Olympic qualifying

Nigeria in a spot

JOHANNESBURG, March 13: Defending champions Nigeria are in danger of missing the 2000 Olympic Games tournament after a 3-1 defeat in Angola at the weekend, reports

The loss left the 1996 winners third on the Group A standings, three points behind Zimbabwe and level with Angola, entering the final round of qualifiers on March 25.

Nigeria host Zimbabwe and Angola visit point-less Uganda in an intriguing finale with the possibility of three teams finishing on 12 points and goal difference determining who travels to Australia.

Despite the presence of more than a dozen Europe-based professionals and senior national team coach Jo Bonfrere from Holland, Nigeria were outplayed before a 30,000 crowd at the Citadela Stadium in Luanda.

Angola have undergone an amazing transformation since losing two of their first three matches and firing Yugoslav coach Vesselin Jesulic. The victory over Nigeria was preceded by a 4-2 walloping of pre-viously unbeaten Zimbabwe.

Egypt squandered a chance to go top of Group C when held 1-1 in Cairo by Morocco. Bouchaib al-Moubarki put the visitors ahead after 24 minutes and Mohamed Farouk levelled deep into the second half.

Morocco are two points ahead and victory at home to Ivory Coast on March 26 will clinch a place at the finals. There is also a two-point gap in Group B between leaders Cameroon and South Africa.

The three group winners gain automatic entry to the 16nation finals during September while the best second-placed team plays off against Oceania champions New Zealand for the final qualifying place.

An appeal

Sports Reporter Both kidneys of Mohammad Nasim Chowdhury, an executive committee member of Bangladesh Deaf Sports Federation, have been damaged. Nasim Chowdhury, himself

deaf, is now under treatment at the Bangabandhu University Hospital and requires an immediate transplant. Kind-hearted persons have been requested to financially

assist ailing Nasim by making their contribution to the following account: M Nasim Chowdhury (deaf) Savings account number-

Uttara Bank Limited Nawabgani Branch Dhaka

Reefat From Page 13

drew with Dipanjan, Syed Ruhul Kabir Shiplu drew with Kazal, Taibur Rahman Sumon drew with Md. Javed and Iva drew with Sohel Chowdhury. The 10th round games will start at 2:00 p.m at NSC Auditorium today.

Moin made

From Page 13 the matter with Moin and told him about the decision," Saeed said

Moin reportedly declined to lead Pakistan last month ahead of the Sri Lankan team's arrival. Anwar's team lost all three

one-dayers against Sri Lanka and the first two Tests of the ongoing Test series. All-rounder Azhar Mah-

mood and off-spinner Saglain Mushtaq were also ruled out due to injury.

From Sharjah, the Pakistan team go to the Caribbean for a tri-series involving the hosts and Zimbabwe, then play three Tests against West Indies.

In the last 11 months, Pakistan has had four cricket board chiefs, six coaches and three captains.

Hosts

From Page 13 Jayasuriya c Ijaz b Akhtar Arnold c Younis b Fazil Jayawardene c Moin b Waqar Dilshan c Moin b Afridi Kaluwitharana run out De Saram c Waqar b Afridi Vaas not out Pushpakumara c Moin b Akhtar Wickremasinghe b Akhtar Muralitharan c Fazil b Akram 14 Extras: (b-10, lb-2, nb-21) Total: (All out in 58.1 overs) Fall of wickets: 1-17; 2-41; 3-

46; 4-100; 5-154; 6-164; 7-188; 8-206; 9-206. OMRW Bowler: 2 39 Wagar 5 52 Akhtar 14.1 Akram

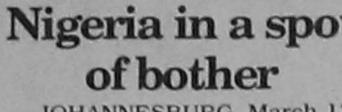
2 49 0 35 Fazil 3 40 Afridi PAKISTAN: Second innings

Naveed Ibw b Muralitharan 27 Afridi b Pushpakumara Ijaz c Dilshan b Muralitharan 3 Inzamam not out Akhtar not out Extras: (lb-1, nb-11) Total: (For 3 wkts in 31 overs) 88 Fall of wickets: 1-70; 2-70; 3-

Bowler: Pushpakumara 8 Wickremasinghe 5 0 22 Muralitharan 7 Umpires: Russell Tiffin

(Zimbabwe) and Riazuddin (Pakistan). TV Umpire: Afzaal Ahmad (Pakistan) ICC Match Referee: Brian

Hastings (New Zealand).





