

## Japan-Iran friendly in September

TOKYO, July 27: Japan and Iran will battle it out in Yokohama on September 8 in their first friendly match since their cliff-hanging World Cup qualifier two years ago, the Japanese football association said Monday, reports AFP.

Japan's national coach Philippe Troussier will announce his squad in late August but Italian-based midfielders Hidetoshi Nakata and Hiroshi Nanami are unlikely to join them, the association said.

Japan won their first ever trip to the World Cup finals by beating Iran 3-2 in November 1997 with reserve forward Masayuki Okano scoring the winner in extra time.

Iran went on to beat Oceania group winner Australia for another berth in France '98.

Ali Daei, arguably Asia's best striker, who plays for Germany's Hertha Berlin, is scheduled to appear in the friendly at the Yokohama International Stadium, the venue of the final in the 2002 Japan/Korea World Cup finals.

## Owen faces an uphill struggle

LIVERPOOL, July 27 (Internet report): Although Michael Owen is still upbeat about his chances of making the first Liverpool fixture of the Premiership season, at Hillsborough, it is unlikely that Gerard Houllier will risk him with so little match practice.

The youngster is set to resume full training in a week or so, but the nature of the injury combined with nearly four months on the physio's bench, mean that time is against him.

Owen has visited German specialist Haffs Muller-Wohlhart at the weekend, and was pleased with the results, saying, "I am hoping to be fit for the start of the season, but I know there is a difference between fitness and match fitness."

"The treatment I had in Germany was massage and exercise-based and not dissimilar to the way I've been treated by Liverpool medical staff over the previous weeks. The German specialist has given me a personalised exercise schedule to ensure all my leg muscles are developed in a balanced way both now and in the future."

"I will be guided by Liverpool's medical and training staff. They will know when it is right for me to start playing again," he concluded.

## Juventus deny Anelka move

MILAN, July 27: Italian giants Juventus deny reports on Tuesday that they were about to sign Arsenal's Nicolas Anelka and then loan the French striker out to Serie A rivals Lazio, reports AFP.

Italian reports claimed that a deal was struck on Monday evening between Lazio's owner Sergio Cragnotti and Juventus director general Luciano Moggi.

Juventus would meet Arsenal's demands of 20 million pounds (32 million dollars) with 13.5 million pounds in cash plus the transfer to Highbury of Juventus' French winger Thierry Henry, much admired by Arsenal's coach Arsene Wenger. Juventus would then loan him to Lazio for two years.

But the Turin club took the rare step of issuing a written denial later in the day. "Following the reports in all the national newspapers regarding the French player's move to Italy," the club said, Juventus "denies having bought Nicolas Anelka from Arsenal."

The French ace has threatened legal action if his much-publicised desire to join Lazio was not met and has always insisted that he will not join Juventus.

**Soccercide!**  
KINGSTON, Jamaica, July 27 (Reuters/Internet): The son of the president of the Jamaica Football Federation and a friend were shot dead in Kingston in the latest high-profile crime in a Caribbean nation reeling from a mounting toll of murders this year, police said on Monday.

Tajh Burrell, 19, the son of Horace Burrell, president of Jamaican soccer's governing body, was gunned down along with Jason Byles, 22, in the parking lot of a pizza shop in a Kingston business district on Sunday, a police statement said.

Police said they had not established a motive for the killings. The two men were shot when they and a female companion were assaulted as they left their car.

Byles died on the spot and Burrell died in a hospital. The woman was unhurt.

Since the beginning of 1999 there have been more than 500 murders in Jamaica, 95 in June alone, a crime wave that prompted the government to send troops into the streets and impose dusk-to-dawn curfews in some of the worst-hit areas of Kingston.

Burrell's death was the second shooting attack this month with connections to the Jamaican soccer team, the pride of the country during 1998's World Cup in France.

Gunman shot Heather Little White, a team nutritionist, at the home of a friend in a Kingston suburb on July 5. She was left paralysed.

