

Bayern-Bremen League Cup finale

AUGSBURG, Germany, July 15: An own goal by Germany defender Christian Woerns allowed Bayern Munich to beat arch rivals Borussia Dortmund 1-0 on Wednesday for a place in the final of the German League Cup, reports Reuters.

German champions Bayern, entering the traditional six-team pre-season tournament from the semifinals, won despite the absence through injury of six first-choice players.

The only goal of a tense, relatively uneventful match came in the 66th minute when Woerns, who joined Dortmund from Paris St Germain, diverted a free kick from Bayern playmaker and new captain Stefan Effenberg into his own net.

Dortmund, who have spent millions in reinforcements, buying not only Woerns but also strikers Fredi Bobic and Victor Ikpeba, came close to levelling when striker Heiko Herrlich hit the post with a header in the dying moments.

Bayern, who have won the tournament for the last two years, will face Werder Bremen in Saturday's final in Leverkusen.

Concerned Chilavert

BUENOS AIRES, July 15 (Reuters/Internet): Paraguay World Cup captain Jose Luis Chilavert said on Wednesday that the three stadia rebuilt for the Copa America, being held in his country, would become white elephants when the tournament finished.

"They (the organisers) said the stadia would be there afterwards for the benefit of Paraguayan football but they will be white elephants," the volatile and outspoken goalkeeper told an Argentine television sports programme.

"In the football of my country, the odd match between Cerro Porteno and Olimpia (Paraguay's two biggest clubs) brings in some money, but the other matches are played without anybody watching."

"I've always said that the Copa America should not be held in Paraguay because in my country, there are a lot of poor people who don't have enough to eat and we can't afford the luxury of organising a tournament of this size."

Chilavert, a goalkeeper who also scores goals regularly from free kicks and penalties, refused to play for his country in protest at the money spent of hosting the 12-team competition.

Paraguay was knocked out by Uruguay on penalties in the quarter-finals, when they appeared to sorely miss his charismatic and inspiring leadership.

"Paraguay got knocked out because we didn't do things well," Chilavert said, describing Uruguay as being "very inferior to Paraguay."

Chilavert lives in Argentina, where he plays his club soccer with Velez Sarsfield.

Inzaghi sets his target

MILAN, July 15: Juventus striker Filippo Inzaghi reckons that he and strike partner Alessandro Del Piero can score 60 goals next season and take the club back to the top of Italian football, reports AFP.

The pair virtually managed the feat in 1997-98, when Del Piero scored 32 goals and Inzaghi another 27, while Juventus topped their third league title in four years and their third consecutive European Cup final.

Now, after one of their worst seasons for decades, the Turin club is keen to lift itself back up off the floor, starting this weekend when they open their inter-city campaign in Romania.

"Juventus have taught me that a wonderful thing is to win," said the striker, who two goals in 10 minutes helped to stop Manchester United reaching the 1999 European Cup final.

"Last year, I was left empty-handed and was pretty disappointed about it. Now I hope things can go back to the way they were."

"Del Piero, Zidane and I are capable of repeating the feat of two seasons ago, when we scored 60 goals," he told "L'Espresso". "We've done it before, and we can do it again, even though it's not going to be easy."

Looking at the big-spending competition, he said: "There are a lot of other strike partnerships around next season which look great on paper," he said. "But they've never done anything like that."

Yugoslavs back with a bang

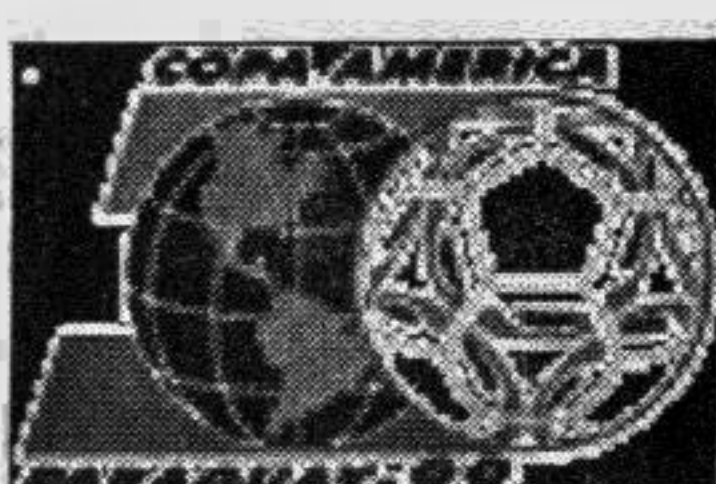
BELGRADE, July 15: Partizan Belgrade marked Yugoslavia's return to international soccer after NATO's 78-day air campaign against the country with a 6-0 drubbing of Estonia's Flora Tallinn in the first qualifying round of the European Champions' League on Wednesday, reports Reuters.

