

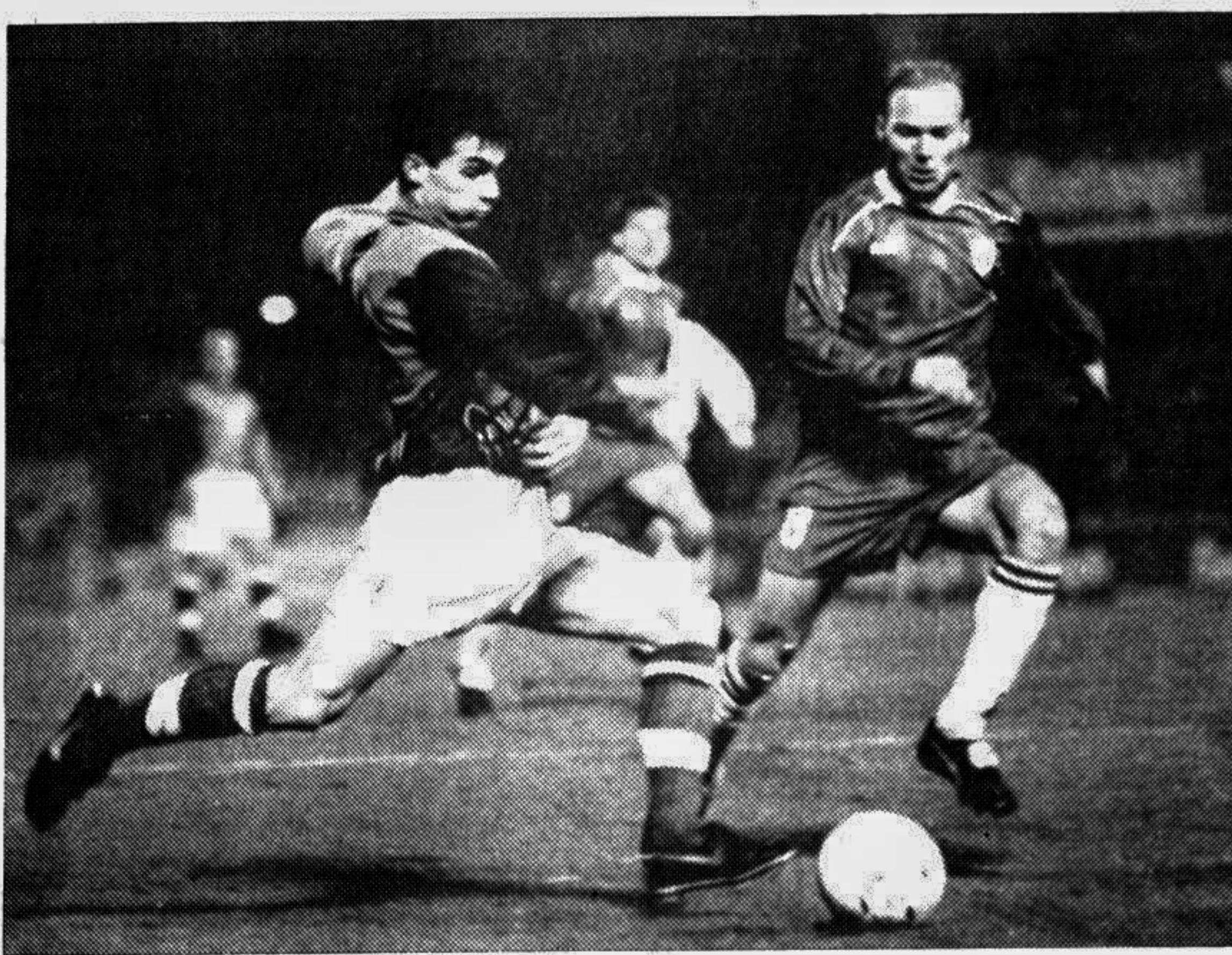
Sport

No change of the top

Table with 2 columns: Country, Points. Lists FIFA rankings for various countries including Brazil, France, Germany, etc.

Bosnich may become the richest Aussie

SYDNEY, Nov 19: Aston Villa goalkeeper Mark Bosnich is on the verge of becoming Australia's highest paid sportsman...



Keith Gillespie (L) of Northern Ireland about to send a cross inside the Moldova box during their Euro 2000 qualifier at Belfast on November 18.

Euro 2000 qualifiers

Yugoslavia made to sweat

LONDON, Nov 19: Yugoslavia began their belated European Championship campaign with a hard fought 1-0 win over Ireland on Wednesday, reports Reuters.

