



# EUROPEAN FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP 2000



## Scary

EDEGEM, Netherlands, June 24: Antiterrorist police arrested a group of five armed, masked men close to the hotel housing the Yugoslav Euro 2000 players, team officials said on Saturday, reports AP.

No shots were fired and the players, who are due to face the Netherlands in the quarterfinal at Rotterdam on Sunday, didn't know anything about the incident, which happened late on Friday evening.

According to Yugoslav team security official Costa Vukovic there was security alert at about 10 pm. Five men armed with guns wearing masks were spotted on the edge of the forest near the hotel by a woman who was walking her dog.

Vukovic said that anti-terrorist police came into the hotel to protect the players and five men were arrested in the forest. They had rubber bullets in their possession. They had stepped out of a German registered car and never got closer than some 200 metres (yards) from the hotel.

According to Vukovic, the five men claim they were playing war games. The players were told to go to their rooms on the first floor and turn their lights off. The whole incident took one hour and 15 minutes.

"It's a small incident because it ended this way," Vukovic said. "Five people came out of a German-registered car. A woman walking her dog saw them and phoned the police. Police were very quick to react. We didn't want to panic the players and told them to go to their room."

Dutch police were initially unable to comment on the incident.

## Men of the matches

ROTTERDAM, Netherlands, June 24 (AP): Two players - Thierry Henry of France and Erik Mykland of Norway - have twice won the UEFA man-of-the-match award during the group stages of Euro 2000.

Striker Henry was voted best player for France-Denmark and France-Czech Republic. Henry was rested for the third French game against the Netherlands.

Midfielder Mykland was selected by the UEFA panel for his play against Spain and Yugoslavia. There will be no more awards for Mykland, however, as the Norwegians were eliminated.

Portugal were the only country with three different players being cited - Luis Figo against England, Fernando Couto against Romania and Sergio Conceicao against Germany.

The UEFA panel is made up of Gérard Houllier of France, Berth Vogts of Germany, Jozef Venglos of Slovakia, Anghel Iordanescu of Romania, Rinus Michel of the Netherlands, Roy Hodgson of England and Andy Roxburgh of Scotland.

### Man-of-the-match awards:

Belgium-Sweden Emile Mpenza (Bel) Turkey-Italy Filippo Inzaghi (Ita)

France-Denmark Thierry Henry (Fra)

Netherlands-Czech Republic Pavel Nedved (Cze)

Germany-Romania Mehmet Scholl (Ger)

Portugal-England Luis Figo (Por)

Spain-Norway Erik Mykland (Nor)

Yugoslavia-Slovénia Zlatko Zahovic (Slo)

Italy-Belgium Francesco Totti (Ita)

Sweden-Turkey Fredrik Ljungberg (Swe)

Czech Republic-France Thierry Henry (Fra)

Denmark-Netherlands Frank De Boer (Ned)

Romania-Portugal Fernando Couto (Por)

England-Germany Alan Shearer (Eng)

Slovenia-Spain Raul (Spa)

Norway-Yugoslavia Dragan Stojkovic (Yug)

Italy-Sweden Henrik Larsson (Swe)

Turkey-Belgium Hakan Sukur (Tur)

England-Romania Dorinel Munteanu (Rom)

Portugal-Germany Sergio Conceicao (Por)

Yugoslavia-Spain Josep Guardiola (Spa)

Slovenia-Norway Erik Mykland (Nor)

Denmark-Czech Republic Vladimir Smicer (Cze)

France-Netherlands Edgar Davids (Ned)

## Joao Pinto going to Sporting Lisbon

ERMELO, Netherlands, June 24: Portugal star Joao Pinto has agreed a four-year contract with new Portuguese champions Sporting Lisbon, Portuguese state radio reported Friday, reports AFP.

The 28-year-old, who can play as a striker or an attacking midfielder, had been freed by previous club Benfica's German boss Jupp Heynckes just before Euro 2000.

