

Sport

CFB adamant about Ronaldo

RIO DE JANEIRO, Nov 5: The Brazilian Football Confederation (CBF) has informed Italian Serie A outfit Inter Milan on Thursday that they will insist star striker Ronaldo plays for the Brazil national team for the two friendly matches with Australia on November 14 and 17, reports AFP.

Brazil coach Wanderley Luxemburgo has frequently clashed with the Italian club over who has priority for the prolific forward.

Brazil say that as Ronaldo has only played four friendlies this year (against Barcelona, twice against Argentina and once against Holland) that they have the right to include him.

The rules say a player must be released by his club for a maximum of six friendly matches.

The CBF also point out that Inter are not participating in any European competitions and so Ronaldo should be available for national service.

Johansson on the attack

STOCKHOLM, Nov 5: UEFA's Swedish president Lennart Johansson Thursday reiterated his opposition to the plan to stage the World Cup every two years - and also had a swipe at Europe's biggest clubs, reigning world champions Real Madrid in particular, reports AFP.

Johansson tried to play down talk of a personal feud with world governing body FIFA's Swiss president Sepp Blatter, who has invested a lot of his personal prestige in the proposed twice-yearly World Cup.

Johansson told Swedish agency TT: "I share numerous opinions with Mr Blatter and we get on as well as possible. But a biannual World Cup would be like celebrating Easter and Christmas together in December."

"But nevertheless if he (Blatter) persists in his project to stage the World Cup every two years, he must expect a counter-attack."

"I have told him I will make no comment on his work as long as he respects the FIFA statutes."

Johansson also slammed the big European clubs for trying to tailor the European Champions League in their favour rather than letting it be run purely on sporting criteria.

He said: "We must try and put brakes on a development that has gone too fast and too far. A club like Real Madrid with debts of millions must find the money. (Real president Lorenzo) Sanz wants a European League where the big clubs could not be eliminated while collecting the maximum amount of money. For us that is a crime against solidarity."

"The Champions League is a mix of sporting and financial interests, it would be useless to deny. The countries (England, Germany, Italy, Spain and France) which have generated the most financial outgoings want to have the guarantees on financial incomes. The ideal would be for sporting criteria to be decisive but we have to be realistic."

Johansson confirmed he would step down from his post in 2002 and would not seek a new mandate.

He confided: "I have a good idea on the name of my successor. It must be someone old enough to know how to manoeuvre and young enough to innovate and look to the future."

Saudi support for Morocco

RIYADH, Nov 5: Saudi Arabia has told FIFA boss Joseph Blatter it backs Morocco's bid to host the 2006 World Cup, although the football chief refused to be drawn on preferences, the official SPA news agency said Friday, reports AFP.

"Saudi Arabia supports the candidacy of Morocco," said Prince Sultan bin Fahd bin Abdel Aziz, the kingdom's equivalent of a sports minister, during a joint press conference with Blatter, who is visiting Saudi Arabia.

There are two African states who asked to host the final phase of the 2006 World Cup (Morocco and South Africa). As president of FIFA I cannot support the candidacy of any one country," Blatter said.

He said a "FIFA inspection commission will travel to these two countries" to judge their suitability to host the football tournament.

Other than Morocco and South Africa, three other countries have put in bids to host -- Germany, Britain and Brazil. Blatter arrived in Saudi on Thursday for a two-day visit, with discussions also focusing on cooperation between FIFA and the Saudi Football Federation and the fifth Intercontinental Cup due in 2001.

After his trip to Saudi Arabia, Blatter and his delegation will go on Friday to Gaza City, in the Palestinian territories, where he will be hosted at dinner by Yasser Arafat, chairman of the Palestinian Authority. FIFA said.

On Saturday he will travel to Amman, where he will attend a football match, and meet King Abdullah II on Saturday.

Blatter was originally scheduled to go to Israel during his current regional tour, but his visit has been postponed for a week to enable him to attend a Euro 2000 play-off between Israel and Denmark in Tel Aviv.

