Premiership

Leeds take lead

Football

AFP. London

Putting behind them the negative publicity of the recent court case involving their stars Lee Bowyer and Jonathan Woodgate Leeds United gave their fans a New Year present Tuesday by going top of the English

A 3-0 win at home to West Ham at a frosty Elland Road was sufficient to move Leeds into pole position with 41 points from 21 games

Leeds, who have lost just twice in the league this season, began like an express train with Mark Viduka tapping home on four minutes and then heading the second three minutes later from a Danny Mills

Robbie Fowler brilliantly lobbed the third five minutes after the restart.

The win, which repeated a threegoal showing against the Hammers when Leeds last won the title a decade ago, left the Yorkshire side two points ahead of both Arsenal whose match at bottom club Leicester was called off due to a frozen pitch at Filbert Street - and

Leeds have, however, played a game more than their nearest rivals. Aussie star Viduka said Leeds were worth a title bet.

"If we kepp playing as consistently as we have been so far we've a good chance of staying up there," Viduka told Sky Sports television.

Sidekick Fowler said he was loving life after his recent switch from hometown side Liverpool.

"I've settled in very quickly and I feel good. It's a massive change for me but it's a fresh chapter in my career," said Fowler, who freely admitted that he still loved Liverpool despite his move.

Bobby Robson's Newcastle must shoot down reigning champions Manchester United at Old Trafford on Wednesday if they want to go back to the top having spent 10 days at the summit prior to Saturday's home reverse against Chelsea.

Chelsea wrecked their chances of closing the gap on the leading quintet following a surprise 2-4 home loss to struggling Southampton.

Liverpool were equally feeling the blues as they blew the chance to return to the top after being held to a frustrating 1-1 draw at Anfield by Bolton Wanderers. The Merseysiders broke the

deadlock through England

Parma's Japanese international

playmaker Hidetoshi Nakata will stay

at the Italian First Division club

director general Luca Baraldi said

Baraldi was speaking after con-

sistent speculation linking the out-of-

favour midfielder with a move when

the January transfer window opens

on Wednesday. English Premiership

outfit Arsenal are reportedly among

said Baraldi. "He is under contract

for five years, is a great professional and a real champion - we are count-

ing on him to help us get out of trou-

since his summer move from cham-

nions AS Roma and he has been

excluded from the first team in recent

months even though Parma have

drifted into the relegation zone

Nakata's form has nosedived

"Hidetoshi is going nowhere,"

those clubs interested.

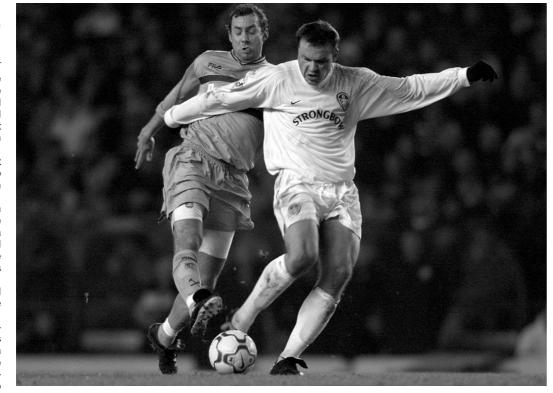
Nakata

stays,

insist

Tuesday.

Parma



Leeds United's Mark Viduka (R) and Don Hutchison are in pursuit of the ball during their Premiership encounter at Elland Road on January 1

midfielder Steven Gerrard just after the break but Kevin Nolan, a boyhood Liverpool supporter, equalized for Bolton 12 minutes from time.

Liverpool stay fourth with 38 points from 20 matches

Liverpool caretaker boss Phil Thompson, holding the reins while manager Gerard Houllier recovers from heart surgery, admitted concern at his team's dip in form which has seen them take just six points from their last six league games. "We have got to be concerned

but I'd be more concerned if the effort wasn't there," said the former Liverpool defender

"I feel this is two points lost. We played well but there was no conviction with the final pass.

