

Brazil to bid for 2006 WC soccer

ASUNCION, Paraguay, July 30: Brazil said on Wednesday it would bid to stage the 2006 World Cup, and immediately received the backing of the South American football confederation (CSF), reports Reuters.

"I have come to formally request the support of the president of the CSF, as a member of the FIFA executive committee, for Brazil's bid to stage the World Cup in 2006," the head of the Brazilian football confederation (CBF), Ricardo Teixeira, told a news conference here.

CSF president Nicolas Leoz, a Paraguayan, said "The confederation is going to back Brazil totally." Other countries bidding to stage the 2006 World Cup are England, Germany, South Africa, and possibly Australia.

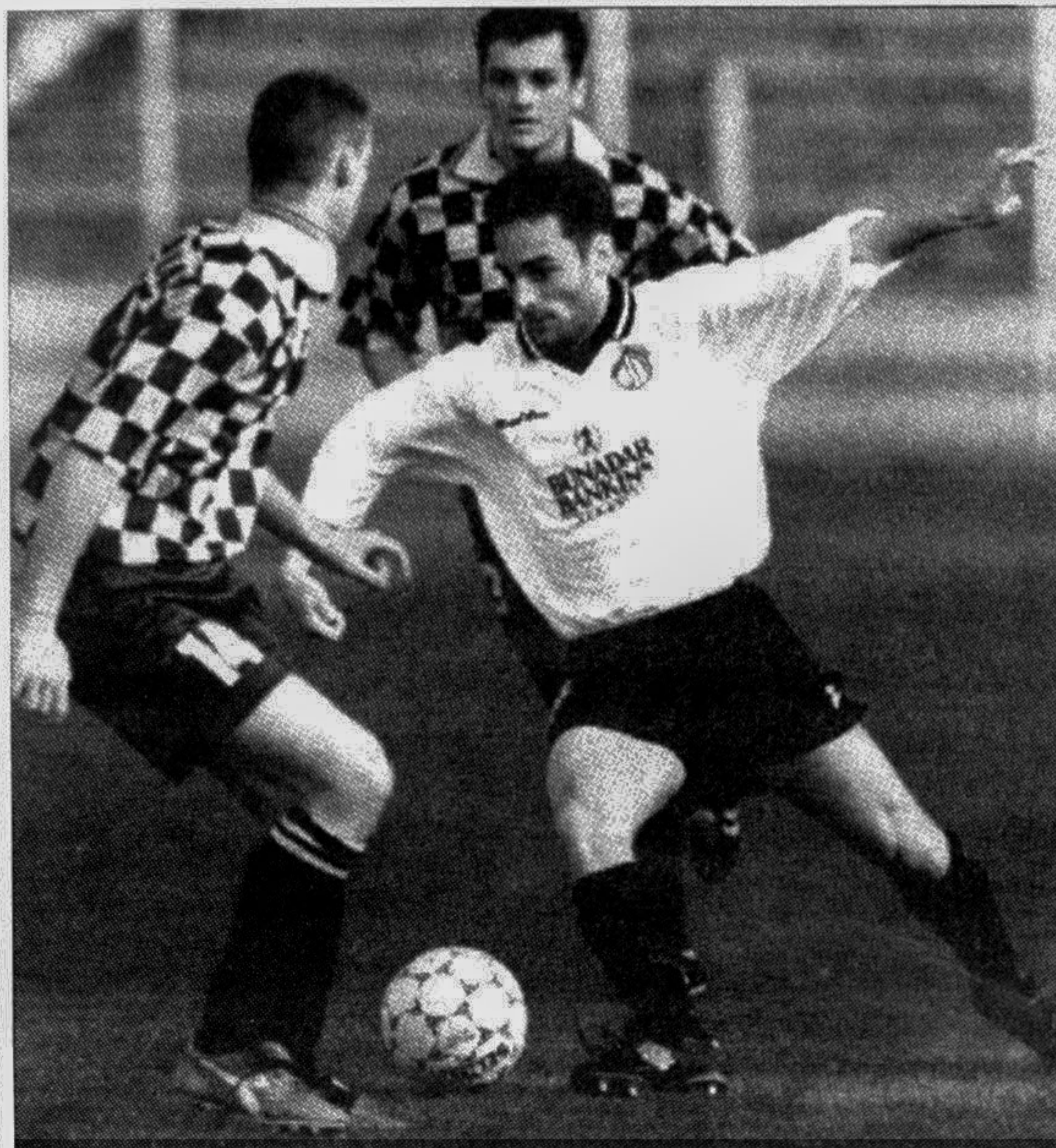
In March, Leoz told a football association delegation in Paraguay that the CSF would back England if world governing body FIFA chose Europe for the 2006 Cup.

