

Arsenal gunning for Tevez

AFP, London

Arsenal are set to make a 17 million pound move for want-away Argentina striker Carlos Tevez of Corinthians...

Corinthians, defending Brazilian champions, had claimed it would cost 30 million pounds to activate a clause in his contract...

The interest in Tevez could hasten the departure of Ashley Cole to Chelsea in a 20million pound deal.

Tevez has been in hot water with the Corinthians bosses this week after being spotted partying in Buenos Aires...

The biggest gripe of the 22-year-old, who arrived at Corinthians from Boca Juniors in November 2004...

Tevez is in the Argentina squad to face Brazil on Saturday at Arsenal's Emirates Stadium...

However, reports in the Brazilian press have claimed that Roma have already sealed a deal for Tevez.

O Estado de Sao Paulo reports that the player's agent is in Italy at the moment concluding a deal.

Tevez has been linked with a host of clubs since announcing he wanted to leave Corinthians, including Manchester United, Chelsea, Bayern Munich and Real Madrid.

Mido back at Spurs

INTERNET, undated

Tottenham Hotspur have agreed a deal to bring Mido back to the club on a permanent deal from Roma.

The 23-year-old striker was at White Hart Lane last season on loan and scored 11 goals before returning to the Italian club.

Spurs boss Martin Jol had been attempting to bring the Egypt international back after his departure, and has now has Mido back to bolster an attacking line-up at White Hart Lane...

Jol said: "We've been tracking Mido since his loan ended and we were always keen to bring him back."

"Roma took some persuading and I'm delighted to have him in the squad."

"He knows I like him as a player, his strength in the air and his mentality. It's an excellent addition to the squad and our striking options are now complete."

The striker told official website: "I'm very happy to be back."

"It was, and it always will be a great honour for me to play for Tottenham."

"I always knew in my heart I would be coming back. It is a fantastic move for me, I have some good friends here and it will be good to be back with the lads. I saw them training today and I'm looking forward to working with Martin and Chris (Hughton) again."

"I can't wait to pull on a Tottenham shirt, to play at the Lane and score some goals."

Garcia moves on loan

AFP, Madrid

Real Madrid announced Tuesday they have loaned their Uruguayan midfielder stopper Pablo Garcia to fellow Spanish league side Celta Vigo.

The 29-year-old Garcia goes on loan for the season having arrived at the Santiago Bernabeu from another top flight side, Osasuna, last year.

Garcia has been left on the sidelines since the arrival of Italian coach Fabio Capello, who has brought in Brazilian Emerson, Italian Fabio Cannavaro and Malian Mahamadou Diarra.

Joaquin thanks Betis

INTERNET, undated

Spain winger Joaquin has thanked Real Betis for helping him become a top-class player, after completing his big-money move to Valencia.

The 25-year-old has signed a six-year contract at the Mestalla, having been linked with a move away from Betis for several seasons.

He told reporters: "I would like to thank the Betis fans because I owe them everything."

"I have had six years here and I have had some fantastic experiences that I never expected to have. I have felt like an idol, a star and you feel that very deeply."

"If any Betis fans feel hurt by my departure I would like to apologise, but I felt that my cycle at the club had finished and I wanted to look for something new."

"It was an honour that a club like Valencia wanted to sign me."

And if initial impressions are something to go by than the 10,000 Valencia fans who came to welcome the Spanish star and their record signing to the club should well find Joaquin a nice home.



Italian trio (From L-R) Gennaro Ivan Gattuso, newly recalled Antonio Cassano and captain Fabio Cannavaro run as part of their training session at the National Technical Center of Coverciano in Florence on Monday.

Donadoni tips Cassano to shine

Football

AFP, Rome

Italy coach Roberto Donadoni predicted Monday that Antonio Cassano will shine again after almost 15 months in the international wilderness.

Cassano, whose last game for Italy was against Norway in June 2005, has been called up by Donadoni as the world champions start their Euro 2008 qualifying campaign against Lithuania in Naples next Saturday followed by

France in Paris the following Wednesday.

Cassano, who joined Spanish giants Real Madrid from Roma in January, was ignored by Marcello Lippi for this year's World Cup, which Italy won by beating France in a penalty shoot-out.

But Donadoni believes Cassano will start to reproduce the kind of form that saw him hailed as Italy's brightest young talent two years ago.

"Now he has his chance and I expect him to take it," said Donadoni at Italy's training camp near Florence.

Cassano's temper has landed him in trouble in the past with his stay at Roma blighted by the then coach Fabio Capello.

However, Donadoni believes the unpredictable 24-year-old just needs lots of attention and care.

"He's a simple lad and you always have to make things clear with him," said the Italy coach whose first game in charge ended in a 2-0 friendly defeat against Croatia.