The result means that Partizan, who should easily survive next week's second leg in Estonia, are virtually guaranteed a place in the second qualifying round of the competition and a fierce two-legged tie with Croatian runners-up Rijeka.

The Yugoslav champions got off the mark in the 12th minute, when skipper Sasa Ilic placed the ball past Tallinn's Tomas Tohver. Striker Milorad Pekovic made a dream debut for the club with two goals, the first coming in the 25th minute when he netted a fierce shot into the top corner.

Partizan went 3-0 up in the 36th minute when Vladimir Ilic headed in from close range.

Their head held high



ASUNCION, Paraguay, July 15: Even if they don't take home the Copa America, Uruguay already is a winner, reports AP.

The team of fresh-faced juniors, some barely out of high school, has captured the imagination of soccer fans in Paraguay with a dazzling run to the finals of the South American championships.

Who could help but like a team that, against heavy odds and some of the world's highest-paid stars, has pulled off upset after upset with a mix of youthful exuberance and cool composure.



YOUTH IS GOLD: The young and inexperienced Uruguayan squad has caught the imagination of fans with their spirited display in the Copa America.

— AFP file photo

sure. In Sunday's final, Uruguay will face Brazil — a 2-0 winner over Mexico on Wednesday night — and certainly will be the underdog once again. That's fine with them.

They've beaten Paraguay and Chile. What's one more?

"These boys have been playing together for some time. They have poise. In the penalty shootout they didn't miss any," Chile's coach Nelson Acosta said after his team was eliminated Tuesday night. "They're young, but they beat us good."

In fact, Chile dominated much of the game, keyed by veterans Jose Luis Sierra and Fabian Estay and the high-priced "Zaza" front line of Ivan Zamorano and Marcelo Salas.

But the young Uruguayan back line held firm, inspired by fullback Alejandro Lembo and 20-year-old goalkeeper Fabian Carini. Uruguay settled down

and began to strike back. In the 22nd minute, Uruguay scored off a corner kick by Walter Coelho that Lembo headed past a flat-footed defense.

Chile missed two chances to tie it minutes later when a Sierra free kick crashed off the crossbar and a penalty by Salas hit the post.

Zamorano finally drew Chile even 1-1 on a header in the 60th minute, eventually sending the match to penalty kicks. The Uruguayans converted all five while Carini got his hand Mauricio Aros' attempt, putting Uruguay in the final.

Not bad for a team that came to the tournament expecting to get some experience and not much else.

Head coach Daniel Passarella, the former Argentine star, remained in Uruguay and kept his regular home, opting instead to send a promising junior team under the direction of Victor Pua, a side comprised mainly from the squad that finished second in the 1997 World Youth (U20) Championship in Malaysia.

The start didn't look promising. Uruguay drew the toughest qualifying group and lost to Argentina and Colombia. But a victory over Ecuador was enough to squeak in to the second round against host Paraguay.

No one gave Uruguay much of a chance against Paraguay, which had the veteran core of last year's World Cup team. Trailing 1-0 late in the game, the youngsters tied it and went to penalty kicks. Again the shooters were perfect, and Carini made a providential stop for the upset victory.

"This is not an accident," Pua said. "We believed in these youngsters and they fully responded. The players arrived here with no name and will leave the Cup with great prestige."

"Back home, they already are heroes."

Uruguayans opened their newspapers Wednesday to see headlines trumpeting the achievement of the nation's new idols and "the wizard" Pua.

El Observador gave it the proper dimension: "Pua's team has made an entire people tremble."

Cloud over Asian football



KUALA LUMPUR, July 15: Asia's hopes of capitalising on the 2002 World Cup to promote football in the region may suffer if the region's threat of a boycott becomes a reality, an Asian Football Confederation official warned Thursday, reports AFP.

