

Pele praises World Cup USA '94

MILAN, Apr 5: Retired soccer star Pele praised American planning for the 1994 World Cup and said he was certain of great success in the championship final rounds in the United States, reports AP.

"It's a perfect organization. All stadiums are already prepared one year prior to the finals," Pele said Sunday, as he travelled to Italy to unveil the World Championships for soccer veterans.

The over-34 tournament for national teams will be played in Trieste, northern Italy, Klagenfurt, Austria, on July 2-11.

Pele, considered an ambassador of the International Soccer Federation (FIFA), said soccer is the most popular sport among American youths and that the 1994 World Cup is likely to boost soccer popularity.

"I'm certain that the 1994 World Cup will enjoy a great success," he said.

Pele, considered one of the best soccer players ever, picked Italy, Germany, Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay as the favourite teams in the 1994 World Cup.

The over-34 tournament in July labelled "Pele Cup," will feature past stars such as Brazilian Rivelino, Italians Paolo Rossi and Alessandro Altobelli, Dutchman Ruud Krol, Austrian Herbert Prohaska and Germans Karl Heinz Rummenigge and Hans Peter Briegel.

Teams include Italy, Germany, Brazil, Uruguay, Argentina, England, Netherlands and Austria.

El Salvador stun Mexico

SAN SALVADOR, Apr 5: El Salvador stunned Mexico with a surprise 2-1 win in their World Cup CONCACAF qualifier on Sunday, reports Reuter.

An opportunist 77th minute goal by substitute William Reneros gave the hosts victory.

They took the lead with a 41st minute penalty by Carlos Castro after playmaker Mauricio Cienfuegos was dragged down from behind.

Mexico, technically superior, dominated midfield for most of the game and looked threatening time and again.

But El Salvador's over-worked defence repeatedly squeezed out veteran marksman Hugo Sanchez and the rest of the Mexican attack.

A powerful close range header from Francisco Urbe in the 52nd minute forced a fine reflex save from Salvadorean goalkeeper Carlos Rivera.

Mexico equalised in the 75th minute when midfielder Alberto Garcia Aspe struck home a stinging 35-metre drive.

But El Salvador replied with the winner two minutes later when Reneros found a gap in the Mexican defence and ran on to a fine pass from fellow forward Raul Diaz.

Mexican goalkeeper Jorge Campos came out to narrow the angle but tripped and was left stranded as Reneros, who had come on just three minutes earlier, picked his spot.

Canada, Honduras split points

TEGUCIGALPA, Honduras, Apr 5: Cesar Obando scored on a penalty kick after a controversial foul call with two minutes remaining, giving Honduras a 2-2 draw with Canada on Sunday in a CONCACAF World Cup qualifying match, reports AP.

Both Honduran goals came on penalties after questionable calls, the second of which drew the ire of Canadian coach Bob Lenarduzzi, who came off the bench to verbally confront Jamaican referee Noel Smith after the match.

Smith whistled the foul apparently after he ruled Watson had obstructed Caltz at the top of the penalty area, preventing him from getting to the ball on a long high pass.

The match was the first for both in the third round of qualifying for the North, Central America and Caribbean region.

