Flops & Failures

From page 13

Lawal claimed the goal - the Opprobrium was heaped on Zubi who retired suitably castigated two weeks later after a goalless draw with Paraguay dumped out Europe's perennial under-achievers.

If only the World Cup final had been played in Lens on June 24, Spain, who turned on a brilliant exhibition showing that night to crush Bulgaria 6-1, might have carried off the tro-

phy.

But it wasn't and they didn't. Bungles & Blunders

From page 13

Coach Glenn Hoddle said of Beckham's blunder. "I am not denying it cost us the game." Was it poetic justice when

Ariel Ortega of Argentina was sent off in similar circumstances in the next round against Holland, responding to provocation from Dutch goalkeeper Edwin Van Der Sar? Probably not, but it did cost

Argentina the match. Marketing executives dropped the ball on the World Cup in an off field blunder. They believed the cliche that women don't watch football.

But half the French audience for the World Cup was made up of women. The advertising moguls who decided to drop ads for baby products, cosmetics and other female-directed products must be kicking them-

French women

From page 13

with two goals from Lizarazu and Henry and then one goal for Brazil for honour's sake," she said.

A pre-World Cup poll showed 70 percent of French women were indifferent to the tournament and even as the event got underway some World Cup widows were advertising on the Internet for stand-ins for spaced-out soccer spouses.

Yet as the month-long competition has progressed, interthe national side ha

flowered - so that by the time of France's semifinal against Croatia around half the 17.7 million French television audience were women.

"They said they were antifootball, now they have taken over the World Cup," groaned the daily newspaper Liberation.

Nike-Adidas

From page 13

referring to the French team. Adidas reckons it will sell half a million French shirts should France win and a hometown win would help revamp its image.

-Nike: the world leader in sports shoes, aims to overtake Adidas as leader in the football market by 2002. Nike is not an official World Cup partner but has nevertheless invested heavily in publicity surrounding this football festival.

But they had a setback at the beginning of the month when their "Nike Park" advertising area at the La Defence business district was criticised for being reminiscent of slogans and images of fascist Italy and Vichy France.

Nike, which signed a 10year, 200 million dollar deal with Brazil in 1996, has seen sales plummet because of the Asian financial crisis.

The American firm has suffered a near halving of net profits in the tax year up to May 31,

the figure dropping to 399.6 million dollars. Adidas, which has become the second largest world seller of sports goods since their buying out of French company Sa-

lomon in 1997, had a 48 percent increase in net profits up to about 260 million dollars after several poor years.

Suker-punch

From page 16

liciently from injury to be thrown into the fray by Hiddink in an unlikely 2-4-4 formation at the re-start, and the Arsenal winger was soon causing trouble.

inessective Dennis Bergkamp was the next to go, in favour of Pierre van Hooijdonk, as Hiddink pushed his men to score an equaliser against a Croatian side who were content just to sit on the result.

For the first 25 minutes of the second half, Croatia's only real threat was a Prosinecki free-kick which narrowly missed the outstretched boot of Suker at the far post.

Holland came closer in the 77th minute, when Overmars beat Ladic but saw his rebounding effort cleared by the Croatian defence and Kluivert rightly covered his face in shame when ne dodged Bilic and, with Ladic at his mercy from eight metres. blasted his effort hopelessly

It looked like the miss of the match, but that distinction was reserved moments later for Clarence Seedorf, who failed to beat the Croatian keeper from seven metres in the 83rd minute.

It was Holland's last chance. as Croatia stole the show.

MATCH STATS NED CRO Goals Shots on target Shots off target Corners Fouls Offsides Red cards Total yellow cards Netherlands yellow cards -Edgar Davids 88, Wim Jonk 88. Croatia yellow cards -Krunoslav Jurcic 34, Igor Sti-

mac 51. Aljosa Asanovic 58,

Attendance: 45,500.

Mario Stanic 73.



ZENDEN TAKES OFF: Boudewijn Zenden, the Dutch juggernaut, leaps in the air while celebrating his brilliant strike against Croatia. - AFP photo

Speaking tactically

PARIS, July 12 (AFP/ Internet): Well, now that the show's over, how was it for you -- tactically speaking, that is?

At the risk of stating the obvious, the 32 teams at France 98 were hardly likely to reinvent the wheel at this World Cup any more than at previous tournaments, so, unsurprisingly, what we've not seen is a whole new ball game.

