

Walsh's arm right as rain

JAMAICA, Oct 24: Julian Fountain is a fielding coach, not a faith healer, but he claims he has restored one of the weakest throwing arms in cricket to its former strength.

He told the Daily Gleaner after a recent session with Jamaican players at Kingston's Sabina Park that the great West Indies fast bowler Courtney Walsh should now be able to throw from the deep for the remainder of his cricketing career.

The 37-year-old Walsh has not thrown from the outfield for a number of years, preferring to bowl in the ball because of pain associated with throwing from distances. But, according to the paper, he was convinced by Fountain to try a different style that had done the trick.

"When I came here, I was told that Walsh couldn't throw and that he hadn't thrown for ten years," Fountain said.

"However, I managed to convince him to change what he did, the way he threw the ball and he was able to throw to me from 20-25 yards without any pain whatsoever."

"I think it was a case of Walsh being tense, not relaxed when throwing, and that caused the pain," Fountain added.

Fountain, a 37-year-old Englishman, was appointed by the West Indies Cricket Board (WICB) to work with the team during last season's home series against Australia and the World Cup in England.

But he does not have a full-time WICB contract and told the Gleaner he is not happy with the consistency with which he works with the senior team.

"I haven't been with the senior team since the World Cup," he explained.

"I understand that developing youngsters is key because they are supposed to be the ones to take over in the future but there are fielding practices in the senior team that need to be corrected," (Courtesy: Daily Gleaner of Jamaica)

Azhar remains defiant

BHOPAL, Oct 24: Deposed Indian captain Mohammad Azharuddin Saturday ruled out possibility of his retiring from the game in the near future and said he was confident that he would be selected for the third Test against New Zealand, reports PTI.

"I have not at all thought of retiring from the game of cricket," the veteran of 98 Tests and 323 one-day internationals told reporters here.

He said he was not only hopeful but confident as well that he would be selected for the October 29-November 2 third and final Test against the tourists at Ahmedabad and for the Australian tour starting November 22.

The team for the final Test against New Zealand will be selected at Kanpur on October 26 while that for the one-day matches and the Australian tour are scheduled to be picked during the Ahmedabad Test.

The 36-year-old wristy Hyderabad batsman said he had no problems with the new coach and former colleague Kapil Dev or in playing under the new captain Sachin Tendulkar and pointed out that he had given good performances under Tendulkar's captaincy earlier.

Test debut for Dippenaar

JOHANNESBURG, Oct 24 (AFP): Hendrick "Boeta" Dippenaar will make his Test debut for South Africa against Zimbabwe in Bloemfontein Friday in the first of two home-and-away Tests between the southern Africa neighbours.

Dippenaar, 22, was picked as an opening batsman following injuries to both South Africa's regular Test openers, Gary Kirsten and Herschelle Gibbs.

He will partner Adam Bacher, who was recalled after being dropped last season.

Kirsten's record run of 53 consecutive Tests for South Africa ended when he suffered a broken bone in his left little finger in a provincial match Friday, while Gibbs has not recovered from a toe tendon injury he received during a one-day tournament in Kenya earlier this month.

The Test will be the first to be played in Bloemfontein. The return match will start in Harare on November 11.

TEAM

Hansie Cronje (captain), Adam Bacher, Boeta Dippenaar, Jacques Kallis, Daryl Cullinan, Jonty Rhodes, Shaun Pollock, Mark Boucher, Lance Klusener, Allan Donald, Paul Adams, Nicky Boje (12th man).

Victory for Victoria

ADELAIDE, Australia, Oct 24 (AFP): A double-century opening partnership propelled Victoria to a come-from-behind outright victory over South Australia in their Sheffield Shield cricket match at the Adelaide Oval Sunday.

South Australia set a target of 287 runs off 79 overs in declaring their second innings at 220 for five.

But centuries by openers Matthew Elliott and Jason Ambrose and the failure of the South Australian bowlers pushed Victoria past the total with nine wickets to spare.

Victoria scored 287 for one in 64.5 overs with Elliott and Ambrose compiling an opening stand of 242.

