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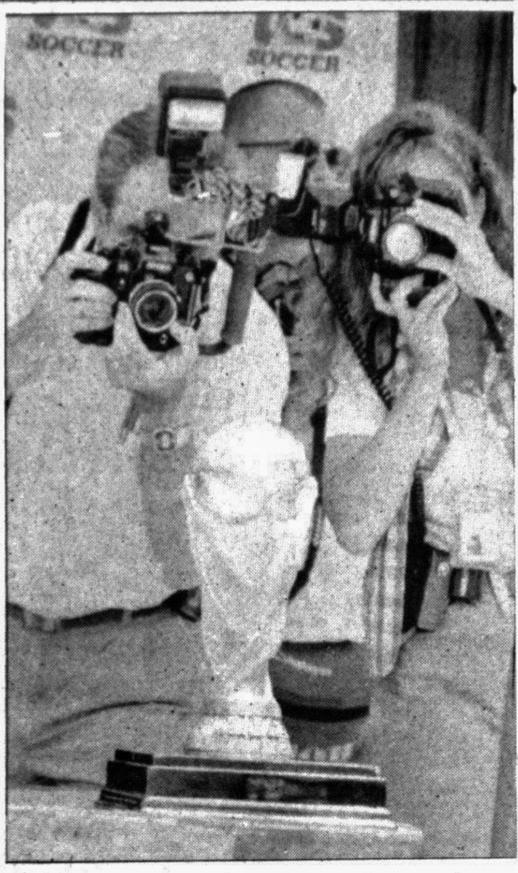


Spain beat Finland

TAMPERE, Finland, June 3: Early goals from Felipe Minambres and Barcelona's Julio Salinas gave Spain a 2-1 win over Finland in a World Cup warm-up match on Thursday, reports Reuter.

Saudi WC squad named

RIYADH, June 3: Saudi Arabia, taking part in the World Cup finals for the first time, on Thursday announced their 22-man squad for the tournament in the United States starting on June 17, reports Reuter.



Press photographers crowd round the World Cup trophy on display in Pasadena, California on Thursday. — AFP photo

Onus on Maradona, Caniggia

BUENOS AIRES, June 3: Argentina coach Alfio Basile on Thursday dropped Real Zaragoza midfielder Dario Franco when he announced his 22-man World Cup squad, reports Reuter.

Franco, a leg break victim during the Copa America in Ecuador last June, failed in his bid to regain full fitness in time for the US finals starting on June 17.

Basile had included Franco in a provisional 23-man squad for World Cup warm-up matches in Europe, but omitted the lanky midfielder when he announced his official squad to Argentine reporters in Croatia.

Argentine Radio reporters travelling with the team, who play against Croatia in Zagreb on Saturday, said Basile made his announcement at a brief news conference.

Basile's squad includes seven veterans of the 1990 World Cup in Italy where Argentina finished runners up, goalkeeper Sergio Goycochea, defenders Oscar Ruggeri and Roberto Sensini, midfielders Jose Basualdo and Diego Maradona and strikers Claudio Caniggia and Abel Balbo.

Only Maradona, who will be playing in his fourth World Cup finals at the age of 33, and Ruggeri, in his third tournament, remain from the side that won the title in Mexico in 1986.

Goalkeeper Luis Islas, recently promoted to first choice, was a reserve in Mexico eight years ago. He refused to go to Italy in 1990 as Nery Pumpido's understudy for a second tournament in a row.

SQUAD

Goalkeepers — Sergio Goycochea (River Plate), Luis Islas (Independent), Norberto Scoponi (Newell's Old Boys).

Defenders — Sergio Vasquez (Universidad Catolica, Chile), Oscar Ruggeri (San Lorenzo), Jorge Borelli (Racing Club), Fernando Caceres (Real Zaragoza, Spain), Roberto Sensini (Parma, Italy), Jose Chamot (Foggia, Italy), Hernan Diaz (River Plate).

Midfielders — Fernando Redondo (Tenerife, Spain), Jose Basualdo (Valez Sarsfield), Hugo Perez (Independent), Alejandro Mancuso (Boca Juniors) Diego Maradona (free agent) Leonardo Rodriguez (Atlanta, Italy), Diego Simeone (Sevilla, Spain).

Forwards — Claudio Caniggia (Roma, Italy), Gabriel Batistuta (Fiorentina, Italy), Abel Balbo (Roma, Italy), Ramon Medina Bello (Yokohama Marinos, Japan), Ariel Ortega (River Plate).

Charlton: Divided loyalty

DUBLIN, June 3: Jack Charlton, the most-loved Englishman in Ireland, carries the pride of two nations into the World Cup finals with an almost carefree nonchalance, reports Reuter.

It may be that Charlton knows he can do no wrong in the eyes of the Irish people, forever grateful that this genial man from over the Irish Sea has led their boys to their second successive finals.

Indeed, he has already been rewarded with the ultimate accolade from the grateful people of Ireland last month — the freedom of the city of Dublin, joining the likes of John F. Kennedy and Nelson Mandela.