Bolton boss Sam Allardyce was delighted with a point for his relega-

20

tion-threatened side.

"This was a fantastic result for us, particularly with the other clubs in the bottom half doing well. It could be a priceless point at the end of the

Inconsistent Chelsea lost their

fourth league match of the season as unfancied Southampton buried them at Stamford Bridge. Eidur Gudjohnsen and Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink gave Chelsea a

2-1 half-time lead after James Beattie's stunning 30-yard free-kick had given Saints an early lead. But Latvian striker Marian Pahars levelled before Beattie's second

goal and a fourth from midfielder Chris Marsden secured a shock victory for Southampton.

Chelsea boss Claudio Ranieri was almost lost for words - despite

> Aston Villa goalkeeper Peter Schmeichel saved Kevin Phillips' first-half penalty as John Gregory's men earned a 1-1 draw at

lan Taylor fired Villa in front only for Brazilian defender Emerson

English Premiership table after Tuesday's matches (played, won, drawn,

48

30

, 3, 3-							
Leeds	21	11	8	2	33	17	41
Arsenal	20	11	6	3	41	24	39
Newcastle	20	12	3	5	38	25	39

Premiership's top six

working hard on his English.

"Crazy football, crazy Chelsea, It's very difficult, very frustrating," the Italian stuttered.

Elsewhere, a Dean Richards' header handed Tottenham a 1-0 win at home to Blackburn for whom former Manchester United hitman Andy Cole made his debut.

Charlton recovered from going two goals behind to edge Ipswich 3-2 at The Valley.

Marcus Bent scored twice in the first five minutes for Ipswich but John Robinson and Scott Parker put Charlton back on level terms and Jason Euell notched the winner.

Everton lost their fifth league game on the trot as Gianluca Festa handed Middlesbrough, coming off four straight defeats, a 1-0 win at the Riverside, increasing speculation over the future of Everton boss Walter Smith.

Sunderland.

Thome to level matters four minutes from time.

Cocu for New Year boost

Football

Barcelona's Dutch international midfielder Phillip Cocu is hoping the New Year will bring a change in fortunes for the underperforming Catalan club.

"We have to improve in a number of areas and show that we are still capable of fighting for the league title," Cocu was quoted as saying by

rivals Espanyol in the last match before the Christmas break, lie eighth in the Spanish First Division, six points adrift of leaders Deportivo But the Dutchman believes that

,with home advantage in four of their next five league matches, the Catalans can get their season back "Nothing has been lost," he said.

"We are starting afresh once more and, with a series of games at the Nou Camp and the return of a number of injured players, we have to be confident that we can get back into contention for the title chase.

Combative midfielder Luis Enrique has been given the all-clear to play after five weeks out with a

But the most eagerly waited

return is that of Rivaldo.

The influential Brazilian forward who has played only seven of Barcelona's 17 league games this season, is expected to be available for Sunday's home game against mid-table Real Zaragoza after resting a troublesome groin injury.

Cocu, who has captained Barcelona for much of the season. believes the fight for the league title is still very open and that a good run of results will see his team back at the top of the table.

"For some years now the league has been more unpredictable and the top teams have lost a lot of points. So, if we can make a good start to 2002, I am convinced we will be up there fighting for the title."

carmaker, and Hyundai Heavy

Industries, which has the world's

"We have received an official

notification from Brazil that they will

set up their training camp here from

May 21-June 14," said Heo Eon-

Brazil ch oose



southeastern coastal city of Ulsan for its training camp during next year's World Cup, officials said Monday

Ulsan, 320 kilometers (200 miles) southeast of Seoul, is home

to several major industrial plants, including those of Hyundai Motor South Korea's largest

wook, chief of Ulsan city's Culture and Sports Bureau. Brazil will sign a contract in January, he added. Brazil is in Group C with Turkey, China and Costa Rica. The teams will play their three first-round

largest shipyard.

