



Northern Ireland's David Healy (2nd from R) and Steve Davis celebrate the former's winning goal as Spain's Cesc Fabregas (L) and Pablo Ibanez look on dismally during their Euro 2008 qualifier at Windsor Park in Belfast on Wednesday.

N Ireland stun Spain

REUTERS, Belfast

A hat-trick by striker David Healy gave Northern Ireland a surprise 3-2 home win over fancied Spain in their Euro 2008 Group F qualifier on Wednesday.

The visitors took an early lead with their 1,000 goal - a volleyed cross by midfielder Xavi that whizzed past substitute goalkeeper Maik Taylor, brought on for the injured Roy Carroll.

But the hosts, smarting from a 3-0 home defeat by Iceland in their opening qualifier on Saturday, hit

back when Healy seized on a mix up inside the box to head a 21st minute equaliser.

The sides were level going into the second half but Northern Ireland struggled to keep up the momentum early on and Spain striker David Villa, on the receiving end of a nifty pass from Cesc Fabregas, put Spain 2-1 ahead in the 54th minute.

Northern Ireland continued to struggle and the visitors, who won 4-0 in their opening group game against Liechtenstein on Saturday, narrowly missed two good chances courtesy of Raul.

But Healy, sweeping in a free-kick, brought the home side level again with his second goal in the 66th minute before grabbing his third, off a long clearance, 15

minutes later.

Healy, Northern Ireland's all-time leading scorer with 23 goals in 52 internationals, said the victory had restored pride after their lacklustre performance against Iceland.

OTHER RESULTS

Scotland maintained their good start in the same group with a 2-1 win over Lithuania in Kaunas.

Georgia looked like they would have that honour when they led Ukraine 2-1 in their Group B match with 30 minutes to go but the hosts hit back to win 3-2 with goals from Ruslan Rotan and Andriy Rusol.

Andriy Shevchenko had put Ukraine ahead after 31 minutes.

Both of the countries that were forced to play away from home won,

with Turkey beating Malta 2-0 in their Group C match in Frankfurt and Israel swamping Andorra 4-1 in their Group E game played in Nijmegen, Netherlands.

Denmark scored a 2-0 win away to Iceland in Group F while in another match between neighbours Czech Republic beat Slovakia 3-0 in Bratislava in their Group D derby.

Poland just about put Saturday's stunning home loss to Finland behind them with a 1-1 draw against Serbia in Group A while Hungary came back from their 4-1 home defeat by Norway to win their Group C match 3-1 in Bosnia.

Donadoni to turn to Totti

INTERNET, undated

Italy Coach Roberto Donadoni is ready to turn to Francesco Totti in a desperate effort to get Italy's European Championship qualifying campaign back on track.

Totti stated last week that he didn't intend to play for the Nazionale again until 2007, but he's likely to get the call after the Azzurri followed up Saturday's 1-1 Lithuania draw with a 3-1 loss in France last night.

And with must win games against Ukraine and Georgia coming up next month, Donadoni has hinted he will recall the Roman for those ties.

"Italy now need their champions and I trust that two or three of them will be at my disposal in October," noted the former Milan winger.

"As for Totti, I know he last said he would not return until next year, but that is not what he had told me. We agreed to speak every once in a while to assess his physical condition.

"I will call him, as I will do with the other world champions who were not in Paris. I don't want all the attention focused on Totti, but Italy now really need him."

Donadoni, who has failed to win any of his first three games in charge, is also likely to recall Luca Toni and the experienced Alessandro Del Piero.

Italy's place at Euro 2008 now looks in real jeopardy and captain Fabio Cannavaro is aware that no more mistakes will be permitted.

"We have to now recover from this defeat and find our peace of mind again," said the Real Madrid man. "We know that every match from now on can be decisive.

"France played a good tie, they scored immediately and we were only able to react during the first half.

"Their physical condition is much better than ours and they deserved to win."

The Azzurri face the Ukraine in Rome on October 7 and then travel to Georgia on October 11.

