Bolivia fight to keep Condor's Gunners look up to Bergkamp Nest'

LA PAZ, Feb 9: Bolivian president Hugo Banzer has Tuesday backed his country's footballers who are seeking to retain the right to continue hosting World Cup qualifiers at La Paz's Stadio Hernando Siles, affectionately known here as "the Condor's Nest", reports

La Paz is the highest capital city in the world and Banzer. who will meet FIFA president Sepp Blatter on Friday, plans to call on the support of other Latin American countries in a bid to continue playing in the city which is 3,600m (11,811

feet) above sea level. Opposing players have protested that playing at such an altitude jeopardised their

terms of infrastructure to or-

ganise various tournaments

and international competi-

eration had confirmed earlier

Tuesday that Blatter would be

visiting the cities of La Paz and

Cochabamba, both based in the

Cruz on Thursday (400m above

sea level), and will move on to

Cochabamba (2500m above sea

La Paz for high-level talks in

country's president and the Bo-

Nest" and will meet Banzer at

the Palacio Quemando, the res-

every sense of the word with the

He will visit "the Condor's

FIFA consdering

use of artificial

fields

ZURICH, Switzerland, Feb 9

Football world governing body

FIFA have announced Tuesday

that artificial surfaces have

never been banned from com-

petitive matches and could

make a return to domestic and

international football, reports

tions, there is no actual stipu-

of the pitch with the exception

of matches played during the

final tournament of FIFA com-

During the 1994 World Cup,

natural turf had to be laid in

several American stadiums in-

cluding the Pontiac Silverdome

in Detroit which saw the first

World Cup match played in-

doors between Russia and Swe-

developments have been made

in the improvement of artifi-

cial surfaces and a new hybrid

turf has been introduced which

is a combination of natural turf

ported to be able to improve the

bounce of the ball and cut down

on injuries, the two biggest

problems found in previous ar-

FIFA president Sepp Blatter

has already approached the

Asian and African football as-

sociations with the idea of

putting the new technology into

ditions in those continents

many pitches become overused

and eventually unplayable re-

sulting in extra costs which

could be eliminated with the in-

troduction of artificial pitches.

A hybrid turf, composed of

approximately 80% natural

turf and 20% artificial turf has

already been installed in Nor-

way's national stadium in Oslo

and could lead to further use

throughout Europe and the rest

Brighton instead

of Bournemouth

ber one Tim Henman will head

a list of world-class players

competing in the Samsung Open

in Brighton this November

when the event moves along the

south coast from its previous

home in Bournemouth, reports

in the 376,000 dollar event

which will take place the week

before the season-ending ATP

Tour World Singles Champi-

place in the Brighton Centre

onship in Lisbon.

place.

from November 20-26.

so well with the calendar.

Henman has agreed to play

The tournament will take

Henman said: "It's a great

"For me the old clay court

"It's very important for me to

opportunity for me and it fits in

tournament in September after

the US Open never really fitted

first on the list to play here.

into my plans, but I was the

support home events and the

week is ideal just before the

Masters Cup in Portugal. It al-

ways comes down to a pretty

close finish and this will be a

good opportunity to cement my

in Stockholm and I have played

there in the past, but Stockholm

is not as geographically

Feaver said: "We are very

pleased that the ATP Tour

agreed to sanction this new

tournament with such a presti-

gious date, especially as our event will be the final chance

for players to compete before

Lisbon and that BBC television

will be covering the event."

Tournament director John

suitable as Brighton.

The event is up against one

LONDON, Feb: British num-

Due to extreme weather con-

practise as a pilot project.

These latest pitches are re-

mixed with artificial turf.

tificial surfaces.

of the world.

Over recent decades, great

petitions.

lation with respect to the nature

According to FIFA regula-

On Friday Blatter will go to

Blatter will arrive in Santa

Andes, as well as the tropical

town of Santa Cruz.

livian Government.

idence of the president.

