

# Becks terrifies Greeks again



AFP, Paris

David Beckham's knack of scoring important goals against Greek opposition came to the fore again as Manchester United got their Champions League campaign back on track with a 2-0 win against Olympiakos on Wednesday.

Beckham, who single-handedly secured England's 2002 World Cup place last weekend with a sensational injury-time equaliser against Greece, opened the scoring with a second-half strike before Andy Cole made sure of the three points late on.

It was Beckham's second goal in the stadium this year - he also scored a free-kick in England's 2-0 away win against the Greeks in June.

More importantly, the victory fired Sir Alex Ferguson's team to the top of Group G, and was the perfect antidote to the 2-1 defeat away to Deportivo La Coruna in their last outing.

United's win gives the English giants a great chance of progressing through to the second phase.

It also gave relief to boss Ferguson, who had seen his side go 10 away matches in Europe without a win.

Ferguson, who had mischievously threatened to drop Beckham before the game, was delighted with the win.

"I thought it was a marvellous performance. We played our own game - which is important in big games."

"All the players worked very hard - I thought our collective football was very, very good," he said.

Beckham revealed he had urged Ferguson to play him despite the exertions of last weekend.

"The manager knew it was a hard game on Saturday for me and the other England lads," he told ITV.

"But I spoke to him and said 'I'll be fine, it's a big game and I want to play in it' - and I think that's all he wanted to hear from me."

United took top spot in the pool after rivals Lille of France and Deportivo drew 1-1 in the night's other game.

Deportivo appeared to be heading for a useful away victory when Juan Carlos Valeron gave the Spaniards the lead early in the second-half with a brilliant individual strike.

But with the clock running down Adekanni Olufade burst into the box and unleashed an unstoppable drive into the top right hand corner for an 87th minute leveller.

"We came up against a good, experienced Coruna side who play with confidence," Lille coach Vahid Halilhodzic said.

"They also have good individuals such as goalscorer Valeron who made a difference in the game."

"This is a good result and hopefully we can do even better in the return match against them."

Deportivo coach Javier Irureta said: "This was a very hard, competitive match. We dominated for 70 minutes but in the final minutes, Lille were tougher physically, showed fighting spirit and deserved the draw."

Elsewhere there was more success for British clubs with



Manchester United's David Beckham salutes to the crowd after defeating Greek side Olympiakos. The England captain opened the scoring in a 2-0 win for the English giants in the Champions League.

Scottish champions Celtic moving to the top of Group E after a 1-0 win over Norwegian outfit Rosenborg in Glasgow.

English midfielder Alan Thompson was the Bhoys' goal hero, rifling in a crisp free-kick from near the edge of the area to leave Martin O'Neill's team sitting pretty.

Italian powerhouses Juventus missed their chance to go top of the Group E table when they could only draw 0-0 away at Portugal's Porto, the 1987 European Cup winners, in a lacklustre game.

Juventus coach Marcello Lippi said he was satisfied with the way his team responded to disruption from injuries during the match but admitted they had been poor creatively.

"I cannot complain about our psychological attitude - the team tried, our desire was satisfactory," Lippi said.

"With all the injuries we conceded the initiative to Porto - in the Champions League when you play away you can let the opposition have the ball at the start.



Barcelona's Brazilian ace Rivaldo almost loses his balance after being challenged by Lyon's Marc-Vivien Foe in their Champions League match.

"The team dealt with the emergency well. But we constructed very little in either half. Too many mistakes; too many incidents of slack-

ness in midfield, we did not create anything dangerous," Lippi said.

Meanwhile holders Bayern Munich had Brazilian striker Giovane Elber to thank as they earned a share of the points in an entertaining 2-2 away to Feyenoord in Group H.

Elber scored either side of two Rotterdam clubs' strike partnership of Pierre van Hooijdonk and Jon Dahl Tomasson.

Although Bayern should now qualify for the second phase - they are three points clear of third placed Feyenoord - coach Ottmar Hitzfeld was anything but satisfied.

"At 1-0, we didn't make the most of our chances and Feyenoord came back into the game at the end of the second half," he said.

"We really upped the tempo after the break and the team showed they had the will to come back but we just could not find the winning goal," Hitzfeld said.

