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Sport

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French striker Jean-Pierre Papin (R) avoids a sliding tackle by Australian defender Mahmet Durakovic during a match in the Kirin Cup in Koke, central Japan on May 26. France beat Australia 1-0.

— AFP photo

Sadyrin rules Russia okay



MOSCOW, May 27: At first glance Russian national soccer coach Pavel Sadyrin is hardly the kind of person you'd suspect of sparking a major sporting mutiny, reports Reuter.

The small mild-mannered man, who won two national league championships as a club coach before steering Russia to their first ever World Cup finals, speaks softly and dresses modestly.

But off the field the 51-year-old former defender has a sharp tongue which has an uncanny habit of bringing out the worst in his teams. Twice it has sparked mass revolts.

Russia's World Cup hopes took a huge knock late last year when 14 top players declared they would no longer play for the national side until Sadyrin had been sacked for incompetence.

The rebels attacked the coach for not knowing his job and always blaming them when things went wrong.

The accusations must have had a familiar ring for Sadyrin, who lost his job as coach of Zenit Leningrad in 1984 thanks to a player rebellion after he had led the team to the Soviet Premier Division title.

No fewer than 16 of the team banded together to attack him for arrogance, rudeness and criticising them unfairly. Stung by the attacks,

Sadyrin announced he was resigning. He later changed his mind but the club showed him the door.

"You're hardly likely to find a trainer in the world who hasn't been sacked once," he said.

Sadyrin ended up coaching minor league sides until 1988, when he was given the reins at CSKA Moscow, then struggling

World Cup but did not run, saying he had no moral right to leave CSKA.

But he could not resist the job of first coach to the nascent Russian side in July 1992 and, on paper at least, his track record is not bad.

Asked what the American public could expect from the Brazilians, Parreira said: "You don't only have art in soccer, you have to compete as well."

"In Brazil we do things differently. We play good possession and we're quite sure we'll give good performances."

Not exactly showing team spirit, temperamental star striker Romario was the main focus of media attention after his demands for a window seat on the flight and final say over his seating partners.

"The airline just mixed the tickets," Parreira smiled.

"But we had a plane for 300 people and only 44 on board, so people could relax and spread out." The Brazilians will train at Santa Clara University before leaving for tune-up matches against Canada in Edmonton June 5, Honduras in San Diego June 8 and El Salvador in Fresno, California, June 12.

Brazil is the seeded team in Group B and will play two matches at Stanford against Russia June 20 and Cameroon June 24, before meeting Sweden in the Pontiac Silverdome June 26.

Sadyrin, whose wife died young leaving him with a small son, did not make the chances of reconciliation any easier when he denounced the rebels as traitors.

'The fence must stay'

WASHINGTON, May 27: A metal fence will remain around the field at Washington's RFK Stadium despite determined efforts by World Cup officials to have it removed, reports Reuter.

Venue head Dave Jensen said on Thursday local police, who have the final say, had insisted the fence stay.

World Cup chairman Alan Rothenberg had told reporters on Monday that he was confident the fence would be removed before the first match at the stadium on June 19.

"I am confident we will have no fences in DC and no fences in Dallas," he said. "The only one of nine venues with a fence will be Sanford and of course they always have a fence. They are just not going to remove it."

World Body FIFA and World Cup organisers oppose fences, designed to prevent crowd invasions of the field, because they say they are unnecessary and are degrading to fans.

Jensen said he and Rothenberg met the city's mayor and police chief. "The bottom line is that the fence stays," he said of the 6 foot (two metre) high structure.

"It's about as unobtrusive as you can get and still have a fence," he added. "We just want to move on now."

Dallas venue chief Bill Stroble said in a statement that he remained hopeful a metal fence, newly installed by city authorities around the field at the Cotton Bowl would be removed before the World Cup.

"There have been meetings with the city of Dallas in the last couple of days and we've discussed a compromise programme concerning removing the fences which we feel satisfied the need of all parties and we're waiting the city's response."

Brazilians arrive in US

SAN JOSE, California, May 27: Three-time world champions Brazil were ready to begin their quest for a fourth World Cup title after the team arrived in northern California on Thursday, reports Reuter.

