

Tonic for Trapattoni

MILAN, Oct 8: Giovanni Trapattoni's Italy go into Wednesday's World Cup Group Eight qualifier with Georgia basking in the fulsome praise that followed a 3-0 victory here Saturday, against a Romanian team tipped to be their main rivals to win the pool, reports AFP.

The Italians destroyed Romania in a first-half blitz that saw Filippo Inzaghi, Marco Delvecchio and Francesco Totti score unanswered goals.

The "Azzurri" took it easy in the second period, perhaps aware of the impending match in Ancona with the Georgians but there was no disguising the positive feeling in the Italian camp.

But Trapattoni, who replaced Dino Zoff after Euro 2000, did not rule out changing the line-up against Georgia, hinting Alessandro Del Piero could make the starting XI on Wednesday.

Asked to explain his decision to leave Juventus star Del Piero out of the starting line-up against Romania, Trapattoni said: "I saw I had to keep someone in reserve, I acted in such a way for what we are waiting for on Wednesday against Georgia."

Asked if he might change his line-up Trapattoni said: "We will see tomorrow and the day after tomorrow how the lads react."

Trapattoni was more forthcoming about his team's performance against Romania, saying: "I found really very little wrong with the team. A solid defence, a midfield that was always lucid and a frontline that worked perfectly."

But clearly aware of the pitfalls of overconfidence the wily old coach added: "Now we must keep our feet on the ground because Wednesday we are expecting a hard match against a stubborn team."

Italian skipper Paolo Maldini was honoured before the match for winning his 113th cap, breaking Zoff's national record, followed by a minute's silence which was held in memory of Dynamo Bucharest player Catalin Haldan, who died during a Romanian club match on Thursday.

Maldini dedicated the match to Trapattoni — it was the former Juventus and Bayern Munich coach's first win at the helm of the "Azzurri" after Italy were lucky to escape with a 2-2 draw in Hungary in their opening qualifier.

"He is the man I have always dreamed of having as coach," said Maldini.

Inzaghi also displayed his faith in Trapattoni as he said: "We are a great team and we can go much further."

Francesco Coco, who made his debut against Romania, laid tribute for his promotion to his coach at AC Milan Alberto Zaccheroni and under-21 coach Marco Tardelli, who Saturday was announced as the new coach of Inter Milan.

Tardelli and Zaccheroni are the men I must be most grateful for getting to this stage. To make my debut at the San Siro was fantastic," said Coco.

Romania coach Ladislav Boloni conceded his team had been outclassed.

The two goals in the first 20 minutes killed the match. Now we must try and get our revenge next March in the return match but our goal remains second place in the group and to finish behind such a team is no dishonour," said Boloni.

UAE 4-nation soccer champs

DUBAI, Oct 8: Kazim Ali struck three minutes from time as the United Arab Emirates defeated Kuwait 1-0 to win a four-nation soccer tournament on Saturday, reports Reuters.

The UAE finished top of the table with five points, followed by South Korea (4 points), Australia (3 points) and Kuwait (none).

In a tense, evenly balanced contest, the UAE rode their luck to clinch the victory late in the match.

A defence-splitting through pass from Subait Khater found Kazim unmarked and the striker beat the goalkeeper with a neat right foot shot.

Kuwait, who lost 1-0 to Australia on Wednesday, had their chances with strikers Saleh Akazan and Salama Hadi both hitting the crossbar.

UAE, beaten 6-1 by Saudi Arabia last week, picked up a winners' cheque for \$35,000 while South Korea received \$15,000 for finishing runners-up.

Earlier, the South Korean came back from two goals down to defeat Australia 4-1.

Australia looked on course for a victory that would have seen them clinch the tournament when Paul Agostino struck in the 36th and 39th minutes.

But South Korea hit back almost immediately as Sim Jae-won reduced the deficit three minutes from halftime, heading home a free kick from Lee Young-pyo.

Noh Jung-yoon equalised four minutes into the second period and the Seol Ki-hyeon, put through by Lee Dong-gook, fired the Koreans ahead in the 65th minute.

South Korea completed an impressive fightback in injury time when Lee Dong-gook, who was tripped inside the box, scored from the penalty spot.

Wembley's Hamman blow



LONDON, Oct 8: England's 2002 World Cup campaign got off to the worst possible start on Saturday when they lost 1-0 to Group Nine opponents Germany in the last match ever to be played at Wembley Stadium, reports AFP.

A goal from Germany's Liverpool midfielder Dietmar Hamann after 13 minutes was enough to secure the vital three points for Rudi Voller's men.

Hamann's quickly-taken free-kick caught the England defence napping and the German's low drive was too powerful for goalkeeper David Seaman to save.

England's best chance to equalise fell to David Beckham during the second period but his fierce right foot screamer was pushed over the crossbar by German keeper Oliver Kahn.

The Germans had further opportunities late on to make the game safe but the superb Jens Nowotny and Sebastian Deisler missed excellent chances with just Seaman to beat.

