

WorldCupUSA94
 
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Brazil on a pragmatic trip

 **FULLERTON, Calif.** July 13: While the soccer world searches for superlatives to describe Brazil's play in the World Cup, strikers Romario and Bebeto are unimpressed, reports AP.

In fact, they're almost apologetic.

"Technically, we haven't shown soccer of great quality," Romario said Tuesday. "We're making up for it with strength and teamwork."

"But individually, we have the obligation to play better."

Wait a minute. This is a mediocre performance?

U.S. defender Alexi Lalas, victimised by Bebeto in a 1-0 Brazilian victory in the second round, called the South American team "awesome."

"They're dribbling maniacs," Lalas said after the match. "They come at you at 100 mph (160 kph)."

Yet their two brightest stars are overwhelmed.

"We're not playing that 'show soccer' people expected," Romario said. "We're playing a modern and efficient soccer."

"What matters is the end result," Bebeto added. "It's useless to play pretty and lose. Maybe it's not great soccer, but it's practical."

This pragmatism is new to Brazilian soccer.

It's been bitter disappoint-

ment for Brazil in the past five World Cups. Brazil were always among the favourites but somehow failed to win, often through overconfidence or unnecessary theatrics - what Brazilians call "playing in high heels."

Now, as their last World Championship in 1970 fades into history, Brazil are determined not to blow another chance.

"We realise we are very important players in our country. But to be considered the best we must win it all," Romario said, candidly.

Much of the credit for the new attitude goes to coach Carlos Alberto Parreira, the said.

A few Brazilians think so. But many disdain the scrappy style he has implanted and blame him for the demise of art-soccer."

"We Brazilians haven't yet been able to admire Parreira's work. But we should be grateful for what he's done," Romario said. "Someone like me wouldn't put up with all the things he's had to take."

Perhaps Parreira's greatest achievement has been to maintain harmony among sometimes prickly personalities. That goes double for Bebeto and Romario.

"The strongest thing we have is union," said Romario, who has a reputation as a prima donna."

Diamonds for Privalova

 **Ystad, Sweden**, July 13: Irina Privalova of Russia set two track records in the DN Galan Grand Prix track and field meet Tuesday and came away with a couple of diamonds, reports AP.

Meet organizers offered a diamond worth drs 10,000 for each track record set and Privalova was the day's only double winner. She set track records in the women's 100 metres, 10.90 seconds, and the 200, 22.02, narrowly beating American Gwen Torrence in the latter.

"I am so happy about the diamonds," Privalova said as she flashed one at a news conference. "I am trying to maintain a high level of performance throughout the season instead of peaking my form for a single event."

Americans Dennis Mitchell and Jeff Williams came up with diamonds for their efforts in the 100 and 200, respectively.

There was plenty of news off the track as well as a number of world-class athletes pulled out of the meet at the last minute.

Lindford Christie, the reigning men's 100 Olympic champion, John Regis, a specialist in the 200, and Olympic 400 hurdles champion Sally Gunnell

isers who quickly invoked an IAAF rule that allows them to demand athletes canceling too late be barred from upcoming competition.

"I have informed the IAAF and asked that Christie, Regis and Gunnell be banned from competing for seven days," tournament director Rajne Soderberg said.

Olympic 200 gold medalist

Merlene Ottey of Jamaica also

sent regrets, but apparently in good time.

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