The 24-year-old Benfica tions early Sunday morning be-

Fiorontina rope in Nuno Gomes

Agreement was reached fol-

lowing three hours of negotia-

l'ortuguese inter- player, Portugal's fourth-choice

national Nuno striker before Euro 2000; and

Gomes has signed one of the major revelations of

a five year deal the tournament, is reported to

with Italian Serie have fetched 18.7 million dol-

LISBON, July 16:

A side Florentina, the sports lars.

press reported here Sunday.

reports AFP.

Namibia maul Benin

JOHANNESBURG, July 16: A dazzling first-half display of attacking football set up Namibia for an 8-2 victory over Benin in an African Nations Cup eliminator this weekend, reports

Namibia won the preliminary-round tie 8-4 on aggregate. having lost the first leg 2-0 in Cotonou two weeks ago, and qualified for the group phase beginning in September.

There were nine goals in an amazing first half at a sparsely populated Independence Stadium with Benin levelling twice through Issifou Assouma inside 12 minutes of the kickoff.

Hat-trick hero Sylvester Goraseb put the Brave Warriors ahead a third time with a 20thminute shot off a Johannes Hindjou corner that gave goalkeeper Jean-Louis Noumhagan no chance.

Razundara Tjikuzu from German Bundesliga club Werder Bremen struck twice, Quinton Jacobs converted a penalty and Goraseb grabbed his third to leave Namibia 7-2 ahead by half-time.

Hindjou and Ruben van Wyk had the ball in the net during the second half only to be ruled offside before Collin Benjamin completed the rout with a closerange shot 13 minutes from the final whistle.

It was a record goal haul for Namibia and equalled their biggest victory margin set against Botswana at the same stage of the Nations Cup four years ago.

Namibia had vowed revenge after being badly treated in . Benin, where they stayed in a mosquito-infested hotel packed with prostitutes and hired taxis to reach the match venue because their bus failed to arrive.

Other Southern Africa minnows were less fortunate with Swaziland losing 3-0 in Kenya and Botswana 2-0 in Madagascar to make early exits from the biennial championship.

Bernard Onyango nudged Kenya in front after 16 minutes in the coastal city of Mombasa and late goals from Belgiumbased Mike Okoth and Sammy Simiyu left the Harambee Stars 5-3 overall winners.

Frequent scorer Hary Randrianaivo put Madagascar ahead with three minutes gone in Antananarivo and an early second-half strike from Claude Ralaitafika put the Indian Ocean islanders through 2-1 on aggregate.

Etienne Bito'o scored a hattrick as Gabon outclassed minnows Sao Tome e Principe 4-1 in Libreville to advance 5-2 overall. Valery Ondo-Ebe was the other Gabonese marksman and Ramos Amilear hit a late consolation goal.

Kramnik needs only a draw

DORTMUND, Germany, July 16: Russian Grand Master Vladimir Kramnik, 25, is heading for his fifth victory in the international chess tournament here after four consecutive wins in 1995-98, reports

In the eighth and second-last round on Saturday he defeated German Grand Master Robert Huebner, 51, to take first place with 5.5 points.

Kramnik now needs only a draw today against Alexander Khalifman of Russia to at least tie for first place. Khalifman has yet to win a game.

World V'ball League

Italy, Russia in final

ROTTERDAM, July 16: Italy regained form Saturday to clinch a berth in the FIVB. World League Championship match, edging Yugoslavia in a five-set thriller, 16-25, 25-15. 17-25, 25-23, 15-12, reports AP.

Italy, which have won the World League seven times in the 10-year history of the competition, earned a meeting in Sunday's title match against Russia. Brazil beat the Russians in

Saturday's round-robin finale, 25-22, 20-25, 25-11, 18-25, 15-11. but finished with a 3-2 record and edged out Yugoslavia for second place in the six-nation competition on sets won.

Italy's only loss in five games was Thursday's upset by the Netherlands.

On a day when all three clashes went down to the wire, the Netherlands beat the United States in the fight to avoid last place, 25-19, 19-25, 25-18, 26-28. 15-13.

Yugoslavia and Brazil will face off for the bronze medal.

