BUENOS AIK 'ES. Sept 30: Argentina striker the is poised to tie, up a move to Italian Serie A giant s Lazio, the player's agent Gus. tavo Mas-cardi claimed Wedne sday, re-

ports AFP. Boca Juniors forward Palermo would move for ports prove to be true. I soca said it was possible the cleal could still go ahead but said at pres ent no official contact has 1

Pa. ermo is the most prolific scorer in Argentinian domestic football' and last season scored 32 goals \ for his club and leads this sea son's standings with eight but in the summer he earned an unwanted place in the record books by missing three penalities in a single match for Ar, tentina in their 3-0 Copa America defeat by Colombia.

It is the onl v case of such a hat-trick at inter national level. Mascardi si vid Palermo. known as "El Loc'o" (the crazy one), would sign a five-year deal with Lazio worth 'wo million dollars a year.

The agent told K'adio Red station: "This is a very favourable opportunity for hit. "."

If the player did move to the Rome-based club he wou,'d join several international toant mates including Diego Sime one Juan Sebastian Veron, Ma, las Almeyda and Roberto Sensini Twenty-five-year-old Palern 10

admitted he was excited abou t the proposed move. He said: "It is a big opportunity for me. They tell me it is all settled, that everything is very advanced with Lazio's people but I would like to know a little bit more before I com-

ment on the situation." Davids' successful eye surgery

ROME, Sept 30: Dutch international Edgar Davids has had successful eye surgery for glaucoma, Juventus said on Wednesday, reports AFP.

The operation on the midfielder's right eye took half an hour in a clinic in Nantes. France, the club added. Juventus had been given the

all-clear from UEFA, FIFA and the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to field Davids after he used medicines containing banned substances to treat the eye problem. However, the deadline on

IOC authorisation runs out on October 3.

Davids played in the Juventus clashes against Cagliari and Udinese earlier this month wearing swimming goggles to protect the affected eye.

Brazil's Australia tour in doubt

SYDNEY, Sept 30: Brazil's tour of Australia may be cancelled as promoters wrangle over the quality of the former World Cup champions' squad reports AFP.

The Brazilians were sched uled to play internationals against Australia in Sydney and Melbourne on November 14 and 17. but that agreement had been compromised by the decision of the Brazilian federation (CBF) to play Spain in Madrid on November 12.

The proximity of the games meant it was unlikely stars. Ronaldo, Rivaldo, Denilson and Roberto Carlos would be able to make the trip to Australia in the midst of the hectic European club calendar.

If the big-name Brazilians were not appearing, commentators said it would be more difficult to convince Australia's European-based players to return for the two games.

Tour promoter IMG was seeking assurances from the CBF that quality players would line up against the Socceroos amidst reports Brazil would send their under-23 Olympic team as a warm-up for the Sydney games.

The CBF met Wednesday to discuss the issue and IMG managing director Martin Jolly was threatening to cancel the deal if a contract signed in January was not honoured.

"It'll go ahead if I get a satisfactory team but I'm not going ahead with a sub-standard product," Jolly said here Thurs-

"We're going to be able to announce a great Australian team and I want to make surewe also get a great Brazilian team that the fans want to

"I'll accept a mix that includes some good younger players with some of their great players but I'm not prepared to

accept an Olympic team. "If it's not acceptable to me as a promoter then I hve to make a decision as a promoter -- I have to make a business decision." he said. Ticket sales for the series have been slow as fans were put off by the failure of leding Australian players to return home to play Manchester United and a less than fullstrength FIFA World Stars team to play the Socceroos in June-

Bulgarian footballer banned

SOFIA, Sept 30: Belasitsa Petrich captain Engibar Engiharov was given a 10-match ban on Wednesday for headbutting Lokomotiv Sofia's Dobromir Mitov during a Bulgarian First Division match at the weekend, reports Reuters.

Mitov's nose was broken in the incident. The match on Saturday ended 2-2.

The BFU disciplinary commission also banned Belasitsa from playing at home for six games.



An aerial tussle between Manchester United's Paul Scholes (R) and Marseille's Frederic Brando during their Champions' League encounter on September 29.

