Petkovic's career over?

AFP, Sydney

The playing career of former Australian international goalkeeper Jason Petkovic may be over after he broke his leg in Perth Glory's 2-1 loss to Central Coast in the A-

The 33-year-old goalkeeper had surgery Saturday to insert a pin in his left tibia following a collision with team-mate Simon Colosimo and Mariners striker Damian Mori in Friday's match in Gosford, a club spokesman said.

The club official said with age and injury against him, Petkovic would face a battle to recover from the injury and return to the A-League.\

Petkovic kept eight clean sheets in 16 appearances for Australia from 1995 to 2002 and had a season in Turkey with Konyaspor in 2004-05.

We can win it: Crouch

INTERNET, undated

Peter Crouch believes Liverpool have the squad to repeat their Champions League success of two years ago. Crouch netted the winner against Bordeaux on Wednesday evening to keep Liverpool at the top of Group C and on course for qualification to the knockout stages of the

And although the Reds have struggled for consistency in the early part of the season, striker Crouch said the club's summer signings have given them the depth to match their historic fifth triumph in

"We have to have the belief we can go all the way again this year,' said Crouch, who has three Champions League goals so far this

"We have more strength in depth than when we won it a couple of years back and we feel we have improved as a squad

"With a little bit of luck I am sure we can go far.'

The England striker picked out the home clash against PSV on November 22 as key to determining who finishes top of the group and lands a potentially easier knock-out

"The PSV game will be the crunch game. We want to finish top, we don't just want to qualify, and the PSV game will be a big one.

"But with it being at Anfield, we think we can get the right result.'

Rimini go second

INTERNET, undated

Rimini triumphed 2-0 over Brescia on Friday to move second in Serie B, striker Capucho Jeda and midfielder Ahmed Barusso finding the net to inflict a second defeat in a week on their opponents.

The sides were level on points prior to the match and so it represented an excellent opportunity for either side to give their season a lift, one that the home team pounced

Jeda almost opened the scoring with a superb bicycle kick in the first half as Rimini set out their stall in attack.

However Mannini then almost scored for the Rondinelle, his shot cannoning back off the upright.

That jerked Rimini into action. Jeda opened the scoring with his left foot from twenty yards before Barusso, only six minutes afterward, struck a second into the roof of the net.

In the last twenty minutes Brescia failed to respond and stay in seventh place, while Rimini move within a point of leaders Genoa.

Toyota staff under attack

REUTERS, Sao Paulo

Four Toyota team members escaped unhurt when gunmen ambushed their car after leaving the Brazilian Formula One Grand Prix circuit on Friday night, a spokeswoman said

Brazilian Fernanda de Mello Villas-Boas, who was in the vehicle, said shots were fired while one of a gang of youths tried to kick in the passenger window at a traffic lights about 3-km from the Interlagos

Describing the hold-up as nothing out of the ordinary in Sao Paulo, a sprawling city with one of the highest crime rates in South America, she said the gunmen would not have known who was in the car as the windows were tinted.

"I took the handbrake and told everyone (in the car) not to react).' she told Reuters. "He had a gun at my head outside the window...I think what saved us was that there was a

"They fired a few shots at it, I told people just don't move, stay down.

"All was okay in the end and we managed to drive away, it was just the shock itself."



VLF Bochum's Fabio Junior (L) races ahead of Dortmund midfielder Lars Ricken during their Bundesliga clash at the Signal Iduna Park in Dortmund on Friday.

Bochum hold Dortmund



Borussia Do-rtmund missed the opportunity to go top of the Bun-desliga when they were held to a 1-1 draw by lastplaced local rivals Bochum.

Theofanis

Gekas put the Bundesliga strugglers ahead after half an hour, but Ebu Smolarek equalised within five min-

Bochum had a Fabio Junior goal ruled out for offside early in the second

Dortmund looked lethargic for much of the game, but finally sprung into life when Nelson Valdez was introduced to replace Lars Ricken with 20 minutes remaining.

However, it was too little too late and neither side could find the killer touch, meaning spoils were shared in the North-Rhein Westphalian derby.

In four Friday night games this

season, Dortmund have now picked up just two points. It was difficult to tell which side

could have moved to the top of the table with a win and which was glued to the bottom of the table early on. Bochum, who had won just one

> Zvjezdan Misimovic was at the root of most Bochum moves while Gekas was invariably on the end of them.

game all season, launched attack after

The Greek striker's acrobatic overhead kick missed the post by inches while he came closer to scoring with a shot across the face of goal after cutting into the penalty area from the

Dortmund goalkeeper Roman Weidenfeller would have had no chance had the shots been more accurate.