Martina joins

From page 13 If I wanted to play tennis I had to leave the country. What I regret the most is that I had to

leave my family. Navratilova, 43, has not yet quit as a player. She played both women's doubles and mixed doubles at Wimbledon this year and still competes in

team tennis. "I'm looking for partners now for the Open," she said. about the US championships beginning next month. "And if I'm in shape, I hope I can play

next year. "The beauty of the sport is the variety. If you take away the doubles, you take away a great part of the game. Doubles should be written about more. The young people should know. If you play doubles you can be-

come a better singles player." Navratilova admits that because of her sexual orientation. she is "continuing to speak up as long as we don't have equal rights in the world. We have it pretty well in this country - but there still could be improvement," she said.



Spanish giants Real Madrid's presidential candidate Florentino Perez (L) showing his vote to photographers prior to casting his ballot at the club's headquarters in Madrid yesterday.

Real Madrid's presidential polls

Bright signs for Sanz



MADRID, July 16: Some 50,000 members of European champions Real Madrid headed to the pools

here Sunday to vote for either current president Lorenzo Sanz of his challenger Florentino Perez, reports AFP.

According to exit polls carried out by the sports daily Marca, Sanz was heading the race by midday (1015 GMT) with 56.7 percent of votes against 43.3 percent for Perez, in what looks like a tightly fought bat-

Real Madrid's website calculated that 8.69 percent of club

members had voted by 12H00, with polls opening at 0900 (0700 GMT).

With some 20,000 postal votes to be counted the final results are expected to be known by 0030 GMT.

his five-year mandate does not year plan. expire until June 2001. tough campaign exchanging a wide range of insults and accu-

Sanz on June 16, even though

sations in the highly mediatized battle made Reality" the 56-year-old Sanz, a property developer,

European Cup titles. While 53-year-old Perez.

who is in the construction business and failed in his previous bid in 1996, has focused on the club's financial record and promised to wipe out the The elections were called by crippling 43 billion pesetas (242 million dollar) debt with a five-

The final day's electioneer The two candidates fought a ing saw Sanz accuse his opponent of vote-buying and having no experience in the world of football.

Perez accused Sanz of calling Using the slogan "Promises a snap election to ensure that

there were no opponents and depriving club members of havcalled on voters to judge him on ing their say in the future of the his record which include two club

South Africa target WC 2010



IOHANNESBURG. July 16: South African football officials will ask world governing body FIFA to host the 2010 World Cup after losing

the shid for the 2006 tournament, bid committee 24-man FIFA executive) and chief executive Danny Jordaan Africa only has four." said Sunday, repports AFP. They will also support calls

continent and challenge the composition of FIFA's executive, a third of whom are from Europe, but had not yet decided whether to call for a revote for the 2006 event, Jordaan told

Jordaan and a delegation of his colleagues will raise these Issues at FIFA's August 3 conference, he said.

FIFA's July 6 vote for the host of the 2006 World Cup became controversial after Oceania representative Charles Dempsey abstained, resulting in Germany winning the bid by 12 votes to South Africa's 11.

Dempsey had been mandated by his federation to vote for South Africa should England be eliminated.

FIFA has already said that a revote would be out of the question, but South African officials were still exploring call-

UNDATED, July 16: AFP

underfire coach Jo Bonfrere

said Saturday the Super Eagles

will qualify for the 2002 World

Cup by beating arch-rivals

again we beat Sudan 3-0 and

they beat Sudan 10-0, no prob-

lem as long as we beat them

home and away," Bonfrere said.

that and if we train well, plan

well and the boys are deter-

from both the fans and the me-

dia since Nigeria's shocking 2-1

loss to Liberia in Monrovia last

the Black Stars of Ghana lead

Group B of the qualifying series

for the 2002 World Cup follow-

ing their comfortable 5.0

spanking of Sierra Leone in Ac-

the Sudanese ahead on better

the table after failing to win

matches take place January

Sierra Leone are bottom of

The next round of qualifying

LAGOS: Nigeria's hero at the

last African Nations Cup Julius

Aghahowa was Saturday re-

called to the country's Olympic

team despite being written off

by Dutch coach Jo Bonfrere as

"Julius will join the Olympic

goals' difference.

next year.

their first two matches.

