

Nigerian 26 for friendly

ABUJA, May 12: Nigeria's Football Association (NFA) announced on Monday a 26-man squad to play a friendly against Yugoslavia on May 30 in Belgrade, reports Reuters.

All but one of those invited for the friendly, part of Nigeria's preparations for the World Cup finals, play for overseas clubs.

NFA secretary-general Sani Toro said the squad will camp in Switzerland for two weeks before travelling to Belgrade.

The NFA named goalkeeper Ike Shorunmu in the squad even though he broke his arm while playing for his Swiss club FC Zurich on Friday. The NFA appeared to be unaware of the injury which rules Shorunmu out of the World Cup.

SQUAD

Goalkeepers: Ike Shorunmu (FC Zurich), Willy Oara (Orlando Pirates), Justin Akubuike (Jasper United)

Defenders: Mubi Oparaku (Kapellen), Uche Okochukwu (Fenerbahce), Taribo West (Inter Milan), Celestine Babayaro (Chelsea), Jero Shakpoke (Reggianna), Kingsley Obiekwe (Go Ahead Eagles), Ajibade Babalade (LG Cheetahs, Korea), Uche Okafor (Kansas City Wizards)

Midfielders: Garba Lawal (Roda Kerkrade), Sunday Oliseh (Ajax), Austin Jay-jay Okocha (Fenerbahce), Karibeojigwe (Kaiserslautern), Steven Musa (Saarbrücken), Godwin Okpara (Strasbourg), Mutiu Adepolu (Real Sociedad), Wilson Oruma (Lens)

Strikers: Finidi George (Real Betis), Tijjani Babangida (Ajax), Nwankwo Kanu (Inter Milan), Victor Ikpeba (Monaco), Daniel Amokachi (Besiktas), Rashidi Yekini (FC Zurich), Emmanuel Amunike (Barcelona)

Spain 1982 World Cup Restored Italian master

Tawfiq Aziz Khan

The increase from 16 to 24 entrants did not improve the World Cup played in Spain, and the second phase format was a failure. Italy were lucky to survive the first round but suddenly came alive as striker Paolo Rossi, recently restored to football after a two-year suspension for his part in a bribery scandal, rediscovered his scoring skills. England, after a bright start, and conceding only one goal, lost the art of scoring and went out like damp squib.



Paolo Rossi, the prodigal son of Italian football, scores the third of his hat-trick against Brazil. Italy won 3-2 to ensure a place in the semifinals. —Star file photo

European champions West Germany qualified ominously well with eight straight wins and 33 goals against three. The first phase of the finals, six groups of four, with two going through from each, threw up a handful of surprises. Holders Argentina lost to Belgium in the opening match, and Algeria made a sensational debut beating West Germany 2-1. They beat Chile too, but were scandalously prevented from going through when West Germany and Austria contrived the result of their match, the last of the group.

England got a wonderful start, skipper Bryan Robson scoring in the 27th second against France, a World Cup record, and winning all their three matches. Brazil were the only other team to take six points with displays of exciting and attacking football not seen since the days of Garrincha, Pele, Tostao and company.

Honduras gave a wonderful account of themselves in Group 5, drawing with Spain and Northern Ireland but Hungary posted as many as 10 goals against one against the sickly El Salvador in Group 3. Ramirez Zapata was their hero with the lone goal.

New Zealand making their debut, fared little better, although the two goals they scored against the carefree Scotland, proved the Scots' downfall. Cameroon were expected to be the chopping-blocks of Group 1, but nobody could beat them. With their captain N'Kono an inspiration in the goal and Roger Milla a dangerous striker, it was only inexperienced that let them down.

The finest performance from an unfancied side in the first phase belonged to Northern Ireland. They not only qualified from Group 5, with inexperienced club players in their squad, but also topped the Group.

Perhaps the strongest Group in the second round was Group C, in which the two South American giants, holders Argentina and three times champions Brazil were bracketed with the European giants Italy, who managed to scrap through with three drawn matches in the first round.

Italy approached their opponents Argentina with typically clinical fashion, intent on stopping Maradona, playing his first World Cup finals.

The chief culprit, ironically named, Gentile, clattered Maradona if he so much as thought of going for the ball. Having softened up the opposition the Italians began to play the ball in the second half to win 2-1. Maradona took his frustration out on Brazil and he was sent off for blatantly kicking Batista, but not before the Brazilians had scored three delightful goals.

(Bangladesh Television managed to show this match live through satellite. As they did not get the commentary in English, this writer had the proud privilege of doing the running commentary in Bengali from the studios of BTV at Rampura on the clash of the titans. Eminent sport journalist of the country M Qamruzzaman was with me.)

Paolo Rossi, hitherto struggling to find his form, was suddenly back to his old sharp-self and scored two typically opportunist goals. Twice the Brazilians came back with magnificent efforts from Soares and Falcao but Rossi completed his hat-trick with 16 minutes to go, and perhaps the best side in the competition were out.

