English harbour hope



AFP, Paris

English expectations of European Champions League glory will rise substantially Wednesday should Manchester United and Liverpool end the year on a high note by putting themselves in the driving seat with wins.

Manchester host Portugal's Boavista in their second phase Group A match and Liverpool travel to AS Roma in Group B.

English teams went on to dominate the old European Cup format in the late 1970s and early 1980s once United had become the first side to lift the trophy in 1968.

But, aside from United's lastgasp win over current holders Bayern Munich two years ago, that dominance has not been carried over into the Champions League with Spanish, German and Italian sides ruling the roost in recent seasons.

An oft-levelled criticism of United is that their domestic consistency has blinded them to the fact that Europe represents a significant step up - but continental action this year constitutes almost a haven from gathering strife at home.

Saturday's 3-0 home hiding by Chelsea was the Red Devil's fifth defeat in 14 league outings and left the club seventh.

Indeed, had United lost one more game they would now be flirting with a place in the bottom six of the English Premiership!

It's a situation to which even eight-times continental kings Real Madrid have become accustomed albeit temporarily - in recent seasons as the "meringues" focus their eyes solely on the main prize, the mere trifle of being involved in the Spanish title race just an occasional means to the greater end.

That strategy has served Real well enough given their two titles in four seasons - but the downside is that a team "only" reaching the final securing an exalted league placing.

CHAMPS LEAGUE

Rivaldo, hampered by a niggling

injury, said he was prepared to go

through the pain barrier to ensure

Barcelona win Wednesday's

Champions League clash with

season," the Brazilian was reported

as saving in the Spanish press. "I still

have pains in my thigh but I am

prepared to sacrifice myself in ordei

Rivaldo said the injury has pre-

vented him from performing at his

best in recent matches, but insisted

that he would still play in the group B

and make sure that we do everything

we can to win the game otherwise all

our good work against Liverpool will

"We all have to be very focused

match against the Turkish side

to help us win this match.'

"For me it has been a difficult

REUTERS, Barcelona

Galatasaray.

Therein lies United's European

Coach Sir Alex Ferguson, who retires next May, insists he is ready to crack the whip, telling Manchester United Radio that when you have a bad spell like this, it's up to you to do something about

"At the moment, we have to correct things. I relish the challenge, absolutely. That challenge will start when the players come to training tomorrow," he warned.

United take on a Boavista side at Old Trafford which twice held

WEDNESDAY'S FIXTURES

European Champions League second phase fixtures on Wednesday (1945 GMT):

GROUP A Manchester United (Eng) v

FC Nantes (Fra) v Bayern Munich (Ger)

AS Roma (Ita) v Liverpool (Eng) Barcelona (Spa) v Galatasaray

Liverpool in the opening group phase as proof of their pedigree.

The other match in Group A sees French side Nantes, still bottom of their league, host a Bayern side who, like United are in a mini-slump without a win in three domestic

Bayern did at least add the Intercontinental Cup to their trophy cabinet a week ago but their loss at Hertha Berlin on Sunday meant they slid to third in the Bundesliga table.

To make matters worse both talismanic keeper Oliver Kahn and dynamic midfielder Stefan Effenberg will miss the trip to Brittany with knee and thigh prob-

Weighing in United's favour in the Group is that they have already

Rivaldo to brave pain

Barca got their second phase

campaign off to a flying start as they

RIVALDO

Liverpool are happy just to have made a belated return to Europe's premier club competition 17 years after they won their fourth crown in

So it is appropriate that the Anfield Reds return to the Italian capital Wednesday en route to what they hope will be a fifth title.

In AS Roma they will meet a club who have been bursting to get their own back on that 1984 defeat in their own stadium.

This time round Liverpool will receive a musical welcome as Roma plan to mark the fact that former Beatle George Harrison. who died of cancer last week, was born and raised along with the other band members in the northern English port city.

Roma plan to play favourite Beatles hits before the match at the Olympic Stadium over the public address system.

Liverpool, for their part, opened with a morale-crushing home loss to Barcelona and avoiding defeat in Roma is imperative.