Known as the "Reggae Boyz," the team was the first from the English-speaking Caribbean to qualify for the World Cup finals.

The team's success was good news in a nation of 2.6 million reeling from a rising crime rate.

# For USA, Brazil are the best



GUADALAJARA, Mexico, July 27 (AP): Members of the US soccer team aren't getting their



American striker Jovan Korovski (R) practises while teammate Ernie Stewart watches at their base in Guadalajara, Mexico on July 26. —AFP photo

hops up for a repeat of their startling victory last year against Brazil, who they called the best team in the world.

The United States beat Brazil 1-0 last year in the Gold Cup in Florida, shocking soccer fans around the world. Kasey Keller, who is still on the US team, gave what Brazilian forward Rivaldo called the best goalkeeping performance he had ever seen.

"It just happened to be one of those special nights," Keller

said Monday. "I'm not expecting to have the same performance. If I did it would be very unrealistic."

Coach Bruce Arena also said the team wasn't getting its hopes up too high for Wednesday's match, noting: "We're playing against the best team in the world."

He said the Brazilians were especially impressive because the team has a system of play that transcends any one player. The Brazilians came to the Confederations' Cup without many of their big stars.

"They continue to look like a great team regardless of who's on the field," Arena said.

US players said they knew what they were up against, and would do their best to prevent the Brazilians from creating scoring opportunities.

"We're going to have to be very focused mentally and very strong physically," said midfielder Cobi Jones, who played in the US win against Brazil.

Brazil announced their lineup Monday night for the game — exactly the same lineup they used against Germany in their 4-0 victory on Saturday.

The only surprise was that Flavio Conceicao will remain a starter instead of Alex, who subbed in the second half in the game against Germany and scored two goals.

Brazilian coach Wanderley Luxemburgo said the team had performed well against Germany and he didn't see any need to change the lineup.

The Brazilians said they were mindful of their history with the Americans.

"That adversary has always been difficult for our country," defender Serginho said. "By tradition, the US team has always been complicated for us."

He also said the Brazilians weren't worrying about the players who begged off of the team, including stars Ronaldo, Rivaldo, Roberto Carlos and Cafu.

"We're a family here," he said. "Independent of which player came or didn't come, the level stays the same."

# Ribbeck not taking NZ lightly



GUADALAJARA, Mexico, July 27: Coming off an embarrassing 4-0 loss to Brazil, German coach Erich Ribbeck

blamed the setback on a lack of preparation time for his players, reports AP.

Ribbeck said Monday that the timing of the Confederations' Cup put his team at a disadvantage because other teams had more time to prepare. He said many German players had obligations to their clubs in Germany.

Ribbeck didn't mention that Brazil travelled to Mexico only one day after winning the Americas Cup in Paraguay. "I'm not bothered by the Confederations' Cup, but rather because we showed up in an unequal position since this tournament started just before the German season," Ribbeck said.

Many of Germany's big stars asked to be left off the team because of the German league pre-season.

