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An AFP undated photo of the South Korean national squad. This will be their fourth successive appearance in the World Cup finals. They will hope to improve upon their dismal record of not getting past the first round during next month's finals in the USA.

'Supereagles' for a fell swoop

PARIS, May 24: Nigeria's Supereagles will be the only side in the World Cup finals hardened by real competition, thanks to their victory in the African Nations' Cup in April, reports AFP.

He repaid the coach's faith with two goals and a display of dribbling skills that probably won Nigeria the tournament.

The 20-year-old Eintracht Frankfurt playmaker Austin Okocha was another who impressed in Tunisia, his sweet passes providing the ammunition for the forward line to



C WESTERHOF

But while the Nigerians have a forward line to rank alongside any in the world, Westerhof, who is expected to retire after the finals, readily acknowledges that a shaky defence could leave them exposed in the United States.

back and captain, is in his 33rd year and looked past his best in Tunisia. He was sacked by Belgian club RWD Molenbeek earlier this year after returning late from his Christmas break and is currently without a club.

Nevertheless, Westerhof is likely to stick with them man who models himself on England's World Cup winning captain Bobby Moore and is known throughout Nigeria as big boss.

The goalkeeper Peter Rufai, who plays for Deventer Go Ahead Eagles, is another source of worry. The 30-year-old, who likes to charge upfield and take penalties, tends to lurch between brilliance and extraordinary blunders.

But if the Nigerian forward line produce the goods, Rufai should not have too much to do.

NIGERIA FACTFILE
Manager: Clemens Westerhof
Nigerian Federation: Founded 1945, 326 clubs, 80, 190 players
Colours: Green shirts, white shorts, green socks
Key players: Rashid Yekini, Daniel Amokachi, Stephen Keshi
World Cup: First appearance How they qualified: Won Group A in second round of African qualifiers.

Zambia win FIFA fair play award

ZURICH, May 24: World soccer bosses said on Friday they were awarding their 1993 fair play award to Zambia for bravely rebuilding their national squad after a tragic air crash wiped out their star players, reports Reuter.

The award was announced by FIFA general secretary Sepp Blatter, who said it was in recognition of Zambia's "extraordinary courage."

"Having lost almost all of their national team, they came back and almost qualified for the World Cup," Blatter said.

Eighteen members of Zambia's squad died in a plane crash off the coast of Gabon in April last year.

All not quite quiet on Cameroon front

YAOUNDE, May 24: Cameroon's World Cup captain Stephen Tataw has appealed to his head of state to restore order in their World Cup training camp, reports AFP.

Tataw asked President Paul Biya to intervene after French coach Henri Michel clashed with agents handling their international fixtures.

The agents have threatened legal action after Michel refused to let his team play one match in France.

Cameroon lost 4-1 to Italian side Juventus last Saturday in their latest warm-up match on a tour of Europe.

Last week 42-year-old Roger Milla, who will be the oldest World Cup finalist if he is picked, appealed for Biya to sort out what he called a symbolic team camp.

