

## Figo through medical test

MADRID, July 24: Portuguese international midfielder 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 France.

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-Élysées finish line.

## Unconvinced

From page 8

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

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## Ronaldo giving it a thought



Ronaldo in action for Brazil.

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 that he was considering as he tried 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 know ourselves, there's no let up."

The Brazilian is back in Italy after a check up in Paris having ripped the same tendon for a 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 per cent 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.



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## WC 2002 qualifying Mexico, USA stumble

SAN JOSE, Costa Rica, July 24: Mexico and the United States, both 1998 World Cup finalists, failed to make a return trip in 2002, were beaten in North American semi-final round-robin qualifying road matches Sunday, reports AFP.

Russell Latapy's goal in the 85th minute gave host Trinidad and Tobago a 1-0 victory over Mexico while Hernan Medford's controversial penalty kick in the final seconds gave Costa Rica a 2-1 victory over the US team.

Trinidad and Tobago took the lead in Group C with a 2-0 record while Mexico remained alone in second place after Canada and Panama played to a goal-less draw in the other Group C match.

Medford's penalty in the third minute of injury time gave Costa Rica a 1-1 record, matching Barbados for second place in Group E, one point behind Guatemala with the US team last on a single point.

The two top teams from each of three qualifying groups advance to next year's continental finals, where three nations will advance to the World Cup hosted by Japan and South Korea.

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.

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.

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

## Squillari wins a Mercedes

STUTTGART, July 24: Fifth seed Franco Squillari took sweet revenge against a man whose game he knows as well as his own when he beat fellow Argentinean Gaston Gaudio 6-2, 3-6, 4-6, 6-4, 6-2 Sunday in the final of the million-dollar Mercedes Cup, reports AFP.

"It is not sour grapes. We are ensuring we do not let the matter rest until we have done our best to discover what really happened," Jordaan told reporters.

Jordaan also travelled to Australia for talks with senior Oceania official Sakhu Khan from Fiji and said he was gathering information ahead of a possible legal challenge to the World Cup decision.

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