

## Sir Alex tips Lazio for Serie A

MONTE CARLO, Aug 28: Manchester United manager Alex Ferguson, who knows a thing or two about winning championships, tipped Lazio to win the Serie A title this season after the Italians won the European Super Cup on Friday, reports Reuters.

Ferguson, who led Manchester United to a treble of European Cup, English League and FA Cup victories last season said: "Lazio really impressed me. They were desperately unlucky last year when Milan pipped them on the last day of the season, but I think they will win Serie A this year."

Their players work so hard, they have fantastic quality and I think they can go all the way. Like all Italian teams, they will be a real threat in the Champions League as well this season."

Argentine Juan Veron, who was voted man-of-the-match for his contribution in midfield, added: "To play Manchester United is something, to actually beat them is something very special indeed. This is a beautiful victory for Lazio, and really gives us great heart for Serie A and for the Champions League as well."

"If we play them at some stage in the League, we will have great confidence."

## Seedorf sidelined

MADRID, Aug 28: Real Madrid midfielder Clarence Seedorf's unhappy start to the season took a further turn for the worse on Friday as he suffered a training ground injury that will keep him out of action for at least two weeks, reports Reuters.

The Dutch international, whose father and representative was at the Bernabeu stadium on Friday to discuss a possible transfer to Italy, took a nasty knock on his right knee after a clattering challenge from team mate Ivan Campo.

Seedorf and Campo came to blows during Real's build-up to the intercontinental Cup match against Vasco da Gama in Japan last season.

However, there was no suggestion of any malice on Campo's part in this latest clash, which will have done little to improve dressing room harmony at the Spanish club.

Seedorf's father told reporters on Friday that he thought it would be for the best if the player now leaves Real Madrid.

Later Milan are believed to be closest to clinching his signature, although Manchester United — who may have to replace Roy Keane before the end of the season — were linked as a possible buyer in the English press this week.

Real are asking 4,000 million pesetas (25 million dollars) for Seedorf, who has been unhappy at being left out of the starting line-up this season.

Coach John Toshack says that while Seedorf remains part of his plans, no player can be guaranteed first team football this season.

## Ajax keep on winning

AMSTERDAM, Aug 28: Ajax Amsterdam maintained their 100 per cent record with a comfortable 3-0 win over Cambuur Leeuwarden on Friday to cement their place at the top of the Dutch First Division, reports Reuters.

It was hardly an inspired display by the Amsterdammers but they were gifted the match through mistakes by the home side.

Two errors by goalkeeper Rob Hilbers, stand-in for injured regular Wim de Ron, and a mistake by defender Richard Elzinga led to the goals.

After six minutes Hilbers failed to hold a simple shot from just outside the box by Dani and he also allowed in a long-range effort by Wamberto in the 87th.

In between, Elzinga failed to clear the ball and gifted a goal to Brian Laudrup in the 52nd minute, allowing him space to run through and score his third of the season.

Defending champions Feyenoord and PSV Eindhoven, who have won both of their matches so far, have the chance to catch up with Ajax today, PSV host Fortuna Sittard and Feyenoord face Heerenveen in Rotterdam.

## IOC official's tip for Osaka

TOKYO, Aug 28: Osaka, seeking to host the 2008 Olympics, has been warned not to break new rules by entertaining International Olympic Committee (IOC) officials during a sports congress, it was reported Saturday, says AFP.

The new guidelines for cities bidding for the 2008 Games will be released in December, IOC spokeswoman Marilena Gueorguieva said in a telephone interview with the Japan Times.

Osaka should refrain from entertaining IOC officials. That includes the use of private money to entertain or promote the bid, she was quoted as saying from the IOC headquarters in Lausanne, Switzerland.

The Japanese city is scheduled to host an annual general meeting of the General Association of International Sports Federations (GAISF) in mid-October.

The association is headed by Kim Un-Yong, a South Korean IOC executive, who was almost expelled from the Olympic governing body for his role in the Salt Lake City bids-for-cash scandal.

Following the scandal, the IOC moved to revise the guidelines for bidding cities.

## Wasim may return soon

KARACHI, Aug 28 (Internet report): Wasim Akram may make the team for the Toronto series against the West Indies if he is cleared by the Judicial Commission and the Pakistan Cricket Board's (PCB) ad hoc committee.

The team for the three-match series would be announced in the second week of September.

Quoting chief selector Naushad Ali, the English language newspaper The News reported on Friday that since Wasim was an automatic selection as a player, he might make the squad at the last moment, that is if the commission and the PCB chairman cleared him. "Though he is not among the camp probables and remains suspended, considering his status as a performer par excellence we'll keep our options open for him till the last moment."

World Cup captain Wasim, Ijaz Ahmed and Salim Malik were suspended by the PCB in the wake of the match-fixing allegations, but indications are that at least Wasim is going to make a comeback very soon. The chief selector also said that after the Toronto series, the

team which would be announced for the Sharjah tournament in October would be more or less the same for the



WASIM AKRAM

gruelling Australian tour.

The nucleus will be there. Since the team is scheduled to fly to Australia after the Sharjah event, at most there will be a few changes in the team."