A Saudi delegate due to accompany Blatter on his tour decided to withdraw from the trip because it included a stop in Israel, an Emirati newspaper said Wednesday.



Kaiserslautern players celebrate their victory over Tottenham Hotspurs in the UEFA Cup in Kaiserslautern on November 4. — AFP photo

UEFA Cup second round second leg**Spurs doomed by Djorkaeff**

PARIS, Nov 5: French World Cup winner Youri Djorkaeff produced an astonishing injury time turnaround as he inspired Kaiserslautern to two late goals to win 2-0, 1-2 on aggregate, against England's Tottenham in the UEFA Cup second round second leg Thursday, reports AFP.

However, Spurs manager George Graham had dropped French star David Ginola in favour of Norway's Steffen Iversen and played Chris Armstrong as a replacement for Djorkaeff.

Ginola had admitted before the match that he was worried about what reception he would receive after accusations of play-acting in the first leg which culminated with the Germans accusing the Frenchman of diving to win a penalty.

Ginola finally made his appearance as a substitute late in the second-half but the boos were muted.

And then Djorkaeff turned the match upside down in the space of a minute when normal time was already up.

First he made a brilliant run before threading the ball through to Buck who was just outside and sidefooted home.

And then the Frenchman made another surging run, finding Buck on the right-hand flank.

The cross was turned into his net by Tottenham's Carr.

A bitter night, for Graham was not made any sweater as the team he ditched for Spurs, Leeds United, eased through 7-1 on aggregate against Russian outfit Lokomotiv Moscow.

A double strike by Michael Bridges handed the English Premiership leaders a 3-0 win extending their unbeaten run in all competitions to 12, including 11 wins.

Bridges finished off any vague hopes Lokomotiv had of making a comeback when he struck home his second on the verge of halftime outrunning the Russian defence to lash home a shot after Norwegian midfielder Erik Bakke had delivered a superb long pass from halfway.

The former Sunderland striker had scored his first goal of the European campaign in the 27th minute tapping in from two yards out past keeper Ruslan Nigmatullin after Lee Bowyer nodded down to him to level down and out.

"When you win in injury-time it's great when you lose in extra-time it's cruel," a dejected Graham said.

Tottenham's despair will be exacerbated by the knowledge that bitter North London rivals Arsenal will enter the competition in the next round by virtue of finishing third in their Champions League group.

Tottenham's 1-0 victory in the home on the home leg looked set to be enough with the scoreline after 90 minutes 0-0 on the night. But this time it was the German side who produced the injury-time heroics and the English side that was left down and out.

Bayern simply relieved

BERLIN, Nov 5: Bayern Munich president Franz Beckenbauer encapsulated the relief that followed his club's Champions League survival when he said: "Let's just be happy that we made it," reports Reuters.

Last season's finalists knew they had been close to disaster after scraping through the opening group stage in second place with a 1-0 home win over Rangers on Wednesday.

Coach Ottmar Hitzfeld was at a loss to explain why key players failed to perform under pressure.

"Maybe a few of them were afraid of not qualifying for the next round. That would have been a huge embarrassment for us," he said.

Captain Steffen Effenberg came under fire from German media after he made little impact on the match and declined to take the penalty converted by Thomas Strunz in the 33rd minute.

Goalkeeper Oliver Kahn, who saved Bayern with a number of spectacular saves, reckoned his team were still devastated by the dramatic 2-1 defeat by Manchester United in the last final. United sank them with their two late goals.

"The trauma is still in our heads, it made our legs heavy," Kahn said.

Bayern manager Uli Hoeneß warned his team would be in for a rough ride in the next phase. "We have to vastly improve our game if we want to keep up with the big teams," he said.

Hertha Berlin lost 2-0 at Chelsea on Wednesday and also finished second in their group to reach the last 16, but Bayer Leverkusen and 1997 European champions Borussia Dortmund went out.

