

## Hasselbaink denies Barca move

LONDON, Nov 16: Chelsea's hotshot Dutch international striker Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink on Wednesday dismissed reports of interest from Barcelona and insisted he was staying at underachieving Premier League big spenders Chelsea, reports AFP.

"My mind is with Chelsea," said Hasselbaink, who cost Chelsea a record 15million pounds (£22.5million dollars) when he signed from Atletico Madrid in the summer.

The 28-year-old, who has scored 10 goals for Chelsea this season, is understood to be the top target for under-pressure Barca coach Llorenç Serra Ferrer, who has seen his side eliminated from the Champions League and lose to minnows Villarreal in the league last Sunday.

Hasselbaink, who joined Chelsea after Atletico Madrid were relegated last season despite his 24 goals for them, did not rule out a return to Spain at some stage in the future.

"Barca are a phenomenal club but I'm not even thinking about leaving," he said.

"I have signed with Chelsea for five years. I don't know anything about interest in me from another team and I don't want to talk about it."

"Barcelona are a great club with some excellent players - not all of them Dutch - but I can't say anything at the moment."

"I don't know anything concrete, although there are only two countries where I would play now - Spain and England."

## Tribute paid to Italian legends

TURIN, Italy, Nov 16: Players and fans of Italy and England Wednesday held a few moments silence in honour of two figures in Italian sport, who have both died, reports AFP.

The death of Edoardo Agnelli, a member of the Agnelli family closely associated with local football team Juventus and the Ferrari Formula One team, was reported earlier on Wednesday.

On Tuesday night Piero Pinatini - a member of the 1938 World Cup winning squad coached by Italy's legendary team boss Vittorio Pozzo - also passed away at the age of 90.

Play was halted immediately after the kick-off of the friendly match between the teams at the Stadio Delle Alpi for a few seconds and the tribute was respected by both sets of supporters.

## Fernandez keeps Marseille waiting

MARSEILLE, Nov 16: French midfield legend Luis Fernandez said Marseille would have to wait at least until later this week before knowing if he will take over as coach at the crisis-ridden French giants, reports AFP.

The 41-year-old, capped 60 times and a member of the 1984 European Championship winning side and 1986 World Cup semi-finalists, held talks with Marseille president Robert Louis-Dreyfus, a source close to the 1993 European Cup winners revealed.

"It's just about signed," said the source, who added that Fernandez would probably come in as team coach.

However Fernandez, who played for and later coached Paris St Germain, guiding them to the 1996 Cup Winners Cup trophy before leaving for Spanish side Athletic Bilbao, said no deal had yet been agreed.

Speaking to local radio station RMC Fernandez, while denying his visit, said Marseille would be given an answer this week, possibly at the start of next week.

If his answer is yes, Fernandez would replace Brazilian Abel Braga, who he played with at Paris Saint Germain in the 1980s.

Braga, who was brought in with much fanfare from Vasco da Gama in the summer but has made a series of disastrous signings and seen the side win just four times in 15 matches to leave them in 16th place, attempted to resign last week.

The 49-year-old was annoyed that too many people were interfering with team affairs - only for Louis-Dreyfus to convince him to stay.

According to another club source, Fernandez, who left Athletic Bilbao in the summer, could come in as a replacement for sacked sporting director Eric Di Meco until Braga officially leaves.

Cedric Dufoux, director of communication at the club, denied to confirm the approach made to Fernandez.

"The club is not in a position to announce such good news," he responded drily.

However the general feeling in Marseille is that Fernandez could be just the man to get the Marseillais out of the league mire.

On Wednesday the club's TV station, OMTV, dedicated a number of programmes which pertained to the eventual arrival of the French legend in the guise of general manager.



Brazil's Roque Junior (C) heads the ball to score the lone goal against Colombia in their World Cup qualifier in Sao Paulo on November 15. —AFP photo

## Roque Junior saves Brazil

MONTEVIDEO, Nov 16: Brazil, Argentina and Paraguay all chalked up vital wins Wednesday in South American zone World Cup qualifiers, reports AFP.

Argentina defeated Chile 2-0 away to stay top on 25 points from 10 games, while Brazil, 1-0 winners at home to Colombia and Paraguay who thumped Peru 5-1, are level on 20 points in second place.