Pinto put himself in the shop window by scoring the equaliser for his country in the 3-2 victory over England.

He had been linked with English clubs Aston Villa and Chelsea and Italy's Fiorentina

## QUARTERFINAL PREVIEW

# Holland v Yugoslavia: Get ready for the unexpected

ROTTERDAM, Netherlands, June 24: Co-hosts Holland and unpredictable Yugoslavia meet Sunday in a Euro 2000 quarter-final tie opposing two of the most talented yet rugged teams in the competition, reports AFP.

After Yugoslavia's 1-0 victory over Norway, coach Nils Johan Semb accused the Yugoslavs of "sabotage" following an often farcical second half replete with yellow cards and riddled with fouls, play-acting and off-the-ball ball incidents.

Vujadin Boskov's side were forced to hang on for the final five minutes of the match after the dismissal of Mateja Kezman in the 88th minute for an ugly foul on Erik Mykland precisely 44 seconds after he came off the bench.

In earlier matches, Siniša Mihajlović was sent off in their opening 3-3 draw with Slovenia and Slavisa Jokanović is suspended for the Dutch game following his red card in the 4-3 loss to Spain.

It could be said both Yugoslav footballers and press are finding it difficult to strike the right balance between asserting themselves and outright bad sportsmanship.

The Yugoslavian press slammed French referee Gilles Veissiere following the Spain defeat which saw the Yugoslavs let in two injury time goals.

The Serbian television station RTS said only "games other than sporting ones" would prevent Yugoslavia going further in the competition which was interpreted as a clear reference that they may be robbed by the referee.

When asked if he expected a physically tough contest, Rijkaard said at a press conference on Friday: "Yugoslavia have a certain way of playing and they go all out for the result. That is not a criticism and they have technical skills and everything a really professional team needs at the moment.

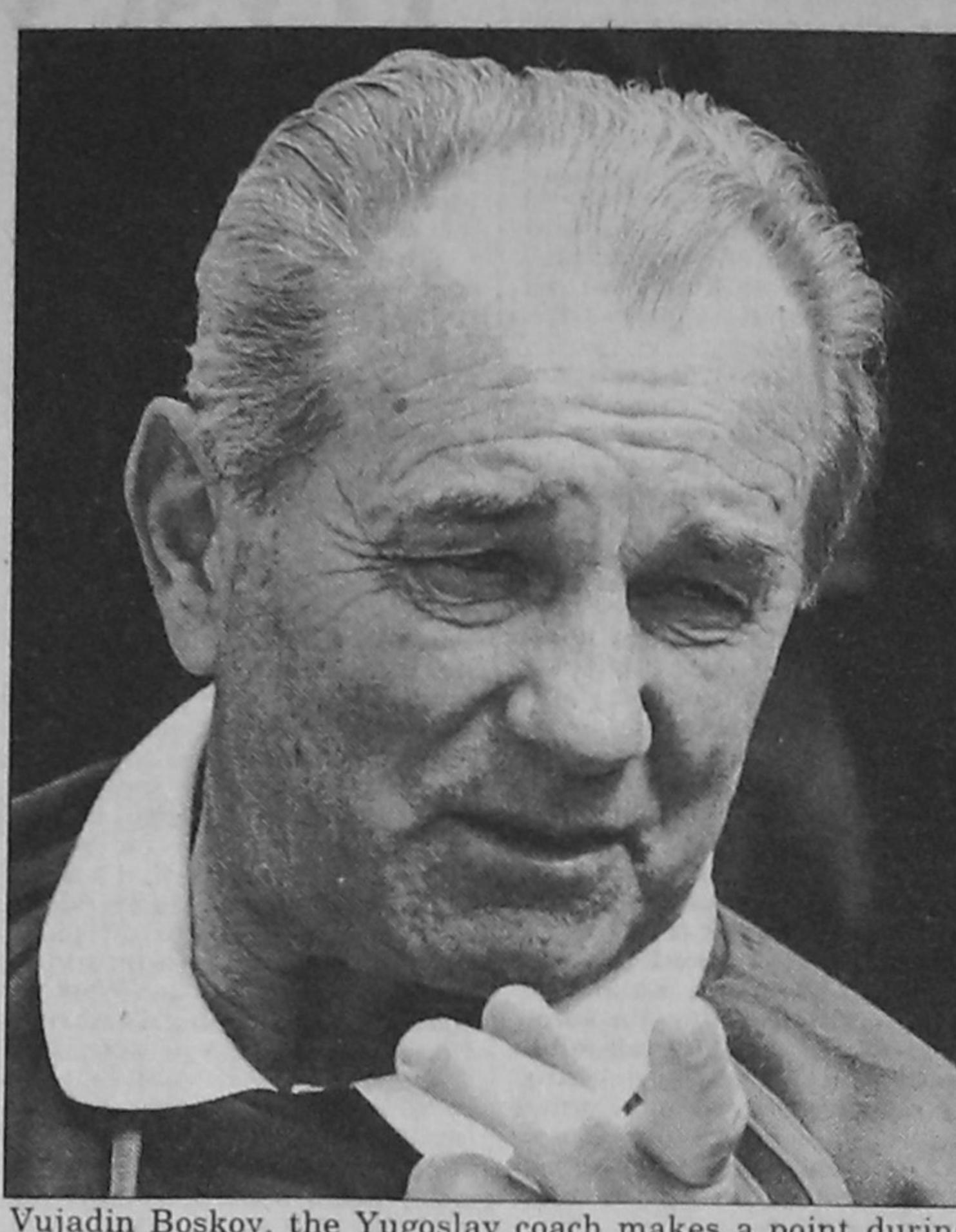
"I have to concentrate on our own team and give them advice not to react in the wrong way."

