

No hiccups for the big guns

PARIS, Aug 27 (AFP/AP): Croatia Zagreb's World Cup stars won 3-0 at home against Scotland's Celtic in their European Champions League second preliminary round, second leg match on Wednesday to move impressively into the group stages.

Silvio Maric hit home a low shot in the 23rd minute leaving Celtic goalkeeper Jonathan Gould no chance. Robert Prosinecki then converted a 44th-minute penalty after Tommy Boyd tripped Maric and also hit a second goal in the 68th minute.

Inter-college handball

Notre Dame College and Mirpur College won their respective matches in the Power inter-college handball competition at the Outer Stadium handball court yesterday, reports UNB.

In the first match, Notre Dame thrashed Shaheed Ramizuddin College 20-6 after dominating the first half 13-4. Claus and Abdul Kader scored five goals each and Kanak netted four for the winners while Jahangir scored four goals for the losers.

In the second match, Mirpur College beat R K Chowdhury Degree College 11-7 after leading the first half 5-2. The Saton and Rahul of the winning team netted four goals each while Biplob and Sabir scored two goals each for the losing side.

Today's matches: Rifles School and College vs Dania College (3:15 pm), BCIC College vs New Model Degree College (4:15 pm).

An escape

KARACHI, Aug 27: A Pakistani local soccer team making tea on a tournament-bound passenger train has been arrested after setting their carriage ablaze, officials said Wednesday, reports AFP.

Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) players were on their way to Quetta, capital of southwestern Baluchistan province, for a tournament when fire from their portable gas stove engulfed the carriage. Some of the footballers leapt for their lives from the blazing carriage near Dadu, about 155 miles northeast of here late Tuesday, team official Hasan Baloch said.

None of the 24-member squad was injured, Baloch said, adding the fire was extinguished, but the "track suited" and kits of the players were gutted. Police arrested the team because the use of gas stoves on passenger trains is illegal, railway officials said.

"It was not an act of terrorism but an accident," Baloch said, adding that the police had promised to release the players. The tournament started in Quetta on Wednesday.

Botev not going to C'wealth

SYDNEY, Aug 27: Australia's most accomplished weightlifter, Stefan Botev, has been left out of the team for next month's Commonwealth Games in Kuala Lumpur because of injury, reports Reuters.

Botev was told today that he would have to miss the Games because of fears he might aggravate an old shoulder injury.

"It was a tough decision to drop him but he's not lifting the weights he should be and we don't want to rush him and ruin his chances for the Olympic Games," Australian national coach Martin Leach said. Botev, a former world champion and Olympic bronze medalist, won the superheavyweight division at the 1994 Commonwealth Games in Canada.

Barthez back

PARIS, Aug 27: France's national soccer team will include 14 World Cup players and only four changes for a match with Iceland on September 5, the team announced Thursday, reports AP.

The match, France's first eliminator for the Euro-2000 title, follows France's 2-2 draw with Austria on August 19 after their World Cup victory the month before.

The four changes in the lineup include the return of Fabien Barthez, who has recovered from an injury, Emmanuel Petit, Patrick Vieira and Christophe Dugarry.

They replace Bernard Lama, Vincent Candela, Frederic Dehu and Florian Maurice.

Fourteen of the 22 members of France's World Cup champions remain in the lineup. On defence, Marcel Desailly and Laurent Blanc were left out.

The lineup is as follows: Goalies: Fabien Barthez, Lionel Letizi.

Defencemen: Alain Goma, Christian Karembeu, Frank Leboeuf, Bixente Lizarazu, Lilian Thuram.

Midfielders: Alain Boghossain, Didier Deschamps, Youri Djorkaeff, Emmanuel Petit, Patrick Vieira, Zinedine Zidane.

Forwards: Christophe Dugarry, Thierry Henry, Lilian Laslandes, Robert Pires, Tony Vairelles.



Croatia Zagreb's national booter Silvio Maric (on the ground) loses balance while Glasgow Celtic's Reginald Blinker prepares to intervene during their Champions' League qualifier on August 26. —AFP photo

No luck yet for Gazza

Wright, Owen to lead attack

LONDON, Aug 27: Michael Owen and Ian Wright were named Thursday in Glenn Hoddle's England squad to play Sweden in their first European Championship qualifier, but Paul Gascoigne missed out again, reports AP.