Ambrose brought up his second first-class century to remain not out 123 off 182 balls with 14 fours. Elliott made 137 off 188 deliveries, including 16 fours and one six.

Serie A

Weah wins it for Milan



MILAN, Oct 24: George Weah snatched a heart-stopping 2-1 victory for champions AC Milan in the last minute of the derby here on Saturday night, after Inter skipper Ronaldo scored and then got sent off, reports AFP.

Ronaldo converted a 19th minute penalty like a true hero but turned villain in the 33rd when he elbowed Milan defender Fabian Ayala in the face as they went up for a high ball in midfield.

Referee Gennaro Borriello missed the blow but his linesman made sure he knew about it and the red card - Ronaldo's first since he arrived in Italy in 1997 - was brandished almost immediately.

Inter held out until the 73rd minute when Ukrainian substitute Andriy Shevchenko equalised, but it was 10 men apiece in the 83rd minute when Ayala himself was sent off for felling Christian Vieri on the break.

The tense but scrappy game looked set to end in a draw before nearly 80,000 people when Weah headed his 90th minute winner to earn Milan their first derby triumph for five and a half years.

It was Inter's second consecutive league defeat, while Ronaldo's sending-off was a double blow as he is now certain to miss Saturday's big game here against league leaders Lazio.

But the win was just what Milan needed before hosting Chelsea in the Champions League here on Tuesday night, despite the prospect of losing midfielder Demetrio Albertini with a thigh injury.

Coach Alberto Zaccheroni said: "We showed determination and clearly we were helped by Ronaldo's sending-off. I'm the first to admit it... but Milan deserved to win this match for what they did."

"The result's fine by me, but not the injury to Albertini. He's not at all well and he's an extremely important player for us."

As for keeping Shevchenko out until the last 20 minutes, Zaccheroni said: "We wanted to rest him for Tuesday's match, which for us is more important than this one tonight, even though I'm not saying this wasn't important."

"Tuesday's is a match we must win at all costs. If we don't, we're out of the Champions League," he claimed.

But after bagging all three points here, Zaccheroni admitted: "Winning helps you to win more. On the psychological level, which I think is the most important, this will be a big advantage."

Inter coach Marcello Lippi was clearly unhappy with Ronaldo, but tempered his criticism.

"I don't want to blame him for absolutely everything, but he did something extremely careless, and I think he knows

it. He was probably naive. It would have been better if he hadn't done it."

But defending his men, he insisted: "We didn't deserve to lose... There's a lot of disappointment and it's a defeat which burns a great deal. But I still think some good things came out of this too."

Matchwinner Weah could have opened the scoring in the sixth minute, after pouncing on an appalling pass by Inter midfielder Ousmane Dabo.

The Liberian worked a one-two with Federico Giunti but with only Angelo Peruzzi to beat from 10 metres saw his shot blocked by the Inter keeper.

It was a miss that Milan were to regret minutes later when Ronaldo was tripped by defender Luigi Sala as he broke into the penalty area.

Ronaldo steered the ball to the left and the goalkeeper to the right, and looked to be heading for a memorable night for all the right reasons. Instead, he received his marching orders for a flying elbow.

Milan's advantage on paper did not immediately translate on the pitch, although they showed more bite in the second half.

They should have equalised in the 50th minute when Oliver Bierhoff sprung Inter's off-side

trap, but with Peruzzi helpless in front of him the German balloned his volley over the bar.

Lippi re-shuffled his pack just before the hour, sending on Chilean striker Ivan Zamorano for midfielder Vladimir Jugovic, while Zaccheroni swapped Giunti for playmaker Zvonimir Boban.

The Croatian soon made his presence felt and created a chance which Bierhoff missed, prompting his replacement with Shevchenko.

The Ukrainian levelled almost immediately when the ball rebounded onto his leg in during a goalmouth melee, his seventh goal in six matches for Milan extending his lead at the top of marksmen's table.

Shevchenko flashed a header narrowly wide just three minutes later but there was a let-off at the other end when Zamorano failed to connect at the far post with a Vieri cross.

