Liverpool get Barmby

LONDON, July 15: English Premiership club Everton on Friday agreed to sell England midfielder Nick Barmby to city rivals Liverpool for 6 million pounds (9 million dollars), reports AFP.

The 26-year-old former Tottenham star shocked Everton earlier this month by revealing he wanted to join bitter rivals Liverpool and his dream came true Friday.

An Everton statement announced: "Everton and Liverpool have today agreed the transfer of Nick Barmby to Liverpool in a package worth up to 6 million pounds.

"The clubs wish to emphasise that negotiations have continued over the past week in a spirit of goodwill and integrity and they both wish each other success in the forthcoming season.

Basler takes a swipe at Ribbeck

COLOGNE, July 15: Mario Basler took his revenge on Germany's fallen coach Erich Ribbeck Friday by declaring him a loser who was solely responsible for the triple world champions' dismal Euro 2000

campaign, reports AFP. Ribbeck alone is the one responsible for the whole mess. he's a failure," Basler was quoted in the newspaper Bild.

Basler was one of the first players to fall by the wayside after Ribbeck took charge in September 1998, something the 31-year-old Kaiserslautern winger has not forgotten.

"He just didn't have the best 22 players in Belgium and Holland.(Andreas) Moller was missing for example," Basler said.

"And when you have a player like Thomas Hassler you simply have to let him play. But Ribbeck never had any character to start with.

Hassler played just one game at Euro 2000, having won a recall for the tournament after two years away from the national team.

Basler, a temperental and often lazy player, has a history of ill discipline behind him and was thrown out of Bayern Munich last year for brawling in a pizza restaurant late at night when he was meant to be taking care of himself at a physical re-

He remains keen though to play for his country again - but under certain conditions.

"I am not going to sit on the bench. If Rudi Voller calls then I will be asking him first if he is really counting on me."

habilitation clinic after injury.

Djorkaeff will be back at Kaiserslautern

BERLIN, July 15 (Reuters/1 nternet): Youri Djorkaeff, fresh from winning Euro 2000 with France, will rejoin German First Division team Kaiserslautern after the summer break, ending weeks of speculation that he would go elsewhere.

Youri will return to the Betzenberg (Kaiserslautern's stadium) after his holiday. That's certain," Denis Djorkaeff, the 32-year-old midfielder's brother and adviser, told Kicker magazine on Thursday.

Djorkaeff, who scored twice during the European Championship, said recently that he wanted to leave Germany's 1998 champions after only one season to seek a place in a team with a higher international profile.

But Kaiserslautern chairman Juergen Friedrich insisted Djorkaeff would be back.

Sino natant banned for doping

BEIJING. July 15: China is set to slap a four-year ban on world record holder Wu Yanyan after she was found guilty of doping, officials indicated today, reports AFP.

"We will punish her in accordance with our policy to strictly prohibit doping, strictly test against doping and strictly punish violators," an official from the anti-doping committee of the Chinese Swimming Asso-

ciation told AFP. "This incident shows that we have zero-tolerance in matters concerning the use of banned substances and that no matter who is involved, we will strictly punish," she said on condition of

anonymity. Wu tested positive for the banned anabolic steroid 19-norandrosterone at the Chinese national swimming championships and Olympic trials for

this years Sydney Games held in May in Jinan city, Shandong province. According to the Beijing Youth Daily, both A and B samples of Wu's urine tested

positive in internal Chinese doping tests, meaning that Wu's punishment would be meted out by the Chinese Swimming Association and not by FINA, the international swimming ruling body,

A formal announcement by the association was expected as early as next week, the official

Wu set the world record for the women's 200 meter individual medley in a time of two minutes 09.79 seconds in Shanghai at China's National games in October 1997. She went on the win at the distance in the world championships in the idea. January 1998.



The historic Maracana Stadium of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

Remembering Maracana



has plummeted.

sary of their greasstill celebrated in Uruguay 50 test sporting achievement all years later. too aware that in the five decades since that triumph the country's sporting reputation

On July 16, 1950 unfancied Uruguay squared up to favourites and hosts Brazil in the deciding match -- technically it was not a final -- of the 1950 World Cup in the footballing equivalent of the lion's den -- Rio de Janeiro's Maracana Arena in front of a 199.584 crowd that remains a world record for a stadiumbased sporting event.

