

Maradona back with a bang

ROSARIO, Argentina, Oct 8: A slimline Diego Maradona celebrated his latest comeback by scoring the winning goal on his first appearance for his new club Newell's Old Boys of Argentina on Thursday, reports Reuter.

Maradona, who claimed to have lost twelve kilos in the weeks before the match, sent a 40,000 crowd into raptures when he scored in the 70th minute with a superbly taken goal as Newell's beat Emelec of Ecuador 1-0 in a friendly.

Maradona received the ball between three Emelec defenders with his back to goal, turned and fired a shot into the corner of the Emelec goal.

A laser show greeted the much-awaited entry of Maradona, who walked on to the field holding the hands of his two daughters.

"I felt very well. Of course, I'm still lacking match fitness, but little by little, I will get there," he said afterwards.

Argentina national team coach Alfio Basile, who was among the crowd, said he was seriously considering recalling Maradona for his country's World Cup qualifiers with Australia.

The first leg is in Sydney on October 31, the second in Buenos Aires on



DIEGO MARADONA

matter how good he is he needs time. I think, in three or four games, he will be fine."

Many thought that Maradona's career had finished following his undistinguished departure from Spanish club Sevilla, who gave him his first comeback chance after he fin-

ished a 15-month worldwide ban for drug abuse. Maradona finished a tumultuous year in Spain, in which he never fully regained his fitness, on June 13, when he stormed off the pitch hurling insults at Sevilla trainer Carlos Bilardo after being substituted in a league match.

But he soon found it impossible to keep away from playing soccer.

In the opening minutes of Thursday's game, he narrowly missed the Emelec goal with a header and he was at the centre most of Newell's best moves.

His devastating pace and acceleration, so prominent when Argentina won the 1986 World Cup with Maradona as captain, were clearly not what they were, but they were amply compensated for by intelligence and ability.

Both Newell's and Argentina are pinning their hopes on a fully fit Maradona, who has been out of Argentine domestic soccer for more than 11 years.

Newell's are struggling in the Argentine championship, having drawn three matches, lost one and scored only three goals.

Argentina are still shell-shocked from a 5-0 defeat at home to Colombia last month which condemned them to the World Cup play-off with Australia.

Iraq in Qatar

DOHA, Oct 8: Iraq's soccer team arrived in Qatar on Thursday to prepare for their World Cup qualifying matches after getting a rousing send-off from Baghdad's media, reports Reuter.

"Fight to the death and come back to Iraq with a passport to the land of unclean," thundered Al-Baath Ar-Riyadhi newspaper before their departure.

Saudi Arabia, which joined a US-led coalition to fight Iraqi forces in the 1990-91 Gulf War, is the only other Arab nation in the six-team group, from which two teams will qualify for the finals in the United States.

But Iraqi captain Ahmed Raif signalled he was not concerned with political differences. "I hope that two Arab nations qualify for the finals in America," he said.

The 30-strong Iraqi squad, who had to make the first leg of their journey by bus to Jordan because of a UN ban on flights out of Iraq, was given a police escort to their city hotel.

The group, which also includes North and South Korea, Japan and Iran, will play out its matches from October 15-28.

On Friday, Japan and Iran are due to arrive. Japan, the Asian champions, are expected to bring around 260 journalists and 1,500 supporters with them.

The support has put such a squeeze on the small Gulf State's hotel accommodation that the authorities have hired a 1,200 berth ship from Greece to cater for the influx.

Saudi Arabia beat Russia

KHOBAR, Saudi Arabia, Oct 8: Saudi Arabia, warming up for next week's Asian Zone World Cup qualifying play-offs in Qatar, beat Russia 4-2 here Wednesday in a friendly football international, reports AFP.

Khaled Messaoud scored twice, the first from a 23rd minute penalty after Alexander Mustovoy had given the Russians a ninth minute lead with his first goal.

Hamza Idriss and Fahd Mhaleel were the other Saudi scorers. Mhaleel's 85th minute strikes settled the outcome after Mustovoy's second in the 72nd minute had pulled the Russians back into contention.

Saudi Arabia: 4 (Khaled Messaoud 23 pen, 60, Hamza Idriss 65, Fahd Mhaleel 85); Russia: 2 (Mustovoy 9, 72); Half-time: 1-1.

