

Inter turn to Tardelli

MILAN, Oct 8: Marco Tardelli is the new coach of Inter Milan, the Italian Serie A club announced on its website on Saturday, reports AFP.

Former Italian international Tardelli will be officially unveiled on Tuesday after he has taken charge of the Italian under-21 side in their next fixture.

"Only out of a question of form and respect with regards to the Italian national federation the official announcement will be given Tuesday after the under-21 match between Italy and Georgia," Sandro Sabatini of the Inter press office said on the website.

The new coach has verbally agreed a two-year contract which will be signed in the next few days.

Tardelli, who replaces the sacked Marcello Lippi, was a key member of the Italian World Cup winning team in 1982 and has been a successful coach to the Italian under-21 side.

Sabatini also revealed that Luciano Nizzola, president of the national federation, had consented to Tardelli's departure.

The announcement of Tardelli's appointment comes 24 hours after Argentina's 1978 World Cup winning skipper Daniel Passarella turned down the chance of coaching Inter, instead preferring to stay in his post as coach to the Uruguay national team.

Tardelli is still revered in Italy for his role in the 1982 triumph and his euphoric goal celebration after giving the 'Azzurri' a 2-0 lead in the 3-1 World Cup Final win over West Germany remains one of the most replayed moments of that tournament.

His coaching career has until now been relatively low key. Beginning in 1988 with the Italian under-16s he graduated to the under-21s before stints with unheralded clubs Como and Cesena. In the 1997-8 season he returned to take charge of the under-21 national side.

Romanian club's fall from grace

BUCHAREST, Oct 8: Romanian club Ceahlaul Pitesti Neamt has been banned from European competitions for five years by UEFA after allegations that prostitutes were offered to match officials in charge of an Intertoto Cup game in July, reports Reuters.

The Romanian Soccer Federation (FRF) was officially informed by UEFA that Ceahlaul Pitesti Neamt was banned from any European club competition for the next five years, said FRF deputy general secretary Cristian Bivolariu on Saturday.

The suspension followed a report by UEFA's German official observer after Ceahlaul Pitesti Neamt's 2-2 home draw with Austria Vienna in the first leg of the Intertoto Cup on July 15. The observer said the club had attempted to offer women to the match officials.

The French referee and other match officials confirmed the observer's report, saying that Ceahlaul officials tried to offer prostitutes to them before the match.

Club president Gheorghe Stefan denied the allegations. He said the women were members of a folk ensemble.

Bivolariu said Stefan and a local referee had been banned from any activity involving European competitions for a year.

Teixeira not afraid

RIO DE JANEIRO, Oct 8 (AP): Brazilian soccer confederation president Ricardo Teixeira says he wants an impending congressional investigation into allegations of tax evasion, money laundering and illegal player transfers in the sport.

Teixeira classified as "unwashed tales" allegations that the CBF is riddled with corruption and challenged investigators to prove his involvement in any wrongdoing.

"They can investigate me from top to bottom," said Teixeira, who tried unsuccessfully to quash the investigation. "Let them try to prove that I'm a thief. But if they can't, then they'll pay for it."

He also attacked local hero Pele, who has criticized Teixeira's handling of the national team and publicly questioned his honesty.

"Doesn't Pele say that I'm corrupt?" Teixeira said. "Then let him go and accuse me. But other people will accuse him and we'll get to the end of it to see who steals and who doesn't."

Earlier this week, Teixeira reportedly lobbied influential politicians in Brasilia and asked them to delay the inquiries. But Senate president Antonio Carlos Magalhães said the investigation would proceed.

The hearings are scheduled to begin Monday with the testimony of Wanderley Luxemburgo, who recently was fired as coach of Brazil's national team.

Among the targets of the investigation is the CBF's 160 million dollars sponsorship contract with sportswear giant Nike, which runs through 2005.

Italy overawe Romania



MILAN, Oct 8: A ruthless first half performance by Italy saw them beat Romania 3-0 in their Group Eight World Cup qualifying match at the San Siro here Saturday evening, reports AFP.

Goals in the first period from Filippo Inzaghi, Marco Delvecchio and Francesco Totti were no more than Giovanni Trapattoni's men deserved after they produced all the significant action in the national team's first visit to the famous Milan arena for seven years.