Czech side Sparta Prague continue to set the pace in the Group, winning 2-0 against Spartak Moscow in Prague thanks to goals from Marek Kincl and Libor Sionko. The victory puts Sparta two points clear at the top of the group from second-place Bayern.

In Group F two late goals from Patrick Kluivert and Rivaldo handed Barcelona a 2-0 win over lively French opponents Lyon at the Nou Camp.

Barcelona's win gave them a three-point gap over the French side, who missed two great chances in the second-half which would have wrapped up the match well before Barcelona finally breached their defence - Bayer Leverkusen lead the group with three wins from three matches.

Rivaldo, who had missed two gilt-edged chances early in the first-half, converted an 86th minute penalty to make it 2-0 after Brazilian defender Edmilson was adjudged to have pushed over Kluivert.

Kluivert, who had a quiet night, finally made his mark on the match when in the 78th minute he rose above Edmilson and headed past keeper Gregory Coupet, who spoils a previously dominant performance by being stuck in no man's land.

## Bayern, Boca set for Tokyo clash

AFP, Prague

European champions Bayern Munich of Germany take on title-holders Boca Juniors of Argentina for the InterContinental Cup in Tokyo on November 27, the European governing body UEFA confirmed Tuesday.

Bayern qualified for the Europe-South America showdown by defeating Valencia of Spain in the European Champions Cup final.

Boca, who beat Real Madrid in Tokyo last year, won through by lifting the Libertadores Cup against Mexico's Cruz Azul.

## RESULTS A GLANCE

Collated Champions League results on Wednesday:

Group E	
At Glasgow	Celtic (Sco) 1 (Thompson 21)
Rosenborg (Nor) 0	At Porto, Portugal
Porto (Por) 0	Juventus (Ita) 0
Group F	
At Barcelona, Spain	Barcelona (Spa) 2 (Kluivert 78, Rivaldo 86-pen) Lyon (Fra) 0
At Leverkusen, Germany	Bayer Leverkusen (Ger) 2 (Lucio 35, Ballack 59) Fenerbahce (Tur) 1 (Revivo 6)
Group G	
At Lens, France	Lille (Fra) 1 (Olufade 87) Deportivo La Coruna (Spa) 1 (Valeron 48)
At Athens	Olympiakos (Gre) 0 Manchester United (Eng) 2 (Beckham 66, Cole 82)
Group H	
At Rotterdam, The Netherlands	Feyenoord (Ned) 2 (Van Hooijdonk 38, Tomasson 45) Bayern Munich (Ger) 2 (Elber 13, 50)
At Prague	Sparta Prague (Cze) 2 (Kincl 57, Sionko 88) Spartak Moscow (Rus) 0

## Wembley Stadium could be rescued

AFP, London

A new proposal to save Wembley Stadium was presented to the British government on Wednesday.

Wembley project manager Sir Rodney Walker handed the new design to British Sports Minister Richard Caborn and government troubleshooter Patrick Carter, appointed to find a solution to the Wembley debacle.

The new 400 million pound (580 million dollar) scheme is 250 million pounds (363 million dollars) cheaper than the original design, which ran into huge problems over its cost.

The plan already has the backing of an international bank.

Under the new scheme, Wembley would be redeveloped as a 90,000-seater stadium with the famous twin towers intact and a running track.

Carter is due to finish his review in two weeks, after which the Football Association (FA) and the Government must come to a decision.

However, the new plan is most certainly too late to rescue London's failed bid to host the 2005 World Championships.

## Iran police will be tough

AFP, Tehran

Iranian police have warned they will "seriously confront" football hooligans at a World Cup Asian qualifying match between the national side and Iraq to be played here Friday.

"Studies on celebrations which take place after Iranian wins in football games reveal that a minority of people try to abuse the situation and conduct illogical and abnormal acts and disrupt public order," police said in a statement published Thursday by the government-run Iran paper.

"Police will seriously confront these people who disrupt public order and break the law and will hand them over to the judiciary," police warned.

Last week, more than 180 people were arrested in Iran during celebrations to mark the country's 1-0 victory against Thailand in the Asian qualifying competition for the 2002 World Cup finals.