Navy soccer on

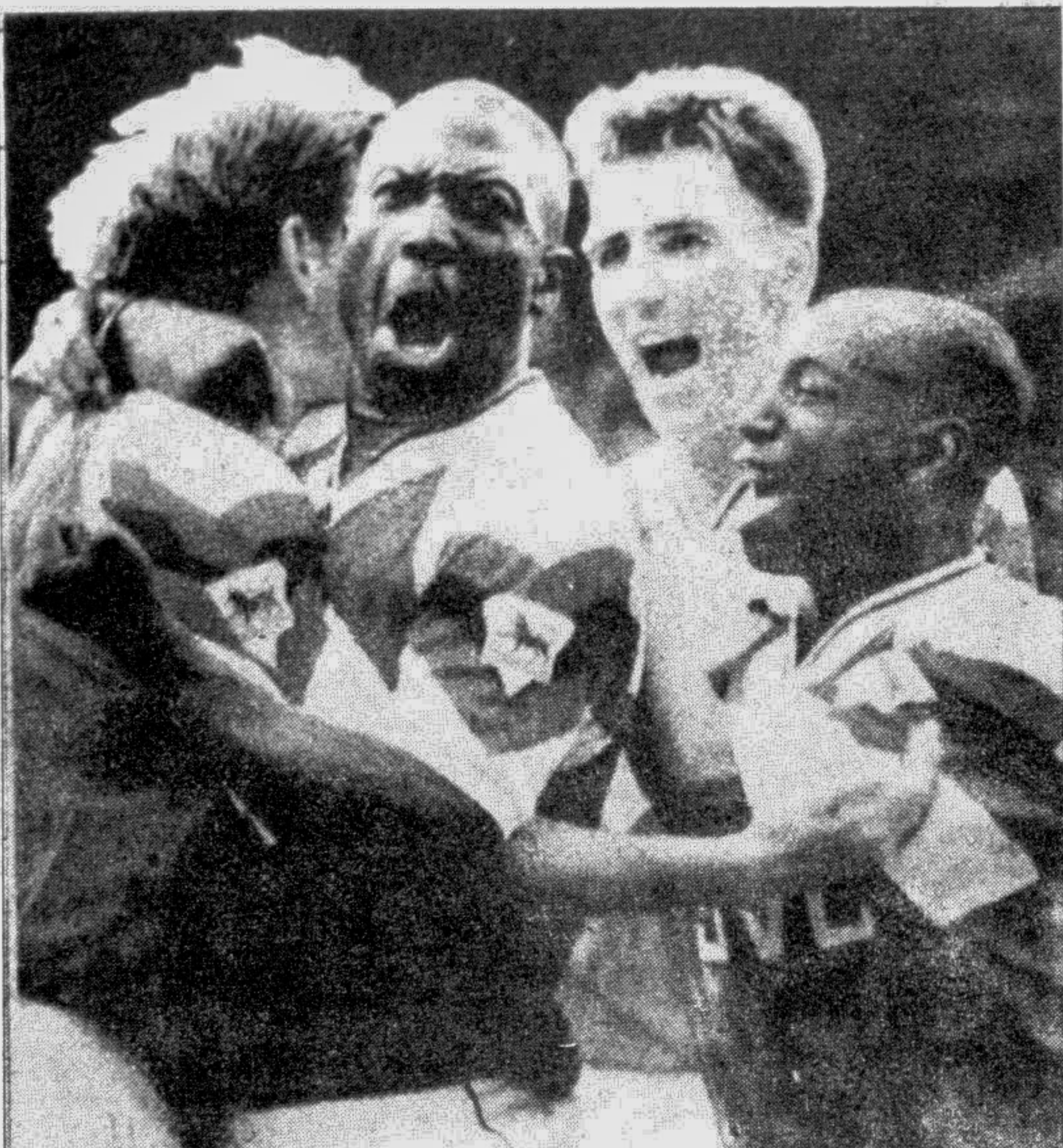
The annual football championship of the Bangladesh Navy began at the Naval Headquarters complex playground at Banani yesterday, says an ISPR release.

BNS Hajj Mohsin beat the Frigate Squadron by a solitary goal in the exciting opening match. M O Hussain, A B scored the lone goal of the match in extra time.

In another match, BNS Shaheed Mozammam beat BNS Titumir 5-2 in the tie-breaker. Both teams were locked 1-1 after scheduled and extra time.

In the penalty shoot-out Shaheed Mozammam scored four goals to Titumir's one.

Earlier, Commodore Fakhruddin Ahmed, Assistant Chief of Naval Staff formally inaugurated the four-day meet as chief guest.



Arsenal captain Tony Adams (far L) is congratulated by teammates (L-R) Kevin Campbell, Andy Linnigan and Ian Wright after he scored the only goal of the FA Cup semifinal match against Tottenham Hotspurs in Wembley on April 4. — AFP photo

Inter Milan's hopes rekindled

PARIS, Apr 5: Internazionale won 3-1 away at Sampdoria on Sunday to retain a glimmer of hope that they might

be able to prevent neighbours AC Milan retaining the Italian league title, reports AFP.