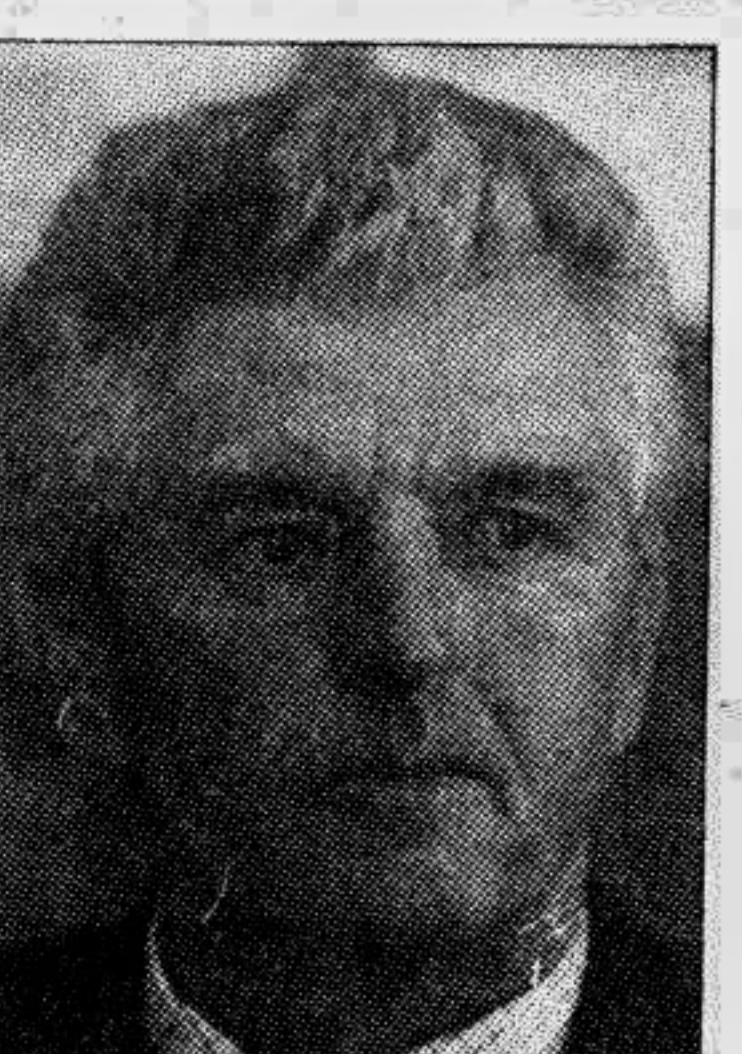
Ribbeck said the loss to

Brazil wasn't weighing too heavily on the players.

"The players have been able to forget about the defeat," Ribbeck said. "The defeat is stronger in the minds of the directors and the trainers than in those of the players."

Forward Michael Preetz agreed. "We didn't come prepared. That's the cause of the problem," he said. "Because of that, I'm not too upset about the defeat."

**Germany's next game is Wednesday against New Zealand, the weakest team in**



ERICH RIBBECK

the Guadalajara half of the tournament.

"We'll change our strategy. We'll play with two forwards," Ribbeck said about the New Zealand game.

He refused to give further details on the lineup, saying: "I don't want to tip off the rivals."

Star defender Lothar Matthaus and midfielder Jorg Heinrich missed practice Monday because of slight injuries suffered game against Brazil. But assistant coach Ulrich Stieli said both would be fine in time for the next game.

Matthaus injured a ligament in his right knee, while Heinrich is having trouble with his Achilles' tendon, Stieli said.

New Zealand, who lost 2-1 to the United States on Saturday, worked on physical conditioning Monday, and played a scrimmage among teammates.

"New Zealand is an accessible team for us, but our big prob-

lem is the physical shape of the players," Stieli said.

"The players can't be at 100 per cent with only two weeks of practice," he said. "No team can."

Meanwhile, a US Major League Soccer spokesman said Monday that Matthias' acquisition from Bayern Munich is "imminent" but probably won't occur until Germany completes play in the Confederations' Cup.

"We certainly expect him to sign in near future," MLS vice president of communications Dan Courtemanche said. "Right now he wants to concentrate on his participation in the Confederations' Cup."

"He wants to play here. We clearly want him to play here, but it probably won't happen until everything is cleared up at the Confederations' Cup."

Matthaus has said he expects to be assigned to the New York-New Jersey MetroStars, which has the worst record in MLS.

## Div I soccer Victoria on top

Victoria SC took sole lead in the Keya First Division football league beating newcomers Muslim Institute 3-0 at the Mirpur Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium yesterday, reports UNB.

With this, Victoria maintained their unbeaten run in the league to secure 16 points from eight matches with four wins and four draws while Muslim Institute remained at 10 points, also playing same number of matches.

Hasan scored two goals in the 2nd and 32nd minutes while Hanif netted the other in the 80th minute for Victoria.

