

**Lucho handed new deal**

INTERNET, undated

Porto have moved swiftly to quash speculation linking Lucho Gonzalez with Atletico Madrid by tying the midfielder to a new contract.

The Argentinian scored a wonder goal in the UEFA Champions League against Hamburg recently and was reportedly attracting interest from Atletico.

However, Porto have agreed fresh terms that will run until 2011.

The 25-year-old was formerly with River Plate and is pleased to commit his future to the Estadio da Dragao outfit.

"I have a very strong commitment with the club, friends and colleagues," he stated.

"I will continue to work in the same way with the intention to help the team exceed ourselves and achieve what we desire."

**Don't punish duo: Henry**

INTERNET, undated

Thierry Henry says that he doesn't believe that Arsene Wenger or Alan Pardew should be punished for their altercation after West Ham's late winner at Upton Park last Sunday.

The two managers have been charged with misconduct by the FA, but Henry believes the authorities should just respect that it was a harmless heat-of-the-moment incident.

"Of course it's been big news because it is Arsene and he paid for the fact that he is normally cool," Henry told the Sun.

"But he was just showing emotion and passion, just like Alan Pardew did."

"Of course it is not the type of thing you want to see but I don't think either manager deserves to be punished."

The French international striker also conceded that some of his performances this season have been below par, but he also said that people have to respect that players get tired, especially on the back of World Cup summers.

"I barely had a break before I was returning to Arsenal," said Henry.

"I'm not a robot. None of us are. I think that is a point that fans and critics need to understand."

**Bremen bookies' favourites**

AFP, Berlin

Bookmakers have made Werder Bremen the new favourites for the Bundesliga title after they moved six points clear of reigning champions Bayern Munich.

League champions for the past two seasons Bayern started the 2006/07 campaign as scorching favourites but four defeats in 11 matches have persuaded bookmakers to extend their price to 7-5 with league leaders Bremen now evens.

Bayern have dominated the league in recent years winning six out of the last eight titles while Bremen have won the title twice in the last 14 years with their last success coming in 2004.

**'No problem with Poll'**

INTERNET, undated

Frank Lampard insists that the Chelsea players will have "no problem" with Graham Poll the next time he referees a game involving the champions.

Poll received heavy criticism from both Ashley Cole and Jose Mourinho after he sent-off John Terry against Tottenham last weekend, but Lampard says that won't be an issue the next time his teammates come across Poll.

"I will say nothing the next time I see Graham Poll," Lampard admitted to the Sun.

"There isn't anything to say. We have to get back to playing football and there will be no need for me to say anything."

"A big decision went against us in the Spurs game and that's it. There is certainly no grudge on our part and I'm sure there won't be on his."

Lampard also said he understands how difficult it must be to be a referee, but he also echoed Roy Keane's opinion from yesterday that officials should be allowed to come out and explain their performance to the media after a game.

"I do see both sides. It's a difficult job being a referee, but I think sometimes they are locked into laws and feel that's the way it has to be.

"I would be a good idea if they came out after games and explained their decisions if there's been controversy.

"These are big decisions which are making a difference in people's careers and lives and it's important."



Manchester City's Richard Dunne (L) and Newcastle United's Shola Ameobi vie for the ball during their Premiership clash at the City of Manchester Stadium on Saturday.

**Stalemate at Eastlands**

AFP, Manchester



Manchester City squandered a series of chances to heap more misery on Glenn Roeder as Newcastle held on for a 0-0 draw at Eastlands on Saturday.

Newcastle boss Roeder has been under increasing pressure in recent weeks as his side slumped into the Premiership relegation zone and they were fortunate to escape with a point after being outplayed by City for much of the match.

Roeder's side remain in the bottom three and are now without a win in eight Premiership games and have failed to score in their last four league outings.

City's impressive unbeaten home record remains intact and they have yet to concede a league goal at Eastlands this season.

Tunisia defender Hatem Traabeli fired in a long-range effort in the opening moments as City tried to take control against tentative opponents.

Stuart Pearce's side enjoyed the majority of the possession as Newcastle sat back but the hosts were mainly restricted to hopeful long shots.

Claudio Reyna and Darius Vassell both tried their luck from distance but neither forced Harper into action.