Barca could put one foot in the quarter-finals should they see off Turkey's Galatasaray in the Nou Camp in the other Group B meeting. Roma held Galatasaray ir

Turkey last week. Despite their Anfield heroics all is not rosy at Barca after Saturday's loss at Alaves.

Coach Carles Rexach was not amused to see El Mundo slam his side as "physically badly prepared with a suspicious lethargy" and also take aim at stars such as Rivaldo and Marc Overmars for the Catalan club's woes which see them sliding towards midtable in the Primera Liga following one point in three

Rexach himself isn't happy with their current form though and has even threatened to cancel the players' Christmas break should results not improve

Like Real and United, Barca's eyes are on a bigger, richer prize but all three ignore the home front at

out-played and out-thought

domestic form has been none too

impressive, and consecutive defeats against Athletic Bilbao and Alaves

have seen them drop to eighth place

now after a draw and two defeats we

have to stay calm and concentrate

on the Champions League," he said.

team's lack of goals in recent games,

and warned against the danger

posed by the Turkish side who drew

1-1 at home to AS Roma in their

scoring opportunities and that wor-

ries us, but we will be doing our best

to sort it out in Wednesday's game,'

he said. "Galatasaray are going to be

very difficult opponents so we will

"We are not creating that many

opening second phase match.

have to be on our guard."

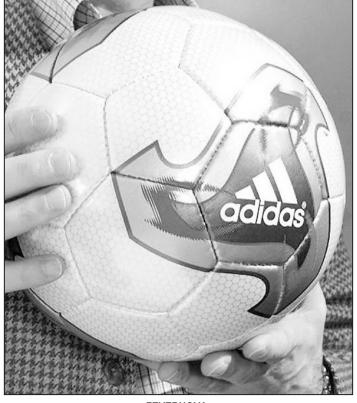
"We began the season well but

The Brazilian also bemoaned his

in the table.

But the Catalan side's recent

Liverpool in a 3-1 victory at Anfield.



Fevernova to debut Sunday

Spurs sail on

Sheringham



Fevernova, the official soccer ball for next year's World Cup finals, will make its debut at a South Korea-US friendly match next week, sports officials said Tuesday.

"Fevernova will be used for the friendly match to be held at Sogwipo on Sunday," a Korea Football Association (KFA) official said.

The United States and South Korea, drawn last week to play in the same group next year, are to play an appreciation match to launch the

Premiership

Football

Tottenham moved above reigning

champions Manchester United and

into fifth place in the English

Premiership table with a 3-2 win

against Bolton here at White Hart

Tottenham captain and England

striker Teddy Sheringham wrapped

up the points with a superb angled

header from a free-kick four minutes

from time in what was a dress

rehearsal for an English League

Bolton took an early lead through

in-form striker Michael Ricketts but

Tottenham hit back at the start of the

second half courtesy of goals from

Then Bolton's veteran forward

Rod Wallace equalised in the 56th

minute and it seemed Sam

Allardyce's men would come away

with a point until Sheringham's late

Newly promoted Bolton, who

staved 10th, might still have had a

point when substitute striker Dean

Holdsworth was clean through on

But he delayed his shot and

Afterwards Tottenham manager

"Bolton hit on the counter-attack

"We changed it around at half-

but our lads in the second half

produced a very good perfor-

time." explained Hoddle, a

Tottenham hero during his playing

days as an England midfielder, who

brought on Ferdinand and Croatia

defender Goran Bunjevcevic at the

put Les on top and it worked," former

England coach Hoddle told Sky

contain his disappointment. "I'm

absolutely gutted. To score two

goals away from home and come

away with nothing is very frustrat-

"We threw caution to the wind.

Meanwhile, Allardyce could not

Glenn Hoddle admitted: "It was a big

test for the blood pressure.

Tottenham central defender Dean

Richards got back in time to chal-

Gus Poyet and Les Ferdinand.

AFP, London

Lane on Monday.

Cup quarter-final.

stadium on the island of Cheju.

"Since it has been officially allowed for the World Cup finals, we are expecting no US objection to the immediate use." another KFA official

The Fevernova ballm produced by sports equipment giant Adidas was unveiled last Thursday at the draw for the World Cup finals, to be staged in South Korea and Japan May and June.