Germany coach Berti Vogts said before the event started he didn't foresee any "tactical revolutions" this summer, while former Dutch legend Johan Cruyff said he hoped the trend towards using wing-backs would be stillborn as he believes they are killing modern football.

Take a look at all 32 teams competing here -- and then ask yourself how many of them deployed a real wide man.

Holland had Marc Overmars, Denmark Brian Laudrup and England, to an extent, Darren Anderton, while Thierry Henry has been a threat for France on the right.

Brazil's Cafu and Rivaldo can certainly cross a ball, but you'd be hard-pressed to come up with anybody else aside from this quintet, so maybe it's 1966 and 'wingless wonders' a la Alf Ramsey all over again.

It's rather a sad spectacle for the Cruyff school of thought, even if Brazil have their customary all-rounders and Holland did their best to reimpose a bit of the Total Football their former star pioneered in the 1970s.

"Wing-backs were brought in as a defensive measure by coaches afraid to use real wingers," insists Cruyff.

"The argument is that wingers cut down your options because they can't defend, but if you have two good wing-men then they tie up their opposing defenders." Cruyff added. "The whole argument doesn't

stand up anyway because most wing-backs can't put in a decent cross once they've run 60 metres." Quite so, Mr Cruyff. "What's so silly is that it's easier to win playing attacking

football than boring football, the Dutch master insists. Would that they all thought like him, though it has to be

noted that, great though the Dutch were, his team never actually won anything. Although he says he prefers to lose playing exciting football. But if the wingbacks argu-

ment will run and run, there have been other tactical innovations here.

The French came up with a novel concept -- an overcrowded midfield, largely ineffective strikers -- and defenders who appear at the wrong end of the pitch and do all the scoring. Step forward Lilian Thuram, two-goal hero against Croatia, and Laurent Blanc, golden goal man against Paraguay.

Paraguay went home after Blanc's goalscoring contribution in the second round, but

they made their own mark tactically speaking.

Eccentric goalkeeper Jose Luis Chilavert, when he wasn't making brilliant saves, could be found in midfield, or even

There have been two further identifiable innovations -- one positive, one negative, at this World Cup.

FIFA's eagerness to cut out dangerous tackles from behind has largely had the desired effect of allowing creative players more room

down," says, former England great Sir Bobby Charlton, although he preferred to see more discretion on whether the tackle was worth a red card or a yellow. In Charlton's view, Eng-

land's Michael Owen could never have scored his stunning goal against Argentina if the new rule had not been in place. have scored like that. The Argentine defence would have

pulled him," he said. But on the downside, there has been far more shirt-pulling. prompting FIFA president Sepp

testers". Tactics will come and tactics will go, they will evolve over

time.

tention to them in their own right. Joao Saldanha, who

moulded Brazil's brilliant 1970

someone to carry the piano" alongside the maestro who plays it.

gone and returned in more or less similar guises. But the bottom line remains

the same as ever. The object is to win and entertain. Never mind the system, let's have more goals please Then even the Americans will wake up to what the game has to

'Champagne' WC Blasted by MP

LONDON, July 12 (AFP/ Internet): France 98 was denounced by a senior British politician on Saturday as "a tournament of smoked salmon and champagne, VIP seating and credit card fatigue".

And Glyn Ford, European MP for Greater Manchester East, and a former Labour leader in Europe, criticised the allocation of tickets, saying the French had "about as much a tradition of attending football matches as the Saudis had of organising beer festivals."

THE SCORERS

PARIS, July 12 (AP): Goalscorers in the 16th World Cup after Saturday's third-place play-off (penalties in parenthe-

Six goals: Davor Suker. Croatia (1). Five goals: Christian Vieri, Italy, Gabriel Batistuta, Ar-

Four goals: Luis Hernandez, Mexico, Ronaldo, Brazil (1) Marcelo Salas, Chile.

gentina (2).

Three goals: Bebeto, Brazil, Dennis Bergkamp, Netherlands, Oliver Bierhoff, Germany, Cesar Sampaio, Brazil, Thierry Henry, France, Juergen Klinsmann, Germany, Rivaldo,

Two goals: Roberto Baggio, Italy (1), Shaun Bartlett, South Africa (1), Salaheddine Bassier, Morocco, Phillip Cocu, Netherlands, Ronald de Boer, Netherlands, Abdeljilil Hadda, Morocco, Fernando Hierro, Spain (1), Patrick Kluivert, Netherlands, Slobodan Komljenovic, Yugoslavia, Brian Laudrup, Denmark, Kiko Narvaez, Spain, Viorel Moldovan, Romania, Fernando Morientes, Spain, Ariel Ortega, Argentina. Michael Owen, England, Ricardo Pelaez, Mexico, Alan Shearer, England (1), Marc Wilmots, Belgium, Theodore Whitmore, Jamaica, Lilian Thuram, France, Robert Prosinecki, Croatia.

