

WEEKEND SPORTS WEEKEND

The presidents of soccer

MARSEILLE — Splashed out almost half a million pounds on a two-year contract to sign Franz Beckenbauer as technical director; almost simultaneously its greatest rival, Bordeaux revealed as being pound 20 million in the red.

The two sides of the same financial coin have rocked French soccer. Does Marseille's millionaire president Bernard Tapie know what he is doing? And is he risking the same humiliation now being heaped on Bordeaux boss Claude Bez?

Time alone will tell. But in the disastrous collapse of one club are sown surely the lessons for the other. As the Tottenham crisis in England demonstrates, soccer is a very particular industry to which the normal business rules and regulations do not necessarily apply.

The way in which Bez had played the millionaire's power game brought him notoriety and his club success. Now it has brought both to the brink of ruin. Will Tapie prove any more successful? And that is not an original question, but one on many financial expert's lips when he poned in the summer giant Adidas at a price far in excess of the value of Tapie's own holding company.

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BERNARD TAPIE...millionaire soccer boss

Promise

Bez promised a great football team in return to municipal support in terms of funding and financial guarantees. Chaban-Delmas told him: "Agreed but it must be all above board. I didn't want any scandals".

Bez was happy to provide that guarantee. And why should anyone doubt the word of a man who according to this father, Gaston, could be brought to the brink of tears by watching Little House on the Prairie?

The initial years were not particularly promising. A former international midfielder, Didier Coucou, was appointed general manager and lasted the best part of a decade. Trainers came and went rather more often.

The veteran Argentine Luis Carniglia, was the first. He quit in October, 1979, to make way for the Belgian, Raymond Goethals.

He lasted through to the end of term and was then replaced by Aimé Jacquet. A last, Bordeaux had found the coach they needed. One year later and it had found Europe.

It would miss out on continental competition only once in the next decade.

Jacquet, former Lyon half-back, provided the discipline and the "language" which the more sophisticated Carniglia and Goethals had lacked. He achieved a far better rapport with the players. Carniglia had made his reputation taking Real Madrid to the Champion's Cup in 1957 and 1958; Goethals had constructed the excellent Anderlecht side which dominated Belgian soccer in the 1960s.

But the players were a little in awe of both men; they lacked the give-and-take in ideas which Jacquet encouraged.

In due course, Jacquet would become ever less flexible and himself become a victim.

But that was later. He was the guiding iron hand behind Bordeaux's domination of French domestic football in the mid-1980s. The Girondins were champions in 1984, 1985 and 1987 and cup-winners in 1986 and 1987. Also in 1985 they reached the semi-finals of the Champion's Cup (losing to eventual winner Juventus) while two years later they were semi-finalists in the Cup-winners' cup (losing on penalties to Lokomotive

Leipzig).

Europe was the key to everything. It was tangible proof of ongoing success, it kept crowds up and sponsorship up. Without Europe, the outlook would be very different.

Bez said: "Bordeaux can be missing from European competition for one season but not for two. My hope is that, thanks to the development work we have undertaken that safety gap can be pushed back to two, three or four years."

The developments included a hotel, a restaurant, a tennis club, two boutiques, two office blocks and a local radio station. The aim as with Tottenham, it seems was that the various other enterprises would provide financial security for the football. In practice, it didn't work out quite like that.

Simultaneously, Bez was busily extending his overall influence within the French game. In the October of 1988 the French national team had been held 1-1 in Cyprus.

Tactics

The match had been a World Cup tie and the result put France at a distinct disadvantage compared with group rivals Yugoslavia and Scotland. The French players looked tired and unenthusiastic. It was no secret that some were vastly at odds with manager Henri Michel over tactics and personnel.

Bez, off his own bat, came up with the solution. Following Bordeaux to Budapest to play Ujpest Dozsa in a second round UEFA Cup-tie, in his role as TV analyst, was Michel Platini.

He had retired from playing, had become vice-president of his original plans for his life beyond football were not going according to plan. Platini's ambition to lead a major TV current affairs interview series had fallen through; a leisurewear scheme was struggling.

Platini and Bez were acquaintances through football. Nothing more. But circumstances conspired such that Bez obtained Platini's word that, should be position of national manager fall vacant, he would be seriously interested.

