

Euro 2000

Dauids on top of Holland!

AMSTERDAM, April 11 (Reuters/Interfax). A huge image of Dutch midfielder Edgar Davids will be plastered on the Netherlands' tallest office building as the Dutch begin to hype Euro 2000.

Construction of the image, which will be the size of the Statue of Liberty, started on Monday and is expected to be completed in four to six weeks.

Davids will be seen from the back and the front, creating the impression he is storming through the 150-metre tall Rotterdam office of insurer Nationale-Nederlanden.

The image will show panes of glass flying as Davids chases a football which has crashed through an adjacent 90-metre tower.

Some 3,000 kilos of vinyl will be used to make the 4,500 separate panels for the image.

Euro 2000, co-hosted with Belgium, runs from June 10 to July 2.

UCB, govt

From page 13

He said to us that he had provided forecasts and information. He said to us that he has not taken part in match-fixing and that the three other players are innocent of the charge.

"Let us say that unequivocally we are shattered. The UCB and the government have been deceived. At 0630 this morning I phoned Mr Majid, the convenor of the selection board, and told him that the captain would not be participating and that he should contact his selectors to appoint a new captain and maybe a replacement batsman."

"We have been in contact with the Minister of Sport to institute an inquiry."

"We have been in contact with David Richards (ICC Chief Executive) and he is fully aware of the facts."

"On Sunday night we said the issues are very serious. At quarter past one we went to speak to the national captain and asked all the players to indicate whether they had ever been part of match-fixing or were part of this process, and all of them including Boje and Gibbs denied any involvement."

"In conclusion we said we need all of them to rise above the crisis. Shaun Pollock has been made captain, and he is a player with an immense future and feet on the ground, and we are confident that he and his team can make the Australia series a good climax to what has been a very difficult season for South African cricket."

Ababani's tenth

From page 13

17: 4-88; 5-89; 6-155; 7-162; 8-164; 9-165.

Table with 5 columns: Bowler, O, M, R, W. Lists bowling figures for various players.

Result: Ababani won by 38 runs.

Rashed rules

From page 13

Earlier, put into bat, City Club scored 219 in the allotted 35 overs for the loss of five wickets. Opener Sajid Hasan scored highest 59 off 99 balls with four boundaries followed by middle order Tuhin who was unbeaten on 38.

Among others, opener Pappu scored 31 while two Pakistanis Rehman Rafique and Wasim Nayem collected 22 and 23 runs respectively.

Victoria, with yesterday's win, raised their tally to eight points from nine matches. On the other hand, City Club suffered their sixth defeat also in nine outings.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard of the Premier Division cricket league match between City Club and Victoria Sporting Club at the Dharmadri Cricket Stadium yesterday.

CITY CLUB

Table with 5 columns: Bowler, O, M, R, W. Lists bowling figures for City Club players.

Extras (lb-3, w-17) 29

Total: (for 5 wks in 50 overs) 219

Did not bat: Tuhin, Rezaul Haque, Taposh Das and Anam.

Fall of wickets: 1-57; 2-120; 3-131; 4-171; 5-198.

Bowler O M R W

Table with 5 columns: Bowler, O, M, R, W. Lists bowling figures for Victoria players.