One goal: Mutiu Adepoju, Nigeria, Sami al-Jaber, Saudi Arabia (1), Youssef al-Thyniyan, Saudi Arabia (1), Darren Anderton, England. Celso Ayala, Paraguay, Tijani Babangida, Nigeria, David Beckham, England, Miguel Benitez, Paraguay, Laurent Blanc, France, Cuauhtemoc Blanco, Mexico, Craig Burley, Scotland, Jose Cardozo, Paraguay, John Collins, Scotland (I), Luigi Di Biagio, Italy, Edgar Davids, Netherlands, Youri Djorkaeff. France (1), Christophe Dugarry, France, Robbie Earle, Jamaica, Hamid Estili, Iran, Dan Eggen. Norway, Tore Andre Flo, Norway, Alberto Garcia Aspe, Mexico (1), Moustafa El Hadji, Morocco, Havard Flo, Norway, Ha Seok-ju, South Korea, Thomas Helveg, Denmark, Andreas Herzog, Austria (1), Victor Ikpeba, Nigeria, Adrian Ilie, Romania, Robert Jarni, Croatia, Martin Jorgensen, Denmark, Emil Kostadinov, Bulgaria, Michael Laudrup, Denmark (1), Garba Lawal, Nigeria, Bixente Lizarazu, France, Claudio Lopez, Argentina, Luis Enrique, Spain, Mehdi Mahdavikia, Patrick Mboma, Iran. Cameroon, Brian McBride, United States, Benni McCarthy, South Africa, Sinisa Mihailovic, Yugoslavia, Andreas Moeller, Germany, Peter Moeller. Denmark. Masashi Nakayama, Japan, Allan Nielsen, Denmark, Luc Nilis. Belgium, Pierre Njanka, Cameroon, Sunday Oliseh, Nigeria, Wilson Oruma, Nigeria, Marc Overmars, Netherlands, Predrag Mijatovic. Yugoslavia. Emmanuel Petit, France, Dan Petrescu, Romania, Hector Pineda, Argentina, Anton Polster, Austria, Leider Preciado, Colombia, Raul Gonzalez, Spain, Kjetil Rekdal, Norway (1). Marc Rieper, Denmark, Ebbe Sand, Denmark, Paul Scholes, England, Jose Sierra, Chile, Skander Souayah, Tunisia (1). Mario Stanic, Croatia, Dragan Stojkovic, Yugoslavia. David Trezeguet. France, Pierre van Hoojdonk, Netherlands, Ivica Vastic, Austria, Goran Vlaovic, Croatia, Yoo Sang-chul, South Korea, Javier Zanetti, Argentina, Boudewijn Zenden, Nether-

Own goals: Sinisa Mihailovic, Yugoslavia, Tommy Bovd. Scotland, Youssef Chippo, Morocco. Pierre Issa. South

Asian football crisis

PARIS, July 12 (AFP): Asia were the poorest continent at the World Cup with no team in the second round although Japan and Korea will be jointly hosting the 2002 tournament.

Japan, South Korea, Iran and Saudi Arabia, who made the second round in USA '94 all fell in the group stages.
If South Korea's Choi Yong-

soo, top scorer in qualifying with nine goals, had been sharper in the box in their last group match against Belgium, the Koreans would have clinched that elusive first World Cup win.

They have now played 14 matches in five World Cup finals without a victory, but the 1-1 draw was greeted as one by stand-in manager Kim Pyongsok players and supporters alike.

It was fitting that captain Yoo Sang-chul scored the equaliser for South Korea in the 71st minute. He was the glue that held the team together af-ter the damaging defeats to Hol-land and Mexico and was the team's most consistent player in France '98.

South Korea came into the tournament with the lofty goal of reaching the second round and in the reverend Cha Bum-Kun the nation felt they had the coach to deliver.

But the country's one true footballing icon, whose 98 goals in 308 matches in Germany's Bundesliga is a record for an overseas player, was both foolish and naive in team selection and tactics.

