Spain accepts two Intertoto Cup places

MADRID, April 5: Spanish football could have as many as eight representatives in next season's European competitions after they accepted on Tuesday two places in the UEFA Cup qualifying competition, the Intertoto Cup, reports AFP.

The Spanish, currently on a high with three Champions League quarter-finalists, will reserve the places for the seventh and eighth placed teams in the league, athough they will choose the ninth team should Real Madrid fill one of the two spots available as they do not want to compete in the competition.

Mysterious death of San Lorenzo booter

BUENOS AIRES, April 5: Argentinian footballer Mirko Sarie was found hanged at his home in the Buenos Aires suburbs, local police sources reported Tuesday.

The player was found suspended from a beam by a pair of stockings. Twenty-one-year-old Saric

played for San Lorenzo de Almagro but had been out of action with injuries to the cruciate ligaments in his left knee.

Call for change

From page 13 that cricket is being played in Toronto, in New York or in Sharjah. But the cast of character is not certainly an American, a Canadian or a Sheikh" said Shakil, advocating that the game's governing body should select a potential area where cricket can flourish as a national interest.

Haq, who graced the occasion as chief guest, also defended Shakil's opinion. The witty politicians entertained the audience by saying: "The American might have accepted cricket as a strategy to fight against communism. Since the cold war is over it is quite impossible to entice them now

The discussion however turned more exciting when patriotism came to the fore in an emotional outburst by noted drama personality Ali Zaker. Patriotism is something

that goes with cricket. Bangladesh have had a good taste of it when they defeated Pakistan in England World Cup. Responding to Zaker's definition, Asif Iqbal, a shrewd cricketer of yesteryears, only recalled the words of State Minister for Youth and Sports Obaidul Quader during his visit in Dhaka during the Mini

World Cup. "I still recall the honourable minister calling me Bangladeshi during my visit in Dhaka before the mini World Cup. It is safe not to talk about that aspect. Patriotism is here in this sub-continent and we have seen it also in Sharjah", quipped Asif.

Quader was also present on the occasion along with BCB president Saber Hossain Chowdhury.

Shuvro Dev, a leading singer of the country, and actress Suborna Mostafa, who added glamour to the audience, also spoke on the occasion.

An avid follower of the game Suborna said: "We are still fighting to get a permanent theatre like the cricketers fighting for a permanent pitch. I think, we need a permanent pitch for cricket now".

Mendis meanwhile concentrated on the rise of the Sri Lankan cricket since their World Cup match against West Indies in England in 1975.

"I can still remember our World Cup match against West Indies in 1975. We were bowled out for 40-odd runs and the match was finished even before a strong band of supporters reached the ground. An exhibition match was later held to satisfy the Sri Lankan supporters. But after 20 years we won the World Cup and cricket in Sri Lanka has become so influential that people are now taking it to the court", said Mendis.

Sir Don Wisden's

From page 13

13 (tied). Sydney Barnes, England, Len Hutton, England,

16. Ian Botham, England, (9) 17. (tied). Harold Larwood.

dia. (6) 20.(tied). Richies Benaud, Australia, George Headley, West

Indies, Kapil Dev, India, (5) 23.(tied). Graeme Pollock, South Africa, Wilfred Rhodes,

England, Victor Trumper, Australia, (4) 26. (tied). Godfrey Evans,

West Indies, Wasim Akram, Pakistan, (3) 29. (tied). Alec Bedser, Eng-

land, Clarrie Grimmett, Australia, Fred Trueman, England, Frank Woolley, England (2)

33. (tied). Curtly Ambrose, West Indies, Colin Bland, South Africa, Allan Border, Australia, BJT Bosanquet, England, Baghwat Chandrasekhar, India, Ian Chappell, Australia, Learie Constantine, West Indies, Allan Donald, South Africa, Lance Gibbs, West Indies, Michael Holding, West Indies, McCabe, Australia, Bruce Tate, England, Pelham Warner, England.



Manchester United's Dutch international defender Jaap Stam (2nd from L) trying to - AFP photo tackle Real Madrid ace Raul at Madrid on April 4.

Bosnich protects Champions

MADRID, April 5: Australian international goal keeper Mark Bosnich produced CHAMPIONS an outstanding performance here

on Tuesday to deny Real Madrid and help defending European Champions League holders Manchester United to a scoreless draw in their quarter-final State Minster for Jute Faizul first leg match, reports AFP. The 28-year-old, who was

dropped during the second phase of the Champions League but regained his place after just one match when replacement Raimond van der Gouw put up a terrible performance against Bordeaux, virtually singlehandedly kept United in the contest as the seven-time European Cup champions poured on the pressure.

