Muralitharan, Jayasuriya in WC squad

COLOMBO, Apr 5(Reuters/Internet): Opener Sanath Jayasuriya and off-spinner Muttiah Muralitharan, both sidelined by injury recently, were included on Monday in Sri Lanka's 15-man World Cup squad.

Jayasuriya has been out of action since breaking a bone in

his arm during a tri-nations series match in Australia two months ago.

Muralitharan was called for throwing during the same se-

He has a congenital deformity to his right elbow that prevents him straightening his bowling arm. The International Cricket Council has given his action the all-clear.

The squad includes 11 players who helped Sri Lanka to victory in the 1996 World Cup.

They play England in the opening match of the tournament at Lord's on May 14.

SQUAD

Arjuna Ranatunga (captain), Aravinda de Silva, Sanath Jayasuriya, Marvan Atapattu, Mahela Jayawardene, Roshan Mahanama, Romesh Kaluwitharana, Hashan Tillekeratne, Muttiah Muralitharan, Chaminda Vaas, Promodya Wickremasinghe, Eric Upashantha, Upul Chandana, Chandika Hathurusinghe, Ruwan Kalpage.

Rajshahi Div One cricket

From Our Corespondent RAJSHAHI, Apr 5: Mukti Sangha recorded a comfortable 74-run win over Bandhan Krira Chakra in the lone First Division cricket League match at the local stadium here today.

Batting first, Mukti Sangha scored 176 run before being all out in 43.2 overs. Azad scored highest 41 followed by Himel and Rabi, who made 28 runs

In reply, Bandhan KC were bundled out for 102 in 23 overs. Titu fought a lost battle with 46. Rabi with four wickets was the wrecker-in-chief among the Mukti Sangha bowlers.

Nat'l U-14 soccer

Qualifiers from Apr 10

The qualifying rounds of the Biman Cup under-14 national football championship will begin from April 10 simultaneously at seven zonal venues across the country, reports

Fifty-three teams, including 52 district associations and Bangladesh Krira Shikkha Protisthan (BKSP) will be taking part in the first phase of the national juvenile meet at Patuakhali, Narayangani, Dhaka, Comilla, Faridpur, Nilphamari and Rajshahi.

The participating teams and zones are:

Patuakhali: Barguna, Khulna, Satkhira, Bagerhat, Gopalganj. Chandpur and Patuakhali. Narayanganj: Munshiganj

Dhaka, Gazipur, Narsingdi, Manikganj. Brahmanbaria and Narayangani.

Dhaka: BKSP, Mymensingh, Jamalpur, Netrakona, Kishoreganj, Habiganj, Sylhet and Sunamganj.

Comilla: Chittagong. Bandarban, Laxmipur. Noakhali, Khagrachhari, Rangamati, Feni

and Comilla. Faridpur: Jessore. Jhenidah, Rajbari, Magura, Kushtia, Chuadanga, Sherpur and Farid-

Nilphamari: Dinajpur, Thakurgoan, Panchagar, Rangpur, Kurigram, Sirajganj, Gaibandha and Nilphamari.

Rajshahi: Bogra, Pabna, Naogaon, Chapainawabgani, Rajshahi, Natore and Tangail. On the opening day fourteen matches will be held.

The matches are: Khulna vs Barguna and Satkhira vs Chandpur (Patuakhali), Dhaka vs Brahmanbaria and Narsingdi vs Manikganj (Narayanganj). Mymensingh vs Sunamganj and Netrakona vs Sylhet (Dhaka), Rangamati vs Feni and Noakhali vs Chittagong (Comilla), Kushtia vs Sherpur and Jessore vs Chuadanga (Faridpur), Dina-Jeur vs Kurigram and Rangpur vs Thakurgaon (Nilphamari) Naogaon vs Pabna and Tangail vs Natore (Rajshahi).