Japan's players stung by their poor performances at the World Cup finals, where they finished bottom of their group and without a point, look set to end their isolation from World Cup football and move to European Clubs.

The players are determined to put on a better show when they co-host the 2002 World Cup with South Korea, and see moving away from the poorly rated J'League as a way of improving their skills and becoming more competitive at international

level. Japan Football Association (JFA) secretary general Junji Ogura said that although European scouts had been watching several of the Japanese players in the first round their high salaries might discourage transfer deals.

"But the players themselves may accept lower pay in order to gain experience," he said.
"I wouldn't be surprised if

several of the players do move abroad soon," he added. Target man Shoji Jo, whose

poor finishing contributed to Japan's three straight Group H defeats and coach Takeshi Okada's resignation, admitted he would like to play abroad if an opportunity arises. Jo's quick rise forced out

veteran striker Kazu Miura, who has played at Brazilian club Santos and Serie A side Genoa, leaving Okada's squad with no players with experience at foreign clubs.

Goalkeeper Yoshikatsu Kawaguchi, 22, said he was ready to play abroad "on a stage where I can improve my game. Saudi Arabia, who reached

the second round in USA '94. were the first team to be eliminated from the World Cup this time and then suffered internal discord following the sacking of their coach.

They may have drawn 2-2 with South Africa in their last game, but it was mere consolation for a team led by new boss Mohamed Al-Kharashi following the axing of Brazil's Carlos Alberto Parreira.

Predictable comments in public have not been able to conceal the internal discord which culminated in a rift between players and officials fol-

lowing Parreira's sacking.

The decision to get rid of Parreira was taken by Prince Faisal at a hastily called meet-ing in the French capital after two crushing defeats in their

opening group matches.

But despite claims by some Saudi officials that his ousting had lifted team morale for their final group match against South Africa, there was growing criticism with in the Saudi

Saudi officials convinced themselves that by taking on Parreira a touch of Brazilian magic would rub off on them for the World Cup, also he was a known quantity. He had been in charge in 1988 when Saudi Arabia won the Asian Cup. He had also coached Kuwait

in the 1982 World Cup, and the United Arab Emirates in the 1990 finals.

The Saudis reached the last 16 four years ago and Parreira was left in no doubt that similar success was expected in France.

As for Iran, Jalal Talebi's side sparked wild celebrations back home when they beat the United States 2-1 in Lyon to put themselves in with a chance of reaching the last 16 of France

Hundreds of thousands of Iranian men and women poured into the streets of Tehran and partied long into the night after the dramatic victory in once unthinkable scenes of public festivity.

But Iran fell 2-0 to Germany in their final group game and were eliminated from the tour-

The Fall Guys

PARIS, July 12 (AFP): When Japanese team boss Takeshi Okada fell in his sword after the defeat by Jamaica in Japan's last group match, three of Asia's four World Cup teams had put up the "coach wanted" sign at France '98. Okada, who rescued Japan

from World Cup oblivion after he took over from Shu Kamo during last year's qualifying campaign, took responsibility for the strikers' failure to convert chances into goals. His resignation pre-empted any decision by the Japan FA

on his future and saved him from the fate of South Korea's Cha Bum-Kun and Carlos Alberto Parreria of Saudi Arabia who were summarily sacked. Cha, Korea's only true footballing icon, paid the price for gambling on team selection and asking his players to man-

ble and close control. Dennis Bargkamp and Marc Overmars of Holland. His replacement Kim Pyong-Sok, whose only previous coaching experience was with a women's team, guided the side

to a 1-1 draw with Belgium but

mark those masters of the drib-

terest in the job. With the highly-regarded

said afterwards he had no in-

Cha having failed, and been humiliated in the process, there will be no rush to take over the coaching job. Cha, who won two UEFA Cup

medals while playing in Germany's Bundesliga during the 1980s, replaced former Asian coach-of-the-year Park Jong-Hwan after Korea's 6-2 loss to Iran in the quarterfinals of the 1996 Asian Cup. Parreira, on top of the world

four years ago when he guided Brazil to victory in USA '94, was a victim of the fickle oil sheikhs who run Saudi football. They had convinced them-

selves that their talented, but fragile, side were world beaters and wanted a world beater to lead them. But France exposed the frailties in the Saudi team and their 4-0 win spelt the end of Parreira's time in charge. Parreira, who the Saudis expected to be a miracle worker,

was not surprised at his sacking but expressed disappointment at his treatment.

