Three rookies in German squad

REUTERS, Stuttgart

Germany head coach Rudi Voeller has named three uncapped players in a squad to face France in a friendly soccer international on February 27.

Goalkeeper Frank Rost and defender Torsten Frings, both with Werder Bremen, and

Kaiserslautern striker Miroslav Klose are the three newcomers in a 20-strong squad named by Voeller on Tuesday for next Tuesday's game at Stade de France.

Injury has deprived Voeller of several players, among them Hertha Berlin midfielders Stefan Beinlich and Sebastian Deisler and Baver Leverkusen defender Jens Nowotny.

SQUAD

Goalkeepers: Oliver Kahn (Bayern Munich). Frank Rost (Werder Bremen)

Torsten Frings (both Werder Bremen), Joerg Heinrich, Christian Woerns (both Borussia Dortmund). Thomas Linke (Bayern Munich), Marko Rehmer (Hertha Berlin), Christian Ziege (Liver

pool) Midfielders: Michael Ballack, Carsten Ramelow (both Bayer Leverkusen), Marco Bode (Werder Bremen), Dietmar Hamann (Liverpool), Jens Jeremies, Mehmet Scholl (both Bayern Munich),

Dariusz Wosz (Hertha Berlin) Forwards: Oliver Bierhoff (AC Milan), Carsten Jancker (Bayern Munich), Miroslav Klose (Kaiserslautern), Oliver Neuville (Bayer Leverkusen)

Sheringham offered new contract

REUTERS, Manchester

Veteran striker Teddy Sheringham will be offered a new contract with Manchester United, manager Alex Ferguson said on Monday.

Sheringham's current one-year | and calm," Bettega said. deal runs out in the summer but the 34-year-old has yet to open talks with the club, a fact wich prompted media reports on Sunday that he could move to Middlesbrough.

"It's always been on the cards for us to talk to Teddy," said

ago, we will be offering him a new contract. I am keen for him to stay."

Sheringham will lead the United attack in their home champions League match against Valencia on Tuesday night.

Ferguson is tipping midfielder David Beckham to make a big impression against the Spaniards. Beckham was taken off in the 0-0 draw in Valencia last week due

partly to the Spanish side's tactics. "I think most teams have been playing that way against David. We have the possibility to change one or two little things in our play, but if David gets his top form on he can handle it," said Ferguson.

A win for United would put them into the quarter-final stage with two games to go, but despite their form Ferguson is still tipping holders Real Madrid to lift the trophy.

"Last year we saw the emergence of Spanish sides again and they have three teams in with a chance of reaching the quarterfinal," Ferguson said.

"But I still think Real Madrid are the favourites."

Bologna to commemorate Galli

AFP, Bologna

Italian First Division side Bologna will commemorate their teenage defender Niccolo Galli, killed ear- McClaren after Ferguson retires as lier this month in a road accident, by naming their Casteldebole training base after him, the club decided at a board meeting Mon-

Seventeen-year-old Galli, the son of former Italian national team goalkeeper Giovanni, was killed when he lost control of his moped when returning home from a training session at Casteldebole.

The club will also hold a triangular tournament with Fiorentina and English club Arsenal for whose youth teams Galli had previously played.

Wynalda staying with Revolution

Eric Wynalda, the all-time scoring huge lift after Sir Alex goes, and we leader for the United States na- would need something like that. tional team, agreed to terms to remain with Major League Soc- the stand, he was also hugely cer's New England Revolution popular among the players. here Monday.



Defenders: Frank Baumann, Rudi Voeller (L), coach of the German national soccer squad, thanks trainees of German car manufacturer Mercedes Benz who gave him a model of a Mercedes Formula One car during his visit to the Mercedes headquarters in Stuttgart yesterday. Voeller announced the German squad during the visit.

Return of the Del Piero?

Football

REUTERS, Turin

Juventus vice-president Roberto to me." Bettega said. Bettega has praised beleaguered striker Alessandro Del Piero for a stunning solo goal wich gave the club a 1-0 Italian league win at Bari on Sunday.

Del Piero's performances have been heavily criticised this season. with several commentators suggesting the player might have lost the ability which made him Italy's most popular player.