Peruzzi pulled off a miraculous double save to stop Weah when the Liberian was put clean through and it was soon 1-1 on sendings-off when Ayala was dismissed eight minutes from the end.

Vieri kept pushing but the breakthrough came for the Italian champions in the 90th minute when Weah rose to head home Boban's corner.



Veteran AC Milan captain Paolo Maldini (L) holding off his counterpart, Inter Milan superstar Ronaldo during their Serie A clash at the San Siro on October 23.

— AFP photo

Ronaldo pleads not guilty



MILAN, Oct 24: Ronaldo claims that his elbow in the face of AC Milan defender Fabian Ayala, which cost him a red card on Saturday night, was an accident and that he should be cleared on appeal, reports AFP.

Ronaldo opened the scoring from the penalty spot, but was sent off in the 33rd minute of a tense derby which finished 2-1 for AC Milan.

The punishment, which means the Brazilian skipper is now set to miss this weekend's big match with league leaders Lazio, was bitterly contested afterwards by the Inter Milan centre-forward.

"I didn't do anything," he said. "I was only protecting myself, raising my arm as the high ball came over. I didn't want to hurt him and I didn't want to hit him."

And he added later: "I repeat, I only wanted to protect myself. I play football. I know how to play football and I'm the one who usually takes the blows - I don't know how to give them out."

"And I want to add one thing. Just before I was sent off, Ayala had threatened me, saying 'I'm going to knock your teeth out'. The next move, I jumped with my arms out wide, to protect me, to stop him getting me."

"And he simulated what knows what kind of foul."

The incident was missed by the referee but seen by the linesman, who soon brought it to the match official's attention.

"The referee didn't pull out the red card at first, he whistled for a normal foul, because it was a normal foul," Ronaldo insisted. "Then he talked to the linesman, who made him change his mind."

Whether or not the blow was intentional and however much Ayala may have made of the contact, Ronaldo knows that he compromised the match for his teammates and coach Marcello Lippi.

His only hope is that the club lodge an appeal when the League's disciplinary officials hold their routine meeting later this week.

"I don't know if Lippi is angry with me, perhaps he is, see-

ing that because of a stupid thing, the match became all uphill for us."

"But I'm very angry too," he told the Gazzetta dello Sport. "I know that I damaged the team, but I know too that I didn't do it intentionally. Now I hope that Inter appeal and that I'll be able to play the next match."

"I know that I'm the captain and that a sending-off is therefore an even more serious matter. But what I did was not a serious matter."

Ronaldo was supported by Inter president Massimo Moratti, who said: "I don't think he intended to strike his opponent violently. We know Ronaldo, he's not the violent sort."

"I say that he didn't do anything that was particularly serious."

As for an appeal, based on TV evidence, Moratti said: "I'm not an expert on these things, but I'm certainly not ruling it out."

The red card was a shock for everyone on Saturday night. Ronaldo had only picked up two bookings in his previous two seasons with the club, once in 1997-98 and once last season.

Spartak's seventh title in eight years

MOSCOW, Oct 24: Spartak Moscow clinched their seventh Russian league title in eight years Saturday after a 1-1 draw at Dynamo Moscow, reports AFP.

The one point meant Spartak can no longer be caught by closest rivals Lokomotiv Moscow, who are likely to finish as runners-up.

Spartak were at full strength - save for coach and club president Oleg Romanisev, who was taken into hospital with a heart attack after his side lost last Wednesday's Champions' League match 2-1 at home to French outfit Bordeaux.

Dynamo made the early running before a 42,000 crowd and created several chances before opening the scoring through Konstantin Golovskoi from the penalty spot in the 31st minute following Spartak goalkeeper Alexander Bilimov's foul on Nikolai Pisarev in the box.

However, eight minutes later Spartak's Russian international midfielder Yegor Titov levelled by firing home from the left edge of the penalty box, shortly after Dynamo's Belarus international defender Erik Yakimovich was sent off for a second bookable offence.