Uniquely in that tournament the destiny of the World Cup would be decided in a group format with the four top teams -- Brazil. Uruguay, Spain and Sweden in the final pool.

Brazil thrashed Sweden 7-1 and Spain 6-1 in their first two final round games while Uruguay had drawn 2-2 with Spain and beaten the Swedes 3-

That left Brazil needing only a draw to win the World Cup for the first time in the final match and when Friaca opened the scoring for the hosts it looked as though the flood gates would

But Uruguay then produced their best football of the tour-

nament and after Juan heroic resistance by Uruguayan Schaffino had equalised Alcides Ghiggia scored the memo- year later. rable winner that silenced the

Brazil's golden age had to wait a further eight years before a certain 17-year-old called Pele appeared on the world

Only nine members of the victorious Uruguay squad -- including both goalscorers -- are still alive.

Uruguay, though surprise winners, were despite their modest size and population the first super powers of the world's most popular game. They lifted the Olympic title

in 1924 and 1928 before winning the first ever World Cup on home soil in 1930. That Maracana triumph remains, however, the finest hour of the 'Celeste' (Sky Blues).

pendent for 175 years -- have since seen their fortunes dwindle and have not even qualified ant of world football is beginfor the last two tournaments.

Politically the country has also sunk into relative obscurity -- cynics observe that the only two occasions that the country has hit the international headlines since were in 1972 when a rugby team from Uruguay were involved in a plane crash in the Andes, hav-The other occasion was the

workers to a military coup a

Drastic situations need drasthe 50th anniver- huge Maracana crowd but is tic remedies and last year the Uruguayan Football Association (AUF) finally looked across the River Plate for help to get out of the crisis.

> They engaged legendary Arhead coach in a money-no-object bid to qualify for the 2002 finals in Japan and South Ko-

> Passarella has a good crop of youngsters brought through by youth team coach Victor Pua who led the under-20s to the

Those youngsters formed the base of the team that reached the 1999 Copa America Final losing 3-0 to Brazil but Uruguay have made a good start to qualifying for the World Cup, currently occupying one of the four But the small nation -- inde- automatic qualification spots in the South American section.

> ning to awake were given further credence in their last World Cup qualifier when the 'Celeste' had the better of a 1-1 draw against Brazil -- in the Maracana of all places.

low as 74 in FIFA's rankings last year is now listed at number 35 and now 50 years after ing to resort to cannibalism to Uruguayan football reached its zenith the good times may finally be starting to roll again.

Figo loyal to Barca



Internet): On the eve of Real Madrid's presidential elections Barce-

lona's Luis Figo has stated categorically that he will not be joining the European champions. Figo told the Barcelonabased daily Sport he has not signed a contract with Real's presidential candidate Florentino Perez and that he will be staying at the Catalan

"Luis Figo hasn't signed a contract with anyone, not with Florentino Perez, nor with Lazio," said the Portuguese international.

"I have made an irrevocable decision: I will not be a Real Madrid player whoever wins the elections.

Figo voiced his discontent at being used as a weapon in the electoral campaign between Perez and current Real president Lorenzo Sanz and apologised to Barcelona fans for the controversy.

"If any of the fans have felt upset or disappointed about what has happened I would like them to forgive me, but they should only believe what I say."

Figo said he had received offers from Lazio and Perez and expressed his disappointment that outgoing Barcelona president Josep Lluis Nunez had refused to discuss his existing AFP.

his desire has always been to stay at Barcelona.

"I am sure that the whole affair will be just an anecdote in the career of Luis Figo as a Barcelona player."

Figo's declarations will be seen as a severe blow to Perez's candidature. The construction magnate has staked his reputa-

mpted calls for Spartak

Moscow's Brazilian striker Luis

Robson to be included in the

team -- this is no fantasy. As

early as this autumn, the

Brazilian could make his na-

tional team debut for Russia."

the leading sports daily Sport-

Express wrote in an editorial

team? Why not?" said Russia

and Spartak coach Oleg Ro-

mantsey, who recently called

the Brazilian the best striker in

the Russian premier division

sian, though he is playing in his

fourth season for the Moscow

side, but does not seem averse to

Robson speaks little Rus-

"If I do get such an offer, I

"Robson in the national

this week

this season.