Macedonia were also held until the second half against Malta but then went 2-0 up through Igor Sasa Nikolovski and Srdjan Zaharijevski.

England win comfortably

LONDON, Nov 19: England, outplayed by the Czech Republic for 20 minutes, battled back to finish deserved 2-0 winners of their friendly international at Wembley on Wednesday, reports Reuters.

England coach Glenn Hoddle, whose team have made an indifferent start to their European qualifying campaign, said: "In the end it was a fair result and we deserved it for the way we passed and worked."

Marschall rescues hosts

GELSENKIRCHEN, Germany, Nov 19: Germany managed a 1-1 draw with the Netherlands in a friendly international on Wednesday that failed to revive memories of the classic battles between the two arch-rivals, reports Reuters.

Hungary blank Switzerland

BUDAPEST, Nov 19: Hungary scored two goals in the first seven minutes to beat Switzerland 2-0 in an exhibition match Wednesday before 4,000 fans braving near-freezing weather at Ferencvaros stadium, reports AP.

"He has a problem with his shoulder and he's concentrating on getting that right and helping Aston Villa win the English Premiership," he said.

"I cannot start talking to clubs until January. The figures are ridiculous. Villa are on top of the league, six points clear of United although Bosnich has missed the past six matches through injury."

Bosnich went to Britain nine years ago and played briefly for United early in his career, but left after failing to secure a first team place.

Norman reportedly earned 36 million dollars last year, primarily through endorsements and business interests.

Beckenbauer, a longtime captain of the German national team and Bayern Munich, received 282 points in a poll conducted by the German-based International Federation of Football History and Statistics (IFFHS).

Gerd Mueller, Germany's leading scorer of all time and Beckenbauer's colleague on the 1974 World Cup champion team and Bayern Munich, finished second with 249 points in the poll released Thursday.

Fritz Walter, captain of the team that won Germany's first World Cup title in 1954 got 105 points and forward Uwe Seeler 72. Lothar Matthaeus, the only active player on the list and who has played in five World Cups in 130 national team appearances, a German record, got 43 points.

Beckenbauer joins six other European stars who are candidates for the title of "European player-of-the-century" to be declared at a ceremony Jan. 11.

They are Bobby Charlton of England, Johan Cruyff of the Netherlands, Alfredo di Stefano of Spain, Eusebio of Portugal, Ferenc Puskas of Hungary and Michel Platini of France.

Malaysian hopes lie on Nyambek

KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 19: Malaysia's athletic squad is pinning its hopes on a powerful sprinter from Borneo island to end its decade-long gold medal drought at the Asian Games, a news report said Thursday, says AP.

Watson Nyambek, currently the country's fastest runner, will compete in the 100-metre race in the December 6-20 Games in Bangkok, Thailand, the national news agency Bernama reported.

Court call up for Matthaeus

MUNICH, Germany, Nov 19: Veteran German international Lothar Matthaeus has been ordered to appear in court here next Monday after he refused to pay a fine for a driving violation, reports AFP.

Police fined the 37-year-old, who captained Germany to 1990 World Cup glory, 200 deutschmarks (125 dollars) when he was caught driving up the hard shoulder of a motorway to avoid a traffic-jam in May.

Wisden serves a stunner

BRISBANE, Nov 19 (Reuters/Internet): Cricket's bible Wisden launched its first ever Australian edition on Thursday by a surprise by naming Belinda Clark as Australian cricketer-of-the-year.

Clark, who has captained the national women's team for the last five years, won the award ahead of the entire Australian men's team.

Her recent achievements included winning the Ashes and the World Cup, where she was player of the series, and setting a world record score of 229 not out in a one-day international.

"Clarke led Australia to a World Cup final win in Calcutta, scored a double century, and led the team on a successful campaign in England," Wisden said.

"She was the dominant player in Australia. Under her leadership the present Australian team has taken women's cricket to an altogether new level."

JPGL-Lights Professional's Cup cricket

The following matches of the JPGL-Lights Professional's Cup cricket will be played today at three different venues of the city.

TODAY'S MATCHES BOC vs CAI (Credit Agricole Indosuez) at BAT ground. BAT (Bangladesh American Tobacco) vs NBL (Nestle Bangladesh Limited) at BUET ground.

Ph (Philips) vs BG (Babylon Group) at Uttara ground.

