Best doesn't

think much

of Beckham!

George Best joined the critics of

Manchester United and Eng-

land's David Beckham yester-

day saying: "I don't think he's a

great player - he can't kick

with his left foot, he doesn't

score many goals, he can't head a ball and he can't tackle. Apart

ond best Manchester United

player of all time, was speaking in Brussels where he was in-

ducted into FIFA's Hall of

Champions along with Brazil-

ians Didi and Zico and Dutch-

reasonably light-hearted vein

drew nervous laughter from re-

porters before he continued by

saying he was upset to have fin-

ished second to Eric Cantona in

a recent Internet poll to find the

player although his kung fu

wasn't very good," he said, re-

ferring to the infamous night

when Cantona jumped over a

barrier wall in a match against

Crystal Palace and kicked a fan

Eric never saw me play... the

people voting on the Internet

happy to finish second to Eric

Cantona, I don't mind finishing second to Pele but not to Can-

Best, who has battled against

alchoholism in the past, looked

in good shape on the podium but

added he was always unhappy

that he was born in Belfast be-

cause it meant he had to play

international football for

Northern Ireland and not

ing of playing for Brazil, and I

ian. They are my type of people.'

Hall of Champions was his sec-

ond major honour in 24 hours

after a lavish dinner was held

in celebration of his career on

Footballer of the Year in 1968.

the year he scored a decisive

goal for Manchester United in

their European Cup final vic-

tory over Benfica, and also won

English league titles with

ter battling to come to terms

He continued playing for an-

with being soccer's first show-

other ten years for clubs in the

United States, Ireland, Scotland

and in the lower reaches of the

Hall of Champions

Best quit United in 1974 af-

He was voted European

Sunday night in London.

United in 1965 and 1967.

biz superstar.

English league.

Best's induction into the

always wanted to be a Brazil-

"I grew up in Belfast dream-

"The people who voted for

who had abused him.

"Eric Cantona was a great

best United player of all time.

His remarks, delivered in a

Best, recently voted the sec-

from that he's all right."

man Marco van Basten.

BRUSSELS, Jan 25 (Reuters):

Cronje's observation

CAPE TOWN, Jan 25: South African cricket needs new talent to replace the big boys, captain Hansie Cronje said yesterday, admitting that Allan Donald's absence had contributed to the embarrassing nine-wicket trouncing against England at the weekend, reports AFP.

"We've got to find replacements not only for Allan, but also for Daryll Cullinan and Jonty Rhodes," Cronje told the SAPA news agency.

The guys have got to start sticking their hands up," the captain said.

Rhodes, recovering from a hamstring injury. is likely to be fit for Wednesday's fixture against England in the one-day triangular series with Zimbabwe.

Cullinan has announced his retirement from one-day cricket and strike bowler Donald was not selected for the series after indicating that he wanted a break from international cricket.

Cronje was particularly worried about the absence of Donald, key to South Africa's bowling attack.

Just when the batsmen think they were safe, (Donald) comes running in at them and wickets start falling. And it's not just about pace. It's about' clever bowling and that's something which the new guys are going to have to pick up on," he

But South Africa was by no means desperate, he said. "We've got a bit of time to look around a bit. As long as we make - and win - the final, I'll be happy. That's what counts."

Scottish Premiership Aberdeen no Match for Rangers

GLASGOW, Jan 25: Rangers marked the restart of the Scottish Premier League campaign by moving seven points clear at the top of the table after an emphatic 5-0 win over bottom club Aberdeen on Saturday, reports

The result shifts the pressure onto their Glasgow rivals Celtic who face Kilmarnock at Rugby Park on Sunday.

Rangers took a grip of the game nine minutes before the break.

Craig Moore made the breakthrough in the 36th minute with a powerful header for his second goal of the season following an inswinging corner from Dutchman Giovanni Van Bronckhorst.

Van Bronckhorst added the second two minutes later with a snap shot from 25 yards which deceived keeper Leighton.

Aberdeen's misery increased two minutes before the break when another Dutchman, Arthur Numan, grabbed the third with a fine lef-foot finish inside the area.