"Robson in the national

MOSCOW. July

net): The sorry

state of Russia's

national soccer

team has pro-

15(Reuters/Inter-

BARCELONA. tion on bringing the Portuguese July 15 (Reuters/ player to the Bernabeu



LUIS FIGO

The voting for the Real Madrid's presidency takes place on Sunday.

Football friendly

TOKYO, July 15: Japan will play a friendly match against the United Arab Emirates on August 16 in Hiroshima in preparation for October's Asian Cup, the Japan Football Association said Friday, reports

The Emirates failed to qual-But Figo stressed again that ify for the Asian Cup -- to be held in Lebanon from October 12-29 -- but they are now coached by Frenchman Henri Michel, the former national team coach of France, Cameroon and Morocco.

The Japanese, also led by French coach Philippe Troussier, won the Asian Cup in 1992 for the first time.

Russia's samba dream

would be more than happy to

put on a Russian national team

jersey." Robson was quoted as

played for Brazil and would be

eligible if he takes out Russian

citizenship. He would also be

the first foreign-born player to

Grubac returns

to Belgrade

burg striker Vanja Grubac is to

return to Belgrade after failing

to make an impression in the

ended his contract a year before

its expiry and will move to OFK

Belgrade for the nominal trans-

He moved to Hamburg in

1998 for 500,000 dollars but has

only played 11 games in his two

years in Germany, scoring two

The 29-year-old striker

Bundesliga, reports AFP.

fer fee of 100,000 dollars.

HAMBURG, July 15: Ham-

The country has fielded sev-

The 25-year-old has never

saying by Sport-Express.

play for Russia.

Fiorentina Gomes

rie A side Fiorentina are interested in signing Portuguese international Nuno Gomes from Benfica, the sports daily A Bola reported Saturday, says AFP.

The 24-year-old striker, Portugal's fourth-choice striker benament.

Fiorentina already have another Portuguese international Rui Costa and the club are interested in adding Gomes to their line-up.

Gomes and a meeting is planned between Vittorio Cecchi Gori (club president) and Vale e Azevedo (Benfica president)," A

However, his get out clause with Benfica would put the club back an estimated 15 million

Gomes has been a prolific scorer for Portugal at junior levels of football. But he faces a eight-month

UEFA ban for his role in the fracas which followed Portugal's Euro 2000 semifinal defeat by France, when he pushed the referee in a free-for-all which ensued when the French won on a controversial penalty.

Sporting Lisbon's Beto, he was European under-18 champion, fourth at the Atlanta Olympics and third in the 1995 under-20 World Championships in Qatar

going after

LISBON, July 15: Italian Se-

fore Euro 2000, was one of the major revelations of the tour-

"Fiorentina want Nuno

Bola reported. Gomes has become much

sort after following the European Championships with other clubs reportedly interested in him including English Premiership side Arsenal, Turkish side Fenerbahce and Spanish club Deportivo La Coruna, Real Sociedad and Valencia.

dollars.

With Ajax's Dani and

eral players native to Ukraine

and other former Soviet re-

publics -- but all were born bes

of goals in his first three sea-

sons in Russia but has found the

net five times in the last three

vision hat-trick in Spartak's 4-

2 win against city rivals Tor-

pedo on July 4, then got the

winner against Uralan Elista

lire from the media and fans

following Russia's disappoint-

campaign to include Robson in

the national team after watch-

ing the some of the leading sides

champions France and the los-

ing semifinalists the Nether-

lands had several African and

Newly-crowned European

He took his first premier di-

Soviet Union.

four days later.

friendlies this year.

at the Euro 2000 finals.

their line-ups.

matches.

fore the 1991 break-up of the

Robson scored just a handful

player's salary during the loan agreement. The 22-year-old arrived at Betis two seasons ago bearing the onerous tag of the world's most expensive player after

late on Friday night.

Betis to loan

Denilson

to Flamengo

(Reuters/Internet): Relegated

Real Betis have reached an

agreement to loan Brazilian

In a press conference on Sat

urday Betis sporting director

Faruk Hadzibegic made public

the agreement wich was reached

would not confirm the details it

is believed Brazil's Flamengo

will pay 500 million pesetas

(2.81 million dollars) plus the

joining the club for 35 million

The talented Denilson found

He failed to recapture the

Denilson had recently come

known to be unsettled in Spain.

an offer had been made for the

club's Spanish international

club had made the bid but said it

was Spanish and did not come

from Real Madrid or Barcelona.