Bez took that promise to the French federation in Paris. In effect he told them: "Drop Henri Michel and I can deliver Platini as national manager." There was one condition, providing Bez himself with a role as a national team director.

Interest

Michel was duly eased aside. Platini appointed. Bez, it seemed, had a controlling interest in every facet of the French game. But, in one area, he was a loser, Bez is no Berlusconi or Agnelli, with his own media outlets to pay him court and treat him gently.

His relations with the French press were brusque, to say the least. He soon developed a reputation for banning reporters or photographers whose work, in his opinion, over-stepped the mark.

That was harmless for Bez and Bordeaux when the provincial press were the victims. It was entirely another when Bez took on the Paris sports daily, L'Equipe.

Now L'Equipe takes itself very seriously, often too seriously, so when Bez tried to ban reporters or photographers whose work, in his opinion, over-stepped the mark.

Bez had all the press phone installations in the Bordeaux press box pulled out by way of retaliation.

But the action had been so impressively well coordinated nationally that the French federation jumped in to mediate and to achieve an uneasy truce.

Further complications entered Bez's life in the shape of another Bordeaux: in this case one Francois-Xavier Bordeaux, leader of the opposition Socialist party on the city council. In March this year, complaining bitterly and vociferously about municipal investment in the club he forecast that Bordeaux would end the season 11 million in debt.

He also produced the first demand for Bez to resign.

Chaban-Delmas, still the mayor and still in charge, sought to playdown the growing crisis, agreeing that the club owed money but insisting that these were "not real debts, merely trading items".

Refused

Francois-Xavier Bordeaux refused to give up. Two months later, in May, with the club awaiting council backing for a 12 million loan from a leading finance house, he estimated that the club was now between 15 million and 20 million in the red and that the council dare not offer the financial guarantees Bez was seeking.

Indeed, it seemed the council might have been in breach of the law in securing the loan. The regional council had complained to the city that it was illegal for municipal authorities to guarantee loans taken out by private companies.

Bordeaux desperately needed success out on the pitch to keep the wolf from the door. But by now Tapie was investing in new players for Marseille at a rate of francs Bordeaux had no hope of matching.

A new footballing nation on horizon

INDEPENDENCE in March last year made Namibia, formerly the South Africa colony of South West Africa, the world's newest footballing nation.

Namibia already has joined the Confederation of African Football and is soon to join FIFA.

It is one of the largest countries in the world, a vast, arid land of 823,144 square kilometres, larger than Britain, West Germany, Italy and the Benelux countries combined, and yet has a tiny population of 1.3 million.

Only 10 per cent live in the urban area, where most of the organised soccer is played. The capital, Windhoek, has a population of around 130,000 and supplies nine of the country's 12 premier league teams.

Namibia rich in minerals like diamonds and copper, is now ruled by the South West African Peoples Organisation (SWAPO), which previously fought a guerrilla war against the South African colonists.

Competition

Independence has meant participation for the country in international competition for the first time, although for a year before the power takeover the country had been ruled by a United Nations peacekeeping force and had sneaked in some soccer matches against neighbouring Angola, with CAF and FIFA turning a blind eye.

Now the various fragmented footballing bodies have finally combined into a single organisation, Namibian Football Association, which has united both professional and amateur wings.

But the country is not expected to create shock waves in African soccer, as South Africa might do when they re-enter world football. There have been poor results in their international contacts so far.

Soccer was the first Namibian sport to have outside participation, with Angolan teams having played in the country even before independence.

Top Windhoek side Orlando Pirates also visited Luanda in February, losing 2-1 to TAAG and 7-0 to Angolan champions Petro Atletico, having been especially flown there by the Angolan government.

On March 21, Independence Day, Namibia's shadow national team had a first outing, losing 5-1 to the full Zimbabwean international side.

That match was overshadowed by a game



The Orlando Pirates in action

between a Namibian President's XI and Spartak Ordzhonikidze, won 6-1 by the visiting Soviets.

South African Jomo Sono was a controversial member of the President's XI, given the sports boycott against his country, but the incident has been ignored by CAF and FIFA.

Sono was told by Namibian sports officials not to play, but after protracted arguments he finally took the pitch, scoring with a stunning free-kick.

The President's XI also included former West German captain Karl-Heinz Rummenigge and Spanish international Antonio Camacho.