matches in South Korea Spain, which belongs to Group B with Slovenia, Paraguay and South Africa, will also set up its camp in

Ulsan, city officials said. Brazil will use a field inside Bangeojin Sports Park near the Hyundai shipyard, officials said. The Brazilians already have booked 56

rooms at Hyundai Diamond Hotel

they said. Next year's World Cup, which will run May 31-June 30, is the first to be held in Asia. As co-hosts. South Korea and Japan will equally split 64

Tyson throws a tantrum in

An irate Mike Tyson threw Christmas tree decorations at reporters here Tuesday, after they discovered the former heavyweight champion spending a New Year's vacation in the capital of communist Cuba.

and white sneakers, was staked out by journalists in the lobby of a downtown Havana hotel, where he reportedly has been staying since Sunday.

Hewitt pulls hosts thru'

AFP, Perth

Australia's world No 1 Lleyton Hewitt shrugged off a fever to inspire his country to a dramatic 2-1 victory over a gallant Argentina in a crucial Hopman Cup tennis tie at Burswood Dome here Wednesday.

Hewitt, 20, laid low overnight and forced to see a doctor, rescued second-seeded Australia from the brink of disaster against the unseeded Argentina in the million dollar (500,000 US) mixed teams' event.

The 20-year old superstar was so exhausted at the end of the tie he was taken to a nearby clinic for medical tests described by tournament organisers as "precaution-

A spokesman said: "It is just a matter of establishing just what is wrong with him -- whether it is a virus problem or whatever."

Hewitt is appearing on court this week for the first time since he snatched the No 1 spot by winning the Tennis Masters' Cup in Sydney in November.

He has won all his matches here

-- two singles and two doubles in partnership with 20-year-old Alicia Molik, ranked 47th. Australia's win -- their second in

two ties -- boosts their hopes of qualifying for Saturday's showdown, probably against the topseeded United States' pair, Monica Seles and Jan-Michael Gambill. To be certain of appearing in the

last two, they must defeat Spain's Tommy Robredo and Arantxa Sanchez-Vicario in a vital clash Thursday night.

In Wednesday's thrill-a-minute tie, Australia were trailing 0-1 after Molik went down to Paola Suarez in the women's singles, losing 6-7, 6-

But Hewitt had little trouble in crushing Argentina's Mariano Zabaleta, 23, who is ranked 59th. After a tentative start. Hewitt

stormed home in straight sets, 6-3. 6-4 in the men's singles in 82 min-

This levelled the tie at 1-1 before Hewitt starred as Australia fought back from a disastrous start to take the deciding mixed doubles, 5-7, 6-

The doubles third set was decided by the super-tiebreaker system, with victory going to the first team to 10 points.

In the tiebreaker, Australia sizzled to an 8-2 lead which Argentina trimmed to 8-7 before the home country scrambled for their last two points Suarez, 25, ranked 27th in the

world, beat Molik (47th) in 122 minutes in a see-saw women's singles encounter. Hewitt, confirming he had a

minor ailment, said after the singles clash: "I don't feel great. It is no

"But I feel that, in the circumstances, I played some pretty good tennis.

after a long layoff, and I was pleased I was able to pick up a couple of notches as the match went on.'

After the doubles, Hewitt told a TV interviewer before being driven to the clinic: "It was certainly a bit nerve-wracking in the doubles after we had been 8-2 up, but we got

Hewitt's singles win gave him special satisfaction, because the South American had beaten him on a clay court in Hamburg 19 months

After only a brief warm-up before the men's singles because of his condition, Hewitt initially looked uncertain, allowing Zabaleta to romp to a surprising 3-1 lead in the opening set after breaking the Australian in the third game.

Steadying, Hewitt won the next five games, breaking his opponent in the sixth and eighth games.