The Bolivian Football Fed-

height

level).

fielder Stephen Hughes grabhealth. bing the other goal. Banzer described himself as Left-back Silvinho also "one more soldier in the Bolivian campaign against the veto".

played, having missed the Bradford game with a calf injury. and assistant manager Pat Rice Last week a Bolivian delegasaid: They all came through tion met with FIFA's medical with flying colours." committee to discuss the alleged health risks of playing at such a

Bergkamp had been out since November 28 with groin and calf injuries which manager Bolivian Sports Minister Arsene Wenger admitted had Tito Hoz de Vila said: "The presbaffled the club's medical exident will show Sepp Blatter the efforts the country is making in | perts.

LONDON. Feb 9:

Dennis Bergkamp

scored for Arsenal

in a behind-clo-

sed-doors friendly

for success.

DENNIS BERGKAMP

fore the end of the match at Ar-

senal's training ground against

Spurs, but commanding centre-

back Adams played the full 90

minutes and his availability af-

ter an enforced mid-season

campaign is also vital.

break for the third consecutive

Wenger won't make a final

Villa letting Collymore go

(800,000 dollars) after 50 ap-

pearances, according to Sky

cluded on Wednesday, will be a

relief to Villa manager John

Gregory, who has made no se-

cret of long-standing attempts

national has been a pariah at

vision One side Fulham but on

his return to Villa Park he was

never included in a first-team

linked with French outfit

Panathinaikos and more re-

cently Premiership strugglers

Bradford, has not played a

competitive match for Villa

more to Filbert Street means

clubs have spent a total of 18.5

The deal that takes Colly-

The 17-year-old Henin,

Switzerland's Patty Schny-

ranked 59 in the world, next

der also advanced, beating Bel-

gium's Sabine Appelmans 6-4

6-3 in 1hr 07min to book a

clash Wednesday with

Williams, who had a first-

confident of giving world num-

Schnyder. 21, said she was

faces French second seed

Montpellier. Greek side

into a clinic for depression.

Villa this season after checking

to sell his troubled star.

squad by Gregory.

since last March.

PARIS. Feb 9: The stadium with a 6-4, 7-6 victory

Maleeva.

round bye

indoor Paris Open over Bulgaria's Magdalena

Nathalie Tauziat

ances, rising to 500,000 pounds million pounds (30 million dol-

The sale, to be formally con-

The former England inter-

He spent a loan spell at Di-

Collymore, who has been

with Tottenham on Tuesday

clash with Liverpool.

and is set to start Sunday's

The 7.5-million-pound (12-

million-dollar) Dutchman, out

minute substitute appearance at

the end of the shock 2-1 defeat

at Bradford on Saturday, scored

against the Gunners' local ri-

vals to mark his return to form.

action, for the first time in a

month since it was revealed he

had a stress fracture in a foot,

Arsenal won 2-0 against a

youthful Spurs side, with mid-

With Tony Adams also in

for 12 matches before a 23rd-

Back-to-form

In his absence, Arsenal's FA Cup hopes had been submerged by defeat in a fourth-round replay penalty shoot-out at Le-

And after the Bradford defeat left them nine points behind the leaders, having played one game more, Wenger said: "Realistically, we can forget about catching Manchester United in the championship

But the Frenchman still has a firm eye on a top-three Premiership finish to earn a place in next season's European

Aston Villa agreed

to sell their misfit

former England

striker Stan Col-

lymore to Leices-

ter City on Tues-

day for 500,000 pounds (800,000

dollars) - one sixth of their

million pounds (11 million

dollars) less than they paid for

losses and let the wayward 29-

year-old go after their English

Premiership rivals Leicester re-

fused to meet the 3 million

pound (4.8 million dollar) they

Little brought Collymore to the

club only three years ago for 7.5

million pounds (11 million dol-

Leicester will pay 250,000

lost its first seed

on the opening

day Tuesday when

Russia's Elena

Likhoviseva collapsed after

streaking through the opening

set to lose to Silvia Farina of

The 24-year-old Likhovtseva

had expected to make a major

impact here after dumping de-

fending champion Serena

Williams out of the Australian

Open last month and she was

looking to meet the big Ameri-

her after she had torn through

recovered to win 1-6, 6-2, 6-1 in

1hr 30min to set up a meeting

with either Nathalie Dechy of

France or Slovakia's Karina

Likhovtseva said she had

Belgian teenager Justine

Henin earlier reached the sec-

ond round of the 535,000-dollar

felt a little unwell before the

match but said lack of prepara-

tion was what really let her

Habsudova.

can again in the semis here.

