Brazil can't afford to slip



REUTERS, Rio de Janeiro

Brazil's battle to retain its proud record of having played in every World Cup finals heads into its final stage when it hosts Chile in a South American qualifier Sunday.

A tense atmosphere hung over the Brazilian training camp in Curitiba ahead of the match which could make or break its campaign to reach the 2002 World Cup finals in Japan and South Korea.

With three matches left to play, the four-time world champion is clinging to the fourth and final automatic qualifying berth, level on points with fifth-placed Uruguay but with a significantly better goal difference.

The team that finishes fifth will face the top team in the Oceania preliminary competition, Australia, in a playoff.

Up until now, Brazil coach Luis Felipe Scolari has already tried out 19 players for his first team line up. He called up 22 for the qualifier against Chile on Sunday at the Couto Pereira stadium in Curitiba. Of these 22, only keeper Dida (Milan), full back Emerson Carvalho (Sao Paulo) and right winger Junior (Parma) have not been trained with the first team.

Doubts surround who he will play in almost every position. Three pairs of attackers have been tried and tested: Rivaldo and Edilson: Elber and Denilson; and Franca and Ronaldinho Gaucho, but none failed to satisfy 'Big Phil'.

only certainty, as he has not been Scolari has still not decided substituted so far in training. whether he will play Ronaldinho Gaucho up front or in the midfield. The player himself has said he will decided on the tactical formation he play whether he is asked to: "I have will use against Chile. And the been tried up front and in the defense is the biggest mystery of midfield. I can play in both positions. Whaterver 'Big Phil' decides is fine by me", said the striker.

Roberto Carlos is almost certain to play on the left wing: and would only be dropped through injury. But on the right wing Cafu is uncertain as to whether he will be fully fit. He aggravated a knee injury in training.

The United Arab Emirates defeated

Qatar 2-1 here on Thursday to

resurrect their chances of reaching

The victory, secured with a goal

from Yasser Salem three minutes

from the end, put the UAE into

second spot in Group B and on

course for a play-off place in the

from seven matches, one ahead of

Qatar with nine points while

Uzbekistan can still finish second as

they have seven points from six

assured of their place in the finals.

They can confirm themselves as

group winners by drawing bottom

team Oman in Shenyang on

Thursday after 43 minutes through

Faisal Khalil when he headed in a

the second half when substitute

Walid Hamza was left in space from

a Mubarak Mustafa corner and he

with just three minutes left when

Salem scored from close range after

Qatar goalkeeper Ahmed Khalil

failed to hold on to a shot from

Abdulaziz Mohamed. The UAE complete their programme with a home match against Oman on

October 19 while Qatar have to travel to China on the same day in the hope that the Emirates will slip up and that they can pull off another shock victory in China like they did in

the World Cup qualifiers four years

matches left - at Oman on October

13 and at home to China on October

Asia are guaranteed places in next

year's finals while the runners-up

play-off - the winner of that match

must face either the Republic of

Ireland or Portugal from European

The Uzbekis have two more

Only the two group winners in

The UAE grabbed the vital goal

cross from Fahad Masood.

slotted the ball home

The UAE took the lead on

Qatar hit back two minutes into

Group leaders China are virtually

The UAE now have ten points

next year's World Cup finals.

UAE stay in

the hunt

AFP, Doha

Asian zone.

According to Dr. Jose Luiz Runco, he is capable of playing on Sunday. After Thursday's training, Cafu said that he was not 100 percent sure, but he still has three days to fully

In the midfield the main doubt appears to be whether to play an offensive or a defensive line up. 'Big Phil' is still undecided and has tried been weakened by injuries and the absence of experienced midfielder Clarence Acuna, who was not released by his English club Newcastle United. But Juventus striker Marcelo

Salas will play. "Everyone knows we no longer

have any interest in the qualifiers but the match against Brazil is very

FIXTURES

October 6 At La Paz Bolivia vs Ecuador Time: 16:00 GMT At San Cristóbal Venezuela vs Peru Time: 19:30 GMT

At Montevideo Uruguay vs Colombia Time: 16:00 GMT At Asunción Paraguay vs Argentina Time: 18:15 GMT At Curitiba Brazil vs Chile Time: 16:00 GMT

important because of the quality of our rivals," Salas said.