The promotion of football on the continent may suffer if the threat of boycott of the tournament goes through," he told AFP on condition of anonymity.

The official said the 2002 World Cup was significant to Asia because it was the first time ever the region with 3.5 billion people was hosting the World Cup.

"There is a need for FIFA to be sensitive. By accepting Asia's request FIFA will help significantly boost the profile and image of football in the region," he added.

The comments came after the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) walked out of the FIFA Congress in Los Angeles last Friday in protest at the number of places allocated to the region in the 2002 World Cup.

"The move by Asian members, angry at being handed only four-and-a-half places at the 2002 World Cup by football's world governing body, humiliated FIFA president Sepp Blatter, who had appealed to them not to leave the meet."

He vowed that football's world governing body would not give in to pressure to award an extra place for the 2002 finals,

which will be hosted jointly by Japan and South Korea.

But other Asian delegates had warned that a threatened boycott of the next World Cup would take place unless an extra fifth berth, which was given to South America, is granted to Asia.

AFC supreme Peter Veluppan had said the continent deserved five places in the qualifying tournament.

The Asian official also took a swipe at Blatter for being insensitive to Asia's quest to develop football in the region.

Asia has 42 countries who will fight for two berths while South America with 10 countries but have five places, he said.

The official also said resources spent by FIFA and AFC to enhance the interest and quality of football would go to waste if Asia boycotts the premier event.

The official also said since qualifying draws were expected in December the issue had to be resolved soon, but was unable to give a date of when the AFC would call an extraordinary congress to endorse the boycott.

back following that comeback match against Surrey at the Oval last month, when he scored 24 and 52.

"I want to score runs for Lancashire," he added.

There's plenty of time to go this season, it's probably only about halfway through.

Watching Glamorgan coach Duncan Fletcher, who will take England to South Africa this winter, could only be impressed as Atherton stroked 27 boundaries and offered only one half chance, a top-edge to mid-wicket, when he had scored 148.

Meanwhile, Essex's prolific Australian batsman Stuart Law on Wednesday became the first player to reach 1,000 runs in English first-class cricket this season.

Law achieved the landmark while hitting 58 against Middlesex at Southend where he shared the spotlight with seam bowling team mate Ricky Anderson, who took a career-best five for 36.

Anderson, in his debut season, helped to plunge Middlesex to 113 all out on the first day of the four-day county championship match.

Law and England captain Nasser Hussain, with an unbeaten 71, steered Essex to 166 for three at the close.

West Indian paceman Nixon McLean captured four for 63 as unbeaten leaders Surrey were shaken by Hampshire on a day of 16 wickets at Guildford.

McLean and fellow new-ball bowler Peter Hartley, who took four for 66, dismissed Surrey for 171, skipper Adam Hogg alone offering effective resistance with 63 not out.

Second-placed Hampshire struggled, too, as paceman Martin Bicknell took three for 44 as they replied with 171 for six at the close.

Worcestershire were also piling up a big total at Cheltenham where England discard Graeme Hick hit 122 and opener Philip Weston scored 139 in their side's 344 for three against Gloucestershire.

England fast bowler Darren Gough, who missed the first test against New Zealand with a calf injury, went some way to proving his fitness with four wickets for Yorkshire against Warwickshire at Edgbaston.

Gough took four for 62 as Warwickshire were all out for 253 on the second day but they took a first innings lead of 40 by dismissing Yorkshire for 213.

Seniors fail to win 'em

COLOMBO, July 15: A campaign by senior Sri Lankan cricket players to reject charges that they treated junior teammates as servants has backfired, reports AFP.

Many squad members refused to sign their petition denying the allegations made by former coach Bruce Yardley.

"It is understood that the move to enlist the signatures had been a failure as several members representing the Sri Lanka side had refused to sign the petition," the Daily Mirror newspaper here said Thursday.

Yardley, in a recent interview, launched a scathing attack on Sri Lankan cricket and claimed junior members of the national side were treated as servants by senior players.

The former Australian Test cricket, whose contract as Sri Lanka coach ended prematurely in 1998, also said his downfall was to suggest skipper Arjuna Ranatunga be replaced by opening batsman Sanath Jayasuriya.

Earlier this month, after Sri Lanka's dismal World Cup performance in England, the Sri Lanka cricket board did exactly what Yardley had suggested.