Italy, reports AFP.

pounds (400,000 dollars) after

Collymore makes 25 appear-

Former Villa manager Brian

Villa decided to cut their

him in 1997, reports AFP.

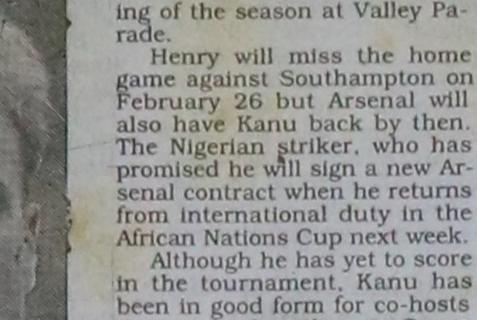
originally wanted.

original asking price and 7

assessment of either player's Champions League. fitness until later this week And Sunday's clash with when he has had time to dis-Liverpool - lying fourth with cover if there has been any adthe same number of points as

Arsenal - is a key fixture. verse reaction. But he is also hopeful that Although he had scored only French international midfield six goals in 19 starts before his star Patrick Vieira will be fit to injuries. Bergkamp's return return against Liverpool after would be a major boost for the missing the Bradford defeat Gunners who also face Spanish with a knee injury. League leaders Deportivo La Winger Marc Overmars is Coruna in the UEFA Cur fourth still recovering from a sprained round next month - with a ankle and remains doubtful for quarter-final tie against hold-

Sunday, but Bergkamp's availers Parma likely to be the prize ability is particularly welcome for Wenger, who will lose top Bergkamp was taken off bescorer Thierry Henry to a onematch ban after his fifth book-



Nigeria, leading them to Group D victories over Tunisia (4-2) and Morocco (2-0) and a goalless draw with Congo before Monday's 2-1 quarter-final victory in extra time against Sene-Now Kanu and Chelsea's

Nigerian left-back Celestine Babayaro are preparing for the semi-final against South Africa on Thursday. The final is scheduled for Sunday. Meanwhile Arsenal's

Liberian striker Christopher Wreh scored twice on his debut for Dutch club Den Bosch. where he is on loan for the rest of the season. Sadly, they were only consolation efforts in a 6-2 defeat by PSV Eindhoven.

lars) on him during his career

a figure matched only by New-

Premier League.

prospect.

castle's Alan Shearer in the

the relatively unfashionable

Crystal Palace and Southend

before establishing himself at

Nottingham Forest, where he

was heralded as an outstanding

leammates at Forest - at one

point they refused to go and

congratulate him when he

scored a gooal - and later failed

to justify the then British

record 8.5 million pounds Liv-

rare glimpses of his Forest form

and his uncomfortable rela-

tionship with Britain's football

-tans deteriorated even more af-

ter his much-publicised domes-

tic problems, notably an inci-

dent where he assaulted his

then girlfriend Ulrika Jonsson

- a leading British TV presenter

Henin, who won her debut

senior tour event last year on

home ground at Antwerp and

At Villa, too, he only showed

erpool paid for his services.

But he alienated many of his

He started his career with

Escobar assassin gets 43 years sentence

BOGOTA, Feb 9: The Colombian Supreme Court has confirmed the 43-year jail sentence passed by the country's Court of Appeal on the man who confessed to the murder on July 2 1994 of Colombian international defender Andres Escobar in Medellin, judicial sources

said Tuesday, reports AFP.
The football world was shocked when Escobar was killed after his own goal against the United States ensured that the Colombians, highly-fancied before the tournament, were eliminated in the first round.

"The sentence is in accordance with the law and with the gravity of the deed," a Supreme Court magistrate told journal-

The Court had been considering a deposition by lawyers for Humberto Munoz Castro,

who has confessed to the crime. Escobar, considered one of the best defenders Colombia had ever produced, was shot on the morning of July 2 1994 in

the entrance of a Medellin bar. With his team-mates Escobar had just returned home from the ill-fated United States campaign.