But Teixeira said Brazil decided to bid after seeing that the Europeans wanted the Cup again so soon after France staged it this year.

Normally, with rotation of continents, it would be Africa's turn to be host in 2006... but with the Europeans bidding, any country has the right to have a go," he said.

Brazil, which staged the Cup in 1950, "has all the conditions to be the organiser... it has big cities, big stadiums, and all the organisational capacity."

The 2002 World Cup is to be jointly staged by Japan and South Korea.



Scene from a UEFA Cup qualifying round second leg match between Zalgiris of Lithuania and Iceland's IA Akranes at Vilnius on July 29. Zalgiris won 1-0. — AP/UNB photo

European soccer scene

DUBLIN, Ireland, July 30: Celtic cruised into the second qualifying round of the European Champions Cup Wednesday after a 2-0 victory at St. Patrick's Athletic, reports AP.

Held 0-0 at home and jeered off the field by their fans in Glasgow, the Scottish titlists had no problems in Dublin and looked a different class against the semi-pros of St. Patrick's.

Norwegian forward Harald Brattback gave Celtic a 12th minute lead and Swedish international Henrik Larsson added the second 18 minutes from the end.

Brattback was put into space on the right by Alan Stubbs, and the Norwegian cut inside defender Colin Hawkins to shoot the first.

Stubbs backheeled against the post in the 60th but the Scottish champions made sure of victory in the 72nd when Larsson ran round a defender and the advancing keeper to collect a long ball from Regi Blinker and roll the ball into an empty net.

Celtic, having ended Rangers' streak of nine domestic league titles in a row, now goes into the second qualifying round where they have a tough matchup with Croatia Zagreb.

Zagreb has six of the players who helped debutant Croatia gain the semifinal of the World Cup while Celtic has 11 World Cup players, including eight from Scotland's national team.

Quarterfinalists last season, Dynamo Kiev looked set for huge second leg total having scored an 8-0 victory in the first leg against the Welsh part-timers from Barry Town.

It looked bad for the Welsh titlists when Dimitri Mikhalekon burst clear in the 11th minute and beat goalkeeper Pat Mountain to stretch his team's advantage to nine.

But Barry hit back with an equaliser on the half hour when

Eiston Williams climbed to head Danny Carter's center home.

Oleg Venglinski netted Kiev's second in the 50th minute for a 2-1 victory and 10-1 aggregate triumph and Kiev meets Sparta Prague in the next round.

Waiting for Latvia's Skonto after a 2-1 win at Dynamo Minsk is Italian powerhouse Inter Milan while Bayern Munich, a three-time Champions Cup winner, now knows they face Yugoslav champions Obilic who downed Iceland's Vestmannaeyja 2-1 to advance 4-1 overall.

In the UEFA Cup, Red Star Belgrade overwhelmed Kolkheti 1913 of Georgia 7-0 to run up an 11-0 aggregate triumph. Second-half substitute Dragan Micic scored three goals and Yugoslav national team winger Perica Ognjenovic netted two.