Active

Despite the disappointing start, Namibia plan to become active in all African competition, according to NFA President Elliott Hiskia, who gave World Soccer an exclusive interview at his home in Katutura township outside Windhoek.

"It has been very difficult for us to plan due to the isolation, but now we are in international football, we can start forming our structures and get on with the business," he said.

Namibia played another

international in June, against Mauritius, who were preparing for the African Nations Cup qualifiers (from which they subsequently withdrew).

Mauritius won 2-1, but Namibia have been invited to make a reciprocal visit to the Indian Ocean island. Another match with Zimbabwe also is planned.

Namibia are to enter a club in both the African Champions and the African Cup-Winners' Cups, according to Hiskia.

The winner of the new NFA Premier Division league will play in the Champion's Cup, with the victors in the NFA Cup going through to the other event.

Namibia began the league campaign at the start of the year with 20 clubs -- a result of the amalgamation of the various leagues.

This has been cut to 12 clubs, who will play off for the title at the end of this year.

They are Orlando Pirates, Black Africa, BS Tigers, Robber Chanties, Golden Bees, Young Ones, Africa Stars, Sundowns, Services (all from Windhoek); Eleven Arrows, Blue Waters (both from Walvis Bay) and Chief Santos, based in the northern mining town of Tsumeb.

Britain's immigrants : top sports achievers

Hockey in Britain has a strong base in the Asian community. Two members of the British team that won the gold medal at the 1988 Olympic Games in Seoul are of Asian descent - Imran Sherwani and Kulbir Bhoura

Sportswomen and women of African, Caribbean and South Asian descent are now playing an overwhelming part in Britain's challenge for global honours. Only 4.7 per cent of Britain's 58 million people are of ethnic minority origin, but they make up an estimated 30 per cent of top sports achievers. In professional boxing, the figure is more than 60 per cent.

Linford Christie, Colin Jackson, Tessa Sanderson, John Barnes, Devon Malcolm, Nasser Hussein and Gary Mason are just the crest of a wave of black and brown talent that is surging through boxing, cricket, athletics, rugby, hockey and soccer. Ten of Britain's 13 current boxing champions were either born in the West Indies or are sons of immigrants. They are Gary Mason (heavyweight), Johnny Nelson (cruiser weight), Herol Graham (middleweight), Gary Stretch (light middleweight), Kirkston Lating (welterweight), Tony Akubea (light welterweight), Hue Forde (super featherweight), Sean Murphy (featherweight) and Pat Clinton (flyweight).

Irishman Barry McGuigan and Londoner Terry Marsh, Britains world champions and most global title aspirants during the 1980s were black.

Famous

Frank Bruno, the most famous name in British boxing in the last 10 years, was born in Wandsworth, South London, but both parents were from Jamaica. His five-round bash with former world heavyweight champion Mike Tyson raised him above any native son of recent years, except perhaps Henry Cooper.

Dennis Andries, the only boxer from Britain to win a world title on three occasions, is arousing real excitement in the fight game. The Hackney-based Andries is a West Indian import.

So is Lloyd Honeyghan, who held the world welterweight title twice. According to Tony Ward, secretary of the British Amateur Athletic Association, 34 per cent of Britain's history-making squad at the 1990 European Athletics Championships in Split, Yugoslavia, were from the so-called New Commonwealth (excluding Australia, New Zealand and Canada).

Among them were Christie, the fastest man in Europe and Olympic Games silver medalist; John Regis, the most decorated athlete at the European Championships (two golds, a silver and bronze); hurdler Jackson (who speaks with a Welsh accent) and Tony Jarrett (a Cockney accent); Marcus Adams, the dynamic, extrovert Kris Akabusi.

Until recently a warrant officer in the Royal Marines, the Nigerian-born Akabusi erased the 21-year-old British all-comers 400 metres hurdles record set by David Hemery in

John Barnes and Linford Christie may be Britain's two best-known sportsmen in international terms, but behind them stand row upon row of athletes from Asia, Africa and the Caribbean who are contributing to the country's sporting success... Ebo Quansah writes

the Olympic Games in Mexico in 1968.

Akabusi's televised dance of joy after his record-shattering feat was one of the highlights of the tournament.

Rise

The rise of British athletics owes much to white middle-distance runners Sebastian Coe, Steve Cram and Steve Ovett, but credit must also go to double Olympic decathlon champion Daley Thompson, Olympic and Commonwealth javelin champion Sanderson, her great rival Fatima Whitbread and former European junior track king Ade Mafe, originally from Nigeria.