"He knows he has made mistakes in his career. He is a boy, but a boy with immense talent."

South Africa funded \$11 million

Football

AFP, Cape Town

South Africa is to be handed 11 million dollars to fund an environmentally-friendly expansion of its public transport system for the 2010 World Cup, a world environmental agency said Monday.

The money should be used to put in place a sustainable transport system to serve the country long after the tournament had passed, Global Environment Facility (GEF) chief executive officer Monique

Barbut told reporters. "The aim is to help South Africa provide good transport that is as green as possible," said Barbut in Cape Town on the eve of the body's third annual assembly.

South African transport department deputy director-general Mathabatha Mokonyama said the government would look to encourage the use of public transport rather than private vehicles during the competition which is expected to attract hundreds of thousands of foreign visitors.

Trains would be upgraded and spectators encouraged to cycle or

walk to stadia, he added. The South African government has already put aside over three billion rand (about 42 million dollars) of its own cash to improve its public transport system in time for 2010, said Mokonyama.

The GEF, an independent body financed by donor countries and which also features World Bank representatives, was set up to help developing nations fund environmental initiatives.

Its projects focus on adherence to global environmental treaties on topics such as climate change and pollution reductions.

Keane starts his new job

Football

THE GUARDIAN

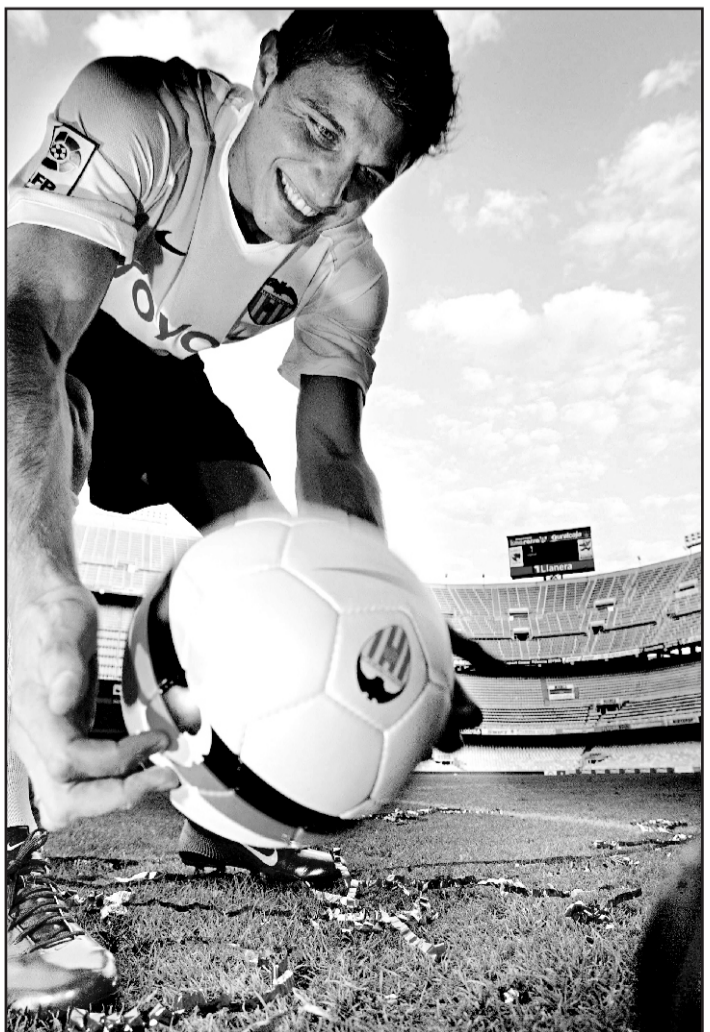
For a man renowned for his devotion to detailed preparation, Roy Keane can be remarkably spontaneous. From his on-pitch violence to his off-

pitch outbursts, the fearsome Irishman has frequently acted without fully plotting the consequences; that intriguing paradox was evident again today as the now 35-year-old explained that the reason he agreed to become Sunderland manager before completing his coaching course was: "I just thought why not? I had to give it a go."

Keane even revealed that he rejected the club's advances several months ago and was still hesitant today when the new owners resumed wooing him last week in the wake of a woeful start to the season under their stopgap boss Niall Quinn. "Three months ago I spoke with the owners and Niall but my priority at that time was to start working on getting my coaching badge in July and August," said Keane. "In that time they didn't get a manager. They came back in last Monday when I was in Portugal and initially I thought I was going to wait longer. But then I thought 'what am I waiting for, the challenge is there'. Sunderland is a big club, with a beautiful stadium, a big fan base so I thought 'why not?'"

