



Share The Passion



Dahlin's road to success

SAN FRANCISCO, July 7: Battling almost all his life to triumph over adversity, Swedish striker Martin Dahlin scored four goals in three games, becoming one of the top scorers in the ongoing World Cup finals, reports Xinhua.

"I feel I can score every time I go out," said the first black player on the Swedish national squad. "That's an important feeling to have because it gives me confidence and the further we go in the tournament, the more our confidence grows. Right now, we feel we can beat anyone."

By edging Saudi Arabia 3-1, Sweden will play their quarter-final against Romania.

Harboring a dream of playing the World Cup finals since the age of 10, Dahlin, now 25, leaped from sideline onto center stage and may challenge for ultimate distinction.

Son of a Venezuelan musician, Dahlin has dragged himself to the top through hard work.

"The key to success if you have some talent is to train hard and have a strong mentality," he said.

In 1988, he became the Swedish star by leading the Malmo Club to the national title with 17 goals and made international debut later in the year against Brazil.

He then lost form and a spot in the national squad for the 1990 World Cup.

In 1991, he signed for German club Borussia Moenchengladbach and gained experience in the Bundesliga where he scored 10 goals in the 1992-93 season.

His seven goals in six World Cup qualifiers earned Sweden the berth and also awarded him the title of Swedish player-of-the-year.

However, he missed Sweden's 1-1 tie with Brazil through suspension in group preliminaries.

What the rising star believes is to always do your best for the team because it's a team sport.

ICC ratifies 'two bouncers' per over in Tests

LONDON, July 7: The International Cricket Council (ICC) on Monday relaxed the rule over the use of bouncers in Test cricket to permit two per over, reports Reuter.

A one bouncer per over maximum has been in operation since October 1991 but the change in the rules had been widely anticipated.

The change, proposed by Australia and seconded by New Zealand, will come into operation on October 1.

More than two bouncers in an over will be called "no-ball" and two runs awarded to the batting side.

But the ICC tightened up the regulation on short-pitched bowling, replacing the world "intimidatory" with the phrase "likely to inflict physical injury on the striker."

It adds that umpires should take into consideration "the relative skill of the striker."

The meeting also recommended umpires should be stricter towards players.

ICC chairman Clyde Walcott said: "We expect them to be tougher and give stiffer penalties, particularly if they become second offenders."

"They could have suspended sentences, but the referees will be given guidelines in writing. There was a general feeling that some of the penalties given so far were not stiff enough."

New rules will also make it more difficult for young players who appear for one country to play for another, even if it is the place of their birth.

A player returning to his homeland after appearing for another country will have to serve out a two-year qualification period, and if it is not the place of his birth, that will be stretched to four years.

It was announced that England will stage the 1999 World Cup and South Africa will host one after that.

The 1996 tournament in India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka will be held between February 14 and March 17.

Lara's lean spell lingers

LONDON, July 7: Brian Lara's strangely lacklustre one-day match form continued on Wednesday when he made only 16 for Warwickshire in their NatWest Trophy second round match against Leicestershire, reports Reuter.