Nigeria to co-host

African Cup LAGOS, Apr 5 (Reuters/ Internet): A senior Nigerian leader has confirmed that Nigeria will co-host next year's African Nations Cup finals with Ghana, newspapers reported on

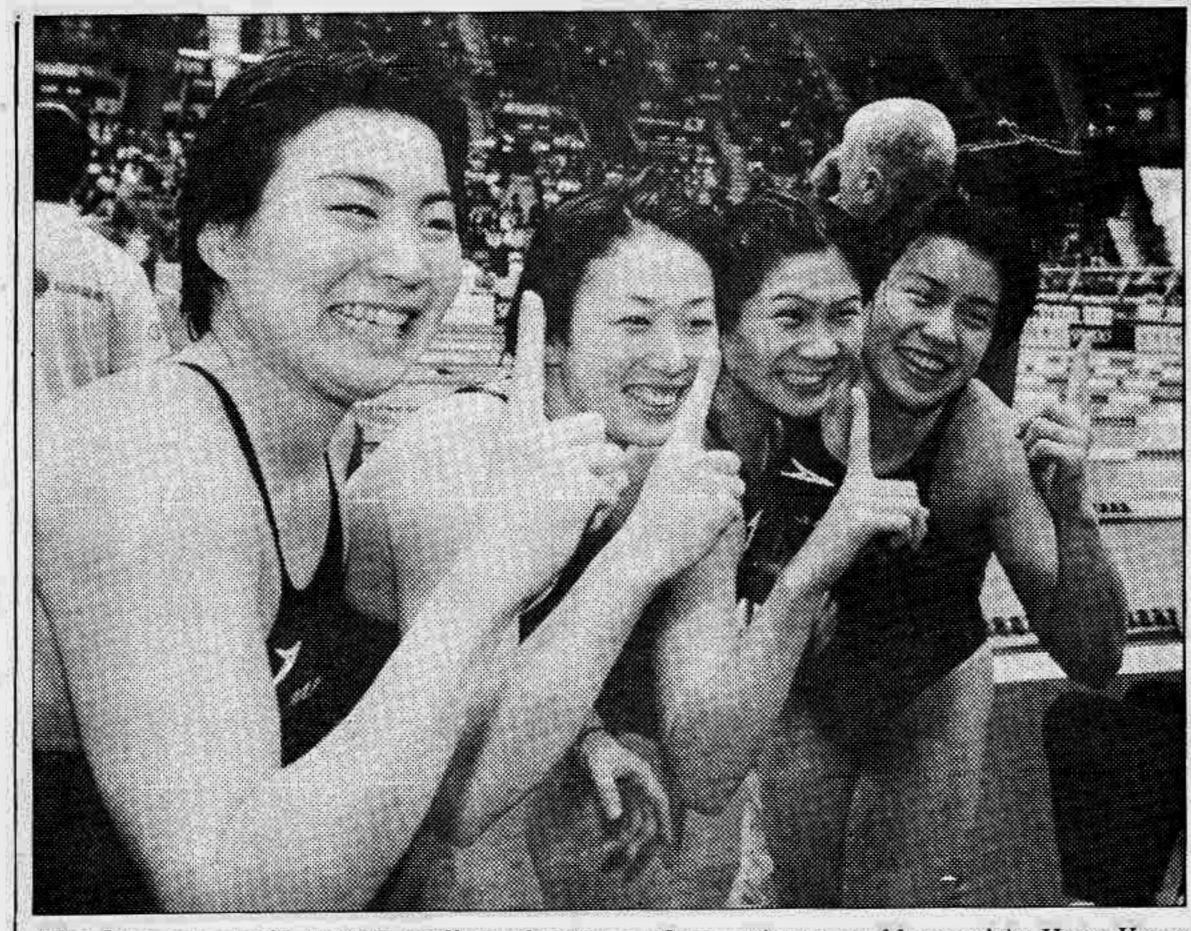
Monday. Last month, the Confederation of African Football (CAF) announced that Nigeria and Ghana would jointly host the tournament after taking it away from Zimbabwe, whose facilities were judged not to have met the required standards.