In another fixture, a hat-trick by Sohail enabled Prantik KC overpower Dhaka Wanderers Club 3-2 in a keenly contested game at the same venue.

Sohail struck in the 52nd, 68th and 72nd minutes to complete the treble. Shaheen and Eco scored for Wanderers in the 88th and 89th minutes respectively.

With the day's outcome, Prantik so far earned 10 points while Wanderers bagged eight from eight matches.

## German media outraged

BERLIN, July 27 (Reuters/Internet): German newspapers reacted with shock and fear on Monday at the national team's 4-0 weekend loss to Brazil even though some analysts tried to put a positive spin on the team's worst defeat in 45 years.

"Herr Ribbeck, we can't be pushed around like that!" wrote Bild, the country's largest selling daily after the Confederations' Cup defeat in Mexico.

"We've reached a new nadir. Erich Ribbeck hasn't done a thing in the 10 months since he replaced Berti Vogts to get the team on track."

Ribbeck has four wins, two draws and four defeats in his 10-month tenure.

"Is our reputation ruined?" asked Berlin's BZ daily, which called Ribbeck the "least successful trainer in German history."

The paper said the team should be "ashamed of itself" for the loss to Brazil.

"We thought losing 3-0 in the 1998 World Cup to Croatia was the bottom," BZ wrote. "And then the 3-0 defeat to the United States was even more embarrassing. And now the shameful 4-0 defeat to Brazil."

"The fans now want to know: How far can German soccer sink?"

The Berliner Kurier called it a "debacle."

But Franz Beckenbauer wrote in Bild that he was confident the team would rebound from the defeat and perhaps meet Brazil for a rematch in the final.

"A lot of German fans are shocked at the 4-0 loss to Brazil and are asking if soccer in Germany is going downhill," Beckenbauer wrote. "My answer is a simple: No."

He said the final score was irritating, but it should have ended at a 2-0 defeat had the team not tried desperately to cut the gap in the game's closing minutes.

"Brazil beat us more than we deserved and that's bitter, but nothing more than that," Beckenbauer said.

## Sydney rehearses security

SYDNEY, July 27 (AP): The sky over Sydney buzzed with military helicopters Tuesday as commandos began practising anti-terrorism measures for the 2000 Olympics.

As the chiefs of Australia's more than 11,000-strong Olympic security force decided on the ground that police from future host cities would be observers only at the Sydney Games, Australia's elite military assault unit began hostage-rescue and other training on site.

Three Australian Army Blackhawk helicopters swept down over the Sydney Opera House and the Sydney Harbor Bridge, before circling the Olympic stadium, athletes village and other venues at the main Homebush site.

Until August 13, up to 12 Blackhawks will buzz the skies and dispatch assault teams from the Special Forces Group who will raid various Olympic venues to save "hostages," and perform other high-speed transport and night flying maneuvers. No live ammunition will be used.

"In this world there is always the risk of a terrorist incident," said Brigadier Philip McNamara, the group's commander. "We are not saying that the risk is high, but what we need to be is ready to counter that risk."

"This exercise will be as realistic as we can make it," he said.

Meanwhile, Bob Myers, the second in command of Sydney's Olympic Security Command Centre, said lessons learned in Atlanta led to the decision not to include foreign officers on the security team.

"(A) lesser team Atlanta is (that) we'll use our own police service," Myers said at a security and emergency services seminar.

"The volunteer programme over there, internationally, did not work at that well," he said.

In addition to the problem of finding accommodation for visiting officers, "If you've got people coming to work for you, you've got to provide them with some incentives."

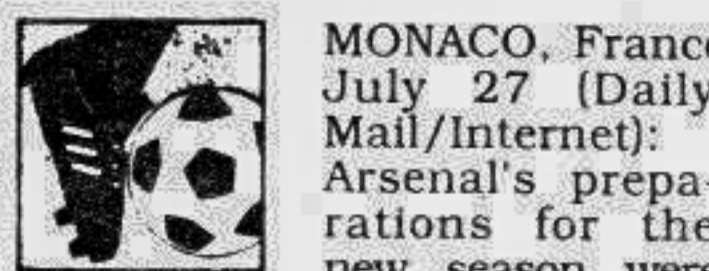
"With my knowledge of Atlanta, there were no incentives," Myers said. "The police were put in fairly bad accommodation and worked in fairly ordinary circumstances and they lost interest very quickly."

