

# Everyone's going Dutch tonight!

## JOHN PLAYER GOLD LEAF LIGHTS

### Rambo plays for Italy

SENLIS, France, June 19 (AFP/Internet): Austria can expect the worst next week when Italy unleashes Christian "Rambo" Vieri in their bid to finish top of Group B.

The tall, powerfully-built Italian, who actually grew up in Australia, is a big fan of movie star Sylvester Stallone of Rocky and Rambo fame. And while Vieri may not be armed, he is certainly dangerous at these finals.

Currently the joint top scorer with three goals in two games, Vieri is on course to repeat his feat last season with Atletico Madrid in Spain, where he finished as the Liga's top marksman.

"I'm a striker and scoring goals is my job," he said bluntly at the Italian training base here. "They massacred us in the press after we drew 2-2 with Chile, but this team is ready, and we're only going to get better."

"This Italy side can shoot for any objective," he said.

Vieri is inevitably being compared to Italian World Cup strikers of the past, like Gigi Riva and Paolo Rossi, though it's not something he relishes.

"The only thing I've got in common with Riva is a left foot," he quipped.

## Europe & Asia's best battle

MARSEILLE, June 19 (AFP): FIFA president Sepp Blatter's demand that skilful players be given maximum protection by referees in the showpiece World Cup will be tested to the limit on Saturday when gifted Dutch forwards Dennis Bergkamp and Marc Overmars are man-marked by two Korean hard men.

Arsenal's Bergkamp, starting a game for the first time in six weeks, will be policed by Lee Min-sung, who was lucky to escape with a yellow card for a crude tackle on Mexico's Cuauhtemoc Blanco last Saturday.

Winger Marc Overmars, a crucial element in Arsenal's league and cup double last season, will be marked by former Korean captain Choi Young-il dubbed 'the man of steel'.

Choi was sent off against fierce rivals Japan in the World Cup qualifying tournament for continuously fouling striker Kazu Miura.

The Koreans are not known as a dirty team but coach Cha Bumkun has called for a more aggressive approach in the hope of snatching a draw and equalising the furore at home over their 3-1 loss to Mexico.

South Korea are playing in

their fourth consecutive World Cup finals and their hope of winning a match for the first time were wrecked when goalscorer Ha Seok Ju was sent off after three minutes.

"It is my job to prepare the team physically and psychologically and I am doing everything I can to achieve that. We will play more defensively against Holland as I believe we need a draw before going for a win against Belgium," said Cha, who won two UEFA Cup medals while playing in the German Bundesliga.

"We cannot match the Dutch for skill but we have a lot of speed in the team and we will try and catch them on the break in the second half."

Dutch coach Guus Hiddink is looking for an improved performance from the 0-0 draw with Belgium but said that it would not be a one-sided affair in the Stade Velodrome.

With the influential Patrick Kluivert suspended for the game Bergkamp, sidelined for six weeks with a hamstring injury, is certain to start but Hiddink was coy about naming the side on Thursday. He held a training session behind closed doors amongst speculation that he was planning a surprise inclusion in his team.

He has indicated that Nottingham Forest striker Pierre van Hooijdonk will be used as a super-sub which means that Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink, who was replaced by Bergkamp against Belgium, will start the match alongside the Arsenal player with midfielder Ronald de Boer playing a more forward role.

The in-fighting which has wrecked Holland's hopes in previous World Cups and European championships seems to be behind them and the fans are waiting for Bergkamp, Overmars and Real Madrid's Clarence Seedorf to click in unison.

Despite Hiddink's warning there is a real chance that Holland will take. Korea lightly and hit-man Choi Yong-soo and France-based midfielder Seo Jung-won could make team pay for a lax approach.

Choi scored nine goals in the qualifying tournament and is eager to prove himself after being left out of the opening match against Mexico and Seo knows the route to goal in the World Cup. His strike against Spain gave Korea a 2-2 draw four years ago and he also starred in the 3-2 defeat by Germany.

### Their way of countering the media

L'ETRAT, France, June 19 (Reuters): One for all and all for one, Argentina's World Cup squad literally took to the stage on Thursday to proclaim their unity.

Somewhat bizarrely, the squad all trooped out on to the stage of a large conference hall at a sports centre outside St Etienne to face more than 200 reporters, the vast majority of them Argentine.