Rod Wallace tapped in a fourth goal on the hour after a surging run by Russian Andrei Kanchelskis.

India collect

From page 13

Srinath was the sixth and last man out for India when he charged down the wicket at spinner Saglain Mushtag and was stumped by wicketkeeper Moin Khan for four.

Saqlain was Pakistan's best bowler, taking two for 56 in 10

Kumble and his fellow bowlers then set about the task of completing India's win.

Mohanty and Srinath made the initial breakthrough with the wickets of openers Saeed Anwar (8) and Shahid Afridi (9) to leave Pakistan 21 for two Ijaz contributed 54 of 77 balls before he was caught by

Dravid at deep mid-off from the bowling of Kumble. Mahmood, determined to

close the gap, swept Robin Singh over square leg for a huge six as he raced to his 50 off 34 balls.

He called for a runner when he appeared to have cramp late in the innings but immediately holed out to Hrishikesh Kanitkar at square leg off Kumble to be the last man out.

Kumble's other victims were Yousuf Youhand (19) and Moin

SCOREBOARD Scoreboard of the triangular series one-day match between India and Pakistan on Tuesday:

INDIA Tendulkar c Moin b Razzaq Ganguly Ibw b Akram Dravid c Inzamam b Afridi Kanitkar c Inzamam b Akhtar R Singh c and b Saqlain Martin not out Srinath st Moin b Saglain Dighe not out

Extras: (lb-6, w-1, nb-5) Total: (for six wickets in 50 overs)267 Fall of wickets: 1-88, 2-175, 3-186, 4-234, 5-257, 6-262.

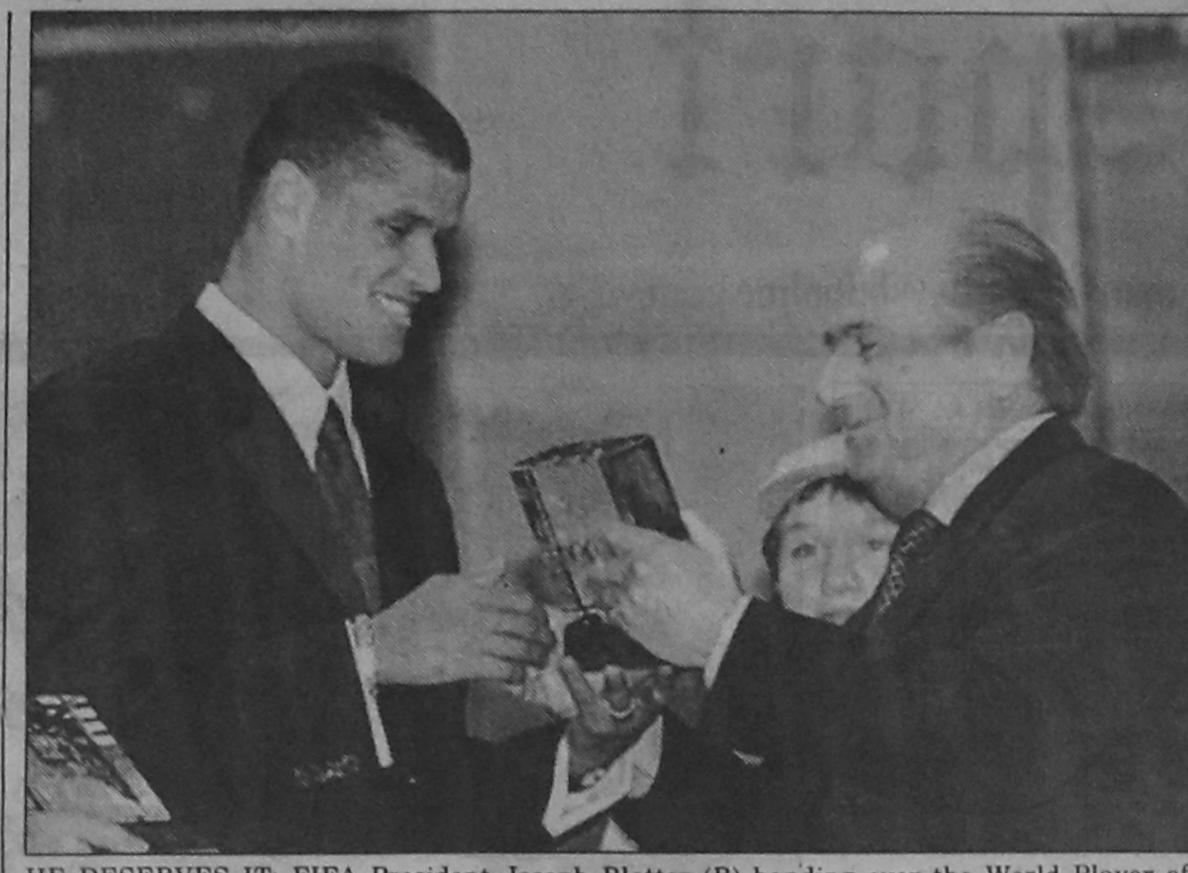
Did not bat: A Kumble, V Prasad, D Mohanty Bowler AKRAM 55 39 Akhtar 37 Razzag 42 Mahmood 56