The second half was a more forgettable affair but, given the scoreline, that suited Italy just fine.

"I found really very little wrong with the team this evening. A solid defence, a midfield that was always lucid and a

frontline that worked perfectly," said Trapattoni, who replaced Dino Zoff at the helm after Euro 2000.

Italy made an electric start and had two chances to score in the first minute.

First Delvecchio found himself in space on the left but fired a wild shot across goal and then Totti also blazed a volley wide when well placed to score.

But after 12 minutes Italy's persistence paid off.

Stefano Fiore played the ball in from the left and Totti and three Romanian defenders failed to get a telling touch as the ball fell to the feet of Inzaghi who drilled the ball under Romanian goalkeeper Bogdan Stelea.

Four minutes later it was 2-0 thanks to a fine strike from Delvecchio whose only previous goal for his country was the volley that took Italy within 30 seconds of winning Euro 2000 before France staged a dramatic comeback for a 2-1 triumph.

Totti was the architect, flicking the ball through to Delvecchio but the Roma forward did superbly to control the ball with his chest before turning and firing the ball past Stelea.

As half-time approached Delvecchio spurned a glorious opportunity to make it 3-0 when he fired over from close range after good work from Fiore.

But after 41 minutes the third goal came with a delightful move.

Fiore fed Delvecchio who played a deceptive reverse pass to Totti and his Roma colleague made no mistake with a cool finish through Stelea's legs for his fifth goal for Italy.

The second half was a less competitive affair although Romanian striker Viorel Moldovan did squander two half-chances in the opening minutes, the first after Italian goalkeeper Francesco Toldo had spilled an easy ball.

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

Maldini said: "We produced some real quality. It was a good performance."

Italy's Demetrio Albertini (L) and Romanian Monteanu are locked in an aerial battle during their World Cup qualifier on October 7.

—AFP photo

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Sumon's all-round show

Sports Reporter

A brilliant all-round performance by Sumon guided hosts Bangladesh Krira Shiksha Protisthan (BKSP) to a massive 157-run demolition over Madaripur Cricket Club in their Third Division Cricket League qualifying match at yesterday.

In other matches, Kalabagan Cricket Academy B (KCAB) handed Dhaka Cricket Academy Moon (DCAM) a five-wicket defeat at the Dhammondi

BRIEF SCORES

BKSP v Madaripur Cricket Club
Venue: BKSP
BKSP: 188 all out in 35 overs (Sumon 48, Extras 35, Raju 26, Nadir 17, Sabir 15, Bashir 15, Ifti 14, Shakil 13, Rassul 3/39, Rajol 2/19)

Madaripur CC: 31 all out in 13.2 overs (Dipak 12, Riaz 6, Extras 6, Roni 4/16, Raihan 3/13, Sumon 2/2)

Result: BKSP won by 157 runs.

Jagrata Jubo Sangha v ACC
Venue: Uttara Police Lines
Jagrata JS: 180 for 7 in 35 overs (Kabir 42, Faisal 42, Mushfiq 41, Rakib 16, Aziz 16, Sumon 3/18, Lenin 2/21)

ACC: 98 all out in 26.5 overs (Tuhil 20, Extras 20, Jhantu 13, Ikram 13, Sumon 13, Mizan 4/17, Rashed 2/19)

Result: Jagrata Jubo Sangha won by 82 runs.

Dhaka Cricket Academy Moon v Kalabagan Cricket Academy B
Venue: Dhammondi Club
Dhaka CA: 67 all out in 24 overs (Extras 20, Maunna 13, Palash 12, Shimul 3/12, Sagar 2/18)

Kalabagan Cricket Academy B: 70 for 5 in 18 overs (Shahin 30 n.o., Saurav 13 n.o., Milan 2/10)

Result: Kalabagan Cricket Academy B won by five wickets.

Cricket ground while Jagrata Jubo Sangha whitewashed ACC by 82 runs at the Uttara Police Lines ground.

The match at the BKSP turned out to be an absolutely one-sided affair as the home team, riding on a run-a-ball 48 from middle-order batsman Sumon, scored a fighting total of 188 all out in the stipulated 35 overs.