The high point of Chile's disappointing campaign was a 3-0 victory over the Brazilians in Santiago, and the memory of this is fraying Brazilian nerves.

The Chilean team arrives in Curitiba on Friday evening. Brazil plans to train only in the afternoon at Atletico Paranaense's Training

Chile will be coached by Jorge Garcs, who is enjoying a successful season with Santiago Wanderers. He has promised his side will harry the Brazilians in the hope of unsettling their opponents.

Second-placed Paraguay will face Argentina, which is the first team in the group to have qualified for the finals.

with Edmilson, Juan (floating) and Paraguay's inspirational goalkeeper Jose Luis Chilavert will hope to lead his team to a victory that Chile, which is just one point off would mean automatic qualificathe bottom of the group and has no chance of making the finals, has

Paraguay is on 29 points -- nine points behind Argentina -- and unbeaten at home but the stress of its unexpected success is taking its toll on coach Sergio Markarian, who this week physically attacked journalists who pursued him with guestions about selection and coaching

SPÖRT

Paraguay will be without defender Pedro Sarabia and midfielders Roberto Acuna, Diego Gavilan, Francisco Esteche and Virgilio Ferreira. Winger Carlos Paredes is suspended but defender Denis Caniza will be back from

Árgentina coach Marcelo Biela has recalled Roma striker Gabriel Batistuta for the first time since October 2000, when he scored in a 2-1 victory over Uruguay.

"I never felt far away from the national team. I am very happy to be back," said Batistuta, who has struggled to get back in the team after injury problems.

Argentina will be without Parma defender Roberto Sensisni and Lazio midfielder Diego Simeone, but the other main players behind its near flawless qualifying campaign will be present -- including Manchester United midfielder Juan Veron.

Colombia and Uruguay meet in Montevideo and both must win to keep their qualification hopes alive.

Colombia's hopes have been raised by the return from injury of midfielder Freddy Grisales, who played a key part in his country's Copa America victory in July.

Colombian is on 20 points, trailing four points behind the home team, which needs a victory to keep the pressure on Brazil.

"We have to win. Whether we go to the finals or not depends on this game," said striker Dario Silva.

Two games will be played Saturday with third-placed Ecuador

facing Bolivia in La Paz. The visitor, which has 26 points, should have less difficulty than most

in adjusting to the altitude. year. Jamaica's Stephen "Shorty" In Saturday's other fixture, Peru Malcolm was killed in February. travels to Venezuela but neither

team can qualify for the finals. Mexico's back against the

wall REUTERS, Rio de Janeiro

Mexico is approaching its penultimate CONCACAF World Cup qualifier against Costa Rica on Sunday as a make or break affair in the race for a place in the 2002

Costa Rica, which tops the final qualifying group on 19 points. has already secured its passage to Japan and South Korea. Mexico and the U.S. share third place with 13 points and identical goal difference,

one point behind Honduras. The top three teams qualify and all six teams have two matches remaining

Mexico and Valladolid striker Cuauhtemoc Blanco raised the stakes this week by promising a Mexico City radio audience that he would dress as a woman if the team

loses to the group leader.

The U.S. play the fifth-placed Jamaica team at the Foxboro Stadium near Boston in the first match for the home side since the attacks on New York and Washington on September 11.

Jamaica, which has eight points, retains a mathematical chance of qualifying for a second consecutive World Cup, but it must win its last two games and hope the U.S. and Mexico lose theirs

Second-placed Honduras travels to bottom team Trinidad and Tobago, which was stunned this week by the death of its squad member Mickey Trotman in a car accident.

