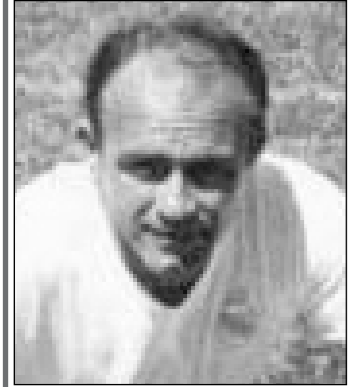


100 years of Real quality

Football
AFP, Madrid
Real Madrid follow up their election, a little over a year ago, as FIFA's 'Club of the Century' by holding their own celebrations on Wednesday.
While world football's governing



ALFREDO DI STEFANO

of the club's official name at the start of 1941, when the dictator General Franco finally granted them the right to use the appellation given to them in 1920 by King Alfonso XIII.
Franco continued to develop a close association with the club, which is one of the principal reasons Real has so many passionate detractors, especially in the Basque



LUIS FIGO

and Catalonia - both regions which suffered under Franco's rule.
However, it would be fair to say that Franco - never a great football fan - used the club as a political pawn in extending his own beliefs, across Spain and into Europe, during the heyday between 1956 and 1960, when they won five



RAUL GONZALEZ

consecutive European Cups.
Former club president Santiago Bernabeu, who was at the helm of Real Madrid for 45 years until his death in 1978, did not relish the trips to pay homage to Spain's leader after an important victory, or when he needed government backing over a football matter, despite the fact that the club profited from their



ROBERTO CARLOS

Factfile on Real Madrid

AFP, Madrid
Factfile on Real Madrid, who celebrate their centenary on Wednesday.
MAJOR HONOURS:
European champions (record eight times): 1956, 1957, 1958, 1959, 1960, 1966, 1998, 2000.
UEFA Cup: 1985, 1986.
Intercontinental Cup: 1960, 1998.
Spanish League champions (record 28 times): 1932, 1933, 1954, 1955, 1957, 1958, 1961, 1962, 1963, 1964, 1965, 1967, 1968, 1969, 1972, 1975, 1976, 1978, 1979, 1980, 1986, 1987, 1988, 1989, 1990, 1995, 1997, 2001.
Spanish Cup winners (17 times): 1905, 1906, 1907, 1908, 1917, 1934, 1936, 1946, 1947, 1962, 1970, 1974, 1975, 1980, 1982, 1989, 1993.
Most appearances: Manuel Sanchis (1983-2001) - 708 games (523 league, 67 Spanish Cup, 8 Spanish League Cup, 9 Spanish Super Cup, 58 European Champions' League, 6 European Cup Winners' Cup, 35 UEFA Cup, 1 European Super Cup, 1 Intercontinental Cup).
Record goal scorer: Alfredo Di Stefano (1953-1964) - 308 goals (216 league, 40 Spanish Cup, 49 European Cup, 2 Latin Cup, 1 Intercontinental Cup).
Biggest league win: Real Madrid 11 Elche 2 (Feb 7, 1960)
Biggest Cup win: Real Madrid 11 Barcelona 1 (Jun 13, 1943)
Biggest league loss: Espanyol 8 Real Madrid 1 (Mar 3, 1930)

FAMOUS PLAYERS FROM THE PAST:
Santiago Bernabeu (1911-1927), Paul Breitner (1974-1977), Emilio Butragueno (1983-1995), Jose Antonio Camacho (1973-1989), Alfredo Di Stefano (1953-1964), Paco Gento (1953-1971), Raymond Kopa (1956-59), Gunter Netzer (1973-76), Ferenc Puskas (1958-67), Hugo Sanchez (1985-1992), Ricardo Zamora (1930-36).

FAMOUS PLAYERS IN THE CURRENT SQUAD:
Roberto Carlos (Brazil), Luis Figo (Portugal - 2001 World Player of the Year), Raul Gonzalez (Spain), Zinedine Zidane (France - 1998 et 2000 World Player of the Year).

