first blood

LONDON. Jan 10: In-form Ipswich, chasing European qualification on three fronts. took a step nearer their goal with a controversial penalty that gave them a 1-0 win over First Division Birmingham City in their League Cup semi-final first leg meeting at Portman Road on Tuesday, reports AFP.

Marcus Stewart converted his 15th goal of the season on the stroke of half-time after Northern Irish international Danny Sonner, on his 29th birthday and who was let go by Ipswich coach George Burley in 1998 for just 70,000 pounds (100,000 dollars) because of an off the field incident, was adjudged to have handled a Jim Magilton cross.

Burley, who appeared for Ipswich in two League Cup semi-finals without ever making it through to the final although he was a member of the 1978 FA Cup winning side, had to make do without the cup-tied Alun Armstrong, who had played for Middlesbrough earlier in the competition, so James Scowcroft reverted from midfield to partner Stewart up tront.

Menotti, Bilardo fighting it off verbally

BUENOS AIRES, Jan 10: Former Argentine World Cupwinning coaches Cesar Luis Menotti and Carlos Bilardo stepped up a running feud on Tuesday with Bilardo complaining his predecessor was simply not in his league, reports AFP.

Menotti led Argentina to the 1978 World Cup, but Bilardo. who performed the same feat in 1986, said his feat was by far the greater as it came in Mexico whereas his rival's triumph was on home soil.

Bilardo, 61 and who is now hoping to make a career in politics, claims Menotti, a year older, has effectively lived off the former's own reputation "for

20 years." Menotti has been even more dismissive of Bilardo, however. Mar del Plata-based daily La Capital quoted him as saving

that "we can thank politics for taking him out of football" with Bilardo saving he intends to run for the presidency in 2003. Bilardo, formerly a doctor, told Radio Mitre that Menotti had also once said sniffily that

taking Bilardo out of medicine." Bilardo said he was fed up with various media outlets tending, as he saw it, to seek

"you can thank football for

out Menotti's view on his per-According to Bilardo. Menotti "goes on and on. I can't do

anything, everything I have ever done has been bad since 1980." Menotti once was quoted as saving he would never go to see Bilardo in the latter's capacity

Reporters reminded Bilardo | England manager, sensationally of that reported comment and asked if he would have attended

to Menotti if need be. "As a doctor, yes - because as a doctor you have to deal with people who have problems. Menotti hit back by saying he was nonplussed at his "dear enemy's" political aspirations

when Bilardo had always appeared to be apolitical. "Now he wants to be president. I don't understand anvthing any more."

Conti pleads for thieves' mercy

ROME, Jan 10: Italy's 1982 World Cup winning star Bruno Conti Tuesday appealed to thieves to return momentos from his football career after a burglary at his house, reports

Among the memorabilia stolen were seven medallions commemorating each of the seven matches he played for Enzo Bearzot's side during the 1982 tournament in Spain that culminated in the 3-1 victory over West Germany in the final.

Also taken was a gold Rolex watch presented to Conti after his club side AS Roma won the 1982-3 Scudetto - the last time Roma won the title.

"I appeal to anyone who can understand the emotional value

of bad injuries to key players these objects have for me." said which have affected his team Conti. and results," he said. "These are objects I wanted "As soon as he became Eng- at the Olympic Stadium as the to divide up between my two land manager, supporters were Italian champions played the children as a momento and saying what a fantastic man- Chinese national team in a ager he was but then they match to mark the conclusion

which would have been part of my wedding present to (his son) Daniele on his wedding day on June 21. I hope someone can help me find them."

