

Vivas opts for Arsenal

LONDON, Aug 6: Argentine international Nelson Vivas is expected to make his Premier League debut for Arsenal in their Charity Shield clash with Manchester United at Wembley on Sunday, reports AP.

The 28-year-old defender on Thursday completed his move to Highbury from Swiss club Lugano, where he was playing on loan from Argentine club, Boca Juniors.

Vivas is Arsenal's first major signing since they clinched the FA Cup and League championship double last season.

Vivas, who played on the Argentina team which knocked England out of the France '98 World Cup, has 32 caps for his country.

Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger said Vivas would strengthen the Gunners' defensive strike power.

Nelson is an experienced, versatile footballer and will play a pivotal role in this year's domestic and European campaigns, Wenger said.

Vivas said he had many offers after the World Cup but the chance to play for Arsenal was too good to miss.

"Boca Juniors wanted to take me back but I wanted to stay with the Arsenal option," he said.

Vivas said playing the World Cup was the fulfilment of a dream and playing in the Premier League would be the fulfilment of another.

"When you play professional football in Argentina you are always looking towards Europe and of course, England is one of the most important place," he said.

AFC's incentive

KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 6: For the first time, soccer teams that advance past the first round of the Asian Club Championship will receive cash rewards, the Asian Football Confederation said Thursday, reports AP.

Teams that qualify for the second round of the 1998-1999 event will receive 5,000 dollars.

Those that advance to the quarterfinals will receive 10,000 dollars, AFC General Secretary Peter Veleppan said in a statement.

"We are committed to doing everything possible to ensure club football gets the support it needs," said Veleppan, adding that many of the clubs lacked sufficient funds.

"By providing them with cash incentives, we hope first to see a further improvement in the quality of their game."

The AFC will also pay full expenses for referees and officials during the championship, and expense previously absorbed by the host team, the statement said.

The 18th edition of the Asian Club Championship begins August 8 in South Korea.

Taffarel the booster



ANKARA, Aug 6 (Reuters/Internet): The Turkish soccer season begins on Friday with Galatasaray looking favour-

ites to take the title for the third year in a row. "We've got big aims and we'll work with all our might and to the last drop of our sweat to get there," coach Fatih Terim promised this week.

His team has remained largely unchanged from the one which lifted the title last May, with Romanian Gheorghe Hagi directing play from midfield and the ever-consistent striker Hakan Sukur favourite to again top the league's scoring charts.

The only major change has been the arrival of Brazilian World Cup goalkeeper Taffarel, who was signed to overcome the team's biggest weakness of last season.

"As a defender, knowing there is an experienced goalkeeper makes you feel much more secure," said Galatasaray's Romanian sweeper Gheorghe Popescu.

Terim is the only Turk coaching one of the country's big four teams and the main rivals are having to adjust to foreign trainers and different systems of play.

Besiktas's Welsh coach John Toshack has sought to impose

discipline on his side, firing Nigerian international striker Daniel Amokachi 25,000 dollar for arriving five days late for pre-season training.

"There is no success without discipline. There is no place in the team for footballers who don't work," Toshack said.



TAFFAREL
The former Liverpool striker has recently bought Peruvian defender Chema Del Solar, Moroccan midfielder Jamal Sellami and Nigerian striker Christopher Ohen to strengthen the team which finished a disappointing sixth at the end of his first season in charge.

New Fenerbahce coach Joachim Loew has to cope with

a gaping hole in his midfield after the departure of Nigerian playmaker Augustine Okocha last week to Paris Saint Germain for a French and Turkish transfer record of 17 million dollar.

That gap was exposed at the weekend with 4-1 and 3-1 defeats to Galatasaray and Besiktas in pre-season cup matches after which Fenerbahce directors ominously expressed their full confidence in Loew, the seventh coach at the club since 1945.

Trabzonspor coach Gordon Milne is familiar with the vagaries of Turkish soccer, the Briton having coached Besiktas for seven years and Bursaspor for one.

He is looking to put that experience into results for his Black Sea side, ever a contender, but without the title since 1984.

Milne has invested around 6.6 dollar million, including the purchase of Kevin Campbell from Nottingham Forest, hoping his 23 goals in England's first division last season can be translated in the Turkish league.

