



# Share The Passion



## Dutch know the score well

ORLANDO, June 28: The Netherlands went to pull out a win against luckless Morocco on Wednesday to ensure a place in the last 16 of the World Cup, reports Reuter.

Fortunae to beat Saudi Arabia 2-1 in their Group F opener in Washington, the Dutch succumbed 1-0 to arch-rivals Belgium here on Saturday and now return to the stifling heat of the Citrus Bowl Stadium to decide their first round fate.

Morocco, who suffered a 1-0 reverse against Belgium here and then took a 2-1 beating from Saudi Arabia in New Jersey, have scant chance of reaching the knockout stage although they have not given up hope.

"If we win we have a chance of making the second round," coach Abdellah Ajri said after the second defeat.

But the odds are against them, and the Dutch assumed defeat against the lively Moroccan would mean the end for themselves too.

"The result against Belgium means we need to win the rest of our matches," Dutch coach Dick Advocaat said at the team's base at lake Nona, on the outskirts of Orlando.

"We're used to this. In the qualifiers we had to win our last three matches to qualify for the finals. In view of that the prospects are good."

There are very few teams who win two matches in a row. I expect the Dutch team to win

against Morocco.

Left-back Frank de Boer voiced similar confidence. "We are under some pressure but it is not enormous. Mostly when we are under pressure we play our best matches," he said.

De Boer's twin brother Ronald, substituted at the interval in the Belgium game, may lose his place up front where Advocaat feels his four-man attack — two in the middle and two wingers — has produced too few dividends.

Ronald de Boer was replaced against Belgium by midfielder Rob Witschge and the coach said the team played better in the second half.

Morocco will miss French-based defender Nourredine Naybet, who collected his second booking of the finals against Saudi Arabia.

There is also speculation that reserve goalkeeper Zakaria Alaoui may take over from Khalil Azmi. "I am ready to play but it's up to the coach to decide who will make the team," Alaoui said after practice on Monday.

"We know a lot about their players and the way they play. I would have no inferiority complex about defending our goal against these great players."

The Moroccan were unlucky not to get a point against Belgium, with striker Mohamed Chaouch denied once by the crossbar and once by inspired Belgian goalkeeper Michel Preud'homme who was himself aided by the woodwork.

Chaouch scored against

Saudi Arabia and although he squandered several other chances he could well trouble a Dutch defence which could not fully cope with Belgium's two strikers Josip Weber and March Degryse.

"Hopefully Morocco will not have the same strength they had against Belgium because then it's going to be difficult for them," Advocaat said.

With games kicking off at 12.35 pm local time the Dutch, like other European teams, have suffered in the intense heat and humidity at the Citrus Bowl. "Last Saturday the heat was terrible," Advocaat said.

Morocco, described by Frank de Boer as "technically a very good team," may feel less uncomfortable in the heat but will be up against it if the Dutch finally hit top form.

## Blatter admits it at last

DALLAS, Texas, June 27: The stifling heat is posing problems for players at the World Cup, FIFA general secretary Sepp Blatter admitted here today, reports AFP.

With temperatures on the field reaching up to 120 F (45 C) several coaches have said it is causing major difficulties for their players.

"We know it is a problem," said Blatter.

But he insisted, the high temperatures were exceptional. When FIFA studied the host cities before the United States won the right to host the World Cup the average temperatures were much lower.

"This heat is exceptional," said Blatter. "We can change everything but not the weather."

## Romanians enjoy a break

PASADENA, Calif., June 28: The Romanian players, top guns in Group A after first round of World Cup competition, got a well-earned day off, reports AP.

Since so few Romanians get the chance to play tourist in the United States — particularly in attraction-rich southern California — the players took advantage Monday.

Some team members, accompanied by relatives and friends in the Romanian community, ventured into the heat for some sightseeing and fun.

Midfielder Gheorghe Popescu, on his first trip to the United States, headed for Beverly Hills and Santa Monica Beach.

"The sand is just like in Romania," Popescu said. "But that's all that's the same."

## BU, Muktiyoddha in Fed Cup semis

Defending champions Brothers Union and Muktiyoddha Sangsad KC moved into the semi-final of BEXIMCO 12th Federation Cup football tournament after winning their last round robin league matches of Group A at the Dhaka Stadium yesterday.

Defender Jewel Rana converted two spot-kicks in the last half of the play to ensure his side Muktiyoddha Sangsad a berth in the last four with a 3-1 win over spirited Bangladesh Boys.

The Gopibagh side held their awesome opponents Muktiyoddha to 1-1 till 78th minute before referee Sheikh Badruddin awarded a penalty to Muktiyoddha when defender Pappu unintentionally handled the ball in the danger zone to thwart a cross from Mamun Joarder.

Jewel Rana coolly converted the spot-kick in the 78th minute relieving a frustrated Muktiyoddha who dearly needed a victory to qualify for the semifinal. Jewel Rana then convert the second spot-kick of the match five minutes before the final whistle to give his side a convincing 3-1 victory.

Sheikh Badruddin pointed to the dreaded spot for the second time and quite duly when the beaten Boys custodian brought down a menacingly poised midfielder Arman.