City defender Micah Richards was celebrating his first call-up to the England squad for next week's friendly in Holland and presented an imposing barrier to Newcastle's sporadic attacks.

Joey Barton came closest to breaking the deadlock before the interval. Traabeli flicked on Nicky Weaver's goal kick and City midfielder Barton hit a well-struck volley that forced Steve Harper to make a fine stop.

The visitors' only threat to the City goal came when James Milner whipped in a low cross and Shola Ameobi narrowly failed to connect from six yards out.

Paul Dickov should have given City the lead soon after half-time when he was played outside by Newcastle defender Steve Carr.

But the Scottish striker's low side-footed effort was pushed

away by Harper as he plunged to his left.

Roeder sent on England midfielder Kieron Dyer for his first Premiership appearance this season in an attempt to add more energy to his side.

Pearce responded by replacing Dickov and Reyna with strikers Bernardo Corradi and Georgios Samaras.

The move almost paid instant dividends as Corradi charged onto Barton's free-kick with a header that Harper stopped well.

Corradi had two more chances to give City the goal their domination deserved but the Italian headed wide and then saw his shot from Vassell's cross blocked by Harper.

City thought they had made the breakthrough in the 69th minute when Georgios Samaras headed home from close range after Richard Dunne had nodded on a corner, but the goal was immediately disallowed for a push.

Dyer could have stolen all three points in the final minutes but he was denied by Weaver after a fine run into the City penalty area gave him a sight of goal.

**Rosicky sidelined**

AFP, Prague

Czech captain Tomas Rosicky will be sidelined for a friendly international against Denmark in Prague on Wednesday due to a hamstring injury picked up in training, the Czech daily Sport reported Saturday.

"The black autumn for Czech football continues," the paper commented, adding that goalkeeper Petr Cech and striker Jan Koller are also injured.

Rosicky picked up the injury during training with Premier league club Arsenal on Thursday.

Arsenal's official club website said the midfielder star could be out "for an estimated 10 days." This could mean he will miss the crucial Champions League clash with Hamburg on November 21, it added.

**United keen on Adu**

INTERNET, undated

Manchester United are keen on signing Freddy Adu if the Ghanaian-born American teenager can prove himself, Sir Alex Ferguson has confirmed.

The hotly tipped 17-year-old is due to come to United for a two-week trial and could sign in the January transfer window.

Asked if he was interested in signing the midfielder, Ferguson said: "I think so, he's only a young lad but we have known of him for a long time."

"We tried to get him here some years ago but he signed for DC United and that stopped the progress of us keeping tabs on him."

United had previously denied any interest in the American star, who has been a considered a massive prospect ever since Inter Milan offered a six-figures fee for him having watched him in just one junior tournament prior to his 14th birthday.

Chelsea have also been linked with Adu, reportedly turning down a solid offer to sign him on loan in January 2007, with a view to a permanent 5-million-pound transfer deal.

If Adu does enough to persuade Ferguson to offer him a permanent contract, a fee would have to be negotiated with MLS who, as with all US-based players, own Adu's registration.

Adu made his professional debut in Major League Soccer at just 14 years of age, making him the youngest professional athlete in modern US sports.

**Maradona pulls for Sanchez**

REUTERS, Mexico City

Former Argentina captain Diego Maradona said on Friday it was time for former Real Madrid striker Hugo Sanchez, considered Mexico's best-ever player, to coach the national team.

On a visit to Mexico 20 years after lifting the World Cup there, Maradona said Sanchez was the ideal candidate to put together a Mexican squad capable of succeeding on the world stage, where they have been constant underperformers.

"The time has come for Hugo," Maradona said. "For me, in my way of seeing things, he is the number one candidate."

Mexico's soccer federation is only days away from picking a new coach to replace Argentine Ricardo La Volpe, who stood down after the World Cup in Germany.

Americo Gallego, another Argentine and currently the coach of Mexican club Toluca, and Sanchez are the favourites for the job.

Sanchez, who won five consecutive league titles with Real Madrid in the 1980s alongside the likes of Emilio Butragueno and Michel, currently coaches Necaxa.