Extras (lb-4, lb-2, nb-1, w-15) 20

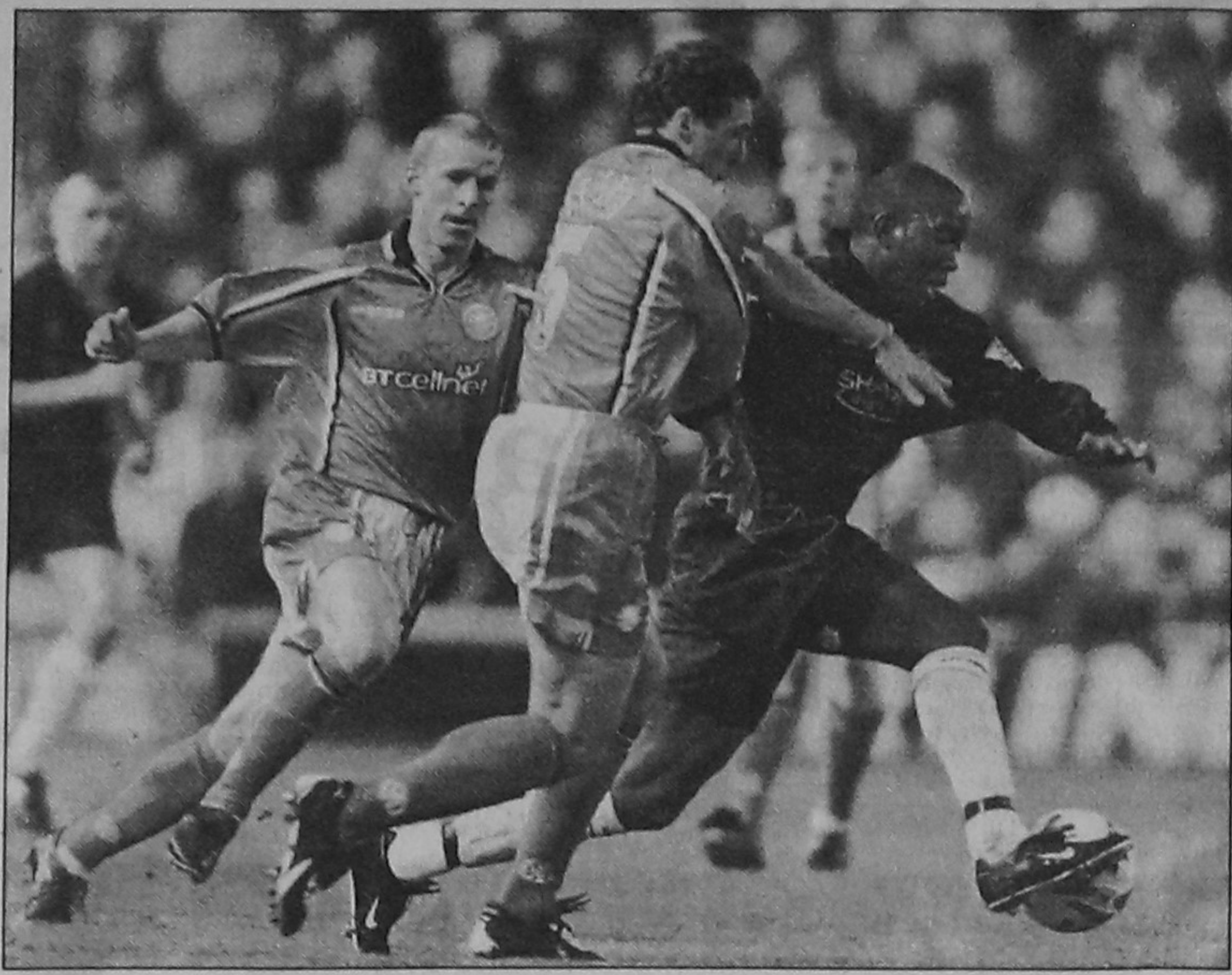
Total: (for 6 wks in 46.5 overs) 220

Did not bat: Shahnewaz Kabir, Biplob Sarkar and Kamruzzaman.

Fall of wickets: 1-58; 2-65; 3-67; 4-117; 5-135; 6-195.

Bowler O M R W

Result: Victoria Sporting Club won by four wickets.



Manchester United's Dwight Yorke (R) surges past a couple of Middlesbrough players during their Premiership clash at the Riverside Stadium on April 10. —AFP photo

Premiership

MU prevail in thriller

LONDON, April 11 (Holders Manchester United took a step closer to securing their sixth Premiership title

in eight seasons after beating Middlesbrough 4-3 in a see-saw encounter at the Riverside Stadium on Monday night, reports AFP.

The reigning champions have 73 points, 11 more than second-placed Liverpool. United now need seven points from their remaining six games to retain their Premiership crown.

The home side went in front after 18 minutes through England under-21 striker Andy Campbell who volleyed an unstoppable effort past keeper Mark Bosnich.

But United came storming back in the second half with Welsh international Ryan Giggs equalizing a minute after the interval with a crisp long shot.