England with two draws in the second round against West Germany and Spain and three wins in the first round went out as an unbeaten team. Poland and France topped their groups to reserve their births in the semifinal along with Italy and West Germany.

Italy had no trouble beating Poland in the first semifinal. A goal in each half from Rossi saw that.

Table with 10 columns: P, W, D, L, F, A, P. It contains 'FINAL SCORE' data for various groups and rounds of the 1982 World Cup, including Group 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6, and semi-finals.

Crucified over many months in the Italian Press for the team's poor results, he had long been frustrated in his attempts to harness their talent into adventurous attacking football, alien as

Tigana was the perfect foil. On the wing Rocheteau was always dangerous.

The first-half was packed with incident and good football and Platini equalised an early Littbarski goal with a penalty. It continued in the same vein in the second-half with the French on top. Even the scandalous foul by German keeper Schumacher on Battiston, for which he went unpunished and the Frenchman was carried off the field, did not stop their flow.

Celtic's coach departs
LISBON, May 12: Celtic coach Wim Jansen, who guided the Scottish side over the weekend to their first league title in 10 years but had fallen out with club officials, resigned Monday, reports AP.

France '98 squads

UNDATED, May 12 (AFP): Following are the preliminary squads of Bulgaria and Tunisia for the World Cup finals announced on Monday —

BULGARIA

Goalkeepers: Zdravko Zdravkov (Istanbulspor), Borislav Mihalov (Slavia Sofia), Radostin Stanev (CSKA Sofia).

Defenders: Trifon Ivanov (CSKA Sofia), Petar Houbchev (Eintracht Frankfurt), Adalbert Zafirou (Arminia Bielefeld), Gocho Guinchev (Antalya), Ivaldo Petkov (Litex Lovech), Radostin Kichichev (Bursaspor).

Midfielders: Zlatko Yankov (Besiktas), Anatoli Nankov (Locomotiv Sofia), Milen Petkov (CSKA Sofia), Jordanov (Sporting Lisbon), Ilvan Iliev (Bursaspor), Stoicho Stoilov (Litex), Daniel Borimirov (1860 Munich), Georgi Bachev (Slavia), Krassimir Balakov (VFB Stuttgart), Marian Hristov (Kaiserslautern), Kostadin Vidolov (Bursaspor), Ilija Grozev (Neftochimique).

Forwards: Hristo Stoichkov (CSKA), Emil Kostadinov (CSKA), Georgi Ivanov (Levski Sofia), Luboslav Penev (Compostela), Svetoslav Todorov (Litex).

Coach: Hristo Bonev

TUNISIA

Goalkeepers: Chokri el Ouaer (Espérance Sportive de Tunis, EST), Radhouane Salhi (Etoile Sportive du Sahel, ESS), Ali Boummijn (Bastia, France), Naceur Bedoui (CSS Faxien, CSS).

Defenders: Tarek Thabet (EST), Hatem Trabelsi (CSS), Sami Trabelsi (CSS), Khaled Badra (EST), Ferid Chouchane (ESS), Sabri Jaballah (Club Africain, CA), Mounir Boukaidia (ESS), Jose Clayton (ESS), Hamdi Marzouki (CA), Tarek Ben Ghovda (AS Marsa).

Midfielders: Kales Ghodbane (ESS), Strajedjine Chihhi (EST), Riach Bouazzi (ESS), Sofiane Fekih (CSS), Skander Souayah (CSS), Maher Kanzari (EST), Faycal ben Ahmed (EST).

Strikers: Riadh Jelassi (ESS), Mourad Melki (O Beja), Imed ben Younes (ESS), Abdelkader an Hassen (CA Bizerte).

Coach: Henry Kaksperczak

Marion Jones' fabulous feat

CHENGDU, China, May 12: US track star Marion Jones became the second-fastest woman in history Tuesday, clocking 10.71 seconds over 100 metres, a time bettered only by world record-holder Florence Griffith-Joyner, reports AP.

Jones' time, clocked in a race in southwest China under less than ideal grey, damp skies, moved her past Merlene Ottey of Jamaica, who has run 10.74, as the second-fastest woman ever.

It also edged the 22-year-old 1997 world champion cloister of Griffith-Joyner's daunting world record of 10.49.

"I'm very excited. It's great for women's athletics," Jones told reporters after the race.

FRANCE '98 SIDELINES

UNDATED, May 12 (AP): Soccer fans all over the world recognise Brazilian superstar Ronaldo. But Pope John Paul II didn't seem to know immediately who he was when the two met in private audience Monday.

The pontiff, who was a goalkeeper in his youth, asked the 21-year-old Brazilian what sport he played: "Soccer?" said the Pope. Then he asked if he played in Italy.

Ronaldo plays for Inter Milan, who signed him last summer for a record 30 million dollars transfer fee.