Blasting Dortmund as a failure, the daily Bild reported that

the team has a 52-million mark (\$28 million) payroll — but zero success.

"It's a disgrace to German soccer what Dortmund put together in its 1-0 loss to Boavista Porto," Bild said of Tuesday's match. "It was a disaster. The greatest calamity of the decade for us," he said.

Leverkusen were also hampered after failing to score against lightweights Maribor Teatnac.

"A team that fails to win any games at home against Lazio, we don't deserve to make it to the next round of the Champions League," admitted Bayer Leverkusen striker Ulf Kirsten.

The only German side who seemed to spark any optimism were Hertha Berlin, despite defeat in their last two games.

We accomplished something that no one expected us to do," said Hertha president Dieter Hoeness. "We deserved to go through. It wasn't just luck. It was hard work."

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COLLATED UEFA CUP RESULTS

Collated results of UEFA Cup second round second leg matches played on Thursday:

At Montpellier, France
Montpellier (Fra) 0
Deportivo La Coruna (Spa) 2
(Makaay 45, Pauleta 83)
Deportivo win 5-1 on aggregate

At Warsaw
Legia Warsaw (Pol) 1
(Czeresewski 11) Udinese (Ita) 1
(Sosa 41)
Udinese win 2-1 on aggregate

At Rome
AS Roma (Ita) 1 (Fabio Junior 88)
Gothenburg (Swe) 0
Roma win 3-0 on aggregate

At Moscow
Lokomotiv Moscow (Rus) 0
Leeds United (Eng) 3 (Harte 16-pen, Bridges 28, 45)
Leeds win 7-1 on aggregate

At Zurich, Switzerland
Grasshopper Zurich (Swi) 1
(Yakin 76) Slavia Prague (Cze) 0
Prague win 3-2 on aggregate

At Stavanger, Norway
Stavanger Viking (Nor) 2
(Berland 3, Dadason 84) Werder Bremen (Ger) 2 (Wiedener 43, Herzog 63)
Match finished 2-2 on aggregate

At Bremen
Werder Bremen win on away goals

At Helsingborg, Sweden
Helsingborg (Swe) 1 (Stavrum 86) Parma (Ita) 3 (Di Vaio 11, 42, 43)
Parma win 4-1 on aggregate

At Arnhem, Netherlands
Vitesse Arnhem (Ned) 1 (Krekel 64) Lenza (Fra) 1 (Blanchard 90)
Lens win 5-2 on aggregate

At Nantes, France
Nantes (Fra) 4 (Sibierski 49, Monterrubio 60, Devineau 74, Da Rocha 82) Inter Bratislava (Svk) 0
Nantes win 7-0 on aggregate

At Athens
Panathinaikos (Gre) 1 (Pflipsen 90) Graz AK (Aut) 0
Aggregate score 2-2. Panathinaikos win on away goals rule

At Kaiserslautern, Germany
Kaiserslautern (Gen) 2 (Buck 90, Carr 90-09) Spurs (Eng) 0
Kaiserslautern win 2-1 on aggregate

At Amsterdam
Ajax (Ned) 0 (Hapoel Haifa (Isr) 1 (Rossi 60-pen))
Ajax won 3-1 on aggregate

At Wronki, Poland
Amica Wronki (Pol) 1 (Jackiewicz 34) Atletico Madrid (Spa) 4 (Hasselbaink 30, Capdevila 44, Baraja 52, Correa 84)
Atletico Madrid win 5-1 on aggregate

At Glasgow
Celtic (Sco) 0 Lyon (Fra) 1 (Vairelles 17)
Lyon win 2-0 on aggregate

At Turin, Italy
Juventus (Ita) 1 (Kovacevic 79) Levski Sofia (Bul) 1 (Petrov 14)
Juventus win 4-2 on aggregate

At Newcastle, England
Newcastle United (Eng) 3 (Maric 33, Ferguson 58, Speed 61) FC Zurich (Swi) 1 (Jamarau 17)
Newcastle win 5-2 on aggregate

At London</b