

## Sven tapped up Lineker!

INTERNET, undated

England legend Gary Lineker has revealed that he was tapped up by then-Fiorentina coach Sven-Goran Eriksson in the 1980s. The striker said the practice of tapping up was a commonplace and accepted part of the game and should be legalised.

Writing in his Sunday Telegraph column, Lineker said he had been approached by Fiorentina when he was playing for Barcelona.

"I was tapped up throughout my career, once by former England manager Sven-Goran Eriksson, if not personally," he said. "And I never thought it was the slightest problem."

"(Eriksson) arranged for a representative from his club to tap me up when I was playing for Barcelona in the late eighties."

"Johan Cruyff, the Barcelona manager, was playing me on the wing, which everybody knew was not my best position, so Sven quite rightly thought I might be unsettled and fancy a move to a club who would play me as a striker."

The move did not go through, with Lineker instead joining Tottenham Hotspur in summer 1989.

Tapping up is the process by which clubs approach prospective transfer targets without the prior agreement of the player's existing employers.

Although it is banned under existing regulations, Lineker claimed it was widespread, saying: "I doubt that many transfer deals have ever been done without a tapping up process because no club want to be left with egg on their face by trying to sign a player who is not interested."

The 45-year-old said the football authorities' efforts to clean up the game by eliminating tapping up were misguided.

Lineker instead suggested banning clubs from paying fees to agents, forcing clubs to take commission from the players they look after.

## Germany job attracts Magath

INTERNET, undated

Bayern Munich coach Felix Magath has admitted he would be interested in taking control of the German national team. Joachim Loew was appointed to succeed Jurgen Klinsmann in July as the German FA opted for continuity, though Magath admitted the post could interest him in the future.

He told German magazine Sportbild: "If anybody came to me and said 'Herr Magath, we would like to have you as national team coach,' then I would have to think about it. At 60 years-old, that could be a goal for me. If I am healthy and fit then, then why shouldn't I do it?"

The 53-year-old has won consecutive league and cup doubles in his first two seasons at the Bavarian club, but has recently become frustrated by the lack of recognition for his success.

"I had thought that such a unique achievement as successfully defending a double would be a reason to celebrate but there I appear to have been mistaken," he lamented.

When the national job became available two years ago after the resignation of Rudi Voeller, Magath's name was one of many put forward as a possible new coach. But the chess enthusiast elected to move from old club Stuttgart, to Bayern.

"It was never an issue for me, because I love getting out on the training field every day. But now I see things a little differently," Magath revealed.

"I wouldn't contradict Uli Hoeness in his statement that the FC Bayern job is the nicest, but it is very energy-consuming. For that reason, I don't know if I could go on doing it for another six or seven years."

## Sicilians in clash again

AFP, Rome

A soldier and two policemen were injured in clashes with Catania supporters at the 2-2 draw with Messina in an Italian football league match on Saturday night, Ansa news agency reported.

Before the Sicilian derby, a soldier received head injuries after being hit by a stone thrown from the stands of Catania's Angelo Massimino stadium.

Two policemen were then injured after being hit coming to the aid of a supporter who was in difficulties. "It was like being in Lebanon," said Catania police chief Michele Capomacchia.

After the match, police used tear gas against the Catania fans who were causing damage outside the stadium and were throwing stones and other objects, causing more injuries.

On September 20, another Sicilian derby between Palermo and Catania ended with 50 people injured, including five policemen, in clashes between the rival fans.



Juan Pablo Sorin (L) of Hamburg is in a tangle with Werder Bremen's Torsten Frings during their Bundesliga match in Hamburg on Saturday.

## Bayern bellow with Bommel

AFP, Munich

Bayern Munich moved ominously to the top of the Bundesliga table with Dutch international Marc van Bommel scoring for the second game in succession to clinch a 2-1 win over Alemannia Aachen on Saturday.

The three points lifts reigning champions Bayern to the summit ahead of Schalke 04 on goals scored.

Schalke defeated VfL Wolfsburg 2-0 courtesy of goals from German international Kevin Kuranyi and Brazilian Lincoln.

Borussia Monchengladbach, who led the standings after a 1-0 win over Borussia Dortmund on Friday, slipped to fourth with Hertha Berlin dropping to third after a 1-1 draw against Mainz 05.