Speculation has centred on

free-spending Deportivo

Cruel JFA!

TOKYO, July 15 (Reuters/

Internet): The Japanese orga-

nising committee for the 2002

World Cup (JAWOC) could put

less than half of Japan's

allotted 750,000 tickets on sale

to the general public, the Kyodo

JAWOC, which has yet to

make a final decision on how to

allocate tickets, may make just

45 per cent available to ordi-

nary fans with the rest going to

the Japan Football Association

(JFA), Kyodo said quoting

Japan and South Korea are

The JFA will reportedly re-

ceive 25 per cent of the tickets.

with another 20 per cent going

unidentified sources.

to co-host the tournament.

news agency said on Saturday.

striker Alfonso Perez.

Hadzibegic also confirmed

He would not reveal which

dollars from Sao Paulo.

Although the Spanish club

SEVILLA, Spain, July 15

Eric an Englishman at heart LONDON, July 15: Portugal. Eric Cantona reckons English football is the best in the world and

that Kevin Keegan was right to

international midfielder Deadopt an attacking approach at nilson to Flamengo for as long Euro 2000, reports AFP. as the Seville-based The 34-year-old former team are in the Second Divi-

Manchester United skipper also issued a snub to his native France, claiming here on Saturday that he preferred to watch England rather than the world vival. and European champions.

"I didn't watch any of the France games," said Cantona. who was capped 43 times by his country. "I like the English. I watched

all the England games and

thought Keegan was unlucky. I was surprised that they did not go through. "They scored so many goals and I can't understand why they

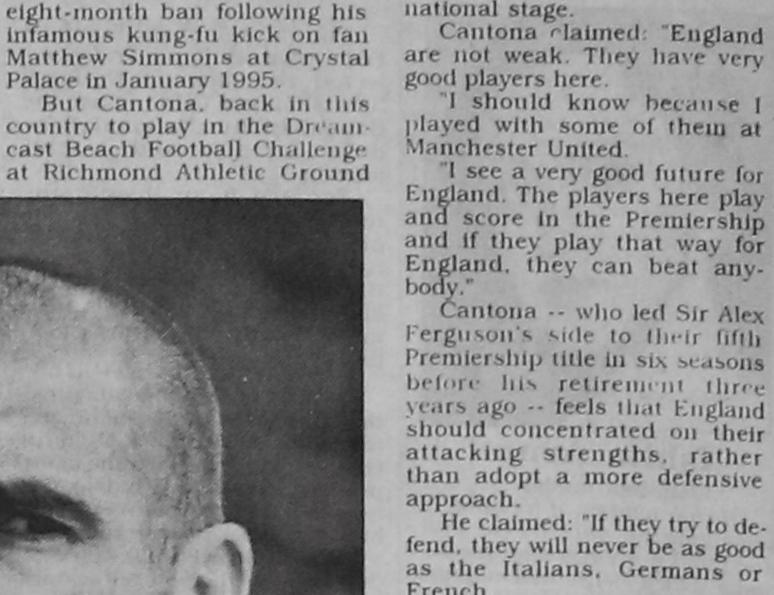
started defending when they went two goals in front against

"I think they are better when they try to score goals. If they play like they did in the first 20 minutes against Portugal, they

will beat anybody." Cantona -- once labelled the bad-boy of French football -was an instant hit at Old Trafford following his 1.2 million (1.92 million dollars) move from rivals Leeds in 1992, playing a major role in the club's re-

However his flery temperament followed him across the Channel and the maverick, yet brilliant striker often found himself at odds with the establishment and was handed an eight-month ban following his infamous kung-fu kick on fan Matthew Simmons at Crystal

But Cantona, back in this country to play in the Dreamcast Beach Football Challenge at Richmond Athletic Ground



fend, they will never be as good as the Italians, Germans or French.

mentality in England, so why did they defend as they did in their last game against Roma-

"England played far back in their own penalty box in the last half against Romania and just waited for them to score.

at Leverkusen

COLOGNE, Germany, July 15: Germany striker Ulf Kirsten is to end his playing career at Bayer Leverkusen, the club he joined nine years ago. On Friday he extended his contract until June 30th 2002, reports AFP.

fered a job on Leverkusen's coaching staff. Leverkusen have also con-

firmed reports from Bulgaria that they are in negotiations to buy 19-year-old international Dimitar Berbatov from CSKA

According to CSKA's president Berbatov has already signed for four years, starting in January, and that Leverkusen have agreed to a 4.5 million Mark (2.3 million dollars) transfer fee.