Sweden sans sloppiness

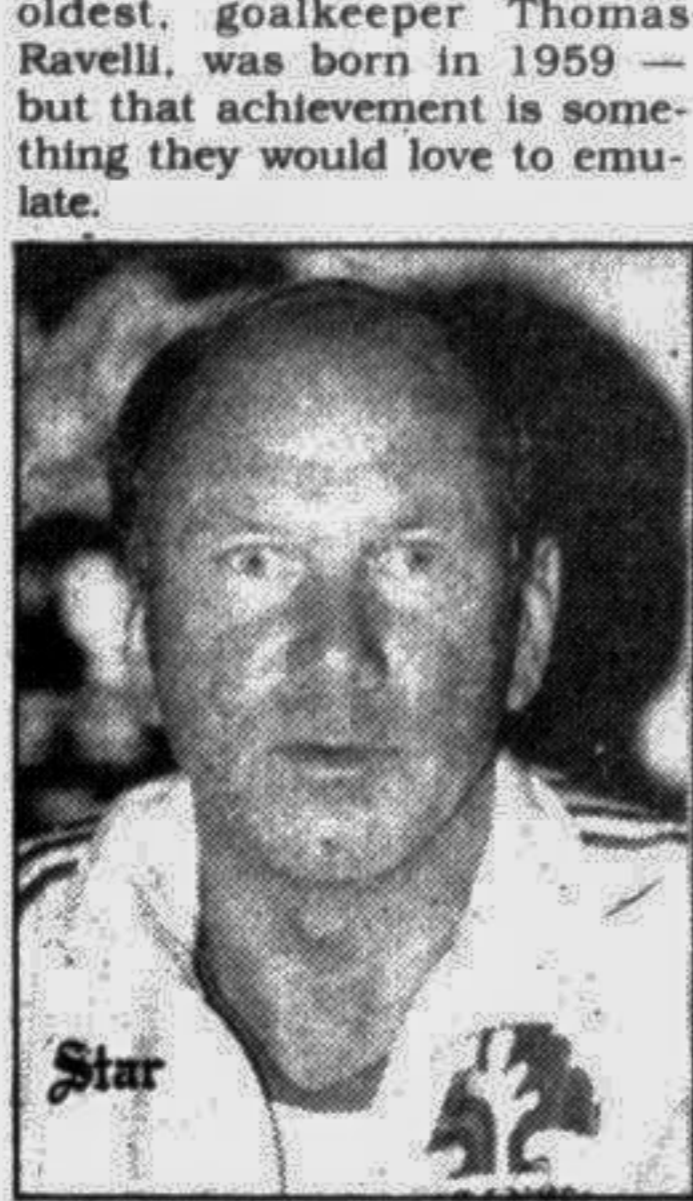
SAN FRANCISCO, July 7: Coach Tommy Svensson said on Wednesday Sweden are on the verge of reaching the World Cup semi-finals for the first time in 36 years because he has toughened up his squad and made them believe in themselves, reports Reuter.

"Swedish teams were mentally weak in the past," Svensson admitted five days before their quarter-final against Romania at the Stanford Stadium in Palo Alto. "But I thought about toughening up their attitude. Our mentality was one of our weaknesses in the past, there was a flaw in our make-up."

"I believe these players believe in themselves totally. They are on the verge of the semifinals because they have not given in."

Sweden have reached the semifinals once, in 1958 when they hosted the tournament and went on to play Brazil in the final.

None of the players in this squad were alive then — the



TOMMY SVENSSON

Midfielder Jonas Thern said he believed the team could go all the way to the final and said he fully expected to recover from a slight knee injury and face the Romanians.

"We grow up knowing that

Sweden reached the final a long time ago," he said. "And of course that is history now. But this team is good enough to go all the way."

"We have changed and developed a lot since we lost all three games in Italy in 1990. But I believe that sometimes in life you need a bad experience, you learn a lot from a bad experience, and we changed a lot of things after Italy."

"We have prepared for this tournament in a more thorough way. We had some time off after the European leagues finished and spent a week with our families in May, away from football, letting the little injuries heal. I think that was very important and something we did not do four years ago."

Thern is one of only two Swedes nursing an injury. He has some swelling on a knee but fully expects to play while defender Joachim Bjorklund has a slight groin strain.

Bjorklund came off early in the second half in Sweden's 3-1 win over Saudi Arabia in their second-round match on Sunday, but is also likely to play in an unchanged team.

Ravelli, rowdy, reliable

MORAGA, July 7: The former "Bad Boy" in Swedish soccer still has a big mouth.

He yells and curses during workouts — in English.

On Sunday, Thomas Ravelli will equal the Swedish national team record by earning his 15th cap, only 10 short of now-retired English goalkeeper Peter Shilton's world mark, reports AP.

But that's secondary for the 34-year-old goalkeeper. Winning the quarter-final against Romania will mean a lot more.

"I'm not thinking about the record," Ravelli says. "The game is so much more important. We haven't had this chance for 20 years and it could take another 20 years when we get another chance. Making the semifinals would be fantastic."

Defender Bjorn Nordqvist set the Swedish record — then a world mark — when he played the final game of his career in the first round of the 1978 World Cup in Argentina.

Ravelli is not only the most experienced goalkeeper in the World Cup finals. He has also showed he's one of the best. He has allowed five goals in four games, but none could be considered a "cheap" goal.

Against Saudi Arabia, Ravelli had one of his best games ever, making a series of saves to preserve the victory.