But Nigerian opinion was divided, with one official quoted as saying it was an insult to Nigeria and suggesting Ghana should stage it alone.

Nigerian soccer authorities said CAF had indefinitely postponed a Nations Cup qualifying match between Nigeria and Senegal scheduled for April 10 in Lagos, pending Nigeria's re-

sponse to the co-hosting offer. But Vice-Admiral Mike Akhigbe, second in the Nigerian leadership, appears to have re-moved doubts about his coun-

try's position. "Nigeria is looking forward to co-hosting the competition with Ghana next year," the semi-official Daily Times newspaper quoted Akhigbe.



The Japanese 4x100 metres medley relay team after setting a world record in Hong Kong - AFP photo on April 4.

Short-Course meet ends



HONG KONG, Apr 5 (Reuters/Internet): Australia underlined their superb class and boosted their

confidence for the 2000 Sydney Olympics with a record spree which highlighted the World Short-Course Swimming Championships which ended

Teenagers Ian Thorpe and Grant Hackett, who established their credentials as world champions more than a year ago, set world short-course marks in the 200 and 400 metres and an Australian quartet ended the four-day championships in rousing style with a third new standard in the men's 4x100 metres medley relay.

Eight world records were set in Hong Kong, including two in the women's 100 metres individual medley in which Slovakia's Martina Moravcova briefly reclaimed the mark from Jenny Thompson only for the American to snatch it back in the next heat with the first sub-minute time in the event.

Japan brought just five swimmers to the championships but demonstrated impressive growing potential as Games champion Masami Tanaka broke the women's 200 metres breaststroke world record and shared an historic Japanese women's relay first with a world record in the 4x100 medley.

Tanaka relegated double Olympic champion Penny Heyns of South Africa to second place in a 50, 100 and 200 breaststroke treble, while compatriot Mai Nakamura claimed two golds and a silver in the backstroke events, coming desperately close to cracking world records in the 100 and 200. Sweden claimed the other

world record in the women's 4x200 metres freestyle relay. which -- like the previous women's medley relay mark -- had been the property of China. China, declaring they have

cleaned up their act after a succession of drug scandals, made

Atherton feels let down

LONDON, Apr 5: Michael Atherton has hit out at the swift manner in which he was axed from England's World Cup squad, insisting he should have been given more time to prove his fitness, reports AFP.

The former England captain, who lost his place in the squad because of a chronic back problem, is furious about being forced to hurriedly withdraw from this summer's competi-Atherton claims the England

Cricket Board could have been more understanding before telling him to fly home in bitter disappointment from their training camp in Lahore. "In truth everything came round a bit too soon," he said.

"Although I got through the fitness tests a fortnight ago, to expect there to be no reaction was a bit too much. He told the Daily Mirror: "I think there could have been a more understanding approach from the England Cricket

Board, delaying the fitness as-

sessments, giving me an extra

two weeks of more gentle reha-

bilitation in Cape Town with Lancashire. "After all, the day the fitness assessments took place was more than two months away

from the first World Cup game."

a low-key appearance, Asian champion Chen Hua claiming their only gold in the women's 800 metres freestyle.

Australia topped the medals table with nine golds -- the same number as at the last edition of these championships in Gothenburg, Sweden, in 1997 -and 27 medals in all.

Hackett, 18, and Thorpe, 16, both carved more than four seconds off Thorpe's previous world record in the 400 metres freestyle the day after Thorpe had bettered the nine-year-old world mark of Italy's Giorgio Lamberti in the 200 freestyle.

The duo train together and, at a news conference, Hackett said: "We just keep on pushing each other. It'll be interesting to see the times becoming shorter over the next few years.

They would almost certainly have shared another world record in the 4x200 metres freestyle relay but never got the chance because the reserve quartet were disqualified in the heats for not going in the officially submitted order.