In a break from Vatican protocol for papal audiences, Ronaldo wore a jacket but no tie. The player was accompanied by his mother, Sonia Nazario De Lima.

Ronaldo pulled two soccer jerseys out of a plastic bag and gave them to the Pope. One was from the Brazil national team; the other was an Inter jersey.

ESTAY'S PRIVILEGE
Midfielder Fabian Estay, fresh from winning the Mexican soccer championship with his team Toluca, flew home Monday in a private jet and joined the Chilean national squad preparing for the World Cup.

Head coach Nelson Acosta, backing down from warnings that he would not accept players reporting later than last Saturday, welcomed Estay to the team's training camp in the northern seaside resort of Puerto Velero.

There was no formal announcement from the coach, but sources close to the team said he talked to the player on the phone and told him he could come late.

Estay was instrumental in Toluca's 5-2 win over Necaxa Sunday.

While the team continued to train doctors worked to recover four players with injury problems: defenders Javier Margas, Pedro Reyes and Moises Villar-

roel and midfielder Clarence Acuña, all considered starters for the World Cup.

LEONHARDSEN'S WOES
Norwegian midfielder Oyvind Leonhardsen suffered a leg sprain during a Liverpool practice over the weekend and is doubtful for the World Cup.

"This is a real disappointment. Now I am really worried that I might miss the World Cup. But of course, I'm hoping for the best," the 27-year-old told the Oslo newspaper Verdens Gang.

Leonhardsen sprained a muscle in his left thigh when taking a shot on goal during a light practice that was to be the last of the season for his English club, Liverpool.

THE CHOICE IS YOURS, CARLOS
French tax authorities have got Carlos Valderrama just where they want him. If the Colombian captain wants to play soccer in next month's World Cup, he's got a bill to settle first.

The president of the Colombian Soccer Federation, Alvaro Fina, said Monday that Valderrama would not be fielded unless he settles with the French, whom he owes 110,000 dollars in unpaid taxes for 1988-91 when he played with the Montpellier club.

Fina said Valderrama had promised to settle the issue this week.

"We hope so, because if he doesn't he won't be in the World Cup," the official told Antena Dos radio.

The 36-year-old Valderrama, currently with the Miami Fusion of US Major League soccer, has said the World Cup would be his last appearance with his national team.

SANTOS SERVES A SCARE
Marco Santos is the latest victim of a rash of injuries that has depleted Brazil's soccer

team just days before World Cup training camp.

The Sao Paulo fullback pulled up lame barely 10 minutes into Sunday's championship final against Corinthians for the Sao Paulo state title. He watched from the bench as Sao Paulo won 3-1.

Brazilian team doctor Lidio Toledo said Santos would undergo magnetic resonance imaging test to determine the extent of the injury.

GOOD NEWS FOR THE BLIND
Information on the World Cup has been prepared in Braille by the French organizers.

A brochure, written in French, provides a breakdown of this summer's World Cup and a look back at the event, which was first staged in 1930 in Uruguay.

The French organizers said there are about 110,000 blind or partially-sighted people in France, 40,000 of whom read Braille.

FINGERS CROSSED FOR CANNIGLIA
Only two spots remain on Argentina's national team, after coach Daniel Passarella called on five local players to join the team.

Passarella Sunday night called up goalkeepers German Burgos and Pablo Caballero, midfielders Leonardo Astrada and Marcelo Gallardo and striker Marcelo Delgado.

Fifteen of the 22 roster spots are filled by players who compete in Europe. The remaining seven are players from Argentina's First Division.

One name conspicuously absent from the list was Claudio Canniglia, a veteran of two past World Cup teams. A fan favourite, Canniglia's play with his club team Boca Juniors in Argentina has improved in recent months following a lengthy slump.

The Daily Star World Cup Quiz '98. HERE'S YOUR CHANCE TO WIN! ROUND 3. Prizes include Whirlpool Gas Cooker, PHILIPS CD RCR AZ 8051, PHILIPS Blender with Chopper, 5 Dozen Philips Bulbs, 5th Prize: Caps & T-Shirts. All Prizes Courtesy: Transcom Electronics Ltd. Competition Information, Prizes and Rules. Information: A. The Daily Star World Cup Quiz '98 is a series of competitions on World Cup Soccer being held in France from June 10 to July 12, 1998. B. There will be nine rounds of competition. C. Each round will have a separate draw with attractive prizes from the house of Transcom Electronics Ltd. as per announcement. D. Participants of all the nine rounds will automatically qualify for the Bumper Draw, which will have even bigger prizes. E. For each round, sets of questions will be published in The Daily Star Sport Pages. F. Names and addresses of all prize winners will be published in The Daily Star. G. Winners will have to collect their prizes from The Daily Star office after satisfactory authentication of their identity. H. Any taxes or levies, as per law, for all the above prizes will have to be borne by the prize winners.