AGHAHOWA

BACK IN

FAVOUR

"fat and unfit".

Bonfrere has come under fire

Currently Nigeria's rivals

mined, we will beat Ghana.

LAGOS, Nigeria: Nigeria's twice.

"We beat Sierra Leone 2-0 and was in very bad physical

"We have the players to do vital goals for the Super Eagles. rope.

and Ghana beat them 5-0. If shape," the Dutchman said.

football briefs on Sunday:

BONFRERE'S

BOLD WORDS

Ghana home and away.

ing for this option. Jordaan "That is something the at-

torneys are looking at, which is the possibility," he said. He added: "It is not about Dempsey but democracy - Eu-Tope has eight delegates fon the

Africa's football federation is the biggest, with 52 members, for the event to be rotated by and the South Africans feel it is under-represented. "The real fight now is to

dismantle Europe's stranglehold on FIFA." a South African Football Association (SAFA) official told the Sunday Independent newspaper on the condition of anonymity. "We didn't go down on our

knees with a bowl and ask for crumbs," he said, referring to South Africa's 2006 World Cup bid, which had emphasised that the tournament has never been held in Africa in its 70-year history "We presented a strong case

and probably they didn't like it. They do not like to see 'these independent Africans' because they feel their control slipping away and they are scared at the thought that they will no longer

membership of FIFA has been omy.

AFP FOOTBALL BRIEFS

"He is a good player but he

"He showed up after our

disappointed me greatly when

he turned down an invitation to

play for the Olympic team

World Cup game against Sierra

Leone but I had to send him

back to his club because he had

not been training for months

per Sub' at the Nations Cup in

February as he twice came off

the substitutes' bench to score

Aghahowa was Nigeria's 'Su-

run along colonial lines since it was established more than 80 years ago, when America, the Caribbean and Africa were still under colonial rule.

"It was designed to suit the Europeans obecause the claimed that they needed Va greater representation on FIFA in order to oversee the interest of their colonies and were thus given greater voting powers on behalf of their subjects in Africa and the Caribbean for example.

"But this is the 21st century and Africans have long gained independence and self-reliance. Yet Europe still clings to that outdated mentality. "That is why (the July 6)

shocking decision was taken against the interests of global football.

South Africa's biggest news paper group Independent Newspapers, public broadcaster SABC, television station e.tv and a leading supermarket chain are collecting signatures for a petition to be presented to FIFA for the 2010 World Cup to be brought to South Africa.

Most South Africans were devastated about the loss of the 2006 event, which economists said would have provided a He added: "The European much-needed filip to the econ-

ALVEWS WELCOME

sion side Alaves.

the Spanish minnows.

CROATIAN STRIKER

VITORIA, Spain: Croatian

The 23-year-old striker has

Previously with Croatian

signed a four-year contract with

side Hajduk Split, the player

signed his contract Saturday.

saying that he was proud to play

in the Spanish league which

was one of the strongest in Eu-

international Jurica Vucko was

on Saturday presented by his

new club Spanish First Divi-

Dortmund comes first for Oliseh

DORTMUND, Germany, July 16: Nigeria captain Sunday Oliseh has said he will not play for his country at the Sydney Olympics so that he can focus on having a good start with his new club Borussia Dortmund,

reports AFP. Oliseh, who has just moved to Dortmund from Juventus on a five year contract for 8 million dollars, joins midfielder Jay-Jay Okocha in knocking back an invitation from Nigeria's coach Dutch coach Jo Bonfrere to join the under 23 Olympic squad as over-age players.

"I would be away for a long time preparing for Sydney, that would be unfair towards Dort-

mund," 25-year-old Oliseh said. "At the beginning of the year I was away with Nigeria for six weeks at the Africa Cup and when I came back I had lost my place at Juventus."

Okocha, at Paris St Germain, says he would prefer to concentrate on playing for Nigeria's senior teain.