Adidas described the syntheticfoam ball as "more accurate, faster and more efficient" than ones previously designated by world's football governing body FIFA.

Tottenham levelled in the 47th

minute when from a Darren

Anderton cross Ferdinand, headed

In trying to clear Bolton defender

Mike Whitlow could only head

against his own crossbar before

Before Tottenham's next.

But referee Paul Durkin was not

Almost immediately afterwards

Tottenham swept up field and a neat

one-touch passing move involving

Bunievcevic, ended with Ferdinand

down and Wallace deservedly

as defender Ledley King shep-

herded the tricky striker out to the

strong for goalkeeper Neil Sullivan

superb start to the season with ar

But Wallace's shot proved too

Earlier Ricketts continued his

Good work down the right hand

side by former Marseille forward

Bruno Ngotty saw him cross the ball

to Kevin Nolan, whose back-heeled

Instead of shooting first time with

his stronger, right foot, he took the

ball down as King rushed out to

Ricketts then shot through a

narrow gap with his left and the ball

flew past Sullivan into the corner of

of the season and an early birthday

present - he turns 23 on Tuesday.

It was Ricketts' 10th league goal

Tottenham came close to

equalising four minutes later. Poyet

won a free-kick on the edge of the

box after he was brought down by

tumbling former Tottenham favour-

Christian Ziege's effort was power-

fully struck but Bolton's Finnish

goalkeeper Jussi Jaaskelainen

German international defender

ite Gudni Bergsson.

However, Bolton refused to lie

There appeared to be no danger

Poyet nodded in from close range.

Ricketts appealed for a penalty

claiming he had been brought down

impresssed and Ricketts was lucky

not to be cautioned for diving.

scoring in the 48th minute.

left hand edge of the box.

who ought to have saved.

eighth minute goal.

flick fell to Ricketts.

the net.

brought them level.

by Sheringham.

powerfully against the far post.

It doesn't get any bigger for Senegal



"France-Senegal - the dream

On paper it's not expected to be the classic encounter of the 20002 World Cup-tournament - but the opening match always conjures a special atmosphere.

For the Senegalese, however, it's their final as they take to the world stage for the ultimate challenge against the best team in the world.

And the fixture has caught the imagination of the media here. "The Lions up against the

Cockerels," was only one of a squadron of enthusiastic headlines in Monday's papers, who were delighted with Saturday's draw in Korea which saw their team drawn for the inaugural match. The Soleil daily preferred to

convey its thoughts in pictorial form with a massive front page photo showing Senegalese striker El Hadji Diouf, clad in his nation's green yellow and red, dribbling the ball towards 1998 hero Zinedine Zidane. wearing the blue and white with red trim of the French.

As a sub-plot, Diouf plays for current French league leaders Lens

and several of his squadmates also play in France.

"It's great," was how Soleil saw the draw, which pits the African hopefuls against "the adopted country of the majority of Senegalese players.

As the paper pointed out, the whole affair had been a pipedream which was now reality.

'The Lions wanted a friendly at the Stade de France, without really believing they would get one," wrote Soleil in an editorial.

"Now here they are up againt



EL HADJI DIOUF

them, and the whole planet, in front of a television audience of billions." "From the north pole to the Amazon, from the Kalahari desert to

Kandahar, people will hear about our country ... that's something no tourist promotion could have achieved," the paper added.

Sud-Quotidien said it was a huge stroke of luck to draw the French for

the opening game. "It's also an honour to take on an adversary so covered in glory." the paper wrote.

And the Senegalese have not been slow to draw a parallel with the 1990 finals, when fellow Africans Cameroon took on - and beat reigning champions Argentina. Diego Maradona and all, in the

tournament opener in Italy. "Our Lions are no less talented than their cousins from Cameroon, wrote the Sud daily, which suggested all the pressure could only be on the French.

And Le Matin weighed in with its belief that "this band of young, enthusiastic, professional friends have made us so used to agreeable surprises that the Senegalese people may allow themselves to dream."