Andy Cole put United in front with just over half an hour to go before England midfielder Paul Scholes made it 3-1 with a fantastic long-range strike.

Former United midfielder Paul Ince reduced the deficit with a close-range header after 86 minutes but substitute Quinton Fortune rounded off a flowing three-man move to restore United's two-goal advantage - despite home appeals for offside.

Brazilian Juninho scored on the stroke of half-time with a stunning individual effort but United held on and are now on course to retain their Premiership title.

United coach Sir Alex Ferguson was full of praise for Giggs after the winger's equalling goal sparked United into life.

"Giggs scored at the right time for us," said the canny Scotsman.

"It gave us a lift and we upped a gear. There's goals in the team from different positions and you always expect one of the players to score. They kept coming back and it was a real cup tie."

Boro boss Bryan Robson was disappointed not to go in at half time with a bigger advantage.

"At half time we could have been 3-1 up. I didn't think there

was much wrong with Hamilton Ricard's goal. A 2-0 lead would have given our lads something to defend. It had a big bearing on the game."

Middlesbrough started strongly and created the first chance when Mark Summerbell almost crowned a neat passing move only for Mark Bosnich to save his improvised back-heel flick.

United responded and Paul Scholes robbed Campbell to feed David Beckham. Beckham's cross was cut out by Colin Cooper and the ball fell to Scholes, whose drive from the edge of the area was stopped by Mark Schwarzer.

Boro were forced to reshuffle their defence after just 11 minutes when Cooper injured his left ankle clearing the ball from Ryan Giggs and had to be replaced by Italian Gianluca Festa.

Jaap Stam made a rare mistake to allow Hamilton Ricard through on the right, but the Dutchman recovered to tackle the Boro forward at the expense of a corner.

United went close to opening the scoring moments later when Giggs flicked Dennis Irwin's throw-in over Curtis Fleming and crossed to Dwight Yorke, whose shot was blocked by Schwarzer.

The game came to life after 18 minutes when Boro took the lead. Ricard lifted the ball over United's stiff defence for Campbell to volley home his fourth goal of the season.

Two minutes later the hosts almost had a second when Brian Deane connected with a glancing header from Christian Ziege's free-kick only to be denied by Bosnich.

The visitors were rocked and Roy Keane, who berated Henning Berg in their last game against Real Madrid, lost his cool with Stam.

Boro thought they had doubled their advantage after 27 minutes when Ricard headed Ziege's corner into the roof of the net, but referee Paul Durkin disallowed the effort because of holding.

Ferguson was clearly unhappy with his defence and four minutes later he brought on Michael Silvestre for Irwin.

United wasted two chances to equalise before half-time

when first Giggs directed a free header from Beckham's cross high and wide before Andy Cole completely missed the target after Schwarzer had parried Scholes' shot.

Ferguson's team-talk had an immediate effect and within a minute of the restart United were on level terms. Gary Neville's long throw was headed out by Paul Ince only as far as Giggs and the Welshman hit a low shot beyond Schwarzer's reach.

Cole should have put the visitors ahead seconds later but with only Schwarzer to beat he dragged his shot wide.

Yorke was also guilty of missing a gilt-edged chance after 58 minutes when he failed to get a foot to Giggs' driven cross.

But United did not have to wait much longer to go in front. Sixty seconds later Beckham ran at the heart of the Boro defence before threading a delightful pass through for Cole who slotted the ball past Schwarzer.

Boro were now struggling to contain a rampant United and former Old Trafford hero Robson brought on the Brazilian Juninho for Robbie Mustoe with 20 minutes to go.

Schwarzer reacted well to tip a Beckham shot over the bar as the home side struggled to break out of their own half.

Juninho then cleared off the line from Yorke's header but after 72 minutes United increased their lead.

Scholes picked the ball up from Neville 25 yards from goal and unleashed an unstoppable shot which flew past Schwarzer and into the top left hand corner.

Ince gave Boro some hope when he headed home a corner with four minutes left after Bosnich failed to punch clear, but United countered and went 4-2 in front through South African international Fortune after a sweeping counter-attack.

Juninho scored Boro's third after 90 minutes, beating three defenders before curling a low shot past Bosnich.