In her singles clash, Suarez after winning the tiebreaker in the opening set -- lost her touch in the second before re-asserting her authority in the decider.

"At the start I was a bit nervous, because she put a lot of pressure on my serve," Suarez said.

"But winning that crucial tiebreaker proved a huge confidencebooster for me.

Indian Open tennis Canas, Santoro sail

AFP. Madras

Top contenders Guillermo Canas of Argentina and Fabrice Santoro of France scored emphatic wins to move into the second round of the 400,000-dollar ATP Indian Open here on Tuesday.

Top-seeded Canas had more worries off the court than on it as he breezed past George Bastl of Switzerland 6-4, 6-2 in his opening

Canas, one of the circuit's rising stars who leap-frogged more than 100 places last year to finish world going into this with a new attitude number 14, said he was relieved to start the new season on a winning

But the 24-year-old admitted he had been pre-occupied in recent days with the political and economic crisis in his own country



Zabaleta and Paolo Suarez in the Hopman Cup in Perth on Wednesday.

Goran beats himself

Tennis

AFP, Doha

It was a case of the good Goran versus the bad Goran but thankfully for the organisers and his diehard fans here, the former won.

Reigning Wimbledon champion Goran Ivanisevic got off to a nervous New Year start in the Qatar Open, squeezing past tough Austrian challenger Stefan Koubek in three sets 6-4, 3-6, 6-3 here on Tuesday.

Ivanisevic, seeded second, spoilt the birthday party of Koubek, who turns 25 Wednesday. "I was stupid and careless at

times, but in the end I was surprised how well I played. Overall it was a good match," Ivanisevic said. "I didn't practice much during the last six weeks and my shoulder was

killers. I ran a lot today. He (Koubek) had his chances. He had several break points in the third set." The match displayed the split personality of the Croat, coasting

smoothly one minute, then com-

also hurting and I had to take pain-

pletely at sea the next. 'Good Goran' secured the first set after breaking Koubek in the ninth game 4-5. But 'Bad Goran' was lurking around the corner and

game of the first set.

Two double faults and several nervous moments later. Ivanisevic pocketed the set with a degree of difficulty, aided by unforced errors from Koubek.

The left-handed Austrian came back strongly in the second set with delicate chips and wilv lobs garnering vital points.

He broke world number 13 vanisevic in the second game and held to romp ahead 3-0.

calls and ran up a stream of double faults as Koubek, almost as temperamental as his opponent, found top gear and piled on the pressure. Ivanisevic's monstrous serve deserted him and Koubek, ranked

59th in the Champions Race, lev-

Ivanisevic began to dispute line

elled the scores by taking the second set 6-3 to force the decider. Ivanisevic, who has been drafted for six months of military service by his country but is let out for tournaments, took a rub on his aching left shoulder as all signs worryingly

pointed towards another quick

Ivanisevic exit. Koubek, however, failed to capitalise, fluffing 10 break-points in the final set, including five in the fifth game as Ivanisevic found some booming aces and forehands down

the line to wrap up the match. Earlier, Germany's Rainer on New Year's eve to oust Finnish

Germany's Schuttler, the 1999 champion in Qatar and runner-up in 2000, was in full control right from the first game even as his young

Playing under grey and threatening skies the seventh seed quickly established his control over the match by breaking for 3-1.

The left-handed Finn, who has

jumped from No 300 to No 63 in the strong baseline game

pinned back by the German's powerful forehand shots. "The results might look easy but they were not so. It was a difficult

young stars in tennis. Elsewhere, third seed Albert Portas of Spain was sent packing by

The smaller

Former world No. 1 Martina Hingis claimed Wednesday she was still good enough to beat the big players

now dominating women's tennis. The 21-year-old, here to defend her Sydney International title next she was confider could regain the world No. 1 ranking

Davenport, 1.89m (6ft 3in) of muscle, and fellow Americans Venus and Serena Williams and Jennifer Capriati have surpassed Hingis with their powerful hitting and