Dortmund out with record fee for Czech

DORTMUND, Germany, Jan 10: Sparta Prague Czech international midfielder Tomas Rosicky joined highflying Bundes- | England team would benefit pitch. liga outfit Borussia Dortmund from Eriksson coming aboard for a German record 24.8 million deutschmarks (12 million dollars) on Tuesday, reports

The 20-year-old, capped eight times, signed a six year contract with the 1997 European Cup champions and is set to play in an indoor match this weekend - The German league winter break does not end till

January 26. "I wanted a player to fill the creative role in midfield," coach | Eriksson we were in favour of Lazio. Goodbye Mister Eriksson. Matthias Sammer said.

Ipswich draw Zoff under spotlight again

line football management Tuesday. taking the helm of Italian First Division champions

land-bound Swedish Sven Goran Eriksson had announced his departure, reports AFP.

Dino Zoff(L) being presented to the media by Lazio presi-

dent Sergio Cragnotti during a press conference at the club's

president of Lazio, said: "I have branded the coach a 'dilettante'

man. I could not resist this mark France's playmaker Zine-

Six months ago Zoff, who Minister for the second time in

won both the World Cup and this year's Italian elections, had

the European Championship as far less football credentials than

his country's most legendary Zoff but the latter felt obliged to

side just two days after the Zoff had come off the worse in a

tional side Tuesday - but ests to support Sven-Goran

Englishman to be appointed to develop grass-roots sport in tion.

The world of Eng- not think enough efforts were

lish football wel- made to find an English man-

nent arrival of there was no-one good enough.

"Azzurri" lost the Euro 2000 skirmish with a politician.

Goran

come back because I am a Lazio (amateur) for failing to man-

headquarters in Formello on January 9.

challenge. I am taking on dine Zidane.

goalkeeper, stepped down as resign.

Eriksson's team who have done

coach to the Italian national

Eriksson as coach of the na-

warned against expecting mira-

cles from the Swedish guru,

The 52-year-old's departure

from the Rome giants means he

is now free to take up the Eng-

land reins as soon as possible.

a fact welcomed by coaches and

Leicester City manager Peter

Taylor, who had been due to

lead England in their home

friendly against Spain on Feb-

ruary 28, said he was now

happy to make way for Eriks-

was coming over here to take

charge of England and it is

good that it is going to happen

never like to see anyone leave a

on it is good news that he can

come over straight away. It

clears a lot of things up for us."

said Taylor, who will work

closely with Eriksson as one of

chester United's Steve

what is in the best interests of

Taylor had sympathy for the

"I think he has had a couple

is sad because he is an excel- AFP.

League Managers' Associa- Zoff.

to revive England's disastrous

them lose 1-0 at home to Ger-

tion chief executive John Barn-

well - who was bitterly opposed

to a foreigner being appointed

in the first place - said the

limbo does not do our cause

excellent communicator and the

FA will be relieved to get him

getting on with it, the better.

easier," said Barnwell.

way things worked out for

Eriksson in the latter stages of

England is what counts."

his spell with Lazio.

lent coach."

draw in Finland.

earlier.

working.

"It would have been nice to

his coaches along with Man-

now, sooner rather than later,

"No-one was sure when Sven

"As a fellow manager von

"But with my England hat

A side Lazio on Tuesday.

officials Tuesday.

Taylor said.

McClaren.

reports AFP.

a great job.

Lazio shortly after their Eng-

MILAN. Jan 10: Final 2-1 to France. Italy had been within sec- coach of Lazio Francesco turned to front- onds of winning that tourna- Kntelli, a Lazio fan who on ment before Sylvain Wiltord Monday resigned as Rome's equalised for the French in the mayor to focus on his campaign fifth minute of stoppage time. A golden goal from David Prime Minister, delivered a

> not Italy would prevail. expectations he faced one for-

of failing to stamp his person-Although Zoff had exceeded ality on the team. With either Berlusconi or Zoff, the club vice-president midable critic in AC Milan Rutelli set to become the coun-

--AFP photo

become his country's Prime

It was not the first time that

The English cautiously happy

Eriksson wholeheartedly.