In the game of the day last season's second and third placed teams, Werder Bremen and SV Hamburg, shared the spoils in a 1-1 draw that is no good for either side.

Bremen lose further ground on Bayern, now three points ahead, while Hamburg are still left searching for their first win of the new campaign after four draws and one defeat.

Bayern, who lost 2-1 to Arminia Bielefeld last weekend, are also

struggling to get going, but continue to grind out results without playing well.

"We only played well after going 1-0 down and we did not do anything more than we needed to," admitted Bayern manager Felix Magath.

Bayern travel to Italy to face Inter Milan in the Champions League on Wednesday and goal hero van Bommel called for an improved display.

"We were too static and were fortunate not to be punished near the end," said van Bommel. "The Champions League is a different level altogether and we are certainly not where we want to be and can do much more."

Aachen took a surprise 38th minute lead at the Allianz Arena through Sascha Dum with his free-kick taking a cruel deflection off Brazilian defender Lucio to wrongfoot Oliver Kahn.

Bayern hit back though after just 60 seconds with Peruvian international Claudio Pizarro, who said earlier this week that he may leave at the end of the season, heading in a corner from the right.

Van Bommel, a recent signing from Barcelona, then scored for the second game in succession with a low 55th minute shot creeping into the corner.

Aachen had a goal controversially ruled out for offside and the hosts held on for three points.

Hamburg have forgotten what taking three points feels like and

were not satisfied with a point in the north German derby with Bremen.

"We saw a real team on the pitch today and we created a lot of chances but unfortunately we did not get our reward," explained Hamburg chief Thomas Doll.

Hamburg capped a debut to Argentina captain Juan Pablo Sorin, a three-million-euro signing from Villareal, and the hosts started the stronger against a Bremen team denied their star striker Miroslav Klose through injury.

Serbia and Montenegro international Danijel Ljuboja had a great chance to break the deadlock for Hamburg on 22 minutes but could not get the ball out of his feet and hit a tame shot at Tim Wiese in the Bremen goal.

Bremen took the lead on 58 minutes with German international Tim Borowski scoring his first goal of the season, drilling a shot through the goalkeeper's legs.

Defender Bastian Reinhardt equalised with 68 minutes gone but Hamburg had Iranian international Mehdi Mahdavia sent off shortly afterwards for a crude challenge on Brazilian Diego.

"If you go in front you want more from the match but overall I am happy with the result," said Bremen coach Thomas Schaaf.

## Ben Haim reveals Bolton boozing

INTERNET, undated

Israeli defender Tal Ben Haim has blown the lid off what he claims is a rampant drinking culture at Bolton Wanderers. The centre-back says some players boasted about spending the entire summer break drunk and went on mid-season booze tours.

"Players love to go out and drink," Ben Haim was quoted as saying in the News of the World. "I am shocked at what they do."

"How come players at Bolton did nothing but drink all summer when I was training all week? They say they did nothing, they told me 'We were drunk for a month' and they were on holiday."

However, he said that the players' recreational excesses had a minimal impact on their fitness: "Then they come for pre-season fitness training and are still at a very high level. I can't understand how."

Ben Haim also revealed that players shelled out £700 a head for a weekend bender in Dublin, and that he had to pay even though he did not go on the trip.

"They rented a plane and flew to Dublin for two days to get drunk."

Bolton lie eighth in the Premiership table after collecting eight points from their first five games, with Ben Haim ever-present.

## Roberto's 500 with Real

REUTERS, Madrid

Brazilian full-back Roberto Carlos made his 500th official appearance for Real Madrid in their Primera Liga game at Real Betis on Saturday.

The 33-year-old joined Real from Inter Milan during Fabio Capello's first spell as coach in 1996. He has played over 350 league games for Real and helped them win three league titles and three European Cups.

He won the World Cup in 2002, but quit international soccer following Brazil's 1-0 quarterfinal defeat by France at this year's tournament in Germany in which he was widely blamed for failing to mark goalscorer Thierry Henry.

The left back hinted at a possible move away from Real during the close season, saying he had received an offer from English champions Chelsea, but he finally decided to remain at the club until the end of the current campaign.