Later, Sumon captured two wickets for only two runs from eight balls to help his side bundle out Madaripur for only 31 in 13.2 overs.

Graf ponders adoption

OFFENBURG, Germany, Oct 8: Former world number one Steffi Graf is mulling the idea of adopting a deprived child as part of her work with children's charity Children for Tomorrow, she revealed Sunday, reports AFP.

"I always say to myself 'you must do something, you can't turn your back so easily now'," Graf told new women's weekly Vivian, which hits the newsstands Monday for the first time.

Graf, who retired last year after winning 22 Grand Slam singles titles, is a patron of Children for Tomorrow, set up two years ago to aid children traumatised or displaced by war or abused in some way.

Japan Open from today

TOKYO, Oct 8: Nicolas Kiefer and Amy Frazier will have a tough path defending their titles at the 970,000-dollar Japan Open tennis tournament which gets under way in Tokyo Monday, reports AFP.

The 23-year-old German number one, who breezed past Mark Philippoussis to win the Hong Kong Open Sunday, could meet the Australian hard-hitter again in a potential semifinal at the outdoor hardcourt event.

Frazier, also the 1995 champion here and three-time finalist, was seeded second to French top seed Julie Halard-Decugis, the finalist to American Serena Williams at the Princess Cup Sunday here.

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Princess Williams



TOKYO, Oct 8: With a big serve and some big groundshots, second seed Serena Williams pounded

out a 7-5, 6-1 victory over fourth-seeded Julie Halard-Decugis in the Toyota Princess final Sunday, reports AP.

In the doubles, top-seeded and the world's top-ranked pair of Halard-Decugis and Japan's Ai Sugiyama won the title with a 6-0, 6-2 win over second-

The 19-year-old from Palm Beach Gardens, Florida, needed only 65 minutes for the victory in her first tournament in Japan.

She opened the match holding her serve at love, and repeated the same performance in the third game that featured two consecutive aces.

Williams, ranked eighth in the world, was in control, but the 30-year-old, 19-ranked Halard-Decugis played superbly even in defeat.



A smiling Serena Williams of the United States poses with the Princess Cup after her victory in Tokyo yesterday.

—AFP photo

seeded Nana Miyagi of Japan and Paola Suarez of Argentina.

Sugiyama previously won the doubles with Monica Seles in 1997.

Halard-Decugis and Sugiyama have moved into the No. 1 spot on the doubles point standings for the Chase Championships in New York Madison Square Garden November 13-20 after their victory in the 2000 US Open doubles event.

Williams, who came to Japan after winning the Sydney Olympic doubles gold medal with her sister Venus, scored 10 aces against Halard-Decugis, none, and often used powerful shots to force the Frenchwoman to go out of position, especially in the second set.

The match went with serve until a decisive turning point came in the first set's 12th game.

Leading 6-5, Williams broke the game on a couple of errors on Halard-Decugis' part and her own winners, including a backhand crosscourt and a ripping forehand to within inches of the baseline. Again, it was a love game.

In the second set, Halard-Decugis lost speed and momentum, never threatening again.

After tying at 1-1, Williams won five straight games, serving out the match in the seventh with an ace and two powerful serves that her opponent slapped wide or long.

Her serve was good in the

beginning, and then it became stronger and stronger," said Halard-Decugis. "In the second set it was unbelievable, and I had less and less chances."

Williams said: "Yes, today my serve was better for sure. I had a few more aces and I was getting the contact point a little better. Overall it was better because whenever you're playing in any final, no matter what tournament, I always step up my game a notch."

The victory, Williams' third this season, was worth 87,000 dollars. The runner-up won 43,500 dollars.

A near-capacity crowd of 10,000 laughed and cheered wildly when Williams spoke in Japanese in her court-side victory statement. She said, in good Japanese, "I'm glad that I came to Japan. I'll come back for sure. Thank you very much."

She said she learned the Japanese words from Ruth Shiraishi, an official translator for the event.

Williams has said she almost skipped the Toyota Princess because of her tight schedule and the tournament's proximity to the US Open and the Olympics.

She told reporters Sunday that from now on she will invest her prize money in the stock market, her new hobby.

