Caniggia may extend contract

GLASGOW, Dec 25: Former World Cup star Claudio Caniggia admits that he is enjoying life at Dundee and considering signing a new contract with the Scottish Premiership side, reports AFP.

The Argentinian striker, who has played alongside Diego Maradona for his country, stunned Tayside when he agreed to sign a deal that would keep him at Dens Park until the end of the season.

Now Caniggia is considering extending his stay in Scotland but believes he is such good friends with manager Ivano Bonetti that they could sit down at any time and informally dis-

cuss a new deal. He said: "I do see a future here at Dundee because of the way Ivano is working with the

"They are an ambitious group and I would like to remain a part of that.

"Dario (Bonetti) and Ivano have a great relationship with me, we are great friends and I know that we can sit down at any time and talk about if I will

"I have been playing well and proving to people that I still want to play at a good level. Obviously I believe that I am part of a group who are working

Caniggia proved to be an instant hit after swapping Italian side Atalanta for the Scottish Premier League.

And Bonetti was so confident that the 33-year-old would boost the side that he was talking about an extension to his contract the day he signed for the club.

But Caniggia insists one of the reasons he could stay is because Bonetti has built such a promising side and he singled out fellow countrymen Beto Carranza and Juan Sara - who both netted against Aberdeen on Saturday - as vital players.

Boca ready to sell Palermo

BUENOS AIRES, Dec 25 Boca Juniors star striker Martin Palermo is now officially for sale after the Argentine club's president Mauricio Macri confirmed that he is to leave the club, the Argentine press reported Sunday, reports AFP. International striker Palermo

has attracted interest from a number of top European clubs and despite earlier attempts to retain the player, Macri says an eventual departure is purely down to financial reasons.

Macri said. Even though Boca Juniors is in sports terms a much bigger club than many chibs in Europe, there is a big difference when it comes to financial clout.

Palermo is currently being followed by Napoli (Italy). West Ham and Chelsea (English Premiership).

He first came to prominence when missing three penalties during a Copa America match against Colombia in 1999, but recently scored the two goals which handed Boca victory over Real Madrid (2-1) in the Intercontinental Cup final in Tokyo.

Emperor's Cup

Antlers treble bound

TOKYO. Dec 25: Kashima Antlers staved on course for an unprecedented domestic season treble by beating Yokohama F Marinos in the quarter-finals of Japan's Emperor's (FA) Cup on Saturday, reports AFP.

Antlers, who have already won the league championship and League Cup this season. held their nerve to win a penalty shoot-out 4-1 after a 1-1 draw following extra time.

World Cup defender Yutaka Akita headed Kashima into the lead in the 40th minute of the match at neutral Tottori, but Marinos equalised in the 77th minute through midfielder Kunio Nagayama following confusion in the Antlers' defence.

Antlers went first in the shoot-out and claimed victory by converting their first four kicks. Marinos, who had lost 3-0 to the Antlers in the two-leg league championship play-off and also been knocked out of

League Cup by Kashima. missed their first two efforts and scored only with their third attempt from central defender

Norio Omura. In Friday's semi-finals, Antlers will meet Gamba Osaka. who beat Jubilo Iwata 1-0 with

few years. a goal in sudden-death extra time from Takahiro Futagawa. If the Antlers win the Eniperor's Cup final, on New Year's Day, it will be the first time a

team has won the treble of league. League Cup and Emperor's Cup in the same season since the professional J. League kicked off in 1993.

Verdy Kawasaki won the league and League Cup in 1993 and 1994, and Antlers won the League Cup and Emperor's Cup

in 1997. In the other quarter-finals on Saturday, a hat-trick from Brazilian winger Alessandro Dos Santos carried Shimizu S-Pulse to a 3-1 win over JEF United Ichihara, and Vissel fielder Adriano to Sao Paulo. Kobe beat Cerezo Osaka 4-3 in the French First Division side a penalty shoot-out after a 2-2

draw.



The victorious French team after their triumph in the Euro 2000.