Saglain 32 Afridi PAKISTAN Anwar c Martin b Mohanty Afridi e Dighe b Srinath Ijaz c Dravid b Kumble Inzamam c Kanitkar b Prasad Youhana c Martin b Kumble Moin Ibw b Kumble Razzaq c Kumble b Prasad Mahmood c Kanitkar b Kumble Akram c Srinath b Mohanty Saglain c Tendulkar b Srinath

Akhtar not out Extras: (lb-4, w-2, nb-7) Total: (All out in 44.4 overs) 219 Fall of wickets: 1-20, 2-21, 3-62, 4-109, 5-124, 6-128, 7-200, 8-207, 9-210, 10-219. Bowler OM

Srinath Mohanty Plays as an over-age member of Prasad R Singh O | Brazil's squad at the Atlanta Olympics, winning bronze Kumble Result: India won by 48

Man-of-the-match: Sourav Ganguly.



HE DESERVES IT: FIFA President Joseph Blatter (R) handing over the World Player of the Year trophy to Brazilian superstar Rivaldo during a gala ceremony at Brussels on - AFP photo January 24.

Rivaldo on top of the world

BRUSSELS, Jan

25: Barcelona's Brazilian forward Rivaldo was chosen as FIFA's world player of the year for 1999 yesterday, reports Reuters.

The Brazilian came off best in a poll of 140 national team coaches with 91 of the leading trainers putting him at the top

of their list. England and Manchester United midfielder David Beckham and Argentine Gabriel Batistuta were second and third respectively in the poll. Some 18 coaches named Beckham as their top player with five voting for Batistuta.

Two other Manchester United players — strikers Andy Cole and Dwight Yorke - were included in the top 10 players. Last year's winner. France's Zinedine Zidane, finished fourth.

Rivaldo guided Brazil to the Copa America and Barcelona to the Spanish league title and was named European Player of the Year last month. He was also voted world

player of the year by readers of World Soccer magazine. Rivaldo, who received the award at FIFA's gala in Brussels

WORLD PLAYER WINNERS

BRUSSELS, Jan 25 (AFP): Winners of FIFA's World Player of the year award during the last decade following Brazilian Rivaldo's nomination here on Monday:

1991: Lothar Matthaeus (Ger) 1992: Marco Van Basten

1993: Roberto Baggio (Ita) 1994: Romario (Bra) 1995: George Weah (Lbr)

1999: Rivaldo (Bra)

plan to rest on his laurels.

"Now I want to be European

champion with Barcelona, then

play in the 2002 World Cup and

win that for Brazil," the man

reporters after lifting the FIFA

player of the year award Mon-

Rivaldo has the drive to achieve

arid Northeast has overcome

the criticism that rained upon

him after his team's 1998 World

Cup defeat and, at 27, matured

into an attacking midfielder

who has it all - blistering pace.

goal-scoring instinct.

subtle ball control and a lethal

teams overwhelming selected

Rivaldo as the best in the game,

ahead of Manchester United's

pinpoint pass master David

Coaches of 140 national

Big ambitions, but few doubt

The poor boy from Brazil's

day night

with the explosive left foot told

1996: Ronaldo (Bra) 1997: Ronaldo (Bra) 1998: Zinedine Zidane (Fra)

25 (AP): Rivaldo.

newly crowned as

the world's best

soccer player of

does not

on Monday, became the third Brazilian to win the award following Romario in 1994 and Ronaldo in 1996 and 1997.