## Kewell on the mend

AFP, Sydney

Injured Liverpool midfielder Harry Kewell has said his football future was looking rosy after the first of a couple operations.

The sidelined Australian international said Sunday he was finding it virtually impossible to walk from his bed to the shower in his family home here without pain, but shortly he will be ready to play again.

Kewell spent his 28th birthday Friday in a recovery ward after undergoing toe and ankle surgery Thursday in Sydney.

He is also expected to have a groin operation in Melbourne next week.

"No question -- I'll come back stronger, quicker and fitter," Kewell told Sydney's Sun-Herald newspaper.

"I've been out for a long time and I'm hungry to come back into it -- that's what I'm really looking forward to."

Kewell has not played since June 22 when he helped Australia reach the second round of the World Cup in Germany with a late equalising goal in the Soccerroos' 2-2 draw with Croatia.

Kewell said he will consult a specialist Monday after surgery to strip the bone in the big toe on his left foot, which he says was "all smashed up". The toe had been attacked by septic arthritis, a bacterial infection.

He said a surgeon also scraped a tendon in his right ankle to ease inflammation.

Kewell said he will have a hip arthroscopy this week to ease pain in his troublesome groin.

"I can walk around now but I have to be very, very careful," he said. "It's going to be a couple of weeks before I can do anything."

"I'm in a bit of pain now but expect to be fine in a couple of days."

Kewell said he was unsure when he would return to the pitch, but expects to spend at least two more weeks in Australia.

He said his English club Liverpool has been supportive while he recovers from his injuries.

"We've discussed everything since I've been out here," he said. "They know exactly what I'm doing and that's how we like it, we like to keep everything open."

"They've been fantastic through the whole thing as well."

## Benitez pin hopes on strikers

AFP, Liverpool



Liverpool boss Rafa Benitez has backed strikers Dirk Kuyt and Craig Bellamy to fire his side into contention for the Premiership title.

Kuyt scored his second goal since his move to Anfield last month as Liverpool beat Tottenham 3-0 on Saturday, but the Dutchman and his strike partner Bellamy, who signed from Blackburn in pre-season, were both below their best.

They looked unconvincing for lengthy periods of the game, but Benitez insists that the strikers have what it takes to hit it off as they grow more accustomed to each other.

He said: "Craig and Dirk have good pace and they can score goals, so I think that they can show that they will be a good pair up front."

"Robbie Fowler and Peter Crouch are also good strikers, so we don't have a problem in that department."

"Obviously, Craig wants to score

goals just like any other striker, but they will come for him."

Benitez insisted he was always confident his team would find their form after a slow start to the campaign.

After a 3-1 defeat against Merseyside rivals Everton and a narrow loss at Chelsea last weekend, Liverpool were well adrift of the title contenders.

But this win, coming just three days after a comfortable victory against Newcastle has given Benitez's men a new lease of life.

He said: "Before we played the two games that we lost, people were talking about crucial times. But everything in this division is crucial, every result."

"They were two difficult away games, and we are in the middle of a spell of many important games close together. But we have now won two in succession, things are looking a bit better."

"In the first half we were searching for space and the right pass, but after the break we started with a much higher tempo. That was the key."

## Lyon rout Lille

AFP, Paris



A double from Brazilian striker Fred kept the Lyon steamroller on track Saturday with a 4-1 rout over fellow Champions League qualifiers Lille.

A second-half brace from Fred along with goals from Florent Malouda and Juninho keep Lyon on top of the table just ahead of fellow pacesetters Marseille who travel to Nantes on Sunday.

Lyon now have 19 out of a possible 21 points as they remain unbeaten this season, having only conceded points in a draw with Toulouse.

Malouda opened after just six minutes at their Gerland stadium when the 26-year-old France midfielder controlled a bad clearance from the Lille defence with his chest.

He fired in from 23 meters out as Lille defender Nicolas Piesters could only get his fingers to the ball.

Lille levelled proceedings after 24 minutes when an effort from Ivorian striker Abdul Kader Keita was deflected in off the thigh of Lyon's Brazilian defender Cris.

But Lyon upped the tempo to completely dominate the second half.

Skipper Juninho finished off a pass from fellow Brazilian Fred after 52 minutes.