There is evidence in this fixture two years is not a long time in football. Holland's team for this game is only likely to have two changes from the 1998 team which played Yugoslavia, with Boudewijn Zenden and Patrick Kluivert likely to play instead of Clarence Seedorf and Marc Overmars.

Of the Yugoslavian 11 which started the 1998 game against Holland, losing 2-1 in Toulouse, eight are still in the current squad.

Rijkaard said of the 1998 game when he was assistant to coach Guus Hiddink: "I found it a very tense match. From what I remember we gave away the goal after letting Yugoslavia get forward too easily."

"We did not dominate that game but we won on will power



Vujadin Boskov, the Yugoslav coach makes a point during a press conference at Edegem yesterday. —AFP photo

and team spirit."

Holland's probable line up is Van der Sar (or Westerveld) in goal, with Michael Reiziger, Jaap Stam, Frank de Boer and Arthur Numan in defence.

**Expectations:** As host nation, the weight of expectation will again be huge in front of a packed Rotterdam crowd. Dutch fans don't want a mere win — they want style and panache. The Dutch camp hit out at the national media this week, saying it should stop its constant criticism and get behind the team.

**YUGOSLAVIA**

**Injuries:** Defender Goran Djordovic is out with a leg muscle injury. Midfielder Vladimir Jugovic, suffering from back spasms, is also a doubt.

**Suspensions:** Defender Slavisa Jokanović is out after being sent off against Spain.

**Worries:** With injuries and suspensions taking their toll, Yugoslavia fears it could suffer against the Dutch. The team's preparations have also been overshadowed by concerns about its fans. One threw a coin at the referee against Spain, while two others ran onto the pitch in an apparent attempt to attack him.

**Expectations:** The fiery Yugoslavs seem to thrive on adversity and have often saved their best for when they've been reduced to ten men. It's sure to be red-hot in Rotterdam against the Dutch. But that could be just what they need.