He conceded that the selectors had discussed the concept of having separate Test and one-day sides — a theory suc-

cessfully employed by Australia and Sri Lanka. "It's too early to say anything, but we've in our minds some players for this purpose. Most probably we might have separate teams for Test and one-day games on the Australian tour."

He also stated that selection for Sharjah and Australia would be based on the performances of the players in the national one-day championship starting from September 20. "All players, including the ones who go to Toronto, will have to appear in the tournament to be eligible for selection." To a query, he said the purpose of recalling players that the ex-Yorkshire and Leicestershire all-rounder chose as his example of how a player can take unfair advantage of the existing law.

But, a report of The Dawn hinted that the hopes of wicket-keeper Latif were about to be shattered as the selectors allegedly decided to stick with Moin Khan arguing that only one wicket-keeper would be selected in the 15-man squad.

The former captain faced a similar treatment from the previous panel of selectors when he was invited for training camp for the Indian tour but ignored completely.

## Illy on throwing

LONDON, Aug 28 (Internet report): Ray Illingworth is urging cricket's lawmakers to act now to prevent more players slipping through the net and "throwing" their way to successful bowling careers in the first-class and even Test match arena.

The former England captain and chairman of selectors has said the International Cricket Council should determine what is what without further delay.

The off-spinner of yesteryear has also welcomed the review of Law 24.2 which he believes is incomplete.

He was speaking after months of controversy over the action of Sri Lanka off-spinner Muttiah Muralitharan — but it was a player of an older vintage that the ex-Yorkshire and Leicestershire all-rounder chose as his example of how a player can take unfair advantage of the existing law.

The biggest example was Sonny Ramadhin, Illingworth claimed. "I was always unsure about his action, but he was never called. Then a few months ago he himself said that he always threw it all the time. It is a very sad state of affairs, especially when you are talking about people who have taken hundreds of wickets."

Illingworth's suspicions these days centre on bowling techniques in the eastern reaches of the cricketing world and the fragility of a law that makes no mention of how the shoulder can be legally used to impart spin.

The law states you can bowl with a bent arm all the time if it is not straightened in the action. But what is does not mention is the shoulder. I believe a lot of bowlers in the Far East are using the shoulder."

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That left Surrey to score just one run and they lost Darren Bicknell lbw to the first ball struck by Ian Ward struck the winning single.

Defending champions Leicestershire meanwhile seem determined not to surrender their crown without a fight and they beat Gloucestershire by 225 runs at Grace Road.

At the Riverside, Durham lifted some of the gloom over Tyneside by moving into seventh place in the table and eight points clear of the relegation zone after beating Middlesex by six wickets.

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DeFreitas was adjudged lbw for 10 as he offered no shot to a ball that straightened, and when Karl Krikken was snared at silly mid-off for six Surrey

moved in for the kill.

Aldred was dropped at deep square leg but Ian Salisbury took his first wicket of the game when he had him caught behind for a single in his next over.

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It hasn't diminished the impact of this victory though. I am delighted we have beaten Manchester United. It lifts our morale for the Italian League and Cup battles ahead and I am delighted to be going home with another Cup. There is plenty of room in our trophy cabinet for even more."

Lazio, the last winners of the European Cup Winners' Cup which has now been discontinued, scored the only goal of a lively European club season curtain-raiser after a superb move that began when Stam lost the ball in the United midfield.

The match turned after Bernd Hollerbach levelled the scoring just before half time.

Croatian midfielder Nico Kovac and Dutch defender Nico-Jan Hoogma put Hamburg two ahead in the second half after Schalke keeper Oliver Reck fumbled two corners.

Hamburg goalie Hans-Joerg Butt compounded Schalke's agony by stopping a weak penalty from Schalke's Dutch striker Youri Mulder in the 69th minute.

Hamburg now top the table with seven points from three games, but with the bulk of this weekend's matches still to play, they are likely to be toppled from their perch.

In the evening's other match, promoted Arminia Bielefeld won 2-0 at Kaiserslautern to go third.

Arminia skipper Bruno Labbadia scored against his old club with header in the 51st minute. Defender Silvio Meissner made sure of Arminia's first win away at Kaiserslautern in 19 years by threading the ball home from 10 metres late in the game.

The records brought the total to 12 in the pool which will host next year's Olympics and extended the perfect run to seven days with at least one record.

Heins set up a 50 time trial during the morning heats and Krayzelburg followed suit by tackling the 50 backstroke at the end of the final session.

Heins broke her eighth breaststroke world record in 11 swims and Krayzelburg set his third backstroke mark of the meet in special 50-metre time trials organised around the main programme.

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Heins clocked 30.83 seconds to beat her 30.95 set at the Goodwill Games in New York last August. Krayzelburg

set a world record in the 50 free to claim the country's first gold by a male swimmer at a PanPacs.

"I only breathed once," said an exhausted Dedeckind. "I usually breathe twice but I saw Gary there so I thought I better only breathe once."

Dedeckind's 22.06 made him the equal fifth-fastest man in history, along with Dutchman Pieter van den Hoogenband, who clocked his 22.06 at the European Championships earlier this month. Hall Jr clocked

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