The result maintained United's poor record in Spain where they have not beaten Spanish teams in 10 matches.

Ferguson was scathing in his criticism and he was deeply disappointed by their display. "I think there's a sense of relief with the result of a draw because I think it was one of our poorest performances in the big games over the last few years,"

said the unhappy United boss. "I was disappointed with the number of times we gave possession of the ball away from players who you would expect to be perfect at these things.

'In games of football you are pointed me was the careless use of the ball and even our control the bar. of the ball.

to be 100 percent all the time and I don't think we made one tackle in the first half. We usuand usually get goals."

"So it was a disappointing legs. game for us and Mark Bosnich without question has kept us in the game.

lost their rhythm from the first 45 minutes and Aitor Karanka was fortunate just to be booked lost form, shining as he halted out for offside.

when he brought down Ryan Giggs in full flow and bearing down on goal in the 64th

However, Michel Salgado had the clearest chance of the second-half in the 66th minute when his shot from just outside the area was saved by Bosnich, though the Australian 'keeper was fortunate to get away with it two minutes later when he missed a corner but Helguera's header went wide.

Madrid then went closest of all to breaking the deadlock as Steve McManaman surged into the box and his low cross left Bosnich in no man's land but Bosnian midfielder Elvir Balic



MARK BOSNICH

never going to play well in all failed to shoot first time allowthe games and what disap- ing the Australian to regain his ground and palm the ball over

"That's disappointing be- as McManaman, who was havcause these are things we expect ing his match of the season after a series of disappointing performances, was released alone into the penalty box by ally have a good threat of goals Raul's backheel but his shot came off the diving 'keeper's

match the brightest with United's Norwegian central defender United shaded the early part Henning Berg, who has kept his of the second-half as Madrid place with some outstanding performances since young

Raul's early foray into the box. Bosnich pulled off a great instinctive save in the 10th minute from McManaman's header seven metres out. Such was the early domi-

nance of Real that United's first worthwhile attack came in the 16th minute when they forced a corner, which was easily gathered by Madrid's 18-year-old 'keeper Iker Casillas.

Andy Cole had their first clear chance a minute later when strike partner Dwight Yorke found him unmarked 15 metres out but he shot high and wide over the goal.

Cole did better next time slipping inside a defender but his shot was well gathered by Casillas.

However, in end to end play Bosnich again pulled off a good save from a long range effort by Raul and an even better one five minutes later when he got down brilliantly to Fernando Morientes' shot from inside the area after great work by McMana-

It was Cole, though, who missed the best opportunity of what was becoming a nightmare first-half for him as he sent a header from five metres out over the bar with Casillas stranded. Bosnich again saved the day

for the defending champions as he came out to prod the ball away from Raul after Mc-Manaman, who was allowed to play a roving role, had split the defence with a superbly weighted pass.

McManaman was proving such a handful that the nor-Bosnich again saved his side mally reliable Denis Irwin brought him down three times during the half, he was finally booked the third time he offended, as his old legs started to feel the pace.

The omnipresent if ineffective Cole woke up the Madrid defence two minutes before the Madrid had started the break with a shot that curled past the post but it was Yorke with his first shot of the half that actually put the ball in the net, shooting home when Casillas failed to hold Scholes' 30 Frenchman Mikael Silvestre metre shot, though it was ruled

RESULTS AT A GLANCE

PARIS, April 5: European Champions League quarter-final, first leg results on Tuesday:

At Madrid Real Madrid (Spa) O Manchester United (Eng) 0

At Porto Porto (Por) 1 (Jardel 47) Bayern Munich (Ger) 1 (Paulo Sergio 80)

Bayern, Barca odds on favourites

LONDON, Apr 5 (Reuters); Latest William Hill betting after Tuesday's Champions League quarter-final first leg matches:

3-1: Bayern Munich Barcelona

100-30: Manchester United 4-1: Lazio

11-1: Real Madrid 14-1: Chelsea

16-1: Valencia 50-1: Porto

One-match ban for Elber

BERLIN, Apr 5: Bayern Munich's Brazilian striker Elber will miss only one German First Division game after being sent off in last Saturday's 1-1 draw at VfL Wolfsburg, reports

The German champions, two points behind leaders Bayer Leverkusen with seven games remaining, said they had accepted the sanction, meaning Elber will be unavailable for this Saturday's match at home to SSV Ulm.