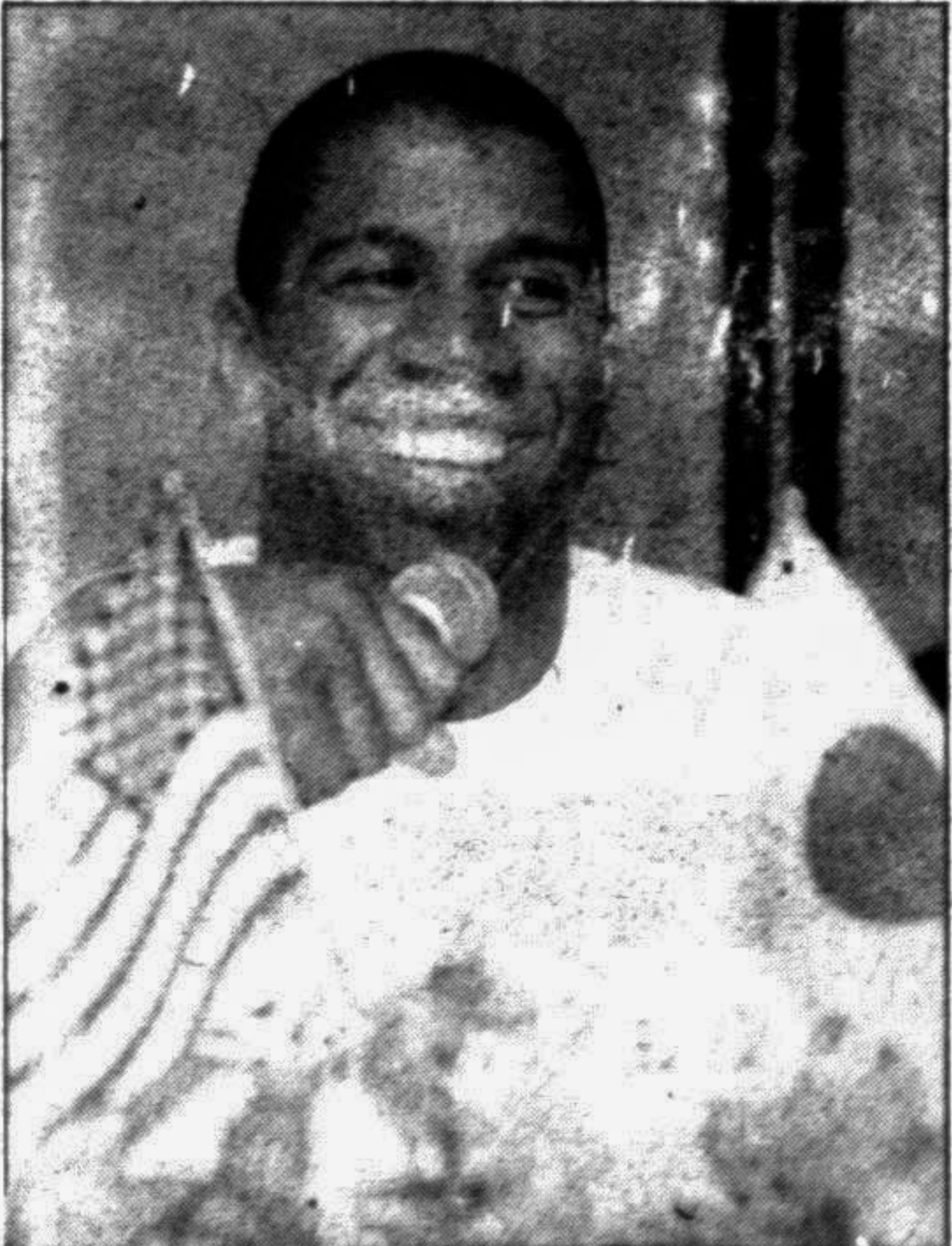
But Milla's presence alone is contributing to the strain. Francois Omam-Biyik, who scored the winner in the 1990 World Cup opening match against Argentina, said the younger players resented the attention Milla was getting.

He was a great player but we have younger players who are better, he said.

Romanian WC squad short of experience

BUCHAREST, May 24: Romania's national soccer team coach Anghel Iordanescu left midfielder Ion Timofte and striker Marius Lăcătuș out of Romania's preliminary 24-man World Cup squad on Monday, report Reuter.

SQUAD
Goalkeeper — Bogdan Stelea (Rapid Bucharest), Florin Prunea (Dinamo Bucharest), Stefan Gabriel Preda (Petrolul Ploiesti)
Defenders — Dan Petrescu (Gnoa, Italy), Nicolae Stancu (Rapid Bucharest), Midrag Belodedici (Valencia, Spain), Gheorghe Mihali (Dinamo Bucharest), Gheorghe Popescu (PSV Eindhoven), Daniel Calaudiu Podan (Steaua Bucharest), Corneliu Papura (Universitatea Craiova), Tibor Selmes (FC Brugge, Belgium)
Midfielder — Ovidiu Ioan Sabau (Brescia, Italy), Basarab Pandaru (Steaua Bucharest), Constantin Gîa (Steaua Bucharest), Gheorghe Hagi (Brescia, Italy), Ionut Angelo Lupescu (Bayer Leverkusen), Julian Chirita (Rapid Bucharest), Ovidiu Stinga (Universitatea Craiova), Dorinel Munteanu (FC Brugge, Belgium)
Attackers — Florin Valeriu Raducliu (AC Milan), Horia Radu Niculescu (FC Inter Sibiu), Ilie Dumitrescu (Steaua Bucharest), Marian Ivan (FC Brasov), Dunu Virel Moldovan (Dinamo Bucharest)



Former US basketball star Earvin 'Magic' Johnson answers a question at a press conference in Tokyo on Monday. Johnson is in Japan for the US-Japan Goodwill Games. — AFP photo

Himst: The unwilling bridge

BRUSSELS, May 24: Bill-gate, suave and reconciliatory. Paul van Himst was widely seen as having the right assets for the job of Belgium's coach, reports Reuter.