Look back on 2000

The hour of the subs



(Reuters/Internet) the ball first, heading into into broke the deadlock. tivity on the sub-

That, though, was the the situation on the Italian bench as the seconds ticked away in the Euro 2000 final against France on July 2.

As the game moved into its fourth minute of stoppage time an expectant line of Italian substitutes, trainers and kit men stood on the touchline, arms to be one winner now. linked and ready for joyous celebration.

down on the spot, others were kicking an imaginary ball and all were willing referee Anders Frisk to blow the final whistle and proclaim Italy European champions.

triumph since winning the for World Cup in 1982. But the celebrations never

play, French goalkeeper Fabien France, then Italy, shaped to Barthez launched one last des- attack

space on the left hand side of the penalty area where another substitute Sylvain Wiltord. found himself with time and space to control the ball. Time itself seemed to stand

still as Wiltord cracked a powerful, low drive under the left arm of Italian goalkeeper Francesco Toldo that sped into the far corner of the net for the equaliser. With virtually the last kick of the game France was level and there was only going As the Italian substitutes

and their fans slumped in ab-Some were jumping up and ject despair, the French players and supporters had hardly time to gather themselves before the referee blew for the end of 90 minutes with either a Golden Goal or penalties now destined to determine the outcome. As extra time began, the

On the pitch their team French team took control of the mates had led France 1-0 game. Thierry Henry wasted a thanks to Marco Delvecchio's chance to wrap it up after two 56th minute goal and were now minutes for France, while Aleson the verge of their greatest sandro Del Piero had a chance Italy but fired high and wide.

The tension in Fevenoord's imposing De Kuip stadium was With just over a minute to almost unbearable as first

But with extra time interval

LONDON, Dec 25 stitute David Trezeguet reached approaching. France finally

France's third substitute Robert Pires was at the heart of the move, whipping away down the left touchline after beating Fabio Cannavaro to the ball.

He took it almost to the byline before cutting back a perfectly-weighted pass for Trezeguet who smashed home a left-footed volley into the roof of the net from 10 metres out.

Toldo was left stranded. The best goal of the tournament had won the tournament as France turned what seemed like certain defeat into a glorious victory to become the first team to win the European Championship as World Cham-

Zinedine Zidane, as he had been in 1998 when France won the World Cup, was singled out as the main inspiration for their

Just days after the final, Dino Zoff, so close to being a hero himself, resigned as Italian

French coach Roger Lemerre summed it up afterwards: "I said even if we had just one second to go we still had to play with full power looking for a goal. After a while hope became desperation and I was praying for a miracle and the miracle

Newcastle eying Bergkamp

Dec 25 (Internet report) Newcastle United have made a bid to sign unsettled striker Dennis Bergkamp from Arsenal. Bergkamp is out of contract at Arsenal at the end of the season, and they have failed to

persuade him to sign a new two-year deal Newcastle boss Bobby Robson, who is desperately short of strikers, enquired about the Dutchman earlier this week

World. A Newcastle source said: "Arsenal do not want to lose him and are still hoping he will

according to the News of the

sign the new deal. "But Newcastle want to take advantage of the fact he hasn't signed yet. Obviously the fmancial situation at Newcastle means Bobby does not have much money to spend.

Bergkamp's ability for Newcas-He he will be very keen."

Robson recently revealed that he had failed to bring 25. players to St James Park in the space of a few weeks as he artempted to solve an injury crisis at the club

PSG chances

PARIS, Dec 25: Ailing Paris St Germain can still win the French First Division title, French international striker Nicolas Anelka said on Saturday, reports Reuters.

PSG are in 11th place in the 18-team league after 22 rounds but are only nine points behind leaders Nantes.

Anelka told the club's website that he believed the title was still a realistic target in the closest championship since World War II.

"We don't want to finish in second or third place, we want to finish first." the former Arsenal and Real Madrid striker said in a rare interview.

"Personally. I am not interested in finishing second or third. We all want to finish first and we know we can do something with this team.