AS Roma's Japanese star Hidetoshi Nakata (R) being tackled from behind by Cagliari defender Alberto O'Neil during their Serie A encounter at Sardinia on March 12. - AFP photo

Serie A

Juve cruise on 'Pippo' power



Juventus took a draw. giant stride towards their 26th Italian league title on Sunday when two second-half goals from Filippo Inzaghi saw the leaders

beat bottom club Piacenza 2-0, reports AFP. The most garlanded club in Serie A history are now six points clear of second-placed Lazio, who were lucky to grab a

on Saturday night. There were slip-ups too on Sunday for defending champions AC Milan and AS Roma.

2-2 draw at home to Inter Milan

Juventus, known as the old lady of Italian football, found it hard going against the strugglers whose defence was marshalled by the old man of Serie A Pietro Vierchowod - the 40year-old former Sampdoria, Juve and Italy stopper. The frustration was beginning to show for Juventus and Inzaghi was cautioned on the hour for a blatant dive.

But "SuperPippo" redeemed himself after 68 minutes, scoring a goal that was greeted with relief by the contingent of travelling Juventus fans.

Juve's football finally started to flow and Inzaghi rounded off a fine move for his second six minutes later.

If the Piacenza match took time to come to the boil, the same could not be s i for the game at San Siro between Milan, who needed victory to stay in touch, and Verona who are in trouble at the other end of the

Milan led 2-0 and 3-2 but in

MILAN, March 13: as Verona fought back for a 3-3

been dropped by the coach, whistled by fans and targetted by the critics in recent weeks. sparked an early surge - cracking home a 17th minute freekick and then supplying the pass for Andrei Shevchenko to score in the 35th. But the second period started disastrously for



FILIPPO INZAGHI

Milan when Argentinian defender Jose Antonio Chamot, signed from Spanish crisis club Atletico Madrid, was sent off for a professional foul.

corner from the left. the end had to share the spoils

the relegation-threatened visi-tors had levelled the score -Dane Martin Laursen coming Demetrio Albertini, who has up with the vital goal.



after when Appoloni fired in from point-blank range after a And within three minutes Udinese finished 0-0.

But Verona failed to hold the score for more than four min-

Apolloni, who was a member of the Italian squad that lost in the 1994 World Cup final, fouled Milan's Paolo Maldini and Shevchenko stepped up to convert his 19th goal of the season from the resultant penalty - extending the h minute of injury time, with Fabrizio Cammorata popping up with the equaliser.

Another team to see their "Scudetto" hopes nosedive was Roma, defeated 1-0 in Sardinia to Cagliari.

Uruguayan playmaker Fabian O'Neill swung over a corner and Cagliari's Cameroon striker Patrick Mboma rose to nod the ball home. Torino ensured it was a day

to remember for Turin with a 1 0 victory at home to Fiorentina. Torino centre-forward Marco Ferrante, top scorer last year in the Serie B, notched his

12th of the Serie A season in the 20th minute. Lecce threw away a 2-0 lead at Perugia to draw 2-2 in a

midtable battle. First to score after 65 minutes was Swiss striker David Sesa and then Cristiano Lucarelli dispatched a penalty after 74 minutes for Lecce who

thought they had killed the But Alessandro Calori and Verona pulled one back soon Massimiliano Cappioli produced the goods, and a point, for

the home team. Reggina's home match with

French First Division

Monaco stay out of reach



PARIS, March 13: Monaco stretched their lead in the French First Division to a whopping 13 points

Sunday with an impressive 2-0 away win over fifth-placed Auxerre, reports AFP.

Goals from defender Philippe Leonard after 48 minutes and from Marcelo Gallardo after 62 minutes left Claude Puel's outfit all but champions with only six games remaining in the season. It was a wonderful weekend

for the wealthy principality team as second-placed Lyon lost Sunday and the next two teams - Paris St Germain and Sedan cancelled each other out with a 1-1 draw on Saturday.