Korea shock the Dutch

Hockey

AFP, Moenchengladbach

South Korea stunned favourites the Netherlands 3-2 in the last match of the opening day of the men's hockey World Cup here on Wednesday.

Earlier, India lost 2-3 to hosts Germany and New Zealand crushed Argentina 3-0 in the only match of Pool A.

"We expected an equal game but we did not expect to win," said South Korea coach Sung Cho.

"We will do our best each game to reach the semifinals."

Netherlands coach Roelant Oltmans said: "We did not start the way we wanted to start and we were surprised with Korea scoring twice from the first two times into our circle.

"I was disappointed we could not keep up the standard at which we played in the first twenty minutes of the second half when we scored twice and we lost the match in the last fifteen minutes when Korea scored again."

South Korea got into the faces of Netherlands in the first half, attack-

ing relentlessly, punishing defensive errors and taking a 2-0 lead into the break with two field goals to Hyo Sik You.

In the second half Ronald Brouwer drove in a field goal off a perfect pass from Teun de Nooijer and Taeke Taekema converted Netherlands third penalty corner to set up a draw.

Nam Lee broke the deadlock with a deflection on a free hit from outside the circle to take the lead 3-2 and South Korea kept possession in the last 10 minutes to hold on to the win.

New Zealand's Hayden Shaw overpowered Argentina with two first-half penalty corner conversions in New Zealand's 3-0 win.

"Paul Woodford in his 100th game for New Zealand made the difference between the two teams early in the game as Argentina played well and was unlucky not to score early," said Kevin Towns, New Zealand's coach.

"We did not defend well and in the second half we had problems with our left defensive position, and lost self confidence after the second goal," said Sergio Vigil, Argentina's coach.

Simon Childs' field goal three

minutes into the second half sealed Argentina's fate.

Germany squeaked past India with a last minute diving goal to Christopher Zeller to win 3-2 in the first Pool B match of the Championship.

"It was disappointing for us to lose a valuable point but I was impressed with the boys who were in the game most of the time," said V. Baskaran, India's coach.

Kanwalpreet Singh conceded a penalty corner from which Christopher Zeller scored, and Germany took a 1-0 lead into the break.

Shivendra Singh converted India's second penalty corner with a backstick shot off the rebound of Kanwalpreet Singh's drive in the second half.

Germany hit back through Oliver Hentschel's conversion of Germany's second penalty corner.

Shivendra Singh capitalising on a defensive error by Germany's defence to beat Christian Schulte and score and set up a draw, until Zeller scored again with 17 seconds on the clock.



Netherlands' Robert van der Horst (R) is under pressure from Korea's Nam Yong Lee during their hockey World Cup encounter in Moenchengladbach on Wednesday.

Torino hire Zaccheroni

AFP, Rome

Torino have sacked Gianni De Biasi and brought in Alberto Zaccheroni to replace him as coach just three days before the start of the new season, the newly-promoted Serie A club confirmed on Thursday.

De Biasi secured promotion for the Turin club via the play-offs, but reportedly fell out with the board in recent weeks.

Zaccheroni, 53, has not coached a club since a brief spell with Inter Milan in the 2003-04 season, when he was appointed halfway through the campaign following the sacking of Hector Cuper.

He helped them secure fourth place in Serie A, but Inter owner Massimo Moratti was not convinced he was the right man for the job and replaced him with Roberto Mancini.

Zaccheroni's finest moment was when he won the league title as AC Milan coach in 1999.

He has also coached Lazio, Udinese, Cosenza and Vicenza.

Zaccheroni's first match in charge of Torino will be against Parma on Sunday.

UNICEF gets Barcelona shirt deal

AFP, Madrid

Barcelona president Joan Laporta announced Wednesday the club has officially signed a shirt deal with international children's welfare body UNICEF.

UNICEF, which stands for United Nations Children's Fund, will be the first name to appear on the Spanish and European champions' shirt.

Laporta said the "historic agreement" with the international body, whose aim is to help children living in poverty in developing countries, will highlight the club's social sympathies.

"It's an historic agreement which shows the world that our club is more than just a club," said Laporta, who was re-elected as the club president last month.

