



PHOTO: AFP

Manchester United defender Patrice Evra (L) jumps to avoid a sliding challenge from forward Wayne Rooney (C) as Alan Smith looks on during a training session at the Carrington ground in Manchester on Tuesday.

## Henry out of Hamburg trip

AFP, London

Arsenal will have to rely on young forwards Emmanuel Adebayor and Robin van Persie to lead the line in their crucial Champions League tie in Hamburg after Thierry Henry pulled out injured on Tuesday.

The French striker sustained a foot injury in morning training and will not travel with the squad to Germany for Wednesday's Group G clash.

However, England under-21 forward Theo Walcott returns to the squad after being rested at the weekend, while new signing Julio Baptista of Brazil will also travel to Germany.

Germany goalkeeper Jens Lehmann is available again following suspension from the first leg of the qualifiers, while France centre-back William Gallias should continue at left-back.

Arsenal are still beset by defensive problems with Gael Clichy (foot), Philippe Senderos (shoulder), Abou Diaby (ankle) and Lauren (knee) all still short of full match fitness.

## Pires needs another six months

AFP, Madrid

Villarreal midfielder Robert Pires is recovering after undergoing a knee operation in the southern French city of Marseille, his Spanish club announced Tuesday.

Pires will remain in Marseille for around a month before returning to Villarreal near Valencia where he will then require several months of rehabilitation before training again.

The 31-year-old France international suffered a rupture of the cruciate ligament in his knee on August 19.

The operating doctor said that former Arsenal midfielder Pires would be out for around six months.

## Eto'o proud of honour

INTERNET, undated

Barcelona forward Samuel Eto'o said he is proud of having been named the best forward of last year's edition of the Champions League, and is raring to carry Barcelona's mantle again.

"Pride and responsibility [is what I feel]," said Eto'o to Spanish daily Sport when asked how he felt having been named the best forward in Europe.

"Now I also understand that if we were to not win the trophy again, it could seem like my performance has gone down. I would sign right now if Barcelona were to win again, and I was not to win anything [individual]."

However, he also sounded a note of caution for the champions: "It is necessary to have your feet firmly on the ground, because if

## Battle of Britain looms large

AFP, Paris

The all-British clash between Manchester United and Celtic at Old Trafford should ensure that Wednesday night's Champions League matches are not short of fireworks.

And in a high-profile cameo, Real Madrid midfielder Mahamadou Diarra's return to Lyon should ensure a hostile reception awaits him.

In other matches AC Milan continue their fortuitous progress in this season's competition by entertaining AEK Athens while strugglers Arsenal and Hamburg clash in Germany, with both sides yet to register a league victory this season.

But all eyes will be on Old Trafford and the first-ever competitive fixture between the eight-time English Premiership champions and the Glasgow giants.

And United manager Sir Alex Ferguson will be delighted to be able to call upon Wayne Rooney and Paul Scholes again after the pair were suspended for the last three league games.

Rooney will be biting at the bit after also missing two England games following his World Cup dismissal against Portugal.

But more importantly, Ferguson is looking for a reaction from his players after they finished bottom of their relatively easy-looking

group a year ago. "Look back at last year. We got off to a good start with a draw at Villarreal with 10 men and we thought: 'that's us off,'" said Ferguson.

"But we didn't score enough goals. We never scored against Lille or Villarreal, that's four games we didn't score in. It'll be different this year, I assure you."

In fact, United scored just three goals in their six games as they won just once and Fergie says the players are determined to set the record straight.

"Nobody likes bad memories," he said. "But in football terms, good footballers don't want that to happen again and aim to improve on it. They should want that, particularly the younger players."

Real Madrid face a return to the Stade Gerland where last season they lost their opening group stage match 3-0.

It's a new Madrid this time

FIXTURES	
<b>Group E</b>	Dynamo Kiev v Steaua Bucuresti Lyon v Real Madrid
<b>Group F</b>	FC Copenhagen v Benfica Manchester Utd v Celtic
<b>Group G</b>	FC Porto v CSKA Moscow Hamburg SV v Arsenal
<b>Group H</b>	AC Milan v AEK Athens Anderlecht v Lille

around, though, with Fabio Capello at the helm and a host of top quality defensive signings bolstering the area where Real have most suffered recently, as well as the addition of goal-machine Ruud van Nistelrooy.

But Lyon will be doubly determined to show Diarra that they can be just as strong without him.

Having reached the quarter-finals the last three seasons and topped their group ahead of Real last time out, Lyon have every reason to feel confident going into this fixture.

Meanwhile, Arsenal tackle Hamburg with both sides hovering in the lower reaches of their domestic leagues and with the Londoners trying to avoid thinking about the distraction of a trip to Manchester United at the weekend.

Manager Arsene Wenger admitted it has been a difficult start for the Gunners, but he is trying to keep his team focussed on their Champions League campaign, especially after last season's dream run to the final.