Owen, the 18-year-old Liverpool striker, was a certainty after his spectacular performances in the World Cup, while Wright gets another chance after missing the World Cup through injury.

Wright, who transferred to West Ham from Arsenal this season, will provide valuable experience up front as England strives to win their first game in Stockholm since 1965.

Gascoigne, who was controversially dropped from Hoddle's World Cup squad before the tournament in France, was again omitted from Hoddle's 25-man squad for the Sept. 5 clash in Stockholm.

The veteran midfielder was substituted in Middlesbrough's 3-1 loss to Aston Villa last week and has been under pressure through persistent injury and problems in his personal life. His rocky two-year marriage ended this week when his wife,

Sheryl, was granted a divorce on grounds of his 'unreasonable behaviour'. Players missing from the England squad knocked out of the World Cup by Argentina in a second-round penalty shoot-out

brother, Phil Neville. New players in the squad are Arsenal's Ray Parlour and Liverpool's Jamie Redknapp.

Parlour was considered unlucky to miss a spot in the World Cup after playing a key role in the Gunners FA Cup and League winning double last season, while Redknapp has recovered from the injury which ruled him out of England's World Cup campaign.

The 25-man squad: David Seaman (Arsenal), Nigel Martyn (Leeds), Tim Flowers (Blackburn), Tony Adams (Arsenal), Sol Campbell (Tottenham), Gareth Southgate (Aston Villa), Martin Keown (Arsenal), Rio Ferdinand (West Ham), Andrew Hinchcliffe (Sheffield Wed), Darren Anderton (Tottenham), Graeme Le Saux (Chelsea), Phil Neville (Manchester United), Ray Parlour (Arsenal), Paul Ince (Liverpool), Robert Lee (Newcastle), Steven McManaman (Liverpool), Nicky Butt (Manchester United), Paul Merson (Middlesbrough), Jamie Redknapp (Liverpool), Paul Scholes (Manchester United), Teddy Sheringham (Manchester United), Alan Shearer (Newcastle), Michael Owen (Liverpool), Ian Wright (West Ham), Dion Dublin (Coventry).

Gary Neville has been ruled out with a hamstring injury. He was replaced by younger

on Tuesday and announced its opposition to the super league project.

At a special meeting in Monaco on Saturday, UEFA is expected to confirm the proposed expansion of the Champions' League and a merger of the UEFA Cup and Cup Winners' Cup to try to head off the super league.

Hecht rejected criticism that clubs from smaller European countries would miss out on the spoils of international competition if the super league replaced the UEFA-run competitions.

"We have no desire to exclude anyone," he said. "It is the clubs that are leading this."

Hecht, the son of film producer Gianni Hecht, who won an Oscar in the 1970s for The Garden of the Finzi-Continis, started Media Partners in 1992.

He was involved in the first pay-per-view soccer deal in Europe, which was approved by the Italian league in 1996.

His business links extend to media magnate Silvio Berlusconi, a former Italian Premier who owns AC Milan. Hecht worked for the holding company in Berlusconi's media enterprise.

He said Berlusconi was not involved in EFL at this stage, although he probably could be involved in the future, as most of the revenue for the competition would be raised through television.

Hecht said he had already made contact with leading broadcasters, including Rupert Murdoch's BSkyB.

He said broadcasters were lining up to pay "far in excess" of what they pay for UEFA games.

"UEFA have not maximised clubs' potential," he said. "We want to raise it to a different level."

Hecht said he would like to see the league based on their performance over the past decade.

The 16 candidates so far are: Arsenal, Manchester United and Liverpool from England's Premier League; Italian giants Juventus, Inter Milan and AC Milan; Germany's Bayern Munich and Borussia Dortmund; Spain's Barcelona and Real Madrid; Dutch club Ajax; Marseille and Paris St. Germain of France; Benfica of Portugal; Panathinaikos of Greece, and Galatasaray of Turkey.

The founder members would be guaranteed a place in the league on a three-year basis, renewable subject to performance.