A night to book tickets



AFP, Paris

MICKEY TROTMAN

Trinidad booter

Football fans were in shock here

Thursdav after learning of the death

of World Cup player Mickey Trotman

Police reports said Trotman's car

slammed into a light post

Wednesday in the eastern city of

Arima, killing the footballer, his

brother Stephan and a friend, Tessa

Trotman to have departed

Trinidad and Tobago has been

Technical director Rene Simoes

"He did not obey the rules and we

Thursday along with his teammates

for his World Cup debut in a qualifier

eliminated from any hope of reach-

ing next year's finals at South Korea

said Trotman snuck from the team's

did not know that he had left camp,

Simoes said. "However I don't think

that resulted in his death. I am very

badly affected by Trotman's death

and Simoes has called upon outside

help to boost the team's moral ahead

help some of the players deal with

the loss. He was a very willing

player. We will miss him a lot,

Trotman is the second Caribbean

player to die in a car accident this

At least three players have been

"We have hired a psychologist to

saddened by his death."

killed in car

crash

AFP, Port-of-Spain

in a car accident.

Sunday at Honduras.

Moses.

and Japan.

training camp.

of the match.

Simoes said.

Russia, Denmark, Belgium, Italy, Portugal and England are most people's favourites to grab the six remaining automatic qualifying spots for the 2002 World Cup in the weekend's final fixtures.

Those who do earn their ticket for South Korea/Japan next year will join Spain, Poland and Sweden who have already qualified from the penultimate round of European zone matches.

The final games will also complete the jigsaw of the nine runnersup, who, with an Asian team, will complete in five qualifying matches, played over two legs on November 10 and 15.

England appearances since he was first called up 20 months ago to just seven caps.

In the other Group 9 game, Germany coach Rudi Voller recalled midfielder Bernd Schneider to the squad to face Finland in

Gelsenkirchen. The 27-year-old Bayer Leverkusen player, who has been out of the national side for two years, has been called up along with Borussia Dortmund's Lars Ricken to replace midfield duo Dietmar Hamann and Mehmet Scholl.

Hamann, who plays for English Premiership club Liverpool, is suspended after being booked during Germany's 5-1 hammering by England earlier this month in Munich.

Italy coach Giovanni Trappatoni will be without suspended players Alessio Tacchinardi and Guiseppe Pancaro for their Group 8 qualifier

level on 21 points, are certain of making the two top spots in Group 2 with one of Europe's top nations Holland already eliminated. The order of the leading duo is vet to be

decided however. Ireland must do without suspended Leeds defender Gary Kelly for their home match against Cyprus

Middlesbrough defender Curtis Fleming and Leeds midfielder Stephen McPhail were called were summoned to the Irish team hotel in Dublin after Millwall midfielder Steven Reid and Southampton utility man Rory Delap were ruled out by toe and hamstring injuries respectively.

The 33-year-old Fleming won the last of his 10 caps in a scoreless draw with Mexico in a friendly in

Dublin in 1998. McPhail won the last of his four caps in the 2-2 draw with Croatia at

Lansdowne Road in August. In the group's other games, Portugal host Estonia and Andorra

play Holland in Arnhem. Group 3 leaders Denmark host Iceland in Copenhagen knowing a win would earn their ticket though. should they slip up and lose the fixture, Czech Republic would sneak an automatic berth by victory

against Bulgaria in Prague. Belgium, who top Group 6, also have the chance to make certain of their Far East trip next year by taking

a point against Croatia in Zagreb. Meanwhile Austria's Group 7 World Cup qualifier in Israel on Sunday has been called off by

FIFA amid growing security fears. World football's governing body took the decision Thursday after a Russian airliner en route from Israel to Siberia exploded and then crashed into the Black

Sea killing 76 people. In a statement FIFA said: "President Joseph Blatter, mandated by the Emergency Committee, has decided that the match between Israel and Austria scheduled for Sunday, 7 October

in Tel Aviv should be postponed."

FIXTURES

European 2002 World Cup qualifying fixtures on Saturday and

SATURDAY

Group 1 Yugoslavia v Luxembourg Russia v Switzerland Slovenia v Faroe Islands Group 2 Holland v Andorra

Portugal v Estonia Republic of Ireland v Cyprus Group 3 Czech Republic v Bulgaria

Group 5

Coach Oleg Romanstev brought

Slovenia, who have a mathematical but unlikely chance of winning the group, must do without four players for their Ljubliana clash -Miran Pavlin, Amir Karic, Ales Ceh

on October 4. England's match against Greece against Hungary at Parma.