"Things are not going well at the moment but the other teams have not broken away. It's not finished yet. If we win our next three or four games. then we will move up the table very quickly. After that, we will

Anelka said his confidence and that of his team mates. remained high under new coach Luis Fernandez, who replaced the sacked Philippe Bergeroo. "There is no problem be-

tween the players," he said. "The only thing is that we have not been able to play well together for several games. As we lose confidence, it becomes difficult to play. When it comes back, though, things will go a

What people remember is the trophies won. That is very important. I won something in London, something with Madrid and I would like to win something with Paris

Stankovic out after knee operation

ROME. Dec 25: Lazio's Yugoslav midfielder Dejan Stankovic will be out of action for up to six weeks after undergoing an operation on his left knee on Saturday. Lazio's sporting director Felice Pulici

said, reports Renters. "He had the operation on his cruciate ligament this morning and we'll see how things go. Pulici said.

Stankovic was carried off with the injury at the end of the

first half of Lazio's 2-1 win at Bari on Friday night. Lazio are nursing several minries with Argentine striker

Claudio Lopez out for three months after sustaining a knee injury in November and compatriot Juan Veron not fully fit after fracturing his left tibia the same month.

Midfielder Roberto Baronio and Goalkeeper Angelo Peruzzi

Rangers owe De Boer one

Boer scored the only goal of the game as Rangers tascinature battle with second-

Scottish Premiership

placed Hibs with all three With pretty football at a throughout the match and the premium, the match was

enthralling. Both sides were reduced to 10 men as the final whistle approached. Jorg Albertz saw red for

Rangers and John O'Neil followed him down the tunnel shortly afterwards The breakthrough came in

49 minutes when Neil McCann fit, they too were reduced to 10 found space on the left and his "If he can grab a player of cross was met by de Boer at the front post, with Nick Colgan left helpless.

Rangers had started the second half at a furious pace with Albertz testing Nick Colgan at his near post.

Hibs refused to lie down,

Rangers onto the back foot. The ever-dangerous Franck drive blocked on the hour-

Clear-cut scoring chances had been hard to come by

majority of the match was wide. nonetheless never less than played out in midfield. A nasty under-current to the match spilled over with ten

minutes remaining when Albertz and Gary Smith clashed.

the players up and issued a straight red card to the German, with Smith only booked. But before Hibs could bene-

from behind Both sides had approached the game wholeheartedly from the off, with challenges flying in and Hibs looking far from overseason to lbrox.

Albertz pulled a couple of though, and they began to force efforts wide early on but it was Ulrik Laursen who almost Sauzee had a typically powerful opened the scoring after 12

A quick free kick was nodded into the Danes' path and a dipping volley had Klos flying across his goal to push the ball

Revna had a long-range effort comfortably saved before de Boer missed a glorious oppor-

tunity to put Rangers ahead. A six-man moved culminated Referee Kenny Clark split in Ricksen delivering a perfect ball from the right, but with the goal at his mercy, de Boer con-

trived to put the ball wide of the The match descended into a rather scrappy period for 15 men when John O'Neil lashed out having been challenged minutes, with either side pick-

ing up two bookings. Neither keeper was particularly threatened, though Reyna forced Colgan to gather a longrange left-foot effort as halfawed on their first visit of the time approached

Anelka fancies No changes at Spurs just yet



LONDON (Renters/Internet): George Graham's position as Tottenham Hotspur

manager is secure "for the time being", the new boss of the premier league club said on Friday as media reports linked Glenn Hoddle with a return to White Hart Lane.

Alan Sugar ended nine turbulent years at the helm when he stepped down as Spurs chairman after selling more than half of his 40 percent stake to ENIC on Thursday.