**Suspensions:** None.

**Worries:** The Dutch will be concerned about Yugoslavia's never-say-die attitude. Tour-

### THEIR STATE

ROTTERDAM, Netherlands (AP): A look-ahead at Sunday's Euro 2000 quarterfinal between the Netherlands and Yugoslavia:

### THE NETHERLANDS

**Injuries:** Goalkeeper Edwin van der Sar should be back after missing the game against France. But midfielder Ronald de Boer is in doubt after straining his hip and groin.

**Suspensions:** None.

**Worries:** The Dutch will be concerned about Yugoslavia's never-say-die attitude. Tour-

# Can the De Boers do a Koemans?

been a major feature of the co-hosts success in front of their fans so far.

He scored a last minute penalty against the Czechs, under tremendous pressure, for a fortunate 1-0 victory in their first group D match nearly two weeks ago.

Frank's freekick with his left foot from way outside the area to equalize at 2-2 against France on Wednesday was a superb strike, even if keeper Bernard Lama could have done better than palm it on to the crossbar and into the net.

Ronald Koeman's brother Erwin was just like Ronald de Boer, a right-sided midfielder, and, like Ronald, is not an automatic first-team player.

Middle-aged football fans might well remember twin brothers Willi and Rene Van de Kerkhof who both contributed to runners-up spots at the 1974 and 1978 World Cups.

Arnold Muhren, who played for Manchester United during the 80's, and brother Gerrie both played for Holland but because of their large age gap, were never on the field together.

Frank de Boer said at their Hoenderloo training base to the north of Arnhem on Friday that they, like normal twins, had a great understanding between them.

"We know everything about each other," skipper Frank said of his older brother. "We don't need to talk to each other much because we always know exactly how the other is feeling."

"I'm very happy when Ronald is in the team, and he always wishes me all the best in my performances."

Both brothers are fiercely competitive whether it's playing cards or having a friendly bet with other team members. Frank was disappointed to see England go out because he had backed them in a friendly flutter amongst the squad.

The 30-year-old brothers have also always been at the same club as professionals, apart from Ronald's season and a half at Dutch First Division

FRANK DE BOER

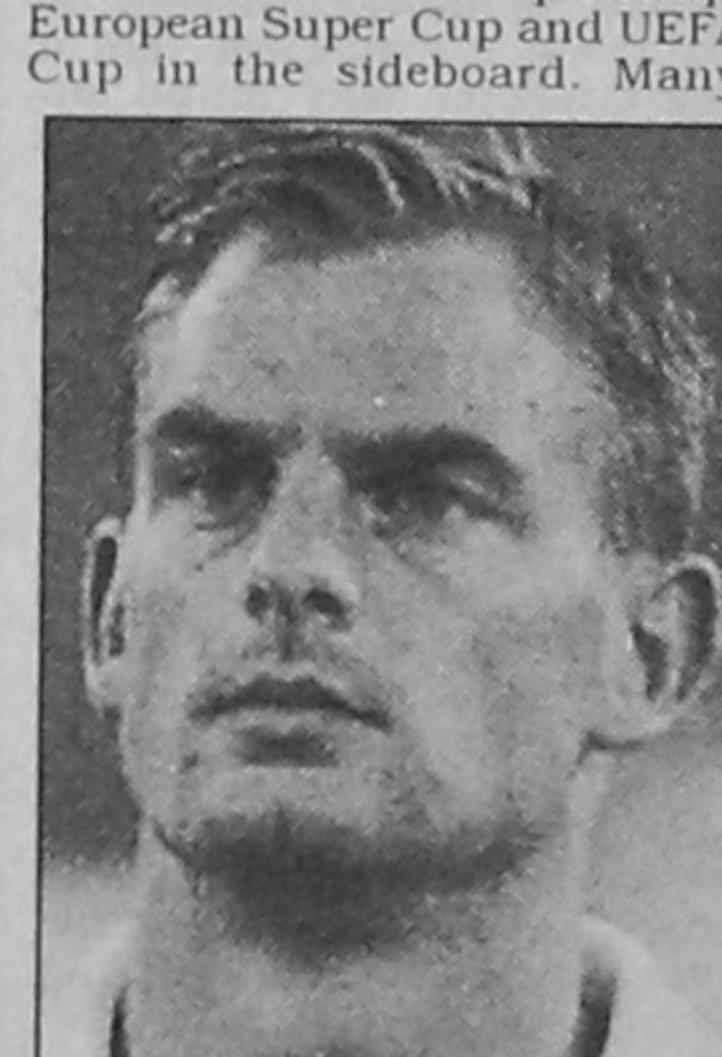
in time for Sunday's quarter-final against Yugoslavia in Rotterdam.

