

Asian Cup 2004 China likely to host finals

KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 4: China has emerged as a clear favourite to host the 2004 Asian Cup, the region's premier international event, reports AFP.

An Asian Football Confederation (AFC) official, who declined to be identified, told AFP that China, which lost out to Lebanon to host the 2000 Cup, "is considered favourite."

"They were put as standby for the 2000 Cup. China will be considered favourably," he added.

AFC general secretary Peter Velappan announced that China, Iran, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Thailand had applied to host the event following the December 31 deadline.

He said a decision would be made during this year's Asian Cup in Lebanon from October 12-29.

All the five interested countries will be making individual presentations to the executive committee for an objective decision to be made," he added.

Thailand played host in 1972, Iran in 1976 and Kuwait in 1980. Saudi Arabia, despite having won the cup three times, is making its first bid.

Velappan said in a statement the AFC was happy with progress in preparing stadiums and other facilities in Lebanon.

The other official said China's chances would be boosted by the fact that the tournament is normally rotated between East Asia and West Asia.

The 1996 tournament was held in the United Arab Emirates and this year's event is in Lebanon.

Hence it is only logical that "it comes back to East Asia," the official added.

Bastl, Santoro progress

DOHA, Jan 4: Switzerland's George Bastl upset sixth-seeded Jiri Novak of the Czech Republic 6-2, 7-5 in Monday's first round of the Qatar Mobil Open, the first of 58 events of the ATP Champions Race 2000, reports AP.

Earlier in the day, No. 3-seed Fabrice Santoro of France advanced to the second round with a 6-4, 6-1 victory over German wild card Lars Burgsmuller.

After the match, Santoro, 27, described the new Race format as "tough to understand." Santoro, who lost in the 1998 finals, said the system forces players into participating in too many games, increasing their risk of injury.

Qatar's top player, Sultan Khalifa, succumbed 6-3, 6-4 to Spanish veteran Alberto Berasategui, saying afterward that he found it difficult to recover from Berasategui's early hard strikes.

"In the second set, I felt that I got a couple of bad calls and this seemed to take my power away," he said.

In Monday's other singles match, Argentinian Franco Squillari booked his ticket to the second round by defeating Jan Smerink of the Netherlands, 6-2, 6-4.

Black Caps

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O'Connor	5	2	39	1
Nash	6	3	0	27
Harris	9	1	42	1
Vettori	8	1	24	4
Astle	4	0	26	1

NEW ZEALAND

Spearman c Jacobs b Dillon	42
Astle c Dillon b Adams	32
Fleming not out	59
McMillan c Jacobs b Rose	13
Cairns not out	27
Extras: (lb-4, nb-12, w-5)	21
Total: (For three wickets in 35.4)	194

Fall of wickets: 1-54; 2-98; 3-137.

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Walsh	6	0	32	0
King	5	0	27	0
Adams	3.4	0	29	1
Perry	5	0	24	0
Dillon	9	0	37	1
Campbell	1	0	4	0
Rose	6	0	37	1

Kallis, Cullinan shine



CAPE TOWN, Jan 4: Daryll Cullinan made a fighting century to keep South Africa on top on the third day of the fourth Test against England on Tuesday, despite a fiery performance by England fast bowler Chris Silverwood, reports AFP.

Cullinan, whose 10th test century equalled the South African record held by opener Gary Kirsten, made 120 in a South African total of 421, a first innings lead of 163.

Left-arm spinner Paul Adams bowled the only over England had to face before the close in their second innings and conceded a four to Mark Butcher, reducing the deficit to 159.

Silverwood, 25, was England's hero, taking a career-best five for 91 in his fourth Test match.

The Yorkshireman, who joined the tour as a replacement following an injury to Dean Headley, showed immense spirit as he kept charging in and bowling at high pace, despite stifling 34 degree heat.

England seemed likely to have an uphill battle on a good batting pitch when South Africa resumed at 200 for one but

they struck blows at crucial times as South Africa lost six further wickets for the addition of 107 runs.

England skipper Nasser Hussain handled his bowlers skilfully, using them in short bursts to combat the heat.