Monaco had lost their last league match to Strasbourg to offer a glimmer of hope to their distant challengers and they were up against it in the first half at Auxerre as Guy Roux's men gave as good as they got. But it was a different story in

the second period with Monaco moving up a gear to force a series of quick corners from which Leonard opened the scoring three minutes into the half. Goalkeeper Fabien Cool failed to cleanly punch clear the third of these corners and Leonard was on hand to drive a low, right-footer into the net.

French international goalkeeper Fabien Barthez needed lengthy treatment after a collision with Steve Marlet before Monaco went further ahead in 62 minutes.

Argentine Marcelo Gallardo's free-kick nearly brought a tremendous save from Cool, but his parry was unable to prevent the ball from lodging in the top left hand corner.

Relegation-threatened Nancy produced their best performance of the year in defeating Lyon 1-0, with Brazilian striker Ze Alcino doing the damage after 70 minutes.

Lyon were well on top in the first half with both Sonny An-

derson and David Linares hitting the woodwork, but Nancy, with only two points from their last five games hung on. The second period was much closer with Ze Alcino scoring

from a tight angle after a per-

In the night's other match, second-from bottom Troves also sprung a surprise by winning 1-0 away at Lens.

Lens were coming off a tremendous midweek win over Atletico Madrid which took them into the UEFA Cup quarter-finals for the first time, and they dominated for most of this

But with 12 minutes to go the Lens midfield lost possession and Rafik Saifi pounced on the counter-attack to sprint clear and score the winner. The two upset wins further

crowded the relegation zone with only Montpellier firmly anchored in the basement with only 23 points. Troyes are second last with

32 points, two points back on Nancy and Le Havre and just three behind mighty Marseille and Nantes, two French giants who are having nightmare sea-

In Saturday's top match, Marseille reject Christophe Dugarry stunned his old club when he opened the scoring for his new side Bordeaux at the Stade-Velodrome.

Dugarry headed home a Lillian Laslandes cross in the 20th minute to silence the 55,000 crowd who had made the flamboyant striker the target of their ire earlier this season.

With six minutes to go Laslandes ended home hopes as he ran on to a pass from Johan Micoud to blast past stand-in goalkeeper Stephane Trevisan from a tight angle.

It was only the second time in 40 years that Bordeaux had won in Marseille, the last time being in 1985 and it moved the French champions to within one point of fifth place Auxerre.

title hopes

MILAN, March 13: AC Milan have given up their defence of the Italian league title after failing to hang onto the coattails of Serie A leaders Juventus

Carlo Ancelotti's men are

now six points clear of Lazio at the top and are 10 points ahead Milan vice-president Adri-

"The battle for the top slot is over. Juventus are flying.
"I think that Milan and Inter

"What's left for us now, is this mini-championship for second place and a (guaranteed) place in the Champions League between the teams from the cities of Rome and Milan. It's one we have to win."

Team coach Alberto Zaccheroni, whose future is now uncertain after being undermined by club president Silvio Berlusconi last week, told the fans not to hold their breaths

for the championship. "We will keep going after Ju-

that people shouldn't have any illusions. Because the situation now is very complicated.

promise anything." Midfield veteran Demetrio Albertini, who scored the first and made the second for striker Andriy Shevchenko on Sunday, said: "Chasing Juventus was already complicated before, let

to become the Serie A's top scorer in his debut season with 19 goals already, has also thrown in the towel.

ing, and aim for a place in the Champions League," said the Ukrainian, who also scored a penalty on Sunday. "I'm just sorry that my goals

Deportivo blank Valencia

MADRID, March 13: Deportivo La maintained their four-point lead at the head of Spain's Primera Liga with a 2-0 win at home to Valencia on Sunday.

The win left the Galicians clear of modest Alaves, who stayed in touch after beating relegation-haunted Real Sociedad 2-1.

Barcelona took a useful stride towards a third straight title Saturday when they crushed Athletic Bilbao 4-0 away, the Catalan club's second

First half goals from Philip Cocu and Patrick Kluivert softened up the Basques and a second from Cocu and one from Luis Figo after the break completed the job.