Eriksson, the first non- of Sport England, a body set up coaching credentials into ques-

England, said Eriksson should

stepped down as coach of Serie be given time to grow into the rive as winners and then make

SVEN GORAN ERIKSSON

help them quality for the World

Cup - and we have to give him

him because he is the first for-

eign coach. Lots of sports have

gone down that road and now

"If he can achieve get the re-

Moving farewell

for the Swede

coach Sven Goran Eriksson was

given an emotional send-off by

Lazio fans on Tuesday evening

Eriksson, Lazio's most suc-

Roman outfit to the Scudetto

was accompanied by club

his successor as coach Dino

clearly moved by the reception

as he addressed the crowd via a

microphone in the centre of the

me even to tears," said the

joining with me in the success

stadium and Lazio fans un-

Victory united us, we have

Applause rang around the

The 52-year-old Swede was

"The reception has moved

"I will always carry you with

"Life is like that. I thank you

ROME, Jan 10: England

that football has as well, he has

to be given that chance.

have been in charge for the sults in the qualifiers against

Spain game but at least five Finland. Albania and Greece

done the job for one game and then England should achieve a

changed the next minute which of their centenary year, reports

Eriksson's immediate task is cessful coach, having led the

start to their 2002 World Cup last season - only their second

qualifying campaign, which saw title and their first for 26 years.

many before scrambling a 0-0 president Sergio Cragnotti and

To have things hanging in normally taciturn Swede.

any good or make his job any in my heart, now I must go.

"He is a good coach and an of this great team."

"The sooner he is here and for staying close to me and

through the front door and furled a huge banner, saying:

an English manager in charge you are a champion of style."

"Before they appointed been divided for the good of

that chance," Brooking said.

"He now has a chance to

It's going to be difficult for

LONDON. Jan 10: of the national side and we do play-off place at worst in the

comed the immi- ager - it was an insult to say som of treatment Eriksson is

pointed it is in everyone's inter- Daily Mirror.

Trezeguet ensured France and broadside at Zoff, accusing him

try's next Prime Minister Zoff would be forgiven if he chose to abstain at the election. His relations with the media have also been difficult

In his previous stint as

as the left wing's candidate for

As Italy coach Zoff often gave monosyllabic answers to banal questions and resolutely refused to smile.

His defining achievement remains his part in Italy's memorable World Cup triumph in 1982 where - at 41 - he became the oldest player to win football's ultimate accolade.

Some fourteen years previously he had also won the European Championship with Italy and in all gained 112 caps for the Azzurri - a mark surpassed just before Christmas by AC Milan defender Paolo Mald-

Zoff. 59 next month, was born in the Friuli region of Italy near what was then the border with Yugoslavia in 1942 at Mariano.

He began his career with local favourites Udinese before moving on to Mantua and Na-But the club where he spent

the best years of his playing career was Juventus and at club level he won six Scudettos (Italian Championships), two Italian Cups as well as the 1977 UEFA Cup.

It was at Juventus that he took his first steps as a coach, looking after the club's goalkeepers before looking after the Italian under-21 side in their but also a former coach and president Silvio Berlusconi who campaign for the 1988 Olympics in Seoul.

He returned to Juventus for two seasons as coach before moving to Lazio for the first Berlusconi, who will seek to time in 1990. He later became club president but eventually gave up that title in 1998 when he succeeded Cesare Maldini as coach to the national side.

After quitting the Italy job last July took a break but was persuaded later to rejoin the Lazio board by current president Sergio Cragnotti.

But an early foretaste of the

likely to receive from the Eng-

The paper questioned the

England bosses used to ar-

a mess of it." the paper's head-

line read. "Not any more - we've

Mancini too

leaving

tant coach Roberto Mancini

announced Tuesday he would

leave the club after the evening

friendly match with the Chinese

Swedish coach Sven Goran

Eriksson who left the Italian

champions Tuesday to take up

his appointment with the Eng-

land team but club president

instead appointed club vice-

here," said Mancini, "But this is

my last day with Lázio. I was

Eriksson's main assistant and

of the responsibility.