Future host cities Salt Lake, Athens and Turin as well as bidders for the 2008 summer games are entitled to send security staff to Sydney for the games.



Monaco's Farnerud (L) and Arsenal's Silvino fight for possession during their friendly match on July 26. —AFP photo

# Gunners' growing injury list



DAVID SEAMAN

Wenger was forced to parade Portuguese misfit Luis Boa Morte alongside the willing Nwankwo Kanu - a combination that will hardly instil fear in Arsenal's Premiership rivals.

Even if Bergkamp recovers in time for the Charity Shield, he will still be woefully short of match fitness when Arsenal begin their Premiership programme at home to Leicester on August 7.

After Nigel Winterburn had been penalised for tripping Monaco goalkeeper Fabien Barthez two minutes before half-time, Petit could not resist an uncomplimentary word in the ear of Monsieur Poulat, who promptly insisted that Wenger substitute his midfielder or have him dismissed.

It was Petit whose persistence had put Arsenal in front after 23 minutes.

New four million-pound Brazilian signing Silvinho, who can look forward to lengthy spells on the substitutes' bench if the left-sided partnership of Nigel Winterburn and Overmars is reunited, ended a fine run with a short pass which was helped on to Petit by Patrick Vieira.

Barthez blocked Petit's shot but the ball cannoned off the back of defender Christophe Pignol and looped into the empty net.

But Arsenal's lead lasted only three minutes before Monaco winger Pontus Farnerud sprinted on to a through pass by Marco Simone and struck the dropping ball firmly past Seaman.

To cap it all, Wenger's defensive thirlysomethings - Martin Keown, Lee Dixon and Nigel Winterburn - looked heavily-legged despite intensive conditioning in the French sunshine.

Wenger's problems do not appear to stop there. His nor-

mally watertight defence has looked at odds during the two friendlies on French soil and Emmanuel Petit does not appear to have overcome the urge to backchat at referees.

The French midfielder, who threatened to leave Highbury in January claiming his name had become a prized possession for English referees to put in their books, found Lyon official Eric Poulat equally unaccommodating.

After Nigel Winterburn had been penalised for tripping Monaco goalkeeper Fabien Barthez two minutes before half-time, Petit could not resist an uncomplimentary word in the ear of Monsieur Poulat, who promptly insisted that Wenger substitute his midfielder or have him dismissed.

It was Petit whose persistence had put Arsenal in front after 23 minutes.

New four million-pound Brazilian signing Silvinho, who can look forward to lengthy spells on the substitutes' bench if the left-sided partnership of Nigel Winterburn and Overmars is reunited, ended a fine run with a short pass which was helped on to Petit by Patrick Vieira.

Barthez blocked Petit's shot but the ball cannoned off the back of defender Christophe Pignol and looped into the empty net.

But Arsenal's lead lasted only three minutes before Monaco winger Pontus Farnerud sprinted on to a through pass by Marco Simone and struck the dropping ball firmly past Seaman.

To cap it all, Wenger's defensive thirlysomethings - Martin Keown, Lee Dixon and Nigel Winterburn - looked heavily-legged despite intensive conditioning in the French sunshine.

Wenger's problems do not appear to stop there. His nor-

mally watertight defence has looked at odds during the two friendlies on French soil and Emmanuel Petit does not appear to have overcome the urge to backchat at referees.

The French midfielder, who threatened to leave Highbury in January claiming his name had become a prized possession for English referees to put in their books, found Lyon official Eric Poulat equally unaccommodating.