"Yes, it felt real good against the Saudis although I almost passed out because of the extreme heat," Ravelli says. "They

kept me busy. But I don't know if it was my best game for Sweden. The match I remember best was against England at Wembley in 1989."

The Swedes drew 0-0 with England and went on to win their 1990 World Cup qualifying group. But Ravelli conceded three goals in the World Cup finals one year later in Italy as Sweden lost all first-round games 2-1 and went home early.

Romania, who upset 1990 finalists Argentina in the second round, are a big challenge for Sweden.



THOMAS RAVELLI

"It will be a very difficult game," Ravelli says. "They have outstanding forwards and midfielder (Gheorghe) Hagi's free kicks are always dangerous."

Swedish coach Tommy Svensson thinks Hagi is the best player overall so far in the tournament and the so-called

"Maradona of the Carpathians" scored the trying goal on a free kick as Romania drew 1-1 with Sweden in both teams' final World Cup tuneup June 12 at Mission Viejo, Calif.

Ravelli defended the Swedish goal in the first half only. It was backup keeper Lars Eriksson who was left helpless on Hagi's rocket late in the second half.

Noted for his ability to inspire his defence, Ravelli was unscathed upon for eight hours, 45 minutes during the first month of the Swedish season in April. Later, he twice gave up four goals in two games for his club team, IFK Goteborg, and the critics said he shouldn't be the starting keeper in the World Cup.

But Svensson stuck with his veteran.

"I'm very thankful that I got a chance to show what I really can do," Ravelli says. "I know it myself, but there are such small margins for a goalkeeper."

Having played his entire career in the semi-professional Swedish First Division, Ravelli would like to end his career in the proposed US league — Major League Soccer (MLS), scheduled to start play next April.

"I think the US is a country which is similar to Sweden," Ravelli says. "There is a similar lifestyle and the language wouldn't be a problem. I have three kids and US schools would be very good for them. It would also be nice to have more money in the bank."

But Ravelli better not curse in English if he plays in MLS.

Prank makes Dutch day longer

DALLAS, July 7: Dutch preparations for their World Cup quarterfinals against Brazil were thrown into disarray Wednesday when a journalist flying with the team told a flight attendant in jest that he had a bomb aboard, reports AP.

After an extensive search of the plane, the team arrived in Dallas from Orlando, Fla. five hours late — without the sports writer — and had to practice at dusk at the Southern Methodist University practice ground instead of during the afternoon.

"The whole day schedule was a mess because of it," said goalkeeper Ed de Goey.

The Netherlands will play Brazil on Saturday in the Cotton Bowl.

The Dutch problems occurred as they left from their base in Orlando.

Instead of departing at 11:00 am, their chartered Boeing 727, with 163 people aboard, was towed to a remote area of the airport where bomb-sniffing dogs checked over the aircraft and the luggage. No bomb was found.

Authorities took Lex Muller, 54, of the Algemeen Dagblad newspaper in Rotterdam, seriously when he joked he had a bomb in a piece of carry-on luggage. He was taken into custody for questioning. Dutch federation officials said he was released late Wednesday after the Dutch embassy intervened.

It is both a Florida state and US federal offence to make a false bomb report, even jokingly.

"They don't have a sense of humour," said Dutch press officer Gerd Stolk. "It's as if they cannot tell the difference."

Police Sgt Mike Holloway said prosecutors will review the case but added charges are unlikely.

"It appears he was just shooting his mouth off," he said.

A flight attendant asked Muller to put his carry-on bag in the overhead bin.

"He didn't want to do it, and he told her it had a bomb in it," Holloway said. "She told him, 'Sir, don't even joke about that, we take that very seriously.' And then he said it again."

The flight attendant reported that Muller then said he had a gun in the bag. Holloway said Muller told police he actually said there was no gun in the bag.

The flight attendant told the pilot, who notified authorities and evacuated the plane.

"It certainly wasn't smart, but we are getting used to such problems," team captain Ronald Koeman said.

It was already the third airplane delay for the Dutch. During preparations in Canada, their plane got off course apparently because personal computers used by journalists on the plane had affected the navigation system.

After their opening game in Washington, the team had to make an emergency landing because a journalist got sick on the plane.