"I have really enjoyed it

president Dino Zoff as coach.

national team, reports AFP.

ROME. Jan 10: Lazio assis-

got a loser from day one.

wisdom of Eriksson's appoint-

qualifying group.

but now he has been ap- lish media came in Tuesday's

Former England mifielder ment and said Lazio's recent

Trevor Brooking, now chairman poor form brought the Swede's

Sad Bertolotti says goodbye

MODENA. Italy, Jan 10: Francesco Bertolotti retired from football on Tuesday less than two months after the postmatch assault by an opponent that left him fighting for his life. reports AFP.

Bertolotti, who played for Italian Third Division side Modena, confirmed in a press conference that he would quit after being advised to do so by doctors who helped him recover from a coma.

Accompanied by his wife and two children 33-year-old Bertolotti was on the verge of tears as he spoke.

"As far as my future is concerned I do not know what to do or what I am capable of doing," he said.

"It was only Friday when I had my last medical that I knew I would have to give up football. I had asked the doctors before but they had always given me vague replies, saving it was not the moment to make such a

"I am going to miss football a lot - I won't even be able to have r kickaround with friends. 1 had been hoping to carry on until the end of the season."

Bertolotti said he was still unconvinced by the apology offered by Como skipper Massimiliano Ferrigno whose assault ended his career and almost cost Bertolotti a lot more.

Ferrigno, who has been suspended pending a disciplinary hearing and also faces criminal charges of grievous bodily harm and failing to assist a person in distress, has apologised in the press for the assault after the Third Division match won 1-0 by Como.

"If he was really sorry it was up to him to explain himself and not via the media," said Bertolotti.

He revealed simple tasks were still difficult, explaining." still need a little bit of home need another operation and a the moment I can not pick up my little girl."

Lazio lesson for China

ROME. Jan 10: Italian

time lead over the visitors, who coached by bohemian Yugoslav Bora Milutinovic finished fourth in October's Asian Cup finals. to ensure the match was effectively over at the interval.

Their Czech midfielder Pavel Nedved set up the opener after four minutes for Simone Inzaghi and then after 26 minutes Chilean forward Marcelo Salas doubled the lead, lobbing goalkeeper Jiang Jin.

Ten minutes after the break Fabrizio Ravanelli made it 3-0 with a freekick that went in off the post.

But then China's Ma Ming Yu. who plays for Serie A side Perugia, scored arguably the best goal of the night with a fine left foot shot from 25 yards. Ravanelli set one up for

Hernan Crespo and then the Argentinian returned the compliment for the veteran Italian as the score reached 5-1.

But two goals in quick sucsion outfit Grimsby Town's loan signing Zang Enhua, both

Mancini was assistant to Lazio's Emanuele Berrettoni. who replaced assistant coach Roberto Mancini who is also leaving the club, rounded off the scoring four minutes from Sergio Cragnotti overlooked the | time after good work from Czech star Karel Poborsky who former Italian international and joined the club from Benfica last week.

champions Lazio gave their England-bound coach Sven Goran Eriksson a winning send-off on Tuesday, beating the Chinese national team 6-3 at the Olympic Stadium in a match that brought down the curtain on the Rome outfit's centenary year, reports AFP.

Lazio eased to a 2-0 half-

cession from English First Divicoming from corners, saw China pull the score back to 5.

To the surprise of many Eriksson, accompanied by his successor Dino Zoff and club president Sergio Cragnotti. attended the match and was therefore I must take my share given a warm ovation by the Lazio supporters.