"It's an initiative with soul. It means winning the 'Champions League' on a social level.

"Our organisation is positioning itself to help children. That means that Barca has a future as it is helping the children of the world."

Passing through Paris on his way to New York, where a delegation from the Catalan giants will visit the UNICEF headquarters on Thursday, Laporta added: "It's a historic moment as it is a prestigious logo and not just a publicity brand.

"It's an honour to wear the UNICEF logo because it's an agreement without precedent for UNICEF as well."

According to Spanish press reports in July, when the historic shirt deal was first made public, Barcelona's contract with UNICEF is set to be for five years.

Founded in 1899 Barcelona have always resisted the temptation to have an actual paying shirt sponsor, something the club has prided itself on throughout the years.

Gravesen slates Capello

INTERNET, undated

Former Real Madrid midfielder Thomas Gravesen has described new Real coach Fabio Capello as "arrogant and an egotist" in a Spanish TV interview after his transfer to Scottish club Celtic.

The combative Danish midfielder accused Capello of "never giving him a chance" and poked fun at his mistake in saying Bodo Illgner was still at the club.

"He came to me and said, without having seen me play, that he had other ideas," claimed Gravesen. "He is not a good type, he never gave me a chance. He told me that I was no longer required in a very arrogant way - he never even called me by my name."

Gravesen was sold to Celtic this summer after a season and a half at Real, in which he impressed in fits and starts but never truly filled the holding role Real were looking for.

"I don't know what they saw me as, but I am not a specialist defensive midfielder, at least I don't see myself in this way. Perhaps they mistook me for Lee Carsley, who played behind me at Everton. Although, for sure, I'm very happy if they made this mistake."

The former Hamburg and Everton player could not resist a further dig at Capello, who mistakenly listed Bodo Illgner as one of his goalkeepers - "he forgot about (Spain international) Cassillas and Bodo isn't even at the club!"

England squeeze past Macedonia

REUTERS, Skopje

A superb finish by striker Peter Crouch just after halftime gave England a deserved 1-0 win over Macedonia in their Euro 2008 Group E qualifier on Wednesday.

England dominated after a nervy start and could have won by a bigger margin, having missed half a dozen good chances either side of the in-form Crouch's 46th minute strike.

It was the lanky forward's 11th goal in his last 10 internationals, including two in England's 5-0 win over Andorra in their first qualifier at Old Trafford on Saturday.

Crouch scored what proved to be the winner when he unleashed a close-range volley that cannoned off the underside of the bar and down over the goal line.

He was set up by midfielder Frank Lampard who stole the ball off a hesitant defence and scrambled it into Crouch's path.

England now have six points from their opening two games while Macedonia have three points from their first two matches following their 1-0 win in Estonia last month.

England coach Steve McClaren was satisfied with the victory that

puts them top of Group E with Israel.

"We defended as a team to get the result and six points from the first two games means we are on target," McClaren, who took over from Sven-Goran Eriksson, told Sky Sports.

"These type of games are decided by one defining moment and we got it. We could have played better football, but overall all we wanted to do was win," added McClaren, who was still making his way down the tunnel when Crouch scored.

England did not look comfortable on a hard pitch in the early stages and were unable to mount any consistent pressure, giving the ball away easily in the final third of the pitch.

Macedonia coach Srecko Katanec fielded his favourite 3-4-1-2 formation and his team subdued England's midfield in the opening 30 minutes, cutting off the supply routes to Crouch and Jermain Defoe up front.

Fullback Phil Neville initially struggled to keep up with Macedonia wing back Robert Petrov on England's right flank but it was his long throw-ins that created the first three chances for Steve McClaren's men.

Crouch saw his header tipped away for a corner by keeper Jane Nikolovski in the 25th minute while Defoe's overhead kick flashed

wide of the far post before he volleyed a Crouch flick-on over the bar from 10 metres.

Nikolovski did well to keep out Lampard's crisp low shot from 20 metres on the stroke of halftime after England captain John Terry had blocked a Velice Sumulikoski shot at the other end with goalkeeper Paul Robinson beaten.