In the evening's other games, Ecuador kept up their hopes of qualifying for the finals in Japan and South Korea by notching up a rare 2-1 away win in Venezuela and Bolivia and Uruguay played out a goalless draw.

Ten teams are in the South American zone qualifier playing home and away against each other. The top four at the end of the 18 games go through to the finals, while the fifth-placed team plays-off against the winner of the Oceania zone.

Brazil put in a mediocre performance but still managed to give new coach Emerson Leao a win with a last-gasp 1-0 victory over 10-man Colombia.

Central defender Roque Junior came to rescue of Leao, who took over when Wanderley Luxemburgo was sacked but had to sit in the stands as he is serving a 20 day touchline ban for abusing a referee, in injury time.

However, the Brazilians poor performance provoked widespread dissatisfaction from the Brazilian fans, who booed them at the end and yelled 'you are nothing but a little team' at the players.

Leao, though, defended his players performance.

"The fans are perfectly entitled to show their displeasure if they feel the team is not playing well," he said.

"However, it is a little unfair as they are only just starting out under my regime and the players cannot always produce a great performance."

"I thought they did well considering the booing from the supporters and they gave everything in coming up with the win because the Colombians were not easy to break down," he added.

Roque's goal came just minutes after Uruguayan referee Jorge Larrión had sent-off Colombian striker Jairo 'The Tiger' Castillo for violent behaviour.

However Leao, who was capped 109 times and was a member of four World Cup finals squads, will have to incite his team to produce more attractive football if he is to improve where Luxemburgo, who came under fire for tactics as much for his poor professional form off the field, left off.

A lack of creativity and imagination, left the crowd with little to cheer in the first half.

and Junior's last-minute effort barely stopped the boo-boys from heaping further scorn on the Brazilians.

Injury-hit Argentina were happy to come away from Santiago with a 2-0 win which maintained their five point lead at the head of the standings and left them as odds-on favourites to make it through to the finals.

Coach Marcelo Bielsa had to do without top strikers Gabriel Batistuta and Hernan Crespo, as well as Claudio Lopez and Diego Simeone, but a goal in each half from Ariel Ortega (26), a brilliant individual effort, and Claudio Husain (88) were enough to ensure victory.

Paraguay were in rampant form as they smashed five goals past hapless Peru, who have all but lost hope of reaching the finals.

The home side were already three goals up at half-time and two more in the second period sealed an easy win. Charismatic goalkeeper Jose Luis Chilavert

scored the last goal from the penalty spot four minutes from time.

