Old Trafford after a bust-up with manager Alex Ferguson prior to the final game of the last season.

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## Juve not for sale: FIAT

INTERNET, undated

Juventus is not for sale, according to the vice president of car giant FIAT that effectively owns the club.

John Elkann, a member of the powerful Agnelli family that runs the club, made the comments to reporters after a meeting with Sergio Chiamparino, the mayor of Turin.

"We are not selling Juventus," Elkann said in remarks on www.gazzetta.it.

"One denial is already enough but I repeat, we are not selling Juventus."

Juventus has been forced to offload several star players after being relegated to Serie B and being hit with a 30-point deduction for next season for attempted match-fixing.

The club is appealing against the penalties imposed.

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## CALCIOPOLI APPEAL VERDICT

# Milan in Europe, Lazio back to Serie A?

Football

INTERNET, undated

A final appeals verdict was expected late Tuesday in the Italian match-fixing scandal with media sources in Italy claiming the penalties imposed on the four clubs by sporting authorities may be reduced significantly.

The verdicts concerning Juventus, AC Milan, Lazio and Fiorentina were expected to be announced at 2000 Italian time (1900 BST) although the more detailed reasons for the ruling will not be divulged until a later date.

In the initial ruling, Juventus were demoted to Serie B, where they would start next season with a 30-point deduction.

Fiorentina and Lazio were also relegated with, respectively, 12- and 7-point deductions.

Milan were allowed to remain in Serie A but with a 15-point deduction and a ban from European football.

Originally prosecutors had demanded that Juve be relegated two divisions but reports in the Italian media indicate the penalties on the four clubs could be reduced.

Italian sports daily La Gazzetta dello Sport predicted on its website that Lazio could return to Serie A albeit with a points deduction.

Milan, if the reports prove well-informed, would be allowed to compete in the UEFA Cup and have their 15-point deduction cut.

The website predicted that Juventus would remain in Serie B but with a reduction in their 30-point penalty, while Fiorentina could remain in Serie B without a



PHOTO: AFP

Italian football federation appeal court president Piero Sandulli arrives at a hotel in downtown Rome on Tuesday.

## Where have India gone?

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

No sooner have the Indian team reassembled after an off-season that lasted less than three weeks and they're off again, to an undisclosed location for three days of team-bonding away from the scrutiny of the media and fans.

The venue, most likely a defence establishment or a spa in the countryside outside Bangalore, has been kept secret even from the players, most of whom were expected to reach the team hotel in Bangalore by 6pm on Tuesday.

Greg King, the fitness trainer, said that there was more to keeping

the venue a secret than keeping the media away. He suggested that it had everything to do with taking players out of the comfort zone.

"The camps we've had have been pretty similar," he said, making it clear that more than yoga, gym work and bleep tests awaited the players.

The team will be away for three days, and will return to Bangalore on July 29. The following day, the players will be put through their paces, and various parameters ranging from body-fat index to overall aerobic strength will be assessed.

After training at the National Cricket Academy on July 31 and August 1, the players will disperse for a short break before the cricket-

skills camp that begins Bangalore on August 6.

Greg Chappell, currently on vacation in the United States, is expected to reach Bangalore two days before the start of the camp.

In his absence, Ian Frazer, his assistant, and King spent some time in the nets with Irfan Pathan and Suresh Raina, who both arrived a couple of days in advance of the rest. Both men had poor outings in the West Indies, and Pathan's indifferent form in particular was cause for genuine concern.

The selectors though have reposed faith in both for the Sri Lanka triangular, and neither man will want to squander the opportunity.

Also joining the 15-man squad



PHOTO: AFP

Indian batsman Virender Sehwag (C) is escorted by security personnel as he enters a hotel in Bangalore on Tuesday.

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