Nigeria's Games going awry



the Sydney Olympies in September are not going as planned, Dutch coach Jo

because the Nigeria Football provide the money in time, he

manager Luciano Moggi said on The Turin club bought pervisory Sports Ministry.

fer, said Bonfrere. Lazio have been splashing out

on remodelling their squad and broke the world transfer record this week when they signed Ar-

"We came second with 71 points last season and our polthat's why we're not interested in the Crespos and (Marcelo) Salases."

Italian newspapers had speculated that Juve might try to buy Brazilian forward Rivaldo from Barcelona before the start of next season but Moggi appeared to rule that out.

Moggi said Juventus had completed the signing of young Dutch midfielder Sergio De Windt from Ajax Amsterdam and were close to selling Argen-

Rivaldo's compatriot, defender

Bejbl joins

Spanish club Celta Vigo.

PRAGUE, July 15: Czech in

year deal for an undisclosed sum in the Spanish capital Madrid Friday, the newspaper reported. The 27-year-old midfielder

secure another camp." Bonfrere

players



net): The Nigeria under-23 team's preparations for

The training camp in Germany secured for the team has been taken up by another side Association (NFA) could not

The NFA said it had not received its financial grants for the Sydney Games from the su-

age players allowed are still vacant as none of the players approached have accepted the of-Under Olympic soccer rules a

Bonfrere coached Nigeria to club's plans. gold at the 1996 Olympic Games

to Europe next week to try and team.

need to prepare well and according to my laid-down schedule." On Wednesday, national team captain Sunday Oliseh and midfielder Austin 'Jay-Jay' Okocha, among the over-age

Bonfrere requested, said they had turned down the offer. The duo were within the agelimit when they played for the 1996 Olympic team. Oliseh, who has joined

Borussia Dortmund from Juventus, said his club career was more important. "It'll be unfair to my career and Borussia Dortmund to go for the Olympics because for the

period of preparations and the

tournament. I'll be away for a long time," he said I stayed away for six weeks from Juventus to play in the 2000 Nations Cup. When I returned, I was no longer in the

During his one-year stay in Atlanta, using Daniel with the Turin club. Oliseh Amokachi, Uche Okechukwu made 19 appearances, mostly in and Emmanuel Aminuke as the UEFA Cup, scoring one goal. Okocha, with French club "We can't start training in Paris Saint Germain, said: "I the first week of August as want to concentrate on playing planned. Now, I have to travel only for the senior (Nigeria)

Hutchison moves to

LONDON, July 15: Scottish international Don Hutchison completed his 2.5 million pound (3.75 million dollar) switch from English Premiership club Everton to rivals Sunderland on Friday signing a four-year deal at the Stadium of

joined the North East club after turning down the chance to join Premiership newcomers Charlton, who had a similar bid accepted by Everton.

"I had no hesitation. I was desperate to come to Sunderland," said Gateshead-born Hutchison.

home for me. "I have said on numerous occasions that there are two managers I have respected and wanted to play for -(Sunderland manager) Peter

those managers. "I have known Peter Reid for a while now. I think he is a great manager and I am looking

forward to working with him. 'I also know Gavin McCann and John Oster from their days with Everton, so it will be great to work with the lads again.

Sunderland boss Reid has also snapped up Belgian midfielder Tom Peeters, 21, for 250,000 pounds (375,000 dollars) from KV Mechelen on a four-year contract and Austria Under-21 goalkeeper Jurgen Macho on a three-year deal after his contract with Casino Vienna expired in the close sea-

Everton sign

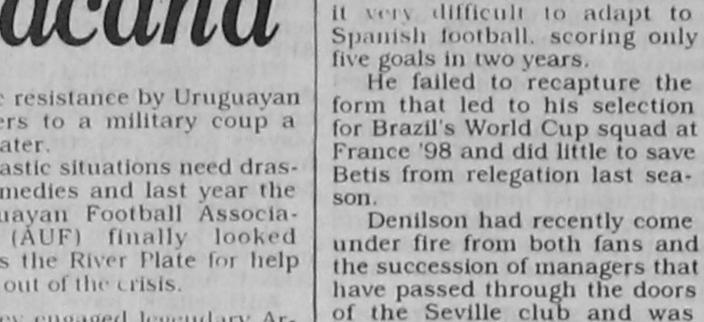
LONDON, July 15: English Premiership club Everton completed the signing of Ghanaian midfielder Alex Nyarko from French side Racing Lens Friday for a fee of 4.1 terms and passing a medical on

apply for a work permit. "That process should take

told SkySports website.