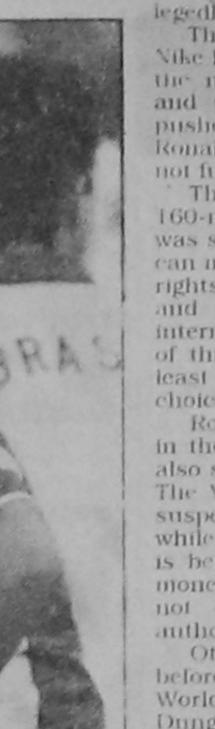


Lazio superstar Marcelo Salas (L) wrong-footing China's Li Weifang during their exhibition match at Rome on January -- AFP photo

Ronaldo volunteered to play



the 1998 World Cup final be-



An AFP file photo of a dejected Ronaldo after the shocking defeat against France in the 1998 World Cup final.

The CPI are also investigat-

There are allegations that Vike has too much influence on the national side's schedule and the company might have pushed for the inclusion of konaido even though he was not fully fit

The controversial 10-year 160-million-dollar Nike deal was signed in 1997. The American manufacturer has exclusive rights on all marketing aspects and can organize 50 friendly internationals, with a minimum of three per year, in which at least eight players of the firstchoice side must play. Romario. Brazil's star player

in the 1994 World Cup win, is also set to come before the CPL The Vasco Da Gama striker is suspected of not paving taxes while playing at Barcelona. He is believed to have transferred money back to Brazil but did not declare it to the fiscal authorities.

Other players yet to come before the CPI include 1994 World Cup winning captain Dringa, Caesar Sampaio and Real Madrid freekick specialist Roberto Carlos. The CPI has already spoken

to former Brazii coach Mario Zagallo, ex-FIFA president Joao Havelange, team doctors and other Brazilian internationals.

Sacchi renews romance

men." said Sacchi.



PARMA, Italy, Jan called Sant'Alberto e Casalbor-10: Former Italian setti but we are both football team boss Arrigo Sacchi admitted on but it is almost. We are not free Tuesday he was

rekindling a love affair as he returned to Italian First Division side Parma where he first came to prominence as a coach. reports AFP. Sacchi replaces Alberto

Malesani, who was sacked by the club late on Monday, and has signed a two-and-a-half vear contract with the club. The 55-year-old veteran admitted he was looking forward

would take some time to assess the players at his disposal. "Footballers are like fiancees," he explained. "You only find out what they

to his new challenge but said it

are really like when you take them home and marry them," he added. On a day which saw another Serie A club Lazio re-appoint a former coach in Dino Zoff. Sacchi. who unlike most top flight coaches never made his name

between himself and the 1982 World Cup winner, a legend as a player. "When he (Zoff) was in Serie

A I was playing at a little club

as a player, drew comparisons

to choose as we think ourselves

ARRIGO SACCIH

mid-1980s when the then ob- as a media pundit. scure northern side were in the lower divisions.

1913 in honour of the town's illustrious composer Giuseppe Verdi to Serie B in 1986 before "I am not saying it is a drug making his name as a coach with AC Milan.

> Parma's transition to the top flight was completed in 1990 with promotion to Serie A. At Milan - using the 4-4-2

> system more associated with the English game than the Italian where the catenaccio (sweeper) system is preferred he turned a sleeping giant into the top club team in Europe and the world.

"Along with Milan it (Parma) is the club that will always be in my heart," said Sacchi. "Without these two teams I would never have reached the levels that I could never imagined I would have reached." After leaving Milan Sacchi

took Italy to the 1994 World Cup Final where they lost to Brazil on penalties but a poor performance in Euro 96 led to his departure.

After an unhappy spell in Spain with Atletico Madrid he Sarchi's previous spell in vowed to give up coaching and charge of Parma was in the has spent the intervening time

But the lure of returning to

"The talks have been very

couple of days the matter will

his first footballing love proved He led the side formed in too much.

Uncertain in exile



main in the dark over their inter-

national futures. reports AFP. Manchester United pair Ole Johnsen as well as Steffen legisen of Tottenham and Rangers' Tore Andre Flo are likely to find out later this week if their suspensions have been lifted.