The goal came when Gekas dispossessed Markus Brzenska to bear down on the Dortmund goal-

Gekas feigned a move one way and let the ball instead roll beyond the

last line of the Dortmund defence to then easily slot it into the empty goal.

Koller's side deserved to be ahead, but were unable to hold the advantage for more than five minutes before Smolarek hit back.

The Polish striker beat the offside trap to chase Alexander Frei's throughball and chipped his shot over the onrushing Alexander Bade into the back of the net.

Fabio headed just wide as Bochum went close to regaining the lead just before the interval, and just after the break. Fabio found the back of the net. but play had already been held up for a tight offside decision.

Nelson Valdez was introduced by Bert van Marwiik as he looked for a more attacking reaction from his side, but the breakthrough never came.

Misimovic came closest to scoring in the final stages, but he could not stretch far enough when as Dede and Weidenfeller clashed and the ball went

McCarthy seeks UEFA action



AFP, London

Benni McCarthy has asked European football's governing body UEFA to investigate racist abuse he allegedly suffered at the hands of Polish side Wisla Krakow and their Serbian defender Nikola Mijailovic. The black South African striker

squared up to Mijailovic at the end of Blackburn's 2-1 UEFA Cup win in Krakow on Thursday night after being allegedly provoked by the

Blackburn said on Friday that McCarthy and another player who overheard the abuse had made a

statement on the incident which has been forwarded to UEFA and the English Football Association.

The English club also revealed that McCarthy had mentioned the abuse to Swedish referee Stefan Johannesson at half-time during the match. apparently to no avail. Blackburn have offered strong

backing to McCarthy and manager Mark Hughes praised the striker for taking a stand and for having kept his cool on Thursday night. "If you ignore it and accept it, it

will continue to be in the game, Hughes said.

We have done great work in this country with the 'Kick It Out' campaign. Maybe other countries are

lagging behind us in that respect.



BATTLE ON: Blackburn striker Benni McCarthy (C) in altercation with Wisla Krakow defender Nikola Mijailovic (R) during their UEFA Cup match in Krakow, Poland on Thursday.

this in sport or in life. There is banter and sledging but this was a lot stronger than that. It is important to make a stand, not just from the game's point of view but the relationship with our plavers.' Hughes added: "Benni to his

credit did not react. He highlighted the issue to a number of Krakow players and the referee at half-time. But the situation still developed and there were more comments at the end of the game." UEFA spokesman William

Gaillard said the allegations would be looked into but admitted it could be difficult to secure enough evidence to justify action against the player or his Gaillard said: "Benni McCarthy

has been in the game for a long time now, playing at the top level, so we have no reason to doubt his word. The problem will be finding the hard evidence to pass sanctions. "There is always the problem of

finding hard evidence but at the same time the referee might have heard something. It should be in the referee's report and I heard that Blackburn people mentioned it to the (UEFA) delegate." The McCarthy incident came just

days after England under-21 internationals Anton Ferdinand and Micah Richards were allegedly called monkeys during a match in Germany. claims UEFA will examine at a disciplinary hearing on November 9. Gaillard added: "In many ways we

are dismayed that this type of matter is coming to us on nearly a weekly basis, on the other hand we would like to underline the fact that it's very courageous on Benni McCarthy's part to denounce the alleged abuse.

"We've had problems in the past in getting players to bear witness on such issues and we think it is progress when players begin to react

Blackburn came from a goal down to win Thursday's match 2-1. The English side had trailed at the break when a Roberto Cantoro drive took a big deflection off Turkey midfielder Tugay to leave goal-

keeper Brad Friedel stranded. Rovers equalised 11 minutes after the interval when former Welsh international Robbie Savage headed in a cross from David Bentley, who followed that up by finishing off a rebound in the last minute for the winner.

Price of fun

REUTERS, Brussels

A Bayer Leverkusen fan who goaded rival supporters by flashing his bum repeatedly during his team's UEFA Cup tie at Club Bruges on Thursday faces court action, a Belgian public prosecutor said.

The fan, who has not been named and was not arrested on the night of the match, will be guestioned by German police and will receive a summons from a court in Bruges, prosecutor Yves Segaert said on Friday.