The Australian men are setting a prodigious pace in the run-up to the Sydney Olympics.

Apart from the performances of Hackett and Thorpe. Matthew Dunn retained his 200 and 400 individual medley titles and veteran Phil Rogers won the 200 breaststroke.

Team mate Michael Klim, world long-course 200 freestyle and 100 butterfly champion, had to settle for three individual silvers in Hong Kong, twice bowing to powerful Swede Lars Frolander in the 100 butterfly and 100 freestyle.

But Australian team media director Ian Hanson sounded a cautious note, looking ahead to the Olympics.



Arts students (standing) and Science students of Kurigram Mahila Government College. The Arts students became cricket champions. - Star photo

Rivaldo scores treble



MADRID, Apr 5 (Reuters/Internet) Barcelona gave themselves some extra breathing space at the top of

the Spanish Primera Liga on Sunday as a Rivaldo hattrick earned them a 3-1 win over Oviedo. With Celta Vigo surprisingly

held 1-1 at lowly Extremadura. Louis van Gaal's side increased their lead over the chasing pack to six points with a comfortable Valencia are the new second-

placed side following their 1-0 win over Racing Santander on Saturday. Celta, who fell behind to a

Toni Velamazan strike on 50 minutes but equalised 15 minutes later through a Juan Sanchez penalty, slip to third, ahead of Real Madrid on goal difference.

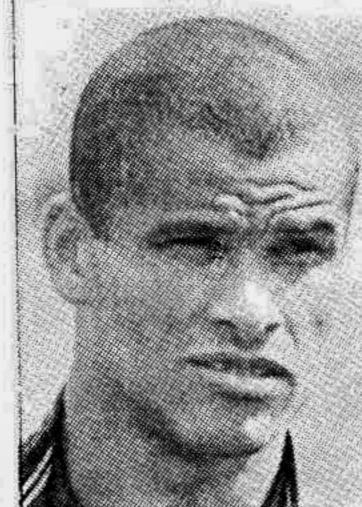
Despite the absence of Predrag Mijatovic -- one of six Yugoslav internationals in Spain's primera liga to support a boycott of matches while NATO strikes continue against their country -- Real beat Alayes 3-2 with goals from Fernando Hierro, Fernando Morientes and Raul Gonzalez.

Barcelona's Nou Camp win against Oviedo came courtesy of the latest in a long line of match-winning displays from

Rivaldo, who took his goal tally for the season to 18. The Brazilian's first, an exquisite 25-metre drive, was

followed by two penalties, the first for a trip on Luis Figo and the second after Philip Cocu was held by Oviedo 'keeper Esteban Suarez at a corner. Dely Valdes had earlier

equalised Rivaldo's opener following a dreadful back pass from Abelardo Fernandez.



RIVALDO Van Gaal was far from satisfied with his team's performance, despite a comprehensive win that leaves them on course to retain their league ti-

"The players know they haven't really performed today," said the Dutch coach. "But at least we created a lot of chances and, in our defence, it is difficult to play against a

team that always has five players at the back. Real Madrid's fourth succes-

sive win under Welsh coach John Toshack maintains their faint title hopes. Real are still failing to con-

trol games but under Toshack they are showing plenty of spirit and they twice came from behind to win the three points against Alaves at the Bernabeu. Pablo Gomez put the visitors ahead from the penalty spot after 15 minutes following a push from Ivan Campo.

Alaves' lead lasted just a minute, however, as Hierro put his side level with a close range strike.

Alayes went into half-time 2-1 up thanks to Sivori's scrappy goal on 23 minutes -more poor defending from the home side -- but a header from Morientes levelled the scores once more and Real took the points thanks to Raul's thumping effort on the rebound after a scrambled clearance from the under-fire Alaves defence.

Mallorca stayed in touch with the leaders with a leisurely 2-0 win at bottom club Salamanca, goals from Leonardo Biagini and Dani Garcia giving them a confidence boost ahead of Thursday's European Cup Winners' Cup semifinal first leg meeting with Chelsea.