Current black dominance is reflected in the make-up of the 400 metres relay team - three blacks and a white called Black (Roger).

Cricket is heavily populated by Indians, Pakistanis, Sri Lankans and West Indians. Many are contract players from their home countries such as stars as Desmond Haynes, Winston Davis, Curtly Ambrose, the 18-year-old "Burewala Bombshell" Waqar Younis, Wasim Akram and Ravi Shastri. India's Narendra Hirwani is expected to find a place in country cricket next season.

All 17 countries have first-class players from the overseas Test nations. But a growing number of professional cricketers are British nationals of ethnic origin.

Since Jamaican-born Norman Cowans became the first black to play for England the

his retirement from Warwickshire, the country handed a two-year contract to Birmingham-born Wasim Khan, 19, a lefthanded opening batsman.

Ugandan-born Mohammed Asif Din also plays for Warwickshire and another East African, Zahid Sadiq from Nairobi, is with Surrey.

Lancashire opening bat Oshan D. Mandes, who hails from Colombo, has twice turned down invitations to play for Sri Lanka to be free for selection by England.

There are even two

Barbados-born umpires: J.W. Holder and V.A. Holder.

Accusations of racism echoed through cricket after remarks by former England captain Brian Close about Pakistanis which angered the immigrant community.

The ill-feeling was directed at Close's own Yorkshire County Cricket Club, which has never fielded non-white. Yorkshire has a well-known policy of using only Yorkshire-born players but immigrants say good locally-born performers from their ranks are ignored.

Bradford cricketer Iftikhar Ahmed organised a meeting with the club to defuse what he called "a potentially damaging situation."

Chance

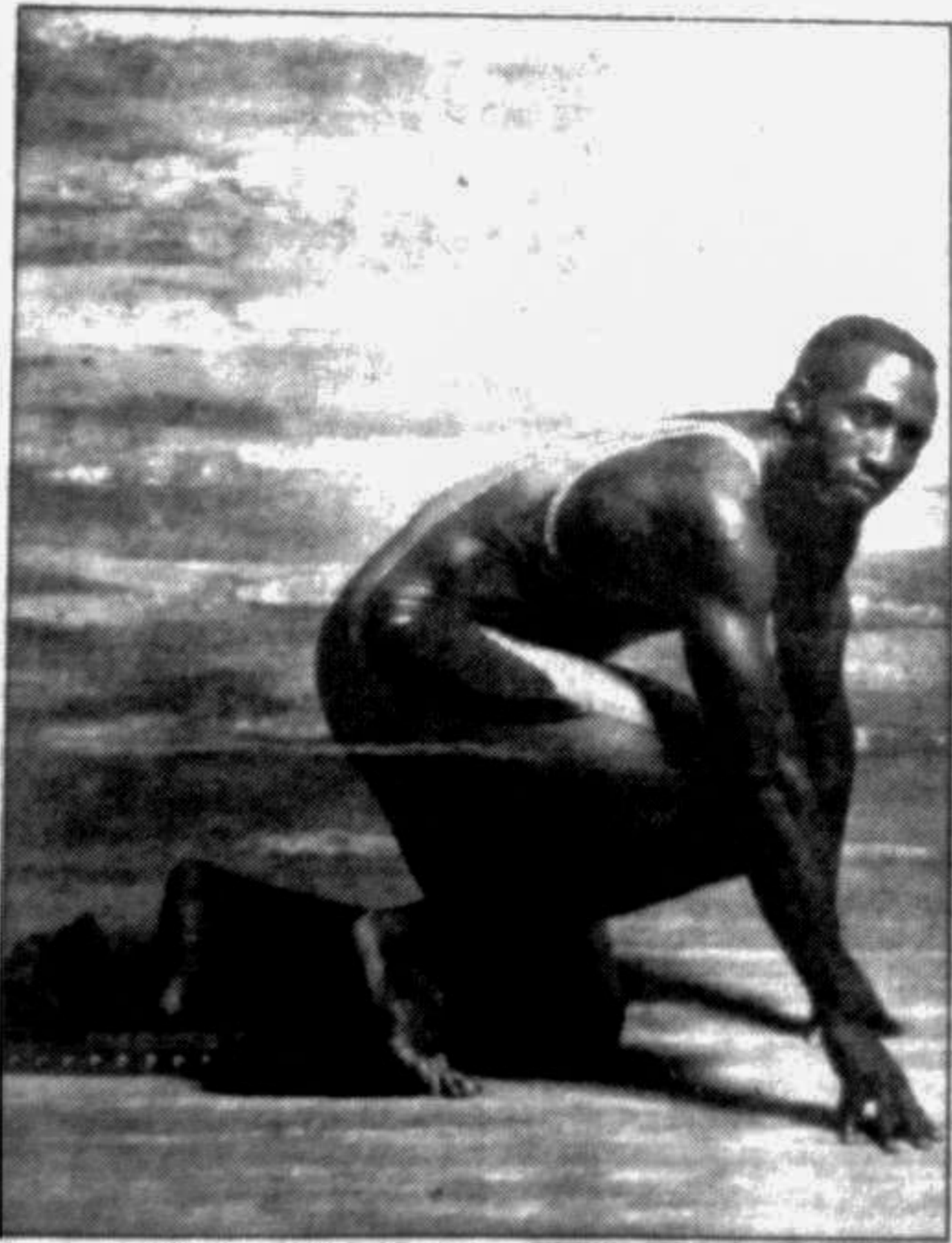
Members of the Asian delegation said young cricketers did not try to join Yorkshire CCC because they did not think they would get a fair chance.