But it took the country's soccer leaders a while to convince him to accept the prime post.

A former Anderlecht player capped 81 times between 1960 and 1974, Van Himst reluctantly took charge of the national side in May 1991 after the retirement of veteran manager Guy Thys.

"I had to talk to him for a long time. He didn't want to become national coach at all," Belgian Soccer Union president Michel D'Hooghe said.

"Paul a national coach... it was a surprise for everybody," said his former teammate Jef Jurion.

Van Himst made his coaching debut in the 1982-1983 season at Anderlecht, the club where he started playing at the age of 16.

Anderlecht won the UEFA Cup in 1983 but Van Himst was sacked two and a half years later.

Van Himst later turned his back on soccer after voluntarily leaving another Brussels club, Molenbeek, and concentrating on his coffee company, until D'Hooghe convinced him to take over from Thys.

Van Himst, who scored a record 31 times for Belgium, quickly convinced the sceptics who thought he lacked the coaching experience to lead

the national side. When his first mission — leading Belgium to their fourth consecutive World Cup finals — was accomplished, the Soccer Union asked him to extend his contract by four years until after the next World Cup finals.

D'Hooghe believes Van Himst, 50, avoids conflict with players because he does not train them from a throne but 'speaks to them man to man'.

"They don't have to feel embarrassed with me, I've

played more than long enough to know what their problems are," Van Himst said at the time.

"People like (midfielders) Marc Degryse or Enzo Scifo, they get fed up if you give them too much theory. It also made me crazy in the past," he added.

One of his main assets is his bilingualism in a country split into rival French and Dutch-speaking communities.

The national side has often suffered from friction caused



VAN HIMST

FIFA to recognise 14 more feds

ZURICH, May 24: FIFA is to affiliate 14 national federations at its congress in Chicago next month, bringing its membership up to 191, reports Reuter.

But general-secretary Sepp Blatter said on Friday FIFA's executive committee had decided to give only provisional membership to war-torn Bosnia-Herzegovina because it did not yet meet FIFA criteria.

Blatter said that because of the war the Bosnian Football Federation had its headquarters in Zagreb. The country was also lacking the necessary stadia in which to play soccer.

"We will look at it with a positive eye, although there is no point making them a full member when they cannot even play football," Blatter said.

The 14-successful applicants include seven former Soviet republics — Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

Whitney to perform at WC closing

NEW YORK, May 24: Pop star Whitney Houston will sing to the fans at the closing ceremony before the World Cup soccer final in Los Angeles on July 17, reports Reuter.

World Cup chairman Alan Rothenberg said on Monday that Houston, one of the world's top female vocalists, would sing her award-winning hits and ballads as the star of a 25-minute show to be broadcast to 180 countries.

The ceremony and final is expected to be watched by a global audience of more than two billion, making it the most widely-seen international event in television history.

Rothenberg said world body FIFA had been concerned about damage to the field at the Rose Bowl in Pasadena and so a stage would be built off the grass to one side.

World Cup officials said in a statement that the closing ceremony would be "every bit as colourful, emotional and memorable as the momentous game that follows."

"Imagine the excitement Whitney will create with over 100,000 soccer fans in the Rose Bowl and a worldwide television audience," said Arlen Kantarian, executive producer at New York's radio city, who signed Houston.

Houston won eight American music and three Grammy awards in 1994 and co-starred with Kevin Costner and sang the theme song for the film "The Bodyguard" in 1992. The soundtrack from the movie has sold more than 25 million copies.