Beckham's club Manchester United won the European Cup, the Premier League and the FA Cup last year as well as the International Cup.

Although Batistuta has not won any major honours with Fiorentina since winning the Italian cup in 1996, he has been outstanding in this season's Champions League scoring a memorable winner for his club against Arsenal at Wembley.

Rivaldo and Beckham enjoyed outstanding years but they both ended the last 12 months in controversy.

Rivaldo fell out with Dutch coach Lous van Gaal and was left out of the Barcelona team in December. Beckham was sent off playing for Manchester United against Mexican club Necaxa during the World Cup championship in Brazil earlier this month.

mours of a 56 million dollars move to Italian side Lazio but his future at Barcelona is still uncertain. "I want to stay at Barcelona

Rivaldo has also denied ru-

but when the coach and the president say the sort of things they have been saying recently, I have to consider the future," he said on Monday. "I have to think about what

is best for myself, the team and the fans. I would be much happier if they came out straight and said I was staying because that is what I want to do." The award has been given

eight times before. Veteran German libero Lothar Mathaeus won the first award in 1991 with French World Cup midsielder Zinedine Zidane taking the prize last year. Brazil were named team of

the year after remaining number one in the world rankings throughout the year. Slovenia won an award for

being the most improved team of the year while the New

Beckham and Fiorentina's Ar-

Batistuta.

Batistuta's five.

Louis van Gaal

gentine sharpshooter Gabriel

valdo won 91 first place votes.

compared to Beckham's 18 and

beaming smile choked back the

emotion as he was awarded the

prize at a gala evening in Brus-

press this," he told reporters af-

ter the ceremony. "This is for

my family, for everybody who

helped me. It's for the whole of

teammates at Barcelona. He

had spent much of the pre-

award news conference denying

rumours he's about to leave the

Spanish club for Italy's Lazio

after a spat with Barca coach

about a move is false," he in-

sisted. In case any clubs are in-

terested. Barcelona president

Jose Luis Nunez last week said

"I'm very happy at Barcelona

everything that's been said

Rivaldo also thanked his

In the worldwide poll, Ri-

The big striker with the

"I don't have words to ex-

won FIFA's Fair Play prize. Between January and December last year, Slove ila moved up almost 40 places in the world rankings as well as qualifying for the Euro 2000 fi-

Zealand "football community

nals. FIFA said: "Winning this title is Slovenia's well deserved reward for a sparkling year with consistently convincing displays in decisive games."

The New Zealanders won praise for their hosting of the FIFA under-17 World Cup in November.

'99's top fifteen

BRUSSELS, Jan 25 (AFP): Standings for FIFA's 1999 World Player of the Year award announced at a gala evening here on Monday: 1. Rivaldo (Bra/Barcelona)

David Beckham (Eng/Manchester Utd) 194

3. Gabriel Batistuta (Arg/Fiorentina) 79 Zinedine Zidane (Fra/ Juventus Turin) 68

5. Christian Vieri (Ita/Inter Milan) 39 6. Luis Figo (Por/Barcelona)

7. Andriy Shevshenko (Ukr/AC Milan) 34 8 Raul Gonzalez (Spa/Real Madrid) 31

9 Andy Cole (Erig/Manchester Utd) 24 10 Dwight Yorke (Tri/ Manchester Utd) 19

11. Juan Sebastian Veron (Arg/Lazio) 17 12. Roberto Carlos (Bra/Real Madrid) 15

13. Lothar Matthaeus (Ger/Bayern Munich) 14 14. Dennis Berkamp (Ned) Arsenal) 14

15. Ronaldo (Bra/Inter Mi

to be located in London BRUSSELS, Jan 25: World

governing body FIFA has scrapped plans to open its multi-million dollar Hall of Champions in Paris and has decided to locate it in London. FIFA secretary general Michael Zen-Ruffinen said on Monday, reports Reuters.