CHAMPS' CUP RESULTS

First qualifying round (second leg):

St. Patrick's Athletic, Ireland 0, Celtic, Scotland 2 (Celtic advances 2-0 on aggregate)

Vestmannaeyja, Iceland 1, Obilic, Yugoslavia 2 (Obilic advances 4-1)

Yerevan, Armenia 0, HJK Helsinki, Finland 3 (HJK advances 5-0)

Halmstad, Sweden 2, Liteks, Bulgaria 1 (Liteks advances 3-2)

Flora, Estonia 3, Steaua Bucharest, Romania 1 (Steaua advances 5-4)

Kapaz, Azerbaijan 1, LKS Lodz, Poland 3 (LKS advances 7-2)

Maribor, Slovenia 1, Kareda, Lithuania 0 (Maribor advances 4-0)

Vallaznia, Albania 3, Dinamo Tbilisi, Georgia 1 (Dinamo advances 4-3)

Anorthosis Famagusta, Cyprus 6, Valtetta, Malta 0 (Anorthosis advances 8-0)

Ujpesti, Hungary 3, Zimbru, Moldova 1 (Ujpesti advances 3-2)

Jeunesse Esch, Luxembourg 0, Grasshoppers, Switzerland 2 (Grasshoppers advances 8-0)

Barry Town, Wales 1, Dynamo Kiev, Ukraine 2 (Kiev advances 10-1)

Club Brugge, Belgium 2, Sileks, Macedonia 1 (Club Brugge advances 2-1)

Kosice, Slovakia 8, Cliftonville, Northern Ireland 0 (Kosice advances 13-1)

Dynamo Minsk, Belarus 1, Skonto, Latvia 2 (Skonto advances 2-1)

B-36 Torshavn, Faeroe Islands 0, Beitar Jerusalem, Israel 1 (Beitar advances 5-1)

UEFA CUP RESULTS

First qualifying round (second leg):

Dynamo Baku, Azerbaijan 0, Arges-Dacia Pitesti, Romania 2 (Pitesti advances 7-1)

CSKA Sofia, Bulgaria 3, Belshina Bobruisk, Belarus 1 (CSKA advances 3-1)

Liffield, Northern Ireland 5, Omonia, Cyprus 3 (Omonia advances 8-6)

Birkirkara, Malta 0, Shakhtar Donetsk, Ukraine 4 (Shakhtar advances 6-1)

Red Star, Yugoslavia 7, Kolkheti-1913, Georgia 0 (Red Star advances 11-0)

Tirana, Albania 0, Inter Bratislava, Slovakia 2 (Inter advances 4-0)

Polonia Warsaw, Poland 3, Tallinn, Estonia 1 (Polonia advances 3-1)

Vaasa, Finland 4, Torshavn, Faeroe Islands 0 (Vaasa advances 4-2)

Kilmarnock, Scotland 1, Zeljeznik, Bosnia-Herzegovina 0 (Kilmarnock advances 2-1)

Daugava, Latvia 1, Mura, Slovenia 2 (Mura advances 8-2)

Zalgiris, Lithuania 1, Akranes, Iceland 0 (aggregate 3-3, Zalgiris advances on away goals)

FinnPaa, Finland 1, Hapoel Tel-Aviv, Israel 3 (Hapoel advances 6-2)

Malmö, Sweden 5, Shirak, Armenia 0 (Malmö advances 7-0)

Rangers, Scotland 2, Shelbourne, Ireland 0 (Rangers advances 7-3)

Sloga Jugomagnat, Macedonia 1, Otetul Galati, Romania 1 (Otetul advances 4-1)

IFK Goteborg, Sweden 4, US Luxembourg, Luxembourg 0 (IFK advances 7-0)

Anderlecht, Belgium 5, Tilgul, Moldova 0 (Anderlecht advances 6-0)

Wisla Krakow, Poland 7, Newtown, Wales 0 (Krakow advances 7-0)

Ujpesti, Hungary 3, Zimbru, Moldova 1 (Ujpesti advances 3-2)

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Rosenborg beat L'pool

OSLO, July 30: Norwegian champions Rosenborg beat Liverpool 2-0 in a friendly match on Wednesday at Oslo's Ullevaal Stadium before a 16,412 crowd, reports AFP.