On a heavy outfield caused by incessant rain, striker Nakhil headed home a right flank corner from Masud Rana to give Muktiyoddha a seventh minute lead before Mintu of Bangladesh Boys restored parity by a neat grounder eight minutes later.

In the other match of the day played under floodlights, Brothers Union edged past Fakirerpool YMC by a lone goal to move into the semi-final as Group A champions.

Midfielder Sadequul Islam Ustam scored the all important goal by a fierce right-footer from inside the box for Brothers Union who played under constant pressure from Fakirerpool throughout the match.

The Fakirerpool boys who had several scoring opportunities in the match spotted those due to poor marksmanship and on one occasion Brothers defender Ruhul Amin cleared the ball from goal line during the second half.

Meanwhile, in a press release issued yesterday Bangladesh Football Federation suspended the tournament till June 30 due to unavoidable circumstances. The meet will resume on July one.

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Italy's Paolo Maldini (5) is tackled by Mexico's Luis Garcia (10) during their World Cup match at the Robert F Kennedy Stadium in Washington yesterday.

## Pakistan, Aussies testing in Trophy hockey

AMSTERDAM, Netherlands, June 28: Pakistan and Australia gained expected wins on the third day of the seven nations hockey Trophy on Monday, but it was not all plain-sailing, reports Reuter.

Pakistan had to withstand a determined late Argentine rally to hang on to the 1-0 lead given to them by their captain Shahbaz Ahmed with a firmly driven opportunist shot in the 26th minute.

Australia, who beat South Africa 5-2 struggled early on against a determined team until a minute before half time, when Stephen Davies set up Jay Stacy, whose well-struck shot beat Brian Myburgh.

Mark Hager volleyed in a penalty corner rebound to make it 2-0 but Robert Pullen pulled a goal back for South Africa from the penalty spot after Wayne Graham had been stopped illegally.

Australia went further ahead through Stephen Davies with a neat reverse stick shot and Brendan Garard following up a penalty corner.

In the last five minutes Murray Anderson replied for South Africa, but Greg Corbitt finished with a gloriously flicked penalty corner shot for Australia's fifth.

Pakistan and Australia head the standings with two wins from two games.

## STANDINGS

Positions to date (tabulated under played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, goals against, points)									
Pakistan	2	2	0	0	7	2	4		
Australia	2	2	0	0	8	4	4		
Netherlands	2	1	1	0	8	3	3		
Argentina	2	1	0	1	3	1	2		
Germany	2	0	1	1	4	5	1		
Malaysia	2	0	0	2	2	9	0		
South Africa	2	0	0	2	3	11	0		

## CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 "Mayday!"

5 Compass-point suffix

8 One Arkin

12 Satan's forte

13 Halloween outcry

14 Golf's "Cham-pagne Tony"

15 Emulate elephants?

17 Trick takers

18 Boring bee?

19 Split second

21 Ohio politico

24 Off-tattooed word

25 Pitch-black

28 Like the White Rabbit

30 Naughty

33 "Isn't it rich? Are — pair?"

34 Actress Valentine

35 Freudian concept

36 Barn denizen

DOWN

1 Bovine bunch

2 Incessantly

3 Prom "wheels"

4 Cornucopia's offering

5 "Cabaret" lyricist

6 Caviar

7 "Cheers" barfly

8 San Antonio landmark

9 Last page?

10 So be it

11 Sail support

16 "Cry — River"

20 Portent

22 Custard-like treat

23 Knave of Hearts' booty

25 — Jima

26 Just out

27 Patricia of "Sisters"

29 Hart's cohort

31 Past

32 Jones' Wall Street partner

34 Marx or Malden

38 Bites down hard

42 Reles of Murder, Inc.

43 "Tell it not in —"

44 Rose's lover

45 Tackles' teammates

47 Theater award

48 — precedent

49 Mine car

52 "Of course, monsieur"

53 Irritate

MEOW ACE GAVE ANKA NUN IDEA PASSPORT GARR TAX HBOMBS CAPER FUEL ARID PASSOVER MEN TRIES TIRE PASSWORD COLA LILY POLED CARINA AIM OVID PASSBOOK DOPE SIT ARNE EWES ERA TREY

Solution time: 21 mins.

## Asprilla will learn to live with it

SAN FRANCISCO, June 28: Faustino Asprilla found World Cup elimination a tough prospect for gutless Colombia, but admitted: "It's not the end of the world."

Colombia had been one of the pre-tournament favorites and even though they beat Switzerland 2-0 on Sunday, they still finished bottom of Group A, reports AFP.

Asprilla, 24, known for his somersault following a goal, was expected to be one of the stars of a competition in a team almost certain to qualify for the second round.

Instead, Colombia flew to Los Angeles on Sunday evening, before their scheduled flight back to Bogota on Tuesday, nearly three weeks before the July 17 final.

## Bruguera, Sanchez bow out

WIMBLEDON, England, June 28: Wimbledon lost the two French Open singles champions when Spaniards Arantxa Sanchez Vicario and Sergi Bruguera were both beaten in the fourth round on Monday, reports Reuter.