Daniel Levy, managing director of the sport and media group and a lifelong Spurs fan. Friday the club would not

make any rash decisions but gave mixed signals about the future of Graham, who is unpopular with a section of the "We are ... very conscious of

the fact that to have a suc-

have a successful team." Levy told the Evening Standard.

on the football side. That's why we employ professionals. "The club's obviously got George Graham and ENIC have no plans to change the operational structure of Tottenham either on the playing or man-

Spurs fans wanted Sugar to invest in new players to drag the club out of a largely barren The League Cup won in

agement side for the time be-

1999 was the only trophy of Sugar's reign. Spurs. 11th in the table, regard themselves as one of the country's top clubs, a team synonymous with style and entertainment, but they have been left behind by the likes of

Graham's style of play is not

champions Manchester United

and north London rivals Arse-

cessful club you have got to appreciated by many fans and his sale of French winger David Ginola to Aston Villa in the off-"I don't want to get involved season caused a lot of anger.

The former Arsenal boss was the sixth manager of Sugar's tenure and the Daily Mail on Friday reported that Hoddle, a former England boss and hero at White Hart Lane, could take over from Graham at the end of the season.

Hoddle is currently in charge at premier league Southampton but his return to Spurs would be very popular with fans who revere him as one of the club's greatest players.

"I have learned long ago that if is a waste of energy to worry about situations that are out of your control," said Graham. once a successful boss at Arsenal, on Thursday. "Nothing surprises you in

tootball any more. I don't know if there is any extra pressure on my job because of the change of le

Venables' nostalgic return

club's problems of more recent



LONDON. Dec 25 patience for the once-mighty (Reuters/Internet): Totten-

return came on Saturday, it a much better position." was a low-key affair.

Venables returned as temporary chief coach with Middlesbrough to see his struggling new side earn a precious point from a goalless draw.

But he did not have to face his old adversary -- once his partner -- Alan Sugar. The former chairman of Tottenham sold a controlling stake in the London side for 22 million pounds on Thursday and left almost immediately for a sunshine holiday in Florida.

But from across the Atlantic. Sugar had much to say about the troubles of Tottenham, who are struggling in mid-table after failing to win an away match this season. "Tottenham is a club where

its fan base lives on its past heritage and its past glory." said Sugar in an interview from Florida with BBC television shown on Saturday.

"For many years now, the managers have been in the untenable position of needing to provide instant success. If we had our time again we should have not succumbed to quick fixes to try to bring success. Sugar blamed the fans' im-

"In hindsight, if we had been manager Terry more patient rather than go for Venables had wai- quick fixes, put up with aggrated seven years to go back to vation from fans for a little bit White Hart Lane. When the longer it would have put us in



TERRY VENABLES

Sugar, chairman of Tottenham for nine years, sold a 27 percent stake in the club to investment company ENIC.

"I've had enough of being the whipping boy of the fans." he said on Saturday. "There's a limit to what one can take." Venables, a popular figure in

English football despite off-field so financial troubles, did well in re his five years as Tottenham 100 manager and chief, executive. leading the club to FA Cup victory in 1991. But he was ousted by Sugar to in 1993 amid allegations of the

financial irregularities and fire banned from the club's London | ag ground. Once the ban was lifted Venables, who went on to be England manager, refused to

attend matches at White Hart Lane as the acrimony between | Gr him and Sugar continued. Venables still describes his inc stint at Spurs as "possibly the most difficult job I 'had" and admitted onav that his return was "a little bit

strange". "It has been a long time." he said after the 0-0 draw. "It was ! a bit emotional maybe but it was good.

But Venables, the ultimate professional on the pitch, could not afford to stay misty- eved "I didn't really think too

much about coming back," he

said. "(Middlesbrough) are in the middle of a difficult situation and all the concentration is about us and what we are going to do and how we are going to And without a backward

glance. Venables left, turning his attention to Middlesbrough's tricky home game against in-form Liverpool on

One's delight is another's plight



is under threat.

of arch rivals Boca Juniors. Club president David Pin- Uruguay. tado admitted on Friday that directors were discussing Gal- was still intact on Friday with pionship held in the first half of alise. the year

Gallego's problem is that Boca won a unique treble, including the South American

"We haven't discarded Gallego but the last part of the year has been very bitter," said Pintado, referring to Boca's titles.