If his decision to wade into the fray at this early stage in his post-playing career seems to be borne not of an intricately assembled masterplan but of his trademark blend of self-assurance, courage and recklessness, he has at least accomplished one important preliminary duty: repairing relations with the club's owner Niall Quinn, with whom he famously fell out during the Republic of Ireland's botched 2002 World Cup campaign. "A lot of people are making a big issue of the past but we sorted it out a few months ago," he said. "I think it's important to move on. I apologise if I've done something wrong but I really don't see a problem. That's the kind of character I am."

Though he demonstrated his awareness of his occasional lack of tact, Keane showed no signs that that will detract from his commitment to excellence. "All I expected from my team-mates was 100%," he said. "I never criticised people for having bad games, I criticised people for slacking off and not being focused on the job. I've already reassured the players here that if they give 100% there won't be a problem." Then came the chilling pay-off. "But if the staff or players take their eye off the ball and are not prepared to give 100%, then there will be a problem. It's very, very straightforward."



Valencia's new signing Joaquin Sanchez poses with a club football in the Mestalla following his arrival at the club on Monday.

'No chance' for Hargreaves to move

AFP, London

England international Owen Hargreaves has "no chance" of joining Manchester United from Bayern Munich before Thursday's transfer deadline, his agent said.

United are reportedly ready to pay 17million pounds for the Canadian-born midfielder but German champions Bayern seem determined that Hargreaves should honour his contract, which runs till 2010.

Hargreaves, 25, has expressed his interest in moving to Old Trafford but with just two days until the transfer window closes, his agent is not confident.

Roman Grill, quoted in the Daily Star newspaper, said: "There is no chance of the deal taking place."

"We have to accept there is no way Bayern will allow this transfer to happen."

"We did everything we could to grant Owen his wish to play for Manchester United but his only hope is that, if United remain interested in him, the deal could happen at a later date."

United are also reported to be interested in signing Juventus and France striker David Trezeguet.

Trezeguet has been linked with several clubs this summer following Juve's demotion to Serie B as a result of a match-fixing scandal.

The player's agent, quoted in the Daily Mail, said: "I believe there is an option with United."

Forget about Downing: Southgate

AFP, Middlesbrough

England winger Stewart Downing will stay at Middlesbrough despite firm interest from Tottenham, according to his manager Gareth Southgate on Tuesday.

Tottenham boss Martin Jol had an offer for Downing rejected in pre-season and revealed on Saturday he has made another bid of around 10 million pounds.

But Middlesbrough are desperate to hold onto the 22-year-old youth academy graduate, who featured for England at the World Cup, and Southgate insists his player does not want to leave the Riverside Stadium.

Southgate told Middlesbrough's website: "Stewart is very happy here. I've had a long chat with him, he doesn't want to move."

"That, for me, is all I needed to hear and I don't need to respond to anything from the other end."

Kuyt scoops Dutch honour

INTERNET, undated

Liverpool new boy Dirk Kuyt celebrated his triumphant debut by scooping a top honour in Holland last night.

Kuyt has been named Dutch player of the year.

The 9 million pound striker received the award on an emotional evening, when his seriously ill father presented him with the country's 'Golden Shoe'.

Kuyt's prolific season with Feyenoord earned him the award ahead of PSV Eindhoven's Philip Cocu.

The 25-year-old is currently on international duty in his homeland.

And Kuyt has proved he's more than just a gifted goalscorer on a star-studded evening, where he followed in the footsteps of Dutch greats such as Johan Cruyff.

The new Liverpool striker celebrated his honour by being invited to join Holland singer Jan Smit, sharing the stage with the vocalist in a rendition of a well known Dutch song: "As the Night Disappears."

Chinese teenager for Inter Milan

REUTERS, Beijing

Shanghai United's promising 17-year-old goalkeeper Wang Dalei left China on Tuesday for a week's trial at Italian club Inter Milan, the Shanghai Daily reported.

The teenager, who got his first call-up to China's national squad last week, will be accompanied by 19-year-old Shenzhen Kingsway striker Zhang Wenzhao.

Chinese Super League club United said in a statement they fully supported Wang's attempts to break into Serie A.

"We are currently open to any option in terms of Wang's future... either a loan deal or a transfer would be acceptable for us and we would go for nothing more than a reasonable price," it read.

"If Wang could land himself a contract with Inter, it would be a blessing not only for himself but also for Chinese soccer as a whole. The more Chinese players hone their skills overseas the faster China's soccer will advance."

Kanu propels Pompey

AFP, Middlesbrough



Revived Nigerian international Nwankwo Kanu scored his second double of the season here on Monday as Portsmouth's outstanding start to the season continued with a 4-0 humbling of Middlesbrough.