Asian cup soccer

HONG KONG, Oct 24: A dramatic last-gasp equaliser from Indonesia's Rochi Putiraya denied underdogs Hong Kong a crucial win in the two sides' Asian Cup Group Seven qualifying tussle here today, reports AFP.

Outplayed and outclassed for much of the match at Hong Kong's Mongkok Stadium, the home team were just two minutes away from what would have been a priceless victory when disaster struck.

Hong Kong keeper Leung Cheuk-cheung flapped hopelessly at a free-kick swung in from the right flank, missing the ball completely and allowing Rochi to pounce and blast home to the relief of his teammates.

Rochi's late strike came after a period of sustained pressure by the Indonesians, who were camped in Hong Kong's half for most of the match.

The visiting team had fallen a goal behind on 62 minutes when substitute striker Au Wai-lun latched on to a speculative long ball from Hong Kong captain Lee Kin-wo, shrugged off his marker and crashed home an unstoppable shot from eight yards out.

Hong Kong, who beat Cambodia 4-1 in their last match, top group seven with four points from two games.

Indonesia, whose next match is against Cambodia in Phnom Penh on October 30, have one point from one game.

Keegan's injury list growing

LONDON, Oct 24: England coach Kevin Keegan was given more injury headaches Saturday as the countdown begins to England's European Championship play-off double header with Scotland next month, reports AFP.

There are now doubts over the fitness of Liverpool striker Michael Owen and Manchester United midfielders Paul Scholes and Nicky Butt just three weeks before the games with "the audit enemy" on November 13 and 17 to decide which of the two historic rivals will go to the 2000 European Finals in Holland and Belgium.

Owen came on as substitute in Liverpool's 1-1 draw at Southampton but limped off a few minutes later clutching a hamstring injury.

Liverpool boss Gerard Houllier said: "I believe it is only a slight strain but if that is the case if all it means is 10 days rest, but we cannot be certain at this stage."

Cute h'ball

Bangladesh Rifles earned a massive 27-7 goals victory over Narinda Progoti Boys Club in Cute Metropolis Premier Division handball league at the outer stadium handball ground yesterday, reports UNB.

Winners dominated the first half by 14-4.

Kamrul and Sajal scored five each for the winners while Litu netted three and Hamim two for the losers.