Elber was sent off in the 80th minute of the Wolfsburg game for pushing Holger Ballwanz. Referee Edgar Steinborn said in his report the offence was unsportsmanlike but not violent.

Bergkamp to see out contract at Arsenal



DENNIS BERGKAMP

LONDON, April 5(Reuters/ Internet): Dutch striker Dennis Bergkamp plans to see out his contract at UEFA Cup semifinalists Arsenal.

Bergkamp's future has been the subject of speculation in the past month with reports linking him to a return to the

Netherlands. But Bergkamp told London's Evening Standard newspaper on Wednesday: "I have one year left on my contract at Arsenal and I want to be here for that year. I have loved my time at Arsenal and I have no wish to

Bergkamp retires from international football after this year's Euro 2000 in his native country and Belgium. "I told the club that I do not

leave.

want any talks about a contract until the summer. I want to concentrate on the Euro 2000 finals," he said. "I am retiring from interna-

tional football then and I want to have a successful tournament with my country. But I will be at Arsenal next season. That is for sure."



Real Madrid's Brazilian superstar Roberto Carlos (L) exchanging shirts with Manchester United play-maker David Beckham after their Champions League quarterfinal first leg at Madrid on April 4. - AFP photo



Porto's Paulinho Santos during their Champions League quarterfinal first leg at Oporto on April 4.

Bayern get vital away goal



PORTO, Portugal, sider one of the most exciting Munich striker tournament. Paulo Sergio grab-CHAMPIONS bed what could prove a crucial late equaliser Tuesday to give last's season's runners-up the edge in their quarter-final with Portuguese

first leg finishing 1-1, reports A goal just after half-time from prolific Brazilian striker Mario Jardel had given the Portuguese side a slender lead but his fellow countryman Paulo Sergio's equaliser gave Bayern a precious away goal going into the second leg at Munich's

Olympic Stadium. Jardel's goal makes him the top scorer(Nine goals) in this season's Champions League and he said: "Obviously I am very happy (to be top scorer) but we are sad to have conceded the equaliser.

"But we are going to Munich with the aim of winning."

Bayern's French World Cup winning defender Bixente Lizarazu said that they were delighted with the equaliser. "We got an away goal that is

very important for the second leg," said the Basque. "It was our positive reaction to losing the first goal that helped us get an equaliser and we hope to build on that for the second leg. "In the first half they played better than is but after the

break we played better and we in 1997. developed our game," Lizarazu told Canal Plus TV station. This was a rematch of the 1987 European Cup Final won

April 5: Bayern finals in the history of the But the first half was not

much of a spectacle as the winners of the last five Portuguese titles found it hard to break champions. It was uncaracteristically mour after the match. champions FC Porto, with the poor goalkeeping by Bayern's

most hope with first Capucho and then prolific Brazilian striker Mario Jardel nearly profiting after lapses in concentration from the German international custodian. Jardel also should have done better with a header after a good

> run and cross by Esquerdinha. And a fine shot by Esquerdinha enabled Kahn to redeem himself with the save of the first period.

> Most of Bayern's good work came from the midfield tandem of Stefan Effenberg and Jens Jeremies. Bayern's best effort of the

first period came when a harmless looking Jeremies shot took a wicked bobble off the pitch but Porto keeper Hilario managed to palm the ball away. Effenberg was said to be a

likely absentee but there seemed little wrong with him and the reports about Effenberg's condition may have merely been mind games by Bayern's wily coach Ottmar Hitzfeld, who steered Borussia Dortmund to the European title But it only took a minute for

a goal to come after the interval and it went to Porto - it was no surprise that the scorer was 2-1 by Porto in what many con- Jardel, his ninth of this sea- utes.

son's Champions League. The tall striker beat Kahn with a textbook header after a precision cross by Yugoslav in-

ternational Ljubinko Drulovic. Many believe that Jardel may be tempted to move on in down the reigning Bundesliga the summer but he made he seemed eager to scotch that ru-

"I'm playing with a big club Oliver Kahn that gave Porto that have already been European Champions. I have a good contract and I am happy with Porto. It's a good deal for Porto and it's a good deal for Jardel."