Sanchez, who was five times the top scorer in Spain's Primera Liga, and La Volpe often traded barbs when the Argentine headed Mexico's national team, with the outspoken striker openly saying he wanted La Volpe's job.

**New home for Valencia**

REUTERS, Madrid

Valencia have unveiled plans to construct a 75,000-capacity stadium that they hope will be used as a venue for a Champions League final.

The new stadium, which bears some resemblance to Bayern Munich's Allianz Arena and will be located in the congress area in the north of the city, has been designed by British architects Reid Fenwick Associates. It is expected to be ready for the 2009-2010 season.

The project will be financed by the sale of the land where the present Mestalla stadium is located which will then be used to build apartment blocks.

"We can be proud that we are going to have the best stadium in the world," club president Juan Bautista Soler said at a gala celebration on Friday.

**Beckham hopes for starting berth**



INTERNET, undated

David Beckham hopes his all-action display in Thursday's Copa del Rey clash with Ecija will prove to coach Fabio Capello that he is fit, hungry and ready to reclaim a permanent first-team spot.

Beckham made only his second full appearance of the season in the return leg of the round-of-32 match after being included in Real's starting line-up, alongside a mixture of senior stars, fringe players and youngsters.

It took the new-look Real a long time to get going against their third division opponents, and it was not until Beckham himself broke the deadlock just after half-time that the Madrid superpowers were finally able to gain any control.

But following Beckham's goal, the floodgates opened and further strikes from Ruud van Nistelrooy (2), Ronaldo and Ruben De la Red completed a 5-1 victory on the night and a 6-2 aggregate scoreline.

Aside from his goal, Beckham looked full of energy and determination, and the former England captain clearly wanted to make the most of his opportunity to impress after being consigned to bench duty for much of the campaign.

"I felt good, my fitness felt really good and I felt strong even at the

end of the game," said Beckham, who revealed he has been working on his fitness in his own time to help compensate for his lack of match-action this season.

"You need games to get your fitness, but I've got my fitness and I've kept my fitness by working hard in training and doing extra in the evenings."

"I do extra training in the evenings, because my wife goes to the gym and I try and do a bit extra while she is working out. It's important I don't do too much but I do extra."

At 31, Beckham is approaching the twilight of his career, but the midfielder is adamant his fitness levels are as high as ever.

"I can still play every game. If I was to play every game this season I'd still be happy with that and I'd still be able to cope with that," he said.

"Mentally and physically I'm strong. (Against Ecija) I was pleased, not just because we won and I scored a goal, but because physically it was the best I've felt for a while," added Beckham, whose lack of first-team action this season is believed to be one of the main reasons why he has yet to sign a contract extension at Real.

"It is down to me to prove to the manager that I can play. I have to that because when you are not in the team you have to work to get into the team, and that is what I will

do."

Beckham was also pleased with the result against Ecija but admits Real needed that first breakthrough to finally gain the upper hand against their battling opponents.

"It is always nice to be involved in a game like that. We were expected to win this game, and we did that in the second half," he said.

"We played a lot better in the second half than we did in the first half. The first half was difficult because people are expecting you to beat these teams four, five, six, 10. When we don't score in the first 10 minutes people are on top of us. But we are happy."

Beckham's goal, which came four minutes after half-time, saw the former Manchester United man drill home a left-footed shot after Ecija goalkeeper Zigor had denied Van Nistelrooy.

"The goal was important for our team, and against them as well, because it knocked them down," added Beckham.

"It knocked their confidence and put ours up a bit, and we went on from there."

Real's next game sees them face Osasuna in Primera Liga on Sunday, with Capello's troops looking to get back on track following their shock 2-1 home defeat to Celta Vigo last weekend.

**Rafa calls for calm**

REUTERS, Liverpool



Liverpool's Rafael Benitez has urged his rival premier-ship managers to control their emotions after last Sunday's touchline row between Arsenal's Arsene Wenger and West Ham's Alan Pardew.

Liverpool play Arsenal on Sunday and Benitez does not want a repeat of the incident that blighted last weekend's game.

"You must be disappointed when you see problems between the managers. We must be an example for young boys that try and play football," he told reporters on Friday.

"It was a bad situation. Sometimes you cannot control your temper but as managers we must do it. Managers have a responsibility and while you can be passionate, afterwards you must be polite."