Sanchez-Vicario, the second seed and favorite to take the women's title following the demise of top-seeded Steffi Graf last week, was shocked 7-5, 4-6, 6-3 by American 13th seed Zina Garrison-Jackson in a 2 1/2-hour Centre Court battle.

Bruguera, seeded eighth, went out earlier 6-4, 7-6, 6-0 to 10th-seeded American Michael Chang on a day which also saw the departure of 1992 men's champion Andre Agassi, who fought back from two sets down but then succumbed to a fifth-set blitz by fellow American Todd Martin.

Martin won 6-3, 7-5, 6-7, 4-6, 6-1.

Martina Navratilova, the nine-times champion dreaming of a 10th triumph in her last appearance at the age of 37, cantered through a test that was expected to be much tougher than it was.

The Czech-born American, seeded fourth, beat 17th-seeded Czech Helena Sukova 6-1, 6-2 and played well to do it although she was helped enormously by a sadly inept performance from her tall rival, who had beaten her five times in the past.

The elimination of Sanchez-Vicario left her compatriot, third-seeded Conchita Martinez as the highest remaining seed at number three.

But the fourth-seeded Navratilova and fifth-seeded Jana Novotna, another Czech who reached last year's final, are both still alive and will clash in a quarter-final.

The championship credentials of American ninth seed Lindsay Davenport were underlined in a 6-1, 6-3 destruction of Gabriela Sabatini of Argentina, who was shrugging her shoulders in futility near the end. Davenport faces Martinez next.

## Brazilian win: A potential political red herring?

SAN JOSE, California, June 28: Brazilian soccer players, sharing their compatriots' distrust of the country's politicians, fear that World Cup victory could be used to divert public attention away from more serious problems, reports Reuter.

Some believe a triumph would lift pressure off the Brazilian government to solve urgent problems or that candidates for forthcoming elections could jump on the soccer bandwagon.

"The politicians will be hoping for us to win more than anyone else, there's no doubt about that, because it will lift a lot of the pressure on them," said full back Leonardo.

Goalkeeper Gilmar was also apprehensive that a Brazilian World Cup triumph could paradoxically be a bad thing for the country itself.

"I'm sure that if Brazil win the World Cup, there will be politicians who will try and take advantage of this and use it for their own benefit," he said. "How and in what way, I don't know, but I'm sure it will happen."

Presidential and congressional elections are to be held in Brazil in November.

Central defender Ricardo Rocha added: "We have to guard against something like this happening."

"Obviously, we very much want to win and make Brazil champions for the fourth time," said midfielder Mauro Silva.

"But if we win, it mustn't be used to hide the problems in Brazil such as hunger and the killing of children in the streets."

"Despite pressing problems, including 40 per cent per month inflation, a massive disparity in income distribution between rich and poor, a crumbling infrastructure and a vast, inefficient bureaucracy, politics in Brazil has already been out of the limelight for one month because of the World Cup."

Even before the competition began, urgent political issues were relegated to a poor second on major news programmes by questions such as what Brazil's players did during training or whether moody striker Romario would be able to sit in the window seat of the team's plane.

Some players admitted that the attention on them may have gone over the top.

"Brazilians mustn't forget about their problems just because of the World Cup," said Gilmar.

Leonardo added: "We know that Brazil has much more serious things to worry about than just winning the World Cup."

Veteran newspaper columnist Fernando Calazans said

that Brazil's last World Cup victory in 1970 was exploited by the impression that the country was doing well, when, of course, it wasn't, he said.

Commentators added that under military rule, the government encouraged the growth of professional clubs in areas where there was political dissent and pressured soccer authorities to allow these clubs to take part in the Brazilian soccer championship.

Stadiums holding up to 60,000 people sprang up in many places usually thought of as soccer backwaters and today most have become huge, white elephants.

The slogan of the campaign was, "where arena (the then ruling party) is doth badly, give them a team in the national championship."

At the height of the campaign in 1979, the number of clubs in the First Division of the Brazilian championship ballooned to 98.

Subsequently, there was a gradual political opening and democracy officially arrived in 1989 with presidential elections.

However, since then, the

credibility of Brazilian politicians has tumbled with a succession of corruption scandals allied to frequent reports of excessive perks for the political class.

The reason Brazil is in the situation it is today is entirely because of the politicians, said Orcha. "There are a few good ones but most of them can't be taken seriously."

Leonardo believes the players should use their prestige by speaking out against bad politicians.

"People listen to what we have to say. We have an opportunity to help change things and we should make the most of it," he said.

But other members of the Brazilian squad are far less interested.

One Brazilian reporter tried to conduct a poll on who each of the 22 players would vote for president but found that only one had decided.

When asked what he thought about his country's politicians, striker Viola said: "I don't want to talk about anything other than soccer during the World Cup."



Henrik Larsson, the smiling Swedish striker with deadlocks tunes up at the Pontiac Silverdome Stadium on June 27. Larsson will replace the in-form Dahlin against Brazil in their last Group match with the latter rendered unfit by two successive yellow cards.

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