Portuguese superstar Luis Figo in training with the national squad at Lisbon

in front of their home fans at Old Trafford is a litmus test of their ability under intense pressure. England know a win will earn them direct qualification unless Germany beat Finland by a huge number of goals.

Anything less from England, without keys players David Seaman, Michael Owen, Sol Campbell and Wes Brown, would be a catastrophe given the Greeks' results this season.

Tottenham striker Teddy Sheringham, called up to replace hamstring victim Owen, will probably line-up alongside former Manchester United teammate Andy Cole as the striking duo. Steven Gerrard meanwhile gave

England coach Sven-Goran Eriksson a boost by vowing he would be fit enough to play a full part in the finals. Gerrard is adamant that he could

stand up to the rigours of a possible six weeks of non-stop international football next May and June which would include the build-up matches for Japan and South Korea.

The Liverpool midfielder has been dogged by a back-related problem which has restricted his Group leaders Italy need to win

or draw to be sure of direct qualification for the finals as Romania, two points behind but with an inferior goal difference, can overhaul them with a home win over Georgia should Italy lose. Russia have called up Etienne

striker Alexander Panov for their Group 1 match against Switzerland in Moscow in which Russia must avoid defeat to ensure direct qualifi-

Panov back into the frame although he has been out of action for nearly 12 months because of injury. Even when St Etienne were able to use him, his form was very up-and-

Yugoslavia host Luxembourg and Slovenia meet the Faroe Islands in the pool's other matches. Yugoslavia must do without Boban Dmitrovic for their match against Luxembourg at Belgrade.

and Milenko Acimovic.

Denmark v Iceland Malta v Northern Ireland

Moldova v Turkey Wales v Belarus Armenia v Norway Poland v Ukraine Group 6

Croatia v Belgium Scotland v Latvia Group 8 Italy v Hungary Romania v Georgia Group 9

Germany v Finland England v Greece SUNDAY

Group 4 Macedonia v Slovakia Sweden v Azerbaijan Group 7 Israel v Austria - postponed

Bosnia-Herzegovina v Liech-

finally paid off when Diouf blasted

past a helpless Tsuzuki into the top

left corner of the Japanese goal on

shot by Takashi Fukunishi, and

there was double joy for the Africans

when Lausanne's Pape Thiaw

secured victory three minutes into

put his side's poor start to their two-

match tour to Europe down to the

tion of the level of play today," said

the Frenchman, following his side's

first loss since their 1-0 defeat to

France in the Confederations Cup

who has worked wonders with the

Africans in his year as coach, had

reason to smile as he left the pitch.

good for confidence building."

estimated the Africans.

Senegal coach Bruno Metsu.

"We lifted the level. This match is

Senegal striker Khalilou Fadiga,

'They didn't respect us before

who plays for French outfit Auxerre

believes that the Japanese under-

the match. We showed them that

Japan coach Philippe Troussier

"The 2-0 result was a true reflec-

Japan missed their best chance of the night in stoppage time from a

Senegal too good for Japan



The Senegalese Lions continued their winning form here Thursday overhauling Japan 2-0 in an international friendly warm-up match before the 2002 World Cup Finals. The west African nation, who

have clinched their first World Cup appearance after decades of failure, gave the 3,000 fans at the Bollaert stadium in north eastern France something to cheer about with the opening goal of the night coming off the boot of Lens striker El Hadji Diouf.

Diouf, whose eight goals in the qualifiers were a huge part of Senegal's entry to the finals, once again proved crucial with his impressive striking prowess. Japan goalkeeper Ryota Tsuzuki

did good work to keep out a shot off a corner from Diouf on 10 minutes and two minutes later was saved again when a El Hadji Papa Sarr strike hit the bar. Henry Camara again failed to get

13 12 11 past Tsuzuki following an opening offered by Khalilou Fadiga in the 20th minute.

After the interval Camara, taking advantage of a poor clearance,

Ryuzo Morioka did well to keep the ball from crossing the line on 64. Four minutes later the Africans

the Bollaert Stadium in Lens on October 4.