Sunday Oliseh may yet to have played a game for Dortmund but he has intimate knowledge of the Bundesliga after playing 52 games for FC Cologne between 1995 and 1997. Nigeria are facing difficult

times as they bid to defend their Olympic title in Sydney. Typical of their shoddy preparations was the recent cancellation of a training camp

in Germany when the Nigeria Football Association failed to pay for it in time, allowing another team to move in.

Old habits die hard!

LONDON, July 16: British football legend George Best has started drinking again despite having been told to give up alcohol to stay alive, the News of the World reported Sunday, reports AFP.

The weekly said Best, 54, had been found slumped on a park bench early on Friday. He subsequently checked himself into a health farm.

The former Manchester United and Northern Ireland star famed for his football genius and hard-drinking lifestyle, had not drunk for



GEORGE BEST more than four months after collapsing in London and need ing emergency treatment in

Doctors said that his liver was at great risk of collapsing if

he continued to drink. Best's latest binge began on Thursday night after a row with his wife Alex and continued through into the small hours of Friday morning in a number of London watering holes, the

News of the World said. He later checked in to a clinic in southern England to dry out for 24 hours, but was back in London on Saturday, the newspaper said.

Leeds discuss fresh contract with O'Leary

LEEDS, England, July 16: English Premiership side Leeds United are already discussing a new deal with manager David O'Leary even though he still has four years to run on his current contract, chairman Peter Ridsdale said Sunday, reports AFP, Ridsdale said that he wants

the Irishman to become the longest-serving manager in the country.

Ridsdale said: "He has four more years on his contract and we are currently talking to him about a new deal. We want to extend the length of the contract and increase what he



ity of our game, but anyway, my players are doing really well. although we've been studied by our opponents," said FC Tokyo coach Kiyoshi Okuma.

Amaral scored a wards afterwards, allowing Tokyo to counter-attack. It was a fourth straight viclead FC Tokyo to a tory for FC Tokyo in the second

2-0 victory over powerhouse stage collecting 11 points to League football on Saturday. Antlers and Gamba Osaka by

The Antlers shrugged off a

"King Kazu," Kazuyoshi Miura of Kyoto Purple Sanga, gave a bouquet to his elder brother Yasutoshi Miura of Avispa Fukuoka for his 200th game in for most of the time, but Koike's the league shortly before the

president Vale e Azevedo. Gomes was a prolific scorer for Portugal at junior levels of football and became much sought after following the Eu-

tween Fiorentina president Vit-

torio Cecchi Gori and Benfica

ropean championships. But he faces an eight-month UEFA ban for his role in the fracas which followed Portugal's Euro 2000 semi-final defeat by France, when he pushed the referee in a free-for-all which ensued when the French

won on a controversial penalty. Fiorentina already have another Portuguese International Rui Costa and the club had been showing interest in adding Gome to their line-up. Gomes has become much sort after following the European championships with other clubs reportedly interested in him including English Premiership side Arsenal, Turkish

Sociedad and Valencia. However, his get out clause with Benfica would put the club back an estimated 15 million dollars.

side Fenerbahce and Spanish

club Deportivo La Coruna, Real

Gomes has been a prolific scorer for Portugal at junior levels of football.

With Ajax's Dani and 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.

Fiorentina, desperate to beef up their forward line following the transfer of Argentine superstar Gabriel Batistuta to AS Roma, have also signed Brazilian youth international striker Leandro Amaral in a four year deal with an option for a further year.

The player, currently with Brazilian side Portuguesa dos Desportos, is reported to have signed a deal worth in the region of 20 billion lira (9.7 million dollars).

The move follows the breakdown of negotiations for the 23year-old player's planned transfer to Portuguese side FC

J-League

Tokyo shine with Amaral



goal for a fourth

NUNO COMES

"The King of Tokyo," who marked a hat-trick a week ago lacklustre first half with for the first time in the First Masashi Motoyama scoring Division league, netted a 70th- twice in the 76th and 88th their first win in the second minute goal after. Toshiki Koike minutes to beat Verdy Kawasaki stage thanks to Brazilian foropened the scoring with a 30metre goal in the 21st minute. "We must improve the qual-

Shimizu controlled the game long-ranged goal frustrated match.

them and they failed to check FC Tokyo's two Brazilian for-

2-0. while Brazilian midfielder Vital gave Gamba Osaka a 1-0 win over Cerezo Osaka.