"In the end, jokes were made about it," said De Goey. "Tomorrow is another day."

Jack Charlton to remain till '96

DUBLIN, July 7: Jack Charlton said he plans to stay on as Ireland's national football coach, as the Englishman returned with the Irish World Cup squad to a champagne welcome here on Thursday, reports AFP.

Asked about his future, Charlton said: "It will take about a month to sit down and feel out the temperature. I am 60 next birthday and I've been in the job a long time."

"I will almost certainly stay and take us on to the European championships. I just want to feel the attitude and see how things turn out. I'm going to sit on my hands for the next month, have a few points and do a bit of fishing."

The European Championships are being hosted by England in 1996.

Several hundred fans turned up to greet the manager and 19 of his 22-strong squad, who arrived for a reception hosted by Prime Minister Albert Reynolds following two days of "on, off" controversy over the official homecoming.

Inter chairman arrested

MILAN, July 7: The chairman of Italian First Division soccer team and 1994 UEFA Cup winners Internazionale was arrested on Tuesday as part of a corruption investigation, police said, reports Reuter.

They said catering executive Ernesto Pellegrini, who has chaired Inter for 10 years, was held on suspicion of corruption, embezzlement and rigging public tenders.

Hierro Spain's only worry

CANCORD, Massachusetts, July 7: Real Madrid midfielder Fernando Hierro, a key member of Spain's World Cup team preparing to meet Italy in the quarter-finals, is nursing a groin injury, reports Reuter.

"Hierro did only light training because he has a pull in the right groin," Spain's press officer Jorge Perez said after Wednesday's workout.

"But he should be fit to play against Italy. It's a nagging injury he has carried for some time and playing aggravates it."

Hierro scored the opening goal in Spain's 3-0 win over Switzerland in their second round match in Washington on Saturday.

Perez said the rest of the squad were all fit, but coach Javier Clemente would not name his line-up for Saturday's match at the Foxboro Stadium until an hour before the start.

Spain have already used 20 of their 22-strong squad in four matches so far, some changes having been forced by injuries and suspensions.

Asked whether it was an advantage for Spain that Italy had received one red and five yellow cards in their 2-1 extra time victory over Nigeria in Tuesday's second round and would take care to avoid suspensions, Perez pointed out that Spain had four men booked against Switzerland.