-Star file photo



gentinian Daniel Passarella as

World Youth Cup Final in 1997.

And signs that the fallen gi-

A team that was ranked as

to officials of the 10 venues throughout Japan where matches will be held, Kyodo said. Another 10 per cent are expected to go to guests prepared to pay top yen for executive boxes.

Some JAWOC officials want more tickets to go to the public and are hoping for a compromise, Kyodo said. A formal decision is not expected until the end of the month.

While JAWOC has yet to finalise a system for fans to purchase tickets for the 2002 World Cup, it is likely they will be allowed to apply by post to enter a lottery, Kyodo said.

Juve won't go shopping TURIN, Italy, July 15: Juventus are not planning to make any more major signings before the start of next season, general

French striker David Trezeguet from Monaco for some 26.5 million dollars last month but have otherwise made few purchases since they finished second in last season's Serie A title In contrast, champions

Friday, reports Reuters.

gentine striker Hernan Crespo from Parma for 110 billion lire (\$53.08 million). icy has been to reinforce our squad," Moggi said. "We signed a European champion (Trezeguet) a month and a half ago and

He confirmed, however, that Juve were interested in buying

Athirson, from Rio club Flatine striker Juan Esnaider to

Romantsev has been under ternational Radek Bejbl has left relegated Spanish outfit Atletico Madrid for French ing showing in several First Division side Lens, the daily Sport newspaper reported The local media began their here Saturday, reports AFP. The player signed a three-

was part of the Czech Republic's Euro 2000 campaign but played Caribbean-born players in for only 130 minutes in their I three matches.

Challenge at Richmond Athletic Ground in Surrey, London yesterday. -AFP photo

Manchester United's legendary French striker Eric

Cantona during playing in the Dreamcast Beach Football



(Reuters/ Inter-

Bonfrere said on Saturday.

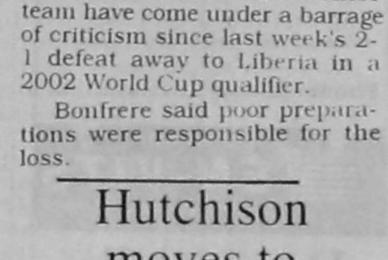
The slots for the three over-

team can use three players above the age-limit during the tournament.

over-age players.



Former Mexico international and Real Madrid striker Hugo Sanchez kisses her wife, Spanish model Isabel Martin, during their wedding ceremony at the Los Jeonimos Church in the Spanish capital on July 14. -AFP photo



Sunderland

Light, reports AFP. The 29-year-old midfielder

"It's a great club and it's back Reid and Howard Kendall are

Nyarko

Friday, reports AFP. Everton manager Walter Smith said the club would now

about two weeks but we do not expect any problems," Smith

and score in the Premiership and if they play that way for England, they can beat any-Cantona -- who led Sir Alex

here on Saturday, revealed that

England still holds a special

and I love the football," he told

ate and are the best to play for

"I had a very good time here

"The fans are very passion-

"I supported the English (at

"I feel closer to England than

The mercurial Frenchman

also dismissed suggestions that

the future for England's na-

tional team is bleak and that

the players lack the technical

ability to compete on the inter-

Euro 2000) and I will always

place in his heart.

BBC Radio 5 Live.

support England.

in the world.

the French.

Ferguson's side to their fifth Premiership title in six seasons before his retirement three years ago -- feels that England should concentrated on their attacking strengths, rather than adopt a more defensive

He claimed: "If they try to de-

"There is a special attacking

Kirsten to stay

Once he ends his playing days 34 year old Kirsten, who has shot 158 goals in his 286 Bundesliga matches, will be of-

Bonfrere and the senior "To repeat the 1996 feat, we of criticism since last week's 2-