More bad news for Beckham

PARIS, July 1 (AFP/ Internet): David Beckham is set to be banned for England's first two qualifying matches for the Eu-

ropean Championship.
The 23-year-old England midfielder was sent off for violent conduct at the start of the second half against Argentina, and FIFA have imposed twomatch bans for all other play-, ers dismissed for that offence. Beckham will also be fined

at least 3,000 dollars by FIFA. FIFA communications director Keith Cooper confirmed: "A red card automatically carries a one-match suspension and the disciplinary committee could make it more.

"Any suspension is carried into the qualifying rounds for the European Championships." He, added: "A red card carries a penalty of at least 5,000 Swiss Francs (3,000 dollars) and the

money goes to FIFA's Youth Fund, the principle beneficiary of which is the SOS Children's Villages charity."

Hero to villain

From page-13 blame at Danish referee Kim Milton Nielsen rather than Beckham. Former England managers

Bobby Robson and Terry Venables, both of whom know exactly how Hoddle and his players feel after the agony of penalty shoot-out defeats in the past, also rounded on Beckham. Robson, who lost to West

Germany in the 1990 World Cup semi-final in Turin, said: "Beckham is a silly offender in this match and he will regret it for a long, long time.

· "And Glenn will be devastated, sad. What does he say to Beckham, what does he say to his players? They defended magnificently, created so many great, great chances, but it all ended in heartbreak.'

Venables, who led England in the 1996 European Championship only to see his side beaten by Germany in the semifinals, said of Beckham's send-

ne was doing. Even Arsenal and England striker Ian Wright criticised Beckham, whose passage from hero - after his wondrous freekick goal against Colombia - to

villain has been swift. Wright, forced to watch from the sidelines after failing to be selected, said: "Without being too harsh on David, it cost us the game."

England love From page 13

lant reaction of an inexperienced egoist. Nevertheless Simeone's dramatisation of the incident prompted the referee to overreact and Beckham was sent off.

The dismissal changed the whole complexion of the match. After losing a crucial component of their midfield, England were forced to defend against wave after wave of Argentinean attacks, with the dim hope that they might grab a goal from a counterattack.

The open, end to end game witnessed previously was abandoned, and for the next 73 minutes the match became a war of attrition. Ariel Ortega called upon all his wizardry but couldn't conjure up a way past a defensive wall made sturdier when England manager Glenn Hoddle brought on protectiveminded guards to stifle the South American assault. Meanwhile, Argentinean manager Daniel Passarella brought on offensive-minded attackers to try to break the deadlock. These changes were to prove decisive when the game eventually went to a penalty shoot-

Defenders lack technique or the composure in front of goal to take penalties. Consequently, Argentina had the advantage as they had a number of marksmen on the field. England, on the other hand, had a number of defenders who wouldn't normally be called upon to take a penalty.

All tragedies produce a moment of cathartic hope. In my despondency, I was consoled by the knowledge that after this game, no one can ever look down their noses at English football again. Though they lack the temperament, they have the talent to suggest that maybe one day they may overcome this wretched English curse. The main source of my optimism was Michael Owen. He'll be 22 in the next World Cup and I hope that he'll make the pundits forget Ronaldo in a hurry. A broken man, hope is all I've got left.

Heart bleeds

From page 16 "The surge at half-time was equivalent to that reached in 1985 during an episode of 'Dallas' when JR was shot," national grid spokesman Sean Re-

gan said. British Prime Minister Tony Blair, who watched the game on television in his Downing Street home with his children, praised the team as epitomizing "the English spirit at its very

"I think people do feel a sense of frustration because the

team had really come into its own," Blair said Queen Elizabeth could not

watch the game because she had a dinner party. During the Wednesday rush-

hour, there was little sympathy for Beckham in Manchester, where he is a star of the United

"He's supposed to be a professional. He's paid millions of pounds a year and he goes and does something like that in an important game," said draughtsman Gary Foden, 32, on his way to work. "It cost England the match."



THINGS LOOK FINE: Leonardo (L), Ronaldo (C) and Brazil coach Mario Zagallo in a -AFP photo cheerful mood during practice at Ozoir la Ferriere on June 30.