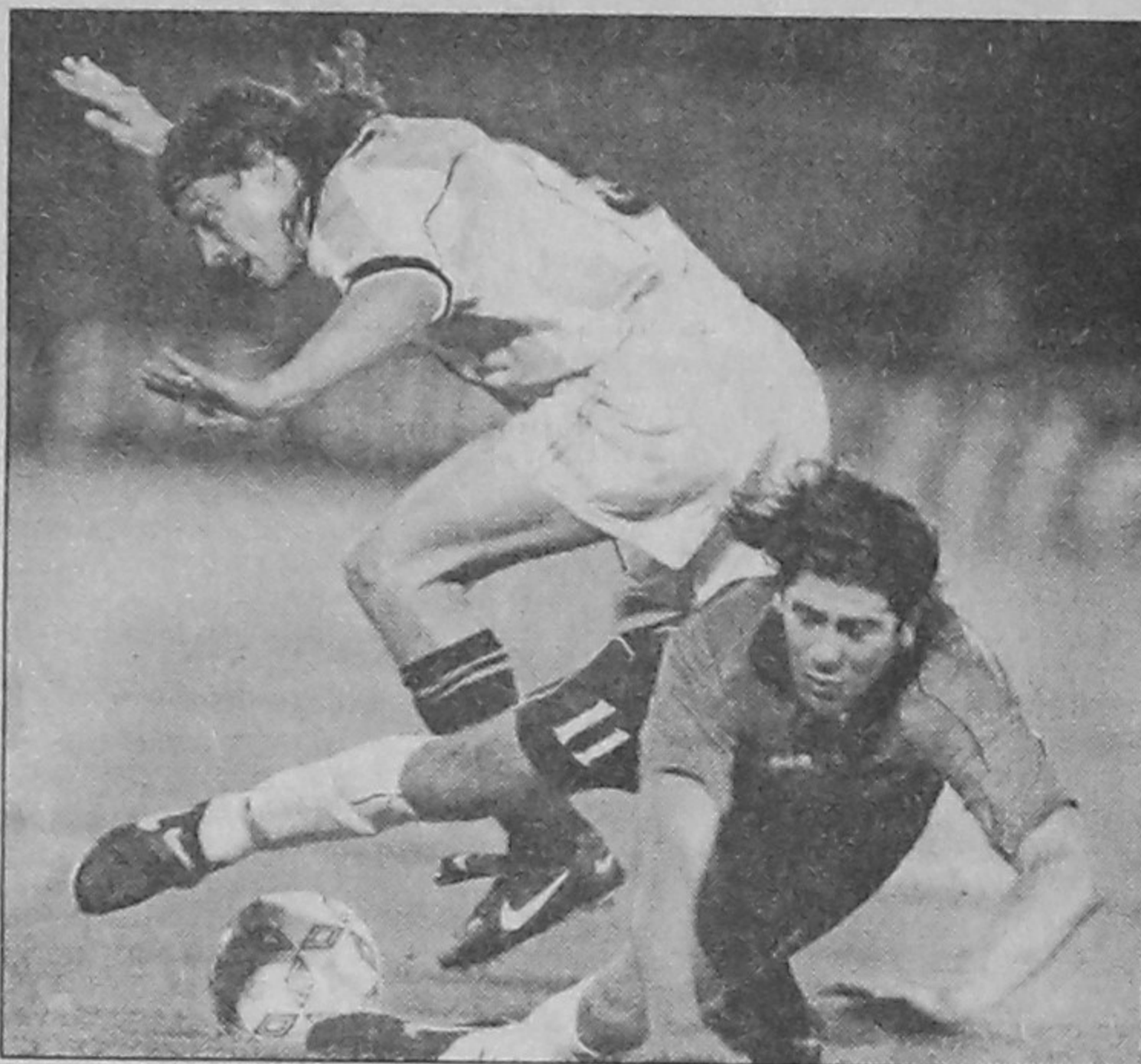
Colombia's loss allowed Uruguay to move above them on goal difference thanks to a 0-0 draw against Bolivia at high altitude in La Paz.

The Uruguayans, who have always struggled to compete at La Paz's 3,600 metres above sea level underwent a 20-day acclimatisation period before the match.

That move appeared to pay off as they looked comfortable against the Bolivians right up to the final whistle.

In the final match of the day, Ecuador edged last-placed Venezuela 2-1 and put themselves in a position to reach the World Cup finals for the first time. The Ecuadorians were 2-0 up after just 22 minutes and they held off the Venezuelan attacks to earn three points.

The qualifiers now head for a winter recess, the next round of games being scheduled for March next year.



Chilean star Marcelo Salas (bottom) and Claudio Usain of Argentina taking a tumble after a collision during their World Cup qualifier in Santiago on November 15. —AFP photo

## STANDINGS

MONTEVIDEO, Nov 16: Standings in the South American zone qualifying group for the 2002 World Cup finals after Wednesday's matches:

Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	For	Against	Points
Argentina	10	8	1	1	22	25
Brazil	10	6	2	2	21	20
Paraguay	10	6	2	2	18	20
Ecuador	10	5	1	4	12	16
Uruguay	10	4	3	3	12	15
Colombia	10	4	3	3	8	15
Chile	10	3	1	6	11	13
Bolivia	10	2	3	5	5	9
Peru	10	2	2	6	7	13
Venezuela	10	1	0	9	6	28

## USA can breathe easy now



WATERFORD, Barbados, Nov 16: The United States scored four second-half goals to beat Barbados 4-0 in a 2002 World Cup qualifier here on Wednesday to advance to the final round of Football Confederation qualifying, reports AFP.

The United States joined Mexico, Trinidad and Tobago, Honduras and Jamaica in the last round of the Caribbean and North and Central American regional qualifying.

Guatemala beat Costa Rica 2-1 on Wednesday, but they were dead even in their group and will have to play-off at a neutral site for the last berth in the six-nation final qualifying group.

Clint Mathis, who failed with two first-half attempts in the do-or-die tie finally connected in the 63rd minute to take the pressure off the United States.

