PARIS, Nov 19 (AFP): Latest FIFA rankings published Wednesday: Points Country 73.59 Brazil 68.89 France 67.07 Germany 66.75 Croatia 66.22 Argentina . 64.37 Czech Republic 64.34 Yugoslavia 64.29 62.41 Netherlands 62.27 Mexico 61.70 England 59.87 59.66 Romania Morocco 59.12 Norway 58.37 15. Spain16. Chile 57.81 56.32 55.19 Sweden 18. Denmark 55.19 South Korea 54.85 20. Tunisia 54.76 21. Austria 54.74 United States 54.61 Egypt 54.57 24. Paraguay 54.29 54.03 Kuwait Zambia 52.72 Saudi Arabia

Bosnich may become the richest Aussie

South Africa

29. Poland

30. Japan

52.70

52.30

SYDNEY, Nov 19: Aston Villa goalkeeper Mark Bosnich is on the verge of becoming Australia's highest paid sportsman if his rumoured wage demand to join Premier League club Manchester United is accepted. reports AFP.

Bosnich, 26, has demanded 163,000 dollars (102,000 US) a week to join Alex Ferguson's Old Trafford squad, the Sydney Daily Telegraph said.

If the figures are correct, he stands to earn some 31 million dollars in match payments and transfer fees over four years. rivaling the earnings of Brazilian superstar Ronaldo who plays in Italy for Internazionale.

This would easily give him more earnings in match payments than fellow Australians, golfer Greg Norman, 500cc world motorcycle champion Mick Doohan, tennis star Pat Rafter and baseballer Dave Nis-

Although Bosnich denies he has spoken to United officials. he is a favourite to replace Peter Schmeichel, who plans to leave English football at the end of the season.

His Sydney-based manager Leo Karis said the wage figure was ridiculous and he was not talking to any club at the moment.

"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. "He 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 in-

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. Doohan earned 8.0 million. ahead of Nilsson on 7.0 million

Kaiser Germany's player-of-century

and Rafter on 4.0 million.

FRANKFURT, Nov 19: Franz Beckenbauer, who won the World Cup as a player in 1974 and as coach in 1990, has been voted Germany's "player-of-the century" in a poll by soccer writers and historians of the game, reports AP.

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 "Europeanplayer-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.