Spain's other remaining European representative, Atletico Madrid, warmed up for Tuesday's UEFA Cup date with Parma with a hard-fought 1-1 draw at Deportivo Coruna.

India name WC squad Sachin not going to Sharjah

BANGALORE, Apr 5 (Reuters/Internet): Star batsman Sachin Tendulkar was named in India's cricket World Cup squad on Sunday despite his recent injury problems.

Tendulkar, who suffered back spasms last month,

missed the triangular series against Pakistan and Sri Lanka which ended with Pakistan beating India in the final on Sunday by 123 runs.

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) an-

nounced a 14-member squad to play in the World Cup in England next month. It also named a 15-member

squad to play in the Sharjah Cup tournament in the United Arab Emirates, with Pakistan and England, from April 7-16 but said Tendulkar was not in-cluded in case his injury should flare up again.

BCCI secretary Jayawant
Lele said the 15th member of

the World Cup squad would be named on Monday as India wanted to include Debashish Mohanty, who was not among the players shortlisted earlier. "We want to include mediumpacer Debashish Mohanty in

the squad but have to get the permission of the International Cricket Council to do so as he was not in the shortlisted 19." Lele said. Lele said Tendulkar had been declared fit by doctors but

was not included in the Sharjah Cup squad as his injury could recur there. "Sachin's back problem

could recur due to the dehydration that players experience in Sharjah and he was advised by doctors to opt out of the tournament," Lele said. "He does not want to take a

chance before the World Cup." World Cup squad: Moham mad Azharuddin (captain) Ajay Jadeja (vice-captain) Saurav Ganguly, Sachin Tendulkar, Sadagoppan Ramesh Rahul Dravid, Robin Singh Nayan Mongia (wicketkeeper) Ajit Agarkar, Anil Kumble, Javagal Srinath, Venkatesh Prasad, Nikhil Chopra, Amay Khurasia

Sharjah Cup squad: Mohammad Azharuddin (captain) Ajay Jadeja (vice-captain), Saurav Ganguly, Sadagoppan Ramesh, Rahul Dravid, Vinod Kambli, Robin Singh, Nayan Mongia (wicketkeeper), Ajit Agarkar, Anil Kumble, Javagal Srinath. Sunil Joshi Venkatesh Prasad, Nikhil Chopra, Amay Khurasia.

Kurigram College cricket

From Our Correspondent KURIGRAM, Apr 5: The first year Arts students became cricket champions of Kurigram Government Mahila College recently.

In the final they defeated first-year (Science) by 15 runs. Batting first Arts team scored 66 from 20 overs. In reply, Science were all out for 51 in 16 overs.

Shahinur Begum of Arts cap
MARSEILLE, France, Apr 5 (Reutetured six wickets and was adjudged player-of-the-match. After the final Principal Professor Aminur Rahman gave away prizes.

TEAMS

ARTS: Jesmin Ara Ferdaus (Capt), Geeta Roy, Shyamoli, Shahinur Begum, Mahmuda Begum, Khusi Rani, Ferdousi Begum, Sabina, Momtaz Laizu and Hasi Rani.

SCIENCE: Shikha Saha Urmila, Sayema Roksana, Shams-e-Ara, Fahmida Haque, Shahriar Shams. Ummey Habiba, Tahera Begum, Zesmin Ara and Aktarun Na-

ATHLETICS

Meanwhile the annual athletics competition of the college was held recently.

About fifty students participated in nine events. Geeta Rani Roy, first-year (Arts). Ummey Habiba Happy Science, a first-year student beyear). French teams have got rid

came champion and runner-up respectively. Mrs. Delruba Rahman, wife of the Principal, distributed

Barisal cricket

From Staff Correspondent BARISAL. Apr 5: Four-H Club defeated Nabajagaran Club by 78 runs in the First Division cricket league here at the Barisal Stadium today.