"Unfortunately all our plans to locate the Hall in Paris have come to nothing," he said. "We were left with two

choices — either Zurich, which is the headquarters of FIFA, or London which is, of course, the capital city of the country that invented soccer. "The only logical choice was

The champion sets his targets London as there are many more people there and who go there to The British government and English Football Association have given us their absolute and total support for the scheme. The official said FIFA had

looked at six buildings in London and was on the verge of signing a contract with one of them, which he described as having "a perfect location in the very heart of London.'

Last year the English Premier League opened their own Hall of Fame in London on the south bank of the River Thames near the Houses of Parliament. But the Hall of Fame's director of football Gary Trowsdale

said he welcomed the arrival of FIFA's Hall of Champions. He said: "We were happy to advise them and help them and we believe that, far from being a counter-attraction, it will be a positive help to us in attracting

people to the Hall of Fame which is principally concerned with the English game and premier league. FIFA had hoped to have the Hall of Champions opened in

Disneyland Paris in time for the 1998 World Cup in France. George Best, the former Manchester United player who was inducted into the Hall on Monday along with Dutchman

Marco van Basten and Brazil-

ians Didi and Zico, said: "I don't

actually care where it is located. "The significant thing for me today is to be honoured by FIFA by being named in it along with the other great players who have already been nominated."

Manchester United strikes Daight Yorke (R) making a diving effort while being under would be too young. But I'm not pressure from Arsenal depender Gilles Grimandi during their Premiership fixture at Old Trafford on January 24

Premiership

Sheringham saves MU



MANCHESTER, England, Jan 25: Manchester United needed a late goal from striker Teddy Shering-

ham to ensure their return to English Premier League action after the World Club championship did not end in defeat yesterday, reports Reuters. The England striker denied

title rivals Arsenal an important victory with a 73rd minute strike in a 1-1 draw. The Londoners had looked set to hand United their first

league home defeat for more than a year after Freddie Ljungberg's 11th minute strike through Mark Bosnich's legs. But former England striker Sheringham slotted home after Arsenal 'keeper David Seaman had flapped at and missed a

cross in the 73rd minute. Leeds top the table with 47 points from 22 matches. Manchester United stay second on goal difference with 44 points from 20 with Arsenal

third on 44 from 23. Arsenal had looked the more

dangerous side despite missing first choice strikers Dennis Bergkamp, Kanu and Davor Suker. They took the lead in the 11th minute due in part to the braveness of Ljungberg. He put his head in the way of

Jaap Stamp's attempted overhead clearance and was rewarded when the ball dropped to his feet on the edge of the As Mark Bosnich advanced

from his line the Swede slide the ball through the keeper's legs and into the corner of the net for his third goal against United since moving to English football in September 1998. That was not the first un-

characteristic mistake in United's defence. Five minutes earlier Gary Neville's poor control gifted the ball to Ljungberg and his cross

superb save.

second half.

was flicked on by Thierry Henry, forcing Bosnich into a

Henry then wasted an excel-

lent opportunity to stretch the lead in the 37th minute when Ljungberg's header gave him a clear run at goal. But Bosnich dived to his left and managed to divert the shot to safety.

Nicky Butt had a good opportunity to equalise on the stroke of halftime when Cole's pass gave him space on the edge of the area. But after beating two men he failed to guide the ball past David Seaman.

Ryan Giggs followed up only to send his shot into the side netting. The second period lacked the

cut and thrust of the first but United defender Denis Irwin was forced to clear from his own goal line in the 47th minute as Arsenal attacked from a corner.

The save was important as United stepped up the pace and Shringham equalised from close range after David Beckham collected Seaman's weak punch and directed the ball back into the goalmouth.