United held out through three minutes of injury time and two more wins out of their final six games will almost certainly be enough to earn their sixth title in eight seasons.

Premiership preview

Wimbledon's fight for survival

LONDON, April 11: Strugglers Wimbledon can go a long way to securing their Premiership status on Wednesday if they beat Sheffield Wednesday at Selhurst Park, as the battle to stay among England's elite clubs heats up, reports AFP.

The relegation trap-door continues to snap at the heels of the Dons after four consecutive defeats but given the opposition, manager Egil Olsen must fancy his chances against a side with only one away win all season.

Wednesday have amassed a meagre 21 points this campaign and along with basement club Watford look doomed to First Division football next season.

Should Wimbledon win, they will open up a nine point gap between themselves and third-bottom Bradford and with just five games left to play have an excellent chance of survival.

Wimbledon are on 32 points, five ahead of Bradford and 11 clear of Wednesday, with Watford propping up the table with 20 points.

Coventry, without an away win all season, could not have picked a worse time to travel to fifth-placed Chelsea.

The Blues have enjoyed a particularly successful 10 days winning 1-0 at UEFA Cup semi-finalists Leeds, beating Spanish giants Barcelona 3-1 in the Champions League quarter-final first leg, and reaching the FA Cup final with a 2-1 semi-final win over Newcastle United on Sunday.

Chelsea are also aiming for a top three finish to secure a place in next season's Champions League while Coventry will be looking to move further away from the relegation zone, but with 38 points and six games to go, Gordon Strachan's perennial under-achievers look safe.

Newcastle, meanwhile, will be hoping they can bounce back from their cup defeat when they travel to West Ham.

Victory for Bobb's Robson's men will lift them above the Hammers and into a respectable eighth position.

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Bundesliga preview

Bayern search for form

BERLIN, April 11: Bundesliga champions Bayern Munich are set to be without their influential captain Stefan Effenberg for the trip to SC Freiburg on Wednesday, hoping to get their 1999/2000 campaign back on course, reports AFP.

Bayern Munich dropped back into second spot behind Bayer Leverkusen a couple of weekend's ago after dominating the championships and leading the Bundesliga since last October.

The 31-year-old Effenberg has pulled a muscle in his calf and was not able to train on Monday. "It's not looking good," said Bayern coach Ottmar Hitzfeld. "If the doctor says it's risky, he won't play."

Effenberg suffered the injury during Saturday's 4-0 home thrashing over SSV Ulm.

Suspended Brazilian Giovane Elber comes back into the side against Freiburg though Alexander Zickler, who has had a torn muscle for the last two weeks, is hoping to return for Saturday's derby against 1860 Munich.

Bayern are in a busy period with the second leg of their European Champions League quarter-final against Portuguese side Porto on April 18 nicely balanced at 1-1 after the first leg.

Bayer Leverkusen face relegation-threatened Hansa Rostock on Wednesday as they try to hang on to their two point lead as Christoph Damm's side have six matches left in which to secure their first ever title.

FIXTURES

Tuesday: Kaiserslautern v Hertha Berlin, VfL Wolfsburg v Schalke 04, SSV Ulm v VfB Stuttgart, Borussia Dortmund v SpVgg Unterhaching.

Wednesday: Arminia Bielefeld v Hamburg SV, Eintracht Frankfurt v Werder Bremen, SC Freiburg v Bayern Munich, Borussia 1860 v MSV Duisburg, Hansa Rostock v Bayer Leverkusen.

Revivo wants to leave Celta

VIGO, Spain, April 11: Celta Vigo's Israeli international striker Haim Revivo said Monday he wanted to leave the Spanish First Division club unless he regained a place in the starting line-up, reports AFP.

"Next season I want to play in every game and if it is not at Celta then it will be in another team," 28-year-old Revivo told journalists. "It's not fair having to stay on the bench."

Italian Cup final first leg

Inter pray for Ronaldo boost



ROME, April 11: Inter fans are hoping that Ronaldo will make a dream return from injury here on Wednesday night and lead them to victory in the first leg of the Italian Cup final against Lazio, reports AFP.