Earnie Stewart, Cobi Jones and Ante Razov added one apiece as the United States finished semi-final Group E with a 3-1-2 record and 11 points.

"It was almost like nothing was going in for us," said Mathis, whose eight-yard shot with goalkeeper Horace Stoute out of the goal ricocheted off the post in the 36th. His point-blank attempt was stopped by Stoute three minutes later.

"Trying to get that first goal put a lot of added pressure on us," he said.

Until Mathis found the back of the net, the US team were uptight, and playing well below their potential.

"We obviously did not play a very good first half," said US coach Bruce Arena, who watched the game from the velodrome that surrounded the field because of a three-game ban from the team bench.

The US thought they had broken through in the 57th minute, but Chris Klein's goal was called back because Joe-Max Moore was ruled to be off-side.

Moore got it right in the 63rd minute. He booted down the right wing, beat his man and crossed the ball to Mathis in the penalty area. Mathis slotted home an eight-yard shot for his first international goal in four appearances.

"He did all the work," Mathis said. "He played a great ball and I was able to finish it."

Clearly more relaxed, the Americans began to assert themselves. Stewart hit a 16-yard rocket in the 73rd minute. Jones, a second-half substitute, connected from six yards four minutes later before Razov, another late sub, closed out the scoring two minutes into stoppage time.

Goalkeeper Tony Meola knocked away Gregory Goodridge's 10-yard blast off the crossbar in the 49th minute, probably Barbados' best opportunity.

"We thought we could get a goal early," Barbados coach Horace Beckles said. "If we had, it would have improved our chances. But it really did just come down to fitness. We had players who could not play a full game. I give credit to the United States."

Despite his delight with the victory, Mathis was quick to caution that the job wasn't finished.

"We have 10 more games ahead of us before we get to the World Cup," he said. "That's the final goal."

## RESULTS AT A GLANCE

PARIS, Nov 16 (AFP): Results of Wednesday's international football friendlies.

**At Braga, Portugal**  
Portugal 2 (Figo 49, Jorge Costa 61) Israel 1 (Benayoun 85)

**At Seville, Spain**  
Spain 1 (Hierro 67) Netherlands 2 (Hasselbaink 74, Frank de Boer 84)

**At Glasgow**  
Scotland 0 Australia 2 (Emerton 12, Zdrilic 66)

**At Turin**  
Italy 1 (Gattuso 57) England 0

**At Dublin**  
Republic of Ireland 3 (Finnan 14, Kilbane 84, Staunton 90) Finland 0

**At Istanbul**  
Turkey 0 France 4 (Trezeguet 15, Wiltord 22, Micoud 44, Robert 74)

**At Tunis**  
Tunisia 1 (Bouaziz 67) Switzerland 1 (Cantunppi 19)

**At Copenhagen**  
Denmark 2 (Rommendahl 55, 65) Germany 1 (Scholl 82)

**At Warsaw**  
Poland 1 (Frankowski 61-pen) Iceland 0

**At Skopje**  
Macedonia v Hungary \*match called off because of fog with Hungary leading 1-0

**At Bucharest**  
Romania 2 (Serban 3, Barcan 90) Yugoslavia 1 (Mihajlovic 87)

**At Rhodes, Greece**  
Greece 0 Slovakia 2 (D. Nemeth 18, P. Nemeth 72)

**At Tirana**  
Albania 3 (Vata, 47, Bogdani 70, 90) Malta 0

## Ronaldo on the right track

CAPBRETON, France, Nov 16: Ronaldo's physiotherapist and his doctor were optimistic about the recovery of the footballer's knee, it emerged on Wednesday, reports AFP.

The 23-year-old has been convalescing since the beginning of the month in the French Atlantic town of Capbreton at the European Sports medical centre, whose director Patrick Middleton told AFP about the stricken star's progress.

"There is no reason why Ronaldo should not play again, it's equally stupid to say he won't play again than to say he will. If he wants to play again there is nothing to stop him," insisted Middleton.

"I've seen others with more serious knee injuries get back to fitness," he explained.

Remy Roulland, the physiotherapist working with Ronaldo expressed similar sentiments.

"I've seen both rugby and football players come back from worse positions," he said. "But there's work to be done on the mobility of the joint and strength."