Five sign for US nat'l team

MISSION VIEJO, Calif, Oct 8: World Cup veterans Tony Meola, Desmond Armstrong and Chris Henderson were among five players Thursday to sign with the US national soccer team, reports AP.

Dominic Kinnear and Brad Friedel also signed, bringing all 20 players at training camp under contract.

"We are extremely pleased to have all the contracts finalized, and are excited that these players have decided to dedicate themselves to preparing for the 1994 World Cup," general manager Bill Nuttall said.

Meola was the starting goalkeeper for the 1990 US World Cup team in Italy. Armstrong, now a sweeper but a midfielder in 1990, also started all three games in Italy. Henderson was a reserve.



Juan Antonio Samaranch (C), president of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), is shown how to hold a Chinese writing brush by C K Wu (L), member of the IOC, and Henry Hsu, an honorary IOC member, as he attempts Chinese calligraphy on Oct 8 during his visit to the National Palace Museum. The IOC chief, who is on a three-day visit at the invitation of the Taiwanese President Lee Teng-Hui, reached Taipei on Oct 7.

WC officials leave it to luck

NEW YORK, Oct 8: World Cup officials announced Thursday they will use a sort of electronic lottery on Friday to sell the approximately 150,000 tickets available to the American public for the quarterfinal, semifinal, third-place and championship match, reports AP.

"When you don't have enough tickets to go around, you're going to get criticism," said World Cup chairman Alan Rothenberg. "The only thing we can do is try to make the system fair."

Rothenberg said the plan announced Thursday was in part due to the outcry in the United States created from the sale of first - and second - round tickets.

World Cup officials promised in the spring that tickets sold to the American public would be handled in a random manner, saying there was no rush to order because the date of ordering the tickets was of no consequence.

But because of an unexpected huge demand and the allowing of fans to buy tickets through phone and mail orders, those who didn't act almost immediately were left without.

The plan announced Thursday will require Americans to fill out an order form, mail it by Oct 31 to World Cup organizers, who will then input the information into a computer, which will use a "random selection" programme to select the lucky fans.

Those fans will get a maximum of two tickets per game per household to the eight later-round matches. Quarter-final tickets range in price from \$15 to \$140 each, semifinals from \$15 to \$200 and the final from \$15 to \$475.

Order forms will be mailed to a select group of about 450,000 people, those registered with the US federation, fans who attended US national team games and those who purchased tick-

ets in the first and second rounds.

Also, forms will be placed in newspaper advertisements in the cities where the games will be held.

No forms will be accepted without a US postmark, meaning foreigners are excluded from the lottery process.

The process for foreigners is completely different.

Approximately 35 per cent of the 3.6 million tickets available to the World Cup have been reserved for foreign distribution, or 1.3 million.

Of that, 200,000 are available for the later-round games.

Tickets for foreign fans have been sold in two ways, through tour operators licensed by World Cup USA 1994 and na-

Pumpido to call it a day

BUENOS AIRES, Oct 8: Argentine goalkeeper Nery Pumpido, a member of the 1986 World Cup-winning side, is retiring from professional soccer after a glittering career spanning 16 years, a local newspaper reported on Wednesday, reports Reuter.

Pumpido, 36, began his career with his home town Club Union de Santa Fe and later moved on to the Buenos Aires First Division teams Velez Sarsfield and River Plate.

He was also one of the few Latin American goalkeepers to sign for a European club, Spain's Betis.

Pumpido suffered a string of injuries during his career, including a broken leg during a key 1990 World Cup match against the Soviet Union.

In 1987, he almost lost a finger in a freak training ground accident while playing for River Plate when his wedding ring got caught in a hook on the goalpost, and was ripped off.

He told the local daily Clarin that he will spend his time coaching youngsters, with a view to entering management in the future.

national federations. Tour operators who purchased ticket for early-round (first and second) games, will get a chance to purchase later-round tickets on a pro-rate basis.

National associations develop their own formula for distribution of their allotment throughout the tournament.

The 150,000 tickets available to Americans will be distributed among the eight later-round games according to stadium size.

Boston, Dallas, San Francisco and New York-New Jersey will host the quarter-finals with Los Angeles and New York-New Jersey staging the semifinals and Los Angeles getting the prize -- the championship.

Los Angeles also will host the third-place game.