River's Colombian striker Juan Pablo Angel, who on Friday was sold to English premier league side Aston Villa for 14 million dollars, said Gallego's predicament was typical of life

biggest rivals are winning this put the club's accounts in or generates bad feeling. Pintado admitted that "The

Millionaires' have considered replacing Gallego with Hugo de Leon, a former River Plate delargely because of the success fender who this year led Nacional to the title in his native

lego's future, even though his the expected flood of offers for team won the Clausura cham- their top players still to materi-"Until now the club has not received any offers but this

Boca's treble winning team

won't be any transfers by the end of the year," vice-president Roberto Digon said. Striker Martin Palermo, who scored both goals in the 2-1 Intercontinental Cup win over European champions Real Madrid and was the team's top

scorer in the Apertura champi-

does not mean to say that there

His agent Gustavo Mascardi lona motto, "More than a club said English premier league

Digon said Boca needed to lar club could match the wages Read's FIFA award.

paid in Europe.

Barca at the

BARCELONA. Dec 25 (Reu-. ters/Interneti: Barcelona prest dent Joan Gaspart could not resist a Christmas-time jibe all arch-rivals Real Madrid on Saturday when he said: "We're the best club in the universe."

best to tone down the rivalry in with the boys from the Berna soon ben since he took over the presidency of the club in the also northern summer.

FIFA award as the best club of the century has clearly rankled onship, is expected to be first to with Gaspart, who believes more than anyone the Barce-

side West Ham United were in the world, in the universe. he told reporters on Saturday. "We don't need anvone else sell at least one player to bal- to tell us that. Other clubs beance the books and that not lieve it because they're told they even the country's most populare," he added in reference to

"I don't believe we re the best

perate clearance upfield. Sub-Premiership preview

Villa plot a miracle



their sights on a Champions League place and are hoping for a victory to jolt Man-

nous English Premiership stride on Tuesday. ended a turbulent week off the field with a morale-boosting 2-1 victory at Leeds on Saturday. entertain the Red Devils at Villa

Park in the pick of Tuesday's

chester United out of their omi-

Boxing Day fixtures. A win for United, who brushed aside upstarts lpswich Town 2-0 on Saturday, could see them extend their eightpoint lead at the top of the ta-

and is promising a battle royale for Sir Alex Ferguson's side. "As people can see we're getting close to a Champions League place," said Gregory

"In the last year - and I do

harp on about it at times -

we've only lost just five of our

use Tuesday's match to show

that Villa are top-three material

last 39 Premier League games. which is a phenomenal record. "We've shown we can protect derperforming in the league. our own goal but we just don't do well enough at the other end and so don't win enough

ship side. But it's the top sides we have to beat, and of course we face the champions next. always the benchmark of how with, and at the moment they good you are. We have to do are not doing that."

showed we are a good Premier-

well against the likes of Arsenal and Manchester United. them if we are to consider ourselves a potential Champions difficult home-tie against League team, and that's always Leicester City, 2-1 victors been our failure over the last against West Ham.

teams but we can never beat the top three or four teams on a consistent basis - we'll soon fund out if that's changed over

Villa's defeat of Leeds at the

the next week."

Marseille loan Adriano to Sao Paulo

MARSEILLE. France, Dec 25: Olympique Marseille have agreed to loan Brazilian midsaid on Saturday, reports Reuters.

LONDON. Dec 25: weekend heightened the gloom results don't keep coming. at free-spending Elland Road. David O'Leary knows his team must start winning if they are to have any chance of securing a place in the lucrative Champions League next season.

sign defender Rio Ferdinand and Robbie Keane in recent John Gregory's men, who weeks, Leeds have failed to add up to the sum of their multimillion-dollar parts. O'Leary has bemoaned a results and they've needed to lack of consistency ahead of his

> team's potentially awkward trip field to struggling Newcastle United but insists he can handle the where we play very well one better understanding of what I game and then the next game

we hit a low. It's like we're on a have to build on that. But Gregory is determined to rollercoaster." O'Leary said. "Last year we did very well less stated): on a consistent basis, but we're not being consistent this year. We had a good performance last week against a decent side (a 2-0 win against Sunderland), but

we haven't performed this week.

son it's been, so I'm looking for

"That's been the type of sea-

a better second half to the season because given the quality of the players we have, we're un-"I didn't come here to manage this club in 12th place. We want to be up there and com-

peting at the very top and at the

dards and that's the reputation

you make, so the onus is on us.