The Brazilian is trying to live a quiet life out of the media glare and does not wish to give interviews.

Staff at the centre are said to be charmed by Ronaldo's simplicity and have asked him to play Santa Claus at the annual Christmas party for their children.

## Beckham shows captain's temperament

TURIN, Italy, Nov 16: England captain David Beckham won praise all round Wednesday after showing maturity in the face of provocation in Wednesday's 1-0 defeat at the hands of Italy in the Stadio Delle Alpi, reports AFP.

Beckham was hounded by the press and public in England after his sending-off for a kick after his sending-off for a kick during the 2-2 draw in the 1998 World Cup which saw England eliminated from the World Cup on penalties.

But on Wednesday the Manchester United midfielder was given the captain's armband by England's stand-in coach Peter Taylor and he fully justified the faith shown in him.

Beckham refused to retaliate when Italy's goalscorer Gennaro Gattuso appeared to aim a punch at him in an incident which Hungarian referee Sandor Puhl did not punish, declining appeals for a penalty and also refusing to send off Gattuso who minutes later scored the winner.

Beckham admitted: "I didn't react and if I had I would have been all over the front pages tomorrow."

Referring to Puhl's performance he said: "It was his last game and I did not think he wanted to go out as the referee who gave England a penalty in Turin."

Taylor praised Beckham's restraint, saying: "I saw something - an arm being waved or something - but all I saw was David getting away from it - and that's his class."

Asked about Beckham's general performance Taylor said: "I thought he got on well with his job. He did some wonderful things, a couple of lovely freekicks. I am very pleased with David and the majority of the team."

## Argentina football great Rinaldo Martino dead

BUENOS AIRES, Nov 16: Former Argentine football great Rinaldo Martino, who played for top sides Newell's Old Boys, San Lorenzo and Boca Juniors, as well as Italian outfit Juventus, has died at the age of 79 years, reports AFP.

## Germany, Spain bites the dust

# World champs turn on the style



PARIS, Nov 16: World and European champions France set the pace in Wednesday's series of international

friendlies, scoring four unanswered goals against Turkey in an affirmation of Gallic depth and finishing, reports AFP.

In other friendly matches Gennaro Gattuso scored a second-half goal to hand Italy a 1-0 victory over England while Dennis Rommedahl scored a brace of goals to give Denmark a deserved 2-1 victory over Germany.

In Seville, Frank de Boer put the icing on winning his 85th cap, a new national record, by scoring Holland's second and winning goal as the "Oranje" grabbed a morale boosting 2-1 win over Spain which saw the other two scorers Fernando Hierro and Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink sent-off for fighting.

There were also creditable wins for Australia who outclassed Scotland in Glasgow to win 2-0 - the home side being booed off the pitch - and the Republic of Ireland who romped home 3-0 over Finland.

It was France, however, who

set a blistering pace and left any detractors gobsmacked by their sheer elegance in attack and astuteness in defence.

If needed reminded at all the Turkish public were shown a glimpse of the French machine in full throttle, with goals from Euro 2000 heroes David Trezeguet and Sylvain Wiltord, and Johan Micoud and Laurent Robert.

In a match which coach Roger Lemerre used to field the majority of his squad, Juventus forward Trezeguet led the scoring heading sneakily past goalkeeper Rustu in the 15th minute.

Seven minutes later Trezeguet took advantage of a dithering Turkish defence to square a simple ball to the unmarked, Wiltord who coolly slotted the ball home.

France largely dominated the first half and a minute before the break Parnia forward Micoud made it a truly European affair for "Les Bleus" with a strike 25 yards out on the right.

Turkey came out for the second half having substituted Rustu for keeper Omer Cakir. However the change made little difference to a French side in-

tent on exploiting every opening.

Turkey's best chance came in the 64th minute when a corner by Ergun eventually fell to Ahmet Dursun who shot just wide of Fabien Barthez's right-hand post.

France, as is its wont, simply responded with a fourth goal, this time by way of home-based Paris St Germain forward Robert, who had come on for Wiltord.

Latching on to a ball wide on the left, Robert kept possession until he unleashed a powerful angled shot from about 15 yards out, sending the ball through Cakir's legs to make it 4-0 for his first international goal.