After Nigel Winterburn had been penalised for tripping Monaco goalkeeper Fabien Barthez two minutes before half-time, Petit could not resist an uncomplimentary word in the ear of Monsieur Poulat, who promptly insisted that Wenger substitute his midfielder or have him dismissed.

It was Petit whose persistence had put Arsenal in front after 23 minutes.

New four million-pound Brazilian signing Silvinho, who can look forward to lengthy spells on the substitutes' bench if the left-sided partnership of Nigel Winterburn and Overmars is reunited, ended a fine run with a short pass which was helped on to Petit by Patrick Vieira.

Barthez blocked Petit's shot but the ball cannoned off the back of defender Christophe Pignol and looped into the empty net.

But Arsenal's lead lasted only three minutes before Monaco winger Pontus Farnerud sprinted on to a through pass by Marco Simone and struck the dropping ball firmly past Seaman.

To cap it all, Wenger's defensive thirlysomethings - Martin Keown, Lee Dixon and Nigel Winterburn - looked heavily-legged despite intensive conditioning in the French sunshine.

Wenger's problems do not appear to stop there. His nor-

mally watertight defence has looked at odds during the two friendlies on French soil and Emmanuel Petit does not appear to have overcome the urge to backchat at referees.

The French midfielder, who threatened to leave Highbury in January claiming his name had become a prized possession for English referees to put in their books, found Lyon official Eric Poulat equally unaccommodating.

After Nigel Winterburn had been penalised for tripping Monaco goalkeeper Fabien Barthez two minutes before half-time, Petit could not resist an uncomplimentary word in the ear of Monsieur Poulat, who promptly insisted that Wenger substitute his midfielder or have him dismissed.

It was Petit whose persistence had put Arsenal in front after 23 minutes.

New four million-pound Brazilian signing Silvinho, who can look forward to lengthy spells on the substitutes' bench if the left-sided partnership of Nigel Winterburn and Overmars is reunited, ended a fine run with a short pass which was helped on to Petit by Patrick Vieira.

Barthez blocked Petit's shot but the ball cannoned off the back of defender Christophe Pignol and looped into the empty net.

But Arsenal's lead lasted only three minutes before Monaco winger Pontus Farnerud sprinted on to a through pass by Marco Simone and struck the dropping ball firmly past Seaman.

To cap it all, Wenger's defensive thirlysomethings - Martin Keown, Lee Dixon and Nigel Winterburn - looked heavily-legged despite intensive conditioning in the French sunshine.

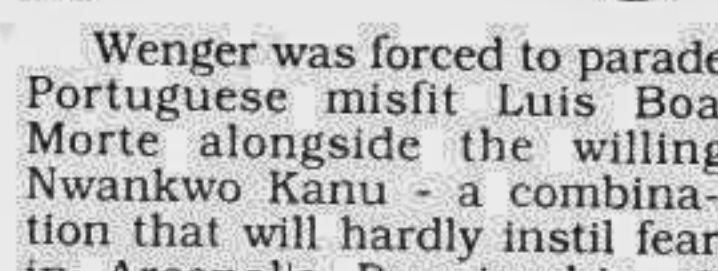
Wenger's problems do not appear to stop there. His nor-

mally watertight defence has looked at odds during the two friendlies on French soil and Emmanuel Petit does not appear to have overcome the urge to backchat at referees.

The French midfielder, who threatened to leave Highbury in January claiming his name had become a prized possession for English referees to put in their books, found Lyon official Eric Poulat equally unaccommodating.

After Nigel Winterburn had been penalised for tripping Monaco goalkeeper Fabien Barthez two minutes before half-time, Petit could not resist an uncomplimentary word in the ear of Monsieur Poulat, who promptly insisted that Wenger substitute his midfielder or have him dismissed.

It was Petit whose persistence had put Arsenal in front after 23 minutes.



DAVID SEAMAN

Wenger was forced to parade Portuguese misfit Luis Boa Morte alongside the willing Nwankwo Kanu - a combination that will hardly instil fear in Arsenal's Premiership rivals.