Cole, Scholes strike in time

MANCHESTER. England, Sept 30: Late goals by Andy Cole and Paul CHA MPIONS Scholes gave Eu-Jropean Cup holders Manchester United an import ant 2-1 victory over French sid . Marseille in Group D of the Ch ampions' League on Wednesd, ay, reports AFP.

The wir I lifted Sir Alex Ferguson's side to the top of the group but they were given a real fright by a w ell-organised Marseille team which had taken the lead in the 41s t minute through Ivory Coast striker Ibrahima Bakavoko.

Cole sparked' the United comeback with a spectacular overhead goal with 11 minutes remaining.

Four minutes 1 ater fellow England internation, al Paul Scholes scrambled in t he winner to end the French resi. stance.

Unbeaten United 1 10w have seven points from three; games, one more than Rolland (Courbis' team, whom they visit in three weeks' time. "We're very happy wit h the

result," said a relieved F. erguson, "though I didn't thini's we played as well in the second half as in the first half funrily "In the next match: we'll the

able to create some openings of 1 the counter-attack - it all reverses now.

United were shorn of injured duo Roy Keane and Ryan Giggs from their midfield but set out determined to improve on a run of three successive draws at Old

Ole Gunnar Solskjaer, played in by Cole, slammed in a shot after six minutes which Marseille goalkeeper Stephane Porato parried to safety, then five minutes later Porato blocked an equally fierce Nicky Butt effort in the box.

Marseille's former Everton striker Bakayoko swivelled and fired in a long range effort in response.

United were dominant, though, and Dwight Yorke fed Cole pushed his shot on the run just wide of Porato's left-hand Marseille, with Stephane

Dalmat prominent in midfield. began to settle but United should have been a goal up on the half hour. David Beckham lofted the ball forward and Cole cushioned

it to Yorke whose shot was straight at Porato with the Marseille defence nowhere. Scholes made a mess of the

follow-up and the French side escaped. Ten minutes later the 1993 European Cup winners stunned

Old Trafford by taking the lead. Berg dawdled on the ball near the centre circle. Bakayoko nipped in, advanced on goal and drilled his shot under United keeper Raimond Van Der Gouw, the ball veering up off the Dutchman and into

the roof of the net. It was the first goal United have conceded in this year's competition and it left them s hell-shocked at half-time. "It was a lack of concentra-

tion and we spoke about it before the game but unfortunately it's come to haunt us again. said Ferguson, whose side twice through away the lead in a 3-3 draw with Southampton here on Saturday

The home side were almost level four minutes after the break but Cole screwed his snot just wide after a fine run acorss the Marseille defence.

From an almost identical position Solskjaer pulled another effort wide but United's momentum didn't last and the French side gained more possession as the second period went on.

Dalmat whistled in three efforts on goal for Marseille but United also went close when Butt found Solskjaer at the far post and Scholes' weak header was gathered on his line by a scrambling Porato.

Ferguson brought on South African Quinton Fortune and then Teddy Sheringham but just as United looked to heading towards their first E'uropean defeat in two years. Cole struck.

Beckham lifted in the ball from the right, Jaap Stam headed it across goal and Cole, his back to goal, leapt up and bicycle-kicked the ball over his head and past Porato for a picture-book equaliser.

Four minutes later, United were ahead. Yorke headed the bail into the path of the onrushing Sc-

holes and the England for ward

wriggled past Porato and

scrambled the ball into the net

to complete the turnaround.