The team landed at San Jose International after a 13-hour flight from Rio de Janeiro and were greeted by a jazz band, the Brazilian consul and a number of local dignitaries, before passing through customs at the usually sedate airport.

At the terminal, the team was besieged by 100 noisy Brazilian fans, who banged drums, chanted and cheered outside a chaotic 30-minute news conference.

In two years we have been here six times, but this time it is different, said Brazil coach Carlos Alberto Parreira of his team's trips to the United States.

This is a big moment for Brazil and in our life. We are ready and we are hoping for the best.

Parreira, who has already released a numerical roster, denied that numbers 1-11 signified a probable starting lineup for the teams June 20 opener against Russia at Stanford Stadium.

The numbers are not a commitment, he said. "We have not mapped out the team yet. This time we hope to prepare the team in a better way."

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"In Brazil we do things differently. We play good possession and we're quite sure we'll give good performances."

The seeds of doom were sown after a surprise 4-2 defeat away to Saudi Arabia when Sadyrin criticised stars like striker Sergei Yuran and midfielder Viktor Onopko for not doing enough.

The players' frustration boiled over in November after a 1-0 away defeat to Greece when they rebelled, partly on the grounds that Sadyrin did not have enough international experience to be leading the side.

Sadyrin played 333 games for Zenit Leningrad in the 10 years to 1975, scoring 17 goals, but was never a top-class player. Critics say this is reflected in the confused performances against quality opposition.

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Denmark edge Sweden

COPENHAGEN, May 27: Denmark beat Sweden 1-0 (halftime 0-0) in an international soccer friendly on Thursday, reports Reuter.

Scorers: Denmark — Michael Laudrup (53rd minute)

— AFP photo

Of the waxing 'Moustache'



LA PAZ, May 27: When Spaniard Xabier Azkargorta took over as Bolivia's national team in 1992, he was written off by many in the country as an intruder who knew nothing about Bolivian soccer. He even received death threats, reports Reuter.

Less than a year later, having steered the Bolivians to the World Cup finals for the first time since 1950, he is affectionately known as the "Big Moustache" as he is affectionately known, is a national hero.

Azkargorta, 41, was voted Bolivia's man-of-the-year last year, beating off a challenge from the country's president.

"Our intention is to be in the two most-watched matches in the World Cup. We are already in the opening game. Now, we are going for the final," he said recently.

Born in the Basque region in 1953, Azkargorta played for local clubs Real Sociedad and Athletic Bilbao.

But his playing career was finished by a knee injury when he was just 20.

He then concentrated on medical studies and graduated as a Doctor in 1985. At the same time, he took up coaching and was in charge of Espanol of Barcelona, Real Valladolid, Sevilla and Tenerife.

Azkargorta said that giving the players some self-belief was the secret of getting the previously unsung Bolivians to the World Cup finals. "I had to do a lot of work with the players."

ers' self-esteem," he said. "I remind them all the time of the phrase 'if you want to, you can.'"

Bolivia with home advantage, romped into a big lead in the South American Group B Qualifying table last year. They beat Brazil 2-0 in their high-altitude strong-hold of La Paz — the first defeat for Brazil in a World Cup qualifying game.

Bolivia subsequently beat Bolivia 6-0 at home and went on to win the group. But Bolivia

tournament in La Paz, 3,900 metres above sea level. They played in the inaugural 1930 World Cup in Uruguay by invitation and reached the 1950 finals in Brazil without having to play qualifying games after Argentina withdrew for political reasons.

Azkargorta says that when Bolivia take on world champions Germany in the World Cup's opening game, they will not be intimidated by the Germans' reputation.

"When I play a match, it is on the basis of here and now. I don't worry about previous records. Germany were champions four years ago," he said.

Kiryakov plays down rumour

KARLSRUHE, Germany, May 27: Karlsruhe striker Sergei Kiryakov denied on Thursday reports that he was breaking a boycott and wanted to play for Russia at the World Cup finals, the German news agency SID said, reports Reuter.

Kiryakov said reports on Wednesday that he had sent a telegram to the Russian Soccer Federation were incorrect.

"I have not sent a telegram," Kiryakov said in an interview with SID. "I am sticking by my decision."

The Russian forward was not immediately available to confirm the SID report on Thursday.