New skipper Jayasuriya declined to react to the Yardley interview which was published widely here but said he looked to the future and had the support of Ranatunga and other seniors.

As part of a major clean up of the Sri Lankan cricket team following their early exit from the World Cup in March, the authorities have also sacked the team manager and rehired Dav Whatmore as coach.

Whatmore groomed the country to its shock World Cup victory in 1996.

Ranatunga and several seniors are due to "clarify all questions and issues regarding the World Cup and the Sri Lanka team" at a press conference later Thursday.

Graveney to stay on as chief selector

LONDON, July 15 (Reuters/Internet): Former spinner David Graveney is to stay on as England's chairman of selectors until the end of the 2001 season, national cricket chiefs announced on Wednesday.

The contract of the ex-Gloucestershire, Somerset and Durham player, who has been a selector since 1995 and chairman of the panel since 1997, has been extended by a further two years, the English and Wales cricket board said.

Following their early exit from the World Cup on home soil, England last month appointed a new captain in Nasser Hussain. Former Zimbabwe Test captain Duncan Fletcher will take over as the new coach at the end of the domestic season.

Graveney will chair a meeting of the five-strong panel to select the winter touring party for South Africa and Zimbabwe towards the end of the domestic season on all team organisational, support and administrative duties, and new senior team physiotherapist Dean Conway, currently working at Glamorgan.

In addition to these appointments, the England Management Advisory Committee (EMAC) also made their choices for the management teams of the A team touring Bangladesh and New Zealand and the NatWest England U19 squad, based in Malaysia and the Youth World Cup.

Last winter Neale managed the England A tour of Zimbabwe and South Africa, having previously managed the NatWest England U19s on their tours of Pakistan (1996/7) and South Africa (1997/8), which included victory in the U19 World Cup.

Neale also coached England A in South Africa in 1993/4 and India in 1994/5 after a successful playing career that saw him captain Worcestershire to six domestic trophies, including the County Championship in 1988 and 1989.

Conway's elevation to physiotherapist to the senior England side comes after fulfilling the role with the England U19 and A sides, and then last winter with England one-day squads for both the Wills International Cup in Dhaka and the

senior squad.

All those associated with the England side throughout this period will want to acknowledge his selfless contribution and commitment, and the role he has played as an integral part of the Management team.

"Nevertheless, it was felt that in this period of change, with a new captain, coach and the introduction of Phil Neale's post, the time was right to look for a fresh face in the area of physiotherapy as well."

Middlesex's Mike Gatting and Martyn Moxon of Yorkshire have been placed in charge of the A team as manager and coach respectively.

Ann Brentnall of Derbyshire and Northamptonshire's Kirk Russell have been named as physiotherapists to the A team and NatWest England U-19s respectively for the second successive winter.

The winter touring parties are likely to be announced in early September.

South Africa and Zimbabwe tour:

Coach: Duncan Fletcher

General Manager: Phil Neale

Physiotherapist: Dean Conway

Media Relations Officer: Brian Murgatroyd

A tour to Bangladesh and New Zealand:

Tour Manager: Mike Gatting

Coach: Martyn Moxon

Physiotherapist: Ann Brentnall

NatWest U-19 tour to Malaysia and Youth World Cup:

Tour Manager: James Whitaker

Coach: Tim Boon

Physiotherapist: Kirk Russell

Kiwis not interested

WELLINGTON, July 15 (AFP): New Zealand cricket chief executive Christopher Doig today dismissed as impractical Australia's idea for a four-nation one-day cricket series in Australia and New Zealand next January.

Australian Cricket Board chief executive Malcolm Speed floated the idea as a possible alternative if Pakistan or India were to pull out of the scheduled series with Australia because of mounting political tension over Kashmir.

New Zealand were due to host the West Indies for a Test and one-day series and Speed suggested they could join Australia and either Pakistan or India in a four-nation one-day tournament.



VIVA BRASIL: Brazilian fans at Ciudad del Este show their appreciation for their team's performance against Mexico on July 14.

COPA CAPSULES

UNDATED, July 15 (AP/Reuters): After a disappointing campaign in the Copa America, Paraguayan soccer officials say they have learned their lesson from the great fish flap.

The team will hire a dietitian to avoid a repeat of the dining hall showdown that caused turmoil in the Paraguayan camp on the eve of the tournament, Antonio Colman Rodriguez, vice president of the Paraguayan Soccer Association, said Wednesday.