"Let's focus on Europe. If we get a good result in Hamburg we'll go in good condition to Man Utd," Wenger said.

"I can't say that I am unconcerned by our start to the season. We are lacking a bit of sharpness because half the team has been away for the whole summer playing football."

AC Milan, who many people feel should not even be in the competition having been found guilty of

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PHOTO: AFP

WATCH THIS: Barcelona hitman Samuel Eto'o plays with his son during a training session at the Nou Camp in Barcelona on Monday.

## India PM pleads to Brazil

AFP, New Delhi

India will seek Brazil's help to improve football standards in the country, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh said on Tuesday ahead of a state visit to the South American nation.

Singh told reporters on board the flight to Brazil that he will raise the issue of football aid at his summit meeting with President Lula Da Silva, the Press Trust of India (PTI) reported.

The Prime Minister said he was persuaded by cabinet colleague Priya Ranjan Dasmunshi, who heads the Indian football federation, to seek Brazil's help "even though it was not on the official agenda", PTI reported.

"If we are aspiring to have the Olympics in our country, we must improve our capabilities in sports," Singh was quoted as saying.

"If co-operation with other countries like getting help of some coaches from other countries was needed, I do not see anything wrong in that."

While five-time World Cup winners Brazil lead FIFA's official rankings, India lie low at 128.

India, ranked 26th in Asia, have never qualified for the World Cup finals.

The current Indian team, coached by Englishman Bob Houghton, is recovering from a 1-7 thrashing by Saudi Arabia in the Asian Cup qualifiers last month.

India, who have hosted the Asian Games twice in 1951 and 1982 and will hold the Commonwealth Games in 2010, are expected to bid for the 2016 Olympics.

## Celtic not ready: Nakamura

INTERNET, undated

Shunsuke Nakamura admits Celtic are not ready for their Champions League game against Manchester United.

United welcome the Scottish champions to Old Trafford tomorrow night and the Japanese midfielder believes the clash has come too soon for a team who only just managed to scrape a win over Aberdeen at the weekend.

"We need to improve as a team before this game because we're not playing well enough for the Champions League," he told the Scottish Sun.

"The manager has brought in two or three new players and unfortunately we still don't know each other well enough."

"So far this season, I don't think we've been playing well as a team. Our last game against Aberdeen brought a win, but we didn't play well. For me, we played too many long balls to [Jan Vennegoor off] Hesselink and that's not good enough for the Champions League."

Nakamura believes a point from their Champions League opener is the best Celtic can hope for.

He added: "For this game, we can't go down to Manchester and attack, attack, attack. It's hard to win there so for us it will be vital to defend in this game."

"Right now, I think a draw would be an important result for us."

## Jarolim, Kompany fit for Hamburg

AFP, Hamburg

Belgian defender Vincent Kompany and Czech midfielder David Jarolim have returned from injury to give SV Hamburg a timely boost ahead of their Champions League clash with Arsenal on Wednesday.

Kompany had been out since the start of September with groin problems while Jarolim was recovering from a fractured arm.

Jarolim will be wearing a plaster for the group G fixture, Hamburg's first in the competition since the 2000-01 season.

Hamburg coach Thomas Doll will however have to do without skipper and playmaker Rafael van der Vaart, who is still nursing a left thigh injury.

Other injured players missing from his squad are Timothee Atouba and Argentine Juan Pablo Sorin.

Despite failing to win any of their three Premiership matches so far, Arsenal go into this fixture as big favourites. Arsene Wenger's men lost to Barcelona in last year's final in Paris.

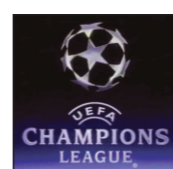
With three league draws and an early exit from the German Cup on Saturday, Hamburg have had a less than spectacular start to the domestic season.

Doll however remains upbeat. "It will be a match that could help turn things around for us," said the German.

"It will give us a chance to stop thinking about the Bundesliga and the German Cup for a while."

## Houllier unworried by Real

AFP, Paris



French champions Lyon begin what has become their annual quest to get past the quarter-final stages of the Champions League against one of the competition's historic giants on Wednesday.

Despite the pedigree of Real Madrid, Lyon will not be swayed from aiming for a repeat of last season's feat when they dominated the nine-time kings of Europe to cruise into the knockout phase as group winners.

Lyon coach Gerard Houllier, who can again count on a wealth of talent throughout the squad, saw his side battle to a 2-0 win over French league side Troyes on Saturday.

And although the level of play is expected to rise significantly when

David Beckham and co. take the field on Wednesday, Houllier is feeling buoyant.

"We deserved to win (against Troyes), even though I have to admit that we had to push for it a bit," said the Frenchman.

"Last year just before we played Real we had some difficulties in the second half against Monaco. So I'm not worried ahead of playing Real Madrid on Wednesday."

Going on last season's statistics alone, Lyon should have little to worry about.