A double dose of second-half Danish delight was duly supplied by Rommedahl as Denmark registered a deserved 2-1 win over 1992 European championship finalists, Germany.

Rommedahl struck in the 56th and 65th minutes - Germany replying with a finely struck shot by Mehmet Scholl - to give German boss Rudi Voller plenty to think about before the World Cup qualifiers resume next year.

The Danish frontman broke the deadlock when he ran from the halfway line on to Stig Tofting's beautifully weighted pass and left the German defence trailing in his wake to slot past Oliver Kahn.

The static German defence were found wanting again nine minutes later as Claus Jensen crossed from inside the box and Rommedahl sidefooted home a volley.

The Germans lacked any sort of firepower up front leaving Voller no choice but to bring on Carsten Jancker for captain Oliver Bierhoff with 15 minutes to go.

However, it was Bayern Munich teammate Scholl who produced the goods, as he produced a delightful curling shot from 25 yards to reduce the deficit.

In Spain Hasselbaink struck home in the 74th minute to cancel out an earlier goal by Spain defender Fernando Hierro.

Three minutes later both players got their names on the sheet once again, this time being sent off after an ugly clash.

Frank de Boer was humble after victory, enjoying setting a new national record after beating the 84 caps held by Aaron Winter, admitting "a win for the team is more important than personal glory, although I admit it's been a hard task notching up 85 caps."



Holland superstar Patrick Kluivert (C) rises above two Spanish players to head during an international friendly at the Olympic Stadium in Seville on November 15. —AFP photo

## Gattuso brings England down



TURIN, Italy, Nov 16: A second-half strike from Gennaro Gattuso was enough for Italy to defeat England 1-0 here on Wednesday in a friendly match at the Stadio Delle Alpi, reports AFP.

The AC Milan midfielder struck from 25 yards, 12 minutes into the second period in a match that was otherwise unremarkable.

After a four first period it was England, who were being watched by future coach Sven Goran Eriksson from the stands, who had the first real chance to break the deadlock after the interval with Emile Heskey setting up Ray Parlour whose shot was well saved by Italian goalkeeper Gianluigi Buffon.

But almost instantly Italy took the lead with a goal out of nothing.

England defender Rio Ferdinand only half cleared and Gattuso fired a powerful shot in off the crossbar with England goalkeeper David James helpless.

Gattuso's goal came minutes after he was lucky to escape the attention of Hungarian referee Sandor Puhl, who officiated in the 1994 World Cup Final, for apparently aiming a blow at England captain David Beckham.

Beckham, however, played down the incident.

"Yes he did put his arm up but arms do get raised in football. I thought it was a penalty," said the Manchester United player.

"I don't think the referee (who was officiating in his last international) wanted to be remembered as the referee who gave England a penalty against Italy in Turin."