His goal as a substitute on Sunday came just days after the death of his father and drew praise from many quarters, including former Juventus and Italy striker "It was the kind of goal I have

always dreamed of scoring. A perfect cocktail of flair, skill, strength "In such a tragic week for Alex, his performance tells more about

the man than it does about the player. This I think was appreciated by everybody, not just by the Juventus fans. Bettega also offered a reminder

of Del Piero's role in Juve's successes in the 1990s after he was "We said many, many weeks | signed as a teenager from Padova.

with Juventus and has been fun- player's reaction to his difficulties. damental in writing important pages of the club's history. As well well, like me, as either coach or

as this he symbolises every child's team mate did not need such a who goes on to become a champion. It was the same as happened said.

Piero is a product of Juventus. I Sunday has served as a reminder don't want to take credit away to those who do not know him from Padova but we included him well. in our youth team from a very



ALESSANDRO DEL PIERO

tender age and he has remained with us ever since, becoming Marcello Lippi, Del Piero's

former coach at Juventus, said he "Alex is in his eighth season was not at all surprised by the "Those who know Del Piero

dream -- a home-grown player goal to confirm to us that he has rediscovered his full ability," Lippi "He needed time to rediscover

"I think it's safe to say that Del his old level and what he did on There is already plenty of pres-

sure on current Juventus boss Carlo Ancelotti to include Del Piero from the start against AC Milan on Sunday night. But, true to form, Ancelotti says he will not be pressurised or

rushed into a decision, especially with French striker David Trezeguet also close to a return to fitness. "It depends how he trains during this week," Ancelotti said.

"With us out of the Champions League my policy has been to choose the strikers who are in best condition and form at a given moment. "But to score a goal like that one on Sunday it is not enough to

be someone with skill, you need to be in good physical condition as "However there are also others and maybe we will have Trezeguet back. I will think a little and I ask

Juventus are second in Serie A, six points behind leaders AS

for patience to make my choice.

Edmundo faces fine for tantrum

AFP, Naples

Napoli's Brazilian striker Edmundo will be fined for his touchline outburst at coach Emiliano Mondonico after being substituted during his side's 1-0 victory over Inter Milan on Sunday, the club's sporting director Luigi

Pavarese announced Monday. the sharp end of his tongue when he was replaced by midfielder Oscar Magoni in what was clearly a tactical move to compensate for the sending-off of Brazilian midfielder Da Silva Matuzalem, who was given a second yellow card for over-celebrating his goal.

Napoli have asked the arbitration committee to let it fine Edmundo," said Pavarese. "The club expects respect from its employees.

The player and coach were not available for comment as they are observing a ban on speaking to the press imposed by the club after last week's 3-0 defeat by Juventus.

On January 9, Edmundo, dubbed 'The Animal' for his offthe-wall antics, was signed on loan by Napoli with a view to a permanent deal from Rio de Janeiro outfit Vasco da Gama who held his registration although he had most recently played for Santos.

It is the first breach of discipline at the Naples club by Edmundo who deserted Serie A rivals Fiorentina at a crucial stage of the 1998-9 Italian season to play the drums in a marching band at the Rio carnival.

Ronaldinho starts legal proceedings against own club

AFP, Rio de Janeiro

Brazilian striker Ronaldinho Gaucho has started legal proceedings againsts his own club Gremio for irregularities in his contract, the player's lawyer Sergio Neves told the press on Mon-

Neves is arguing that Ronaldinho's contract has irregularities and discrepancies in reference to the player's wages.

Meanwhile Gremio of Porto Alegre last week won a court order to force French club Paris Saint Germain, with whom Ronaldinho says he has a pre-contract, to deal with them first and not the player directly.

Jayme Machado, a Gremio official, said: "Gremio holds Ronaldinho Gaucho's contract. PSG must deal with the club before any contract negotiations take place."

Gremio have also said Ronaldinho will be going nowhere before the buy-out fee of 42 million dollars is paid.

An off-duty barman said on Mon-

day he saw Leeds United delender

Football

REUTERS. Hull

unconscious.

Champions League

Who can stop Real?