Deportivo, who thanked goals in either half from Fran, a header from a cross by Manuel Pablo, and Flavio for their truimph over sixth-placed Valen-Brazilian star Djalminha

almost managed a third for Deportivo but his hopeful 50-me-

Celta Vigo followed up their 4-0 thrashing of Juventus with a shocker, losing 3-0 at Espanyol, to stay seventh.

Scottish Cup

Rangers reach semis in style

GLASGOW, March 13: Rangers proved too strong for Hearts and sailed into the semifinals of the Scottish Cup after beating the Edinburgh club 4-1 at Ibrox on Sunday.



Auxerre defender Ludovic Giuly (R) clearing the ball before Monaco forward Teemu Tainio could get to it during their French First Division fixture at Auxerre on March 12. fectly-weighted pass from Said . - AFP photo

Milan give up

at the weekend, reports AFP. AC Milan were 2-0 up before drawing 3-3 here with lowly Verona, while Juventus continued their victory march by beating Piacenza 2-0.

of Milan. ano Galliani told reporters:

are too many points behind. Lazio, on the other hand, still have a chance.

ventus," he said "But it's only right (to say)

"We'll try, but we can't

Shevchenko, who looks set

"We're all sad and disappointed. But we have to keep go-

haven't served any purpose."

Primera Liga

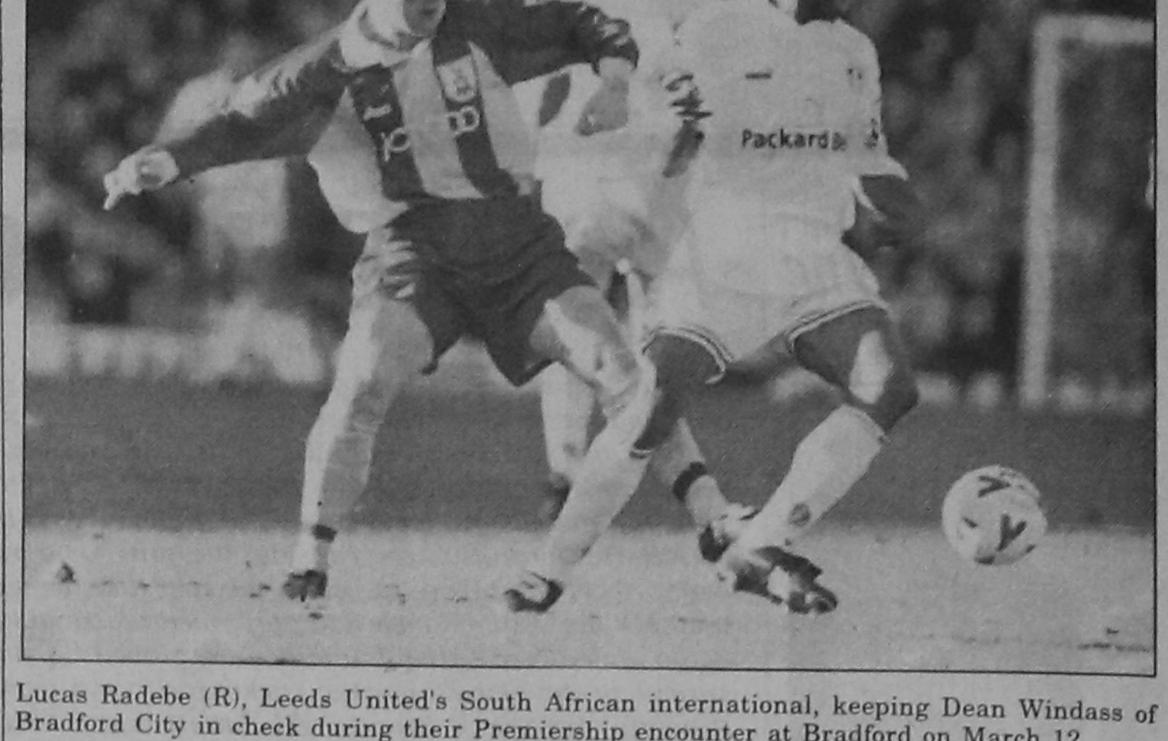
on hand to knock the ball

straight win by the same score.

