

## Toni told to forget Inter

INTERNET, undated

Despite Luca Toni's plea to join a Champions League club, Fiorentina patron Diego Della Valle insists he won't be released from his contract.

"Toni will stay where he is. That is absolutely my last word on the matter," the businessman told the 'Gazzetta dello Sport'. "He won't be leaving Florence. In the modern game contracts must be respected and the time has come to make that clear, even if it would seem obvious to many."

Toni has been a huge success since joining the Stadio Artemio Franchi side from Palermo last summer, scoring a club record 31 Serie A goals and taking the Capocannoniere crown.

However, the World Cup winner has made it clear in a Press Conference this week that he wants to play Champions League football and complete a switch to Inter.

"It's the principle that counts, as these things must not happen at Fiorentina," continued Della Valle. "It's time for everyone to find the right path. There are 30m Italians who live on the minimum wage in work that is far from stable, so Toni is a great champion, but also a privileged young man. He earns a great deal of money and this brings with it responsibilities and duties."

Toni is also eager to walk out on Fiorentina after their role in the Calciopoli scandal, which at first saw the side relegated to Serie B, but then returned to the top flight with a 19-point penalty and stripped of the chance to play in the Champions League preliminary round.

"People in football cannot consider everything up for grabs and live outside of principles or morality, especially in a time like this where the sport is buried in scandals. Even if someone has tried to sully my image, I continue to believe that rules must be set and respected. This is what we'll do now with Toni. When I return to Italy, I'll meet with the team and calmly explain it to everyone: starting from Luca."



Manchester United striker Wayne Rooney (R) looks flabbergasted as he sees card for committing a foul on FC Porto's Pepe during their match in the Amsterdam Tournament at the Arena on Friday.

## Rash Rooney sees red again

Football

AFP, Amsterdam

Sir Alex Ferguson hit out at Dutch referee Ruud Bossen after Wayne Rooney's second red card in 34 days marred Manchester United's 3-1 Amsterdam Tournament victory against FC Porto on Friday.

United manager Ferguson, who also saw Paul Scholes dismissed in the second-half following a foul on Ricardo Quaresma, claimed that Bossen took advantage of Rooney's bad-boy reputation when sending him off for appearing to elbow defender Pepe on 41 minutes.

And with Rooney now facing a three-match Premiership ban if the

Dutch FA send a report of the incident to the Football Association in London, Ferguson admitted that he is now determined to help the 20-year-old avoid a costly suspension.

Ferguson said: "The issue of a suspension is clearly a real worry for us now, but you just hope that fairness comes into it because Wayne's sending off was unfair. Their player made a meal of it, but that kind of thing is becoming endemic in the game today."

"You worry about whether Wayne's reputation is becoming an element with referees, though. I just can't understand what the referee was thinking. "Sixty seconds earlier, Ole Solskjaer was hit in the face by one of the Porto players and the ref didn't even show a card, yet Wayne

gets sent off and I don't see what was different between the two incidents."

"I haven't spoken to the referee about it because I don't go near them, but we do need to address the situation now and see what we can do about it."

While defending Rooney to the hilt, Ferguson refused to be so supportive of Scholes, who was sent off minutes after receiving a yellow card for an earlier rash challenge.

Ferguson said: "Paul Scholes can have no excuses. It was a tackle from behind and he has taken the player out."

"It may have been a booking, but Paul already had a yellow card, so he would have been sent off anyway. But Wayne was unfortunate."

Although United's victory, earned by goals from Scholes, Rooney and Solskjaer prior to Pepe's late long range consolation strike, gave the Premiership team a positive outcome from the game, the red cards leave Ferguson with a real headache.

And his bad night was compounded by England defender Rio Ferdinand limping out of the game after suffering an injury during the pre-match warm-up.

Ferguson said: "Rio went over on his ankle and it's a blow to us, especially with the season only two weeks away."

"We'll see how he goes, but he will hopefully be fit for the game against Seville next Saturday."

## Landis set to lose Tour title

Cycling

AFP, Paris

Tour de France winner Floyd Landis is set to become the first victor of the race to be stripped of his title after his B sample confirmed he had abnormal levels of testosterone on Saturday the sport's governing body the UCI announced.

The 30-year-old American - who was also sacked by his Phonak team following the announcement - had failed a drugs test after the 17th stage of the Tour de France which he had won to get his way back into the race just a day after he had faded out of contention.