Japan's former top striker

But Kazu showed no mercy to his brother as he struck home a decider in the 112th minute to put an end to sudden death extra time to beat Fukuoka 3-2. In other games, Jubilo Iwata

ran out 3-1 winners over regular bottom placers Kawasaki Frontale with Yugoslavian striker Aleksandar Zivkovic scoring his first goal in Japan in the 81st minute. JEF United Ichihara posted

ward Baron's sole goal nine minutes to the end as they blanked Kashiwa Reysol 1-0. Nagoya Grampus Eight also

gained their first win of the second stage beating Vissel Kobe 3-1. while first-stage winners Yokohama Marinos breezed past Sanfrecce Hiroshima 4-2 with Korean striker Yoo Sang-Chul scoring twice.

Cantona eying Fergie's job



LONDON. July 16: United. I had a great time at Old tootball legend Eric Cantona Saturday threw his hat into the ring to succeed Sir Alex

Ferguson as Manchester United manager, reports AFP. The former United striker, in London to play in the Dreamcast Beach Football Challenge at Richmond Athletic Ground, said he could "handle"

the job of following Sir Alex

Fergisson, who will not seek an

extension to his current Cantona, now concentrating on his career as an actor, said: "I really love Manchester

34NASA

beverage

fashion?

56 Garden

intruder

Solution time: 25 mins.

CROSSWORD

ACROSS

1 Tropical

21 Word

22 Reside

24 Equitable

27 Montana

DiMaggio

28 Washing-

ton D.C.

paper

31 Ostrich's

cousin

32"- longa,

syllable?

33 Dance

vita brevis"

symbol-

'ized by "x"

French Trafford but it would be difficult to follow Alex who, I think. is the best manager in the world. However, I could handle

Cantona has no plans to re-

turn to football at the moment, claiming: "I really enjoy my life right now. But in the future, we'll see.' The man who Ferguson claims was his best signing reckons English football is the

best in the world and that Kevin Keegan was right to adopt an attacking approach at Euro 2000. Cantona - once labelled the bad-boy of French football was an instant hit at Old Traf-

ford following his 1.2million

pound move from rivals Leeds in 1992, playing a major role in the club's revival.

However his fiery 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 Simmonds at Crystal Palace in January 1995.

But Cantona revealed that England still holds a special place in his heart. "I had a very good time here

and I love the football," he said. "The fans are very passionate and are the best to play for in the world.

island 36 Frontierssilents 23 Bridge 5 Heming-2 On position Carson 3 Acknowl-24 Lustrous 37 Misrepresobriquet edge black 25 Ms. "Star 4 Behind, Thurman 24 25 26 Wars" 38 Reveals perhaps 26 Beach-12"- o'clock 40 Nein 5 November goer's scholar survey coat 41 Lily variety 6 Hullabaloo 27 Hunky-13 Valhalla 43 Diva Maria 7 Snapshot dory 14 Conceil 47 Equi-8 Bracelet 29 The 15 Anti-lugi-48 Sing Sing setting maiden 41 42 tive tactic 30 Witnessed, section 9 Pulitzer-17Wish 51 First X or winner to Tweety otherwise politcal 358 pts. 18 Seek a 52 Dandling cartoonist 37 Poor higher 10 Malaria locale complexcourt 53 Storybook indication ion 11 Christmas 39 Clothing 19 Where the baddie 54 Himalayan washing retrain shop furinstruc bovine 16 Fundy nishings tions are 55 Line of or 40 The "one"