Brazila goaldown before kick-off?

PARIS, July 1 (AFP/ Internet): Denmark will start their quarter-final match against Brazil a goal-up as far as coach Bo Johansson is concerned.

His logic is simple. Denmark have Manchester United goalkeeper Peter Schmeichel between the sticks.

that gives us a goal start," said the Swedish born Johansson. Denmark's complete domination of their second round

"As far as I am concerned

a the against Nigeria - the score was 4-1 but mey could easily have scored seven - shows they are a side who are danger-

ous to under-estimate. Michael Laudrup, thought by many to be a spent force, was the creative hub. His brother Brian and fellow striker Peter Moller were clinical in their finishing. The defence were a solid wall against which the Super Eagles battered themselves in vain.

But above all, Schmeichel stood out. An imposing 6ft, 4in and 16 stone mountain of a man, his message was clear: And for all of the bravery of

Scotland's Jim Leighton and Chile's Nelson Tapia, Brazil have yet to come up against a keeper who dominates his box in the way that Schmeichel

Kevin Keegan often remarks that Schmeichel is worth an extra 15 goals a season to Manchester United, and Denmark coach Johansson does not dis-

"In order to do well we have to have a goalkeeper like Peter Schmeichel," said Johansson. "He had a fantastic game

again - every time we have a great victory it is often just because Peter Schmeichel is so Schmeichel himself calls

the quarter-finals their best achievement. Their only other appearance in the finals was in 1986 in Mexico when, inspired by

Michael Laudrup, they were one

of the teams of the opening

Denmark's success in reaching

phase only to be humiliated 5-1 by Spain in the second round.

Schmeichel said: "For such a small country, to play against Brazil, the best team in the world, is such a great achieve-

"It is the best thing that can have happened to us and we are very proud to be in the quarter-

He believes the match against Nigeria was proof of the all-round talent in the Denmark team which until now has remained under wraps.

"We have always known we can play like this. Against Nigeria was the way we know we can play. It was a team performance and it was exceptional." he said.

"The second half was the proof of that - to play behind that team, defending that well, was easy. The only thing I had to do was take the goal-kicks in that half.

"It really gives you confidence when the team is defending that well."

Best of friends, best of enemies

PARIS, July 1 (AFP/ Internet): Best of friends during the Serie A season, French and Italians will be worst enemies on Friday when the two sides meet for a place in the World Cup semi-finals.

France has recently become a happy hunting ground for Italian clubs looking to recruit midfielders and defenders, with 15 of them playing in the top flight of the Serie A last season. Now the skills which have been honed in the classroom of

the "Calcio" will be turned against the teachers. Parma's Lilian Thuram, rated by the Gazzetta dello Sport as the best defender in Italy, admitted: "I've matured from a tactical point of view since playing in Italy. I've finally understood how important it is to have a match firmly

under control. "When you're 1-0 up in a French side they always keep looking for a second goal. They don't realise, as the Italians do, that the scoreline means your opponents have to score twice to

"In Italy, you can still play great football and keep a 1-0 result in hand, and you can be a hero if you play badly but still win. In short, the result is everything.

Turin is meanwhile a second home to France captain Didier Deschamps, who has spent the last four years as the defensive pillar of Juventus' midfield. "We all arrived as good play-

ers, now some of them have become excellent in Italy," he

said. "Those who already had selfdiscipline and the right mentality now have even more of it.

now have plenty."

and those who didn't have any,

"But on Friday we have to go out and beat them. We 'Italians' owe a great deal to Italy -- but now we want to prove that we can win things on our own."

Asked what Frenchmen had learned most from their experiences in the Serie A, he said: Above all, tactics.

"In Italy, players are born, grow up and live with a sense of tactics, and if you haven't got

Brown predicts Brazil-France finale

PARIS, July 1 (AFP/ Internet): Scotland coach Craig Brown believes hosts France will make it to the World Cup final - where they will meet

Brown, still in France to see out the end of the tournament, believes that Brazil will sweep aside Denmark in the quarterfinals and win their semifinal

reckon it could well be France against Brazil in the final," said Brown. "Both sides have impressed me a great

Brown has returned to Bordeaux, where the Scotland squad were based, and has received such a warm welcome back he is planning to make it his next holiday destination.

