

## Sport

**Figo through medical test**

MADRID, July 24: Portuguese international midfield star Luis Figo has cleared the first hurdle on the way to becoming the world's most expensive footballer by passing a medical at Real Madrid, reports AFP.

Spanish radio reported Monday that Figo had arrived in the capital from Barcelona to tie up the details concerning his 70 million dollar move from the Catalan club. New Real president Florentino Perez has promised to present Figo to the club's fans as a Real player on Monday night.

**Pele attacks Luxemburgo**

RIO DE JANEIRO, July 24: Pele, still regarded as the best footballer of all time, has added his weight to the growing criticism of beleaguered Brazilian coach Wanderley Luxemburgo, reports AFP.

After Brazil's humiliation at the hands of Paraguay in a World Cup qualifier last week, Luxemburgo knows he probably faces the sack if the team lose to Argentina in Sao Paulo on Wednesday.

If he was in any doubt about his increasing unpopularity, Pele's outburst will have given him pause for thought.

Pele said on Sunday that he believed Brazil would not be in their current plight if Luxemburgo had listened to his advice and kept a settled side.

**Umpires under media attack**

COLOMBO, July 24 (Internet report): Umpires Daryl Harper and Peter Manuel have been severely criticised following a number of questionable decisions during the first Test between Sri Lanka and South Africa in Galle.

Sri Lankan newspapers gave the two officials a roasting, even though their own side won the match by an innings and 15 runs.

The English language Daily Mirror was particularly unhappy with two decisions, one of which brought about the second innings dismissal of South African captain Shaun Pollock, who was adjudged to have been caught at short leg from the bowling of spinner Muttiah Muralitharan.

The appeal for the catch by the fielders was clearly half-hearted, which an international umpire of the calibre of Harper had failed to realise," the newspaper said.

**Lance retains Tour de France**

PARIS, July 24 (AP): The world's top cycling competition is starting to look like the Tour de Lance.

Lance Armstrong cruised Sunday to his second Tour de France championship in front of cheering Parisians and tourists, and speculation immediately turned to whether the 28-year-old Texan had it in him for a third.

"I don't see why not, but there's a lot of talent in the field who are only going to come back harder and stronger next year," he said after a day spent clowning and celebrating even before he'd crossed the Champs-Elysees finish line.

**Unconvinced**

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The match has been identified by bookmaker Saleem Pervez as fixed.

Pakistan's batting collapsed from a very strong position, with Waugh himself taking 3-14 from 10 overs.

"I've played 30 years and I know when things aren't quite right," Waugh said.

"I remember bowling in that game and taking three for 14 and I don't normally take three for 14 off 10 overs to start with, so that was a bit suspicious."

"It was just the way that the opposition were playing. A couple of players in particular weren't, didn't appear, to be playing as if they normally would."

Former Pakistan captain Wasim Akram, who played in the match, denied it had been thrown.

"Pakistan always collapses. Steve should know that. We always collapse," he said.

**Tiger roars at St Andrews**

ST ANDREWS, Scotland, July 24: A relentless Tiger Woods walked all over the best of the rest as he kept his appointment with destiny here on Sunday by winning the 129th British Open, reports AFP.

The 24-year-old wrote himself into the history books when he became the youngest player ever to win all Grand Slams.

Only four other players have ever managed such a feat -- Ben Hogan, Gene Sarazen, Gary

Player and Jack Nicklaus.

It was a frightening display from the young Californian, who started the day six shots ahead of his nearest rivals and was so certain to win that the British bookmakers stopped taking bets on him.

Woods finished on 269, 19-under par, breaking Nick Faldo's 10-year-old record of 18-under, and eight shots clear of second-placed Ernie Els and Thomas Bjorn.

American superstar golfer Tiger Woods holds the British Open trophy on July 23. — AFP photo

Player and Jack Nicklaus.

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**WC 2006 controversy****SA team to meet FIFA**

JOHANNESBURG, July 24: The South African Football Association said Sunday it wants to meet

world governing body FIFA within a few days and discuss the controversial awarding of the 2006 World Cup to Germany.