Irish journalist Con Houlihan wrote: "It would be impossible to overestimate the extent of Charlton's popularity in Ireland. He was already a freeman of every city, town, village and hamlet in the republic."

Charlton said: "It has been my delight over the last eight years to have this special relationship with the Irish people."

The centre-half in England's 1966 World Cup triumph is equally admired by the soccer fans of his homeland. And with England absent from the World Cup finals, Charlton and his men in green — most of whom play in the English league — will attract the dubious support and scrutiny of London's media.

The miner's son from near Newcastle took over as manager eight years ago and turned the Republic of Ireland into a world soccer force, inspiring songs, poetry, books and ballads.



JACK CHARLTON ... Irish coach

The fairytale began with qualification for the 1988 European Championship where Ireland beat England, followed by their first venture into the World Cup finals in 1990 where they reached the quarter-finals before losing 1-0 to hosts Italy.

Expectations are even greater this time, fed by his own success. That success came by virtue

of scoring birth records more than soccer itches in search of talent — and foreign-born players with forgotten Irish ancestry that made them eligible for the team. Only seven of the players were born in Ireland.

"This is the biggest year of my life. We are going to America. I don't know how we are going to do but we are to give it everything we have got," said Charlton.

"I am not worried about the World Cup — just a little anxious. I like to think we've got a chance and if we get a fair crack of the whip we won't even need luck."

"Big Jack," 59 last month, says he will stay with Ireland as long as he and the people enjoy each other's company. And then he will quit soccer, but not the country, for good — "To a very expensive Irish Salmon River that I'm thinking of buying."

Germany trounce Austria

VIENNA, June 3: World champions Germany bounced back from a surprise defeat by Areland at the weekend with a 5-1 thrashing of neighbours Austria in a friendly international on Thursday, reports Reuter.

A double strike by Andreas Moeller in the second half and goals by Matthias Sammer, Jurgen Klinsmann and Marco Basler swept the Germans to victory.

Organisers may take action

DALLAS, TEXAS, June 3: World Cup organisers have threatened legal action in an argument over a metal security fence erected by city authorities around the field at the Cotton Bowl Stadium in Dallas, reports Reuter.

"We have drafted papers for a lawsuit but have not filed them and do not at this stage anticipate filing them," said venue press officer Chales Stachowiak on Wednesday.

"It remains an option but we do not believe it will come to that," she added. "We expect it will be resolved out of court by the end of the week."

World Cup and world soccer body FIFA oppose the fence as unnecessary and obtrusive for television cameras but local police, who have the final say, are in favour as an anti-hooliganism measure.

Washington's REK Stadium and San Francisco's university owned Stanford Stadium are the only other of the nine venues to have erected such fences.

World Cup organisers have accepted San Francisco will have a fence as the stadium has always had one.

FIFA president Joao Havelange and World Cup chairman Alan Rothenberg met President Clinton at the White House on Tuesday and sources said the fences in Washington and Dallas were discussed briefly during the 15-minute meeting.

Van Basten unavailable

NOORDWIJK, Netherlands, June 3: Dutch striker Marco van Basten ruled himself out of the World Cup on Friday after his Italian club AC Milan made it clear they were adamantly opposed to his selection, reports Reuter.

Van Basten, who has not played since May last year because of a serious ankle injury which has required two operations, was invited to become the 22nd and final player in the Dutch squad after Ruud Gullit left their training camp on Monday without offering an explanation.

The invitation was initially accepted by Van Basten who told Dutch coach Dick Advocaat on Thursday he was ready to replace Gullit.

But within 24 hours he had reversed his decision and on Friday a Dutch Soccer Union spokeswoman said Van Basten had decided not to join the squad. Instead, Dutch coach Dick Advocaat has called in Anderlecht striker John Bos-

man in place of the three times European player-of-the-year.

An official at AC Milan said the club had sent Van Basten a personal letter about his pro-



MARCO VAN BASTEN

posed World Cup trip but declined to divulge the contents. Milan's deputy chairman Adriano Galliani, however, said the club was totally against Van Basten taking part. "Not only are we absolutely

opposed to the idea of him going to America but we believe that, in that case, there would inevitably be legal problems," Galliani told reporters.

"Van Basten hasn't played for more than a year and all the doctors, including professor Martens of the Netherlands, have told us that he is still in a process of rehabilitation."

"In other words, Van Basten is in no condition to take part in the World Cup. If he goes as the 23rd man, no problem. But if he goes as the 22nd, however, sorry I am to say it, that would be the end of a dream for us."

Even Dutch fans, stunned by Gullit's withdrawal, expressed mixed emotions over Van Basten's inclusion.

"A coach should only take players to the States if they are 100 per cent fit," one supporter told a radio phone-in programme.

"What can you do with a player who has not played for such a long time. One kick on his ankle and he might be out for the tournament."

Ajri: No bluff this time?

RABAT, June 3: Abdallah Ajri, the man the Moroccans call the "Poker Bluffer," is reluctant to reveal his hand, but promises his side is good enough to go beyond the first round of the World Cup finals, reports Reuter.