The squad then issued a statement saying that until further notice they would all sit together on the stage to answer questions.

"In the face of rumours of apparent internal problems in the squad, we have decided to change our method of receiving the press," said the statement read by captain and Inter Milan midfielder Diego Simeone.

"There is no better way to reach one's objective than being united and we are, do not doubt it," the statement added.

The players feel erroneous reports worry their families back home. The journalists say they need interviews with individual players.



FULLY SATISFIED: French fans cheer the national side on June 18 at Saint Denis. — AFP photo

### Tickets stolen

PARIS, June 19: Nearly 15,000 World Cup tickets and hundreds of thousands of dollars in cash have been stolen from the Paris office of an American travel agency, police said Thursday, reports AP.

The burglary happened overnight at the office of Prime Sport International, said police officials, speaking on customary anonymity.

They said one or two burglars had climbed the scaffolding outside the office, and had broken the safe as well as the door.

In addition to the tickets, the burglars also took access badges to get into Saint-Denis Stadium in Paris.

### Kenyan blackout

NAIROBI, June 19: Kenyan students went on the rampage on Wednesday evening after a power blackout interrupted coverage of the World Cup match between Cameroon and Italy, local papers said today, reports Reuters.

About 300 students armed with metal bars, stones and other crude weapons attacked motorists, smashed windows and looted goods in the city centre, the daily nation reported.

The students were angry about a power blackout which affected the University of Nairobi half an hour into the game which Italy won 3-0.

It was the third riot involving University of Nairobi students since March. The other disturbances were unrelated to sports.

### England fans may be fenced-in

TOULOUSE, France, June 19 (AFP/Internet): Police and World Cup organisers, meeting ahead of England's World Cup match with Romania on Monday, are considering erecting fences around the pitch to prevent crowd trouble.

England fans sparked two days of rioting in Marseille when England played their last game and police here fear that more trouble could break out.

Senior police officers and members of the organising committee (CFO) are to meet Saturday and will hold a press conference.

"No decision has been taken either way on this question," a police source said.

Fences surrounding the Toulouse stadium pitch were removed for the World Cup -- in line with a FIFA appeal -- and would take 36 hours to reinstall.

Alain Bidou, the top local government official for the region, has opposed caging in the fans.

"Incidents involving hooligans have not taken place at games," said the Regional Prefect. "We should not penalise ordinary English fans in possession of valid match tickets."

Fans rampaged through the streets of Marseille and fought outside the stadium when England played Tunisia on Monday. But there was no crowd trouble inside the stadium.



FUTURE 'BAFANA BAFANA': Two South African tiny tots watch their team in action at Toulouse. — AFP photo

### Mates think Zidane lets 'em down

PARIS, June 19 (AFP/Internet): Marcel Desailly has slammed team-mate Zinedine Zidane for putting France's World Cup hopes at risk by getting himself sent off against Saudi Arabia on Thursday.

"He's let down the whole team as well as himself. He knows it and he'll be the first to regret it," said the Chelsea-bound defender.

FIFA's disciplinary committee meets later of Friday to decide on how many matches Zidane will miss.

Holland striker Patrick Kluivert was banned for two matches for a similar offence against Belgium.

France captain Didier Deschamps hoped they would be lenient.

"It's inexcusable what he did but you have to remember he takes a lot of kicks every match and he just lost his temper," he said.

Zidane sent off for stamping on Saudi Arabia captain Fuad Amin when France were leading 2-0 against a 10-man Saudi side.

One man in the French team who was not too disappointed was Robert Pires. "I'm sorry for him but I'm ready to step in to take his place," said the Metz playmaker who has just moved to Olympique Marseille for 10 million dollars.

## Tino's olive branch rejected

PARIS, June 19 (AFP/Reuters/Internet): Star striker Faustino Asprilla, kicked out of Colombia's World Cup squad on Wednesday, said Friday he expected to commentate on television for the rest of the tournament.

"Maybe I'll commentate on matches in Colombia," he said before leaving a Paris hotel for what he said was Charles de Gaulle airport and a flight back to Bogota.

Colombia coach Hernan Dario Gomez ruled out the olive branch offered by Asprilla, who had apologised for disrupting team morale. Gomez expelled the Parma striker after he complained about being substituted in Colombia's opening game against Romania and accused the coach of favouritism.

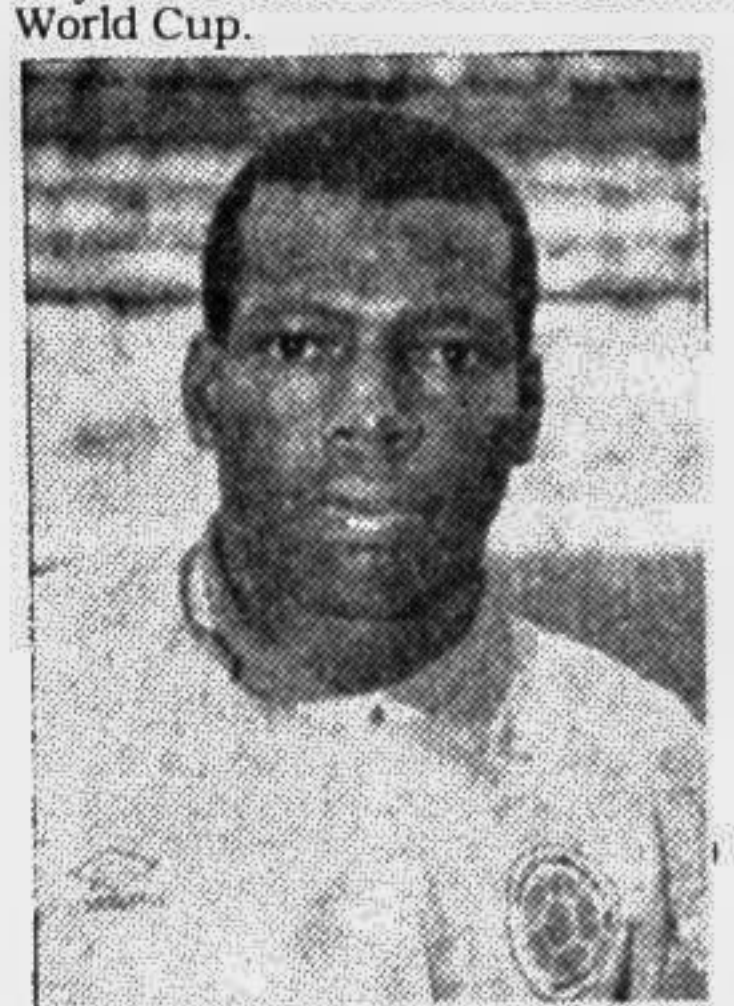
Just 24 hours after being kicked out of the finals, the temperamental striker said he would behave himself if Gomez invited him to return. But with no sign emerging that Gomez would relent, Asprilla looked likely to leave France or turn into a TV commentator.

Asprilla's father Diego told reporters: "We'll have to wait to see what happens. Nobody has come to see us or tell us anything. I think we'll wait until tomorrow to see," he said.

Gomez told Colombian reporters near the team training camp at La-Tour-du-Pin in cen-

tral France that there would be no change of heart by him.

Earlier Asprilla read out a statement to reporters which said: "If the team coach considers my participation to be important, I am ready to submit willingly and in a disciplined way to the rules demanded in a World Cup."



FAUSTINO ASPRILLA

"The coach decided to kick me out of the squad because of what I said. Nobody wants to continue being part of this team more than I do."

"With respect...through these words I would like to apologise to the president, to his executive, to the coach, to my colleagues and above all to the Colombian people."

Colombian president Ernesto Samper had tried to mediate in the furore over Asprilla's outburst, telephoning Colombian soccer federation president Alvaro Fina to ask him to persuade Gomez to change his mind.

But Fina said on Wednesday that Asprilla's remarks had been "the straw that broke the camel's back" and he had to agree with Gomez's decision.

Angry at being substituted, Asprilla, a superb player who has frequently clashed with authority, went on to criticise the coach saying other players had played worse than him and had not been substituted because they were "untouchables."

He was apparently targeting veteran playmaker Carlos Valderrama, who had a poor game against Romania.

Asprilla has a history of tantrums, including walking out in 1993 after he was dropped for a qualifying match.

Gomez announced on Thursday that he would stand down after the finals in protest at criticism from the media and from Colombia's powerful clubs.

"I was calm when I came (to France) but it looks like to come with Colombia to the World Cup is a punishment, to suffer and not to enjoy," he said at the team's base.

He still had a good word to say for Asprilla however, calling him a "good lad" whom he liked and respected.

## Hooligans on holiday

PARIS, June 19 (L'Equipe/Internet): The Cap-d'Agde pier was peaceful and sunny, and six Englishmen were sunbathing and drinking beer on a terrace. They had been in Marseille for England's opening match against Tunisia.

They were pulling Mark's leg because he had made the front page of an English tabloid. My ex-wife even called me to insult me," Mark said. Mark is a "class C" Queen's Park Rangers fan, a violent one.

"But these categories are too restrictive," Scarrett, a Millwall fan, said. "When we go to a match with our families, we're quiet, but with our buddies, it's different," he said.

But Scarrett, as well as "Fat boy," are pretty quiet compared to the others in the group, to whom the incidents in Marseille were nothing special.

"It was all right. But the French police obviously [don't] know how to handle this kind of situation. [They're] not used to handling that and it's obvious. In England, it would never have happened. The Tunisians wouldn't have been able to do anything, and we wouldn't have been allowed to re-group. In England now, we can't do much anymore. We're surrounded. It's become boring. At least here we can have some fun," Mark said.

"They don't care that their actions are preventing England from organising the World Cup in 2006. On the contrary. We don't give a damn. A World Cup in England would mean we'd sleep in our homes, drink in our pubs. Here there is some sun, the sea. It's something else," Mark said.

Yes, but it's more expensive. "Are you kidding me? Beer is twice as cheap as in England," Mark said. Most of them work

anyway. "Big Rob" and "Fat boy" quit their jobs because their bosses wouldn't let them take their holidays during the World Cup. "Bubbs," an Arsenal fan, is a trucker who financed his trip to France with the money he got from being involved in an accident.

They all rented a villa here

### Card glut confuses Americans

SAINT-JEAN D'ARDIERES, France, June 19: The flood of red cards in Thursday's two World Cup games, apparently stimulated by FIFA supremo Sepp Blatter's call for less leniency on tough tackling, has left the US squad bewildered, reports AFP.

"The players have been left wondering exactly what the situation is," said midfielder Cobi Jones.

Coach Steve Sampson also underlined the extent of the confusion by saying that the initial FIFA instructions to referees had hampered the way his team played in their opening match against Germany.

"It is not excuse but it had its part to play in the players being a little bit more reserved, a little bit more conservative than usual."

Now, as he prepares for Sunday's clash with Iran, Sampson says he cannot risk telling his players to adopt a more physical approach.

"The attitude has to be close down the opposition but do not over commit when a player as his back to goal," he said at the United States' base here.

which they're going to share with other fans. "We're all fans of different teams. We clash all season long, but when we're abroad we get together. The other day in Marseille I drank beer with a West Ham fan I'd gotten into a fight with last year," Bubbs said.

Mark is a friendly type, so how could he become violent? "It's the fact that we Englishmen get together, we feel strong."

And now we're abroad, it's exciting, we feel freer," he replied. And what about the risk of ending up in jail? "That's bothering," they all admitted.

Some of them were not even hooligans, were married with children and had come with friends. They had still come by way of Barcelona, Spain, or Amsterdam, Netherlands. "France is convenient for that. There are different ways to come because you can't come directly," Mark explained.

They reminisced for a while. Bubbs showed a huge scar on his neck. "It's not Vietnam, it's against Tottenham," he said. "The new cans are too big, too heavy, my arm is hurting from throwing them," Mark said kiddingly.

They also talked about upcoming matches and the ban on the sale of alcoholic beverages in Toulouse. "It will only be worse," Scarrett said. "People will drink as much as they can and

then ask themselves, 'what's next?'"

And the match in Lens, which is very close to the channel: "It's going to be packed, even more so since there are very few trains heading back after the match. But the real trouble will start if England plays the Netherlands or Germany," Mark said.



LOSING FACE: Veiled Saudi females watch their side being drubbed by the hosts at Parc Des Princes. — AFP photo

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