However the UCI revealed on Saturday that the B sample had simply confirmed the initial findings - though Landis's camp had already accepted that it would.

"UCI communicates that the analysis of the sample B of Floyd Landis's urine has confirmed the result of an adverse analytical finding notified by the Anti-doping laboratory of Paris on 26th July, following the analysis of the sample A," said a UCI statement.

"In accordance to the Anti-doping rules, the Anti-doping Commission of the UCI will request that the USA Cycling Federation open a disciplinary procedure against the rider."

Landis, though, protested his innocence and announced on his website that he would appeal against the findings.

"Landis will pursue the appeal procedures established by the UCI in order to overturn the laboratory results. It is expected that the matter will now be referred to USA Cycling."

"Landis, who has not used performance-enhancing substances, maintains his innocence in this case and believes that he will be vindicated of the doping charges."

Landis's attorney, Howard Jacobs, has begun preparing the case for arbitration. If the case

follows the normal protocol, it is expected to be resolved within four to six months.

"At this point in time, I am waiting to receive the full laboratory documentation for the B test."

"In consultation with some of the leading medical and scientific experts, we will prove that Floyd Landis's victory in the 2006 Tour de France was not aided in any respect by the use of any banned substances," said Jacobs.

Landis and Jacobs will also argue against the UCI's premature release of the A sample findings as well as the anonymous leak of the carbon-isotope test results to the New York Times on July 31.

However the team of Tour de France runner-up Oscar Pereiro, the man who will benefit from Landis' disqualification and become the fifth Spaniard to win the Tour, were not celebrating yet.

"You can just about say he is the winner, we will just have to wait for confirmation of that in the months to come," Caisse d'Epargne-Iles Balnearies spokesman Francis Lafargue told AFP.

"One cannot but deplore what has happened. It is damaging for cycling in general."

Landis had said prior to the B sample result that he would go to the limit to prove his innocence.

"I ask not to be judged and much less to be sentenced by anyone," Landis said over a week ago.

"I will proceed to undergo all of these tests" to show the levels "are absolutely natural and produced by my own organism", he promised on Friday.

The American added that he wished to state "categorically that my Tour win was exclusively due to many years of training and dedication" to his sport.



FLOYD LANDIS

## Juve angry with AWOL Zlatan

Football

AFP, Rome

Zlatan Ibrahimovic's days at crisis-torn Juventus appear to be numbered after he refused to travel with the team to Friday's friendly against Lo Spezia.

The Swedish striker, whose future in Turin has been in doubt since Juve's relegation to Serie B for match-fixing, was not expected to play in the match because of a knee injury, but he was meant to join up with his teammates and can now expect to be fined.

"I'm really sorry that Zlatan didn't come here," said Juventus coach Didier Deschamps after his side's 4-1 victory.

"I know that he has a knee injury and he hasn't been able to train properly, but I was counting on his presence."

"He didn't want to come along and now the club will take the necessary action."

"Above all, I'm sorry for his team-

mates because they have been let down."

Asked if 'Ibra' was on his way out, Deschamps replied: "No. He simply made a mistake and now he has to pay."

However, despite his insistence that Ibrahimovic will stay, Deschamps appears to be losing the battle to hold onto the lanky Sweden international, who had a terrible World Cup barely getting a shot on target as Sweden limped out in the second round. Earlier this week, Ibrahimovic's agent Mino Raiola said it was "very likely" the 24-year-old forward would leave Juventus.

If he does decide to go, Ibrahimovic will follow French midfielder Patrick Vieira, World Cup-winning captain Fabio Cannavaro, Brazilian midfielder Emerson, French defender Lilian Thuram and another World Cup winning defender Gianluca Zambrotta out of Juventus.

SEE PAGE 18 COL 1

## Pakistan change hockey coach

AFP, Islamabad

Pakistan on Saturday appointed former Olympian Shahnaz Sheikh as coach of its hockey team, replacing Asif Bajwa following a dismal performance at the Champions Trophy last month.

"Bajwa has expressed his unavailability to continue as team coach," Pakistan Hockey Federation secretary Akhtarul Islam told AFP.

Shahnaz Sheikh will become coach and manager with Shahid Ali Khan as assistant coach, he added.

The move comes just a month ahead of the World Cup in Germany. Bajwa faced harsh criticism after Holland thrashed Pakistan 9-2 - its worst ever defeat - in last month's Champions Trophy in Spain.

Pakistan is in Pool A of the World Cup along with Argentina, Australia, Japan, New Zealand and Spain with the top two teams qualifying for the semifinals.