Bayern, determined to lay the ghost of last season when they famously snatched defeat from the jaws of victory in the final thanks to injury time goals by Manchester United's Teddy Sheringham and Ole Gunnar Solskjaer, were visibly shocked and briefly seemed to

lose their discipline. First Aloisio volleyed just wide of Kahn's goal and then Bayern's French World Cup winning fullback Bixente Lizarazu was cautioned for a tackle on Drulovic.

But gradually the Germans stepped up the pace and more strain was put on the Porto defence when Esquerdinha had to leave the field with a cut. And Paulo Sergio came up

with the priceless leveller with just 10 minutes remaining. The Porto defence seemed to be sleeping when Paulo Sergio took advantage of the slack

marking to score from close range. That seemed to unhinge the Porto players and both Aloisio and Jardel were both given yellow cards in the closing min-

UEFA Cup semi-finals first leg

English power put to test



United and Che-Isea in the Champions League, Arsenal and Leeds

step forth onto the European stage on Thursday in the UEFA Cup semi-finals as English clubs continue their quest to lift both European trophies, reports

Arsenal entertain French club Lens at Highbury, hoping to inflict the first away defeat on the 1998 French champions in this year's competition, while Leeds visit Turkish giants Galatasaray in the UEFA Cup. first-leg matches.

The prospect of an all-English final, the first since Spurs beat Wolves 3-2 on aggregate in 1972, is a distinct possibility as Arsene Wenger's "Gunners" and David O'Leary's young lions at Leeds have reserved their best form for this competition this

LEEDS - GALATASARAY While Galatasaray have won

everything on a domestic level they have never reached a European final and will be looking for a strong home performance before going back to Elland Road for the return-leg. There is no doubt the fans of

the Istanbul based club will be up for this game and Leeds can expect a hostile reception as they enter the Ali Sami Yen stadium, a place the fans like to call hell. Galatasaray are reportedly

60 million dollars in debt and are relying heavily on UEFA Cup success to bail them out of their financial crisis - the Turkish parliament have said they will pass a bill for a nine million dollar one-off payment to the players, who have not been paid for months, should they win the trophy. However, they have played

superbly in Europe this season eliminating AC Milan from both the Champions League and at the same time depriving them of a place in the UEFA Cup as they leapfrogged them to take third in the group. They are a team loaded with

ageless Romanian playmaker Georghe Hagi, the 'Maradona of the Carpathians', possess a player capable of unlocking the "A 0-0 result would be sufficient for the first leg," said their

experience and in the seemingly

"We want to be the first Turk-After Manchester ish club to reach a European final," he added.

Leeds meanwhile have gone off the boil losing their last three matches, the UEFA Cup Quarter-Final second leg tie at Slavia Prague and Premiership defeats against Leicester and Chelsea - falling 10 points behind Manchester United and clinging onto their second

O'Leary knows he has to pick his team up for the clash. "We have to re-group and

bounce back quickly from this, only time will tell if we can," Republic of Ireland international midfielder Stephen McPhail remained upbeat.

"Supposedly it's a hostile place to go. but that can only spur us on. We are in the last four in Europe and that's an honour. We have to show no fear and go out and play," he



HAKAN SUKUR

"European games have been good for us this season and we've just go to keep it going. It's been great for the club, the chairman and supporters, so we want to reward them with a place in the final," he added. ARSENAL - LENS Arsenal meanwhile seem to

have moved up a gear and are back in the thick of the race for Champions League places for next year picking up a convincing 3-1 away win at Wimbledon at the weekend despite playing the second-half with 10 men. They will not need remind-

ing how dangerous Lens can be as it was the French club who sent them reeling from Champions League play last season winning at Wembley 1-0 and holding them to a draw in the northern French city.

Unfortunately their on-fire French international striker Thierry Henry who scored his 20th goal of the season against Wimbledon is suspended after being controversially sent-off in the second-leg quarter-final win over German outfit Werder

Arsenal appealed the sending-off and Henry was only given a one-game suspension instead of the normal three games which means he will be free to play in the return-leg and if necessary the final in Copenhagen.

Skipper Tony Adams is also ruled out after failing to recover from his persistant groin injury while Dutch winger Marc Overmars is doubtful after picking up a knock on a thigh.

World Cup winner Emmanuel Petit has lost his voice due to the 'flu but should be in the middle of midfield alongside his compatriot Patrick Vieira while Dennis Bergkamp faces a late fitness test over a calf injury.