Originally it was reported that the attack was in relation to the own goal or was the work of a drugs cartel but now authorities maintain that the player was killed after an ar gument after he had badly parked his car. The then Colombia coach

Francisco 'Pacho' Maturana, who is now coach to Peru, said the player "had been in the wrong place at the wrong time". Escobar, born on March 13 1967, had been a star with top

Colombian club side Atletico Nacional Medellin.

Dubai Open Norman sent packing

DUBAI, Feb 9: Australian Open semifinalist Magnus Norman was knocked out of the Dubai Open 7-6 (8-6) 7-5 in the first round by unseeded Moroccan Karim Alami on Tuesday, reports Reuters.

The Swedish second seed faltered on the big points and, despite breaking Alami's serve early in the second set, he was outhit from the baseline.

Top seed Kiefer met unexpected resistance from qualifier Lars Burgsmueller but he finally ground down his fellow German to win 6-1, 2-6, 6-4.

Kiefer trailed 2-0 in the deciding set but broke back to level at 4-4 and then took a decisive 5-4 lead with another

break of serve. "I did not pay attention in the second set but I always had this feeling I could break him when it mattered most," said Kiefer who added he was happy to play Davis Cup for Germany next year after declaring him-

self unavailable for 2000. Sybase Open on SAN JOSE, Feb 9: Belgium's

Likhovtseva first to go Xavier Malisse made the most of his second chance in the Sybase Open, reports AP.

Malisse, who gained a spot in the main draw when thirdseeded Vince Spadea, withdrew because of a shoulder injury, beat Australia's Richard Fromberg 7-6 (5), 0-6, 6-4 in the first round Tuesday. Malisse was the top-ranked loser in the qualifying round.

"I found out, I was playing about 45 minutes before the match," Malisse said. 'That's good for me. If I know I'm playing, I'm just waiting around. This way I had nothing to worry

about. Malisse, 19, lost to Finland's Ville Liukko in the last qualifying match. Liukko won his first-round match Monday.

"I think it did me some good to lose and then get a second chance," Malisse said. "I know I can play with the field. I just have to stay mentally tough."

Spadea, who said his right shoulder had been bothering him the past several days, came out to practice early Tuesday, but couldn't play.

"I think I need to take some time off," he said. "It's disappointing I can't play in the Sybase Open. I just couldn't recover in time to be ready to go." Sweden's Magnus Larsson and Americans Cecil Mamiit and Paul Goldstein also opened

Larsson beat Argentina's Martin Rodriguez, 6-2, 6-1; Mamiit defeated Spain's Julian Alonso, 6-4, 6-4; and Goldstein topped James Blake 6-3, 7-6 (4). Fourth-seeded Michael

with victories.

Chang and fifth-seeded Jim Courier were scheduled to play in later matches. Top-seeded Andre Agassi and No. 2 Mark Philippoussis,

the defending champion, open Wednesday night.

Trouble ahead of Kiefer.

BERLIN, Feb 9: Nicolas Kiefer is being sued by his former German agent for breach of contract, the German player's one-time management company said yesterday, reports Reuters.

SMR is seeking some 600,000 dollars in damages from the world number seven, said officials from the firm which signed a five-year deal with Kiefer a year ago.

They said Kiefer had disagreed with their efforts to make him appear more frequently in the media, the SID sports agency reported.

The case adds to problems for the top-ranked German player. He has been in hot water with German te mis authorities who are angry at his refusal to play in last weekend's Davis Cup world Group tie against the Netherlands.



World heavyweight boxing champion Lennox Lewis (L) attending a press conference at Madison Square Garden on February 8. It was announced that Lewis will defend his crown

Lennox aiming higher



NEW YORK, Feb 9 idol Holyfield for the title but (AFP): Having captured the undisputed heavyweight crown he

sought for more than a decade. British boxer Lennox Lewis is ready to test himself against his most highly

regarded challenger. Lewis spoke here Tuesday to begin promoting his first title defence, an April 29 bout at Madison Square Garden against unbeaten American

Michael Grant in a matchup of

tall titans with massive muscu-

lar builds. "I'm undisputed and there's no disputing that." Lewis said. "I've waited so many years to get the undisputed belt that now it's mine to keep. This will be another opportunity to show evervone that I'm the man to

Grant, 31-0, trains with the same support crew as Evander Holyfield, the fighter Lewis decisioned last November to take the unified crown.