Premiership

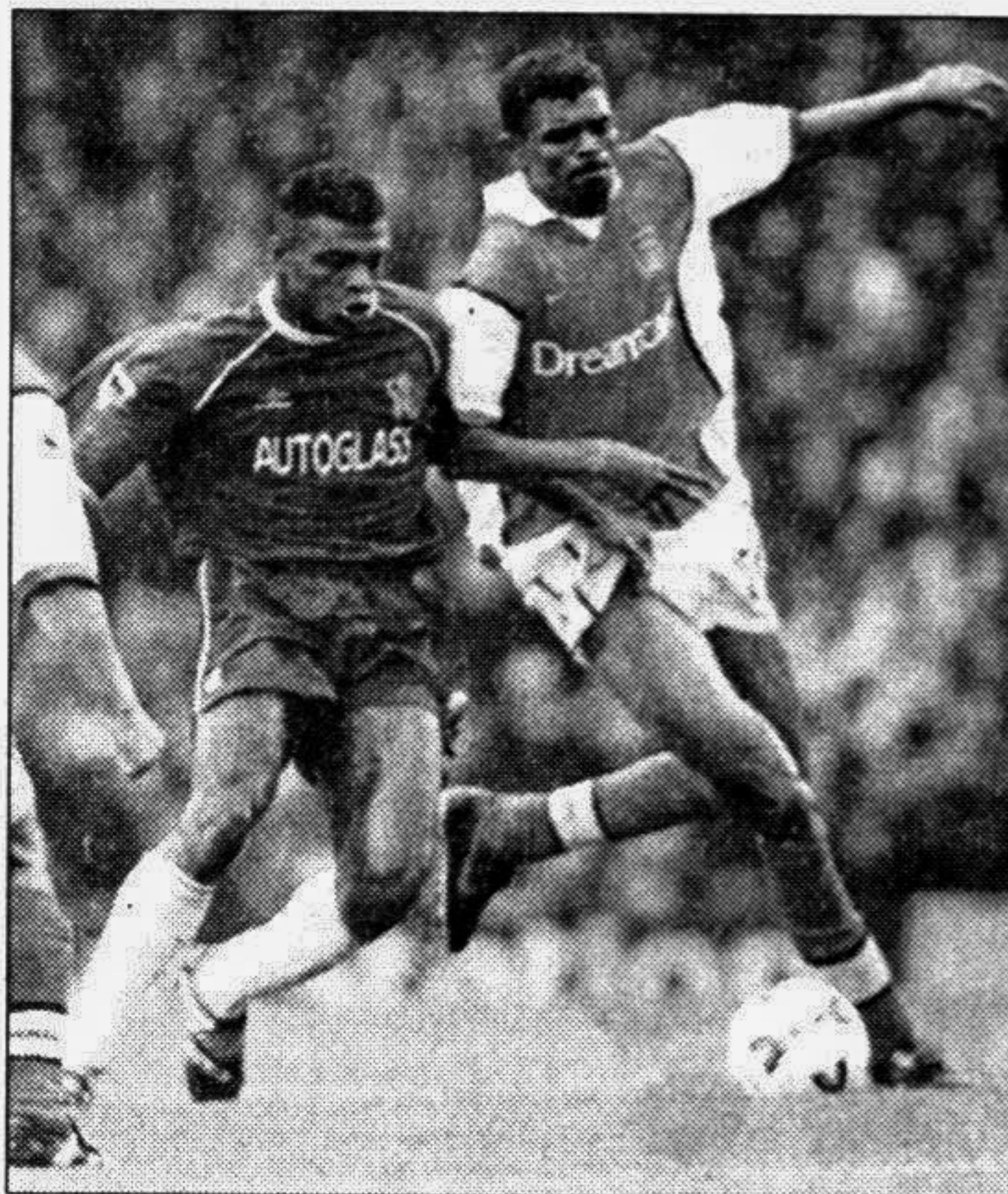
Kanu spoils Chelsea party



LONDON, Oct 24: Nigerian striker Nwankwo Kanu scored a hat-trick in the closing 15 minutes to snatch an astonishing 3-2 win for Arsenal at Chelsea in an all-London English Premiership

third goal surprised everybody. I thought he shouldn't take the chance to shoot. He looked like he was in position to cross the ball for somebody else but he scored."

"He does things you don't expect him to. That's the Kanu game. He likes the ball to his



Arsenal's Nwankwo Kanu and Chelsea's Marcel Desailly go for the ball.

— AFP photo

derby here Saturday, reports AFP.

Goals from in-form Norwegian forward Tore Andre Flo and Romanian utility man Dan Petrescu had put Chelsea in the driving seat but Kanu struck in the 75th, 83rd and 90th minutes to turn the game on its head and ensure Arsenal go level on points at the top with Leeds, who play Everton Sunday.

Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger was quick to pay tribute to the brilliance of Kanu who only played because Dennis Bergkamp was rested: "The

feet and he likes to turn the defence. It's difficult to compare him to other great players I've managed but he's a great player."

The result however was a bitter blow for Chelsea boss Gianluca Vialli, who thought his Chelsea side had done enough to secure all three points after taking a 2-0 lead.

Vialli said: "When you have scored two goals you feel you can do anything because you have such great confidence. This isn't the first time Kanu has scored a great goal. He's so dangerous."



Tottenham Hotspur's Steffen Freund (R) goes past Manchester United's Roy Keane on October 23.

— AFP photo

Primera Liga

Business as usual for Barca



MADRID, Oct 24: Barcelona moved a point clear of surprise packet Rayo Vallecano in the Spanish league on Saturday night after swamping Athletic Bilbao 4-0 at their majestic Nou Camp while Real Madrid lost further

ground after a 1-1 draw at Seville, reports AFP.