Ronaldo, who underwent knee surgery in Paris on November 30, scored one of the goals when these two teams last met in a trophy match - the 1998 UEFA Cup final, also in the French capital.

Inter won 3-0 that night, though it's hard to see them repeating the feat at the Olympic stadium.

Inter have clocked up only draws and defeats since they had Lazio on the ropes in a league match in Rome on May 12, leading 2-0 with only seven minutes to go.

It was a game that should have swung the season Inter's way.

Instead, a collective suicide by Inter's defence saw the match finish 2-2 and the team, by the admission of its own technical director Gabriele Orlandi, have yet to recover from its psychologically.

Ronaldo is calling on his Inter Milan teammates to shrug off their recent crisis and start winning.

But the omens are not good for Marcello Lippi's men, who haven't won a match in more than a month and who have slipped to fifth place in the Serie A. Just outside the Champions League zone for next season.

With team morale severely battered by last weekend's 3-0 defeat to Udinese, Ronaldo is doing his best to make players to think positive.

"I don't think that this season can be considered a failure," he told the Italian press on Tuesday. "Last season, things were a lot worse. It was all over for me by February."

But now we've got the Italian Cup and the Champions League to aim for. And they're both within our grasp."

Ronaldo believes his teammates should just worry less and concentrate more on playing and enjoying their football.

"Even though I haven't been there, I've suffered too for the

team," he said. "And my impression is that we should go back to enjoying ourselves. In training and in matches."

"I think that the crisis has mainly been due to the lack of results: Inter just need to focus on playing as they know they can and they shouldn't be afraid of anyone."

As for his much-awaited return, Ronaldo said: "I'm coming back in a decisive match - but then they all are now in Italian football."

"Obviously, after such a long time away, I can't come back and play as if nothing had happened. I'll play for 20 minutes in one match, then 30 and so on until I reach the peak of condition."

"I have to take one step at a time, that's only to be expected," he said.

Ronaldo has been dogged by injury and poor form since the 1998 World Cup finals. Now the Brazilian hopes that fate will be kinder to him after four and a half months away from the game.



RONALDO

"From the point of view of my private life, it's been a marvellous time," he said. "I've been able to experience the joy of being married and just recently of the birth of little Ronaldo," he said of the son born last week.

"But now I hope that I've paid all my dues as far as bad luck is concerned. That's enough injuries."

Ronaldo is unlikely to play for more than 45 minutes on

Wednesday, and may well only get 30 given his prolonged absence. But the Brazilian is determined to play.

"I want to make my contribution," he insisted last week. Doubts remain though over injured centre-forward Christian Vieri, the other half of what was supposed to be Inter's all-star attacking partnership this season, but which has rarely ever been seen due to injuries.

Lazio, who won this tournament in 1998, may have their main focus on the league championship, but coach Sven Goran Eriksson is not snubbing the Cup either.

He ordered his men to get a good night's sleep this week, after battle fatigue began to set in at the end of Saturday's 1-0 victory over Perugia.

"In the last 20 minutes we were tired and we suffered," Eriksson said. But that's only to be expected because we're playing too many matches. For some players, there's not a moment's respite."

"I just don't know how many consecutive matches have been played by people like (Paolo) Negro or (Giuseppe) Pancaro. They need a good sleep," he said. "In fact, they all need to sleep well because on Wednesday there's the Italian Cup final. And that's not something to be thrown away."

Eriksson will be without skipper Alessandro Nesta and fellow defender Giuseppe Favalli through injury and there are doubts that goalkeeper Luca Marchegiani will recover in time. Striker Fabrizio Ravanelli is suspended.

Another forward, Alen Boksjic is likely to be dropped for disciplinary reasons after a row with Eriksson on Sunday, reportedly because the Croatian claimed his shirt was too tight.

The centre-backs means that Chilean Marcelo Salas will probably be partnered by Simone Inzaghi up front.

The return leg will be played at San Siro on either May 18 or 20, depending on Lazio's progress in the European Champions League. However, after being hammered 5-2 by Valencia in last week's quarter-final first leg, there doesn't look too much of that left.