Morocco's 'Berlin Wall'

RABAT, May 27: Moroccan World Cup coach Abdallah Ajri said on Friday he planned a "Berlin Wall" defence against more highly fancied first-round rivals in the finals in the United States beginning next month, reports Reuter.

"We are going to build a new Berlin Wall against Belgium and Holland," Ajri told a news conference the day before the squad leave for Canada on their World Cup campaign.

"Our first match against Belgium on June 19 in Orlando is going to be the turning-point for us in this Cup."

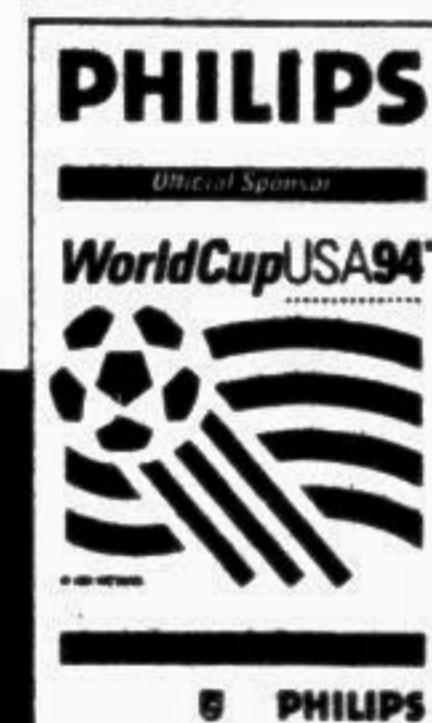
"It is going to be a difficult job. These other teams are not going to the States to see the Statue of Liberty or the Golden Gate, they are out to beat us."

Ajri said Morocco would play Canada in Montreal on June 1 and the same side would face Belgium.

He said that in a three-week training stint in France this month his players had made good progress in ball control. "We held on to it for 23 passes once," he said.

Football federation sources said if Morocco reached the second round, as they did in the 1986 finals, each player would get a bonus of 100,000 dirhams (10,800 USD). If they won the Cup they would each receive 1.3 million dirhams (140,000 USD).

Morocco are also due to play a local Canadian team on June 8 and take on a Florida team after they arrive in Orlando on June 11.



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COMPETITION RULES

INTRODUCTION:

A. The Daily Star World Cup Quiz '94 is a series of Global Quiz Competitions on World Cup Football. Sixty questions will be asked for 10 days consecutively in the Sports Page of The Daily Star for the first time. The Quiz Competitions. For the last and final Bumper Quiz Competition, a list of questions will be published for one month in the Sports Page of The Daily Star according to the schedule (Fixture of the Rounds) as fixed by the competition authorities.

B. For the first 5th Bumper Quiz Competitions there will be 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th consolation prizes. The prizes will be Colour TV, Black & White TV, Super Turbo 2-in-1 Stereo Recorder and light bulbs respectively.

C. Any taxes or levies, as per rule for all the above prizes will have to be borne by the winners.

D. Names and addresses of all prize-winners will be published in The Daily Star. Winners will be responsible for collecting their prizes from The Daily Star office after satisfactory authentication of their identity.

E. For the Bumper Quiz Competition, there will be the BUMPER PRIZE consisting of a ticket to the World Cup Final match, along with an Economic Class return air ticket (Dhaka-Los Angeles-Dhaka) and an amount for local expenses. The Daily Star does NOT take any responsibility for any visa or other travel documents required. The BUMPER PRIZE Winner will have to make his/her own arrangements in this regard. In case of the Bumper Prize winner's inability to travel to the USA, he/she may choose to receive a sum of Tk.100,000/- in cash in lieu of the air fare and living expenses.

1. Residents of Bangladesh, subject to these rules, will be eligible to participate in The Daily Star World Cup Quiz '94. All personnel and family members of The Daily Star, Transcom Electronics Ltd. and Unifrend (advertising agency) and all its affiliate companies shall be deemed disqualified to participate in The Daily Star World Cup Quiz '94.

2. Participants are to cut the original form along the indicated dotted lines. All entries must be submitted on the original form printed in The Daily Star. Photocopies or reproductions in any form will not be accepted.

3. Participants are to put a tick (✓) mark in the box which they think is the correct answer to the question. A person may send as many