Cullinan kept his composure, however, and found a solid partner in wicketkeeper Mark Boucher, who made 36 in an eighth wicket stand of 90 in 126 minutes, which ensured South Africa would have a substantial lead.

Cullinan batted for 351 minutes, faced 255 balls and hit ten fours and a six.

Kirsten's run of form ended, however, when he was out to the first ball he faced Tuesday, edging Silverwood to wicket-keeper Alec Stewart without adding to his overnight 80, ending a second wicket stand of 158 with Jacques Kallis.

Kallis, who also started the day on 80, went to his sixth Test century before being caught at first slip by Mike Atherton off Darren Gough for 105 in the first over with the second new ball.

South African captain Hansie Cronje continued a run of poor form when he was caught by Michael Vaughan at gully off Caddick for nought.

Selection convenor Rushdi Magiet said, however, he would assure Cronje that the selectors had full confidence in the man they have appointed until the end of the season.

Recalled Jonty Rhodes was caught by Chris Adams at second slip off Silverwood for 16 and Lance Klusener was bowled by Gough for three, trying to force a straight ball to the off-side.

Shaun Pollock was also caught by Adams at second slip off Caddick for four before Boucher helped Cullinan extend South Africa's lead.

England were without all-rounder Andrew Flintoff, who suffered a fractured bone in his left foot while bowling Monday.

It was announced Tuesday that Flintoff had been ruled out of the rest of the tour.

It was also announced that six England players who are flying out to join the team for a triangular limited overs series after the Test series would arrive five days earlier than originally planned.

The players, Mark Alleyne, Mark Ealham, Ashley Giles, Graeme Hick, Nick Knight and Vikram Solanki, will join the team on Friday and will be available for a three-day match against a South African invitational team starting Sunday.

England's last first class match before the fifth and final Test starting at Centurion on January 14.

The triangular series, starting on January 21, involves South Africa, England and Zimbabwe.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at close of play on the third day of the fourth Test between South Africa and England at Newlands on Tuesday:

ENGLAND: First innings 258 (M Butcher 40, M Atherton 71, M Vaughan 42, A Stewart 40; A Donald 5/47)

SOUTH AFRICA: First innings (200-1 overnight)

Kirsten c Stewart b Silverwood	80
Gibbs c Vaughan b Silverwood	29
Kallis c Atherton b Gough	105
Cullinan c Vaughan b Tufnell	120
Cronje c Vaughan b Caddick	0
Rhodes c Adams b Silverwood	16
Klusener b Gough	3
Pollock c Adams b Caddick	4
Boucher lbw b Silverwood	36
Donald c Adams b Silverwood	7
Adams not out	3
Extras: (lb-1, lb-7, nb-10)	18
Total: (All out in 153.4 overs)	421

Fall of wickets: 1/43; 2/201; 3/246; 4/247; 5/279; 6/290; 7/307; 8/397; 9/405

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Gough	37	6	88	2
Caddick	31	6	95	2
Silverwood	32	6	91	5
Tufnell	39	10	97	0
Butcher	3	0	9	0
Adams	7	2	17	0

ENGLAND: Second innings

Butcher not out	4
Atherton not out	4
Extras:	0
Total: (For no loss in 1 over)	7

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Adams	1	0	4	0

Pakistan fail again

ADELAIDE, Jan 4: Shane Lee kept it all in the family when he smashed an unbeaten 60 off 63 balls to steer Australia to a six-wicket win over Pakistan in a one-day cricket warmup match at Adelaide Oval here Tuesday night, reports AFP.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard in the one-day cricket match between Australia A and Pakistan at the Adelaide Oval here Tuesday:

Pakistan	10
Anwar c Haddin b Wilson	10
Afridi c Symonds b Wilson	11
Wasti c Lee b MacGill	31
Ijaz c Harvey b Wilson	2
Yousuf not out	63
Wasim b MacGill	2
Mahmood c Symonds b Marsh	10
Akram c Symonds b Marsh	15
Razaq stpd Haddin b MacGill	0
Saqin c Symonds b Harvey	8
Younis not out	1
Extras: (lb-5, w-7, nb-2)	14
Total: (All out in 47.5 overs)	167