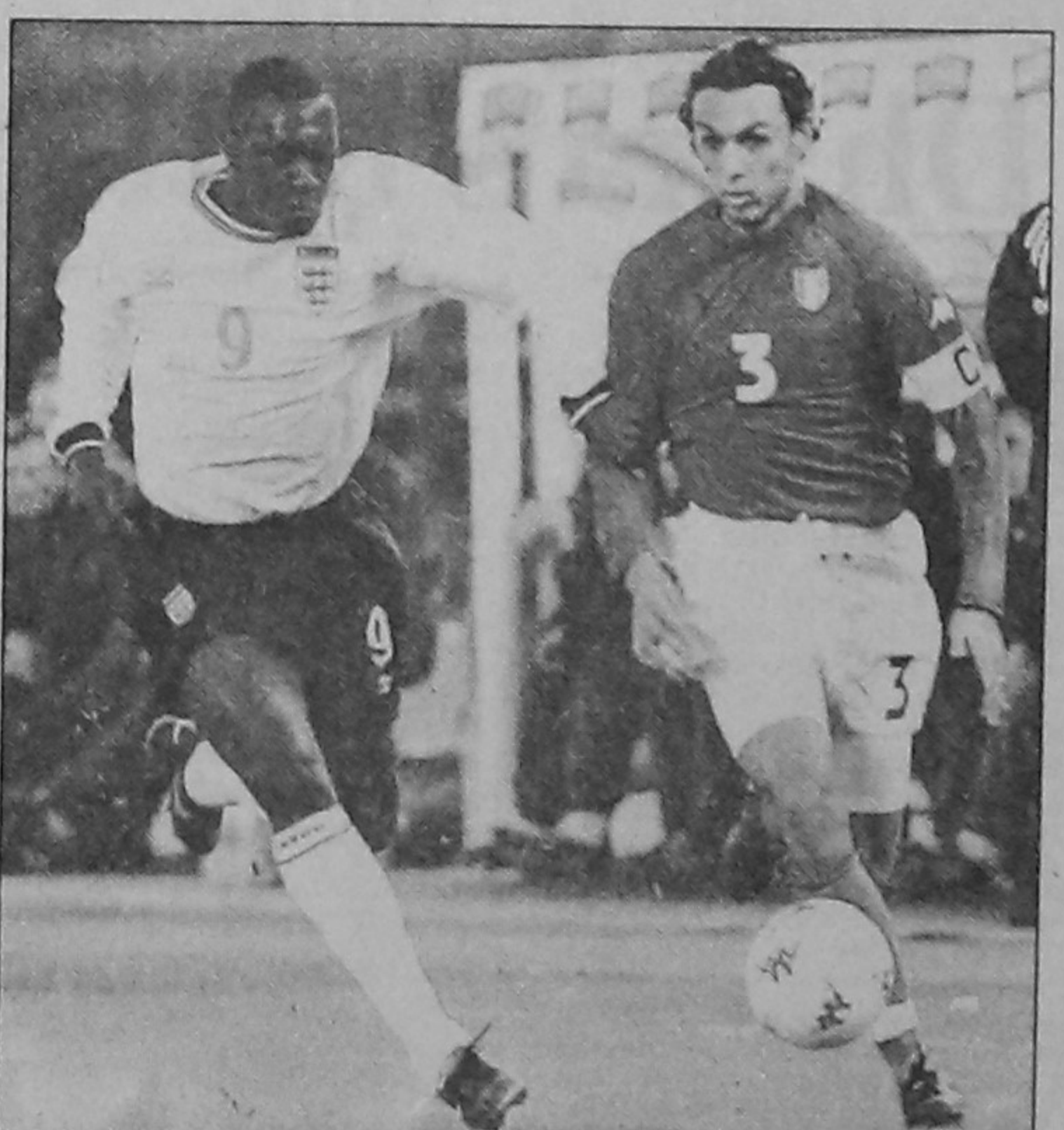
England's temporary coach Peter Taylor said: "I saw something - an arm being waved or something - but all I did see was David getting away from it and that's his class."

Neither Italy coach Giovanni Trapattoni or Gattuso commented on the incident but the goalscorer was more keen to talk about his decision.

"It was the greatest moment of my career," he told AFP. "To score a goal against the country that invented the game was a very special moment."

Seth Johnson almost came up with an equaliser seconds after coming on as substitute only to see his close-range shot saved by Buffon at the expense of a corner.

England exerted some late pressure in the Turin rain but that was as near as they came to equalising in this friendly match where Italy coach Giovanni Trapattoni made liberal use of his substitutes in the



Italy captain Paolo Maldini (R) is under pressure from Emile Heskey of England during their international friendly in Turin on November 15. —AFP photo

second period.

England's stand-in coaching team of Taylor and Steve McLaren also used the opportunity to experiment.

"Even though I think England deserved to score I think Italy deserved to win," Trapattoni said.

Gattuso played a good match - he has different qualities to (Demetrio) Albertini and (Stefano) Fiore - but he played a good match," he added.

Atalanta's Damiano Zenoni took his international bow as a second-half substitute while the Inzaghi brothers Filippo and Simone were briefly united after the break when Simone replaced Marco Delvecchio and before Filippo was replaced.

Italy were going into this match on the back of their so-called-but-so-far runners-up spot in Euro 2000 and some encouraging performances since under new coach Trapattoni.

England, meanwhile, are in a state of limbo and followed their disastrous showing in Euro 2000 with a dreadful start to their World Cup qualifying campaign.

That led to the departure of Kevin Keegan as coach and the appointment of Eriksson, who will only take charge when his contract with Italian champions Lazio expires next summer.

The Swede attended the game but had no contact with the players and Taylor said: "Mr Eriksson is going to be England coach for five years and I think he's seen that he has got some good players at his disposal."</