Lleyton Hewitt and Frenchman Sebastian Grosjean proved you did

Hingis, whose speed about the

"There's always plenty of things you need to work on. Definitely the speed and getting back into the groove of the game in general," she

"I'm still pretty much at the top but Hingis, who tore ligaments in her right ankle during a semi-final against Davenport at the Porsche Grand Prix in Germany last October, said she had enjoyed the breather

it happening much more often but it was nice to have this break and I'm

and new energy. "The ankle's fine. It's not a factor hope Jarkko Nieminen 6-3, 6-2 while fourth-seeded Czech Jiri Novak was stretched by Austria's Markus Hipfl before winning 3-6, 6-

rival struggled to come up with a game plan

span of a year, always had a battle on his hands against Schuttler's Nieminen tried to lure Schuttler to the net but often found himself

match, but I practised hard in December," said Schuttler, fast emerging as one of the brightest

Austrian qualifier Julian Knowle in three sets, 6-4, 1-6, 7-6.

sports daily Marca. thigh strain, while Swedish interna-Barcelona, who lost 2-0 to local tional defender Patrik Andersson also returns to action after nearly a



AP, Seoul

Four-time world champion Brazil has decided on South Korea's

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer ACROSS 38 High-58 Catches 19 U.S. 1 Emaciated lander some 5 Cranberry 39 Internet territory 8 "- for All 40 Bill's DOWN partner 42 Less Seasons" 1 "Guard 12 Conticider 2 Shipnental workbuilding coin 13 Eddie's oriented 45 Personify structure

co-star 14 Flower shop item 15 Bedframe piece 16 Lincoln or Ford 17 Muslim

20 Baby's 22 KGB's longtime 23 Downed 24 Rickey flavor 27 Belgian 32 Oklahoma 33 Mess up

34 Charged

35 Southern

21 Propeller 24 Hastv departure 25 "Apple 26 Newsstand "Dies -49 Pivot line "Green Acres' 50 Vacation-4 Written 28 Bush warning spokes-52 San-5 Popular man Fleischer dusky's sauce 29 Lithe 53 Pool 30 Overly 6 Eggs membe 54 Lucy of "Charlie's 8 Italian for tree creature "Come Angels" mander 55 Object of 9 Attractive 37 "Bravo!" 18 12/24 10 "Days of venera-38 Amen 41 Yogi's 56 Coaster memoirist 57 Sushi candidate inside Solution time: 28 mins.

11 Fit snugly 42 Trails the 43 Skater's leap 44 Charac terization 46 Killer Yesterday's Cryptoquip: BECAUSE I DIDN'T CRACK THE BOOKS MUCH ALL SEMESTER, I whale **47** "My Heart REALLY WENT DOWN IN HISTORY. Will Go On" singer The Cryptoquip is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the 48 Longings

51 "A pox

CRYPTOQUIP E BRUVCICEU SIBXGUG HIBZV VIDPCEUR. EQUIU XCR EBB PZSQ HBIDWWC XCIMCIU.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: I equals R

puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophi give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Cuba AFP, Havana

A shirtless Tyson, dressed in jeans

the better

AFP, Sydney

from Lindsay Davenport.



MARTINA HINGIS But Hingis, who has not won a major tournament since the 1999 Australian Open, pointed out that Australia's men's world No. 1

not need to be big to win. "It's nice to see that players like them have the chance," the 1.70m (5ft 7in) Hingis said.

court and racket skills helped her stay at No. 1 for 209 weeks, said she had been training in the mountains near her home in Trubbach, Switzerland, to regain her fitness and strength following a two-month break because of ankle surgery.

I have less to defend than last year."

from tennis. "It was the first time in my life that I hadn't played for so long," she said. "I'm not really looking forward to

anymore. Of course it's always in the back of your head but I've had injuries before and hopefully this year I'll be fine."