"The police expect football fans to express their happiness without disrupting public order and without bringing traffic to a halt," Tehran police chief Mohsen Ansari was quoted as saying by the paper.

## Sacchi, Clemente eye Tunisian job

AFP, Tunis

Arrigo Sacchi and Javier Clemente, former national coaches of Italy and Spain, have been put at the top of a wish list by the Tunisian football federation (FTF) to become national coach, Tunisian newspaper the Quotidien reported Wednesday.

According to the paper, the contacts were made last week by FTF president Khaled Sancho and follow the collapse of negotiations with Italian Nevio Scala after the sacking of Germany's Eckhard Krautzen in August.

Krautzen succeeded Italy's Francesco Scoglio in March 2001 and contributed to Tunisia's qualification for the finals of next year's African Nations Cup and World Cup finals.

The newspaper confirmed talks broke down with Scala, who made his name as coach of Parma in the early 90's guiding them to Cup Winners Cup success in 1993, over their offering only about 30,000 dinars (21,000 dollars) per month. 1

# Iran hope Daei delivers



AFP, Nicosia

Goal-shy Iran will be relying on veteran striker Ali Daei to fire them back into pole position in the race for the World Cup finals when they face bitter rivals Iraq in Tehran on Friday.

Iran, who qualified for the finals in France in 1998, are currently second in Group A of the Asian qualifiers, two points behind Saudi Arabia but with a game in hand.

However, they have found the target just seven times in six games in the second round - only Thailand and Bahrain have a worse record - and the 31-year-old Daei has scored four of those.

A former Asian Player of the Year, Daei earned his 100th cap in the 1-0 win over Thailand last week to cap an international career which has seen a return of 76 goals.

"I don't pay attention to how

many times I have played for Iran and how many times I have scored," he was quoted as saying recently.

"My main aim is for Iran to be successful and I will do my best to help Iran to be successful," added the Herthe Berlin striker.

A victory over Iraq will put Iran back on top of the table allowing them to take a one point advantage into the final round of matches on October 19 when they travel to Bahrain while the Saudis are at home to bottom team Thailand.

Iran coach Miroslav Blazevic, who has seen his team remain unbeaten in the group, recognises that there are problems in front of goal.

"It is true we have goal scoring problems," the Croat told Iranian reporters.

"We will try to solve it. Against Thailand, we hit the post or shot straight at the keeper, we were unlucky."

"It was a shame we couldn't use the opportunities better but the

main aim was to gain three points. I don't have a magic wand. The ball was in our possession 80 percent of the time."

China have already wrapped up the top spot in Group B making sure of their first ever appearance in the World Cup finals with their 1-0 win against Oman last Sunday.

The battle in the group now is for the play-off position with the team finishing in second spot facing either Iran or Saudi Arabia - the winner of that match going on to face Ireland for a place in the finals.

The United Arab Emirates currently occupy second spot in Group B with ten points from seven matches, Qatar are third with nine points from seven while Uzbekistan have seven points from six games.

On Saturday, Uzbekistan travel to bottom team Oman while Qatar face China in Shenyang.

Defeat for both Qatar and Uzbekistan would leave the UAE needing just a point from their final match at home to Oman on October 19.



Craig Hignett of Blackburn shoots while Middlesbrough's Robbie Mustoe tries to block during their English League Cup encounter.

## English League Cup

# Fulham, Man City rampage



AFP, London

Fulham went goal-crazy at Craven Cottage as they battered Premiership rivals Derby 5-2 in their League Cup third round tie on Wednesday.

It was the worst possible start for new Derby coach Colin Todd who took control following the departure of Jim Smith earlier in the week.

Fulham showed their lethal attacking form of last season as they stunned Derby with four goals in a sensational 25-minute second-half blitz.

Barry Hayles hauled Fulham back onto level terms after Craig Burley had given Derby a first-half lead, but Fabrizio Ravanelli put the visitors 2-1 up after 54 minutes.

The home side then smashed

four quick-fire goals, starting with a Sylvain Legwinski header and a John Collins free-kick, to put the home side ahead.

A great Louis Saha run and shot, followed by a Steed Malbranque penalty wrapped up an amazing victory.