But both the Catalan club and Real Madrid, who won 3lagains Seville on Saturday, remain five points adrift of

tre effort flew just off target. UEFA Cup quarter-finalists

dre Flo warned nothing could be



Bradford City in check during their Premiership encounter at Bradford on March 12. - AFP photo

Premiership

Bridges Leeds' hero



LONDON, March strike by Michael Bridges took Leeds points of Premie-

rship leaders Manchester United on Sunday as David O'Leary's side edged Yorkshire neighbours Bradford 2-1 at Valley Parade, reports AFP. Bridges scored goals in each half after 12 and 63 minutes be-

ter Beagrie pulled one back for the visitors. Leeds now have 57 points. four behind the reigning champions, who top the table on 61.

Meanwhile, fifth-placed Ar-

senal failed to close the gap on

the top two after going down 2-1

fore former Everton winger Pe-

to Middlesbrough at the Riverside Stadium. Leeds took the lead after 12 minutes when full-back Ian Harte whipped in a curling free kick to the far post and as veteran goalkeeper Neville Southall hesitated, Bridges was

Southall, recently signed on a non-contract basis, was making his 978th appearance both at domestic and international level in the twilight of a glittering career. But it was his first in the Premiership since November 29, 1997 when he last played with Everton in a 2-0 defeat against Spurs at Goodison

With Matt Clarke having slipped down the stairs at his home and again damaging medial ligaments in his knee, Southall was pressed into emergency service.

Then just after the hour, and somewhat against the run of play. Leeds and Bridges grabbed their second to take a commanding lead. Harte initially started the

move with a ball out wide to Ja-

son Wilcox, with the winger's

delivery into the heart of the six-yard area hitting Lee Bowyer. As Southall came to claim, the ball ricocheted to Alan Smith and the teenager picked out Bridges, who teed up his

But then with 15 minutes remaining, Bradford grabbed a lifeline when Beagrie struck a stunning 25-yard shot following a free-kick - the first goal Leeds had conceded for 470 minutes.

shot before scooping the ball

into the top corner of the net.

Arsenal's lingering title hopes were dealt a fatal blow at Middlesbrough as the Bryan Robson's men produced a spirited display to clinch a wellearned victory.

Skipper Paul Ince set the ball rolling with a 49th-minute header to cap a superb individual performance, and Colombian striker Hamilton Ricard made it 2-0 14 minutes later with his 11th of the season. Substitute Dennis Bergkamp

ensured a grandstand finish with a 70th-minute strike, but the visitors simply could not break through a determined Boro defence. Arsenal were left to reflect

upon a first-half in which they

dominated for long periods but

could not push home their advantage. Ray Parlour saw his 17thminute shot come back off the post and keeper Mark Schwarzer made several impor-

tant saves to keep his side in it. But with Ince turning in a captain's display, a depleted Boro side battled every inch of the way, and if Ricard had been able to summon up a little more composure, could have won the game more comfortably.

Quarter final spots up for grabs

Chelsea extremely focused



PARIS, March 13: Bayern Munich and Barcelona are already well down the road leading to the promised

and Chelsea, Lazio and Real Madrid will fight to book their berths on Tuesday, reports AFP. Holders Manchester United will step up their own campaign on Wednesday against Valencia so it falls to Chelsea to maintain the good name of the En-

land that is winning the

European Champions League,

having reached the last eight,

glish Premiership by getting out of Group C, proving to be the tightest group of the lot. The cosmopolitan Londoners pursue their dream of a pot of gold with a trip to Dutch outfit Feyenoord, who have taken four points off Lazio since los-

ing at Stamford Bridge in November. Chelsea's Dutch keeper Ed De Goey is desperate to put one over

his compatriots. "It will be tough but we are also very hungry. Everybody here at Chelsea wants to win trophies. That's why I came to the club," he told the Daily

left to chance. "We must try and beat Fevenoord in Rotterdam, otherwise it will all be left to our last game in London against Lazio. That would be a big risk for us."