Fall of wickets: 1-25; 2-26; 3-30; 4-107; 5-123; 6-137; 7-144; 8-145; 9-159

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Williams	7	2	16	0
Wilson	6	2	14	3
Harvey	7.5	0	35	1
Lee	4	0	18	0
Symonds	3	0	17	0
MacGill	10	2	26	3
Marsh	10	0	36	2

AUSTRALIA A

Fitzgerald c Mahmood b Akram	2
Hayden c Ijaz b Waqar	6
Symonds lbw b Akram	17
Hodge c Wasti b Mahmood	46
Lee not out	60
Harvey not out	13
Extras: (lb-10, w-10, nb-4)	24
Total: (For 4 wickets in 33.4 overs)	168

Fall of wickets: 1-9; 2-14; 3-45; 4-120

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Akram	7	2	22	2
Waqar	8	1	24	1
Mahmood	5.3	0	26	1
Razaq	3.3	0	22	0
Saqin	6.4	1	41	0
Afridi	3	0	23	0

Result: Australia A won by six wickets.

English Div One Crewe hold Man City

LONDON, Jan 4: Crewe's Rodney Jack hit a late equaliser to slow Manchester City's march towards the English Premiership as the First Division strugglers held the leaders to a 1-1 draw on Monday, reports AFP.

Jack made it six matches unbeaten at home for the hosts after Lee Crooks had put Manchester City ahead in front of Crewe's biggest crowd of the season.

Birmingham midfielder Bryan Hughes scored the decider after only 12 seconds to leave Huddersfield without a win in seven visits to St Andrews.

"Victory eased the pressure on manager Trevor Francis whose side had taken only two points from their previous four games."

That result meant Charlton were able to leapfrog Huddersfield and move up to second place after beating Nottingham Forest 3-0 thanks to goals from Greg Shields, former Chelsea and Everton midfielder Graham Stuart and Andy Hunt.

After four wins in six games, Alan Curshley's side are now just two points behind leaders City and have a game in hand.

Ipswich moved into third place by extending their unbeaten run to 11 games by beating Port Vale 2-1.

Matthew Holland put them ahead with a 43rd-minute volley only for Tony Naylor to level five minutes after half-time before Jamie Scowcroft grabbed the winner seven minutes after the break.

Barnsley won 2-0 at West Brom thanks to a double strike from Darren Bernard moving them up to fourth in the table.

Stockport County lost their unbeaten home record to Crystal Palace as the visitors won for only the second time on their league travels this season.

County went in front through Ian Moore but Hayden Mullins equalised before Wayne Carlisle gave Palace the points.

Africans making presence felt

SAO PAULO, Brazil, Jan 4: African involvement in the first World Club Championship starting on Wednesday extends far beyond the presence of Champions League winners Raja Casablanca from Morocco, reports AFP.

Manchester United of England have Quinton Fortune from South Africa, Real Madrid of Spain have Geremi Njitap and Samuel Eto'o from Cameroon and Al-Nassr from Saudi Arabia have Smahi Triki and Ahmed Bahja from Morocco and Moussa Saib from Algeria.

The irony cannot be lost on a youthful Raja squad lacking till coach Luis Oscar Fullone that compatriots Triki and Bahja will be trying to ensure that the Casablanca club finish bottom of Group A.

Bahja joined Al-Nassr several months ago from United Arab Emirates team Al-Wasl for 600,000 dollars, and a similar fee brought Saib from English Premiership outfit Tottenham Hotspur.

Njitap and Eto'o form part of a new generation of Cameroonian footballers hoping to follow in the footsteps of legends like Roger Milla, Theophile "Doctor" Abega and Thomas "Black Spider" Nkono.

Brazil at the weekend with the praise of manager Sir Alex Ferguson ringing in his ears after a memorable first appearance in the starting line-up over Christmas.

United were struggling to break down struggles Bradford City midway through the second half at Old Trafford when perfectly positioned Fortune pushed a cross into the net.

Fergie's money on Vasco!

RIO DE JANEIRO, Jan 4: Manchester United coach Alex Ferguson claimed on Monday Vasco Da Gama were the favourites to win the world club championship, playing down United's own favourites tag, reports AFP.