Barcelona, who let slip two points against modest Numancia last week, didn't touch the heights of Tuesday's 4-2 Champions League win over Arsenal at Wembley as they picked up another three points.

In truth, they didn't need to as Bilbao shot themselves in the foot when Aitor Larrazabal earned himself a red card after 36 minutes for pulling Luis Figo's shirt having earlier second booking

out to another of his Dutch internationals Boudewijn Zenden.

With a little over ten minutes remaining Figo slotted home a spotkick he had won himself with a bustling run into the area and Dani then beat the offside trap to steer home the fourth in the final moments.

Earlier, a goal eight minutes from time by Spanish international Raul rescued an off-colour Real Madrid as the reigning world champions drew with 1-1 at Seville to extend their winless Primera Liga run to seven matches.

Real needed a three-point tonic after their Champions League loss at Porto in midweek but were fortunate to escape thanks to Raul's predatory instincts in the penalty box.

Greek forward Vassilis Tsartas put Seville ahead in the 21st minute with a superb left-foot freekick and the hosts were so close to holding on for the win despite making few clear-cut chances until Raul's late intervention.

The striker had come on as a substitute on the hour for Christian Karembou.

Real's Welsh coach John Toshack is now coming under increasing pressure as the seven-times European champions have been completely overshadowed so far this season by table-topping little neighbours Rayo Vallecano, from the Madrid suburbs.

Vallecano play Real Betis on Sunday as they bid to go back ahead of Barcelona.

Real had hoped to welcome back England winger Steve McManaman back after a thigh muscle injury but he failed to recover in time.

French First Division

Laslandes double sinks Marseille



PARIS, Oct 24: Bordeaux's French international striker Lilian Laslandes became joint top scorer in the French First Division here Saturday as his two goals saw the defending champions come back from a goal down to beat eternal rivals Marseille 2-1.

Bordeaux, who qualified for the next phase of the European Champions League in midweek, now move up to third in the top flight behind leaders Auxerre and Lyon.

Marseille had taken a 21st minute lead through Spaniard Ivan De La Pena, signed from Lazio on loan.

It was a penalty finish from the former Barcelona player, Ibrahima Bakayoko headed the ball into the path of the man known during his Nou Camp days as "the little Buddha", who controlled the ball with his chest before firing the ball past Bordeaux goalkeeper Ulrich Rame.

But Laslandes squared the match just two minutes later on the rebound after De La Pena had cleared the ball off the line

from a header from Laslandes' strike partner for club and country Sylvain Wiltord.

Then with four minutes remaining Laslandes snatched what proved to be the winner with a header after good work from Francois Grenet.

Laslandes now has nine goals to his name putting himself level with Monaco's David Trezeguet at the top of the standings.

Auxerre's Stephane Guivarch and Monaco's Italian striker Marco Simone both have eight goals - the two teams meet Sunday.

Laslandes and Wiltord already have 16 goals between them this season - last season their 37 goals - Wiltord got the lion's share with 22 - were instrumental in the team's title success.

Savio injured

MADRID, Oct 24: Real Madrid's Brazilian winger Savio Bortolini is expected to be sidelined for three weeks after pulling a thigh muscle during the 1-1 draw at Sevilla on Saturday, reports Reuters.

Bordeaux and Marseille were renewing a longstanding rivalry. Last season the two teams were streets ahead of their first division rivals all season with Bordeaux edging the title on the last day of a campaign which saw the lead constantly change hands between the two sides.