The fuss began when the cook served fish for dinner. Star midfielder Roberto "Toro" Acuna said he didn't like fish and wouldn't eat it. Team directors said he had to eat it anyway, and Acuna walked out of training camp.

Teammates eventually persuaded Acuna to return in time for the games, but Paraguay never played up to expectations and was eliminated by Uruguay in the quarterfinals.

"That was a great lesson for us," Colman Rodriguez said. He said the team also is studying whether to hire a psychologist.

CONFIDENT BRAZILIANS

Brazilians celebrated their

2-0 semifinal victory over Mexico Wednesday night with the feeling the Copa America was already theirs for the taking.

With each goal, cheers erupted out of buildings and on to streets that were mostly deserted thanks to colder than usual weather.

Then when the final whistle blew, the ecstatic cheer was like the whistle on a tea kettle that had been building to a boil for over 90 minutes. Brazil now faces unheralded Uruguay in Sunday's final.

"Mexico was the hard part. After them Uruguay is going to be easy," said Miriam Cohen, 26, who watched the game at a street corner bar in the upscale Ipanema district.

Television commentators tried hard to keep a lid on their high spirits, remarking that Uruguay may not be the team they've played up to expectations and have certainly risen to the occasion in this Copa America.

Others worried about holes in Brazil's defense, especially in the aerial game, but most people were swept up in the heady emotion of being one step away from taking the Cup.

Ronaldo's lacklustre per-

Fletcher in charge of tour

LONDON, July 15 (Internet report): England's incoming coach Duncan Fletcher has been put in overall charge of the senior tour to South Africa and Zimbabwe while Phil Neale is appointed manager.

And joining Fletcher on the tour will be Phil Neale, who will assist on all team organisational, support and administrative duties, and new senior team physiotherapist Dean Conway, currently working at Glamorgan.

In addition to these appointments, the England Management Advisory Committee (EMAC) also made their choices for the management teams of the A team touring Bangladesh and New Zealand and the NatWest England U19 squad, based in Malaysia and the Youth World Cup.

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Atherton finds his bearings

LONDON, July 15 (Internet report): Mike Atherton completed a brilliant double century for Lancashire.

The former England captain, 176 not out overnight, picked up where he had left off to reach 261 out of a Lancashire total of 540 for six against Glamorgan.

It was his first double century for Lancashire, beating his previous county best of 199

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WC ticket row MCC gets vote of confidence

LONDON, July 15 (Reuters): Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) members gave the committee a vote of confidence on Wednesday at a special general meeting that was called after a storm over World Cup tickets.

Members were furious at having to pay for tickets to watch matches at Lord's during the recent World Cup.

It was a break with tradition as members normally have free admission to Lord's which is owned by MCC.

Anderson, in his debut season, helped to plunge Middlesex to 113 all out on the first day of the four-day county championship match.

Law and England captain Nasser Hussain, with an unbeaten 71, steered Essex to 166 for three at the close.

Worcestershire were also piling up a big total at Cheltenham where England discard Graeme Hick hit 122 and opener Philip Weston scored 139 in their side's 344 for three against Gloucestershire.

England fast bowler Darren Gough, who missed the first test against New Zealand with a calf injury, went some way to proving his fitness with four wickets for Yorkshire against Warwickshire at Edgbaston.

Gough took four for 62 as Warwickshire were all out for 253 on the second day but they took a first innings lead of 40 by dismissing Yorkshire for 213.

New Zealand were due to host the West Indies for a Test and one-day series and Speed suggested they could join Australia and either Pakistan or India in a four-nation one-day tournament.

Speed stressed that no approaches had been made and other alternatives were being considered.

However, Doig said it was unlikely New Zealand would change their schedule.

"I think it may have been a split-of-moment comment by Malcolm Speed," Doig said. "It is impractical, really."

Matthaeus breaks up with wife

MUNICH, Germany, July 15: German footballing legend Lothar Matthaeus and his wife, former Miss Switzerland Lolita Morena, have divorced it was revealed on Wednesday, reports AFP.

According to German newspaper Bild the marital split, Matthaeus' second wife, the 38-year-old Bayern Munich sweeper custody of his six-year-old child, Loris, as well as a house in Switzerland, and around 500,000 dollars.

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