Last season's finalists Birmingham City suffered the blues after being thumped 6-0 by Manchester City and may well have sealed their manager Trevor Francis' fate after a run of six matches without a win.

The damage was done in the opening 25 minutes by which time the home side had established a three-goal lead, with Darren Huckerby netting twice.

Huckerby then added another two after the break as Kevin Keegan's rampant side ran riot.

Shaun Goater also got on the scoresheet and Tresor Luntala scored an own goal.

Kevin Pressman was the hero for Sheffield Wednesday as they beat Crystal Palace 3-1 on penalties.

The veteran Wednesday stopper saved three penalties to carry The Owls through after the teams finished level at 1-1 after 90 minutes and 2-2 after extra-time.

Ashley Westwood and Tony Crane scored for Wednesday, with Simon Rodger and Aki Riihilahti twice giving Palace the lead.

The sight of Mark Delaney being carried off on a stretcher with his neck in a brace overshadowed Aston Villa's 1-0 victory over Reading.

The Welsh international received an accidental knock to the head when he challenged Tony Rougier midway through the second half, although he was not taken to hospital following examination by the Villa medical staff.

# Hands off Elber



REUTERS, Berlin

Elber demonstrated with his two goals in Wednesday's 2-2 Champions League draw with Feyenoord why Bayern Munich will not let him leave.

The Bayern striker, in a hot streak of goal-scoring form, saved the European champions from the first defeat of their title defence. But he remains frustrated because he does not start every game and has said he is considering leaving Bayern.

Elber has now scored seven goals in Bayern's last three matches -- two in a 3-1 victory over Spartak, a hat-trick in a 4-0 thrashing of VfB Stuttgart in the Bundesliga and two on Wednesday.

"Of course I'm happy when I score goals but I'm not satisfied because this is a game we should have won," Elber said after the draw in Rotterdam which left Bayern second in Group H, two points behind leaders Sparta Prague.

With two draws in three Champions League games Bayern are yet to recapture the form which grabbed them their first European triumph in 25 years last May.

But they can only get better as a string of players, among them playmaker Stefan Effenberg, fellow midfielders Jens Jeremies and Mehmet Scholl, and striker Carsten Jancker, are sidelined with injuries. Fortunately for Bayern, Elber is

fit and in great form.

"Elber is a precious player and we know what we have in him," coach Ottmar Hitzfeld said of the Brazilian, who joined from VfB Stuttgart in 1997.

"We knew already that he was a man for important goals," Bayern commercial manager Uli Hoernes has stated Elber has a contract until 2003 and is not going anywhere.

The 29-year-old, who was on the bench when Brazil beat Chile 2-0 in a World Cup qualifier on Sunday, arrived in Rotterdam only on Tuesday night and missed his side's training session.

Bayern commercial manager Uli

Hoernes, who also suffered Paraguayan striker Roque Santa Cruz arriving late because he had been on international duty, was furious.

"The World Cup qualifiers could have taken place at another time," he said.

"This is something we must talk about at the G-14," he added, referring to the lobby group representing the leading European clubs.

"It would be interesting to see what would happen if the teams agreed not to release their internationals anymore."

# No Voller surprises



AFP, Berlin

German national coach Rudi Voller stood by his players Wednesday and insisted he would use the same squad in the 2002 World Cup play-off with Ukraine that failed so miserably against England and Finland in their last two qualifiers.

However the former World Cup winning striker suggested that captain Oliver Bierhoff may be replaced as skipper after he came in for severe criticism following his performance in the 0-0 draw with Finland last Saturday.

Bierhoff missed several easy chances which left them being edged out by England on goal

difference for top spot in Group Nine.

"The squad against Ukraine will include the same players used up to now as well as others who have recovered from injury," Voller said.

"I don't have any new names in my head at the moment and I consider this type of discussion superfluous."

He said the players finally chosen would be able to withstand pressure and to give 100 percent.

"Those who do not understand that have no right to be there," Voller added.

Voller rejected suggestions that the team had slipped back to the poor standard of the Euro 2000 squad who exited in the first round.

"I can accept that we have been treated like national simpletons," Voller said.