Milan, unbeaten for 58 league matches until a fortnight ago, have now taken only one point from their last three matches after having to fight back from 2-0 down to draw with Napoli at home on Saturday.

Inter get the chance to cut the champions lead at the top to five points in the Milan derby next weekend. But even if they win they will have only seven matches left to catch Fabio Capello's men.

Goals for two and 21 minutes by Italy's World Cup hero Salvatore "Toto" Schillaci put Inter on their way to victory against the 1991 champions.

Nicolas Bertl made sure of the points after 69 minutes before Vladimir Jugovic pulled one back 15 minutes from the end.

Italy winger Gianluigi Lentini was AC Milan's saviour, scoring twice in six minutes around the hour mark after Napoli had gone into the break two ahead.

Brazilian striker Antonio Careca and Roberto Pollicano had put the southern club ahead with goals in the 35th and 44th minutes.

Despite the fightback, the performance will not have left Capello over confident for Wednesday's European Cup clash with Gothenburg, where the Milanese need a draw to go into the final.

Parma, who ended Milan's unbeaten run, moved level with Lazio in third and warmed up for their Cup Winner's Cup semi-final against Atletico Madrid on Wednesday by beating lowly Pescara 2-0 with goals from Salvatore Matarrese and Sweden's Thomas Brodin.

But Juventus, who take on Paris Saint Germain in a UEFA Cup semifinal first leg on

Tuesday, could manage only a goalless draw at Udinese, despite the return of Roberto Baggio and David Platt.

An equaliser by Belgian international Enzo Scifo three minutes from time prevented Lazio taking both points from Torino in Turin. Dutch midfielder Aron Winter had put the Roman club ahead.

In France, Rudi Voeller sent Olympique Marseille back to the top of the French league with a goal that will have chilled Rangers boss Walter Smith as he prepares for Wednesday's European Cup clash.

The veteran German striker's 22-yard volley, struck with the outside of the foot, finally broke stubborn Saint Etienne's resistance 18 minutes from time.

Marcel Desailly thundered in a first time shot from 15 yards in the 80th minute to ensure the 'Greens' were beaten for the first time in 14 matches.

"Some of the players clearly had the match on Wednesday in mind and didn't play as well as they could have," said Marseille coach Raymond Goethals. "But we've won two difficult away matches, here and at Nantes, and it is a huge step towards the title."

The win put Marseille, chasing a fifth straight title, two points clear at the top as rivals Monaco crashed to a 3-0 defeat at Strasbourg.

A double from Algerian Ali Bouafia after Jacky Paillard had put Strasbourg ahead on the hour mark ensured an unhappy return for coach Arsene Wenger to his native Alsace and the club he graced as a player.

Bordeaux kept up their campaign for a championship triumph in their first year back in the top flight when Brazilian Alder scored the only goal in a 1-0 defeat of Sochaux. Another clean sheet took goalkeeper Gaetan Huard's unbeaten record to 1,097 minutes.

France's two remaining UEFA Cup contenders had mixed nights. Auxerre lost a sixth consecutive away match,

while Paris Saint Germain, who were unbeaten in their first year back in the top flight when Brazilian Alder scored the only goal in a 1-0 defeat of Sochaux. Another clean sheet took goalkeeper Gaetan Huard's unbeaten record to 1,097 minutes.

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Lame Juventus' last hope

TURIN, Italy, Apr 5: Juventus of Turin will miss five key players as they play a dramatic survival match against Paris St Germain in an early first-leg game of the UEFA Cup semifinals, reports AP.

The match at Delle Alpi stadium Tuesday night can either revive or definitely end La Juve hopes for a berth on the European Cup scene next season.

Despite an expensive infusion of transfers last summer, the Turin team has been eliminated from the Italian Cup and trails league leaders AC Milan by 14 points, in sixth place, overall — out of contention for the Italian title and for a berth in next season's UEFA Cup.

"UEFA is the only season target left. The semifinals could give us some consolation. Thus I expect a strong engagement of my players," Juventus coach Giovanni Trapattoni said.

In another game Tuesday night, Parma of Italy play Atletico Madrid on the road in a first-leg semifinal of the Cupwinners Cup.