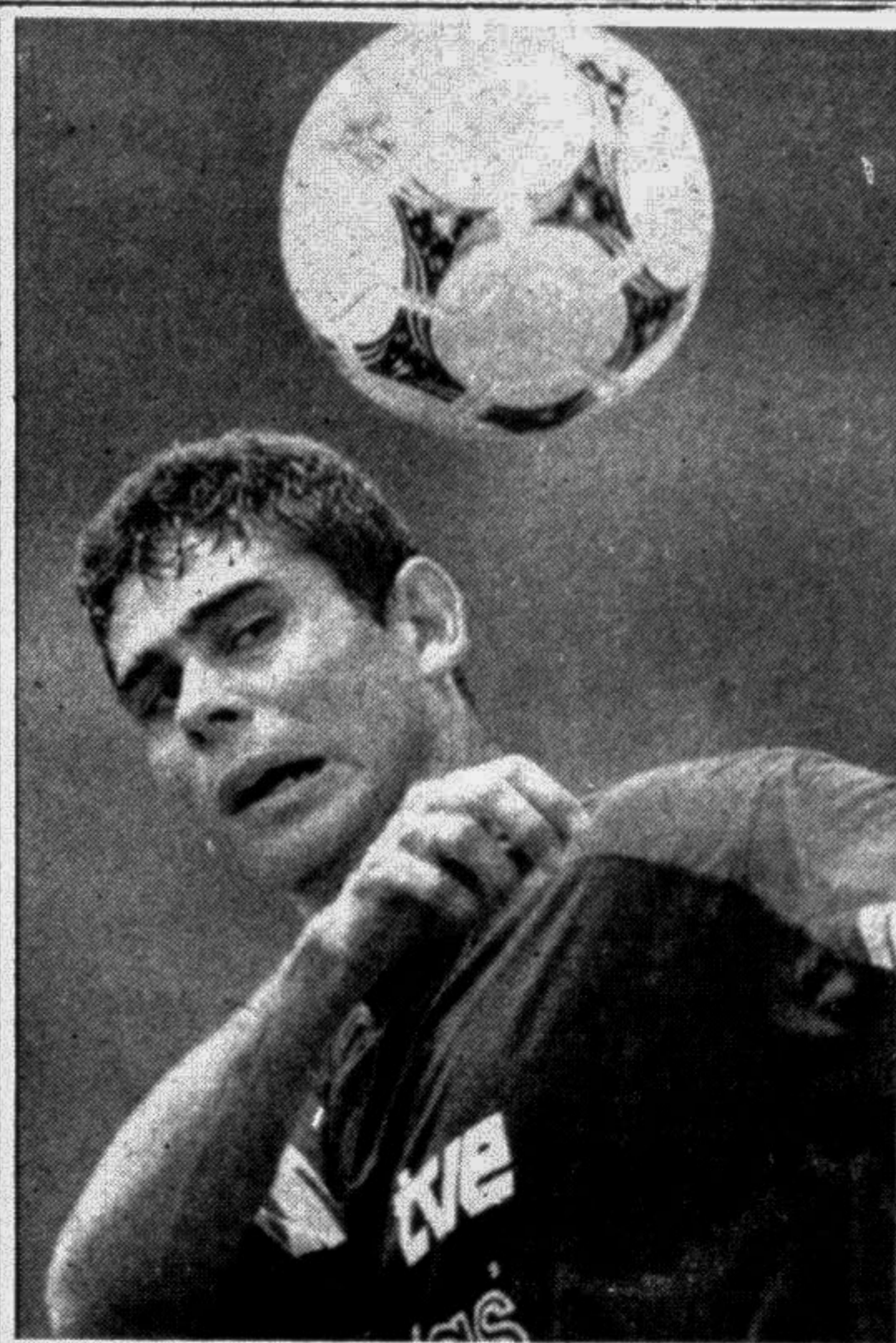
He added: "I don't think players at a World Cup go into matches thinking about that."

Athletic Bilbao's midfielder Juten Guerrero, who did not face the Swiss after playing for the first half against South Korea and the full match against Bolivia, said he hoped Spain could benefit from a longer rest than the Italians.

"I hope they feel the fatigue. It's an advantage for us," he said.

"But they are a dangerous side. They haven't scored many goals but they can get one at any moment."

Guerrero said Spain would have preferred to meet Nigeria in the quarter-finals. But Clemente has lots of faith in his game plan.



Spanish midfielder Fernando Hierro heads the ball during a training session at the team's Middlesex School base in Concord on July 6. Spain meet Italy in quarter-finals on July 9. — AFP photo

Escobar murder: 3 suspects held

BOGOTA, July 7: Colombia's prosecutor-general's office said Wednesday it had three suspects under arrest for the shooting death of soccer player Andres Escobar and insisted the killing was not premeditated, reports Reuter.

An office spokeswoman said one of the suspects, Humberto Munoz, had already confessed to shooting Escobar outside a Medellin night club last Saturday.

The other two suspects, brothers Pedro and Santiago Gallon, were being held as accomplices to the killing, she said.

Drug traffickers allegedly bet millions of dollars in favour of the team and might have wanted to take revenge for its dismal performance during the international tournament in the United States. The national team was eliminated from the tournament after winning only one of three matches.

Refs for qtr-finals named

DALLAS, July 7: The Mexican and Syrian referees who came under heavy criticism for their handling of Tuesday's World Cup second-round matches were not named to officiate in the quarter-finals when FIFA made its selections on Wednesday, reports Reuter.

FIFA left out Mexican Arturo Pablo Brizio, who sent off Italy's Gianfranco Zola for an innocuous tackle in the match with Nigeria, and Jamal Al-Sharif of Syria, who showed red cards to a Bulgarian and a Mexican in the day's other game.

Brizio and Sharif were not on the list either of nine referees retained for the rest of the tournament.

Swiss referee Kurt Roethlisberger, who apologised to FIFA for failing to send off a player in the second-round match between Germany and Belgium, was also among the 15 referees released from further World Cup duty.

FIFA officials conceded that some referees of second-round matches had not lived up to expectations, but insisted the general standard of officiating was excellent.