Because of contractual obligations to sponsors, marketing sponsors, FIFA, etc., more tickets are available for the quarter-finals per game than the semifinals and subsequently the final.

For the final, only 5,000-10,000 of the Rose Bowl's 90,000 capacity will be available to the American public through Thursday's announced sale plan.

"We assume we are going to be overwhelmed," Rothenberg said. "But we want it to be through mail-order only. We don't want to frustrate the public unduly."

"It's all designed to keep the people from being too upset when their order isn't fulfilled."

Charges of incompetence, even from its own members, were levelled at World Cup and US federation officials when many people who heeded the "no need to rush" instructions for the first round didn't get tickets.

"We learned from the experience," Rothenberg said. "We always intended to have some type of random selection process, because we knew the last stage of the ticket process would be overwhelmingly subscribed."

Use of Prevention in Sports World

By Dr Omar Faruque

Hippocrates (460-377BC) said, "If we could give everybody the right amount of nourishment and exercise, not too little or not too much, we would have found the safest way to health."

Preventive steps play an important role in the injury possibilities of an active sportsman. The barriers of ignorance, misconception, and too much eagerness to reach the top in the shortest possible time should be removed by teaching coaches and players preventive measures about injuries. These considerations have increased pressure on medical services. Fortunately the natural phenomenon of injuries did not undergo any astounding rise in tandem with new thoughts and challenges faced by the medical services. May be, the qualitative improvement in training and equipments is responsible for this. With the increased interest and intensity in athletics, sports physician can expect to see an increase in the number of over-use injuries. A composite knowledge of anatomy and biomechanics coupled with clinical examination should hold the doctor in good stead in dealing diagnosis in most cases. Considering the above mentioned factors, treatment should not be only curative, but should be centred on a combined approach of preventive step, relative rest, (alt. exercise), physical modalities and occasional medication.

TYPES & CAUSES OF INJURIES:

Every sportsman or woman live under the threat of two types of injuries: 1) Exogenous: Caused by external agents, like ball or by an action of the opponent;

2) Endogenous: Caused by autogenous dynamics as in the case of rupture of a muscle fibre. Exogenous causes could be minimised by strictly obeying the games rules and also by putting on the protective gear, injuries from endogenous causes could only be minimised by adequate physical fitness.

HOW TO PREVENT INJURIES:

1) Physical fitness: Inactivity accelerates the natural degeneration of muscles, tendons, ligaments, articular surfaces and bone structure. The prime time for physical achievement is between the age of twenty and forty. By carrying out appropriate performance tests, the fit-

ness of an athlete does not know what he does is dangerous, e.g. unscientific weight training;

2) Inadequate training technique and equipment: the athletes or players may not know how to avoid injuries in spite of being switched on about injuries, e.g. like defending punches in boxing; and

3) Carelessness: Though the athlete is aware of danger and knows how to avoid it, carelessness may lead to injuries, e.g. close fielding in cricket, inadequate protective gear.

ness of an athlete for a particular game of sport could be ensured.

The basic components of these tests would be muscular strength, and anaerobic and aerobic capacities and psycho and sensor motor qualities (rapidity of muscle contraction, co-ordination, skill, techniques, elasticity etc).

Experience is very much important. Beginners suffer injury more than experienced ones. Too much training, on the other hand, may cause injuries as a result of over-use. Technique is of great importance for any one who likes high jump, tennis, javelin throwing. Faulty techniques can contribute to burnout syndromes and cause traumatic injuries.

2. Warning up exercise: Once the competitor is found fit for the event, he must go through pre-competitive or pre-training exercises to prepare his body for the task ahead. This is known as warm-up. He should utilise this period to get used to the environmental conditions, like heat, humidity, cold wind, sunlight or flood light. He should also get psychologically tuned up to the atmosphere and partisan hostile crowd. Warm-up period should be done at the optimum level to ensure that every muscle tendon-joint is fully stretched to all planes. Insufficient warm-up period may contribute to muscle and tendon injuries.

WARMING DOWN:

After the competition is over, it is equally important to warm down. The muscles are to be

kept gently active for some time in order to facilitate blood circulation, which, in turn, removes the waste products of excessive metabolism. Otherwise, blood tends to stagnate in the leg muscle resulting stiffness of joint.

