

## LEADING ASIAN CUP SCORERS

BEIRUT, Oct 30 (AP): Leading Asian Cup scorers following Sunday's final matches: 6-Lee Dong-Gook (Kor); 5-Naohiro Takahara (Jpn), Akinori Nishizawa (Jpn); 3- Ali Daet (Ind), Mohammed Al-Shilooh (Ksa), Hiroshi Nanami (Jpn), Yang Chen (Chi), Qi Hong (Chi), Nawaf Al-Temiyat (Ksa); 2-Talal Meshal (Ksa); 2-Hamidreza Estili (Ind), Sabah Jadir (IRQ), Sakesan Pituratana (Tha), Karim Bagheri (Ind), Li Ming (Chi), Jassine Al-Houwadli (Kuwait).

### AWARDS

BEIRUT, Oct 30 (Xinhua): Following are the awards of the 12th Asian Cup announced by the Asian Football Confederation on Sunday:

**MVP of the Tournament:** Hiroshi Nanami (Japan).

**Tournament's Top Scorer:** Lee Dong Gook (South Korea).

**Best Goalkeeper:** Jiang Jin (China).

**Best Defender:** Ryuzo Morioka (Japan).

**Fair Play Award:** Saudi Arabia.

### Star Eagles promise big

LAGOS, Oct 30: Nigeria will beat arch-rivals Ghana and qualify for the World Cup finals, the country's top stars have assured Dutch coach Jo Bonfrere, reports AFP.

"After the Sydney Olympics I spoke to Sunday Oliseh and Austin Okocha and they told me 'coach this will be our last World Cup and nobody, not even Ghana, will stop us from qualifying'."

"They said they want to finally put to rest their poor outing in France and the only place to do so is at another World Cup," Bonfrere said here.

The Dutch coach added: "Next year we have two difficult games at home against Sudan and Ghana. But we have all agreed that the key to our qualification would still be the two matches against Ghana."

"We all want to be at the next World Cup. How we get there is not important."

Bonfrere said at the weekend that Nigerian football is dying and there is an urgent need to bring in new players to the national team.

Ghana Black Stars lead Nigeria's World Cup group with three points from their comprehensive 5-0 win over Sierra Leone at home. Nigeria are also on three points but surprisingly lost in Monrovia to Liberia to give Ghana an added advantage.

Japan conquer

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"We had a big emotional charge throughout the tournament," Troussier said. "It was not so easy to play with this emotion but I am very proud ... it was very important for the development of Japanese football that we win tonight."

Japan's triumph was the first time a side from the Far East has ever won the Asian Cup when it has been staged in the Middle East.

Troussier's side -- who had banged in 20 goals in five matches going into the final -- had begun smoothly, their neat inter-passing stretching the Saudi defence in the opening minutes.

But the Japanese were stunned on 10 minutes when Saudi Arabia broke forward to earn a penalty. Ryuzo Morioka being adjudged to have tripped down Talal Al-Meshal as the two chased a long ball from midfield.

Iridi stepped up -- but scuttled a weak spot-kick low and wide of the right-hand post to the relief of the Japanese and groans from the partisan capacity crowd.

Japan continued to press forward and with their slick passing and movement off the ball looked by far the more creative of the two sides in the first half.

But Troussier's youngsters spent the second-half well and truly on the backfoot, as the Saudis -- Asian Cup winners in 1984, 1988 and 1996 -- launched wave after wave of furious attacks on the opposition goal.

Substitute Mohammed Al-Shilooh, midfielder Al-Temiyat and Fouzi Al-Shehri all went close with shots from distance.

The Saudis were given a lucky break on 58 minutes when Ahmed Khalil bundled over Akinori Nishizawa for what looked a dead-cert penalty. Mystifyingly, United Arab Emirates referee Ali Bujasim waved play on.

The defending champions continued to pour forward but Japan preserved their lead thanks to the brilliance of Kawaguchi.

Two saves in particular were firmly in the blindfold category. The athletic stopper first leapt acrobatically to punch away a dipping 30-yarder from Al-Jaber on 60 minutes before pulling off a breath-taking reflex save from a close-range Al-Meshal header moments later.

"Our keeper played really well. He is one of the reasons we won," Troussier said.

Japan also had the satisfaction of seeing playmaker Hiroshi Nanami, who filled the void left by the absent AS Roma Hidetoshi Nakata, named player of the tournament.

South Korean striker Lee Dong-Gook finished topscorer with six goals after netting in his team's 1-0 victory in the third-place playoff win over China earlier on Sunday.



TROUSSIER TRIUMPHS: A delighted Japan coach Philippe Troussier holds aloft the Asian Cup during the presentation ceremony. - AFP photo

## Sport

### Bonfrere won't budge

LAGOS, Oct 30: Nigeria's Dutch coach Jo Bonfrere said here Monday he will not resign in the face of media pressure that he be sacked after Nigeria failed to defend its Olympic gold in Sydney, reports AFP.