With the competition awash

with the tens of millions of dol-

lars available - and some might

say almost as many teams these

Norwegian striker Tore An-

days - the rewards for lifting the famous trophy are larger than Yet, perversely, so numerous have the group encounters become that the old adage of participation being almost as important as winning has belat-

The winning club will have

edly begun to come true.

played 17 matches in total but the devaluation of the old elitist format, which opened the doors only to league champions and holders means that the likes of Chelsea and Real will almost match that even if they 'only' reach the quarters. illustrated than the case of sad Real, their wealthy multina-

tional and temperamental stars

riven by division - illustrated

basis of finishing runners-up to Barcelona in a league habitually won by one or the other and, ludicrously, can still reach ter over Den Bosch - including the last eight even if they lose 1- Ivorian striker Bonaventure O Tuesday at home to Dynamo Kalou, while fellow striker Kyiv.

Having won the away leg 2-1 Real could then progress on the head-to-head rule where they would have an away goal ad-

vantage over the Ukrainians. The Spaniards would then be able to count themselves lucky indeed, having been thrashed twice by Bayern and having generally shown the kind of form which has no place in a tournament which used to be

reserved only for the cream. This season's cup is overflowing with copious quantities of semi-skimmed milk, as well

as bundles of money. Chelsea's rivals Lazio are fighting for their lives after a defeat and a draw against surprise package Feyenoord - who finished behind Rosenborg in the first phase - while Fiorentina's fate also hangs in the bal-



TORE ANDRE FLO

Italy therefore face their worst European harvest in years after the destruction wrought on their UEFA Cup en-

to transfer their allegiance to Gianluca Vialli's cappuccino Chelsea travel to Feyenoord with Vialli on Sunday having refused to criticise his underachieving strikeforce - even though their lack of goals is

Both Chelsea and Lazio

should progress but if the Ro-

mans do not and Fiorentina

also exit Italian fans may have

Blues' season. The Londoners' recent progress has largely been achieved in spite of - rather than because of - strikers Gian-Nowhere is that more clearly franco Zola, Flo and Chris Sutton, who has been a fish out of water all season.

Chelsea cannot turn to the

man who best knows the terri-

threatening to undermine the

by the pathetic saga of one Nicotory at this level - Liberian inlas Anelka - and their results to ternational George Weah - as he has a hamstring injury and had The seven-times winners ar- in any case already played for rived in the competition on the AC Milan in the first round. Feyenoord, coached by Leo Beenhakker, rested several regulars in Saturday's 3-0 can-

the match. The Dutch side, European champions in 1970, caused a sensation in winning at Lazio and former Newcastle man Jon Dahl Tomasson, who scored twice in Rome, has warned Chelsea that "we are really up

for this one." Lazio host a Marseille side all but out of the running four points behind Fevenoord and Chelsea's seven with the Italians on five.

now to save face - and avoid relegation following Saturday's home reverse against Bordeaux. Lazio, in contrast, have everything to play for and Sven Goran Eriksson was optimistic on Sunday despite dropped

A club in domestic crisis,

Marseille's prime objective is

"I am happy with my team and we are entirely focused on Marseille now. It's a match we simply must win," the Swede With Bayern, who host Rosenborg, having dominated

Group C interest focuses on Re-

al's home encounter with Dy-

home points on Saturday in a 2-

2 draw against Inter Milan.

namo Kyiv as both are level pegging on six points. Kyiv, who end their programme at home to Bayern, know their home defeat by Real means the Spaniards are

favourites to make it.

Real remain unpredictable with - or as seems more likely without Anelka yet he has hardly been the club's most potent weapon. A side with Raul and Fer-

nando Morientes leading the

line instead should manage to

put last week's Munich drubbing behind them. European Champions League fixtures

European Champions League fixtures on Tuesday: Group C: Bayern Munich (Ger) v Rosenborg (Nor) Real Madrid (Spa) v Dynamo

Group D: Feyenoord (Ned) v Chelsea Lazio (Ita) v Marseille (Fra)

Kyiv (Ukr)

US, Tunisia BIRMINGHAM, Alabama, March 13: Ben Olsen's point-

of stoppage time allowed the United States to escape with a 1-1 draw against Tunisia in a football friendly here Sunday, reports AFP. Olsen slammed home a loose ball off John O'Brien's pass to

equalize for the Americans one

blank goal in the final seconds

minute and 45 seconds into time added on. Maher Kanzari curled in a right-footer in the 78th minute

Julio Cruz played only part of to give Tunisia a 1-0 lead