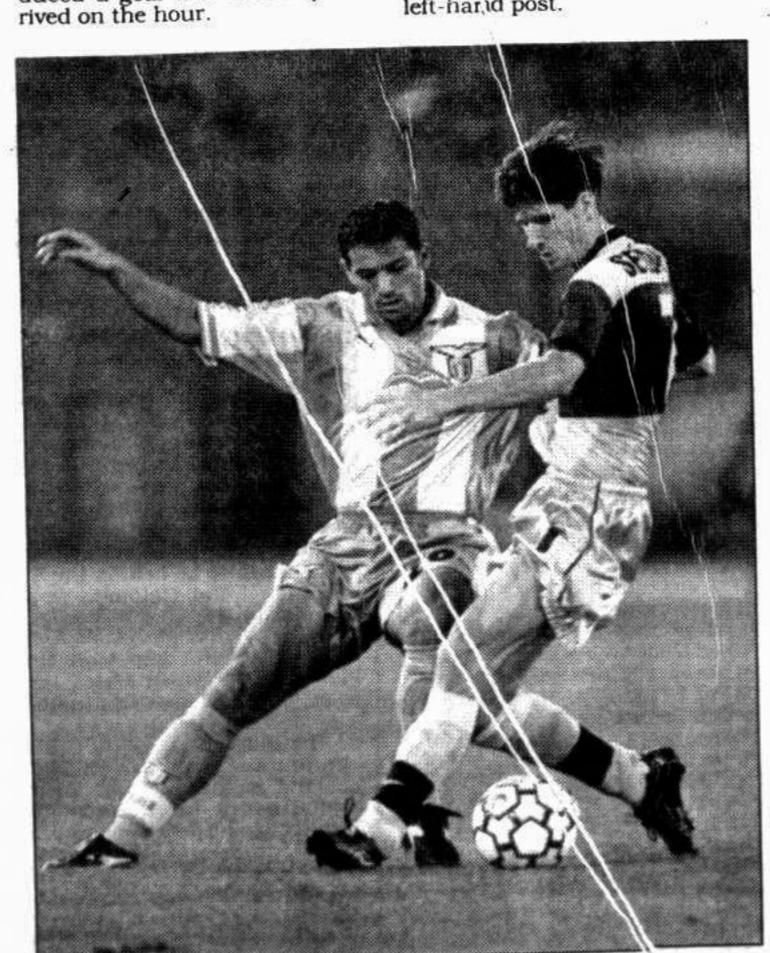
Maribor area and rifled in a low cross which evaded three defenders but was prodded into an empty net at the far post by Inzaghi. Reward for Conceicao was

just around the corner when Negro escaped down the right, pulled the ball back and the Portuguese tucked a low shot wide of the keeper and into the far corner.

Salas, who scored the winner against Dynamo Kyiv here last week, was back on the scoresheet in the 71st minute. Maribor, who only had a long

Veron sent over a booming cross. Mancini flicked it to the far post with his outstep and Salas leapt to provide a textbook header down and into the back of the net past a helpless Simeunovic.

Lazio's luckless attacks continued with the re-start as The Maribor keeper was Salas forced goalkeeper Marko caught out again five minutes Simeunovic to get down to an later when Inzaghi sent over a overhead kick through a crowhigh cross from the right, ded area in the 55th minute. Simeunovic failed to intercept It was only a matter of time and Salas was left alone to before the one-way traffic prosteer into an empty net, via the duced a goal and it finally arleft-hard post.



Lazio's Yugoslavia international Dejan Stankovic (L) and Maribor's Simon Seslar fight for possession at the Rome -AFP p hoto Olympic Stadium.

Zagreb blank Sturm Graz

ZAGREB, Sept 30: Croatia Zagreb completed their first Champions League victory yesterday, overpowering Group D rivals Sturm Graz 3-0. All the goals came from set pieces, re-

ports Reuters. Tomislav Rukavina opened the scoring in the 27th minute with a curling free-kick from the edge of the penalty area. Seven minutes later Tomo

Sokota hit the upper left corner of Josef Schicklgruber's goal from a 20-metre free kick. The dispirited Austrians failed to mount a recovery and

Sokota added his second in the 57th minute from the penalty spot after Belgian Jan-Pieter Martens felled striker Josip Simic inside the area.

never threatened Croatia.

Neither side managed to create a promising chance after that, although Croatia's Argentine coach Ossie Ardiles fielded inspirational midfielder Robert Prosinecki in the second half.

The victory revived Croatia's chances of progressing despite last week's home defeat by Olympique Marseille. Sturm Graz look virtually eliminated.

Rosenborg's gritty show

TRONDHEIM, Norway, Sept 30: Norwegian outfit Rosenborg showed real character to sal vage a 2-2 draw against Germany's Borussia Dortmund despite two early goals by the Germans in their Group C clash in the European Champions League Wednesday, reports

Goals from Sergej Barbarez and German international warhorse Jurgen Kohler had given the visitors. European champions three seasons ago under former coach Ottmar Hitzfeld. a two-goal cushion although that advantage was against the run of play after Rosenborg, spear headed up front by six foot six striker John Carew, dominated the early exchanges.