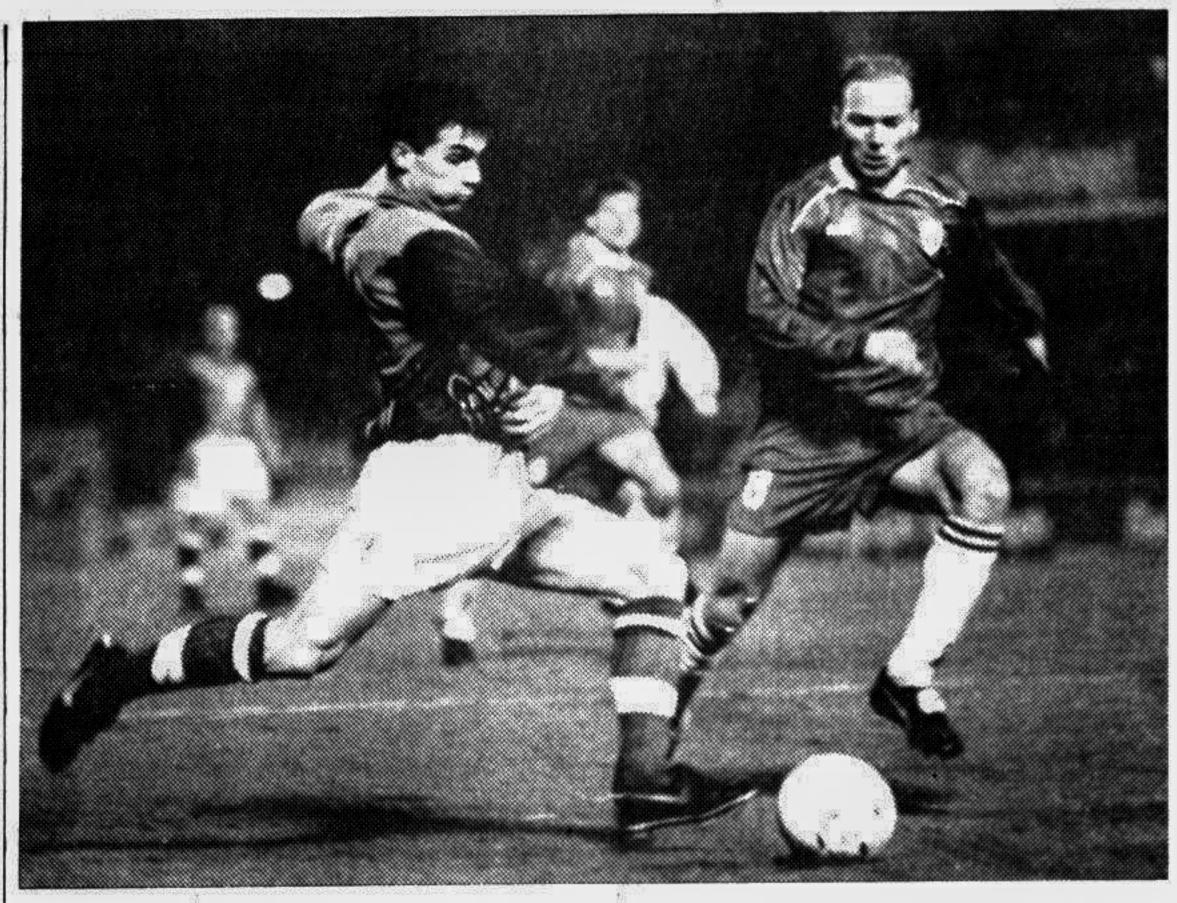
Malaysian hopes lie on Nyambek

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

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. A native of Sarawak state in northern Borneo, Nyambek sprinted to a silver medal at the Asian Track and Field Championships in Japan this year,

finishing in 10.42 seconds. The last time a Malaysian won this event was at the 9th Asian Games in 1986.



Keith Gillespie (L) of Northern Ireland about to send a cross inside the Moldova box - AFP photo 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 Wednes-

day, reports Reuters. To complete a bad night for the Irish, Macedonia won 2-1 in

Malta to join Mick McCarthy's side on six points in a threeway tie, along with Croatia, at the top of Group Eight. Northern Ireland twice

fought back to draw 2-2 with Moldova in Belfast but they really needed a win to stay in contention in a tough Group Three that also includes Turkey, Germany and surprise leaders Finland. Greece failed to take top spot

in Group Two as they were held to a 0-0-draw in Albania while Cyprus, who bat Spain in September, scraped a 1-0 away win over San Marino in Group

Yugoslavia had to watch and wait as the unstable political situation in the country delayed their participation in the quali-

deserved 2-0 winners of their

friendly international at

Wembley on Wednesday, reports

Anderton and Paul Merson gave

new-look England a victory

that could have been far more

Beckham and 21-year-old debu-

tant Lee Hendrie, who had been

on the pitch for just 10 minutes.

all went close to adding their

names to the scoresheet while

the Czechs faded the longer the

Marschall

rescues

hosts

Nov 19: Germany managed a 1-

GELSENKIRCHEN, Germany.

Graeme Le Saux, David

emphatic at the end.

match wore on.

reports Reuters.

First-half goals from Darren

Reuters.

LONDON, Nov 19:

England, out-

played by the

Czech Republic for

20 minutes, bat-

tled back to finish

fying competitions. Ireland, meanwhile, got off to a flyer with two victories in two games, including a 2-0 defeat of World Cup semifinalists

Mick McCarthy's resurgent side looked on course for a point on Wednesday as they defended in depth in Belgrade, keeping the Yugoslavians at arm's length until the 63rd minute.

But then Real Madrid striker Predrag Mijatovic seized on a long ball into the box, controlled it instantly and shot home for the only goal of the Yugoslav coach Milan Zi-

vadinovic said he was "very pleased with the result against a very powerful Irish team." "We saw this evening that their victory against Croatia

was no surprise. Zivadinovic said the game turned after he introduced Darko Kovacevic for the second

"Then, for 35 minutes we played the type of game that I always want my team to play,"

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

Paul Sixsmith pulled one back for Malta but Macedonia held out to complete the double over the islanders and move onto six points along with Croatia and Ireland

Albania and Greece drew 0-0 in the first international held in Albania in 2-1/2 year because of political unrest.

Greece remain unbeaten in their three games but stay second in the group on five points, one behind leaders Latvia, Albania are bottom with two points.

In Group Three Moldova twice led through Vladamir Gaidamashchyuk and Ion Testimitanu only for Iain Dowie and Neil Lannon to score equalisers.

The draw moves Northern Ireland on te four points from their three games but they have an almost impossible task to qualify. It was Moldova's first point in three games.

players being given a chance to

stake a claim, eventually set-

a stunner

BRISBANE, Nov 19 (Reuters/ Internet): Cricket's bible Wisden launched its first ever Australian edition on Thursday with 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

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

JPGL-Lights Professional's Cup cricket Sports Reporter

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



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 Vanderley Luxemburgo, once again rested several World Cup players. making the game of questionable importance. The contest, which begar

half an hour late because of a

floodlight failure, was effec-

tively 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. off-key version of the Brazilian

The lights went out just as an 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 substi-

tutions, 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 in-

ternational 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 exhibi tion match Wednesday before 4,000 fans braving near-freezing weather at Ferencyaros stadium, reports AP. In the first minute, Janos