The Norwegian tootball association (NFF) have imposed the

Petit not pleased at all

BARCELONA, Spain, Jan 10: Frustrated French midfielder Emmanuel Petit, left out of the Barcelona first team, joked it wasn't worth shooting club officials in an effort to get his place, reports AFP.

Petit and keeper Richard Dutruel, also of France, told Spanish media on Tuesday they were unhappy after being dumped from coach Lorenzo Serra Ferrer's plans.

Sunday's 3-2 victory at Real Oviedo, said: "I train hard and give my best on the pitch but I feel frustrated. Then again. what can I do? Get a gun and shoot everybody?" Petit said he did not under-

stand why he was being fielded at left back, a position he played in during his Monaco days before Arsenal's Arsene Wenger decided midfield was better for him.

nal. Petit, a reigning world and rectly. We have faith in the European champion for France president. as a midfielder, added: "It's sometimes difficult to under- and have the documentation can whatever the position."

is a lack of communication Norway." between the coach and the rest thought I would be given the player or the country. chance to regain my place.

him.

LONDON, Jan 10: bans on the quartet for failing Norway's British- to sign a new sponsorship con- constructive, and perhaps in a

brokered a deal. Gunnar Solskjaer and Ronny NFF president Per Ravn Omdal could have been avoided. refused to sign the agreement.

have been resolved late on



TORE ANDRE FLO

news conference at a hotel adto Norway for top-level talks. play for Norway. and general secretary Karen Espelund took the chair. Morgan Andersen, secretary

of the Norwegian Professional Footballers' Association, is quietly confident Omdal will get the backing he needs. "We had already shaken hands on the deal when the

president told us he wanted to obtain the permission of the board," said Andersen. "I mitend to call him in the Since then, his success as a morning and hopefully all our midfielder has been phenome- questions will be answered cor-

> "We've had good negotiations not immediately revealed. the players ruled out by the FA

The root of the problem lies of the team, said: "I was out of over commercial rights and the side with an injury but I whether they belong to the

"I thought he (Serra Ferrer) hopefully clarified some misuncould have explained his point derstandings with the players of view to me but then it's up to and are optimistic we can reach an agreement.

The situation seemed to be resolved. Blackburn defender Henning Monday when the players union Berg, the players' spokesman. believes the public debate and But at the 11th hour the the public outers over the bans "This problem could have saving he must first talk to his been handled better." he said. "The players have been put

Omdal was due to host a under enormous pressure.



Monaco rope

champions Monaco have signed Romanian striker Florin Raducioiu on a six-month contract with an option for an extension at the end of the season. the club said Wednesday, reports

charest for the 30-year-old, who holds an Italian passport, was

stand but I try to do as well as I that solves all the problems. All AC Milan in 1994 and also played with Serie A side Brescia Dutruel, who believes there will come back and play for for a total of 80 Italian league matches, scoring 35 goals.

capped 42 times for the na-



in Raducioiu MONACO, Jan 10: French

The fee paid to Dynamo Bu-

He won the Italian title with He also had stints with

Espanyol (Spain), West Ham (England) and Stuttgart (Germany) and rejoined Dynamo Espelund said: "We have last June where he started his career in 1986. Raducioin has also been

tional squad.

BRASILIA. Jan The 1996 and 1997 FIFA (CPI) which is investigating 10: Striker Ron- world player of the year had irregularities in Brazilian footaldo told Brazil's had convulsions hours before ball, said: "After medical tests parliament on their 3-0 defeat against France were clear and I felt well. I in-Wednesday he in- of the Stade de France just to sisted on playing the final. sisted on playing the north of Paris on July 12. Ronaldo, speaking on the ing tax evasion by players, the cause he felt well and medical first day of his testimony before. Nike contract, and the sale of tests were normal, reports AFP the parliamentary commission voungster to foreign clubs, allegedly with false passports.