But Galatasaray remain the team to beat and Terim is sure they will come up with he goods for a third time.

"We were champions before and we will be champions again," he said.

Barthez, Trezeguet doubtful



PARIS, Aug 6 (Reuters/Internet): France's World Cup goalkeeper Fabien Barthez and striker David Trezeguet

could both miss Monaco's opening match of the new French first division season at promoted Lorient on Friday.

Only winger Thierry Henry of Monaco's World Cup-winning trio is sure to play, along with fellow forward Victor Ikpeba, who helped Nigeria reach the second round of France '98.

Trezeguet is out with a calf injury, missing the trip altogether, whereas Barthez, facing a late fitness test on a groin strain, travels with the squad.

Barthez last played a competitive match when France beat Brazil 3-0 in the World Cup final at the Stade de France on July 12. Henry and Trezeguet were both substitutes in France's 2-1 semifinal win over Croatia four days earlier.

The remaining five of France's eight home-based World Cup winners return to action on Saturday.

Laurent Blanc and Robert Pires turn out for championship favourites Olympique Marseille at home to Nantes. Christophe Dugary is expected to start on the bench.

The match at the 60,000-cap-

acity Velodrome was sold out by Wednesday, such is the anticipation created by France's World Cup triumph and Marseille's ambitious signings.

Goalkeeper Bernard Lama, Barthez's World Cup understudy, travels with Paris St Germain to meet Girondins Bordeaux in a tough opening match for the French Cup hold-

ers, while winger Bernard Diomede plays for AJ Auxerre at Reims.

The champions are in the best of spirits and they help lift the rest (of the squad)," coach

Jean Tigana said, referring to his World Cup trio.

Physical fitness trainer Claude Puel said: "The only problem this season is in attack since (Nigeria's Victor) Ikpeba, Henry and Trezeguet have not been able to work with us from the start (of the pre-season)."

Monaco, champions in 1997 but without a trophy last season, are gunning for silverware.

"Since I've been here we haven't won a French or European cup and that's something 'in lacking,'" said Tigana, who rejected efforts to have him succeed Aime Jacquet as national team boss after the World Cup.

Tigana is now building on the side that reached the European Cup semifinals last season.

"We didn't win anything but it was a very good season if you take into account the fact that the squad went through big changes," he said.

"Besides, youngsters like Henry and Trezeguet made their mark at the highest level," he said.

Tigana's squad for the Lorient match includes his two major signings for this season, Sabri Lamouchi from AJ Auxerre and Franck Gava from Paris St Germain.

They replace the departed Ali Benbarbia and John Collins respectively.

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Super League silence broken

LONDON, Aug 6 (Reuters): A new European Super League moved several steps closer on Wednesday after announcements from UEFA and top clubs Manchester United, Arsenal and Ajax Amsterdam.

For the first time since reports of a new competition surfaced two weeks ago, UEFA admitted it was working on its own plans for a new competition — and would make them public shortly.

The clubs also admitted their involvement for the first time, but although UEFA and the clubs have not been talking to each other, the implication from all parties was that they could well work together to develop the new league within the existing European framework.

UEFA's statement came on the day two former European champions, Manchester United and Ajax and current English champions Arsenal admitted publicly for the first time they

were involved in talks to set up a new European-wide competition.

UEFA spokesman Frits Ahlstrom said on Wednesday: "The fact Manchester United made this announcement today is not news to us. We have known all about United's involvement for some time."

"But we have also been working on our own plans for a new competition. We have a clear idea of how the competition should be organised and think they will be met very positively."

Gerhard Aigner, UEFA's general secretary probably has more experience than anyone else in Europe on how to run a competition and I think his plans are very exciting.

"The difference between UEFA and other groups who want to start a Super League is that we have become far more democratic. We have to talk to everyone and our politicians have to discuss all the options and this takes time."

"Sometimes changes do not happen as fast as we would like,

but I think that our plans could be made public at the next UEFA executive committee meeting in Lisbon on October 6."

The keyword for us is the supporter. That is absolutely crucial for UEFA. There is no point in having matches played in empty stadiums, even for television and we have to make it right for the supporter."

Ahlstrom did not expand on UEFA's plans, but they were expected to include provision for relegation from any Super League — with conditions attached. Relegation might not be automatic when a club finished bottom, but might be invoked if a club finished bottom for two successive seasons, for example.