Nigeria's international striker Nwankwo Kanu has been cleared to play by his country's federation and will fly out the day after the match to play in a 2002 World Cup qualifier. Kanu who scored two first-

half goals in the win over Wimbledon will likely play up front alongside Bergkamp. Lens meanwhile are also looking for their first European final appearance despite a

mediocre domestic season

which finds them in the lower-

half of the table and not quite safe from the relegation demons. The team, who play in the Felix Bollaert stadium which famously has a capacity large than the town's population,

play according to Arsene Wenger a style of football very similar to that of English clubs. They shot to fame in 1998 when they surprisingly won the French title and their 42,000 stadium is regularly packed

with fans covered in the clubs colors of red and gold. They are boosted by the return of French-Senagalese defender Ferdinand Coly who returns after a lengthy injury and will marshall the Lens defense.

However, influential midfielder Olivier Dacourt is ruled out with a groin injury as well as the suspended Valerien Ismael and Jose Pierre-Fanfan forcing coach Francois Brisson to reorganise his central defence that will feature Youl Mawene alongside Coly.

Lens have proved stingy opposition in previous rounds coming from behind to knock out Spanish sides Atletico Madrid and Celta Vigo in the quarter-finals.

15. Bill O'Reilly, Australia,

England, Ray Lindwall, Australia. Sachin Tendulkar, In-

England, Malcolm Marshall,

(Reuters/Internet) borrowed the title HAMPIONS of one of lan nal Dury's best-kno-

wn songs to describe Real Madrid's 0-0 draw with Manchester United. "Reasons to be cheerful." might seem a strange headline

Madrid fans taken into custody

MADRID, April 5: Four Real Madrid supportors were arrested late Tuesday following an attack on a young Spaniard after the Champions League quarter-final against Manch-

ester United, police said. The 28-year-old victim who was wearing a United scarf was found lying in the street by emergency services who immediately transfered the young man to hospital.

clear diagnosis pending further examinations for spinal dam-The four men aged 23 to 27years-old are members of the radical Ultrasur group of supporters that follow the Madrid side who drew 0-0 with United

Doctors were unable to give a

in the first-leg match. Police found the suspects to be carrying a truncheon which could have been used to attack A.P. "Tich" Freeman, England, the victim as well as a kitchen knife and neo-nazi pamphlets.

There were also reports of Clive Lloyd, West Indies, Stan | minor incidents in a Madrid bar where United supporters Mitchell, South Africa, KS | threw bottles as well as minor Ranjitsinhji, England, Maurice | scuffles outside the Bernabeu man. stadium that resulted in four people suffering minor injuries.

after such a result but the shirt since his arrival last Spanish media applauded Real summer and also the best for their display in Tuesday's Champions League quarter-fi-"This was a great Real

Media's thumbs-up to Real

even though this was a draw European champions there is nothing to suggest they cannot win at Old Trafford, As's chief soccer writer wrote. Marca counted 14 occasions when United's Australian goalkeeper Mark Bosnich kept Real

Madrid. They never gave up and

Madrid strikers at bay. "How lucky they were," Marca commented. Real Madrid will visit the English premiership leaders as underdogs in the second leg but there is no doubt among the

Spanish players that they can defy the odds. "Although it is a bit sad just to have got a draw out of this match, we are going to Old Trafford to win," Real Madrid captain Fernando Redondo said.

OK, we didn't get a goal but now it is Manchester United who have the pressure on them." defender Michel Salgado said. Much of the post-match analysis focussed on Real Madrid's stunning reversal of their recent dismal form and the inspired efforts of Bosnich.

eliminated after the first leg.

"Everyone expected us to be

However, the failure of United midfielder David Beckham to make his mark drew considerable comment. Former Real Madrid striker Jose Miguel 'Michel' Gonzalez, now a TV pundit and columnist,

was among the most outspoken.

"At the end of 90 minutes it

was a case of: Beckham -- great expectation, great disappointment," Michel commented. "He didn't do much work .. and in the second 45 minutes he was hardly in the game."

One English international who did live up to his reputation was Real's Steve McMana-The Liverpudlian had arguably his best game in a white

chance of the match, just before the end, which Bosnich managed to keep out. "Macca rediscovered his form.. every day he is looking better." As commented.

tightest of defences. legendary striker Hakan 'the Bull of the Bosphorous' Sukur.