PROPER CLOTHING AND FOOT WEAR:

Worn-out shoes, laces, jagged trousers buckles, sweat-soaked shirt collars can cause serious injury or may hinder the performance. Faulty design of studs on boots and faulty arch support in shoes can give rise to lower limb injuries. Black coloured clothing in hot and humid environment may disturb the heat regulatory mechanism of the body with resultant dehydration which can be dangerous.

Besides, protective clothing and equipment can minimise injuries. The protective clothing is different for each game e.g. mouth guard for boxing, leg pads for hockey, helmet for racing, abdominal guard for cricket, goggles for swimming. Overgrown nails can cause injuries in contact games like wrestling, judo, kabaddi, water polo, etc.

Artificial denture could be dangerous in boxing, heading in football can cause serious injuries. Unsuitable environment, wet ground, under-prepared cricket pitch (uneven bounce) are also responsible for injuries.

Last but not the least, commonsense of the athlete or player can minimise the possibilities of injuries.

Chipolopolo - a tangible reality

CASABLANCA, Morocco, Oct 8: Chipolopolo! It's the chant of Zambian soccer fans. It's the sound of a sporting miracle, one match away from coming true.

Forging hope out of horror and heartbreak, Zambia's national team seeks a victory or draw Sunday against Morocco that would clinch a berth in next year's World Cup finals in the United States, reports AP.

Five months ago, there really was no Zambian team. Eighteen of the players were killed April 28 in a plane crash off the coast of Gabon, en route to their first game in the second and final round of African regional qualification.

Around a nucleus of four Europe-based veterans who missed the fatal flight, Zambia rebuilt the team with newcomers who had never played international matches. A nation battered by economic crises and political uncertainty took heart from their pluck.

In the first qualifying match after the crash, Zambia beat Morocco 2-1 at their home ground in Lusaka. Commentators said the Moroccans were unsettled by the Zambians' black arm bands and the horseshoe-shaped graveyard of their dead colleagues outside the gate of Independence Stadium.

The Zambians drew with Senegal on the road in August, then routed the Senegalese 4-0 in Lusaka on Sept. 26 before 35,000 ecstatic fans, including President Frederick Chiluba.

Fans waved US flags and chanted, "America, here we come." They shouted "Chipolopolo!" - a word in the local language likening the team's progress to the force and speed of a bullet.

The joy contrasted sharply with the unprecedented scenes of public grief in Zambia after the crash.

"Fate has robbed our country of its finest football heroes," Chiluba said then.

"I can't believe they are gone," said Kabwe Warriors coach Matthew Kasoka, who lost six players in the crash.

"But the challenge is for us to form a new national team and continue."

The rout of Senegal set up Sunday's decisive match in Casablanca, Morocco must win to get the World Cup berth; even a draw will give Zambia one of Africa's three places in the 24 team finals next year.

Never before have Zambia reached the World Cup finals or even won the biennial African Nations' Cup.

"The boys are fit and ready," said Ian Porterfield, a Briton hired after the plane crash to manage the team. "They'll deliver the goods."

Morocco is expected to be supported by a crowd of more than 80,000.

"They'll have no option but to go for an all-out attack, but we're ready," Porterfield said. "We have a team that is intelligent and hasn't been beaten..."

'Gazza' sidelined

ROME, Oct 8: Paul Gascoigne will be out of action for a month after twisting his left knee in training on Wednesday, his club Italian Lazio said on Thursday, reports AFP.

The England midfielder was examined by a specialist, Aldo Maiotti, at Rome's San Giacomo Hospital and has been advised to have a complete break from competition.

Presuming the prescribed physiotherapy goes well, Gascoigne should be fit for the UEFA Cup second round, second leg against Portugal's Boavista on November 3.

But that would leave him only two weeks to regain full fitness for England's potentially crucial World Cup qualifier in San Marino.

Gascoigne was already ruled out of next week's Group Two match against Holland through suspension.

It is also a severe blow to Lazio who are struggling in the Italian league and are already missing leading striker Giuseppe Signori and Diego Fuser.

Pierluigi Casiraghi joined the injured list on Wednesday when Lazio were bundled out of the Italian Cup by Third Division Avellino.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer. Includes a crossword puzzle grid, word lists for across and down, a solution time of 28 mins, and a Cryptoquip puzzle section with a grid and clues.