"I'm not going to resign. If my employers tell me to go, I will go, of course. But I will not resign because I still have big assignments ahead of me. There is the 2002 African Nations Cup as well as the next World Cup," Bonfrere told a radio station. The Dutchman has come under heavy fire following Nigeria's failure to retain the Olympic soccer title.

"Nigerians should realise that they cannot win all the time," Bonfrere said. "I was not expecting any miracles in Sydney. The key players were not available and our problems were getting worse with every match. Against Chile, we had only 11 fit players. Others were either injured or suspended."

"Also, there's no way you can compare the Atlanta team with that of Sydney."

Bonfrere has been on a collision course with the Nigeria Football Association (NFA).

He said he is owed four months pay while the NFA has accused him of flouting its orders and relying too much on foreign-based players several of whom were not committed to the national team.

The Dutchman has also said that Nigerian football is dying and there is an urgent need to bring in new players to the national team ahead of important qualifying matches in both the World Cup and the Nations Cup next year.

Bonfrere was named Nigeria's coach last November. He still has a year to run of his contract.

### Cascarino never an Irish!

DUBLIN, Oct 30: Former Republic of Ireland international Tony Cascarino admitted Sunday that he was never eligible to play for the country, reports AFP.

The former Chelsea, Aston Villa, Celtic, Marseille and Nancy striker won 88 caps for the Republic on the strength of a maternal grandfather, Michael O'Malley from Westport, County Mayo, west Ireland.

However, in his autobiography "Full Time: The Secret Life of Tony Cascarino", he now admits that O'Malley was not his mother's natural father, rendering him ineligible under international rules.

Cascarino's mother had been aware of the fact throughout his career, but only told him after he had retired from international football.

"I didn't qualify for Ireland," writes Cascarino. "I was a fraud. A fake Irishman."

Cascarino also reveals that he was turned down for an Irish passport in 1985, but carried on playing regardless.

"It seemed odd but I didn't follow up," said Cascarino. "I didn't need to. I had already won three international caps and for the next 12 years I continued playing for Ireland with my British passport."

Cascarino made his confession in Dublin's Sunday Independent newspaper, who have serialisation rights to the player's book.

### Scotland friendly Bosnich recalled

SYDNEY, Oct 30: Out-of-favour Manchester United goal-keeper Mark Bosnich has been called up for Australia's international with Scotland on November 15 in Glasgow, reports AFP.

Iran Football Federation President Safae Farahani cast a grim picture as his team attempt to catch up with the Japanese.

Troussier earns a salary of one million dollars a year," he said. "The entire budget for the IFF is 228,000 dollars. How can we compete with that? It's like buying a Trabant and expecting it to be a Mercedes."

"The Japanese team has been successful because you are seeing five years of investment into their football. We can't hope to succeed until we start putting in some money," he said.

## From Asia with class



BEIRUT, Oct 30 (AP):

Newly crowned Asian kings Japan have revolutionized stan-

dards of football in the continent -- and left traditionally strong nations from the Middle East scrambling to catch up.

French coach Philippe Troussier's free-scoring young side completed a dazzling Asian Cup campaign on Sunday with a 1-0 victory against Saudi Arabia at Beirut's Sports City Stadium.

Fielding a squad with an average age of just 24, Troussier's team were a class apart throughout the tournament, averaging more than three goals per game with their attack-driven brand of total football.

And ominously for the rest of Asia, Troussier -- dubbed the 'white witch doctor' during his coaching career in Africa -- is determined to prove that his side can get better as the 2002 World Cup looms.

"The quality of their football is excellent," Milutinovic said. "Every team in Asia should be trying to get to their level. They have benefited from having a long-term plan and strong club competitions."

"China are at the same level technically, but we need more international games. We played hardly any fixtures this year -- we need to be playing against Japan and South Korea on a regular basis," Milutinovic said.

"For our team, winning here is the key to moving on to a new and higher level. It means the team has confidence and belief ... it's having the winning mentality," Troussier said.

If there are other lessons to be learned from Japan's success, one of them seems to be that stability pays off.



THAT DID IT: Shigeyoshi Mochizuki (on the ground) watches his effort entering the net. - AFP photo

## EUROPEAN SOCCER SCENE

PARIS, Oct 30: Valencia retained top spot in the Spanish championship on Sunday with a 2-1 away victory at Osasuna the day after Deportivo had claimed pole position with a 2-1 win at Numancia, reports AFP.

Hector Cuper's men extended their lead at the top from one to two points in relation to last week's table and, having qualified for the European Champions League second phase, are on the crest of a wave.