Most games in the three European competitions for clubs, including the Champions Cup, are scheduled for Wednesday.

Trapattoni said his team will need to score two goals at home to be on the safe side of the second leg in France within two weeks.

"Unfortunately we will miss key players and our task is going to be extremely difficult," the Italian coach said.

La Juve will have to do without German midfielder Andreas Moeller, Italian striker Pierluigi Casiraghi and No 1 goalie Angelo Peruzzi, all injured. Defenders Roberto Galia and Massimo Carrera are suspended.

However Juventus still can start an impressive forwardline including Roberto Baggio and Gianluca Vialli, two of Italy's most expensive transfers, and Englishman David Platt.

La Juve's defence, including tough German Juergen Kohler and Brazilian Julio Cesar, will have to watch for Liberian-born striker Georges Weah, who is considered St Germain's most dangerous forward.

Goalkeeper Michelangelo Rampulla, who won interna-

tional lame when he scored one goal for Cremonese on an unexpected offensive raid two years ago, will make his European debut at age 30 as the substitute for Peruzzi.

The Turin team, who have had two losses, one draw and a single win in the last league rounds, face a tough challenge in Tuesday's home match which kicks off at 2030 local time (1830 GMT) before an expected crowd of 50,000.

Paced by flashy Colombian forward Faustino Asprilla and Swedish forward Tomas Brodin, Parma handed AC Milan their first league defeat two weeks ago and climbed to third place overall.

Parma, playing for the first time ever in the semifinals of an European competition, announced an offensive-minded team as coach Nevio Scala emphasized that "goals on the road can be decisive under the Cup tie-break system."

Mexican striker Luis Garcia and German veteran midfielder Bernd Schuster are questionable starters for Atletico Madrid, who were upset by Albacete in the last round of the Spanish league.

Now, Milan line!

MILAN, Apr 5: AC Milan, the powerful Italian soccer club, inaugurated an information service this week for its fans called "Milan-line," reports AP.

By dialing a special number, at a cost of 952 lire (60 US cents) per minute, the caller can hear a tape giving the latest team news, interviews with team officials and players, details on ticket prices and travels with the squad.

A club spokesman said "Milan-line" was intended to improve relations and communication between the club and its supporters.

The inaugural tape included an interview with media tycoon Silvio Berlusconi, AC Milan's president, in which he reviewed the team's current problems and made predictions for the upcoming crucial league game against crosstown rival Internazionale.

Milan have two draws and one loss in their last three league games and were eliminated from the Italian Cup. They appear to be a shadow of the team which dominated the first part of the season.

But they still lead runners-up Internazionale by seven points overall, although Inter have cut four points off the lead in the last three weeks.

The special telephone number is (39-2-144-662-922).

Canniggia dropped

ROME, Apr 5: Argentine international Claudio Canniggia, suspected of taking cocaine before a match last month, was left out of A S Roma's team which drew 1-1 with Fiorentina on Sunday, reports AFP.

Roma coach Vujadin Boskov decided to omit Canniggia, though club doctor Faio Pigozzi gave him a pre-match clean bill of health.

The other Roma player who had a drugs test against Naples on March 21, Thomas H. played in the match.

Easy wins for Barcelona, Real

MADRID, Apr 5: Spanish title rivals Barcelona and Real Madrid had easy home victories on Sunday, reports Reuter.

Leaders Barcelona beat lowly Logrones 3-0 despite a dismal first half performance, leaving themselves two points clear of Real Madrid who thrashed Real Zaragoza 4-0.

Third-placed Deportivo Coruna, top for the first half of the season, kept in touch by beating Sporting Gijon 1-0 away. They trail Barcelona by three points.

Injury-hit Barcelona went ahead through Julio Salinas in the 19th minute, then Altor Beguiristain took a pass from Ronald Koeman to make it 2-0 in the 48th. The Dutchman scored himself in the 63rd minute.

Chilean striker Ivan Zamorano was on target twice for Real Madrid. Manuel Sanchis hit his first of the season and Fernando Hierro added the other.

Sanchis scored in the 20th minute with a header and Zamorano made it 2-0 four minutes later. In the 37th minute, Zaragoza's goalkeeper Antonio Cedrun parried a shot from Emilio Butragueno but the ball bounced off Hierro's leg and in to goal.