UEFA's response came after Bayern Munich president Franz Beckenbauer and Borussia Dortmund general manager Michael Meier said on German TV channel ARD that UEFA had plans for a Super League and the time had come for UEFA to make those plans public.

Beckenbauer hinted on ARD that the investors behind the

breakaway venture could well work with UEFA in the future.

Earlier on Wednesday Manchester United confirmed in a statement issued through the London stock exchange that they were involved in talks concerning the Super League which would bring together perhaps the top 16 clubs in Europe.

Ajax also admitted earlier that they had also been involved in talks. Both Manchester United and Ajax also confirmed they were committed to remaining in their domestic leagues, meaning that all Super League matches would have to take place in midweek. Arsenal's statement mirrored those of United and Ajax.

Manchester United manager Alex Ferguson said. However, he did not believe a new league would happen for a number of years.

"Talks of the Super League is all hypothetical," he said.

"People have been talking about such things for 50 years but it doesn't mean it'll happen."



SUMMER SIGNINGS: AC Milan captain Paolo Maldini (C) with the club's four new recruits (from L to R) Argentine Fabian Ayala, German Oliver Bierhoff, Dane Thomas Helveg and German Jens Lehmann during the orientation ceremony in Milan on August 4.

Never Gullit!

LAGOS, Aug 6: A Nigerian soccer official said on Wednesday that five Dutch coaches, including Wim Jansen, have been shortlisted for the vacant national coaching job, reports Reuters.

Austin Akosa, head of the three-man team that toured Europe in search of a coach, dismissed claims that Ruud Gullit, former player-manager of English Premier league club Chelsea, was among those earmarked as a possible replacement.

"Dutchmen Henk Tencate, Wim Jansen, Thijs Libregts, Aad de Mos and Wim Rijsbergen are the only five coaches on the list we sent to the NFA," state-run News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) quoted Akosa as saying.

On Tuesday, Kasimawo Laloko, technical director of the NFA and who was part of the team that went to Europe to recruit a coach, said Gullit had been shortlisted for the job.

Gullit has been out of coaching since February when he was sacked by Chelsea.

The Nigerian coaching job has been vacant since the World Cup when the contract of former coach Bora Milutinovic, appointed in December to guide the Olympic champions through the World Cup, ended in a second round defeat to Denmark.

USA-Iran soccer solidarity

LOS ANGELES, Aug 6: Jalal Talebi and Steve Sampson, who coached Iran and the United States in their historic World Cup clash in France, hope the match can serve as a springboard to improved relations between the two nations, reports AFP.

Talebi and Sampson, who have since been sacked as coach of the US national team, got together in Los Angeles Wednesday under the auspices of Iranian-born businessman Fred Nourzad to discuss their memories of the match, which Iran won 2-1.

Prior to the Iran-USA match in the World Cup, there was an enormous amount of political overtones, I'm sure in both countries," Sampson said. "I think coach Talebi and myself, all we wanted to concentrate on was soccer."

The second emphasis was that we were not going to let politics play a part in this."

But both coaches admitted they were moved after the match, when disappointed US fans — who saw their players hit the woodwork three times to no avail — celebrated alongside the euphoric Iranians while players embraced and exchanged jerseys.

"Sometimes there are things more important than the result in sports," Sampson said. "I see it as a way for us to jumpstart a relationship."

B for battle: B for Bierhoff



CARNAGO, Italy, Aug 6: German striker Oliver Bierhoff pledged to take AC Milan back to the top of Italian football on Tuesday, as the Serie A giants unveiled their battle plan for the new season, reports AFP.

Bierhoff, the Serie A's top scorer with 27 goals for Udinese last season, was one of four new signings presented at Milan's training base near the Swiss border.

Argentines defender Roberto Ayala, Danish midfielder Thomas Helveg, who along with new coach Alberto Zaccheroni has also arrived from Udinese, and German goalkeeper Jens Lehmann were also on show.

Once the biggest club in world football, AC Milan again finished mid-table last season scoring a miserly 37 goals in 34 games.

Fans of the club are now hoping that the arrival of Bierhoff, famous for his Euro '96-winning Golden Goal at Wembley, will be the turning point.

"It's a big responsibility and I'm not going to run away from it," he said.