Lewis has a 35-1 record with one draw, that a controversial result against an outfought Holyfield here at the Garden 11 months ago.

Grant has bided his time against all comers among emerging young US heavyweights, vowing not to fight his now open to avenging his hero's

"I would rather fight him now, before he gets any better," Lewis said, acknowledging Grant's reputation as the next great heavyweight while also touting another popular notion - that Grant is not yet ready for

The scheduled 12-round affair will bring Lewis 7.5 million dollars, three times the take for Grant, the top-ranked world Boxing Council challenger.

Although he has proven his undisputed status in the ring. boxing politics might conspire to strip Lewis of his unified crown even if Grant fails. Lewis' manager, Frank Mal-

oney, has already said his man will drop the World Boxing Association title rather than face its top-rated contender. African-born British fighter Henry Akinwande. Akinwande, promoted by

Don King, was disqualified in an earlier title fight against Lewis for clutching and grabbing Lewis, preferring to hug Lewis not hit him. Lewis and light fans have little desire for a rematch.

And the International Boxing Federation, which hesitated recognising Lewis for days after his victory over Holyfield, has

another protester in its topranked contender, American David Tua.

Tua has filed a lawruit claiming he was supposed 1 be the first unified defence for Lewis. In all likelihood, Lewis would face Tua later this year and possibly fight Mike Tyson late this year or in early 2001.

Former world champion Tyson has talked of fighting Lewis in the next 12 months. despite the fact the convicted rapist and assailant has fought less than eight rounds since biting Holyfield's ears in a 1997 loss that led to a one-year banishment from the sport.

Lewis and Tyson were to have met in 1996 but Tyson dropped a world title rather than face a mandatory defence against Lewis.

Tyson is definitely a fight I would want," Lewis said. "He is the only man of my era l haven't fought. I want to put a whipping on him. He paid me money once not to fight him. If he still feels the same way. I don't mind."

Tyson attracted a sel'out crowd and great numbers of supporters and protesters for his controversial fight last month in England, where a meeting with Lewis in a large yenue could produce record income.

Anxious time for Ottey UK Athletics would not



Jamaican sprinter Merlene Ottey will learn this the world governing body is to

send her doping case to an arbitration panel which could then ban her from the Sydney Olympics, reports Reuters.

The head of the International Amateur Athletic Federation's (IAAF) doping commission. Swedish professor Arne Lungqvist, confirmed Tuesday it would report to the federation's council at a two-day meeting in Monaco.

"A recommendation will be made." he said in a telephone interview. "It will then be up to the council.

Ottey, who turns 40 this year, ran in the 1980 Moscow Olympics and had hoped to finish a glittering career of unparalleled longevity at this year's Sydney Games.

But she tested positive for the steroid nandrolone before last year's Seville World

Championships and subsequently withdrew from the competition. In an interview on Monday. Ottey's agent Daniel Zimmermann said two IAAF officials

withdrawn from the Championships through injury. IAAF spokesman Giorgio Reineri denied Zimmermann's

had asked her to say she had

allegation.

Ottey was cleared by the Jamaican federation but the IAAF has maintained that athletes are responsible for substances found inside their bodies and

her case looks certain to go to

ACROSS 34 Chemin DOWN

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12 Cross

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If the panel finds her guilty she will then be banned for two comment on reports that an-

weekend whether referred the cases of Britons nandrolone. Linford Christie, Doug Walker and Gary Cadogan to arbitration after they all tested posi-

tive for nandrolone. RICHARDSON TESTS POSITIVE

On Monday, another British sprinter Mark Richardson, the last man to beat Michael Johnson over 400 metres, said he had also tested positive for the steroid.

Richardson denied taking illegal substances, saying: "The sport is on the verge of disre-

pute, this could happen to absolutely any athlete. "This is Olympic year, a lot of hopes and dreams are riding

on this year and you could find that half the team is caught up in a nandrolone situation. It's frightening. Richardson's positive test

was confirmed on Tuesday by the British governing body UK Athletics who said he would not be suspended until a drug advisory committee had met within the next 14 days.