England looked completely in control after Crouch broke the deadlock straight after the restart and almost made it 2-0 in the 57th minute when he rifled a fierce shot from 15 metres just wide of the far post.

Nikolovski then kept out midfielder Steven Gerrard's scrambled shot from 10 metres in the 65th minute but England were forced to hang on in the closing stages and survived a late onslaught from the battling Macedonians.

Veteran midfielder Artim Sakiri, who came on as a second half substitute, shot just wide in the 78th minute and Macedonia had a penalty appeal waved away two minutes later when Goran Pandev's shot struck central defender Terry on the arm.

But it was Ashley Cole who came to England's rescue in their most frightening moment when he scrambled the ball away on the goal line in the 83rd minute after a shot by Darko Tasevski.



England striker Peter Crouch scores the winning goal against Macedonia with an overhead kick during their Euro 2008 qualifying match in Skopje on Wednesday.

Carlos ends Brazil career

Football

AFP, Madrid

Real Madrid defender Roberto Carlos said Wednesday the arrival of younger, fitter defenders in the Brazil national team had spelt the end of his international career.

And the 33-year-old said he would not be following in the footsteps of former teammates Zinedine Zidane and Luis Figo, both of whom returned from international retirement to play again for France and

Portugal respectively.

"With me, a return is not possible," the veteran dead ball specialist told reporters at a press conference.

"Brazil can now count on the likes of Marcelo (Fluminense) and Gilberto (Hertha Berlin) and they are both very good players.

"Now, the days off are precious to me."

Roberto Carlos, who has solicited interest from Fenerbahce in Turkey and English champions Chelsea, seemed a shadow of his former self at the World Cup.

He emerged from the tournament

having faced criticism for his lack of intervention before Thierry Henry's goal which handed France a 1-0 win and ticket to the semifinals.

However he said he had been unjustly criticised.

"I've played for Brazil for 15 years, we've lost 16 games and I've been world champion," said the Brazilian.

"Now I just want to concentrate on Real Madrid. My family's been missing me a lot since the World Cup."

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Arguments brand

5 Alias (Abbr.)

8 "Dear —"

12 Send overseas

13 Opposite of "trans-"

14 Scottish hillside wiper?

15 Workbench attachment

16 Ersatz stain remover

18 Movie-house treat

20 Also-ran

21 Cretan amount

22 Supporting

23 Bound into bundles

26 Lake

30 Work with

31 Driver's license datum

32 "CS" evidence

DOWN

1 Answer an Invite

2 Columbus' place

3 Thready streak

4 Coin

5 Capital of Ghana

6 Potter's oven

7 Ann and Andy

8 Capri, e.g.

9 Family-fraction abbr.

10 Ordered light

11 Calendar quota

17 Puff

19 Peculiar amount

22 Sly one

23 Urban transport

Solution time: 21 mins.

LETTERS LEA ARGO
ECHO ARW LUAU
FRUO PRESUMES
TUNIP TWIBLE
DREW BNA
PRESIDES AIDE
ACT SUITE NOS
RAGE PRESAGES
ERE SAPS
OCTAVE TIGHEM
PRESENTS ESSE
TORE IIT NPAE
SPAR DEN DUST

24 Blond shade

25 Zodiac cat

26 King (Lat.)

27 Praise in verse

28 Literary collection

29 Slight amount

31 Drunkard

34 Wears away

35 U2 lead singer

36 Prickly plant part

37 Set the tape back to the start

39 Flash

40 Grouch

41 "The Amazing —"

42 Shrek, for one

43 Family

44 On the briny

45 Unkempt one

46 Coop group

48 Grazing site

CRYPTOQUIP

E PFT KFAI-AFVVFB, NEVVF

C "IRUA XP XSITRIIRPW

EPJ VRF-CFIFNIXB IFAI,"

RA KJ UESV F. WBEQQ.

Yesterday's Cryptquip: BECAUSE SOME ANGRY BEES ATTACKED HIM, THE GUY HAD TO TAKE PART IN A STING OPERATION.

Today's Cryptquip Clue: J equals Y

The Cryptquip 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.