African Nations Cup

Draws order of the day



ACCRA, Jan 25: Rank outsiders Togo overcame the absence of top striker Bachirou Salou to hold Ivory Coast 1-1 on a day of draws at

the African Nations Cup yesterday, reports Reuters. The points were also shared between Algeria and Democratic Republic of Congo but, in contrast to the entertaining

a dull 0-0 draw IVORY COAST-TOGO

match in Accra, their clash was

Togo's result left all four teams in Group A level on one point, co-hosts Ghana and Cameroon having drawn 1-1 on Saturday

The second result was a boost for South Africa, who were left as clear leaders of Group B thanks to their 3-1 win over Gabon on Sunday.

Ivory Coast dominated the first half and went ahead in the 38th minute when St Etienne striker Tchiressoa Guel, one of 10 foreign-based players in the Elephants' starting line-up.

Baby daughter Okocha's secret

LAGOS, Jan 25: Nigerian midfielder Austin "Jay-Jay" Okocha said bringing his oneyear-old daughter to training helped inspire two goals in the 4-2 African Nations Cup victory over Tunisia, reports Reuters.

"I persuaded the coach to let me have her in camp and sometimes I take her to our training sessions too because she likes soccer," the 26-year-old Paris Saint Germain player said.

"Scoring goals is the name of the game and I also want to give my wife and little daughter something to appreciate in each of our games in this competition," he said. Nigeria's next Group D game

is against Congo on Friday.

converted a penalty after Ibrahima Bakayoko was tripped.

last year's Confederation of African Football player of the year poll despite a modest season with Everton and then Marseille, contributed little else and was substituted in the

hour, came out of their shell immediately and created three good chances before halftime. They took control after the break, equalised in the 62nd minute through Swiss-based

pass right in the opening half

Togo, who could barely get a

Lantame Ouadja and created enough chances to have snatched a shock winner. "We are outsiders but we haven't come here to play tennis," said Togo's German coach

Gottlieb Goeller. "If we could get into the second round for the first time in history, it would be very nice, he added of a team who have failed at the first hurdle in their four previous Nations Cup ap-

pearances. Their point was won without Salou, involved in a three-way dispute between his country, his German club Eintracht Frankfurt and his agent, members of the squad said.

Goeller said Salou, who has

Diego was denied US visa

HAVANA, Jan 25: Diego Maradona said Monday that US refusal to give him visas led him to chose treatment in Cuba for cocaine dependency, reports "To the American people, a

cials, no." Maradona, 39, arrived in Cuba on Jan. 18 to undergo treatment for drug addiction at a medical-oriented hotel on the

outskirts of Havana.

big greeting," he said. "To offi-

Asked why he did not go to the United States for treatment, he replied. "Because America has not given me a visa. ... Officials have done that a bunch of times. I am really satisfied and convinced that I am much better off in Cuba than facing the hostility of American officials."

Maradona, who has dyed his dark hair a light shade of orange while in Cuba, is accompanied by a large entourage of friends, family and trainers. President Fidel Castro visited him Saturday.

Maradona has had troubles obtaining a visa to travel to the United States since testing positive for stimulants during the 1994 World Cup, which led to a 15-month suspension by FIFA, soccer's governing body. US State Department offi-

cials earlier said they were not aware of any visa application by Maradona prior to his medical trip.

complained in the past at being jeered at during matches in Lome, was still in Germany and Bakayoko, voted third in 'unlikely to get to Ghana in time to meet the hosts on Thursday, even if the dispute was sorted out by then.

ALGERIA-CONGO

Algeria had the better of the second match in the Ghanaian city of Kumasi but were repeatedly foiled by DRC goalkeeper Mkueni Mayala, Defender Rezki Amrouche

missed an excellent chance for the North Africans when he headed over from close range in injury time. Farid Ghazi also came close in the closing stages as Algeria pressed for a winner. The cup switches today to

Nigeria. sharing the tournament with Ghana. Burkina Faso meet Senegal in a Group C match in Kano while Morocco. one of the favourites, meet Congo in Lagos in Group D.