Hrutka headed Istvan Pisont's long shot to Gyoergy Korsos, who fired the ball into the net from three metres. Six minutes later, left

winger Gabor Egressy 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. "The Swiss played arrogantly," was how Gyoergy

Mezei, a former all-stars player, saw it on state TV, commenting on the first half. The Hungarians were more cautious - and slower - in the second half, while the Swiss

In the 72nd minute, Sebastien Jeanneret headed the ball just over the net from two

Wisden serves | Inzaghi double not enough



SALERNO, Italy, Nov 19 (Reuters/ AP): Juventus st riker Filippo In-Tuesday.

zaghi scored his first goals for Italy before Real Madrid's Raul half with a cut on his right an-Gonzalez converted a late kle. The defender, who plays for Spanish club Real Madrid, repenalty to give Spain a 2-2 draw in a friendly international on reived four stitches. Wednesday.

Inzaghi opened the scoring on 14 minutes, pulling down a pass from new cap Francesco Totti 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 col-

lected 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 cen-

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

treback Fabio Cannavaro un-

characteristically scythed

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

new coaches Dino Zoff and Jose

eight people, seven of them teenagers, who were killed in a

bus crash in northern Spain on Italy's Christian Panucci left in the last minute of the first

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 cam-

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 at more than 40 people died and over a 100 were iniured

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 Alesandro Del Piero for the next five months due to in-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 in-

jured an off-field official

Fiorentina were kicked out of the cup because of the incident. Italy made a bright start with Totti 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 - AP/UNB photo

Sitting in the hot seats



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

And none of the three can afford another slip-up in trickylooking 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."

cluding experienced defenders Rafael Alkorta and Roberto

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

Dutch duo gets going

HARTFORD, Connecticut, Nov 19: Top-seeded Dutchmen Jacco Eltingh and Paul Haarhuis began their final tournament as partners with a straight-set victory over Ellis Ferreira and Rick Leach at the 800,000 dollar ATP Tour World Doubles Championship on Wednesday, reports Reuters.

Eltingh and Haarhuis won 6-4, 6-4 in their first of three round-robin matches but there were two upsets in other matches.

Americans Donald Johnson and Francisco Montana, seeded eighth, upset the second-seeded Tandem of Mahesh Bhupathi and Leander Paes 3-6, 6-4, 7-6 (7-4).

26 Margery

Injuries and suspensions are Barcelona up to second place in (Reuters/ Inter- set to leave Athletic without the table and bought van Gaal net): Real Madrid, four first-choice players, in- some respite from recent criti-

cism. But the Dutchman desperately needs to win, and win well, against third-placed Mallorca on Saturday and against

Manchester United on Wednes-

day 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 in-

cludes 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.

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Yesterday's Cryptoquip: THE BIG CLOD CROSSES

Today's Cryptoquip clue: T equals C locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

worship EATEN 40 Otherwise A RABBIT AND A SPIDER, HOPING HE'LL GET A 41 Portend HARENET.

Xochi-The Cryptoquip is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that X equals O, it 43 Leading will equal O throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to 44 Capone

perior to their hosts but were not quite as dominant. Court call up

the World Cup finals.

kicked out straight at him.

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 deutsch-marks (125 dollars) when he was caught driving up the hard shoulder of a motorway to avoid a traffic-jam in May.

0-6.

England win comfortably England coach Gleen 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. But more importantly it gives us a huge confidence boost for the

> and Sweden. The defeat was the Czechs' first since they lost to Brazil last December and also their first in 10 matches since coach Jozef Chouvanec took control

> of the team last January. The Czechs, starting with seven of the players who lost to Germany at Wembley in the Euro '96 final, swarmed all over

with a fine chip after nine

important qualifiers we have to play next year against Poland

England for the first 20 minutes and Pavel Kuka was unlucky not to score when he hit the bar

minutes. But the unusual England line-up, with several squad

Anderton scored with a well taken left-foot shot in the 22nd

minutes after an Ian Wright cross eluded the Czech defence and the West Ham striker also had a hand in creating the goal for his former Arsenal team mate Merson who shot home from close-range five minutes before halftime.

The final ball for his goal was a flick-on from his new Villa teammate Dion Dublin who worked well despite not scoring in an England attack missing the injured Alan Shearer and Michael Owen.

The Czechs made four changes at halftime, inspirational Vladimir Smicer sat out the second half in an agreed deal with his French club Lens for whom he will be playing at Wembley next week against Arsenal in the European Champions' League.



were more aggressive but failed Frenchwoman Sandrine Testud lets out a cry of anguish to score. during her Chase Championships fixture against world No 1 Lindsay Davenport on November 18. Testud lost 6-4, 6-7, - AP/UNB photo