Win or lose at least one Frenchman will be happy at the final

Either Roger Lemerre will as expected steer the holders past their opening test or the honours will go to Senegal's own French coach -Bruno Metsu



Brazilian legend Pele gestures during a media conference in Singapore on December 3.

commercialised.

There is only one Pele

best football player ever said he

agreed that the game has become

different philosophy," said Pele, who

is on a visit to Singapore after

attending the weekend draw held in

South Korea for the World Cup

ers only play for the money. This is

"Not everyone, but a lot of play-

"I agree that today there is a



Brazilian football legend Pele said here Tuesday scientists could clone his body -- but not his mind and soul. In a wide-ranging online chat in

Singapore fans, Pele was asked if he supported being cloned. "Maybe they can clone the body,

but the mind and the soul they will never be able to clone," he replied. The man widely regarded as the

which he answered questions from

bad for the sport." he said in reply to

one question in the interactive site of Singapore's leading newspaper the

In a talk with reporters on Monday, Pele described French

as the world's best soccer player at He also rated Manchester United

midfield player Argentine Juan Sebastian Veron and Zidane's Spanish team mate Raul Gonzalez at the top of his list of the world's elite contemporary players.

England's Liverpool striker Michael Owen is also a favorite of Pele and according to the Brazilian master is tipped to have an explosive run at the World Cup next year

in South Korea and Japan.

Shearer red card overturned

AFP, London

The Football Association (FA) on Monday overturned a red card against Newcastle striker Alan Shearer after he was sent off for allegedly using his elbow on Charlton defender Jon Fortune during Saturday's 1-1 English Premiership draw.

Shearer was dismissed after Fortune fell to the around, but the decision angered Newcastle manager Bobby Robson.

Former England captain Shearer protested his innocence after the game and the club successfully appealed to the FA.

English football's governing body also confirmed that Shearer would not now receive any kind of punishment for his part in the inci-FA spokesman Adrian Bevington

dived to his right and produced a said: "Referee Andy D'Urso has superb one-handed save to turn the reviewed the incident from which Alan Shearer was dismissed against Charlton on Saturday. "In doing so, he has reached the

conclusion that the red card should be rescinded. Therefore, no further punishment will follow." Shearer's only other red card

came on August 7, 1999 when he was dismissed by Uriah Rennie for persistent foul play in a 1-0 home defeat by Aston Villa

Choosing right training bases



World Cup teams are snapping up luxury hotels, country homes and even military camps as a base in South Korea for next year's tournament, officials said Tuesday.

Seven of the 15 teams based in South Korea for the first round groups next year have found camps, the Korean World Cup Organising Committee (KOWOC) officials said.

Even some teams who will play in Japan, the co-hosts, are looking in Korea, officials said.

Teams have stepped up the hunt after last weekend's draw for the tournament that runs from May 31 to June 30 next year.

"It is natural for them to compete for a better camp, but we stick to the principle of first come first served, said KOWOC official Lee Sang-Ho.

World Cup holders France have booked a luxury hotel in Seoul and will use the LG stadium at Kuri on the eastern outskirts of the capital

Senegal, who will play the opening match against France in Seoul on May 31, wanted to be near the capital, but were too late. The two remaining training camps in the Seoul region have already been

Portugal will set up a training camp in the Korean Military Academy and the United States in Misari, both on the outskirts of Seoul.

Despite the fierce competition to get the best sites, KOWOC said there would be no problem getting

camps for all teams. KOWOC said Denmark will be based in the southern port of Namhae, Spain in the southeastern port of Ulsan, South Africa in the eastern port of Kangung and South Korea in the southern city of

Juventus can float

AFP, Milan

on Monday.

Italian First Division giants Juventus have been given the green light to trade on the Milan stock exchange, the Italian stock market announced

A stock market statement added the start of trading would be decided

Last month Italian holding com-

pany IFI, majority shareholder in Juventus, said it planned to float some of its stake in the club on the Milan stock exchange in December.

Currently Roman rivals AS Roma and Lazio are the only Italian clubs quoted on the stock market.

Premiership's top six English Premiership table after Monday's match (played, won, drawn,

lost, goals for, goals against, points): Liverpool

15 30 Arsenal 16 8 25 Leeds Newcastle 24 18 Tottenham 20