It was then the turn of Fred to show his style and he got his first of the night after 64 minutes when he found himself alone in front of Gregory Malicki in the Lille goal.

The 22-year-old grabbed his fifth goal of the season six minutes later from a Juninho pass to put himself top of the scorers table.

It was all one-way-traffic for the hosts thereafter with Malicki doing well to keep out two quick fire efforts from Malouda and substitute Karim Benzema 10 minutes from time.

Malicki punched out a final Juninho effort in extra time as Lille suffered their third loss in six matches, following their shock home defeat to high-flying Toulouse last weekend.

Lille have not lost two consecutive league matches since the 2003-2004 season, and with 10 goals conceded in seven matches, they will be less than confident as they host the powerful AC Milan in the Champions League on Tuesday.

"It was a funny match because we were never really threatened," said Lille coach Claude Puel.

"We had the chance to go two up early in the second half but we conceded a second goal because of a defensive error and then the third was there before we knew what was happening and after that it was mission impossible to get back into the match."

Puel added: "We have to regroup now and recuperate for Tuesday. Milan is a very good team with few

weaknesses. It will be a big challenge to pick ourselves up and get a result at home."

Five-in-a-row champions Lyon will be riding a wave of confidence as they head for European action at Steaua Bucharest midweek.

"It was a bit tough during the first half but that's normal against a team that plays Champions League now. In the end there was very little in it between the teams, but we took out chances," said Malouda.

Elsewhere, high-flying Nancy and Toulouse were held to goalless draws. Nancy failed to take their chances against struggling Paris Saint Germain who were jeered off their Parc des Princes pitch following the stalemate under the rain.

Nancy remain third seven points behind Lyon as PSG move up one place to 13th with just eight points after seven games.

Toulouse, in fourth, were held at home to tenth-placed Lorient, as Bordeaux won 2-1 at home against Troyes.

Auxerre were held 2-2 at home by Sedan as were Le Mans by Sochaux.

Nice, meanwhile, move off the bottom of the table after two goals in the dying minutes of the game the Rivera outfit a 2-0 win at home against 14th-place Valenciennes.

## 'Ronaldo can be the best'

Football

AFP, Manchester

Cristiano Ronaldo's efforts to erase the memory of last season's Champions League humiliation when he returns to Benfica this week have been lifted by claims the Manchester United winger can become the world's best player.

Taunted by the home fans at the Stadium of Light last December, the former Sporting Lisbon player responded with a one-fingered gesture as United slumped to a 2-1 defeat and that sent them out of the competition after the initial group phase.

Ronaldo's actions earned him a one-match European ban and triggered an turbulent second half of the season that culminated in the youngster declaring he wanted to quit Old Trafford following his World Cup spat with United team-mate Wayne Rooney.

But having revealed his desire to join Real Madrid, the 21-year-old was persuaded to remain in England by the United assistant manager Carlos Queiroz and has started this season in outstanding form.

Now Queiroz, a fellow Portuguese, believes Ronaldo has the maturity to not only lay to rest the shame of his last visit to Lisbon went United face Benfica again on Tuesday, but to go on and establish himself as the game's outstanding player.

"Ronaldo is showing Portugal and the rest of the world that he is not the kind of player to be affected by that mistake," Queiroz said. "And he now has a great opportunity to go back to Benfica with a great chance to reverse what happened last season."

"When you are dealing with young players it is important not to tell them what to do. I don't believe you should approach a player and tell him specifically how to do things."

"You should encourage them to think about all aspects of life and teach them to think for themselves and come to the right answers. And that is what he is doing."



CRISTIANO RONALDO



Lyon's Brazilian playmaker Juninho salutes the crowd after defeating Lille in the Ligue 1 match at the Gerland Stadium on Saturday.

### CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

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 21 Bran source  
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 25 Heir, often  
 26 Gallons  
 28 Honest politician  
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 30 Gist  
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### CRYPTOQUIP

MDLSR VLUAY YP QDTLQD  
 PS APID AFBUGKLSR  
 PUSBIDSYBK MLYA, L EBR  
 YED FLTG PV YED RKLYDU.  
 Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF A GUY CONTINUALLY  
 STREICHES OUT HIS ARM, I GUESS HE MIGHT BE  
 A REACHER OF HABIT.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: Y equals T

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.