Morocco's poker-playing soccer coach, nicknamed Blindsa, which is Moroccan-French slang for a bluffer, is a near-novice to soccer coaching but believes his charges are set to cause a major surprise.

Trainer of the national squad only since last October when they qualified by beating Zambia 1-0, Ajri may of course be calling everyone's bluff.

But Ajri, a professional gymnastics coach like his wife and who played soccer for only four years with the Fath Union Sports (FUS) of Rabat, is confident Morocco can hold Belgium to a draw and beat Saudi

Arabia to qualify for the second round.

The bluff and burly Ajri, 43, who tips the scales at 90.72 kgs, knows the Saudi style of play well after a two-season stint as a trainer in the country. Morocco's other opponents in Group F are the Netherlands.

Ajri's finest moment in his short playing career for the FUS, the royal palace's favourite team, was his winning goal, a 25-metre blast, in one of the two Cup finals in which he played.



ABDALLAH AJRI ... Moroccan coach

He also seems to favour left-footed players, like Hadraoui, Daoudi and Harji, who form the backbone of the selection.

But years of sitting around the smoky poker tables of Morocco have taught him to keep his cards close to his chest and he has been refusing to reveal his final team until the last possible day.

He is also well versed in the art of making the most of any hand he is dealt. To boost morale, he keeps telling players the aim is not just to make up the numbers, but to win the Cup.

The taciturn coach's friends say he was a great admirer of the tactics of Argentina when they won the 1986 World Cup, and he arranged a friendly with them in April. Morocco lost 3-1 but it was their only defeat since last July.

His relationship with the media is slightly strained. Foreign sportswriters have claimed Ajri refuses to talk to reporters, which he denies, and the Moroccan press frequently finds fault with his choice of players.

During a training stint in the Normandy beach town of Granville in May, he brushed criticism aside saying, "I wear a bullet-proof vest."

"If we have a good Cup we'll be praised. If not they'll throw me out," he belted.

Azkargorta ignores docs advice

LA PAZ, June 3: Bolivia have ignored club advice and included Marco Etcheverry, their best forward, in the squad for the World Cup finals.

SQUAD

Goalkeepers: Carlos Leonel Trocco, Dario Sebastian Rojas, Marcelo Eduardo Torrico.

Defenders: Miguel Angel Rimba, Maarco Antonio Sandy, Gustavo Domingo Quinteros, Juan Manuel Pena, Oscar Sanchez, Modesto Soruco, Luis Hector Cristaldo.

Midfielders: Carlos Fernando Borja, Mario Daniel Pinedo, Julio Cesar Baldivieso, Vladimir Soria, Jose Milton Melgar, Marcio Ramos, Ramiro Castillo, Erwin Sanchez.

Forwards: Marco Antonio Etcheverry, Luis William Ramallo, Alvaro Guillermo Pena, Jaime Moreno.

Maradona threatens again!

BUENOS AIRES, June 3: Diego Maradona on Thursday threatened — once again — to ditch Argentina's soccer team, reports AP.

In Pörschach, Austria, where Argentina were preparing for an exhibition match at Croatia on Saturday, Maradona said he was disgusted with a radio interview by the mother of national team defender Dario Franco, who was left off the roster for the June 17-July 17 World Cup in the United States.

Franco's mother told the radio station La Red her son was left out of the team "because of Maradona, who dictates the lineup to (coach Alfio) Basile."

Maradona told Argentine reporters in Austria, "My nerves are in a terrible state, I can't go on like this."

Basile said Franco was excluded because of a leg injury.

Later, Argentine Football Association president Julio Grondona said he had called Maradona to talk him out of leaving the team.

"The interview with Franco's mother was an act of bad faith," on the part of newsmen, Grondona said.

Maradona has threatened repeatedly to retire but always reversed himself in the end.

Kohl slates violence

BONN, June 3: German Chancellor Helmut Kohl on Friday condemned riots by soccer rowdies, shouting Nazi slogans, after a match against the Austrian national team in Vienna, which left one man in hospital with knife wounds, reports Reuter.

Government spokesman Dieter Vogel quoted Kohl as saying German's image abroad would be damaged by the involvement of German fans in the riots on the sidelines of the match in which the national team thrashed Austria 5-1.

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COMPETITION RULES. 1. The Daily Star World Cup Quiz 94, is a series of (Six) Quiz Competitions on World Cup Football. Sets of questions will be published for 10 (ten) consecutive days in the Sports Page of the Daily Star for the first (Six) Quiz Competitions.

Quiz 6. Entries close on 24-06-94. Read the instructions carefully. Then tick (X) the answer which you think is correct. 1. Who is the oldest player to have scored in the WC finals? Pele, Vava, R. Milla, Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia, Meazza, Moore, Passarella, 12, 14, 16, Eusebio, Charlton, Hurst, Bilek, Skuhravy, Luhovy, Mauro, Didi, Zozimo, Argentina, Ireland, Yugoslavia, G. Muller, Pele, Cubillas, 3, 5, 7