Barbarez's selection turned out to be an inspired choice by Dortmund coach Michael Skibbe because a deft lob with his weak right foot beat Rosenborg keeper Jorn Jamtfall after 11 minutes

From Dortmund's point of view it was a fortunate lead but better was vet to come. Kohler lunged for an Evanilson cross after 22 minutes and deflected it into the net

Despite that double blow and a hectic pace Rosenborg, to their credit, held steady and pulled themselves back into contention.

Jan Sorensen escaped his marker Dede to head home in the 35th minute while Carew having already hit the bar after the break - then wrongfooted Kohler at the correct moment and converted in the 68th

"Carew's an excellent striker and he won't be playing here for long," Dortmund trainer Skibbe said. "I expect he will move to England soon because they play a similar brand of football there to here in Norway."

Rosenborg and Dortmund are level in group C on five points, followed by Fevenoord on three and Boavista on one Fevenoord and Boavista drew 1-1 Wednesday evening.

Leverkusen held by **Kyiv**

LEVERKUSEN, Germany Sept 30: Germany's Bayer Leverkusen preserved their unbeaten record in Group A of the European Champions League but will be disappointed to have only drawn 1-1 with Ukraine's Dyna mo Kyiv here Wednesday. reports AFP.

Dynamo reached the semifinals in last season's competition but have sold star striker Andriy Shevchenko to AC Milan and now are not looking the same team without their front-

Leverkusen dominated the game and the only surprise was that it took them 52 minutes to take the lead. The goal was put away by

prolific German international striker Ulf Kirsten and the home fan's sat back waiting for a goal feasst.

Kirsten fully deserved his goal for a for aging performance that also earned a yellow card from French referee Claude Colombo.

But Leverk usen, leaders of the German Bundesliga, failed to press home their advantage despite laying slege to Oleksandr Shovkovsky's goal and the visitors made them pay for their profligacy 19 minutes from the

Ukrainian international Andrii Husin squared the match very much against the run of play to record the first point of the campaign for the visitors.