If convicted, the German man faces a fine and a ban from the stadium.

"He pulled his trousers down several times during the match and showed his butt to the Bruges fans," Segaert said. "He did this to annoy some hard core fans and provoke

"The temperature was going up and he almost caused a serious problem with security."

Puyol sounds warning

INTERNET, undated

Barcelona captain Carlos Puyol has admitted that Wednesday's defeat to Chelsea in the Champions League has made it crucial that his side responds well in the return match in two weeks' time.

"It's a very important match," the defender stressed. "We are under more pressure than Chelsea. Chelsea will be more relaxed, we just have to hope we can get a good result.'

A goal at the start of the second half from Didier consigned the Spanish giants to a 1-0 defeat, while Werder Bremen kept up the pressure on the two group favourites by defeating Levski Sofia 2-0. But Puyol insisted that his side could not afford to be distracted from the task in hand.

"We thought that they (Bremen) would do well, but we have to focus on ourselves and if we get a good result against Chelsea in the Nou Camp things will be better."

The azulgrana face Real Madrid in the Santiago Bernabeu on Sunday, though Puyol is a doubt for the game with after sustaining a muscle strain in his left leg against

Tigana rues **Fulham spat**

INTERNET, undated

Former Fulham manager Jean Tigana says his legal dispute with the club cost him the opportunity to take over the French national side.

Tigana was involved in a bitter legal battle with the west London club after he was accused of overpaying considerable amounts for two signings.

"I missed the chance to be manager of the national team because 2004 and I had the trial with (Fulham chairman Mohamed) Al Fayed in October that year," Tigana explained in an interview with the Guardian. "I would have loved the job."

Raymond Domenech was eventually given the France job, and Tigana went on to coach Besitkas in October 2005, although he worried for his future in football after the allegations.

"When I didn't take the national team job I thought I would never come back to football," said Tigana. "It was very tough. I was destroyed after Fulham because I gave 100 percent and I didn't understand why they tried to attack me."

of age

REUTERS, London

Chelsea midfielder Michael Essien said he had learned valuable lessons from his debut Premier League campaign and was putting them to good effect with more consistent performances this sea-

a solid first season in England after leaving Olympique Lyon in August 2005 but was also involved in controversy over his aggressive tack-

The Ghana international enjoyed

Essien was suspended for two matches by UEFA for an over-the-top challenge on Liverpool's Dietmar Hamann in the Champions League and also heavily criticised for a foul on Tal Ben Haim in a Premier League clash with Bolton "These things happen in football

going," Essien told reporters on the eve of Chelsea's home game with "Now I am a little bit careful but my game is hard and I play hard and

and you have to take it and forget

about the bad things and keep

Essien, one of only three Chelsea ever-presents this season along with Didier Drogba and Andriy Shevchenko, is hoping to make his 50th start for the champions on

The Ghanaian has been outstanding this season and was particularly effective in Wednesday's 1-0 victory over Barcelona in the Champions

Platini for 3 UCL places



France legend Michel Platini would aim to reduce each country's Champions League alloca-

tions if he is voted in as the next president of UEFA. Platini is battling with current UEFA

chief Lennart Johansson of Sweden for the presidency of European football's ruling body. And while admitting he would not

change the format of Europe's lucrative premier club competition, he feels that three clubs per country should be the limit. Should Platini take over from

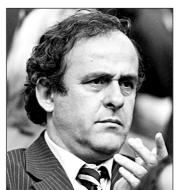
Johansson, England, Spain and Italy would all lose a spot. Platini said: "Four clubs are too

many -- for the country itself, the fans and TV rights. Three should be the

"There are not enough national

champions in the last 32 of the tournament and that cannot be right."

Platini, a former star midfielder for France and Italian giants Juventus



MICHEL PLATINI

outlined his manifesto last month vowing to implement a football evolution rather than revolution.

It included promises to unify the

football family, return power to UEFA's members and to improve solidarity

among members. Platini also wants to stamp out racism and xenophobia, sporting

fraud, illegal betting, doping, embezzlement and corrupt agents. On Friday Platini added to those promises by saying he weants to

improve the youth player system. And while promising changes regarding refereeing, he ruled out any chance of introducing video refereeing -- apart from goal-line

technology.
"We have to help referees who can't see everything and I believe two more assistants on either side of the

pitch would do this," he said. "It would help judging offside decisions as well as a range of offthe-ball incidents.