Spanish Cup semifinal first legs

All's not well at Barcelona

MADRID, April 11: Spanish giants Barcelona and Real Madrid go into Wednesday's Spanish Cup semi-final first legs both still holding out on increasingly bleak prospects of a treble as they play Atletico Madrid and Espanyol respectively, reports AFP.

Barcelona are coming off a disastrous five-day spell which saw them lose their unbeaten run in the Champions League when they lost 3-1 at London based Chelsea before another heavy defeat on Sunday when they were beaten 3-0 at home by mid-table Real Mallorca.

Moreover, there were clear signs of unease inside the Barca camp as star players Rivaldo and Patrick Kluyvert on Monday criticised their substitutions by coach Louis Van Gaal during their loss to Mallorca.

Brazilian Rivaldo again directly questioned coach Louis Van Gaal's use of him on the wing instead of in central midfield where he believes he would be more effective.

During January and February, Van Gaal did not pick Rivaldo, who had just won the 1999 FIFA World Player of the Year award, for exactly the same reason.

"I don't know why he replaced me," said Rivaldo who was taken off in the 63rd minute for Simao. "I did all Van Gaal asked me to do in training during the week. I didn't have one bad match."

Kluyvert backed the comments of Rivaldo saying he should have been left out of the field to keep up the pressure. "He's (Rivaldo) right. When you lose 1-0 you have to keep attacking."

Kluyvert added he was not happy at being replaced in the 73rd minute by Dani, saying it would have been better to have

replaced a defender with a striker than a striker with a striker to keep up the attacking impetus.

Van Gaal defended his decisions by saying: "I saw that neither Rivaldo nor Kluyvert were really in the match. They didn't have the desire or that little spark."

Barcelona are still second in the league but now trail leaders Deportivo Coruna by five points with six games left and must overcome a two goal deficit to

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5 Turks put behind bars

ISTANBUL, Turkey, Apr 11: Five Turkish men were jailed Monday in connection with the stabbing deaths of two English soccer fans on the eve of last week's UEFA Cup semifinal in Istanbul between Leeds United and Galatasaray.

Four of the men were charged with the murder and the fifth was held on lesser charges in connection with the crime. Three others were also charged in connection with the killings and were released pending trial. Ten others questioned were released on Monday.

The slain fans, Christopher Loftus and Kevin Speight, died in street clashes in downtown Istanbul last Wednesday just 24 hours before Galatasaray defeated Leeds 2-0 in the first-leg match.

Turkish accounts said many of the English fans were drunk and provoked the violence, harassing women on the streets and making obscene gestures with the Turkish flag. English fans said they were ambushed by Turkish youths armed with knives who were out to stir up trouble.

Turkish newspapers said at least five of the suspects had criminal records for knife assaults, theft, and selling tickets on the black market. At least one is reported to have confessed.

As the murder charges were filed in Turkey, Leeds chairman Peter Ridsdale lashed out at the Galatasaray club, saying it was "showing a lack of respect" and being "opportunistic."

Ridsdale wants Galatasaray fans to be barred from the April

20 second-leg in Leeds, hoping to head off any further violence. Galatasaray has suggested the game be played at a neutral venue or that Leeds fans be banned from the Elland Road stadium.

UEFA, the governing body of European soccer, said Monday it would announce Wednesday whether Turks will be barred from the match. UEFA has also asked Leeds whether it could guarantee security "if Turkish supporters were admitted to the stadium."

In addition, UEFA said it asked Leeds for an "assessment of security implications" if Turkish supporters were to arrive in Leeds but were denied entry into the stadium.

Galatasaray general secretary Sinan Kalpakcioglu said the club would wait for Leeds' response before deciding whether to seek a neutral venue or ask that Leeds fans also be banned.

Galatasaray officials are angry at Leeds for warning fans against going to the match.

"The suspects are in the hands of justice... and will be punished," said Galatasaray Chairman Faruk Suren. "The issue should not be turned into a blood feud."

Ridsdale, the Leeds chairman, hit back and said Galatasaray should pull out of the competition if its fans are banned from Elland Road.

"I think that's the best thing they can do frankly because Galatasaray, since it happened, appear to me to have been opportunistic," he said. "They have been trying to find any means possible to get through to the final without kicking a football."

The UEFA Cup final is May 17 in Copenhagen.