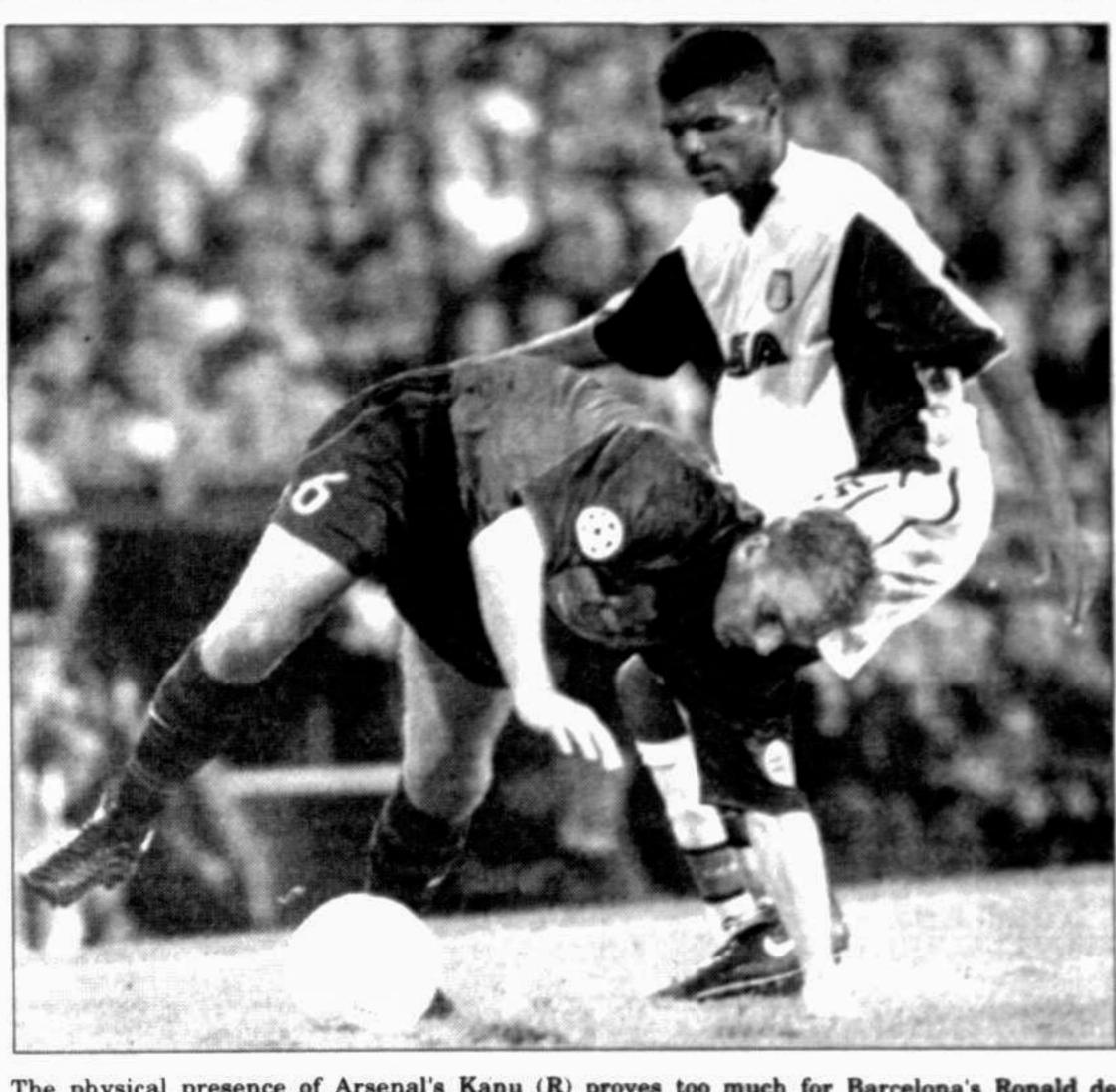
FIFA picks on Cham pions Leastue

MONTE CARLO. Sept 30: FIFA secetary general Michel Zen-Ruffinen launched a scathing attack on the new formula European Champions League here on We dnesday, reports AFP. "It is a fiasco," said Zen-Ruf-

fen. He charged that UEFA's decision to expand the Champions League to 32 teams instead of last season's 24 was harming football. He added that there was

also too much television cover-"The saturation of matches on television has only dil ut ed in-

terest in an extraordinary competition and as a consequence the UEFA Cup does not in it erest anyone," said Zen-Ruffen, here for Sportel - a conference/exhibition on television and



The physical presence of Arsenal's Kanu (R) proves too much for Barcelona's Ronald de Boer during their Champions' League match on September 29.

Kanu denies Barca

CHAMPIONS

BARCELONA. Sept 30: Nigerian striker Nwankwo Kanu scored a late equaliser to give Arsenal a priceless 1-1 draw at the Nou Camp

against Group B leaders Barcelona just seconds after the English side had been reduced to 10 men, reports AFP. It was a hugely courageous performance by the Londoners and leaves them in second place

in the pool while leaders Barcelona dropped points for the first time in their campaign. Barcelona, the only team to compete in every year of European club competition, were sitting pretty on maximum points before kick-off and, while it was a tight contest, for much of the match the English side never

really looked like getting back into the match. The Spanish champions were the better side in the first half by some way and Arsenal were in some ways lucky to only con-

cede one goal in the first period. But the goal the London side did concede in the 16th minute was down just to plain bad defending with French World Cup winning midfielder Patrick Vieira, England defender Martin Keown and Austrian goalkeeper Alex Manninger all

sharing the blame. Manninger had passed a late fitness test on a wrist injury to keep England's David Seaman on the bench, but he failed to clear a shot from one of Barcelona's many Dutchmen Phillip Cocu and Luis Enrique turned the loose ball into the

Earlier in the move Keown had failed to halt a run from Luis Figo while Vieira could have cleared the ball before Luis Enrique pounced.

lost, goals for, against, points):