The other 16 sides will qualify on season by season performances in the respective national domestic leagues.

A second competition — a Pro Cup — would involve another 56 teams, including at least six from England, in a knock-out style competition similar to the UEFA Cup.

Hecht said each team in the EFL would be guaranteed nearly 20 million pounds (\$32.8 million dollars) for taking part.

Games are expected to be played on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, with each team involved in a minimum 15 games and a maximum 22 games — including playoffs.

Hecht said he wanted to go public with EFL plans until the concept was finalised. He said he now had "absolute confidence" the league would begin in 2000.

Hecht said he was confident he would get the support of UEFA, European soccer's governing body, but UEFA is expected to combat the breakaway league by reforming its own competition.

UEFA's Committee for Professional Football, comprising the chiefs of Europe's major domestic leagues, met in Geneva

Boost sports WHIZZ KID

COMPETITION FOR SCHOOL CHILDREN Competition-101

Tick the Correct Answers Post to The Daily Star Win attractive prizes Competition closes at 8 pm, Aug 28, '98, and draw shortly afterwards

- 1 What is the name of Brazil's new soccer coach?
Zagaló Luxemburgo Parreira
- 2 Who was the player-of-the-match in the fifth Test at Headingley?
Butcher Donald Stewart
- 3 How many Tests will Australia play in Pakistan?
One Two Three
- 4 Who is the No 1 on ATP rankings at the moment?
Rios Rafter Agassi
- 5 Michelle Smith has been banned for
2yrs 4yrs 6yrs

Name
Class Roll No.
School Address

Phone: (if any)

POWERED WITH EN-VITS ENERGY RELEASING VITAMINS

SPORTS TALK

Glenn Hoddle

(England soccer manager) "The door is not shut for him, but he needs to be fitter than ever before."

On Paul Gascoigne's future with the national team.

Tiger Cup underway

HANOI, Aug 27: Singapore beat Malaysia 2-0 in the opening match at the 1998 Tiger Cup southeast Asian football tournament here on Wednesday, reports Xinhua.

In Wednesday's other game, the Vietnamese national eleven overwhelmed Laos 4-1 after an opening ceremony which featured 30-minute music and dance show.

Teams from Malaysia, Singapore, Laos, Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand, Myanmar and host Vietnam are competing in two groups in the tournament.

They will play a total number of 16 matches at the Hanoi Stadium and Ho Chi Minh City's Nhat (unification) Stadium.

Group B teams Malaysia, Singapore, Laos and Vietnam will play at Hanoi, while Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand and Myanmar of Group A will clash in Ho Chi Minh City.

The final is scheduled to be held at Hanoi Stadium.

The biennial Tiger Cup is southeast Asia's biggest football tournament of the ten southeast Asian countries and this year's event is the largest international soccer tournament ever hosted by Vietnam.

The Tiger Cup is sponsored by Tiger Beer Company of Singapore, where the inaugural tournament was held in 1996.

This year's tournament was originally slated for Indonesia but social turmoil and economic crisis in that country forced organisers to look elsewhere for a host.

Malaysia, which had originally offered to stand in as late replacement for Indonesia, decided against hosting it because it was too busy preparing for next month's Commonwealth Games there.

Vietnam had been chosen on June 19, just 10 weeks before the Cup was due to start.

The tournament will conclude on September 5.

Argentine soccer

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina, Aug 27 (AP): Results from third round of the Argentine First-Division soccer league (home teams listed first):

Friday's game: Ferro Carril Oeste 1, Huracán 3.

Saturday's game: Estudiantes 1, River Plate 0.

Sunday's games: Boca Juniors 2, Argentinos Juniors 2; San Lorenzo 0, Vélez Sarsfield 0; Unión 3, Belgrano Córdoba 0; Gimnasia Jujuy 1, Gimnasia La Plata 2; Talleres Córdoba 2, Colon 1.

Monday's game: Lanús 0, Newell's Old Boys 1.

Wednesday's game: Independiente 1, Racing 3.

First-leg goals by Ryan Giggs and Andy Cole two weeks ago were enough to earn Manchester United a 2-0 aggregate victory at the expense of LKS Lodz. United played to a 0-0 draw in Poland on Wednesday night.