## Real looking for Reyes of sunshine

Football

AFP, Madrid

Spanish giants Real Madrid will try and buy Malian international midfielder Mahamadou Diarra and Spanish international Antonio Reyes next week it was reported on Saturday.

Real Madrid are prepared to pay French champions Lyon 25million euros for Diarra, a pivotal figure in their title win last term, and Arsenal 15million for Reyes according to sports daily As.

According to AS, Real Madrid directors will go to Lyon early next week to seal the deal for Diarra, though, it is believed that the French side will ask for 30million.

Real are keen also to wrap up the transfer of Reyes, who has

demanding he not play in the Champions League third preliminary round against Dinamo Zagreb as that would rule him out of the competition for the rest of the season should he sign for Real. But in a statement on the Arsenal website, Reyes insisted he was going nowhere.

"I did not say these words (about the Champions League)," he said. "I'll tell you once again, I am happy at Arsenal and I am looking forward to the coming campaign."

"We have a new stadium this season and we are pushing for honours in all competitions. I do not want to leave Arsenal."

AS and rival Marca also say that coach Fabio Capello is set to divest himself of several players he believes are surplus to requirements.

SEE PAGE 18 COL 8

## Magnini claims 100m title

AFP, Budapest

Triple Olympic champion Pieter van den Hoogenband was upstaged in the blue riband 100m freestyle at the European Swimming Championships here on Friday by Italy's Filippo Magnini.

Sweden's Stefan Nystrand took second spot ahead with van den Hoogenband, who won back-to-back 100m crowns at the Sydney and Athens Olympics, settling for third. World champion Magnini retained the title he had won two years earlier.

Magnini, who clocked 48.79sec, said afterwards: "The time wasn't great but the important thing was to have retained my title from Madrid. I saw Pieter finish third and Frederick (Bousquet) fourth, but apart from that I concentrated on my own race."

SEE PAGE 18 COL 6

## Inter held in Amsterdam

INTERNET, undated

A late equaliser saw Ajax hold Inter to a 1-1 draw in the Amsterdam Tournament on Friday night after Santiago Solari's opener.

The Nerazzurri took the lead with their first real scoring opportunity at the Amsterdam Arena after 18 minutes of play. Dejan Stankovic pushed forward from midfield and his shot was parried into the path of Solari for a left-foot finish.

The home side fought back after the break and Francesco Toldo saw a Rosales angled drive whistle wide, then former Milan star Jaap Stam rose to nod a corner kick just past the post.

The Dutch outfit continued to pour on the pressure with Wesley Sneijder going close and Toldo forced into a fine save on Huntelaar's close-range effort.

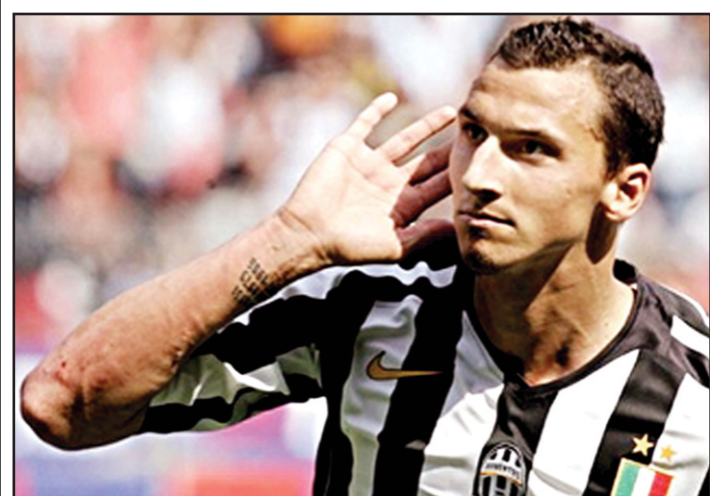
Just as Inter thought they had rode out the storm, Ajax equalised with four minutes left on the clock. Sneijder's curling effort from distance slotted into the top corner despite Toldo getting a touch to the ball.

The Amsterdam Tournament is held every summer and this year sees Inter, Ajax, Porto and Manchester United challenge for the trophy.



Inter Milan midfielder Dejan Stankovic (C) tries to wriggle between two Ajax defenders during their match of the Amsterdam Tournament in the Arena on Friday.

PHOTO: INTERNET



ZLATAN IBRAHIMOVIC

Ad.

Ad.

Ad.