Paris Saint Germain were beaten 2-1 by Bordeaux to lose their unbeaten home French League record this season but managed to remain top of the table.

Philippe Bergeron's men had this sudden setback just five days after their rousing 7-2 European Champions League win over Norwegian club Rosenborg on the same Parc des Princes pitch.

Hertha Berlin's Eyraud Svartsson scored in the final seconds for a 1-0 victory at 1860 Munich to propel them into top spot in the German First Division on Sunday.

Stefan Beinlich hit a cross and Icelandic international Svartsson outjumped the rest of the 1860 defence to head home and ensure the win.

It has been Berlin's best ever start to the Bundesliga in 30 years and their first victory at 1860 for 20 years.

Real Madrid, who qualified for the second phase of the Champions League in midweek, thrashed Real Sociedad 4-1 and are in second spot in Spain.

Real Madrid's Eyraud Svartsson scored in the final seconds for a 1-0 victory at 1860 Munich to propel them into top spot in the German First Division on Sunday.

At St Sebastian, new Real Sociedad coach Perico Alonso could do nothing against a cavalier Real Madrid. Guti opened the scoring with his fifth league goal of the season and Fernando Hierro, Luis Figo and Savio also got on the scoresheet.

Barcelona, who were within a whisker of Champions League elimination on Tuesday before a last-gasp equalizer against Leeds, were beaten 2-0 on their own pitch by Real Mallorca.

Barcelona, who would have been on top had they won, had to settle for fourth place. Samuel Eto'o opened the scoring for Mallorca and Argentina's Ariel Ibagaza hit the second after the break.

Atletico Madrid's Ulrich Rame off a corner.

Lilles were in second spot following their 1-0 victory at home to Toulouse thanks to a Laurent Peyrelade goal in the 84th minute.

Atletico Madrid's Ulrich Rame off a corner.

But Derek Adams headed Motherwell back into the game with an equaliser when he leapt to meet John Spencer's cross.

Lee McCulloch put the hosts 2-1 ahead after 53 minutes before Joos Valgareen levelled for the visitors four minutes later.

Martin O'Neill's men fought back in front following a Jackie McNamara wonder goal - his first for two-and-a-half years.

But Motherwell levelled with a Ged Brannan penalty to leave the field with a point.

PSG missed a chance to move into second place.

Paulo Sergio scored for Bayern in the sixth minute and Bremen equalized just five minutes later through a penalty by fellow Brazilian Alilton.

However, Celtic felt they were entitled to a fourth goal when Mjallby had a header booted out from behind the line midway through the second half.

PSG against violence

LONDON, Oct 30: England international Emile Heskey fired his sixth goal in four games to lead Liverpool to a 3-1 Premiership victory over their Merseyside rivals Everton at Anfield on Sunday, reports AFP.

Elsewhere, bad-boy Stan Collymore, who left Leicester this week after a bust up with manager Peter Taylor, fired Bradford in front on his debut only for Mark Viduka to equalise in a 1-1 draw against Leeds at Valley Parade.

Heskey, 22, smashed home Liverpool's all-important second goal in the 56th minute to hand

Gerard Houllier's men the initiative in a fiercely contested local derby.

Kevin Campbell's 17th minute header had equalled Nick Barmby's opener five minutes earlier, but Heskey's strike and Patrik Berger's 78th minute penalty guaranteed three points for Liverpool.

"We can play lesser teams and win comfortably but we don't learn anything from that," he said.

He expects a tough outing against Scotland.

"They drew with Croatia the other week and they really look very good at the moment and these are the type of teams we should be playing," he added.

Barmby rose to meet Christian Ziegler's deflected shot and he directed a powerful header into the top right-hand corner of the net.

But Everton came back at their rivals and Campbell levelled the scores by stooping low to head home David Weir's low cross.

Liverpool picked up the pace in the second-half and Heskey struck after 55 minutes.

Barmby was nudged over on the edge of the box but as

Everton waited for a split second for a free-kick to be awarded, referee Paul Durkin waved play on. Heskey pounced to drill the ball in from

Hitzfeld said afterwards: "Unfortunately we cannot expect to live off the advantage of our good start any longer. Although we had more chances, we can count ourselves lucky because that was a very difficult away match."

Kaiserslautern have gone from strength to strength since Andreas Brehme took over from Otto Rehhagel, winning three times in the league and once in the UEFA Cup.

SCOTTISH PREMIERSHIP

Celtic increased their lead at the top of the Scottish Premier League to three points on Sunday after drawing 3-3 with Motherwell at Fir Park.

Celtic top the table with 35

points from 13 games, three ahead of second-placed Hibernian.

Celtic, the only unbeaten



Luis Figo (C) of Real Madrid going past the challenges of two Real Sociedad defenders