Football

AFP, Paris

Real Madrid, voted team of the Edmundo let Mondonico feel | century by world football's governing body FIFA last year, can yet again enhance their reputation with a win at Lazio in the European Champions League on Wednesday

> Victory at the Italian champions would, pending other results on the night, put Madrid into the quarter-finals from group D and on course for a possible ninth title.

A win for English side Leeds at Belgians Anderlecht would also virtually assure their last eight berth from group D with two second round matches to go.

In group C, leaders Bayern Munich make the trip to Spartak Moscow and second-placed Arsenal host Lyon in Wednesday's other games.

Real coach Vicente Del Bosque said he wants to see Madrid qualify quickly and believes a point at Lazio would be enough to eventually see them through.

Fernando Morientes returns from injury and is expected to go straight into the side.

Del Bosque also finds himself with a selection poser in defence because of the injury to Ivan Campo and Cameroon's Geremi being called up by his country. He might have to resort to one of the many youngsters coming through Real's ranks.

Lazio coach Dino Zoff has a host of selection problems ahead

of the match however. Key Argentinian midfielder Juan Sebastian Veron and captain

and defender Alessandro Nesta are ruled out of the match because of suspension.

Zoff will also have to do without Czech winger Karel Poborsky and midfielder Dino Baggio, both

He is also awaiting news on the condition of Argentinian striker 1-0. Hernan Crespo whose stomach pains - probably due to food poisoning - prevented him from fac-

ing Perugia at the weekend. Another Czech player, Pavel Nedved, is on the mend but still a doubt for Wednesday's match where even victory will leave the Roman side with an uphill climb to qualify after three defeats in their three second-phase games so

"There is little chance of us progressing in the competition and Wednesday is a very difficult game. We are not running up the able to count on its first team white flag but this is the reality," midfielder Dmitry Parfyonov, who was Zoff's candid opinion.

"Real Madrid are a very good team but we must go out and play as we usually do and not worry about that."

Leeds midfielder Eirik Bakke who has recently been struggling with a thigh injury, is certain to play at Anderlecht as Leeds will be without Lee Bowyer, not only suspended but also unable to travel due to his ongoing trial for assault.

While Bakke, who played the last 20 minutes of last Tuesday's first fixture between the sides, realises the task facing Leeds is a

"If we beat them away we're quite safe for the quarter-finals. but it won't be easy as they haven't lost at home for more than two years," said Bakke. "It'll be an enormous challenge."

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE FIXTURES

AFP, Paris

European Champions League fixtures and tables for Wednesday's matches: GROUPC

Arsenal (Eng) v Lvon (Fra) Spartak Moscow (Rus) v Bayern Munich (Ger) Bayern Munich Arsenal Spartak Moscow **GROUP D** Anderlecht (Bel) v Leeds (Eng)

Lazio (Ifa) v Real Madrid (Spa) Real Madrid Leeds Anderlecht Lazio

Russia's reigning champions

Spartak Moscow must face Bayern Munich weakened by the absence of key defender Yury Kovtun.

Kovtun will miss this return match with Bayern after being booked in last week's match between the sides which Spariak lost

After the match, the Russian champions, who are still suffering from a lack of match practice. returned to their base in Tarasovka, near Moscow to prepare for the game.

Spartak, who are currently bottom of group C. must win to keep alive their chances of making the quarter-finals.

Spartak's striker Alexander Shirko, who has still failed to overcome his hip injury, will also likely miss the Bayern showdown.

But Moscow Spartak may be had to miss last week's match with the German giants because of a third booking.

84,000-seater Moscow's Luzhniki stadium is expecting a 70,000 crowd.

Arsenal's FA Cup hero Sylvain Wiltord could find himself back on the substitutes' bench for their match with Lyon.

Wiltord, the former Bordeaux striker whose last-gasp equaliser set up France's final triumph over Italy in last summer's Euro 2000 Championships, scored twice in the last 16 minutes after coming on as a substitute to remove holders Chelsea from the FA Cup at Highbury on Sunday.

The double against Chelsea brought Wiltord's tally to eight goals this season - five of them in the FA Cup, including two in the previous round's 6-0 demolition of QPR and the winner at Carlisle in round three.

Wiltord said: "The manager has explained that you need all your players in the English championship and I have to accept that. In Lyon last week I was naturally very disappointed I didn't get a chance because all my family were there to watch me, but it is not true I regret coming to Arsenal.

"The crowd are behind me here and I have been made very welcome. It is difficult sometimes for individual players when the manager rotates the team from match to match but when I do get my chance I am glad that I can bring something to the team."

Meanwhile Lyon playmaker Vi-Pts kash Dhorasoo, who continually 9 posed a danger to Assertal in the side's first match last week before going off with a grain injury, is still

Cantona-mania sweeps MU

Football

AFP, London

Frenchman Eric Cantona's return to Manchester United when Sir players," he said. Alex Ferguson leaves as manager would be the perfect boost for the Beckham. Giggs, Scholes, Butt and club, according to Reds fans.

the Independent Manchester United Supporters Association, generation of lads coming through would love to see the United idol at the club.' back at Old Trafford.

player in history in a poll for the club's greatest player of all time. club's official magazine - would as a coach, and it is believed he brate their 100th issue. has turned down a lucrative offer to manager Greek club Olympiakos because he would prefer to work for United.

It would appear unlikely he is at the top of the United wish-list to take control, though, with the likes of Steve McClaren, Martin O'Neill and other big names in the running for the top job.

However, Longden feels that Cantona would be ideal working as assistant to someone like manager next year.

"Eric is a folk hero, and it would be great if it happened," Longden told the Press Associa-"Eric has only got one spiritual

home, and that's Old Trafford - so if he did come back into football then it should be at Old Trafford. "I'm not so sure I would like to see Eric come straight back as manager but I would love to see

work under someone like Steve McClaren. "Looking at it realistically, who could take over from Sir Alex and fill the breach?

him come as coach and maybe

"Whoever it is has got to be a massive, massive character - and so something unrealistic could

"Just to have the man walk back into the place would be a Not only was Cantona a hero in

Even Ferguson admitted he

Longden feels he would be great medals. on the training ground. "He was a model professional and an example to all the other

"The current crop of players the Nevilles - all chose Eric as their Mark Longden, chairman of role model, and it would be great if

A poll conducted by Manches-Cantona - who has been voted ter United's official club magazine the greatest Manchester United on Monday voted Cantona the

The survey asked fans to vote reportedly like to return to United for their all-time greats to cele-



ERIC CANTONA

Less than four years after his

for," said Law. "When he arrived everything Group D now comprises Ivory

departure from Old Trafford, the man Ferguson described as the "catalyst for the championships" topped the poll listing the club's 100 greatest players. Former United legend Denis

Law paid tribute to Cantona who was instrumental in bringing United the Premiership crown in 1993 - their first league title in 26 "He was the missing piece of the jigsaw that Alex was searching

seemed to slot into place and he was the one that started the success that continues today." Cantona left in 1997, taking

Frenchman sparked the revolution that has turned United into one of the world's most successful teams. Cantona, a former French in-

ternational, possessed a complete

Few can argue that the

array of ball skills, a marvellous touch and the ability to finish as he could also influence the next clinically from 25 yards as from Cantona, who now earns a living playing beach football, was voted the greatest ahead of other

learnt from the Frenchman, and with him three more Premiership

came second, Bobby Charlton and Winger Ryan Giggs was third, former goalkeeper Peter Schmeichel was fifth and David Beckham was eighth.

United legends George Best, who

Congo pull out of WC 2002 qualifiers

AFP, Abidjan

The World Cup qualifying match between Congo and Ivory Coast on Sunday has been cancelled, confirming Congo's withdrawal from the competition because of financial problems, the Ivorian football federation announced on Monday.

FIFA confirmed this weekend that Congo would play no further part in the competition despite a last-minute attempt by Congo football association president Sylvestre Mbongo to reverse the decision to withdraw. Mbongo appealed in vain after realising that countries who with-

draw from the World Cup are

barred from receiving an annual 250,000-dollar grant from the world football governing body. Congo were bottom of Group D, after losing 2-0 in Democratic Republic of Congo and 2-1 at home to Tunisia.

Following Congo's withdrawal. Coast, Madagascar, the Demo cratic Republic of Congo and Tu nisia, with only the group winners qualifying for the finals.

Jonathan Woodgate kick and jump on an Asian vouth after the player's friends had battered in there at all?" de Silva said. The witness told a court trying three Leeds footballers for serious The witness agreed he had assault that he saw midfielder Lee been wrong. Bowyer join in the attack and bite But he said the attack itself left

was leaving work when he saw a against the dustbin. gang of men chase a group of After they saw their friend

as he lay on the ground. and jump with both his legs in the ued to kick and beat him, he said. air on to the Asian lad . . ., he body jolt," he told the court.

down onto him . . . he was maybe hard. biting him," he said. Some days after the attack in Leeds, northern England, last year. Villa Park will the witness heard on television that two Leeds United players had been arrested in connection with

an attack on an Asian student.

of Jonathan Woodgate and Lee Bowyer in the newspaper. "They were the men I saw . . . that night, as soon as I saw the pictures I realised one of them was Jonathan Woodgate and one of

The witness saw photographs

He then told police the man who jumped on the victim was Woodgate and that the man who looked like he bit him was Bowyer. Defence lawyers picked over the witness's statements and said he had made a mistake.

them was Lee Bowyer," he said.

two players in video footage, but when he pointed out to police in an identity parade the man he thought was Bowyer, he actually chose another defendant, Paul Clifford, defence lawyers said. Prosecutors last week said bite

marks in the face of the victim.

cast of Clifford, a friend of Wood-

gate who is also on trial.

The witness had identified the

Bowyer's lawyer Desmond de Silva said the witness had seen the came running round the corner. pictures in the newspaper and they began to attack this lad on the "put two and two together" and that his account was not accurate.

"You now see the dangers of misidentification . . . now tell me, what did you see Lee Bowyer do? Bowyer. Am I right that you can't recall what he was doing - if he was

a clear imprint on his memory. the victim, but under cross-The witness said he saw a gang examination he said he had been wrong and that the man was not of men chase the Asians and that the two groups started fighting. The barman, who cannot be before the gang rounded on one of named for legal reasons, said he the Asians and slammed him

Asians, slam one of them against a struck to the floor, the witness said dustbin, then kick and punch him the others seemed to back off. Their friend lay motionless on "I saw one of them step back the ground while the gang contin-

"He may have been unconlanded on (his) body - I saw his scious . . . it seemed just like a body lying here. There were no "Another bent down toward his cries . . . they (the gang) were facial area and forced his head kicking and punching him fairly

be ready'

Aston Villa have denied suggestions that Villa Park will resemble a "building site" for England's friendly international with Spain on February 28. Work on the club's new 15 mil-

hind schedule since the original building contractors went in liquidation last November. Sunday's News of the World tabloid said many parts of the stand were not ready and de-

scribed the stadium as a "building

lion-pound (Dollars21.70 million)

Trinity Road stand has been be-

But Villa chairman Doug Ellis said on Monday that "all public and VIP areas" would be in use for the game. To suggest the ground will re-

semble a building site is complete nonsense," said Ellis. "The board of directors wish to Sarfraz Najeib, matched the teeth reassure supporters with tickets for the game that facilities will not

be restricted.

"Then two other white lads justice. They deny the charges. ground - kicking and punching him," he said.

later recognised as Woodgate and Woodgate, Bowver, reserve

their friends face jail if they are found guilty of grievous bodily harm with intent and affray. All deny the charges.

Barman saw Woodgate kick Asian

A window cleaner who told the court last week that he saw Woodgate kick out at an Asian youth and then join in the attack, said he did He said these were the two he not originally tell police all that he saw because he feared for his fam-

Andrew Clarke said on Monday player Tony Hackworth and two of he did not want to get involved in the trial because he feared his children would suffer if he testified in court.

"I didn't want my family in-Leeds player Michael Duberry, timidated. It has caused a lot of Woodgate and the two other de- trouble for my family . . . I've got fendants are also charged with three young children to protect." conspiracy to pervert the course of he said.

Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority

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