Brazil blow Russia away

FORTALEZA, Brazil, Nov 19: Brazil, fielding an experimental side, hammered depleted, jet-lagged, heat-sapped Russia 5-1 in a friendly international on Wednesday, reports Reuters.

The Russians, fielding only home-based players in what was effectively a B team faced a six-hour time difference and a temperature change of 40 degrees Celsius, and took the field 24 hours after completing a marathon 30-hour trip from Moscow.

Brazil, playing their third match under coach Vanderlei Luxemburgo, once again rested several World Cup players, making the game of questionable importance.

The contest, which began half an hour late because of a floodlight failure, was effectively over after 20 minutes as Brazil, who beat Ecuador by the same score in their last outing, shot into a two-goal lead through Elber and Amoroso.

The lights went out as an off-key version of the Brazilian national anthem was being played. The band continued till the end in pitch darkness.

With power restored, Elber fired Brazil ahead after three minutes with his sixth goal in six full internationals. Then Udinese striker Amoroso, winning his second cap, scored his first international goal with a 19th minute header from a cross provided by Vampeta.

After more Brazilian dominance, Rivaldo, one of three survivors from the 1998 World Cup team on the field, scored from a penalty he won himself in the 44th.

Russia, who made six substitutions, tried to slow the game down after the break but fell further behind in the 59th minute when goalkeeper Andrei Novosadov allowed a Marcos Assuncao free kick to slip through his hands.

It was Assuncao's first international goal. Novosadov was almost immediately substituted by Andrei Chichkin.

Oleg Koranukhov reduced the arrears with a 66th minute penalty but five minutes later Amoroso scored Brazil's fifth and his second with a 20 yarder.

Hungary blank Switzerland

BUDAPEST, Nov 19: Hungary scored two goals in the first seven minutes to beat Switzerland 2-0 in an exhibition match Wednesday before 4,000 fans braving near-freezing weather at Ferencvaros stadium, reports AP.

In the first minute, Janos Hrutka headed Istvan Pison's long shot to Gyorgy Korsos, who fired the ball into the net from three metres.

Six minutes later, left winger Gabor Egresy passed to the right, where Jozsef Seboek headed it in from five metres for 2-0.

The Swiss regrouped and concentrated more, bent on at least stopping the host team, but were not able to score themselves.

The Hungarian defense stood their ground on home turf, stopping all Swiss offensives, although in the 34th minute the visitors nearly scored when Raphael Wicky fired from 14 metres, but the ball went just wide of the right goal post.

Inzaghi double not enough

SALERNO, Italy, Nov 19 (Reuters/AF): Juventus striker Filippo Inzaghi scored his first goals for Italy before Real Madrid's Raul Gonzalez converted a late penalty to give Spain a 2-2 draw in a friendly international on Wednesday.

Inzaghi opened the scoring on 14 minutes, pulling down a pass from new cap Francesco Toti and firing a right-foot volley high into the Spanish net.

Real Sociedad midfielder Francisco de Pedro brought the visitors level with a simple headed goal on 33 minutes after excellent work down the right by defender Michel Salgado but Inzaghi restored Italy's lead on 74 minutes.

The lithe Juve forward collected the ball 10 metres from goal, turned his marker Marcelino Elena superbly and blasted a shot past Spanish goalkeeper Santiago Canizares.

Italy looked to have done enough to win until their centre-back Fabio Cannavaro uncharacteristically scythed down second-half substitute Juan Sanchez as he headed for goal.

Raul sent goalkeeper Angelo Peruzzi the wrong way from the subsequent 82nd minute spot kick to ensure both sides remained unbeaten under their new coaches Dino Zoff and Jose Antonio Camacho.

"I've been waiting a long time to score goals in an international," said Inzaghi, who was making his eight appearance for his country. "It's a shame

eight people, seven of them teenagers, who were killed in a bus crash in northern Spain on Tuesday.

Italy's Christian Panucci left in the last minute of the first half with a cut on his right ankle. The defender, who plays for Spanish club Real Madrid, received four stitches.

Flo saves Norway

CAIRO, Nov 19: A header by Tore Andre Flo earned Norway a 1-1 draw with Egypt in the teams' friendly soccer international on Wednesday, reports Reuters.

The African champions were on the attack throughout the first half, with Yasser Radwan, Samir Ibrahim and Hossam Hassan to the fore, and Hassan put them ahead five minutes before the break.

Norway, trying to pick up momentum after a poor start to their Euro 2000 campaign, hit back with a header by Chelsea striker Flo in the 63rd minute.