Amunike's dream

LAGOS. Jan 25: Nigeria's left-winger Emmanuel Amunike said on Monday he hoped his return to the national side at the African Nations Cup could help win back a place in Barcelona's first team after injury, reports Reuters. Amunike came on as a sec-

ond-half substitute in Nigeria's 4-2 Group D win over Tunisia on Sunday. The 29-year-old has been out of soccer for two years after a knee injury. He underwent an operation last year in the United States

but later got involved in a legal tussle with Barcelona over hotel bill payments and his right to "As far as I'm concerned, my contract with them hasn't

ended. I'll use this tournament

to prove a point and get back there to fight for a first team shirt," Amunike said. Those two years were of

pain, torture and trauma," he Amunike scored both goals in Nigeria's 2-1 defeat of Zam-

and the winning goal in the 3-2 victory over Argentina to take the gold medal at the 1996

bia to win the 1994 Nations Cup

Aime beats Zinedine

PARIS, Jan 25: Aime Jacquet's memoirs, published a year after he steered France to their 1998 World Cup victory. was the country's best-selling biography last year, reports The former France coach's

book "My life for a star", published in June, sold 258,000 copies in 1999, the specialist weekly Livre Hebdo said.

FACTFILE

BRUSSELS, Jan 25 (Reuters): Factfile on Rivaldo, who was named FIFA's world player of the year on Monday.

1972: Born April 19, Racife, Brazil. Full name Vito Barbosa Ferreira. 1989: Signs professional terms at the age of 16 with Paulista after impressing local scouts in a junior tournament.

Club Santa Cruz. 1992: Signs for Mogi Mirim. 1993: Signs for Corinthians. Makes international debut in December, scoring only goal in 1-0 victory over Mexico in a friendly

1991: Signs for Brazilian

1994: Signs for Palmeiras. 13 Wins Brazilian league championship. Regular international appearances during early part of the year but is not included in Brazil's World Cup-winning 1996: Wins Sao Paulo state championship with Palmeiras.

> medal. Moves to Spain to join Deportivo Coruna. world player of the year for 1997: Deportivo Coruna finish third in the Spanish first

division and Rivaldo plays in 41 of their 42 league games, scoring 21 goals. Recalled to Brazilian international side against Wales in November after lengthy absence. 1997: Moves to Barcelona in

August for 26.7 million dollars.

1998: Barcelona win Spanish League and Cup double. Rivaldo scores 19 league goals in 34 games. 1998: Plays in all seven games for Brazil in World Cup

nal before losing 3-0 to the hosts. 1998: Fifth in the European Player of the Year voting, sixth in FIFA Player of The Year poll. 1999: Wins second Spanish league title with Barcelona, scoring 24 goals in 37 games. the second highest tally in the

in France as they reach the fi-

Spanish First Division. 1999: Wins Copa America with Brazil but gets sent off twice during the tournament. 1999: Voted European Player of the Year by France Football magazine.

Jan 24, 2000: Named FIFA

Brazilians have won four times. Rivaldo follows Romario in 1994 and Ronaldo in 1996 and French World Cup winner Zinedine Zidane interrupted the Brazilian run in 1998. He

finished fourth in the latest

poll, ahead of Italy's Christian

they'd have to pay a world

record transfer fee of 70 million

award was launched in 1991,

Since the FIFA top player

dollars.

Vieri and Portugal's Luis Figo. All were well behind Rivaldo whose glittering year included a Spanish championship with Barcelona and spearheading Brazil's victory in the Copa America with two goals in the final against Uruguay.

His best moment came in September with a spectacular hattrick against archrivals Argentina that finally won over the Rio fans who had long accused Rivaldo of underachieving in the canary yellow of

sensitivity," said Didi, Brazil's legendary star of the 1958 and 962 World Cup. Didi was inducted into soccer's new international Hall of Champions at the ceremony Monday, alongside his countryman Zico, Manchester Unit-

ten.

he handles the ball with such

"He's such a skillful player,

ed's 1960's star George Best and Dutch striker Marco van Bas-

Michelle Ackers of Britain (L), Sissi of Brazil (C) and Chinese Su Wen pose with their World Female Footballer trophies during a FIFA gala in Brussels on January 24.

- AFP photo

Olympic Games.