"People were talking here about (former Liverpool manager) Bill Shankly having passion and nothing happened with him."

Liverpool and Arsenal have both struggled to mount a title challenge this season and Benitez said his side could not afford to lose many more matches and still hold out hope of winning the Premier League.

"It's important to beat the top

teams, but when you are 11 points behind it's important not to lose any games -- especially against the top sides," he said.

"We know we need to win in the Premiership and we need to win against the top sides."

Liverpool are without midfielder Momo Sissoko for the next three months after he underwent surgery to repair a dislocated shoulder.

"It is a blow for us. When I look at my team I always think which players can keep playing and Momo could always play," Benitez said. "Even if the game were two days later he would be fit. He is a big player for us."



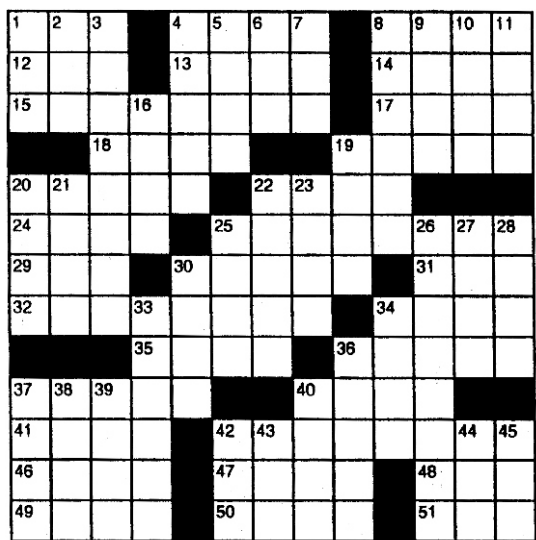
Argentina legend Diego Armando Maradona (C) poses with ex-Mexican stars Carlos Hermosillo (L) and Garcia Aspe in Mexico City on Friday.

**CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer**

**ACROSS**  
 1 Occupation  
 4 Bruins' sch.  
 8 In addition  
 12 Ms.  
 13 In addition  
 14 Engine sound  
 15 Hiker's carryall  
 17 Eastern potentate  
 18 Recognized  
 19 "Murder, She ..." She ...  
 20 Lattice-work shelter  
 22 Stylish  
 24 Ducklike bird  
 25 Like an innocent babe  
 29 Attila, e.g.  
 30 Blog, essentially  
 31 "— was saying, ..."  
 32 Will VIP  
 34 "Get lost!"  
 35 Robert of "Airplane!"

**DOWN**  
 21 Sauce thickener  
 2 Eminent aves  
 3 Firmness of effect  
 23 Man of the Haus  
 5 Talon  
 6 Robitaille of hockey  
 7 Request  
 8 Insight  
 9 Wheels of fortune?  
 4 Superior  
 5 Talon  
 25 Metropolis  
 26 Go wrong  
 27 Goller  
 Aoki  
 28 Give as an example  
 30 Two-way  
 33 Phlog's request?  
 34 Kosovo resident  
 35 Authentic  
 37 One unwilling to talk  
 38 Four-star review  
 39 Send out  
 40 High-lander  
 42 Prohibit  
 43 Parisian pal  
 44 Reason for "sudden death"  
 45 A billion years

**Solution time: 25 mins.**  
 PALM MAIS HENS  
 AREA PRA ARIES  
 DIAL PIN BOTT  
 SAFARI DRIP  
 ROCK BOTTOM  
 CABIN NOW TOU  
 HULA SEX MOPS  
 ATLA SPA BENSE  
 ROCKHOP  
 KEEPT ENTIRE  
 OBOE NOV IDEIA  
 COUP TRE OLDS  
 TOTS KEN NEST



**CRYPTOQUIP**  
 D S H K W M H W P H S B M Y H E  
 J L H D P W I B J L H B E W N J  
 P S B D , D B Z M Y Q B Z P W Q  
 N S W N ' P E H K N H E - N W L K I H K N ?  
**Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF YOU WERE IN LONDON AND NEEDED A LIFT, I GUESS YOU MIGHT CALL THE WESTMINSTER CABBY.**  
 Today's Cryptoquip Clue: J equals V  
 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.