Asked if she plans to go shopping to celebrate the victory, she said her days of splurging are gone. "Last year, I went through a 12-step programme to stop. I had a couple of relapses in Australia, but I'm now investing in stocks and IPOs (initial public offerings)."

Williams said she may compete in the "Generali Ladies Linz" in Austria October 16-22. "My next tournament? I might go to Linz," she told a reporter.

Williams and Halard-Decugis were the highest survivors in a week in which top seed Monica Seles and third-seeded Anelie Mauresmo were eliminated.

More than 15 singles players will stay and compete in the Japan Open October 9-15. They include Halard-Decugis, Amy Frazier, Kristina Brandi, Jelena Dokic, Tamarine Tanasugarn and Daja Bedanov.

Sugiyama, Japan's top player ranked No. 32, will sit out the singles event.

After the doubles match, Suarez said: "It was tough to play against them (Sugiyama and Halard-Decugis). We did not feel so good today, and I did not return so well. They played so good that they put a lot of pressure on us."

The winners received a total of 27,000 dollars, while the Suarez-Miyagi pair won 13,800 dollars.

Kiefer grounds Scud



HONG KONG, Oct 8: Fourth seed Mark Philippoussis produced three double-faults to start the

third set, then smashed his racket in two, a cue for Nicolas Kiefer to move on and complete a 7-6, 2-6, 6-2 victory in the final of the 375,000-dollar Salem Hong Kong Open Sunday, reports AFP.

It was all over for the big-hitting "Scud," after that forgettable first game against Kiefer, whose second trophy this season completed a week-end of sporting glory for Germany in Europe and Asia.

The 23-year-old from a village near Hanover claimed his title just a few hours after compatriot Michael Schumacher clinched the F1 title for Ferrari in Japan.

On Saturday, Germany started off the run with a 1-0 win over England in a World Cup qualifier at Wembley.

The victory levels third seed Kiefer's career mark against Philippoussis at two wins and two defeats. The German came



German Nicolas Kiefer with the Salem Hong Kong Open trophy.

—AFP photo

into the event at Victoria Park after suffering a calf strain at the Sydney Olympics.

He and Philippoussis will headline next week in Tokyo.

Kiefer notched his 30th win this season as he came back after dropping the second set against the Australian.

Under the blazing sun, both men kept their games in solid control at the start with no breaks of serve. Kiefer saved break points in the fifth game, but got out of danger for 3-2.

Philippoussis ended the eighth with an ace and the German won to love with an ace for a 5-4 lead. The Aussie answered with a love game, 5-all.

Fourth seed Philippoussis forced a tie-breaker with another ace, but couldn't match the effort from Kiefer, who grabbed a 4-2 lead when the Australian netted a return.

Kiefer earned another mini-break for 5-3 and fired over an ace for three set points. Philippoussis saved the first but an unforced error on the second gave the German the set after 54 minutes.

The Aussie broke the German twice in the second set to square the match, but lost his way totally from the start of the third.

Finally Schumacher's Ferrari

SUZUKA, Japan, Oct 8: Master of the wet Michael Schumacher ended Ferrari's 21-year drought when he won the driver's championship by taking the Japanese Grand Prix here on Sunday, reports AFP.

The 31-year-old German took his third title but only his first with Ferrari as Mika Hakkinen in a McLaren, the only man who could deny him, finished second.

David Coulthard in the second McLaren was third followed by Rubens Barrichello in a second Ferrari. Williams rookie Jenson Button was fifth with former world champion Jacques Villeneuve finishing sixth in the BAR-Honda.

Schumacher was in tears as he hugged Ferrari race director Jean Todt when he stepped out of his crimson Ferrari.

He was then engulfed by his mechanics, many of who were too young to remember when Ferrari last took the championship with Jody Scheckter in 1979.

Many were crying, 21 years of failure for the most famous team in Formula One finally ended.

Schumacher said it was almost impossible to describe his emotions.

"It's difficult to find proper words for my feelings. Condi-

tions were difficult today. It is simply so outstanding. There are no better words to describe it," he said. "Imagine what is going on in Italy now. It must be amazing."

Schumacher had begun the day with an eight-point lead, with a win here making the final race of the season in Malaysia in two weeks' time nothing more than a victory parade.

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