GROUP A

Bayer Leverkusen

Lazio

Maribor

GROUP B

Barcelona

Fiorentina

AIK Solna

GROUP C

Rosenborg

Feyenoord

Boavista

GROUP D

Marseille

ACROSS

1 Parlor

piece

5 "Citizen

Kane"

determine

12 Masonry

13 Hirsch

support

14 Indivisible

15 A Baldwin

brother

defense

pieces

18 Legend

19 Flushed

20 Lab rat's

21 Hit hard

23 Dream

25 It may be

nuclear

injury

32 Breathing

minster

28 Knee

33 West-

34 Leave

36 Claim

37 Main-

38 Mimic

alone

lander's

memento

challenge

16 Skunk's

17 Chess

9 Pre-

Manchester Utd

Croatia Zagreb

CROSSWORD

39 Charit-

42 Singer

44 Com-

donation

Damone

ments

Sandy

48 Whopper

a-minute

52 Between

assign

ments

54 Solidified

hammer

55 Ball- —

56 Lend a

hand

Mustard's

49 Platter

50 Laugh-

51 Rd.

53 Col.

from

Sturm Graz

Borussia Dortmund

Arsenal

Dynamo Kyiv

STANDINGS

played in Groups A to D Wednesday (played, won, drawn,

European Champions' League tables after matches

By Eugene Sheffer

DOWN

1 Junk

e-mail

2 Unctuous

and iamb

enemies

5 Tempes-

tuous

dores

work

7 Mass

8 Holly-

wood VIP

"Touched

(Abbr.)

9 Downey

Angel"

mother

Cologne

45 Get one's

dander up

10 Don

Wednesday's answer

3 Trochee

4 Bitter

The Londoners played a distinct second fiddle to Barcelona with the Catalan side's Brazilian ace Rivaldo leading the way and experienced skipper Josep Guardiola pulling the strings in

Manninger had to throw up an arm desperately to knock away dashing winger Luis Figo's angled shot after a Rivaldo freekick had been deflected across the area, and from the subsequent corner in the ninth minute. Lee Dixon had to hack Rivaldo's header off the line.

But Arsenal were unlucky when Barca's Frank de Boer received only a yellow card when he cynically tripped his Dutch compatriot Marc Overmars who was embarking on a dangerous run 40 vards from goal. Another Arsenal Dutchman

Dennis Bergkamp was booked for a reckless challenge from behind on Rivaldo. After 34 minutes Rivaldo hit a thundering cross-shot from just inside the corner of the penalty box and narrowly whis-

led over Vieira later earned his sec ond vellow card of the campaign for an unnecessary foul on Rivaldo, leaving him just one more away from an automatic one-

match ban. Then right on half-time Ri-

Fiorentina fail to break Solna

SOLNA, Sweden, Sept 30: AIK Solna picked up their first point in the Champions League with a 0-0 draw with Fiorentina. The result still left the Swedish League leaders at the bottom of the Group B standings with little chance of making the tournament's second round. Fiorentina is next to last with only two points, reports AP.

a fizzing drive just over the bar from a central position. In the second period Barca continued to press and Vieira's

competitive approach was leaving him looking vulnerable to a Keown almost redeemed his earlier mistake but he failed to

hit the target when the ball fell to him in the home side's penalty area Suddenly Arsenal were look ing a threat and Vieira thread

a ball through to Nigerian

Nwankwo Kanu who placed his shot too close to Barcelona keeper Ruud Hesp, a Dutchman needless to say. Arsenal boss Arsene Wenger replaced Bergkamp with Croatian striker Davor Suker, who

entered the field to a chorus of boos - his previous club was Barca's hated rivals Real Madrid Suker did not take long to make his mark but unfortu-

nately for Arsenal it was in the referee's book for a foul on Winston Bogarde. Finally Arsenal were reduced to 10 men when French utility

man Gilles Grimandi was sent off for reckless use of the elbow. But just as Barca looked to have seen off the storm Arsenal equalised

Suker's bustling presence unsettled the Barca defence and Kanu reacted quickest to level the match.