The omens had always been good for United. The only other time they played a Polish side in the competition was in 1968 when they beat Gornik Zabrze in the quarter-final on the way to becoming the first English club to win the event.

Metz's miserable start to the season continued as the French club went out to FKJ Helsinki 2-1 on aggregate after drawing 1-1 at home on the night.

Metz coach Joel Muller is coming under increasing pressure as his league runners-up are now out of the top European competition and are second-from-bottom in the French league with just one point from three games.

Vesa Vasara put Helsinki ahead with an accurate header into the top left-hand corner in the 68th minute. But drama was to follow as Frederic Meyrieu scored from the penalty spot to equalise and Aarno Turpeinen of Helsinki was sent off.

Two-time European Cup winners Benfica went through despite losing 4-2 away to Beitar Jerusalem. Benfica's crushing 6-0 first leg victory in Lisbon meant they qualified 8-4 on aggregate.

Nuno Gomes scored a 17th minute penalty and Joao Pinto scored in the last-minute for the 1961 and 1962 winners.

There were also goals galore for Spartak Moscow, who beat Bulgarian side FC Litex 6-2 at Litex's Vesselin Ignatov was sent off in the 35th minute.

Two goals each from Andrei Tikhonov and Brazilian striker Robson and further goals from Yegor Titov and Ilya Tsyymbalar put the Russians through.

In Riga, Latvia, Youri Djorkaeff, Ivan Zamorano and

Fabio Galante scored as Italy's Internazionale of Milan beat Skonto Riga 3-1 to easily qualify on a 7-1 aggregate.

With Brazilian Ronaldo still working his way into shape for Inter Milan — he skipped the trip — France's Djorkaeff and Chile's Zamorano teamed in attack with Roberto Baggio and the experimental trio dominated the action in front of 6,000 spectators under a steady rain.

In a high-drama match, Dynamo Kiev slipped through over Sparta Prague.

Kiev won the match 1-0, putting the clubs level on aggregate (1-1) and away goals. After a scoreless 30-minute overtime, they won 3-1 on penalties with Sergei Rebrov, Kaka Kaladze and Yuri Dmitriulin converting.

In Spain, Athletic Bilbao won 1-0 over Georgia's Dinamo Tbilisi and got through on the away-goal rule after a 2-2 aggregate. The Spaniards lost 2-1 in Tbilisi two weeks ago.

Greek side Panathinaikos, who played a 2-2 draw in Bucharest two weeks ago, came back to win 6-3 and advance 8-5. Another Greek side Olympiakos also got through, beating Anorthosis Famagusta of Cyprus 4-2 to advance 6-3.

Norway's Rosenborg made it in on the away-goal rule despite a 4-2 loss to Brugge of Belgium. Rosenborg won the first game in Norway 2-0. The clubs tied 4-4 on aggregate.

In Budapest, Austrian side Sturm Graz won 3-2 over Hungary's Ujpest to advance 7-2.

Turkey's Galatasaray also qualified with a 3-2 victory over Grasshoppers of Switzerland to move through on a 5-3 aggregate.

In Copenhagen, Kosice of Slovakia won 1-0 but Denmark's Brøndby advanced on a 2-1 aggregate.

Wednesday's 16 winners join pre-qualified Lens, Juventus, Kaiserslautern, Barcelona, Ajax, Arsenal, Porto and holders Real Madrid in today's draw in Monaco.

Champions' League draw

MONACO, Aug 27 (Reuters/Internet): Manchester United's bid for Champions' League success took a knock on Thursday when they were grouped with heavyweights Barcelona and Bayern Munich in the European Champions' League.

Denmark's Brøndby were the fourth side drawn in what appeared the toughest of the six groups. Defending champions Real Madrid were drawn with Italy's Inter Milan in group C along with Spartak Moscow and Austria's Sturm Graz. Last year's runners-up Juventus

should progress after being drawn with Galatasaray, Rosenborg Trondheim and Athletic Bilbao. English champions Arsenal and three-times champions Ajax Amsterdam will also be happy to have avoided any of the heavyweights.