"UK Athletics is increasingly concerned with the significant increase in the number of nandrolone findings and is looking for ways to work with the IAAF

and other agencies to resolve the current issues," the statement said. UK Athletics chief executive David Moorcroft was due to fly to Monaco today to discuss London's bid for the 2005 World

Championship but the drugs is-

sue is also certain to arise in his

talks with the IAAF.

21 French

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Solution time: 27 mins.

Yesterday's answer

7 1981

Apostles

other British international Last November the council athlete had tested positive for Before the Richardson announcement on Monday, ath-

letics sources said two British athletes had tested positive for nandrolone. Richardson said he had

never taken drugs but did use food supplements.

Keith, Robert bout Apr 29

LONDON, Feb 9: Keith Holmes will defend his WBC middleweight title April 29 against Britain's unbeaten Robert McCracken, reports AP. McCracken, who has won all

33 fights, has recently teamed up with Panos Eliades, promoter of undisputed world heavyweight champion Lennox Lewis, and is the mandatory challenger. The fight will be at the London Arena. "It is a terrific bonus to fight

for the title in England," said McCracken, who will making his first challenge for a world title and has not fought for 13 months. "Panos has come through for me and he has delivered what he has promised.

The last time that Holmes fought outside America he ost the title to Hassine Cheric in France and I am hoping he does not travel well.

But Holmes, regained the title by beating Cherifi in Washington and this is his second defence since then. He has also beaten a British fighter before

in a world title contest.

Silvia Farina of Italy playing a forehand against Russian Elena Likhovtseva during her Paris Indoor Open encounter on February 8. Farina won 1-6, 6-2, 6-1. - AFP photo

20 |21 24 |25 26 |27 |28 42 43 44

CRYPTOQUIP

38 Largest of V K T BHPTWN JTLN VTWTUKYET VLMJTWTP

LTUMHLSME YCVTE BTEV

VY UYWT CLYS UYWT Yesterday's Cryptoquip: I'D PRESUME THAT LOOTING A DRUGSTORE IS THE SAME THING AS PILL-AGING.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: Y equals O

The Cryptoquip is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the 46 Literary collection puzzie. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error. 48 Caviar, e.g.

ber four Williams a run for her money after beating Appelmans But the Kazakh-born seventh for the second time in as many seed's game suddenly deserted the opening set as Farina

Marseille tennis MARSEILLE, France, Feb 9: Sweden's Andreas Vinciguerra earnt a shock 6-3, 6-3 victory over Russia's number five seed Marat Safin in the first round of the 500,000-dollar ATP men's tennis tournament here

"I played very well in the on Tuesday, reports AFP. first set. I was very concen-Safin, who received a wild trated. Then she got better and card, was outmanoevred by by the time I was in the third set Vinciguerra from the back of l just was not in the game any the court.

Vinciguerra, who played his Farina, who was playing her first match ever at France's first match of the year after southern coastal city, meets knee problems late last year. said that she felt tense to start ond round.

Spain's Jacobo Diaz in the sec-In another upset, number three seed Dominik Hrbaty was ousted by fellow Slovakian Jan

Kroslak 7/6, 6-4.

who took Lindsay Davenport to three sets at last year's French Open, earlier shrugged off a slow start as she advanced after losing the opening two games on the Greenset hardcourt.

The Belgian recovered to get her nose in front at 4-3 only for the 24-year-old Maleeva to break back to 4-4 as both women struggled on serve.

Henin, the youngest player competing here, then had to call a time out and underwent lengthy treatment to a foot injury before wrapping up the opening set in 48 min.

Maleeva pushed her all the way in the second set, breaking for a 3-1 lead; but eventually lost in a tiebreak 7-4 losing four straight points as Henin advanced in 1hr 40min at the end

of an absorbing tussle. "I'm not going to put myself under any pressure here. I want to play my natural game and go as far as I can," said Henin afterwards.

Elsewhere, Laurence Andretto of France, ranked 201 in the world, won a clash of qualifiers 7-5, 7-5 against the Czech Republic's Denisa Chladkova, ranked 150 places above her

and now plays compatriot and third seed Julie Halard-Decugis. British qualifier Louise Latimer, ranked 138, found Luxemburg's Anne Kremer too hard a nut to crack as world number 30 Kremer won 6-3, 7-6 in 1hr