Sigurd Rushfeldt put the Norwegians ahead in the 28th minute and Boerge Hernes made the game safe with the second after 66 minutes.

African Nations' Cup fixtures

JOHANNESBURG, July 30 (Reuters/Internet): African Nations' Cup preliminary round, first leg fixtures to be played this weekend:

Friday: Libya v Algeria, in Tripoli

Saturday: Namibia v Malawi, Windhoek

Uganda v Rwanda, Kampala

Benin v Angola, Cotonou

Botswana v Mozambique, Gaborone

Burundi v Tanzania, Bujumbura

Chad v Congo, Ndjamena

Djibouti v Kenya, Djibouti

Equatorial Guinea v Gabon, Malabo

Lesotho v Mauritius, Maseru

Mali v Cape Verde Islands, Bamako

Niger v Liberia, Niamey

Sao Tome e Principe v Togo, Sao Tome

Henman handles Tarango

LOS ANGELES, July 30: Second seeded Briton Tim Henman outlasted an ill-tempered Jeff Tarango Wednesday night to reach the quarterfinals of the ATP Tour tournament here, reports AFP.

Henman, ranked 12th in the world and playing his first tournament since he reached the Wimbledon semifinals, downed Tarango 7-6 (8/6), 7-5 to advance to a quarterfinal match with seventh-seeded Byron Black of Zimbabwe.

After winning the first-set tiebreaker, Henman broke Tarango in the opening game of the second. But some inconsistencies crept in, and he dropped the next four games.

Henman clawed his way back with a break in the seventh game that narrowed the gap to 4-3.

Tarango's infamous temper got the better of him when he sailed a forehand long on break point and he broke his racket over his knee.

He threw the pieces in the stands and received a code violation warning.

In the next game Tarango received a time violation warning which he hotly disputed to the jeers of the crowd.

Henman, unfazed, held his serve easily and went ahead 5-4 with a break in the ninth game.

Tarango regrouped and broke back for 5-5, then dropped his serve to trail again.

The time, Tarango couldn't get the break back and Henman wrapped up the match on his first match point when the American netted a service return.

In Black, he'll face an opponent seeking revenge for a third round defeat at Wimbledon.

Black who beat Gianluca Pozzi 6-3, 6-2, said he benefitted from a history of success against the Italian.

Unseeded Guillaume Raoux of France, a semifinalist here last year, said his past success against his opponent also made the difference in a 7-6 (9-7), 6-7 (1-7), 7-6 (7-3) win over Denmark's Kenneth Carlsen.

Raoux, who ousted third-seeded Croatian Goran Ivanisevic in the first round, had the only break chances in the entire two-hour, 47-minute match, but failed to convert either of the two.

Steffi just too much



STANFORD, July 30: Monica Seles used experience and stamina to outlast unseeded challenger Fang Li 2-6, 6-2, 6-1 Wednesday night in the Bank of the West women's tournament, reports AP.

Li came out strong, making some seemingly impossible shots against the second-seeded Seles, who is ranked No. 6 in the world. But the more experienced Seles appeared unflinching as she easily took the next two sets.

In the other late match Wednesday, Steffi Graf defeated Mary Joe Fernandez 6-4, 6-0. The fourth-seeded Graf, ranked No. 57, has a 15-0 career record against Fernandez.

Seles, who won this tournament in 1990 and 1992, had the crowd on her side, especially after her frustrating first set. The sellout crowd at Stanford University peppered her with shouts of "C'mon Monica" and enthusiastic applause.

Li, who won four satellite events in 1997, defeated No. 63 Nathalie Dechy of France to face Seles, who had a first-round bye.

Graf appeared to be frustrated in the first set against Fernandez. Shaking her head after missed shots, her frustration was enhanced by a fault call, which she briefly argued.