A 12-11 victory for Germany over South Africa on July 6 was overshadowed by the abstention of Oceania delegate Charles Dempsey from the final round of voting at FIFA House in the Swiss city of Zurich.

Had Dempsey followed the mandate of his region and backed South Africa once England had been eliminated, a 12-12 tie would have left the casting vote with FIFA president and strong South African supporter Sepp Blatter.

Dempsey from New Zealand cited "intolerable pressure" for his decision and has since quit as president of the Oceania Football Confederation and as a member of the decision-making FIFA executive committee.

South African World Cup bid

**Gaspart new Barcelona president**

BARCELONA, Spain, July 24: FC Barcelona vice-president Joan Gaspart has been elected president of the Spanish football giant, the club announced, reports AFP.

Gaspart won 54.87 percent of votes cast by club members Sunday against 43.17 percent for his rival, publicist Lluis Bassat. A total of 45,888 votes were cast.

Gaspart succeeds Josep Luis Nunez, who served as president for 22 years but resigned in May.

Nunez left after Barcelona suffered a catastrophic season, picking up no silverware and being kicked out of the Spanish cup, without even playing a game, after a row with the national footballing authorities.

Gaspart, director of the Husa hotel group, represents a break with the past for Barcelona.

The club vice-president, during his campaign for the top job, promised change but not a drastic "rupture" from the way the club has been run.

**Ronaldo giving it a thought**

ROME, July 24: Inter Milan's injured star Ronaldo raised the possibility here Monday of being loaned to Brazilian First Division side Flamengo, reports AFP.

Ronaldo told Gazzetta dello Sport that the move was something to be considered as he strived to regain full fitness from a second round of knee surgery in nearly five months in Paris in April.

"The possibility of a loan should be examined, the problem exists and it's got to be tackled," he told the sports daily.

"We play hard in Italy, we knock ourselves, there's no let up."

The Brazilian is back in Italy after a check up in Paris having ripped the same tendon for second time in the Italian Cup final first leg against Lazio on April 12.

His short appearance there ended with the 23-year-old collapsing to the floor, screaming in agony before being stretchered off in tears.

The Brazilian international, recalling that wretched moment at the Olympic stadium, said: "I'd returned and then after just seven minutes the incredible happened. You can see that occurring again," he stressed.

"In Italy the tensions and knocks are serious straight away, in other countries less so. I'm not saying that I've got to be loaned to Brazil, I'm saying that the problem is there and that



we've got to think about it," he reasoned.

Ronaldo's intriguing suggestion was made after he had left Paris Sunday after an examination by professor Gerard Sallant, the surgeon who carried out the operation.

The player indicated that his knee was working up to 80 percent of its capability, and he was hoping to get it back to full working order by September.

If the move were to go through he would be lining up alongside Denilson, who has joined Flamengo from Spanish relegated side Real Betis on a one season loan.

The pace-setting Guatemalans visit Costa Rica while Barbados visits the US team in Group E.

The next matches are August 15 and 16. The Canadians visit Mexico while Panama is at leader Trinidad and Tobago in Group C, while Group D finds El Salvador at Jamaica and St. Vincent and the Grenadines at Honduras.

In Group D, Jamaica beat visiting Honduras 3-1 to take the group lead while host El Salvador routed St. Vincent and the Grenadines 7-1.

John Capel, 21, won the race in 19.85m, second-fastest in the world this year behind Johnson's 19.71 run at altitude in South Africa. Veteran Floyd Heard, 34, ran a strong second half to finish second in 19.88, and Coby Miller was third in 19.96.

Marion Jones won her third title of the meet with season's best 21.94sec in the 200m, adding it to the 100m and long jump titles she earned last weekend.

Inger Miller, the reigning 200m world champion, finished second in 22.09, and Nancie Perry was third 22.38.

Jones led out of the blocks, and although Miller narrowed the gap on the straight she never threatened the winner.

Jones is now poised for her campaign to win five gold medals at the Sydney Olympics in the 100m and 200m long jump and two relays.

— AFP photo

Argentine Franco Squillari holds aloft the trophy after winning the Stuttgart Open on July 23. — AFP photo

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