France's top club hammered the Spanish giants 3-0 at home then held them to a draw at the Santiago Bernabeu to secure entry to the knockout phase after topping group F.

Lyon sailed through that phase after dominating PSV Eindhoven 5-0 over two legs, but they were then stopped at the quarter-finals, yet again, by AC Milan.

Since failing to get out of the

competition's group stages in the 2002-2003 season, Lyon's Champions League campaign has ended at the quarter-finals for three years in a row.

Making it to and past the last four will be the club's target again and with Dynamo Kiev and Steaua Bucharest in group E that should be realistic.

Against Real, Lyon's forwards will find themselves face to face with Mahamadou Diarra, the midfielder general who was crucial to their team before he secured a move to Real last month.

Diarra is in for an emotional return but Jeremy Toulalan, who was bought from Nantes to replace him, is ready to step in and fill the hole left by the Mali international.

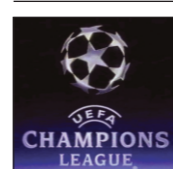
"I'm nobody's successor, but I want to make sure I give it 110 percent," Toulalan told the Dauphine Libere newspaper.

"I have to make sure I am at the

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## Rooney to be unleashed

AFP, Manchester



As Blackburn's Michael Gray will testify, Wayne Rooney suffers more than most from the pent-up frustration that afflicts professional footballers when they are prevented from playing their trade.

Floored by a single punch from Rooney in a Manchester restaurant at the weekend, Gray felt the full force of the rage that Manchester United boss Sir Alex Ferguson is planning to unleash on Celtic in Wednesday night's Champions League showdown at Old Trafford.

The first competitive meeting between the two clubs could also

see a return to action for Paul Scholes, who, like Rooney, has served a three-match ban as a result of a red card received in a pre-season friendly tournament in Amsterdam.

The pair are itching for a return to action, "like bears with sore heads," as Ferguson put it.

"They've not been happy bunnies and they're not satisfied unless they're playing," the Scott added. "They know they've been punished very unfairly but they're raring to go and it'll be great to have them back."

United's pre-Christmas exit from last season's Champions League was largely the result of their failure to score against either Lille or Villarreal at home.

But with Scholes now fully

recovered from the eye problem that afflicted him last season and Rooney champing at the bit, Ferguson believes a lack of goals is unlikely to be an issue this season.

"It will be different this year I can assure you," said Ferguson. "If someone had told me this time last year we would finish bottom of our group, I would never have believed them."

"No one likes bad memories but good footballers should always look at situations like that and say 'I do not want that to happen again'."

Celtic have a good record against English opposition in recent years, having knocked Blackburn and Liverpool out of the UEFA Cup in 2001/02 and 2002/03 respectively.

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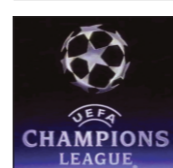
PHOTO: AFP

US Open champion Maria Sharapova arrives at the Marc Jacobs Spring 2007 show during Olympus Fashion week at the Armory in New York on Monday.

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## Bayern top earnings list

AFP, Berlin



Bayern Munich are the kings when it comes to earnings from the Champions League, according to a report here Tuesday.

However the financial findings by a German news agency will raise a few eyebrows - especially after Bayern's recent claim that they cannot compete with Europe's big guns due to a lack of funds.

Bayern's general manager Uli Hoeness said earlier this year the German champions may never win the Champions League again because they cannot compete with other teams in terms of television revenues.

But figures released by news agency DPA reveal that Bayern have earned more from the Champions League since its inception in 1992-93 than any other club.

The 2001 champions' revenues

from television rights and prize money comes to 210 million euros (267 million dollars).

After their gate receipts for the 54 home matches Bayern have played in the competition is taken into account, that sum rises to 300 million euros (381 million dollars).

In comparison record nine-time European champions Real Madrid are not even on the same playing field, having earned only 194 million euros (247 million dollars).

The Spanish giants lie joint second with Manchester United.

Disgraced Italian giants Juventus are next with 172 million euros ahead of Arsenal with 171 million euros, AC Milan on 147 million euros and current European champions Barcelona with 143 million euros.

Bayern, who were also European Cup winners three times in a row from 1974-76, begin this season's campaign on Tuesday night against Spartak Moscow.

While Barca earned 32 million euros (40.7 million dollars) last

season, that pales in comparison to Bayern's best season in 2001 when they earned 46 million euros (58.5 million dollars).

When asked in April if Bayern could win another Champions League crown, Hoeness had moaned: "The probability is not very big."

"Juventus earn 118 million euros per season from selling television rights, we get 16 million. Over five years, that makes a difference of 500 million euros (636 million dollars)."

Coach Felix Magath was following a similar line on Monday when he claimed the best Bayern could hope for this season was merely making it out of the group stages.

"We need to get past the group stage and that is what can be expected of us. After that a lot depends on the draw," Magath said in an interview with Kicker magazine.

"The main target is to still be in the competition in 2007."