In the second set, the frustration was passed to Fernandez, currently ranked No. 49.

"I just tried to stay with her and not try to do too much," Graf said. "You have to wait for your chances and you have to be patient."

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After an eight-month layoff because of knee surgery, Graf returned to tennis in February at Hanover, then injured a hamstring in her next tournament at Indian Wells. The Bank of the West is just her eighth tournament this year.

"Every match I play puts me a step further to where I want to be," she said.

Top-seeded Lindsay Davenport, ranked third in the world, took less than an hour to beat Kimberly Po 6-1, 6-3.

Davenport, who has reached the quarterfinals in all but two of the 12 tournaments she has played this year, was never in trouble against Po, who is ranked No. 56 in the world.

"She's a dangerous opponent," Davenport said. "I've lost to her before. I was trying to mix it up a little and thought to do some stuff different. That seemed to work."

In other matches, fifth-seeded Natasha Zvereva of Belarus defeated Tara Snyder 6-3, 6-4 and Joannette Kruger of South Africa, beat Anne-Gaëlle Sidot of France 1-6, 6-2, 6-4.

Davenport beat Po 6-2, 6-2 in the first round of the French Open this year.

"I knew she would be better this time around," Davenport said. "She's not at the same level she was last spring (Po was ranked in the top 20) but I think she'll get back there."

Davenport said she's trying not to rely on hitting the ball hard all the time.

"I still want to be aggressive, but I have to learn to be able to do different things," she said. "That can pull you through some bad days."

Barca after Beckham?



LONDON, July 30 (The Mirror/Internet): Barcelona has made a sensational 17 million pound bid for Manchester United's David Beckham.

Sources in Spain report that a faxed offer has been sent to Old Trafford with the Spanish giants confident of pulling off the deal that would stun the world of soccer. Midfielder Beckham has already been targeted by Real Madrid who, like Barcelona, are offering a safe haven for the superstar pilloried for his World Cup red-card shame.

But now Barca, who fly into England today for two pre-season friendlies, believe they can capture Beckham with the offer of 40,000 pounds-a-week after tax.

The Spaniards are also anxious to sign Beckham before the Champions' League transfer deadline of August 15.

The Mirror has been informed that Barcelona have initiated the daring move through a group of solicitors through the Catalan capital.

It is headed by Angel Joaquin Ibarz, an influential member of Catalan society and a high-ranking public prosecutor.

He is believed to have formally bid by fax on Monday

and is now waiting for a reply from United chairman Martin Edwards.

United are currently on a pre-season tour in Norway and there was no hint over the last 48 hours that a move was in the pipeline.

Barcelona, who want Beckham to star in their Champions' League campaign, have also acted quickly before Beckham agrees a new 8m pounds five-year contract at United.

On a day of furious transfer activity, United are poised to sign 9 million pounds Dutch star Patrick Kluyvert.

An AC Milan source said: "Our sporting director, Ariado Braida, will fly to London in the next 48 hours to meet Manchester United directors. It is true that the Old Trafford club are now very much favourites to sign Patrick."

"But there will also be efforts to make sure that Arsenal, Kluyvert's original choice, are no longer interested.

If that is the case, then Manchester United will buy Patrick because Tottenham Hotspur are out of the picture completely."

Spurs had originally offered most but Kluyvert was not interested in joining a club which had only narrowly avoided relegation last season. Beckham missed yesterday's training session with United.

His injured ankle was packed in ice as his team-mates toiled in the midday sun while he sat out the tough 90-minute session.

Boss Alex Ferguson said: "He has got an ankle injury and he may miss Friday's game against Bromley. It's nothing serious but he took a kick and there's some swelling. He will stay with us and have treatment here in Norway before we fly to Denmark."

for television affair called the Mercosur Cup, was met with stunning indifference as it kicked off on Wednesday.

A combined total of less than 10,000 fans watched three of the four games played on the competition's opening night. The attendance for the fourth was not given.