Following a pass from Diouf, substitute Pape Thiaw - brought on in place of Camara - missed a chance



Senegal's Hadji Sarrelle (R) under pressure from Japan's Junichi Inamoto at

But their constant pressure

extra time.

effects of jetlag.

in Yokohama last June.

enstein



we're not just an African team, but an international team.'

Group Two for a place in the finals. **Butt blow for England**

AFP,London

Midfielder Nicky Butt has joined England's injury list meaning he will play no part in Saturday's World Cup qualifier against Greece at Old Trafford.

The news was revealed at England's training session at Old Trafford on Friday.

England coach Sven-Goran Eriksson, who must already do without shoulder injury-victim David Seaman, plus Michael Owen, Wes Brown, Sol Campbell and Alan Smith, loses yet another squad

Primera Liga

Brazil's Ronaldinho juggling with

the ball at practice in Curitiba on

out several different combinations:

Emerson or Eduardo Costa?

Juninho Paulista or Marcelinho

Paraiba? Vampeta is perhaps the

From the forwards to the

defense, Scolari has still not

Will Scolari opt for three backs,

Lucio, or just two. Maybe in this

October 4.

Celta surrender lead

Football

case Juan and Cris.

AFP, Madrid Celta Vigo retained their unbeaten record but squandered the chance to go back to the top of the Spanish First Division with a 1-1 draw at home against Valencia on Manuel Pinto had no chance to stop. However, Pinto showed that he was a worthy substitute for the Argentine international Pablo Cavallero, who flew home for World Cup duty, with an outstanding save

Spanish league leadership and they currently lie fourth with 12 points from six games.

a few minutes later. range, a shot from Valencia's Salva Ballesta which had seemed like a certain goal.

Barcelona instead stand on top of the Spanish First Division with 14

He saved, from point-blank

points, after their 3-0 win over Real Mallorca on Wednesday. All three goals came in a first half

spell of 31 minutes. Barcelona remain unbeaten, but their great rivals Real Madrid are



Jesuly (R) of Celta Vigo, tries to run past Valencia's Rufete during their Primera Liga match at Vigo on October 4.

The visitors, despite missing six key players due to international call ups and having to put several of their reserve team squad on the bench, made it clear from the outset that they had not just come for a draw and opened the scoring after

just six minutes. Spanish international Juan Sanchez fired home a Vicente Rodriguez cross from the left, which Celta's reserve goalkeeper Juan

WEEKEND'S PRIMERA LIGA **FIXTURES**

Saturday (kick off times GMT): Real Madrid v Athletic Bilbao (1700), Barcelona v Deportivo La Coruna (1930)

Sunday: Malaga v Celta Vigo (1600), Valladolid v Las Palmas 1600), Espanyol v Osasuna 1600), Real Betis v Alaves (1600), Real Sociedad v Sevilla (1600), Real Mallorca v Real Zaragoza (1700), Tenerife v Rayo Vallecano (1700), Valencia v Villarreal (1800)

Both sides played out an entertaining, if occasionally petulant, match in driving rain and Celta got their reward for their attacking football with an excellent goal three minutes after the break

Croatian international Zvonimir Boban produced an exquisite bit of artistry, chipping the ball with the outside of his right foot from wide out left close to the corner flag, and French striker Florian Maurice was on hand to volley the ball home and Both teams did their best to get

ahead but it was fair that the hon-

ours, and the points, were evenly

split even if Celta might be regretting

the lost opportunity of regaining the

struggling to get even a solitary The defending Spanish champi-

ons went down 4-2 at Las Palmas

on Wednesday, to post their worst start at this stage in the season for Real Madrid now lie in 14th place, with just five points from six games, and are nine points adrift of

Real Betis lie in second place with 13 points. The Seville side had to settle for a 0-0 draw at Athletic Bilbao on Wednesday and slipped back a place after being in pole position at the end of last weekend.

Primera Liga's top six

Spanish First Division table after Thursday's match (played, won, drawn, lost,

Real Betis 6 4 1 1 10 Villarreal 6 4 1 1 8 Celta Vigo 6 3 3 0 11 Deportivo 6 3 2 1 12 Alaves 6 3 2 1 7		
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