Zimbabwean international striker Benjani Mwaruware scored one and substitute Svetoslav Todorov - who came on for an injured Kanu late in the match - a last minute goal as Portsmouth rose to second in the Premiership with their first top flight win away over Middlesbrough since September 1949 when they went on to retain the title.

It also maintained their proud record of being the only Premiership side not to have conceded a goal and brought 'Boro back to earth after their shock defeat of champions Chelsea last week.

However Kanu said that his teammates should keep their feet on the ground despite their good run.

"We don't have to be carried away - we have to keep going," said Kanu, who won the Champions League with Ajax in 1995.

"When you keep scoring you have the confidence back and I

want to play good football. When you play in a good side who keep the ball, everyone works hard and I keep playing for the team," added the striker, who was also an Olympic winner with Nigeria in 1996.

Portsmouth manager Harry Redknapp was full of praise for the Nigerian, who features Arsenal among his former clubs.

"He was sitting around all summer and no one else wanted to take him - anybody could have had him, he was waiting for a chance and he's been fantastic," said Redknapp.

However Redknapp also sought to dampen the club's fans expectations especially as he feels his squad is not strong enough.

"Everybody we've gone for we've failed to get and four of the five we have brought in have been frees. But if we get a few injuries, we will be bang in trouble," admitted the 59-year-old, who is close to being in charge of 1000 matches in his 23-year long managerial career.

Portsmouth took the lead in the sixth minute as Kanu, who has taken on a new lease of life since he signed earlier this month after being released by West Brom, prodded home past Mark Schwarzer from inside the box.

It was rough justice on the Australian 'keeper, who had produced a superb save to concede a corner from Dejan Stankovic's

freekick prior to the goal. Indeed Schwarzer produced another top class save to thwart Kanu in the 38th minute as he just got his fingertips to the shot to turn it away for a corner.

The hosts had several chances all from 31-year-old Kanu's former international team-mate Aiyegbeni Yakubu but the former Pompey marksman found error prone ex-England 'keeper David James in solid form as he saved both chances, one a header and the other a shot.

However 'Boro were hit with another early goal in the second-half as the impressive Benjani Mwaruware headed David Thompson's cross past Schwarzer to all but wrap up the match.

While James had to tip a Chris Riggott header round his post shortly afterwards the match was over as a contest when Kanu made it 3-0 as his shot from inside the penalty area gave Schwarzer no chance.

Middlesbrough rarely threatened after that with James having to make just two saves from Lee Cattermole and then another header by Riggott.

However Pompey rubbed salt into the hosts wounds as Todorov produced a delightful lob from the edge of the area to beat Schwarzer and perhaps put a more realistic tint to 'Boro's ambitions for the season.

Sven was not 'expensive mistake'

Football

AFP, London

Sven-Goran Eriksson was not an 'expensive failure' as England manager despite failing to get past the quarter-final stage of three major tournaments, his former employers the Football Association insisted Tuesday.

Swede Eriksson's five-year reign ended after this summer's World Cup, when he stepped down after guiding England to the quarter-finals.

It was England's third successive exit at the last-eight stage of a major tournament under Eriksson,

who reportedly earned up to 5million pounds a year during his tenure.

"In qualification terms he was 100 percent in major tournaments but he himself would say three quarter-finals would not be considered the success he would have looked for," said FA chief executive Brian Barwick.

"He thought this time there would be every chance of success but it did not happen."

"An expensive mistake? I would not accept that notion but we were all disappointed, him included," Barwick told BBC Radio Five Live.

Eriksson has been succeeded by his number two, the former Middlesbrough manager Steve

McClaren, who has brought in another ex-England boss, Terry Venables, as his assistant.

Barwick believes bringing Venables in was a smart move and denies there are any problems relating to him leaving the England post 10 years ago.

Barwick, speaking in an interview to be broadcast in full later Tuesday, said: "I think Terry sees something extra. He will not sit back and not tell Steve, he will tell Steve."

"He is no threat to Steve as the boss - that will be a mischief rumour, not reality."

"He has great experience, he will get on the field. He is a tracksuit coach, as Steve is a tracksuit coach. It is two brains."



New Liverpool forward Dirk Kuyt (L) receives the award for Dutch player of the year from his father during a ceremony in Hilversum on Monday.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down words.

Cryptoquip puzzle grid with a key for letter substitution.

CRYPTOQUIP T S B X N O Q V I V W H B X E B U CTWSTWQ UBH V E H B R T Y A Y J V J N V Y J V X Y T P A H Q T J I T Q V Y A R B H I C B V H O . Yesterday's Cryptoquip: FUN NEW SHOW ABOUT A DOCTOR WITH A SIDE JOB AS A HIP-HOP PERFORMER: "RAPPER JOHN, M.D." Today's Cryptoquip Clue: T equals I The Cryptoquip is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.