Four-H Club winning the toss batted first and scored 210 in 39.4 overs losing all the wickets.

Babu made 66 from 60 balls and took one wicket for 8. He was also adjudged man-of-thematch.

In reply, Nabajagaran Club scored 132 runs losing all the wickets in 30.5 overs. Anu managed highest 30 and Rajib scored 23 runs.

Rangers beaten by St Johnstone

LONDON, Apr 5(Reuters/Internet): St Johnstone beat Rangers 3-1 on Sunday to breathe life into the Scotlish premier league title race. Rangers' lead over second-

points after the champions beat Dundee 5-0 on Saturday. Fourth-placed St Johnstone took the lead after 14 minutes when Jim Weir, making his first start of a season wrecked

57th minute when keeper Alan Main missed a cross, leading to a scramble that ended with Craig Moore scoring with a diving header. Main made amends with some good saves and St. Johnstone made it 2-1 18 minutes

over the line from a metre out. In injury time Simao broke away to feed Kieran McAnespie who tucked away the third.



Emilio Martinez (R) of Paraguay pulls down Germany's Patrick Falk during their World Youth Championship match at Lagos, Nigeria on April 4. Germany won 4-0. — AFP photo

Germany begin in style



LAGOS, Apr 5: Striker Enrico Kern scored a hattrick as Germany demolished

Paraguay 4-0 in the World Youth Championship on Sunday while Argentina began the defence of their crown with an unremarkable 1-0 win over Kazakhstan, reports Reuters. Paraguay's Miguel Domi-

nguez was sent off for retaliation while Australia were blasted by their coach despite beating Saudi Arabia 3-1. A floodlight failure interrupted the Mexico-Ireland game

in Ibadan the first organisa-

tional glitch of the tournament,

and an official blamed sabo-Germany, playing before a sparse crowd at the national stadium in Lagos, were run ragged in the first half and Dominguez caused them endless-problems with his twisting

runs and trickery on the ball. Paraguay missed a succession of chances and were punished when Kern scored his a hattrick between the 44th and

69th minutes. The best German effort, however, came from Patrick Falk, who spotted Paraguay goalkeeper Christian Florentin off his line and chipped the ball over him from 40 metres in the

Kern a 20-year-old who plays for Borussia Berlin, was also guilty of a scything tackle from behind on Dominguez,

who lashed out with his elbow

and was sent off Kern's tackle went unpunished. Germany top the group, ahead of Nigeria and Costa Rica who drew 1-1 in Saturday's

tournament opener. Argentina, winners of the last two championships, dominated their central Asian opponents in Group B but their only goal came through captain Esteban Cambiasso a minute before halftime.

Kazakhstan goalkeeper David Loriya kept the score down with some excellent saves. "We were nervous because it was or first match," said Argentine coach Jose Peckerman. Earlier, Ghana and Croatia

opened a double bill in Ibadan by drawing 1-1 in the same group. Ghana dominated but Malaga striker Owusu Afriyie was in miserable form, missing a string of good chances. The Africans fell behind to a

Zvonimir Deranja goal before Peter Ofori-Quaye equalised after an hour. Group C began with Australia's win over Saudi Arabia

and a 1-0 win for Mexico over

Ireland in another double bill

Jason Culina, John Masaino and an Al-Gani Omar own goal put the Australians 3-0 ahead, the Saudi's managing a last minute consolation through Dabo Mohammed.

But Australian coach Leslie Scheinflug was not satisfied. "I'm happy we won but I didn't think we played well enough. We will go back to the drawing board," he said.

A 12 minute floodlight failure delayed play in the following match in which Mexico beat Ireland 1-0 with a spectacular free kick scored by Rafael Marquez. It was a blow for Nigerian organisers who are trying to prove to detractors that the country can state the tourna-

ment without problems. Local official Gebnga Giwa said he thought it was sabotage but did not enlarge.