"At 30-year-old, I feel ready to take on a challenge like this one and prove that I am a quality player. I don't feel any of the fear that I might have experienced if I'd only been 22."

"AC Milan have paid 25 billion lira (15 million dollars) for me and they therefore have every right to expect a good performance, and I hope that with

my performances, and my goals, we can take this club back to where it deserves to be."

Explaining his decision to join a side which has been through two disastrous seasons, Bierhoff said: "As a club, and in terms of organisation, AC Milan is still the number one in Italy."

"I also have a lot of faith in this group of players, and although I didn't know that Zaccheroni would be joining when I signed, this is obviously another good reason to be here."

"It was also a decision that came from inside, from the heart, even though I can't say I have been an AC Milan fan since I was a boy."

Though Bierhoff's contribution will be vital, Milan's fortunes are also tied to the skills of Zaccheroni, their fourth coach in two years after Oscar Tabarez, Arrigo Sacchi and Fabio Capello.

"Zaccheroni can give Milan a great deal," Bierhoff said. "In the last three years, he's had excellent result with Udinese, and he's not the sort of coach who stands still and sticks to one scheme of play. He's always looking at ways of improving things."

"It's down to him to decide the way we play, but it's down to us as players to create the team spirit. And if these two things can come together, it can only be to Milan's benefit."

"The important thing is to believe in ourselves, in our abilities and to work hard. We mustn't look at what's happen-

ing left or right but look straight ahead and try to win every match."

Bierhoff will lead the attack in Zaccheroni's 3-4-3 formation, but faces competition from George Weah, Maurizio Ganz and now Patrick Kluivert, after the Dutchman on Monday rejected a move to Manchester United.

"I've got to prove that I deserve a first-team place and the competition is going to be tough," he said. "But Milan officials told me right from the start that I would have to accept that. And it's not a problem."

Bierhoff's compatriot Lehmann, meanwhile, faces competition between the posts from veteran keeper Sebastiano Rossi.

Lehmann, who joins after 11 years with Schalke 04, is famous in Germany for becoming the first goalkeeper ever to score a goal in open play in the Bundesliga, in December 1997.

And he has already won a place in the hearts of AC Milan's volatile fans by denying arch rivals Inter Milan in the penalty shoot out which decided the 1997 UEFA Cup final at San Siro.

"I come from a team who were successful because they had team great spirit," Lehmann said. "And I'll do everything I can to help to develop that here."

"That feeling was shared by Ayala, who arrived from relegated Napoli."

"I hope that we can form a good group," he said. "Because that's the only way you can go good things."

Jubilo on course



TOKYO, Aug 6: Reigning J-League champions Jubilo Iwata came one step closer to clinching the first stage of this year's title race on Wednesday night with a 2-1 away win over Nagoya Grampus Eight, reports Reuters.

Jubilo's victory kept them clear of Shimizu S-Pulse on goal difference after they beat Sanfrecce Hiroshima 1-0 at home.

Jubilo have a goal difference of 32 compared to Shimizu's 15. Jubilo and Shimizu each have 36 points from 16 games.

"Thanks to our two early goals we managed to keep the lead to the end," said Jubilo coach Valmir. "The next game will also be difficult for us."

Jubilo will win the first stage if they secure a victory inside 90 minutes at home to Bellmare Hiratsuka on Saturday.

"Anything less, such as an extra-time or penalty shootout win, plus a victory for S-Pulse in their last first stage game at

Avsipa Fukuoka, and the title will go to Shimizu.

Jubilo's win against Grampus Eight before a crowd of 23,077 was inspired by the return of Brazil's World Cup captain Dunga.

It was his free-kick on 20 minutes which led to the first goal.

As Dunga swung the ball in from the left, keeper Yuji Ito tried to punch clear at the backpost but missed and watched in agony as the ball rebounded off his head into the net.

It also handed Jubilo their second goal on 38 minutes when he brought down right back Takuma Koga inside the penalty area.

Former Brazilian international defender Adilson stepped up to score his fourth goal in as many games for Jubilo.

Grampus made life even more difficult when Brazilian Torres was sent off on 64 minutes for this second yellow card.

But they managed to pull a goal back three minutes later when Tetsuya Okayama curled in a goal from 25 metres with a left-foot shot from the right.