United's delegation arrived in Rio late on Sunday and were greeted by euphoric Flamengo supporters, who named themselves the Fla-Manchester fans, and are arch rivals of Vasco Da Gama.

"Vasco Da Gama is a very good team with great players and for that reason I am sure they will be very difficult to beat. Without doubt, I think that the most difficult game in the tournament will be against Vasco Da Gama," Ferguson said.

"The tournament will be very hard but we are playing good football and I think we have the ability to do well."

He added he was sorry not to be able to count on attacking midfielder Paul Scholes, who was missing from the party with a hernia problem.

And when told the fans wait-

ing at the airport would back United, Ferguson added: "Clearly we will like Rio de Janeiro very much."

The anticlimax of the impromptu celebrations, according to Brazilian media, was the reaction of David Beckham, who refused to join in with the party spirit.

While the rest of the team were signing autographs and generally enjoying themselves, Beckham reportedly took a backseat role, even snubbing press questions by answering in sign language.

Real Madrid arrived at Sao Paulo, bowed from their poor performance in the Spanish league but determined to lift morale with a good showing at this tournament.

Brazilian striker Sadio said: "We are not doing very well in the Spanish championship but in spite of that I believe that Real Madrid's experience in international competitions will give us some hope to win the title."

Little information is coming through from the Vasco Da Gama camp, which is a deliber-

ate play, according to the Brazilian press. The club have had two friendlies behind closed doors in the last two weeks.

Vasco Da Gama coach Antonio Lopes has admitted, however, that Edmundo, known as the Animal for his hectic lifestyle, and Romario will start as the front two in their opening match against South Melbourne.

Lopes said: "Romario and Edmundo form the most dangerous strike partnership in soccer world wide."

Mexican club Necaxa tried not to let the torrential rain falling on Rio de Janeiro affect their Monday training. "To train under this much rain is dangerous, because a player can slip and hurt himself," coach Raul Aryan said.

Meanwhile FIFA president Sepp Blatter - accompanied by a delegation of 14 FIFA officials - is staying in Rio de Janeiro, although Tuesday will be travelling to Sao Paulo, where he will be present at the official opening of the tournament.

World Club Championship

Brazil, January 5-14 (Kick-off times in GMT)

Group A

Sao Paulo's Morumbi stadium

(20:45)	Real Madrid v Al-Nassr
(23:15)	Corinthians v Raja Casablanca
(20:45)	Real Madrid v Corinthians
(23:15)	Raja Casablanca v Al-Nassr
(20:45)	Real Madrid v Raja Casablanca
(23:15)	Al-Nassr v Corinthians

Group B

Rio de Janeiro's Maracana stadium

(20:15)	Manchester United v Necaxa
(22:45)	Vasco da Gama v South Melbourne
(20:15)	Manchester United v Vasco da Gama
(22:45)	South Melbourne v Necaxa
(20:15)	Manchester United v South Melbourne
(22:45)	Necaxa v Vasco da Gama

Finals round

Jan 14, Maracana Stadium

(Group A runner-up) (Group B runner-up)

Third place play-off (19:00)

(Group A winner), (Group B winner)

Final (22:00)

Serie A preview

Lazio set New Year's target



ROME, Jan 4: Serie A leaders Lazio travel to Venezia on Wednesday following the mid-season break with a two-point lead but their Swedish coach Sven Goran Eriksson indicated that he would not be satisfied with only one piece of silverware this season even if it is a second ever league title, reports AFP.

And with their European Champions League hopes still on track Eriksson, who guided them to the 1999 Cup Winners

Aussie Open on Hingis' mind

HONG KONG, Jan 4: Women's world number one Martina Hingis may have been invincible down under in the past three years but the teenage "Swiss Miss" is undecided about going for Olympic gold in Sydney, reports AFP.

Hingis - who will attempt to win her fourth Australian Open in a row later this month - said here Monday September's Sydney Games were too far off to contemplate.

"The Olympics are too far ahead in a tennis player's life. I can't really answer that right now," she said when asked if she would be keen to play in Sydney.