He added: "I am totally against refereeing by video. Where would it "If you start with videos, you will

finish with videos and there would be no more referees.'

FORMULA 1

Alonso poised for double

REUTERS, Sao Paulo

Fernando Alonso can take one of Michael Schumacher's many records on Sunday by becoming Formula One's youngest double world cham-

Whether the 25-year-old Renault

racer can prise other milestones from the most successful driver the sport has ever known remains doubtful. Pat Symonds, the Renault master strategist who guided Schumacher to

his first two titles with Benetton before

the German moved to Ferrari, believes

Alonso has the talent but that is unlikely to be enough. "Has he got what it takes? Yes, I think he has," he said of the Spaniard at the title-deciding Brazilian Grand Prix. Schumacher's last race before

"There are many similarities between Michael and Fernando and those similarities go beyond just being able to drive the car fast

both very good at reading a race, they

know when to go quickly and when to

look after things," continued Symonds.

"He has the capability of doing it

"I think Fernando and Michael are

(heating Schumacher's records), but one of the interesting things about any competitive sport is that performance "Not taking anything away from the

achievements of Ferrari or Michael.

but I think the rest of us were really

asleep for a few years and if that were

to happen again, then yes maybe Fernando can do it. "But I think the level of competitiveness now in Formula One is such that it's unlikely to happen," added

Symonds. "I think it will be a long, long while before we see the many records that Michael has set being approached, let alone broken.'

Alonso needs just one point to

secure the title, even if Schumacher wins, in Sunday's season-ender at nterlagos. He then leaves Renault for McLaren, former champions who nave not won all season. Schumacher did something similar

row to join Ferrari, then a slumbering giant that had won only two races in five seasons. Since then, the German has won

at the end of 1995, leaving Benetton at

the age of 26 and after two titles in a

72 times for Ferrari, clinching an unprecedented five titles in a row from 2000 to 2004 to stand as the only

Alonso cannot hope for such dominance, particularly at a team that believes firmly in giving both of its drivers equal opportunities and at a time when rule stability promises closer competition than evernext year.

2005 to become the youngest ever title His confidence and maturity have

rown noticeably since he last raced in "I know how to do it and I know how I enjoyed last year winning and how to

on my car," he said. "The experience you have in one

Bring back Beckham: Henry

Football

AFP, London

retirement.

Arsenal captain Thierry Henry believes England manager Steve McClaren should give midfielder David Beckham another chance in the England set-up.

Recently-installed England coach McClaren has yet to select Beckham for any of his squads, and the former Manchester United star is also fighting to win back a place in the Real Madrid team.

strong desire to win regular selection for both club and country, which until this season had on both counts

The Frenchman told The Sun: Beckham has expressed a the world. much to give England and it would be a shame if he does not get another chance. Henry, 29, dismissed suggestions

focus has drifted away from football and towards off-the-field interests.

"People get him wrong as he is not showbiz," Henry added.

good and he looks away and says Okay, yeah, yeah'. He is embarrassed and David is like that."

Henry also gave a warm welcome

Henry (R) has called for Beckham to be given another chance. Essien comes CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

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19 Blockage

21 Missile

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BXYRWFJF, WF WJ OA-FBQWHAO? Yesterday's Cryptoquip: THE PIANO INSTRUCTOR, ADMONISHING AN ERRANT PUPIL, TOLD HIM TO "GET BACH TO BASICS!"

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.

seven-times champion. If he wins on Sunday, it will be the 92nd of his career.

But he will be left as Formula One's only active champion, as well as the man who dethroned Schumacher in

repeat and how to defend number one

important year, like you have with your first championship, this you never forget and you use in the rest of your

been considered a given.

31, still has plenty to offer

"Steve McClaren has a very difficult job. One of the most difficult jobs in "But David is a great player and a great guy. I believe he still has so

Henry believes that Beckham.

that the former England captain's

"In fact he reminds me of (Zinedine) Zidane. You tell ZZ he is

to news of Cesc Fabregas signing a new eight-year contract. The 19-year-old Spanish midfielder was a big influence as Arsenal reached last season's Champions League final, and Henry stated: "Cesc deciding to stay here is as important as me staying. I don't think I will be here when he is 29. But

he is the future of the club so you have to keep him."x

CRYPTOQUIP YDZBA

W J F Y Q X M A F F W X P Z D

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: F equals S