RESULTS AT A GLANCE

Collated Champions League results on Wednesday: Group A

At Leverkusen, Germany Bayer Leverkusen (Ger) (Kirsten 52) Dynamo Kyiv (Ukr) 1 (Husin 71)

At Rome Lazio (Ita) 4 (S.Inzaghi 60, Conceicao 62, Salas 71, 76)

Maribor (Slo) 0 Group B At Barcelona Barcelona (Spa) 1 (Luis En-

rique 16) Arsenal (Eng) 1 (Kanu At Stockholm AlK Solna (Swe) 0 Fiorentina

Group C At Trondheim, Norway Rosenborg (Nor) 2 (Sorensen 35. Carew 68) Borussia Dortmund (Ger) 2 (Barbarez 11.

Kohler 22) At Porto, Portugal Boavista (Por) 1 (Mario Silva 87) Feyenoord (Ned) 1 (Borsvelt

Group D At Manchester, England Manchester United (Eng) 2 (Cole 79. Scholes 83) Marseille (Fra) 1 (Bakayoko 41)

At Zagreb Croatia Zagreb (Cro) 3 (Rukavina 28, Sokota 34, 57pen) Sturm Graz (Aut) 0

11 DNA passenger 20 London landmark 22 Coeur ď-Idaho 29 30 31 25 26 27 24 Seek huge profits 6 Do steve- 25 Scale members 26 Model Carol emigration 27 Troubleladen spacecraft 48 29 Copper 30 Cribbage 31 Storm CRYPTOCUIP 35 Find the 36 City near

ZUV, VOCOLAF, K QEPZOLSIYR

39 Reaction A W J O C O C S A D K J I R U C V T U K

WIPUQD AC YTANNUCV KNLOOK Yesterday's Cryptoquip: I'D SAY THAT A SHARP DELI OWNER WILL ALWAYS BE ABLE TO SPOT

BALONEY Today's Crypto quip Clue: I equals A

46 Polluted The Cryptoquip is a raubstitution cipher in which one letter stands 47 Dance for another. If you think 'that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locr,ting vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Lazio too good for Maribor Conceicao picked up the ball It see, med impossible to miss on the right-hand side of the ROME, Sept 30: from suci's a distance, but former Cryst.al Palace midfielder

Attilio Lomi ardo also managed

the feat three minutes later

when he faile'd to connect with

Lombardo li mped off injured

Conceicao's cr.oss from the left.

soon afterwards to be replaced

by Argentinian Juan Sebastian

Veron, and Lazio continued to

ually let down by the tinal pass

or shot, provoking the fury of

Mancini, who tried to shout

shot over the bar from Kliton

Bozgu to show for their opening

45 minutes, didn't seem to reel

Cipi's absence and continued to

some sense into his men.

play the ball around.

However, they were contin-

press forward.

CHAMPIONS

Lazio romped to a 4-0 victory over 10-man Maribor here on Wednesday night and staked their claim to a place in the European Champions League

second round from Group A, reports AFP. Lazio failed to exploit their first-half possession, missed two golden opportunities to score and wasted their numerical superiority after Maribor's Alba-

nian-defender Geri Cipi was sent off in the 20th minute. But the second half was a very different story as they floored the Slovenians with a punishing one-two in the space of two minutes.

goal for Simone Inzaghi on the hour and then scored one himself in the 62nd minute, while Chilean substitute Marcelo "Il Matador" Salas added two more in the space of five minutes. The scoreline was a fair reflection of the match but the

Sergio Conceicao set up a

Slovenians, who didn't manage a single shot on target all night, will regret seeing their hour-long resistance count for nothing. Lazio coach Sven Goran Eriksson said: "The first half was very difficult. They defended well and got people behind the ball. Even when they

were down to 10 men it was hard for us.

"But after we got the first goal, it became easy. Lazio made a bright enough start and should have been ahead in the 13th minute when Inzaghi missed an absolute sit-

Roberto Mancini chipped the ball over but from right in front of the six metre-box - and with the goalkeeping dropping to the ground - Inzaghi's first-time shot hit the crossbar and bounced out.

Boavista tie Feyenoord

OPORTO, Sept 30: Boavista goalkeeper William Bassey Andem was sent off a minute from time against Feyenoord in a Champions' League Group C match soon after Mario Silva saved a point for his side with an 86th minute equaliser. Paul Bosvlet had put Feyenoord ahead in the 62nd minute, reports Reuters.

Borussia Dortmund and Rosenborg are leading the group with five points, Feyenoord have three and Boavista one.