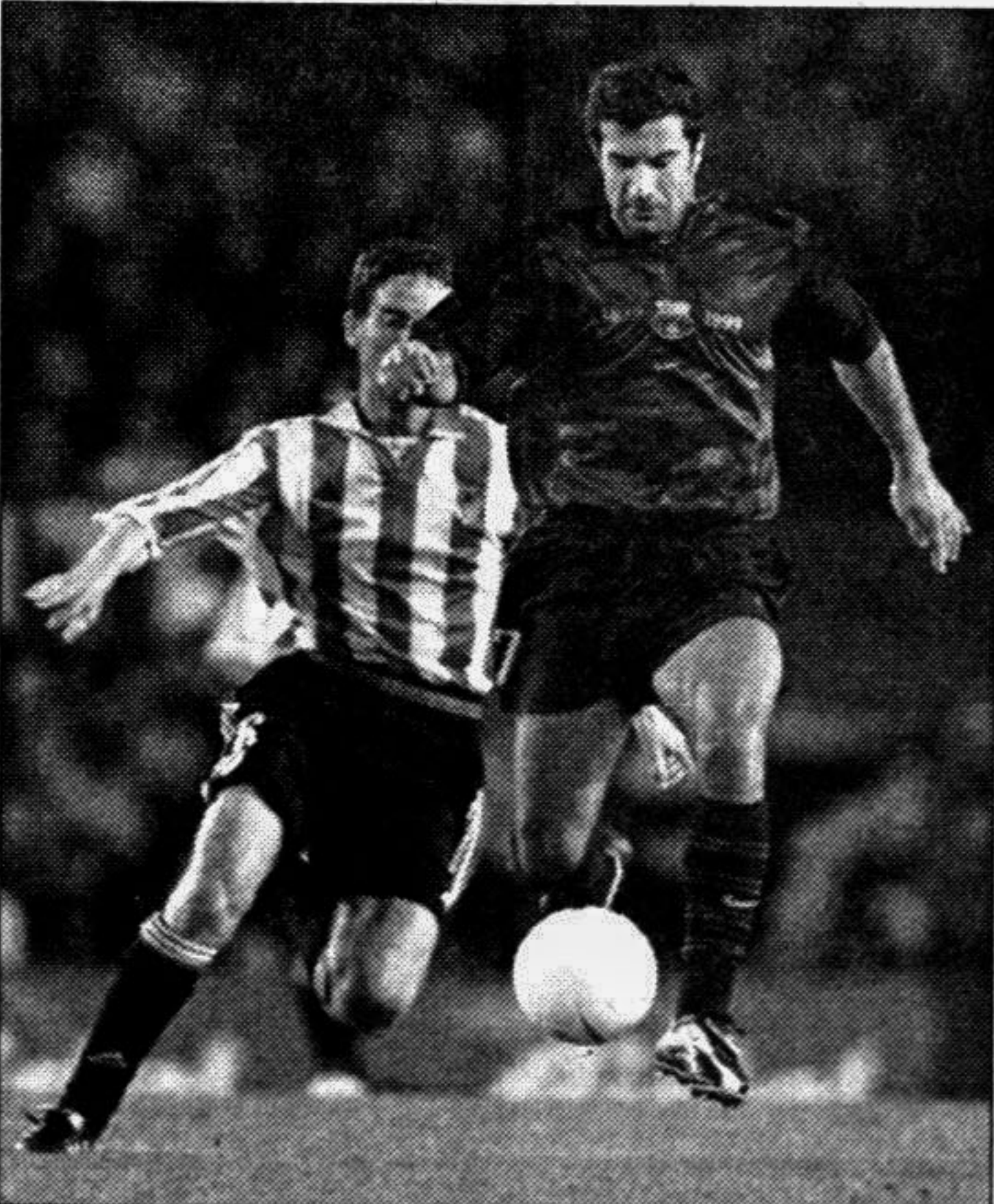
But the rivalry goes back longer than that. In the late 1980s and early 1990s the two teams were vying for the title of best team in France under controversial chairmen Bernard Tapie (Marseille) and the late Claude Bez (Bordeaux).

Bordeaux's coach in those days was Aime Jacquet, who last year coached France to victory in the World Cup.

In the other match played Saturday Rennes confirmed their return to form with a 4-1 thrashing of St Etienne.

Burundi striker Shabani Nonda put the Brittany outfit ahead only for Stephane Pedron to square the match three minutes later.

But Nonda struck again seven minutes after the interval before goals from Stephane Gregoire and Lamine Diatta ensured the 4-1 margin.



Barcelona's Luis Figo (R) pursued by an Athletic Bilbao player.

— AFP photo