"I am not happy," he said.

"But I feel comfortable with myself both as a man and as a professional. I would have like to stay on until the end of the World Cup. "I don't think that by

changing the coach every week you build a very good team." Mohamad al Kharashi was appointed as stand in coach and

the players delivered a 2-2 draw with South Africa in their final match. Iran, whose win over the United States in the 'mother of all football matches' was celebrated long into the night in

Tehran, are the only side from

the Asian zone to have retained

their coach throughout the

World Cup. However, they have dismissed two managers since becoming the last team to book a place in France '98 by ending out Australia last December.

Valdeir Vierra took them to the World Cup but was replaced by highly-regarded Croat Tomislav Ivic in January. But when warm-up matches went badly he was kicked out and Jalal Talebi led them against the Yugoslavia and the United

Zagallo the enigma Zagallo, world champion as

a player in 1958 and 1962, as a

coach in 1970 and as assistant

coach in 1994, has often con-

a Brazil team whose style was

acclaimed as the utopian exam-

ple of how the game should be

played -- with artistry and tal-

ent, without fear and worrying

In 1970, he was in charge of

tradicted himself.

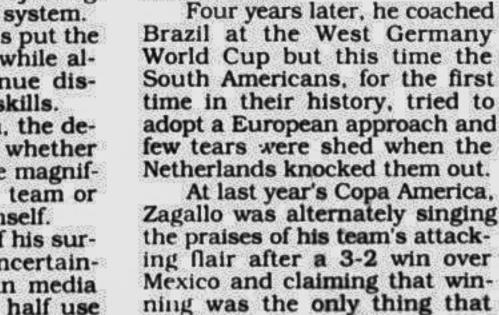
OZOIR-LA-FERRIERE France, July 12 (Reuters/Internet): As a player he was known as the Little Ant, and as Brazil's veteran coach he is nicknamed

the Old Wolf. Whatever you call him, Mario Zagallo remains an enigma. Some see him as a man who

has taken the flair out of Brazil's players by subjecting them to a rigid tactical system. Others claim he has put the steel back into Brazil while allowing them to continue displaying their natural skills.

Nearly 30 years on, the debate still rages about whether he merely inherited the magnificent 1970 World Cup team or whether he built it himself. Even the spelling of his sur-

name gives rise to uncertainties. Half the Brazilian media use one "l," the other half use two. Zagallo himself says that two is correct.



about defence.

mattered after a 2-0 win over Paraguay. In that game, Brazil scored two early goals and then fell back into mass defence. This year, Brazil has at

times played with reckless abandon, throwing both fullbacks forward and leaving huge spaces at the back. At other times, the Brazilians have flooded their defence

to protect one-goal leads and Zagallo has been seen replacing creative players, such as Leonardo, with defensive men such as Emerson. Such tactical behaviour has led to Zagallo being labelled a

"Retranquero" -- literally a double lock man. But he is not worried about what other people think of his coaching. "I don't like to please other people, I like to please myself," he said before the World Cup. Zagallo is normally a jovial person with an extraordinary

patience when giving interviews, speaking to even his sternest critics. But it takes only the mildest provocation for him to launch into an impassioned defence of himself, in which he cites his

career achievements time and again. After Brazil won last year's Copa America final, Zagallo rushed up to a Brazilian camera crew and, red in the face through a mixture of anger and

excitement, shouted "now you're going to have to swallow me" to millions of television viewers. Asked once if he was in a

bad mood, he replied: "Yes, I am. And I was in a bad mood in 1958. I was in a bad mood in 1962, in 1970 and in 1994." The real windup is to accuse Zagallo of not building the 1970

team himself. The Old Wolf took over three months before the start of the competition after Joao Saldanha was sacked for telling the military government to stay out of team affairs.

Zagallo will go into intri-

cate details of all the innovations he made to prove that the team was of his making. At 66, his appetite for soccer and for the collection of world titles still appears to be insa-

tiable. Said assistant coach Zico: "I'm privileged to work with someone who is so popular and who loves football and loves his

country like he does.' Zagallo has hardly behaved like somebody who has seen it all before.

Never mind

From page 13 think about reacting.