The competition continues today with the remaining 12 teams who have yet to play all making their debut. Uruguay, runners-up two years ago, meet Mali in Group

D followed by South Korea v

Portugal in a double bill in

Enugu. The other games are Cameroon v England in Kano (Group E), Japan v United States in Bauchin (Group E), and the Group F Zambia v Honduras and Spain v Brazil in

Calabar.

Bologna ready for Marseille

play the match of their season,

maybe the match of their life.

They are not very impressive

in Ibandan.



rs/Internet): Italy's Bologna are ready to write another compel-

ling chapter in their successful UEFA Cup story when they face Olympique Marseille in the first leg of the semifinals on. Tuesday. Serie A team Bologna, who were in the third division just

four years ago, have reached the last four the hard way after playing in the Interto Cup qual-ifying event during the last northern summer. Bologna, whose last appearance in a European competition semifinal was 38 years ago. confront a Marseille side seek-

their former glory -- they won the European Cup in 1993. The French team are wary of the Italians causing an upset, a view underlined by captain Laurent Blanc. "Since the World Cup (last

ing to recapture a measure of

of their inferiority complex when they take on Italian sides but they (Italians) have this capability to beat anyone," Blanc Marseille's Italian marks-

nearly as well as I know my wife," he said. "I used to play with these guys either when I wore the Juventus colours or

when I played for Italy.

man Fabrizio Ravanelli has been able to give his team mates useful inside knowledge on their opponents.

"I know the Bologna team

"You can bet they are going to

but their strikers are realistic." Bologna's veteran coach Carlo Mazzone is expected to field a fiercely defensive lineup, relying on the rapid counter

attacks of strikers Giuseppe Signeri and Sweden's Kennet Andersson.

Luxemburgo waiting for Ronaldo

RIO DE JANEIRO, Apr 5: Brazil coach Wanderley Luxemburgo said on Sunday that Ronaldo would be selected to face his former club Barcelona in a match to celebrate the Catalan giants centenary season, reports AFP.

Luxemburgo watched Ronaldo net two penalties in Inter Milan's 2-0 win over Fiorentina in Italy's Serie A on Saturday. It would be the first time Ronaldo had worn the national

side's shirt since his ill-fated

appearance in the 1998 World Cup final, which Brazil lost 3-0 to France. Luxemburgo also revealed he had asked Ronaldo if he had wanted to play in the recent friendlies with South Korea and

clined, saying he was not fully recovered. Ronaldo has been plagued by

injury this season.

Japan but the striker had de-

Bologna have used that strategy to neutralise several of the top serie A clubs on their own turf this season but usualy

play a more attacking game at their own stadium. The Italian team's midfield will be led by the experienced Giancarlo Marocchi, a pillar for Juventus from 1989 to 1996, and powerful Swede Klas Ingersson, with Davide Fontolan and Jonathan Binotto attack-

ing down the flanks. Marseille coach Rolland Courbis, who watched Saturday's league match at Perugia where Bologna drew 0-0, said: "We will need two good games

but I'm convinced we can do it." He has not named his side but defender Patrick Blondeau may not be fit enough for the clash despite recovering from a knee injury. William Gallas

could take his place.
In midfield, Courbis will have to choose between Eric Roy and Frederic Brando while South African Pierre Issa should start along with Blanc in central defence.

PROBABLE TEAMS MARSEILLE: Stephane Porato, William Gallas, Laurent Blanc, Pierre Issa, Cyril Domoraud, Peter Luccin, Frederic Brando, Robert Pircs. Christophe Dugarry, Fabrizio Ravanelli, Florian Maurice.

BOLOGNA: Francesco Antoniolo, Michele Paramatti, Giovanni Bia, Amedeo Mangone, Eriberto, Davide Fontolan, Giancarlo Marocchi, Klas Ingersson. Jonatahn Binotto, Giuseppe Signorti, Kenneth Andersson.

- AFP photo



A tiny Australian celebrates the victory of Rafter in Harare on April 4.