"The Bordeaux people have become our main supporters in France and I have even seen a couple of Scottish flags still up in the city centre, which warmed my heart," he said.

"I am planning to go back as a holiday as I have very pleasant memories of our stay."

that, you'll soon be packing your bags and going home." Deschamps had mixed feelings about the amount of friendship on the pitch at the

Stade de France. "It's going to be strange, because I've spent four years now with Alessandro Del Piero and Angelo Di Livio, and I was only speaking on the phone the

other day to Filippo Inzaghi. "We'll be friends," he quipped. "But after the match. And only if we win."

Winning will mean coping with the support, but also the

pressure of the home fans. Italy's Demetrio Albertini. who has been playing alongside Marcel Desailly at AC Milan since 1993, said: "They will be under a lot of pressure because they have been preparing for the World Cup for a long time.

"Desailly has been talking about it for the past two years." The five Juventus men in Italy's team meanwhile know all there is to know about France's most feared weapon. playmaker Zinedine Zidane.

Gianluca Pessotto said: "On his day, it's difficult to stop Zidane. He can win matches on his own, and he can move all around the pitch in search of inspiration. "The only way to make life

difficult for him is with the tightest possible marking. You've got to try and smother his creative skills, find a way of shutting him out of the match. "And if the coach wants me

to, I'll do it myself." Italy skipper Paolo Maldini summed up Friday's showdown, saying: "We all know each other, there will be no advantages and no secrets. What will count is the physical shape we're all in.'



HERE COMES CROATIA: Jubilant Croatian fans take to the streets at capital Zagreb after the second round victory over Romania on June 30. -AFP photo

Batigol's hattrick

ST ETIENNE, July 1: Gabriel Batistuta marked the birth of his third son by returning to the top of the World Cup marks-men's list with his penalty against England on Tuesday, reports Reuters.

Batistuta, whose third son Joaquin was born on Monday, celebrated his fifth goal of the competition by rocking an imaginary baby in his arms just as Brazil's Bebeto did during the 1994 finals.

The Fiorentina striker joined Italy's Christian Vieri as top scorer after four matches. But he said: "I didn't go into the match thinking about it (the

record), just about winning." Batistuta's goal was the first of a pulsating 2-2 draw after extra time between twice world champions Argentina and 1966 winners England in the second round.

Argentina won the penalty shootout.

Batistuta said he had no problems with being substituted for Parma's Hernan Crespo during the second half.

"We're 22 in the squad. Today it was my turn come off. That's no problem. We won and we're very happy," he said.

Mario plans to storm the flanks

OZOIR-LA-FERRIERE, France, July 1: Coach Mario Zagallo lifted the veil on his master plan for the quarterfinal against Denmark on Friday, revealing that Brazil hope to wing their way to victory, reports AFP.

"From what I know of the Danes, we are going to hit a traffic jam if we try to play the game through the middle and down the central corridor," he said. "We will be trying to outflank them."

Zagallo was impressed with the Danish performance against Nigeria, especially their mastery of the midfield in the 4-1 win.

"Their win against Nigeria was proof of their fine quality." he said. "We will play them the only

way we know. And if it's God's

will, we will stay in the cup." Zagallo was unwilling to sketch in the details of his wide attack plan but hinted he may be ready to unleash his flying wing-backs Cafu and Roberto Carlos.

Trust Maradona!

BUENOS AIRES, July 1: Fiery former international soccen star Diego Maradona said Tuesday that Argentina's penalty-kick victory over England was "very difficult" but said he never doubted the outcome, reports AFP. "I knew the game against

England would be difficult, but my heart told me we were going to win." Maradona told the official Telam news agency after Argentina earned a spot in the World Cup quarter-finals.

The former captain of the blue-and-white squad, which won 4-3 in a penalty shoot-out, said "England was a tough team that gave us a difficult game, but... we deserved victory."

Batty's most forgetful

ST ETIENNE, July 1 (Reuters): David Batty took the first penalty of his senior professional career on Tuesday missed it and sent England tumbling out of the World Cup.

His failure gave Argentina a 4-3 shootout victory in their second round clash after the two teams were dead locked 2-2 at the end of extra time. The Newcastle United mid-

fielder said: "I was very confident about taking the penalty. It was my first one. "In my mind, I had decided to

smash it. I knew it would be the fifth one and I saw myself smashing it in to take us through, if we weren't through already. "I only realised we were out

when I saw the Argentinians all running towards their goalkeeper.

Football's elite

From page 16 the World Cup but you can do as much as possible to give yourself the best chance, and that is exactly what we do.' Since the World War Two.

only three teams from outside Europe and South America have reached the quarterfinals - North Korea (1966), Mexico (1970 and 1986) and Cameroon

In fact, the quarterfinal geographical breakdown reveals a consistent pattern between European and South American teams.

"This year six European teams have made it through along with Brazil and Argentina whereas in 1994 it was seven from Europe plus Brazil. Five or six European teams regularly feature in the last

eight while either Brazil or Ar-

gentina, and often both, have

made it through at every World Cup since the World War two. Although there is still everything to play for in the quarterfinals on Friday and Saturday. World Cup pedigree suggests that the semifinalists should be Italy, Brazil, Argentina and

Germany. France, Denmark, the Netherlands and Croatia will have other ideas but tradition and history indicates it will be difficult for them to succeed now that the World Cup's perennial powers have emerged, as ever, from the pack.

Dunga to call it a day

OZOIR-LA-FERRIERE, France. July 1 (AP/ Internet): If Brazilians needed any extra motivation to win the World Cup, they have Dunga.

The 34-year-old captain quietly announced he would retire from the national team after the Cup, although he will still play for his club, Jubilo Iwata of Japan. "These are my last three

games for the selection." Dunga said as the team prepared to face Denmark in the quarterfinals.

His count is based on the assumption that Brazil will get by Denmark. Once in the semifinals, the team at worst will play for third place. But the worst isn't in his plans.

"Our team is a killer," he said. "But we must fight, take every opponent seriously, forget the score. Dunga is the heart of the de-

fending champions. His bullying, badgering, on-field manner isn't always pleasant for his teammates, but they know he would give his blood for the team. He gave it against Chile. A vicious tackle opened a gash on

his leg that took six stitches to

close, but Dunga didn't even slow down until he was ordered off for treatment. When I'm wearing the jersey of the selection, I don't feel pain," he said. "You can kick me, I feel nothing. My leg was full of blood, and I didn't even

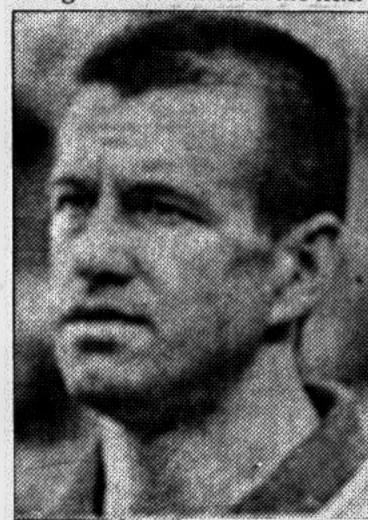
If his teammates questioned his drill-sergeant tactics, it

notice. I only realised it when

the referee stopped the game to

send me off."

took just one game to realise how much they depend on him. Criticised after a heated onfield argument with Bebeto. Dunga was subdued in the next



DUNGA

game against Norway. After Brazil lost 2-1, the team as one came to ask for their old leader

"Dunga has something special, that natural dynamism that is super important for us," Leonardo said. After the Bebeto incident, an

Internet survey asked whether Dunga should still be a starter on the Brazilian team. Fully 95 per cent of respondents said "Dunga is very important be-

cause of the vision he has of the game." Rivaldo said. "He pushes us at the right moment."

It all comes naturally to

Dunga, a descendant of German immigrants to the "gaucho" re-

gion of far southern Brazil. "That's the only way I know how to play." he said. "I felt bad when I shouted at Bebeto. I think I went too far. But when I see something wrong, I can't overlook it. On the field I'm crazy for the selection. I want to win always."

It's been same the wherever he played, in Brazil, Germany, Italy and Japan. On the national team, Dunga embodied the spirit Brazilians call the "fatherland in cleats."

In three World Cups, he became a symbol of the best and the worst of the team. In 1990, his bulldog style was ridiculed as artless and ugly. Four years later, when the team won a fourth Cup title, Brazilians saluted his courage and leader-

Now, he just wants one more

"In soccer, what remains is the last moment," he said. "Peciple generally forget what you did before.

What's difficult is imagining Brazilian soccer in the posit-Dunga era. He has left his innprint on the team, and an example to follow. "I always gave the maximum

of myself," Dunga said, running his hand over his buzz-cut in a reflective moment. Then he paused. This was about more than soccer.

"I took the love of my country to the world," he said. "I tried to show that Brazil is not just a Third World country. It has extraordinary riches. I just hope I left something positive."



Davor Suker of Croatia (L) scoring from the spot against Romania on June 30. -- AFP photo

Have refs spoilt the game?

Cameroon alleged there was

PARIS, July 1 (AFP/ Internet): The World Cup has always been overdramatized by triumph and disaster, but surely those two sporting impostors have once more been dancing to

the tune of referees' whistles. Denmark's Kim Nielsen was at the centre of France 98's most sensational match when he sent off England's David Beckham, awarded two penalties for dives, disallowed an England score and missed an England

penalty. Even Italy goalkeeper Gianluca Pagliuca was astonished with the referee.

"Nielsen made a string of blunders," the goalkeeper said. "The penalties given, the one not given to England and a few offside decisions: he made a lot of mistakes, not to mention the an anti-African conspiracy when they had two players sent off and two goals by veteran striker Francois Omam Biyick disallowed by Hungarian referee Laszlo Vagner. Patrick Mboma headed the equaliser in a 1-1 draw with

Chile which denied the Africans a place in the last 16. Referees are in an impossible situation with no choice but to cause triumph and disaster

sending-off of Beckham.

SENLIS, France, July 1(Reuters): Christian Vieri says his mother, born in France, will support her son and Italy when the two nations meet in their World Cup quarterfinal on Friday.

"She'll be supporting Italy because I'm playing for them. If I weren't, she'd be supporting France," Vieri told reporters at Italy's training camp today. Vieri's mother Natalie was born in Paris, where the two

sides will meet at the Stade de France, his father Roberto is Italian and Vieri was brought up in Australia. "My father was a professional footballer and he gives me advice now and then." he said. "I manage to stay calm be-

that's down to my mother, she's very calm." Vieri, joint top scorer in the World Cup with five goals in four matches, acknowledged the pressure was growing in both him and Italy as the tournament progressed.

"That's normal. We're in the quarterfinals and the pressure is bound to be intense, but we have to use it to our advantage." he said. Vieri said he was looking

Zinedine Zidane, his former teammate at Juventus. "He's a world class player in every sense, technically, physically and mentally. He had a great understanding both on

time I was at Juventus. Vieri, one of soccer's nomads, was at Juve for a single season in 1996-97 before moving to Spain's Atletico Madrid for 21 million dollars, still a record transfer fee for an Ital-

one season at Atlanta Bergamo, one at Venezia, one at Ravenna, one at Pisa and two at Torino, where he started his career. "I've moved around a lot but

these things happen in football.

by their performances. Argentina's Javier Castrilli had no hesitation in deciding

Gabriel Popescu fouled Aljosa Asanovic for a penalty Davor Suker converted for Croatia's earn 1-0 win over Romania and a place in Saturday's quarterfinal against Germany.