It was an encouraging display by Egypt, who are planning 60 internationals in the next few seasons as they prepare for the defence of their African Nations Cup title and the 2002 World Cup qualifying campaign.

Takings from the match, which was watched by around 30,000 people, will go to the dependents and victims of Egypt's train crash of last month in which more than 40 people died and over a 100 were injured.

they only came in a friendly rather than in a competitive match but it's a great feeling nevertheless."

His lively performance was encouraging for an Italy side who have lost his club striking partner Alessandro Del Piero for the next five months due to injury.

Del Piero had scored both goals in Italy's last outing and Inzaghi could be just the man to replace him for Italy's remaining European Championship qualifying matches.

Both the Italians and Spaniards enjoyed spells of dominance in an entertaining match played in front of 25,000 fans in the southern city of Salerno.

There was no fan trouble at Arechi Stadium, site of the Nov. 3 Fiorentina-Grasshoppers UEFA Cup game suspended at halftime when an explosive device tossed from the stands injured an off-field official. Fiorentina were kicked out of the cup because of the incident.

Italy made a bright start, with Toti crashing a shot off the outside of a post in the opening minutes, but Spain came to life after conceding the first goal and hit the woodwork themselves after the break.

The Italian football federation announced that all proceeds from the match would go towards survivors of mudslides which killed around 150 people in the hills north of Salerno earlier this year.

The Spaniards were also in mourning. Their team wore black armbands in honour of



Brazil's prolific striker Giovanni Elber (C) tries to make his way through a host of Russian defenders during their friendly encounter at Fortaleza, Brazil on November 18. Brazil won 5-1.

Sitting in the hot seats

MADRID, Nov 19 (Reuters/Internet): Real Madrid, Barcelona and Athletic Bilbao face Spanish first division games they must win this weekend before re-entering the Champions' League fray on Wednesday.

Guus Hiddink, Louis van Gaal and Luis Fernandez, coaches of Spain's three European Cup representatives, have all come under fire in recent weeks for poor performances at home.

And none of the three can afford another slip-up in tricky-looking league games this weekend.

Athletic Bilbao get the latest round of matches under way against Tenerife on Friday in a bottom-of-the-table clash.

The game has been brought forward to Friday to give the Basque side an extra day in Norway to acclimatise ahead of Wednesday's European assignment against Rosenborg.

But Fernandez, with his side currently mired in the relegation zone after six defeats in 10 games, knows he cannot afford to ignore domestic commitments for much longer.

"Morale is definitely a little down amongst the players," Fernandez said this week.

"But we need to remain calm and get our confidence back. We're going to do everything we can to get our form back in the league. We've got a difficult game against Tenerife coming up but the players will continue doing their best."

Injuries and suspensions are set to leave Athletic without four first-choice players, including experienced defenders Rafael Alkorta and Roberto Rios.

And with international trio Joseba Etxeberria, Ismael Urzaiz and Bittor Alkiza still feeling the effects of a difficult game against Italy on Wednesday, Fernandez could be forced to put out virtually a reserve team for a vital league game.

Like Athletic, Barcelona's hopes of making progress in the Champions' League have been left hanging by a thread following a 2-1 defeat to Bayern Munich at the Nou Camp.

Victory over Tenerife in the league last weekend took

Barcelona up to second place in the table and bought van Gaal some respite from recent criticism.

But the Dutchman desperately needs to win, and win well, against third-placed Mallorca on Saturday and against Manchester United on Wednesday if he is to claim support, rather than tolerance, from the Catalan media and public.

Van Gaal's patched-up defence took another hit this week, though, with Abelardo Fernandez joining the list of walking wounded that also includes such influential figures as Pep Guardiola, Luis Enrique and Miguel Angel Nadal.

Injuries are also starting to plague Hiddink at Real Madrid as, following a 2-1 home defeat to Celta Vigo last weekend, they have slipped to fourth place in the league.

Fernando Hierro, Christian Karembeu and Christian Panucci - injured in Italy's 2-2 draw with Spain on Wednesday - are all ruled out of Saturday's trip to Valencia, who have won four out of their five home games this season.

Victory over Inter Milan on Wednesday would be an important step in their bid for a quarterfinal place in the European Cup but, as Jupp Heynckes discovered last season, success in Europe will not see off criticism at home if league results are not up to scratch.

A third defeat of the season, to Valencia on Saturday, would leave Hiddink facing further crisis talk just three months into his first season in charge.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down. Includes a solution key at the bottom.

Cryptoquip puzzle grid with a key and instructions. Includes a solution key at the bottom.