To add insult to injury, Brazil's Vasco da Gama were due to field a reserve team away to Chile's Universidad Catolica on

Thursday night, saving their top players for what they regard as more important matches.

Only 4,352 supporters bothered to watch Flamengo, allegedly Brazil's best-supported club, begin their campaign with a 2-0 win over Paraguay's Cerro Porteno at the 120,000 capacity Maracana stadium in Rio de Janeiro.

Sao Paulo's 80,000 capacity Morumbi was occupied by just 1,352 as local club Palmeiras beat Argentina's Independiente 2-1 in a Group B clash featuring two of South America's biggest clubs.

Montevideo's historic Centenario stadium, an 80,000 capacity ground which hosted the first World Cup final, has certainly seen more glorious days than Wednesday's other Group B match where only 2,500 witnessed Nacional beat Universidad de Chile 1-0.

The undeclared attendance was in Buenos Aires but the stadium was clearly less than half full as Argentina's San Lorenzo beat Brazil's Cruzeiro 2-1 to kick off Group A.

The South American Confederation (CSF) guarantees competing clubs 200,000 dollars per match, a sum it can afford thanks to the money raked in from television contracts.

Stunning apathy greets new South American cup



RIO DE JANEIRO, July 30 (Reuters/Internet): South America's latest club soccer tournament, a made-for television affair called the Mercosur Cup, was met with stunning indifference as it kicked off on Wednesday.

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The Daily Star TV Guide

Friday 31st July

(All programmes are in local time but subject to last minute change.)

BBC

8:00am Weather News Followed by BBC 8:30 Asia Today 8:40 World Business Report 9:00 BBC News Followed by Weather 9:30 Asia Today 9:40 World Business Report 10:00 BBC News Followed by Weather 10:30 World Focus: The Money Programme 11:00 BBC World News Followed by Weather 11:30 World Living: Future Fantastic: Weird Science 12:00 BBC World News Followed by Weather 12:30 Hardtalk 1:00 BBC World News Followed by Weather 1:30 World Living: Film '98 2:00 BBC World News Followed by Weather 2:30 World Focus: The Money Programme 3:00 BBC World News Followed by Weather 3:30 Hardtalk 4:00 BBC World News Followed by Weather 4:30 World Living: Holiday - Fasten Your Seatbelt 5:00 The World Today 6:30 Land of the Tiger - Monsoon Forests 7:00 BBC World News 7:15 World Business Report Followed by Weather 7:30 The World Today 8:30 World Living: Jeremy Clarkson's Extreme Machines 9:00 BBC World News Followed by Weather 9:30 Hardtalk 10:00 BBC World News Followed by Weather 10:30 IBR Midweek 11:30 The World Today 12:30 Hardtalk 1:00 BBC World News Followed by Weather 1:30 World Focus: The Sci-Fi-Surveillance Society 2:00 BBC World News 2:10 World Business Report Fol-

CHANNEL V

6:00am Turn on TV 7:30 Rewind Vj Sophia 8:30 Turn On TV 9:30 House Arrest 10:00 Turn on TV 1:30 By Demand VJ Trey 2:30 Liberty: First Day First Show 3:00 Videoclan Flashback 3:30 Turn on TV 4:30 Volum Double guest Special 5:30 Turn on TV [V] 6:00 Billboard US Countdown 7:30 Liberty: First Day First Show 8:00 House Arrest 8:30 The Indian Top Ten 9:30 Turn on TV 10:00 Liberty: First Day First Show 10:30 The Ticket 11:00 Bacardi Blast 11:30 Turn on TV 12:30 BPL OYE! 1:30 Turn on TV 2:30 By Demand VJ Trey 3:30 Turn on TV 4:00 Pepsi - Chinese Top: 20

STAR PLUS

6:30am Ninaad 7:30 Good Morning India 9:15 Dress Circle 9:30 Coldarin: Ek Do Teen 10:30 Post Cards From Pakistan 11:00 The Oprah Winfrey

PTV