David Will, chairman of the Referees' Committee, refused to discuss individual cases but said some of the referees had not performed well.

"When we made the appointments for the round of 16 we were confident, at the stage the appointments were made, that the referees would be up to the standard we ex-

pected," he said. "I am clearly not going to comment on individual performances."

"It is inevitable in a World Cup... that along the way you are going to have some mistakes made and that there will be some poorer performances than we might anticipate."

"But to suggest we are more disappointed than we ought to be is not the case. We have been generally pleased with the overall performances of the referees."

In keeping with tradition, FIFA released all referees from the eight nations still in the tournament when drawing up their list of nine remaining officials.

FIFA general secretary Sepp Blatter insisted the nine were selected solely for their ability.

"The choice has been made, not according to geographical principles, but according to performances shown and given during the first 36 matches and the round of 16," he said.

Will added: "We did not look at who should go home, we looked at who should remain."

Costa Rica's Rodrigo Badilla, who made his World Cup finals debut in the first round, will referee Brazil's quarter-final against the Netherlands in Dallas on Sunday.

The match between defending champions Germany and Bulgaria at Giants Stadium on Sunday will be in the hands of Colombian Jose Torres Cadena, who took charge of the 1992 Olympic Games final won by Spain over Poland in Barcelona.

WC, press & privacy

LOS ANGELES, California, July 7: The American public's right to know is on a collision course with some of the secretive teams at the World Cup, reports AFP.

The US media's growing dissatisfaction with the lack of regular access to teams came to a head on Wednesday when FIFA urged all the quarter-finalists to cooperate with the press.

But the die seems to have been cast. Romania, playing Sweden in San Francisco on Sunday, closed their training session on Wednesday and said all their sessions would be closed from here on out.

FIFA general secretary Sepp Blatter sent a letter to the remaining eight teams saying it was of "crucial importance" that they helped the media do their job.

Since the main reason FIFA awarded the World Cup to the United States was to try to expand the game's popularity here, good press is vital.

Specifically, Blatter asked the teams to schedule press conferences, of about 30 minutes, each day with their coach and possibly with some players.

He urged that training sessions be open at least once before their quarter-final matches in the competition.

Romania started one conference by reading out names of journalists who had offended the team.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS 38 P.E. 4 "You — There" 24 Additionally

1 Lose one's marbles 40 What the walls have 5 Negligent 25 Jack of "Barney Miller"

6 Scored a zero 42 Evergreen 6 Central points 26 Forward course

12 Aplenty 44 Some are liberal 7 Less than 90 degrees 28 More unctuous

13 Squids' kin 46 Potential 8 "Monty Python" opener 30 Literary collection

14 Elusive one 50 Relaxed an Arrow shirt? 9 Obsessive seducer 31 Turn of Cole

15 He wore 52 Spain + Portugal 10 Duel tool 11 Disastrous 33 Act as judge

16 "Tekel, Upharsin" 55 Winter weasel 56 Nod, e.g. 18 Muezzin's tower 39 Street boss?

17 Send forth lead-in 57 Grates DOWN 1 Donated 2 Buck heroine 3 Computer hookup 41 Apparently is 42 White House pooch

19 Haw 22 Ms. le Gallienne 24 Cleo's killer 27 Spill the beans 29 Stopover en route to Casablanca 32 Helms territory 35 "Let's Make a Deal" option 36 Genealogy chart 37 Feed-bag tidbit

Solution time: 24 mins.

MOM HITS CLAM
IDI ETAL HOME
LITTLEMO UPON
ANTHEM BAN
INS BIGBEN
BWANA JED ADO
LAPS CAR BRIM
ODE DAY VASES
BIGSUR TIS
WOO ORISON
JAKE LITTLEME
ALOE ESAU MIX
BLOT ROLE ITT

Yesterday's answer 11-6

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CRYPTOQUIP
L X W X P D U H D E Z D U D P A T E
U D I X U D L T H Q G A T P
Q T W G P D E Q G A X
Q H G K H Y X G P U D I Y Z X D P G

Yesterday's Cryptquip: SAID WAITER AT BOWLING-LEAGUE LUNCHEON, EYING HIS LITTLE-BITTY TIP: "CAN YOU SPARE IT?"

Today's Cryptquip clue: Z equals M

The Cryptquip is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.