The club stressed that membership was open to anyone in the immigrant communities and urged them to join and effect change democratically.

An annual game was agreed between a Yorkshire side and Asian select XI.

In rugby, the skills and running power of Chris Oti, Andy Harriman, Martin Offiah and Steve Ojomoh, all Nigeria-born, have enriched what is sometimes considered an elite sport.

Oti, a Cambridge University graduate in the headlines in 1988 when, at the age of 21, he became the first black Rugby Union player to turn out for England since James Peters in 1908. He made six more international appearances before injury forced him off the England scene.



LINFORD CHRISTIE...successful sprinter

High-flying Jumbo

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Masashi Ozaki is Japan's greatest all-time golfer who was responsible for his country's tournament boom during the 1970s. He is a winner not just on the course, but off it as well.

In Japan, where golf is a passion, Masashi Ozaki is Arnold Palmer, Jack Nicklaus and Lee Trevino all rolled into one.

Like Palmer in the United States, Ozaki was responsible for Japan's tournament boom during the 1970s.

Like his idol Nicklaus, Ozaki is his country's greatest all-time player. And like Trevino, he's a showman who enjoys bantering with spectators between booming drives.

"In the army I learned how to be golfing most accurate, by shooting; bullets at targets," Ozaki says, grinning, through an interpreter.

Nicknamed Jumbo, Ozaki is a big man by Japanese standards, almost six feet (two metres) and 190 pounds (86 kgs).

He has led the Japan PGA tour with over \$1 million in prize money in each of the last three years. He won 41 times in the 1970s and since 1980 has added 32 victories, including four in 16 starts this year. He has won the Japan Open three times.

"My wish is for me or another Japanese player to win a major tournament in North America," says Ozaki, who annually enters the four majors on the tour and has had top-

10 finishes in the Masters and British Open.

Ozaki, who looks younger than his 43 years, has been working on his first North American golfcourse project. Ozaki's signature is already on five courses in Japan, with another 10 in progress.

The new course, Loomis Trail, is adjacent to the Semiahmoo Resort course in Washington State, south of Vancouver, just across the Canada-United States border.

Ozaki is acting as consultant to Bellingham, Washington, architect Rick Dvorak. The Loomis Trail project is being

developed by North Sanal (Canada) Inc. And the Naniwa-Ya Group of Vancouver.

Ozaki is also in Canada promoting his new Bridgestone driver, called J's Professional Weapon.

Since both Nicklaus and Greg Norman enthusiastically endorsed Ozaki's club during the Masters tournament last April, J's Weapon has been a hot item. The driver sells for \$345 each - if it can be found.

"We can't get enough of them... We're severely back-ordered," says Darryl Olson, sales manager at Bridgestone's United States headquarters in Atlanta, Georgia. "I understand 10,000 have moved monthly worldwide."

Ozaki says his newest model has been modified to suit the week-end player. His original design was geared for high-ball, high-spin hitters like himself.