But Feyenoord stayed a point clear of PSV thanks to goals from Rob Witschge and Reginald Blinker, which allowed them to come back from a goal down against RWC Waalwijk.

Ajax kept up the chase with Dennis Bergkamp scoring twice in a 4-0 defeat of Den Bosch.

Jeering fans enrage Maradona

MADRID, Apr 5: Diego Maradona, who has been keeping an unusually low profile at his Spanish club

Sevilla, issued death threats to fans after crowd abuse and a drug test angered him at the weekend, reports Reuter.

Maradona, outraged by spectators who shouted insults about his wife and children, said: "If any one touches my family then they will die, and I'm telling the truth."

The Argentine, who stormed out of Sunday's post-match news conference, also accused authorities of picking on him after last week's revelations that an unnamed Roma player tested positive for drugs after a recent Italian league match.

Maradona was fuming after undergoing a routine dope test after his side's 1-0 defeat against Oviedo, and claimed: "After everything that happened last week, it wasn't chance that I had to have a test."

An injury to key striker Michael Laudrup took the gloss off Barcelona's weekend victory which kept them on course for a second successive Spanish league title.

The comfortable 3-0 win over lowly Logrones kept

Barcelona two points clear of championship rivals Real Madrid and a further point ahead of Deportivo Coruna, but left coach Johan Cruyff more worried than pleased.

"I understand why they booed us ... play was scrappy and too often we gave the ball away," Floro said.

With 10 games remaining, one-time leaders Deportivo are still clinging to the coat tails of the big two after an injury-time goal secured a 1-0 victory over Sporting Gijon.

"The only good thing to come out of this match was the result," said Deportivo coach Arsenio Iglesias. "I'm not at all happy with the way the team played. We lacked concentration and in the end were very lucky."

"It's going to be very hard for us to win the league, but I suppose that if we carry on picking up points then anything is possible," Iglesias said.

One man who was happy was Jose Luis Zalazar, Albacete's Uruguayan midfielder, who scored a stunning 55-metre goal, as his team beat Atletico Madrid 2-1.

Spanish newspapers described it as one of the longest goals in Spanish soccer history, but Zalazar's attempts to repeat the feat after the match in to an empty goal finished well wide of target.

"I hope, because I'm an eternal optimist, that he will be back in time for next weekend," Cruyff told journalists.

Real Madrid enjoyed an even more emphatic victory, beating Real Zaragoza 4-0, but

it, and it needed Aston Villa's Irish connection to break the city ground deadlock.

A Dean Saunders header and a Kevin Richardson long distance power driver both threatened the Forest goal, but Villa's breakthrough did not arrive until they won a corner after an hour.

Steve Staunton looped the ball over for fellow Irish international McGrath to head in, classic fashion at the far post.

For a man whose arthritis prevents him taking part in regular training, it has been quite a week for McGrath.

Last weekend his fellow professionals elected him their player-of-the-year, and on Wednesday he played a starring role in Ireland's 3-0 World Cup demolition of neighbours Northern Ireland.

Forest were always in the game, creating enough chances against the impressive Villa defence.

But once again their lack of an adequate target man let them down in the final third of the field, as new signing Robert Rosario failed to impress.

Although it was a fine result for Villa, their reign at the top could be over this evening when fellow challengers Manchester United visit Norwich.

As the race for the championship heats up, however, it could be too late for Forest.

McGrath followed up his FFA player-of-the-year award with a World Cup win in Dublin, and then put Ron Atkinson's men two points clear in the Premier League with six games to go.

Villa's flight is Notts' plight

NOTTINGHAM, England, Apr 5: Paul McGrath headed a 64th minute header that could win Aston Villa the Premier League title while condemning Nottingham Forest to relegation, reports AFP.

Aston Villa's 1-0 victory over Forest here on Sunday puts them two points top of the league, but defeat means Forest are still second bottom and a long way from safety.

With seven games remaining, Brian Clough's team are two points off fellow strugglers Oldham, now fourth from bottom after beating Wimbledon 6-2 on Saturday.