Group A: Croatia Zagreb (Croatia), Olympiakos Piraeus (Greece), Porto (Portugal), Ajax Amsterdam (Netherlands)

Group B: Galatasaray (Turkey), Rosenborg Trondheim (Norway), Athletic Bilbao (Spain), Juventus (Italy)

Group C: Spartak Moscow (Russia), Sturm Graz (Austria), Inter Milan (Italy), Real Madrid (Spain)

Group D: Brøndby (Denmark), Manchester United (England), Bayern Munich (Germany), Barcelona (Spain)

Group E: Dynamo Kiev (Ukraine), Panathinaikos (Greece), Arsenal (England), RC Lens (France)

Group F: HJK Helsinki (Finland), Benfica (Portugal), PSV Eindhoven (Netherlands), Kaiserslautern (Germany)



England international David Beckham of Manchester United (L) being tackled by Tomasz Kos of Polish side LKS Ptak during their European Champions League second qualifying leg match at Lodz, Poland on August 26. The game ended scoreless. —AP/UNB photo

Fitness, Ronaldo's top priority

MILAN, Italy, Aug 27: After the longest layoff of his career, Ronaldo is rushing to get into game-shape, reports AP.

Internazionale of Milan owner Massimo Moratti gave the Brazilian striker a month off after the World Cup, and the player acknowledged in an interview published Thursday that he does not have much time to prepare for the Sept. 13 start of the Serie A season.

Moratti told Ronaldo to take the extended vacation in the aftermath of the World Cup final. The player was taken to the hospital hours before the July 12 game and was scratched from the lineup — then inexplicably put back in. He played lethargically as Brazil lost 3-0 to France. Later, Ronaldo said he had gone into convulsions, and Moratti publicly questioned why the 21-year-old had played at all.

Ronaldo reported to Inter Milan one week ago and did not make the trip for the club's game Wednesday at Latvia's Skonto Riga in Champions Cup qualifying action. Inter won 3-1 and advanced on a 7-1 aggregate.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

1 Confab	feature	letters	singer
5 Pouch	Louis	17 Spindle-top spill	
8 They'll get you moving	41 I	1 Greek Xs	19 Plug stopper?
12 Les Miserables' author	42 Pele's horse	2 Dromedary's pride	22 De-ices the walkway
13 Korean variety	49 Cabbage	3 Culture medium	24 Petrol
14 Instinctual parts	51 Left's pop	4 Juice veggie	25 Ant.
15 Muslim bigwig	52 Arrow poison	5 T-bars, e.g.	26 Defensive digs.
16 Not domestic	53 Retainer	6 Intention	27 Lofty
18 Lie spread-eagle	54 Fast time?	7 LI	29 Gorilla
20 Capital of South Dakota	55 Free ticket	8 Small Abner's creator	30 Ruin the veneer
21 Anything but that	56 Newsman Koppel	9 Unselfish behavior	33 Broker's advice
23 Comic Costello	57 Report-card	10 -- do-well	36 Washer settings
24 Overdo		11 Nigerian	38 Off the subject
28 King Mongkut's realm			40 End for auction or profit
31 Auto ad abbr.			42 Bypass
32 Hold-up man?			43 Charlie's widow
34 Hot tub			44 Tom's carrier
35 Detail, for short			46 Algonquian tongue
37 Gonfalon			47 Meadow females
			48 Gossips' follow-up
			50 Spill-down

Solution time: 26 min.

CLYDE BONNIE
CLOUDS APLICE
ARNO TAFFEGRA
HERMES LINGER
MAIM ACME ADD
VOYO SAT
SAM WIRE FIVE
PROGRESSIVE
ARNO TAFFEGRA
ODE GREW
JAG ALEE AMMO
ENRAGE SPLEEN
STAPLE SEDATE
TIMBER OZONE

CRYPTOQUIP
T Z T B F Q C G Q X N R A S W V F B
E F V T W R X N E C N X W F N N
S W T N A T G G N Z T G F
Saturday's Cryptiquip: COULD THE ASTRONAUT AND HIS BRIDE BE CALLED MISTER AND MISSLE? Today's Cryptiquip clue: Z equals C

The Cryptiquip is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.