His split-second ruling cast a pall over Bucharest and set the

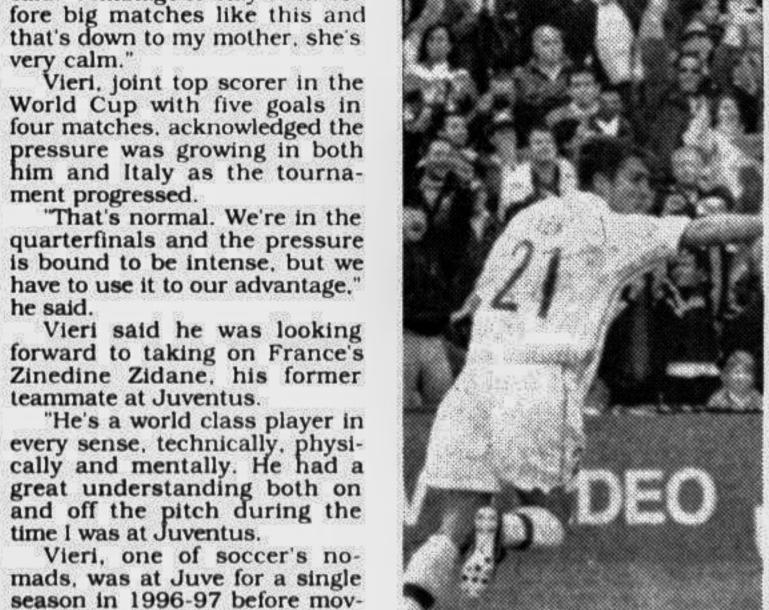
Vieri, nomad no more

I look at each year as a step for-After making his way to Spain, he says he might finally put down roots. "I spoke to Atletico's president Jesus Gil yesterday and he doesn't want to let me go. For

the moment I'm happy in Spain and happy to be playing for Atletico "I left one of the biggest and most successful clubs in Europe (Juventus) but I made a choice and I'm happy with the choice

He said he had recently spoken to Arrigo Sacchi, who guided Italy to the 1994 World Cup final and will take over

from Radomir Antic as coach at



CHRISTIAN VIERI

Atletico next season. Before Juventus, he spent "Sacchi called me and congratulated me on the goal I scored against Australia," Vieri said. "Atletico have made a good decision in bringing in an Italian coach."

bells ringing in Zagreb. South African defender

Pierre Issa, whose side were

eliminated following a 2-2 draw against Saudi Arabia, denied he had given away two penalties. The defender said: "For the first penalty, I clidn't touch the Saudi and on the second our

fell over together." However Chile referee Mario Sanchez Yanten immediately pointed to the spot on both occasions.

But such highs and lows

arms and legs entwined and we

have always followed in the wake of World Cup rulings. Remember the 3-2 victory by Germany when Swiss referee Kurt Rothlisberger, who was later sent home, failed to award

a penalty to Belgium in the second round of USA 94. Remember the Hand of God goal by Maradona in the 1986 quarter-final against England who are still licking their

wounds from that. Were Germany robbed of the 1966 title by what many believe was the goal that never was. England's third on the way to a 4-2 win, by hat-trick hero

Geoff Hurst.

Every World Cup is littered with such problems and the heartache and joy encapsulates the very essence of the emotional power a World Cup generates in all corners of the globe. The quarter-finals are on

Friday and Saturday, the semi-

finals are on Tuesday and

Wednesday next week before the

third-place play-off and final are or, the following Saturday and Sunday. And expect the men with the toughest job in the world, the

referees, to break more hearts.

Record beckons Taffarel

OZOIR-LA-FERRIERE, France. July 1 (AFP/ Internet): Brazilian veteran Claudio Taffarel is set to beat the World Cup appearances record for goalkeepers in Friday's

quarter-final against Denmark. The 32-year-old, who has won 108 caps, should play in his 16th World Cup tie, one more than compatriots Gilmar

and Emerson Leao. After the tournament Taffarel will leave Atletico Mineiro for Turkey, having last week signed a two-year contract

ROUND 2 RESULTS

Norway 0 Italy 1 Chile 1 Brazil 4

Paraguay 0 France 1 Nigeria 1 Denmark 4 Mexico 1 Germany 2 Yugoslavia 1 Holland 2 Romania 0 Croatia 1 England 2 Argentina 2 (Argentina won by 4-3 on penalties)

with Galatasaray.