Inspirational Chilavert

BUENOS AIRES, Aug 6 (Reuters/Internet): Paraguay captain Jose Luis Chilavert inspired Argentine's Velez Sarsfield to a memorable win in Boca Junior's feared Chocolate Box stadium in their opening Copa Mercosur match.

The Paraguayan goalkeeper produced more than half a dozen memorable saves in Wednesday's game to defy Boca.

At the other end, defender Mauricio Pellegrino gave Velez three points when he headed the only goal of the group D match in the 21st minute.

The Copa Mercosur, an invitation tournament, has replaced the South American Supercup.

Helveg, meanwhile, denied Milan were fragile in midfield, saying: "I think we have one of the best in Italy. But if we make mistake we will be made to pay for it. The important thing is to make as few as possible."

The Daily Star TV Guide

Friday 7th August
(All programmes are in local time but subject to last minute change.)

BBC
8:00am BBC News Followed by Weather 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: Disaster — October Fire 11:00 BBC World News Followed by Weather 11:30 World Living: Top Gear 12:00 BBC World News Followed by Weather 12:30 Hardtalk 1:00 BBC World News Followed by Weather 1:30 World Living: The Travel Show 2:00 BBC World News Followed by Weather 2:30 World Focus: Disaster — October Fire 3:00 BBC World News Followed by Weather 3:30 Hardtalk 4:00 BBC World News Followed by Weather 4:30 World Living: One Foot on The Continent 5:00 The World Today 6:30 World World: Wildlife on One — Tiger of the Highlands 7:00 BBC World News 7:15 World Business Report Followed by Weather 7:30 The World Today 8:30 World Living: Earth Report — Desertification 9:00 BBC World News Followed by Weather 9:30 Hardtalk 10:00

BBC World News Followed by Weather 10:30 Question Time India 11:30 The World Today 12:30 Hardtalk 1:00 BBC World News Followed by Weather 1:30 World Focus: Correspondent 2:00 BBC World News 2:10 World Business Report Followed by Weather 2:30 World Living: How Buildings Learn 5/6 — The Romance of Maintenance 3:00 BBC World News 3:10 Europe Direct 4:00 BBC World News Followed by Weather 4:30 World Business Report 4:45 Asia Today Followed by Weather 5:00 BBC World News 5:05 USA Direct 5:30 World Focus: Disaster — October Fire 6:00 BBC News Followed by Weather 6:30 World Living: Earth Report — Desertification 7:00 BBC News Followed by Weather 7:30 Asia Today 7:40 World Business Report

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] 2:30 Liberty: First Day First Show 3:00 Videoclan Flashback 3:30 Turn on [TV] 4:30 Volume Double Guest Special 5:30 Turn on [TV] 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 Coldani: Ek Do Teen 10:30 Post Cards From Pakistan 11:00 The Oprah Winfrey Show 12:00 Are You Being Served? 12:30 Murder: She Wrote! 1:30 Santa Barbara 2:30 The Bold & The Beautiful 3:00 Manzi 3:30 Swabhimaan 4:00 Dress Circle 4:30 Kaleidoscope 5:00 The Wonder Years 5:30 Small Wonder 6:00 Meri Awaz Suno 6:30 Kabhi Kabhi 7:30 Star News (Hindi) 8:00 So Lets Yahoo 9:00 Master Card: Family Fortunes 9:30 Star News 10:00 Not a Nice Man to Know 10:30 Due South 11:30 A Mouthful of Sky 12:00 The Bold & The Beautiful 12:30 Star News 1:00 New Heart 1:30 Heartbeat 2:30 Christy 3:30 Charles' Angels 4:30 Santa Barbara 5:30 The Oprah Winfrey Show

STAR MOVIES
8:00am Film Fever: Hot Sport 18 9:30 Thriller: A Culmate for

Killing 11:30 Film Club: Vincent the Lie and Death of Death OVEN GUN 12:30 Western: Heads I Kill You Tails I Win Dead 3:30 Comedy: The Scout 15 5:00 Thriller: Angel Heart 7:00 Drama: Sleepers 15 9:30 Classic: Madness of 10:00 The Friday 11:00 UK Top Ten 11:30 Friday Fury: Live by the First 15 1:00 Thriller: A Fatal Intervention 3: