



PHOTO: AFP

A CHANCE FOR REVENGE: Brazil coach Emerson Leao (C) addresses his team during a practice session at Seoul on June 6.

## Brazil eye '98 reverse



different teams from the match that saw Brazil overthrown as world champions. No Zinedine Zidane, no Ronaldo. Brazil lost top place in the FIFA world rankings to France last month, they are struggling in the South American qualifying competition for next year's World Cup and the national federation is embroiled in financial scandal.

match against Brazil as favourites but that could be a trap for us and we must not fall into it," said the Arsenal midfielder. "It isn't revenge, it is just another game of football." Neither Lemerre nor his Brazilian counterpart Emerson Leao has had an easy time at the eighth nation tournament, featuring the top nation from each continent plus the two hosts of next year's World Cup final.

every match. "We are improving as we go on and growing in confidence," said Leao as his players started training in Seoul after arriving from Japan. France meanwhile scored big wins over South Korea (5-0) and defending champions Mexico (4-0) in Group A. But Lemerre's experiments rebounded when his team suffered a shock 1-0 defeat to a dogged Australian side.

**AFP, Suwon**

A rehearsal for next year's World Cup has turned into a replay of the 1998 final and Brazil will be seeking revenge for their defeat by France. The winner of Thursday's Confederations Cup semi-final in the Suwon World Cup stadium will play Japan or Australia in the final on Sunday. But memories of France's 3-0 win in the Stade de France have added an extra dimension. Vampeta, the Brazilian captain at this tournament, made no doubt of his team's aim. "Of course this is revenge." He also admitted though that France start as favourites as Brazil tries to shrug off a confidence crisis on the pitch and a scandal off it. "Brazil are still respected around the world but France is a more complete team," said the centre half who plays for French club Paris St Germain. "Brazil came to the Confederations Cup to build confidence. To beat France would be good for us to gain the confidence we need," he added. This will be a clash between two

## France v Brazil history

Results of past matches between France and Brazil who play in the semi-final of the Confederations Cup here Thursday (1100 GMT):

Date	Venue	Score
01/08/30	Rio de Janeiro	Brazil 3 France 2
24/06/58	Solna, Sweden	Brazil 5 France 2 (World Cup semi-final)
28/04/63	Paris	France 2 Brazil 3
30/06/77	Rio de Janeiro	Brazil 2 France 2
01/04/78	Paris	France 1 Brazil 0
15/05/81	Paris	France 1 Brazil 3
21/06/86	Guadalajara	France 1 Brazil 1 (France win 4-3 on pen in Mexico/World Cup quarter-final)
26/08/92	Paris	France 0 Brazil 2
03/06/97	Lyon, France	France 1 Brazil 1
12/07/98	Paris	France 3 Brazil 0 (World Cup final)

French coach Roger Lemerre and his players are trying to avoid the "revenge" tag given to the game. "We should never talk of revenge," said Lemerre. "When the match is finished it is over. That match was three years ago and this is not the World Cup. We are here to prepare for the World Cup." Patrick Vieira, one of the stars of the World Cup victory, said France must be wary of its new status. "For the first time, France starts a

## Rivaldo to seek Spanish naturalisation

**AFP, Barcelona**  
Barcelona's Brazilian international Rivaldo is considering applying for double nationality in Spain, Catalan daily Sport said Tuesday.

The move would suit both the club, who may only field three non-European Union players next season, and the player who may wish to settle in the region with his wife and two children. Barcelona have reportedly agreed pre-contract terms with six top international players as they rebuild for next season after a disappointing 2000-2001 campaign. The players in question are Argentinian stars Juan Roman Riquelme of Boca Juniors, Javier Saviola of River Plate, Italian goalkeeper Francesco Toldo of Fiorentina, French defender Philippe Christianval of Monaco and promising Brazilians Geovanni Deiberson of Cruzeiro and Fabio Rochembach of Internacional.

**AFP, Milan**  
Inter Milan's home game with Bologna on June 17 will be played at Bari's San Nicola Stadium as punishment for a bizarre incident of crowd violence, league disciplinary chiefs decided Wednesday.

## Eriksson's toughest test yet



**AFP, Athens**

Sven-Goran Eriksson said Tuesday he will face his stiffest challenge since accepting the England coach's job six months ago when he leads his team to a crucial 2002 World Cup qualifier against Greece on Wednesday. After four straight victories, two of which were in the Group Nine qualifiers, Eriksson told a press conference that Greece should not be taken lightly. "It is not easy to beat Greece at home. You really have to work hard to win," Eriksson said. "If you listen to people back home (England) you can feel that the game is easy, but it is absolutely not." Greece go into the match after a 1-0 home win against Albania at the weekend and Vasilis Danielis' side remains in contention for the second place in the group which would assure survival in the competition through the playoffs. Greece currently sit third, above Albania and Finland, and just one point behind second-place England. England need a win to keep the pressure on leaders Germany, who play at Albania Wednesday. The Germans have played one more match than England and are six points ahead. Greece has never beaten England and Eriksson admitted that Danielis' side would be extra motivated after the Albania win. "It is most important for us to win against Greece. After beating Albania they know they have to beat us to be in contention," Eriksson

added. "They will have to attack. We must concentrate on this match and not think about Germany (who England play in Munich on September 1) which would be very dangerous." Eriksson will only announce the starting line-up at match time, but said there were no injury problems. There had been concern in the past few days about minor injuries to David Beckham, Paul Sholes, Steven Gerrard and David Seaman, however all players are available for selection. In a separate press conference on the other side of the capital, Greece coach Daniel said he would try to unnerve the "strong" England team by telling his players to keep their composure. "England is a very strong team and has produced good results of late," Daniel said. "Our goal is to remain calm and concentrate. The team spirit is very good. The match has a new meaning for us as we are back in the running for second place. "If we manage to play to a high standard then we can win." Daniel announced he will replace the two forwards who started against Albania, the Greek league's leading scorer Aleksis Alexandris and Nikos Liberopoulos, with Ajax star Nikos Vlachas and Perugia forward Zisis Vrizas. "We believe we have worthy players. It is very positive for a coach to have such top players in order to make changes. We have six quality forwards," Daniel said. Greek national team officials said 75,000-capacity Spiros Louis Stadium is only expected to be half-full for the match.

## 'Smart football'

**AFP, Paris**

British military scientists have invented a "smart football" that tells the player when it is inflated to the right pressure, the weekly magazine New Scientist reports in next Saturday's issue. The ball has a patch in its surface in which two films are separated by an opaque gel. The top film is transparent, while the lower one is embossed with a diamond and a cross, with the cross standing more proud than the diamond. If the ball is under-inflated, the gel spreads thickly and neither cross nor diamond is visible. When the pressure is right, the cross alone touches the top film and becomes visible. But if the ball is over-inflated, both the diamond and the cross are visible. The Defence Evaluation and Research Agency (DERA) -- the "skunk works" where British military engineers devise and test new weapons -- has filed a patent for the device. Colombia confirmed Copa America host **AFP, Asuncion** The South American Football Confederation (CSF) has ratified Colombia's right to host the South American Nations Cup in July, Colombian president Andres Pastrana said here on Tuesday. "We received unanimous backing from the CSF and all the presidents of the participating football federations; we will host the Copa America in Colombia," Pastrana said on leaving a CSF meeting in Paraguay. "Every Colombian will act as a guardian of the peace," he added. A series of bombings which have left 12 dead and more than 200 injured in Colombia since May had led to calls for the July 11-29 tournament to be relocated to Mexico.

## Hosts, Soccerroos locked in mind-game



**AFP, Yokohama**

A bout of verbal sparring over Australia's style of play has added the Frenchman said. "Their players all play in Europe and have a lot of experience. It's not a match between Oceania and Asia, it's a match between Asia and Europe. The Australians are not Kangaroo players, they are European players." Australia's development as a serious force in world football has coincided with the growing success of their players at club level. While Farina can pick from some 130 overseas-based players, only two members of the Japanese squad are currently playing in Europe.

Farina will be without winger Brett Emerton, who has returned to Australia for a family wedding, and forward Clayton Zane, who is suspended after being sent off in the defeat by South Korea. David Zdrilic will replace Zane and Josip Skoko will come in for Emerton. Farina also indicated that Birmingham City's Stan Lazardis, who was suspended for the South Korea match, would be recalled. Troussier, who successfully employed a solitary forward in 0-0 draw with Brazil in Japan's final group match, promised to name an

need to win -- a draw is not enough." "Victory and a place in the final on Sunday against Brazil or France would be a major feather in the cap for both countries. But Farina admitted that he would gladly swap a victory here for a place in next year's World Cup final. Australia are due to play their final Oceania zone qualifier later this month, probably against New Zealand. If they come through that, the Australians go into an end-of-year play-off with the team that finish fifth in the South American

WAR OF WORDS: Australia's coach Frank Farina (R) and his Japan counterpart Philippe Troussier speaking during respective team press conferences at Yokohama on June 6.

an extra touch of spice to their Confederations Cup semi-final with Japan here on Thursday.

Japan's coach Philippe Troussier has been psyching up his players all week to be prepared for a tough battle in the stadium which will host next year's World Cup final. The Frenchman's emphasis on Australia's physical qualities has clearly irked his counterpart Frank Farina, who responded Wednesday by accusing the Japanese players of being prone to feigning injury. "In the games here and prior to the tournament Australia has shown we can play football and an attractive brand of football," Farina said. "If the perception is that we play a physical brand of football, it does not bother me." Clearly concerned that Troussier's comments could influence the way the match is handled, Farina added: "My concern is that Japan's players go down very quickly and roll around a lot. "I do think the referee should be looking at that as well." Troussier declined to be drawn into a slanging match with the Australian. "He's a good strategist and a very intelligent coach and he knows that at this stage of the tournament, the preparation is more psychological than anything. "I don't want to be trapped." Instead, Troussier admitted he was jealous of the depth of Australian experience in Britain and Europe. "We know Australia is a very athletic team but they can also keep the ball and play very intelligently,"

attack-orientated line-up, which means exciting young midfielder Shinji Ono, who was pulled off at half-time against Brazil, is likely to start. "Both sides will make a number of changes to the teams that played in their final group matches.

Australian player Stan Lazardis (R) and assistant coach Gram Arnold jogging with the team during a warm-up session at Yokohama on June 6.

competition. "For us it is another game of football," Farina said. "As much as this tournament is important to us, Australia has not qualified for the World Cup for 28 years. That is the major priority."

## Valencia go for low profile coach

**AFP, Valencia**

Valencia look set to name the virtually unknown Rafael Benitez as the coach to succeed outgoing Argentine Hector Cuper, sources close to the beaten Champions league finalists told AFP on Tuesday. Benitez is close to taking Spanish second division Tenerife back to the first division this season and has managed another second division outfit Estartimadura. The 41-year-old will earn 1.3 million dollars over two years at Valencia, according to the same source. Valencia general secretary Javier Subirats justified the choice with solid arguments on Tuesday. "We wanted a Spaniard who knows the market well, we were looking for a man with a will to win titles and Benitez fits the bill," he told Spanish radio station Onda Cero. "Besides, big names aren't always the best option, (Jorge) Valdano didn't do that well here," added Subirats. France's 1998 World Cup winning captain and Valencia defender Didier Deschamps also defended the decision. "So what if he's known to division one, Vicente Del Bosque (Real Madrid) and Marcello Lippi were two when they started careers at big clubs," he said. Hector Cuper has been named as coach of Italian side Inter Milan for next season, also a two-year deal.

## Suzuki confident of more



**AFP, Yokohama**

Takayuki Suzuki, who has bolted out of nowhere to lead Japan's surprise assault on the football Confederations Cup, is aiming to score his way into history. The Kashima Antlers forward, who joined Japan's squad only three days before the start of their Group B campaign, scored both goals in the 2-0 weekend win over Cameroon -- his first full international appearance. "It has made me a bit confident. Everybody cheered me up," said Suzuki, his hair dyed blond, as he celebrated his 25th birthday on Tuesday while gearing up for Japan's semi-final clash with Australia here on Thursday. "But I've played well in just one match. I still cannot feel what it is like to be an international. I will try to be called up every time." Suzuki, who was sidelined from Japan's first group match against

Canada, was part of a two-pronged attack against a second-string Brazil on Monday but pulled out at half-time with back pain. Japan secured a scoreless draw to reach the semi-finals after having previously lost every one of their five encounters against the four-time world champions. Japan's coach Philippe Troussier may count on Suzuki's strength and fighting spirit again in the semi-finals and for a possible title showdown against either Brazil or reigning world champions France. Suzuki's second goal against Cameroon was Japan's 696th in full internationals and he may well become responsible for the historic 700th. The left-footer, standing 182cm (6ft1) tall, said he had no problem with his back but admitted: "I am not in good condition after this series of matches. "But, as we have come through at the top of our group, our team is in a happy mood." Known as the "migrant bird of the J-League" for an itinerant career marked with transfers and bench-warming roles, Suzuki has come a long way to reach a Japanese frontline woefully short of firepower. Born to the family of a football instructor in rural Ibaraki prefecture, home to J-League powerhouse

Kashima Antlers, he started playing when he was nine years old and joined Kashima Antlers in 1995. He moved to third-division Brazilian side CFZ in 1997, playing for six months and helping the club win promotion to the second division. Suzuki signed up with J-League JEF United Ichihara in the second half of 1998 and played again with CFZ in 1999. Last year, he was transferred to J-League second-division club Kawasaki Frontale but returned to Kashima in August, contributing to their league and cup triumphs and playing his way into international contention. Troussier, who became national coach after Japan's winless World Cup finals debut in 1998, granted Suzuki his first cap as a substitute in Japan's 1-0 friendly loss to Spain in April. He played only one minute in injury time. Troussier recruited Suzuki for the Confed Cup, a dress rehearsal for next year's World Cup in Japan and South Korea, after a regular defender was injured. The flamboyant Frenchman said it was "a little bit of a risk" to use him in the match against Cameroon, the African champions. "But his mind and body were ready. He has great potential."