England coach Kevin Keegan took a surprise gamble by naming Aston Villa defender Gareth Southgate in midfield for the injured Steven Gerrard of Liverpool.

It was the first time that Southgate has started the game in that role since his days with Crystal Palace more than five years ago.

Michael Owen and Cole started up front together for the first time as England looked for a winning send-off from the last match to be staged at the Twin Towers.

The early stages were scrappy with both sides testing each other out in a game vital to their chances of qualifying for the 2002 finals in Japan and South Korea.

The Owen-Cole partnership received poor service early on with too many passes from the England midfield misdirected.

The Germans were more structured in their build-up — and after 13 minutes disaster struck for England when Hamann gave the visitors the lead.

Paul Scholes brought down Michael Ballack 30 metres from the England goal and goalkeeper Seaman made amends for his part in the opening goal by coming to England's rescue after 51 minutes.

The Arsenal goalkeeper was still organising the defensive wall in front of him when the Liverpool midfielder let fly with a low shot and Seaman could only parry the ball with his left-hand into the net.

Deisler then sent over a teasing right-wing cross and Martin Keown had to head away from Marco Bode behind him as he lined up a volley.

England took time to settle after the early setback but were handed a good opportunity to draw level moments later when

He received a ball 25 metres out and his powerful shot was

tipped over athletically by Kahn just outside the penalty area.

Beckham, usually lethal from set pieces, took the free-kick but his curling effort was comfortably dealt with by German keeper Kahn.

England failed to keep possession for any length of time but they did start to exert a bit more pressure as the half-time whistle approached.

Beckham then tried his luck from the other flank and his dipping curling effort was just too high as Kahn looked anxiously over his shoulder.

Keegan switched from a 4-4-2 to a 3-5-2 formation in the second half, bringing on Kieron Dyer at wing-back in place of Gary Neville and switching Southgate to his more accus-

tomed position at the heart of the defence.

But the Germans still looked the more likely side to score and Seaman made amends for his part in the opening goal by coming to England's rescue after 51 minutes.

Mehmet Scholl went charging down the left wing and turned Martin Keown inside out before firing a low shot towards the right hand corner of the net.

But Seaman got down brilliantly at full stretch to palm the ball away to safety.

Ballack was then booked for time-wasting before Beckham brought about the biggest roar of the afternoon from the England fans.

England travel to Finland on Wednesday for their second Group Nine game looking to get their first points of the campaign.

who was not having one of his better games, allowed the ball to spin away from him and Nowotny was able to tidy up.

Despite relentless England attacks the Germans were able to soak up the pressure and looked increasingly dangerous on the counter-attack.

Nowotny and Deisler came close when presented with gilt-edged chances in the last 10 minutes but both failed to test Seaman and with England chasing the game Voller's side held on to make it two wins out of two.

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—AFP photo

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South Korea.

The first goal came when Santa Cruz clipped the ball over advancing Colombia goalkeeper Oscar Cordoba after Jose Cardozo had headed a long upfield pass from Francisco Arece into his path. It was the first goal Cordoba had conceded in five matches.

Colombia controlled the second half, during which Chilavert was booked for time-wasting, but could not break down a typically well-organised Paraguay defence.

The had a penalty appeal ignored when Victor Aristizabal appeared to be tripped in the goalmouth scrabble.

Chilavert, booed throughout for some provocative pre-match comments, curled the ball around the Colombian wall in the 90th minute to complete a comfortable win for Paraguay.

Striker Roque Santa Cruz set them on the way with a fourth

international.

Paraguay dominated the first half and Santa Cruz had three good chances to double his tally. Colombia suffered a further blow when defender Ivan Ramiro Cordoba was sent off in the 27th minute for punching

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Chilavert, who has scored more than 50 goals in his career, had predicted before the game that Paraguay would win.

He also threatened to sue the Colombian football federation for using a photograph of him on match tickets and refused to talk to local journalists, claiming they had stoked up hostility against his team.

Paraguay leap to second place in the South American qualifying group with 17 points from nine games, overtaking Colombia who are third with 15.

The top four in the 10-team group qualify for Japan and

STANDINGS

BOGOTA, Oct 8: (Reuters): South American World Cup qualifying standngs after Saturday's game (Played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, against, points):

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100	101	102	103	104	105	106	107	108	109	110	111	112	113	114	115	116	117	118	119	120	121	122	123	124	125	126	127	128	129	130	131	132	133	134	135	136	137	138	139	140	141	142	143	144	145	146	147	148	149	150	151	152	153	154	155	156	157	158	159	160	161	162	163	164	165	166	167	168	169	170	171	172	173	174	175	176	177	178	179	180	181	182	183	184	185	186	187	188	189	190	191	192	193	194	195	196	197	198	199	200	201	202	203	204	205	206	207	208	209	210	211	212	213	214	215	216	217	218	219	220	221	222	223	224	225	226	227	228	229	230	231	232	233	234	235	236	237	238	239	240	241	242	243	244	245	246	247	248	249	250	251	252	253	254	255	256	257	258	259	260	2