Even if Bergkamp recovers in time for the Charity Shield, he will still be woefully short of match fitness when Arsenal begin their Premiership programme at home to Leicester on August 7.

After Nigel Winterburn had been penalised for tripping Monaco goalkeeper Fabien Barthez two minutes before half-time, Petit could not resist an uncomplimentary word in the ear of Monsieur Poulat, who promptly insisted that Wenger substitute his midfielder or have him dismissed.

It was Petit whose persistence had put Arsenal in front after 23 minutes.

New four million-pound Brazilian signing Silvinho, who can look forward to lengthy spells on the substitutes' bench if the left-sided partnership of Nigel Winterburn and Overmars is reunited, ended a fine run with a short pass which was helped on to Petit by Patrick Vieira.

Barthez blocked Petit's shot but the ball cannoned off the back of defender Christophe Pignol and looped into the empty net.

But Arsenal's lead lasted only three minutes before Monaco winger Pontus Farnerud sprinted on to a through pass by Marco Simone and struck the dropping ball firmly past Seaman.

To cap it all, Wenger's defensive thirlysomethings - Martin Keown, Lee Dixon and Nigel Winterburn - looked heavily-legged despite intensive conditioning in the French sunshine.

Wenger's problems do not appear to stop there. His nor-

mally watertight defence has looked at odds during the two friendlies on French soil and Emmanuel Petit does not appear to have overcome the urge to backchat at referees.

The French midfielder, who threatened to leave Highbury in January claiming his name had become a prized possession for English referees to put in their books, found Lyon official Eric Poulat equally unaccommodating.

After Nigel Winterburn had been penalised for tripping Monaco goalkeeper Fabien Barthez two minutes before half-time, Petit could not resist an uncomplimentary word in the ear of Monsieur Poulat, who promptly insisted that Wenger substitute his midfielder or have him dismissed.

It was Petit whose persistence had put Arsenal in front after 23 minutes.

New four million-pound Brazilian signing Silvinho, who can look forward to lengthy spells on the substitutes' bench if the left-sided partnership of Nigel Winterburn and Overmars is reunited, ended a fine run with a short pass which was helped on to Petit by Patrick Vieira.

Barthez blocked Petit's shot but the ball cannoned off the back of defender Christophe Pignol and looped into the empty net.

But Arsenal's lead lasted only three minutes before Monaco winger Pontus Farnerud sprinted on to a through pass by Marco Simone and struck the dropping ball firmly past Seaman.

To cap it all, Wenger's defensive thirlysomethings - Martin Keown, Lee Dixon and Nigel Winterburn - looked heavily-legged despite intensive conditioning in the French sunshine.

Wenger's problems do not appear to stop there. His nor-

mally watertight defence has looked at odds during the two friendlies on French soil and Emmanuel Petit does not appear to have overcome the urge to backchat at referees.

The French midfielder, who threatened to leave Highbury in January claiming his name had become a prized possession for English referees to put in their books, found Lyon official Eric Poulat equally unaccommodating.

After Nigel Winterburn had been penalised for tripping Monaco goalkeeper Fabien Barthez two minutes before half-time, Petit could not resist an uncomplimentary word in the ear of Monsieur Poulat, who promptly insisted that Wenger substitute his midfielder or have him dismissed.

It was Petit whose persistence had put Arsenal in front after 23 minutes.

New four million-pound Brazilian signing Silvinho, who can look forward to lengthy spells on the substitutes' bench if the left-sided partnership of Nigel Winterburn and Overmars is reunited, ended a fine run with a short pass which was helped on to Petit by Patrick Vieira.

Barthez blocked Petit's shot but the ball cannoned off the back of defender Christophe Pignol and looped into the empty net.

But Arsenal's lead lasted only three minutes before Monaco winger Pontus Farnerud sprinted on to a through pass by Marco Simone and struck the dropping ball firmly past Seaman.

To cap it all, Wenger's defensive thirlysomethings - Martin Keown, Lee Dixon