The 100th game between these two sides was always

Britain's grand national tragedy

LONDON, Apr 5: The biggest pay-out in British bookmakers' history followed the race that never was, reports AP.

Licensed bookmakers Monday began paying back some £115 million in bets over the Grand National steeplechase declared void because of a false start.

Seven of the 39 starters actually completed the gruelling 4.5-mile (7.2-kilometer) race around the 30-fence Aintree course and Esha Ness actually finished first.

But it didn't count. While they were racing around the course, nine more were still at the start line while others pulled up or fell at the fences. The race was declared void and won't be re-run.

Owners, trainers, jockeys and the media admit it was the biggest debacle in the 157-year history of the famous race.

Bookmakers were so incensed that one considered suing the racecourse for lost profits.

William Hill spokesman Graham Sharpe said Monday, however, it had decided such a move would do more harm than good.

"Although we were assured we would have a very strong case, we have decided to write off the loss as a bad debt," Sharpe said.

"If we pressed a case against Aintree it could bankrupt the course and such an outcome would be more counter-productive than productive."

Now the rule-making Jockey Club is setting up its inquiry into what went wrong.

The race, first held up by an animal rights demonstration on the course, had two false starts, each time caused by horses preventing the start tape from lifting.

The first time, starter Keith Brown raised his red flag to call a false start. Race steward Ken Evans, some 200 yards (meters) down the course, spotted Brown's flag and ran across waving his hand to halt the runners.

Witnesses say it seems that the second time, Evans did not see Brown's flag waving and failed to stop the runners who had started the race.

The result was red flags instead of red flags and one of the papers said it had turned the Sport of Kings into the Sport of Clowns.

"We will look at not only the personnel involved but also the technical side of it to see what needs to be improved," said Jockey Club spokesman David Pipe.

"It's extremely understandable that everyone was angry. It was just a catastrophe that it did happen, particularly for trainers who had brought their horses to a peak for that day."

Jockey Peter Scudamore, one of 30 National riders who didn't see the starter's red flag, said British racing would be "the laughingstock of the world."

The blunder was witnessed by some 350 million TV viewers worldwide and another 55,000 racefans in the stands.

"It was a fiasco and avoidable," Scudamore said.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down. Clues include: 1 French composer, 5 'Fat farm' money, 8 'To — and 41' —, 12 Freehold, 13 Road goo, 14 Moslem chieftain, 15 Some popular music, 17 Hindu queen, 18 Disen-cumber, 19 Corrida cheer, 20 Like some commit-tees, 21 Hasten, 22 Gramus, 23 Neighbor of Tibet, 26 Some New Orleans residents, 30 Sharif, 31 'Some Like It —', 32 Field mouse, 33 Ties together, 35 Jury or larceny descriptive, 36 Highland hat, 37 The heart, 38 Paper money, 41 '—', 42 'appetit', 43 Cebine monkey, 44 Juicy fruit, 45 Army meal, 46 of yore, 47 River in France, 48 Yoko —, 49 Bouffant hairdo, 50 You can count on them, 51 Favorite, 52 Hammer head part, 53 Dickens novel of 1845, 54 Cowardly Lion, 55 Table, 56 scrap, 57 'Hawaii Five-O' star, 58 Peculiar, 59 Fur piece, 60 Unit of length, 61 Biblical craft, 62 Not paper-back, 63 Nepal nanny, 64 Pasta wash-down, 65 Newsman Severeid, 66 Muddy, 67 'Where the Boys —', 68 Dicks novel of 1845, 69 Table, 70 Stragem, 71 Poison, 72 It's often cracked, 73 Israeli port, 74 Sacred image, 75 '— on Pop' (Dr. Seuss book), 76 Invitation to dance?

Cryptogram puzzle grid with letters and numbers. The text below the grid reads: V X K K X U Q H X O Q G L E X W H M S U A P L W V B L W M G L A B O O S H X P L S M S L E S Z W W B B D P H M W G D S G Q V G Z K. Yesterday's Cryptogram: WALL STREET AREA WHERE VALUABLES CAN OFTEN BE RECOVERED: THE LOST AND FUND. Today's Cryptogram clue: O equals B

The Cryptogram 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.