The only thing central defender Frank might need to fight off is the media barrage inflicted on him everyday. Yet he is unflappably courteous, perhaps mirroring his composure under pressure on the football pitch.

Superstitious Dutch supporters might take note of their similarity with the Koeman brothers who won the European title for Holland in 1988.

Ronald Koeman was an automatic choice in central defence, like Frank, and had a thunderous shot from dead ball situations. A Koeman freekick even won the 1992 European title for Barcelona.

Frank's dead ball ability has



RONALD DE BOER

Dutch domestic titles, of course, were also won.

Ronald was not available to talk on Friday because of his injury, but Frank was as open and informative in front of the microphones as he is talented and industrious on a football pitch.

"I hope to play for another four years or so," Frank said, adding he was not in any way planning to leave Barcelona.

"Of course you can have a new coach and things can change, but I'm happy in Spain."

The brothers are fierce competitors, like Frank's older brother.

Both of them exude level-headedness which might be innate in their make-up or could be because of the Ajax culture of nurturing players emotionally, mentally and physically as well as helping them with their football skills.

## Hefty fine on the Yugoslavs

ROTTERDAM, June 24: Yugoslavia's football federation has been hit Friday with a hefty 120,000 Swiss franc (72,400 dollar) fine by UEFA's disciplinary commission as a result of the crowd trouble that marred their midweek Euro 2000 match against Spain, reports AFP.

In a statement issued here the commission explained: "The decision was based on a series of incidents spotted during and immediately after the final whistle."

In particular the penalty was sparked by the 14 flares exploding onto the pitch and the three attempted attacks on French referee Gilles Veissiere following Spain's last gasp 4-3 win which dumped Yugoslavia out of the competition.

Two Yugoslav supporters threatened Veissiere after he'd red carded Yugoslavia's Slavisa Jokanovic in the 63rd minute and again after the final whistle.

The frenchman came under attack again as he made his way off the pitch, being hit full on the face by a coin.

The commission highlighted the "very bad conduct of the Yugoslav supporters, the throwing of dangerous objects and the potential danger prompted by the pitch invasion" as well as mentioning the six yellow cards and one red handed out to the Yugoslav players in the match itself.

Yugoslavia has up to midnight Saturday to appeal.

The commission suspended Jokanovic for one match.

## World champs still fairest

BRUSSELS, June 24 (AP): World champions France are also topping the UEFA fairplay league at the completion of the group stages.

Roger Lemerre's side have a coefficient of 8.17 points ahead of Portugal with 8.00 points and Spain with 7.92 points.

Bottom of the pile by a long way are Yugoslavia with just 5.75 points. The Yugoslavs notched up 12 yellow cards and three red in qualifying for a quarter-final against the Netherlands.

The UEFA coefficient takes account of red and yellow cards as well as a more subjective general measure of how the players are respecting the rules and etiquette of the game.

Both England and Turkey were discounted because of fan violence at their games.

UEFA fairplay standings after group stages:-

1. France	8.17 points
2. Portugal	8.00
3. Spain	7.92
4. Netherlands	7.83
5. Italy	7.75
6. Sweden	7.67
7. Denmark</	