"My record in Australia is good and I feel very good about going back there for the Open. But I don't know about the Olympics yet," she said at a press conference ahead of the Millennium Cup exhibition event here.

Cup trophy, may well find his orders being followed to the letter by his expensive assembled but multi-talented team.

"I want to win a lot of trophies this year," Eriksson said. "The more the better."

Lazio bought former Juventus favourite Fabrizio Ravanelli from Marseille to give the Rome club another attacking option.

Their city rivals AS Roma have reportedly drafted in Brazilian Emerson and also have their eye on Japan's Hidetoshi Nakata as they look to strengthen their bid to win the title.

Meanwhile champions AC Milan bought Jose Mari from Atletico Madrid and Nigerian defender Taribo West from bitter rivals Inter Milan, while Inter managed to get Dutch player Clarence Seedorf on board for the new millennium from Spanish giants Real Madrid.

"Now we have all the players we need," said Inter defender Christian Panucci, who is another former Real Madrid player.

"I know Seedorf will fit in perfectly to our midfield as well as being a good person to have around generally," he added.

Just eight points separate the top six clubs with 20 matches to go. Lazio lead by two points from Juventus, with UEFA Cup champions Parma four points behind the leaders.

AS Roma, reigning champions AC Milan and Inter Milan are all in touch with the pace-setters.

"Right now, if I had to pick a favorite, it would be Lazio... They're in top gear," Milan

coach Alberto Zaccheroni said. On Thursday Juventus host 13th-placed Verona, Parma are at Udinese, Roma host Bari, Milan go to Fiorentina, and Inter host Perugia.

Other games include Lecce versus Fiorentina, Reggina against Torino and Bologna versus Cagliari.

African Nations Cup CAF delegation start inspecting

LAGOS, Jan 4: A delegation from the Confederation of African Football (CAF) arrived here on Monday to begin an inspection of facilities to be used for the 2000 African Nations Cup to be jointly hosted by Ghana and Nigeria, reports AFP.

The two-man delegation inspected the pitches, control and changing rooms, sports, health and communications facilities at the national stadium in Lagos, one of the venues to be used for the competition.

Before leaving Lagos, the delegation will also inspect hotel facilities for players and officials for the tournament.

The team will also inspect similar facilities put in place in Kano city, in northern Nigeria, the second Nigerian venue for the competition.

The competition runs from January 22 to February 13. A similar CAF inspection ruled out initial hosts Zimbabwe, because of the poor state of preparations, before Ghanaian and Nigeria organizers were given the go-ahead.

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i) Terms of Delivery	C&F, Chittagong (Liner Terms basis)
ii) Source of Finance	Cash.

SL No	Tender No with price	Description of Stores	Date of closing and opening
01.	BIWTC/FP-844 @ Tk 200/- per set.	Different sizes of MS Plate	01.02.2000
02.	BIWTC/FP-845 @ Tk 200/- per set	Diesel Engine with Generator set	08.02.2000
03.	BIWTC/FP-846 @ Tk. 300/- per set	Inflatable Life Raft	09.02.2000.

Tender documents including detailed specifications, requirements and terms & conditions can be purchased from the cash section of BIWTC, Accounts Department, 5, Dilkusha Commercial Area, Dhaka-1000 during the office hours on cash payment of tender price mentioned against each tender (Non-refundable). Earnest money @ 1% of bid value must be furnished in the form of Bank Draft/Pay Order/Bank Guarantee in favour of BIWTC. Tender will be received up to 11-30 hours and opened at 12.00 hours on the same day in presence of the bidder, if any. No tender documents will be sold by post and on the opening day. BIWTC reserves the right to accept or reject any tender without assigning any reason whatsoever.

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Shaheenoor Bhuiyan
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Argentine defender joins Santos

RIO DE JANEIRO, Jan 4: Argentina's Carlos Alberto Galvan on Monday signed a two-year contract with Brazilian club Santos, in a 1.8-million-dollar deal, the club said, reports AFP.

The 27-year-old Galvan was considered one of the best defenders in Brazilian soccer and was a key player at Atletico Mineiro, finishing second in this season's championship which ended last month.

Galvan had a medical and joined his new teammates at the club's Rey Pele training centre.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

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