"We've set ourselves stan-

"Against Leeds, though, we moment we are not doing that

It's another part of the learning "For me it is a game which is process for my players to deal Arsene Wenger's Arsenal will attempt to recover from the "We have to take points off trauma of their 4-0 hammering at Liverpool on Saturday with a

Wenger is hoping to have in-"We manage to beat 16 or 17 spirational captain Tony Adams back on the team-sheet to shore up the Gunners' defence after Saturday's debacle.

Gerard Houllier's Liverpool

travel to the Riverside to face

struggling Middlesbrough.

The home team are hoping to extend their recent minirevival - a win over Chelsea and | thing," Henry said. a draw at Tottenham on Saturday - under the guidance of for sure. But I insist it was not if you're not aggressive." former England coach Terry Venables. Venables, drafted in to perform his version of the great

escape with sidelined manager

Bryan Robson, said he had |

a new direction since his arri-

"We are all in it together and so long as they want to improve from game to game, even if the

that's good enough for me." he

"We have some very good

them in a new direction. It is not that they are lacking in Despite breaking the bank to anything elementary because that infers they haven't got the basic professionalism and that's not right. "But everybody has been put

under pressure by a run of bad

players but I'm trying to point

learn new disciplines on the "That's my job to get them into those disciplines and although there's still lots of work "We seem to be in a stage to do they've shown already a

> want defensively. Eventually we FIXTURES (1500 GMT un-Tuesday: Arsenal v Leicester (1200 GMT). Aston Villa v Man Utd (1300 GMT), Bradford v Sunderland, Everton v Coventry. Ipswich v Chelsea, Man

City v Derby, Middlesbrough v

Liverpool. Newcastle v Leeds.

West Ham v Charlton (1200

are also out of action. Henry France's best

that when I arrived at Arsenal. I Wright was the player who had

since he joined Arsenal, he said was sitting next to Martin Ke-

inspired him.

very solid," he said.



striker Thierry Henry was French footballer of the vear by France Football on Friday and paid homage to lan Wright as the player who had influenced him

Henry beat Juventus play-

maker Zinedine Zidane in the

poll of the soccer weekly's jour-

nalists at the end of a year in which world champions France won the European title. Zidane was second to Portugal's Luis Figo for the European Footballer of the Year award also organised by France Foot-

most, reports AFP.

award but I don't want to get carried away by things like I beat Zizou (Zidane) or some-"This was my best season, technically gifted, you're nobody easy at first and people forget

was living on the bench."

"I'm very happy to win the

been trying to take the squad in | level. With the Gunners, my game and especially tackling," he goals in 285 matches. Solid,

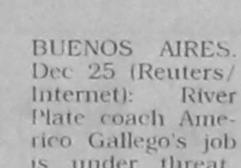
Asked what had changed



And former Arsenal striker

that he had improved at every own and he asked me to watch Ian Wright. And I did. "I have the tape of his goals improved in all its aspects: with Arsenal at home and I headers, controlling the ball sometimes watch it for fun: 184

"At Lee Dixon's testimonial,



and were runners-up in the Apertura wich finished last

Libertadores Cup, the Intercontinental Cup and the Apertura.

at one of the world's biggest clubs. "These situations are normal at River," said Angel, who was

It's a club which is used to could have problems," he said. can't decide with a vote. They're perpetual success and when its , "An important sale can help us obvious."

Gaspart puts

But Real Madrid's recent

"We're the best sporting club

"The situation is not serious - I know it I don't need FIFA top scorer in the Apertura with but if we don't repeat our UEFA or anyone else to tell me sporting success next year we. There are certain things you

Gaspart has been doing his too