PHILIPS WorldCupUSA94™ The Daily Star Quiz Competition

Prizes: Powervision CTV 21" (1st Prize) Tk.26,950; Philips B/W TV 17" (2nd Prize) Tk.7,200; Turbo Stereo Recorder (3rd Prize) Tk.5,500; 4 Dozens of Philips Bulbs (4th Prize) Tk.1,200 X 5 Prizes

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COMPETITION RULES: 1. The Daily Star World Cup Quiz 94 is a series of 60 Quiz Competitions... 2. Participants are to cut the original form along the indicated dotted lines... 3. Photocopies or reproductions in any form will not be accepted... 4. Each entry form should be clearly filled-in complete with a ball-point pen... 5. Participants must ensure the following: All entries must reach the office of The Daily Star on or before the closing date marked on the entry form... 6. Entries will be opened by The Daily Star authorities... 7. The Daily Star authorities, in their absolute discretion, reserve the right to amend, modify or substitute any of the above rules... 8. All participants agree to abide by all rules, instructions and guidelines... 9. Any decision of The Daily Star authorities in the conduct of the Quiz Competition... shall be deemed final and binding on all participants and shall not be called in question and/or challenged in any manner whatsoever.

Quiz 5. Entries close on 31-5-94. Read the instructions carefully. Then tick (✓) the answer which you think is correct. 1. Which one of these countries was eliminated from the 1974 WC without losing a match? Italy [] Chile [] Scotland [] 2. When was the red card first used in a World Cup? 1970 [] 1974 [] 1978 [] 3. Who is credited with the first-ever World Cup hat-trick? Fontaine [] Dorado [] Stabile [] 4. Who scored the first hat-trick in a World Cup Final? Pele [] Piola [] Hurst [] 5. Who was the first player to get a red card in a WC Final? Garrincha [] Dezotti [] Monzon [] 6. Who scored Germany's winning goal in the 1990 WC Final? Klinsmann [] Voeller [] Brehme [] 7. How many World Cup appearances did Pele make? 12 [] 14 [] 16 [] 8. Which country played in the 1978 World Cup after a gap of 20 years? Austria [] France [] Peru [] 9. When was the first-ever goalless draw in a World Cup? 1938 [] 1958 [] 1978 [] 10. Who captained the World Cup-winning German team in 1954? Rahn [] F Walter [] O Walter [] NAME: _____ AGE: _____ ADDRESS: _____ FATHER'S NAME: _____ TELEPHONE: _____ OCCUPATION: _____ SIGNATURE: _____ Write with a ball-point pen in clear, CAPITAL LETTERS. Cut along the dotted lines and mail it to us FAST!

Burnout cases do bother

PARIS, May 24: Jennifer Capriati and her parents have been asked to give their views to a special

panel debating whether to raise the minimum age on the women's pro tennis tour, reports AP.

The Capriatis are among those invited to give testimony at the first formal meeting of the Women Tennis Council's age eligibility commission next month at Wimbledon.

Others asked to give oral or written testimony include Tracy Austin, Andrea Jaeger, Steffi Graf, Gabriela Sabatini, Martina Navratilova, Chris Evert and Billie Jean King.

"We would very much like to hear from Jennifer but we're not sure that will happen," WTC managing director Ann Worcester said Tuesday at the French Open.

Capriati, a former child prodigy who has been off the tour since last August, was arrested last week on misdemeanor, marijuana possession charges. She is currently undergoing substance abuse treatment at a drug rehabilitation clinic in Miami Beach, Fla.

The age panel was formed last year before Capriati announced her sabbatical, but her highly-publicized troubles have provided the focus for the commission's debate.

"Clearly Jennifer's decision to take a leave of absence from the tour and the most recent incidents have heightened the visibility and exposure of the age issue," Worcester said.

Officials relaxed the age rule in March 1991 to allow Capriati to play her first pro tournament three weeks before her 14th birthday.

Experts are now considering whether to raise the minimum age from 13 years, 11 months, to 15 years or older and whether to restrict the number and level of tournaments a young girl can enter per year.

The WTC panel includes seven medical and health experts. At Wimbledon, it will hear from past and present players, coaches, manufacturers, agents and anti-trust

lawyers. Worcester said they will not be applied against Capriati.

"We're supporting Jennifer and glad she's seeking help," she said. "Suspension would be absolutely out of the question. We're not happy it happened and it doesn't reflect positively on women's tennis. We've never had a case like this. We wouldn't characterize it as bringing the sport into disrepute."

Worcester said Capriati's troubles were not indicative of a trend in women's tennis.

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