in a one-

41 Metropolis

42 One side

of the

Urals

Skelton

44 Theater

45 Farm

measure

46 Timetable.

for short

49 Compass

heading

50 Meadow

43 Red

two

By Eugene Sheffer

22 A Day at

the movies

DOWN

1 Theda of

Biscay

20 Climber's

challenge

48 49 50 CRYPTOQUIP VXBCJ FPQQNTD ECVXEBJ

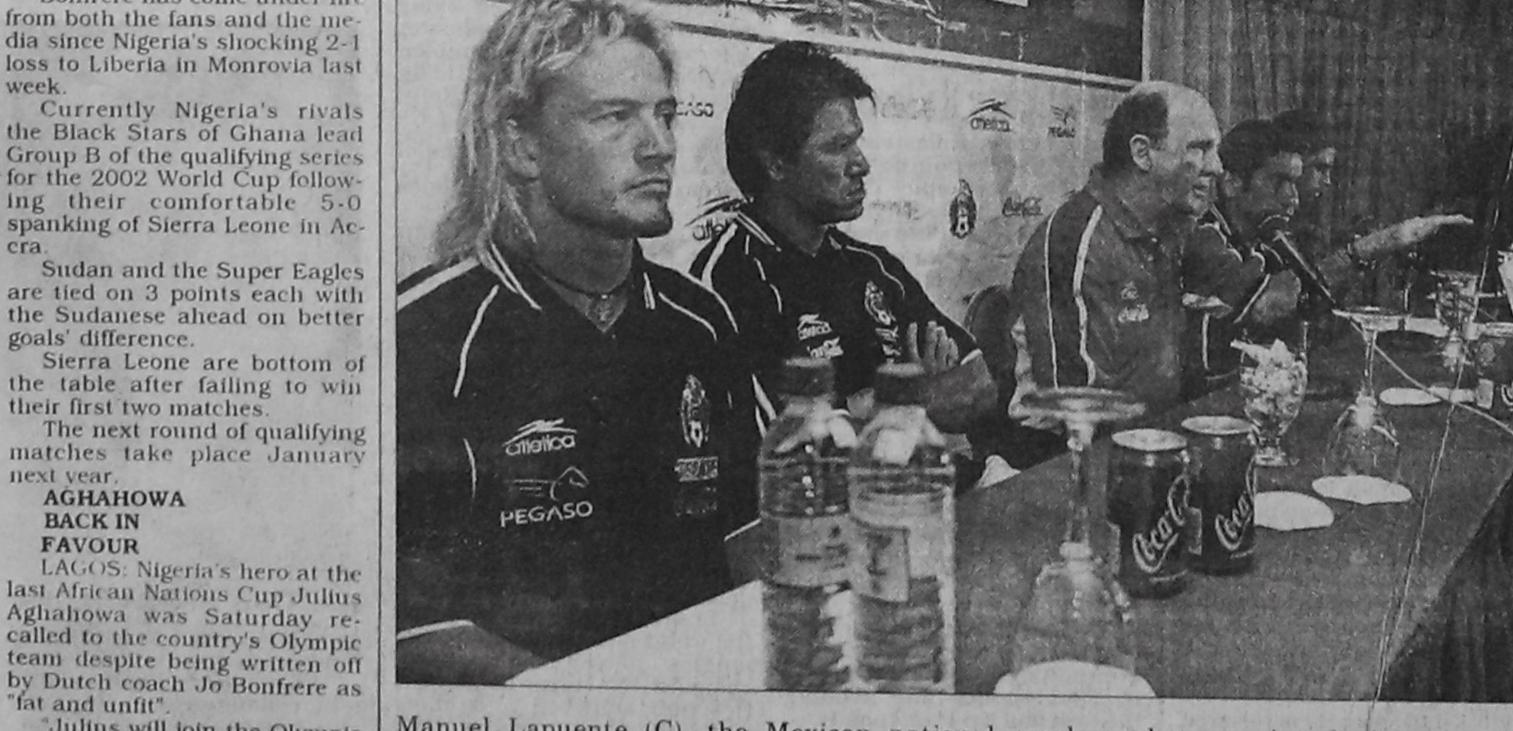
19 20 22 |23 |

VXTPLXFQPECE

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: WHERE'S NEVADA? I HAVEN'T GOT THE VEGAS IDEA IN THE WHOLE WORLD.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: Q equals T

The Cryptoquip is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.



Manuel Lapuente (C), the Mexican national coach, makes a point during a media team when we reconvene in Auconference at Panama City ahead of his team's World Cup 2002 qualifier against Panama. gust." Bonfrere told reporters Star players Luis Hernandez (L) and Claudius Sharez listen.