For his second, the Parma defender added a slight, stylised crouch to the rigid pose, with fingers drawn across the lips. Thierry Henry, to his credit

has also grabbed the corner flag and stood to attention. In 1990, it was Cameroon's Roger Milla with his hip-wriggling jive at the corner flag. Then there was the disco sway and the Fabrizio Ravanelli-pi-

player wheeling away with arms outstretched. Some players are still locked in the time warp. Rivaldo did a Ravanelli with his shirt after scoring his

oneered shirt over the head, the

first goal of the tournament against Morocco but has not attempted it since. Juergen Klinsmann, leader of the aging German team, turned the clock back to 1994 with a celebration pioneered by

ran into the goal and grabbed the net with pumping fists as he grimaced at the crowd. Klinsmann performed that one against Iran. Sunday is unlikely to be a

Nigerian Rashidi Yekini who

day for nonchalance or intellectuals, but for history. A win will do and never mind the frol-



Croatians Stimac (No 4) and Suker (R) at Parc des Princes on July 11. - AFP photo

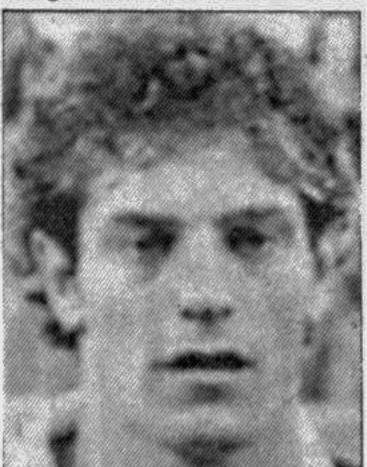
Scoundrel or scapegoat?

PARIS, July 12: (AFP/ Reuters/Internet): Slaven Bilic hit back at his tormentors here on Saturday night as the most hated man in France won the

World Cup's bronze medal.

Croatia beat Holland 2-1 in their play-off, but the 45,000 crowd booed and whistled when Bilic's name was read out from the team sheet after his altercation with Laurent Blanc got the Frenchman sent off last week.

The vitriolic abuse continued whenever he went to touch the ball and even returned after the match when organising chairman Lennart Johanson hung a bronze medal around the



defender's neck. Blanc's red card in last Wednesday's semifinal means that veteran and Golden Goal

banned for today's final with Brazil. But Everton defender Bilic blamed the press for his treatment and admitted that the match at the Parc des Princes had a trial for him.

scorer against Paraguay was

"I know that I am an honest player," he said. "I am not a "Laurent Blanc is a good

player but he made a mistake and I don't know why French people are making a hero out of him: They are manipulated by everything they read." Bilic also accused the British

media for stirring up the Blanc

"The English press started all of this. The French press said it was a red card offence (by Blanc). I don't feel I am to blame afterall he hit me in the face. I

don't see why I should be made a scapegoat. "It is silly that on the most glorious day of my career, we are talking about something unnecessary," he said. "I can't say that I'm a stone and don't feel it. Of course, I was a bit dis-

appointed, especially at the Bilic revealed he hadn't apologised to Blanc over the incident, but did admit: "I'm sorry he's going to miss the final."

And he acknowledged the

strain of his last game of the

tournament, saying: "It took a lot of strength of character to overcome all these whistles. "It was rather unsettling in the opening few minutes, but then I settled down - I'm 29 years old afterall and I didn't let

these things get to me.

"I was prepared for it, I expected it. Now I need a good "I am happy anyway. I've had a good World Cup the Dutch wanted to win tonight of course. But we wanted it much more. Now we feel like we're the champions. It's an unbelievable

try."
The Croat said he would like to ask Blanc how he would have reacted to being hit and said people were simply making a fuss because it was the World Cup final.

success for such a small coun-

to friends in England and they could not understand all the commotion. "This is the tabloids who like a big story, and they didn't have it because England is out,"

"Maybe I was more a scape-

goat for David Beckham, who

made a mistake, so they try to

he said.

He said that he had spoken

say that in the World Cup there were cheats and all that." Midfielder Beckham was sent off for retaliation in England's second-round match with Argentina.

taking free kicks in attack.

I like the new law. It stops people being ruthlessly hacked

"In the past Owen could not

Blatter to condemn the "textile

But let's not pay too much at-

side, says tactics are slowly strangling the game. "You have to leave room for the players -- you can't subordinate them to the tactics," insists Saldanha, even if he coined the phrase that "every team needs

The myriad four-four-two, four-three-three, three-fivetwo, four-two-four, three-fourthree 'systems' have come and

lands.