FASCINATING FACTS:
*** Real Madrid have never been relegated from the Spanish First Division. The worst ever season was 1947-48, when they finished 11th, and they have not finished lower than 6th since 1977.**
**** Santiago Bernabeu, after whom Real Madrid's current home is named, was a player, coach and then president of Real Madrid.**
***** There have been 22 different presidents of Real Madrid, of which the longest serving was Santiago Bernabeu, from 1943 to 1978.**
****** There have been 37 different coaches of Real Madrid since the role was first created in 1923, of which the longest serving was Miguel Munoz, from 1960 to 1974.**
******* 765 players have appeared for the Real Madrid first team, 583 of whom have been Spanish and the remainder from 31 different countries, from Argentina to Yugoslavia.**

Blatter speaks

AFP, Nicosia
Under fire FIFA president Sepp Blatter Saturday brushed aside bribery and corruption charges as an orchestrated smear campaign to discredit him during an election year.
The embattled FIFA president is accused of dishonesty over his handling of the world football body's rocky finances and buying votes to secure his 1998 election.
At a press conference in Cyprus, the FIFA chief was reluctant to answer questions concerning the allegations.
"Everything I had to say has been said," Blatter told a press conference in Nicosia on the election-rigging claims.
He said that a court in Zurich had already "closed the book" on this issue.
Blatter then urged journalists to consider why the accusations had surfaced at this time.
"Now it comes up at this period after four years, then you should put a question mark behind that," he said cryptically.
When pressed on the issue why he thought he was being victimised Blatter said: "It is because we are in an election year and there are, let's say, people who like to destabilise the actual president by defamation."
"But I'm already an election candidate supported by more than 100 associations and if there shall be another candidate he has until March 28 to announce his candidature."
Blatter was on a two-day visit of the island following an invitation by the Cyprus Football Association, which is backing the president's reelection.
No sooner had Blatter denied reports Thursday that he had bought his way to the presidency than he was accused by UEFA treasurer Mathieu Sprengers of denying in public that he had dipped into the 2006 budget to keep FIFA's ship afloat - while not rejecting the accusation in private.
FIFA was badly hit after the collapse of its marketing partner ISL with debts of 1.2 billion dollars.

Fergie blasts Dunn

Football
AFP, London
Manchester United boss Alex Ferguson said Monday that the performance of referee Steve Dunn in Sunday's 2-2 draw with Derby County could cost his team the defence of their English Premiership title.
Most of the post-match attention at Pride Park focused on Dunn's last-minute decision to deny Derby what would have been a third goal.
Dunn disallowed Malcolm Christie what the striker thought was a hat-trick when he ruled the forward had kicked the ball out of the grasp of United keeper Fabien Barthez.
While even Ferguson admitted that the goal "should have stood", the Scot insisted that earlier Dunn decisions had cost his team all three points.
He was adamant that Christie's first goal was offside and also said United should have had two penalties as well.
"It could cost you the title, that," he said.
"There was certainly an offside for their first goal, and I don't think there was any doubt about that."
"I thought we had a penalty claim early on and one right after half-time," Ferguson added.
"The linesman on the stand side had an absolutely horrendous game. He gave offside against Denis Irwin in the second half when he ran from 20 yards behind the ball. Twenty yards!
"It was an absolutely ridiculous performance by the linesman, and the referee was just so poor," he told United's own television station MUTV.
"Even I thought they had a winning goal and I think he's just a poor ref. These professional referees are supposed to bring a quality to the Premier League that transcends any doubts about referees' decisions and honesty, but that perfor-

mance was poor."
The result left United with 58 points from 29 matches, one more than second-placed Arsenal who have a game in hand.
Meanwhile, Derby are still second from bottom, level on points with League Cup winners Blackburn Rovers who have a superior goal difference.
Earlier Monday the Football Association issued a statement saying Dunn had been correct in disallowing Christie's late strike.
It read: "Following referee Steve Dunn's decision to disallow Malcolm Christie's goal against Manchester United on Sunday, he has been heavily criticised in certain quarters."
"However, the FA would like to make it clear the referee was perfectly correct to take such action under the laws of the game."
"They clearly state, 'The goalkeeper is considered to be in control of the ball by touching it with any part of his hand or arms.'
"'Possession of the ball includes the goalkeeper deliberately parrying the ball but does not include the circumstances where, in the opinion of the referee, the ball rebounds accidentally from the goalkeeper - for example, after he has made a save."
"The referee, was therefore, correct."
After the game Derby boss John Gregory was equally critical of Dunn over the Christie incident and claimed his side should have had a penalty as well.
"The goalkeeper did not have the ball under control. The referee said he had two hands on it. That's rubbish."
And, talking about Derby's spot-kick appeal, Gregory added: "Barthez chopped Christie down. If that is not a penalty then something is wrong with the laws of the game. The referee made a huge mistake."

Fans hold vigil for Iranian star

AFP, Tehran
Hundreds of Iranian football fans held a vigil here Monday at the hospital where coma-stricken former international captain Ahmadzadeh Abedzadeh is battling to recover from a brain haemorrhage.
Abedzadeh, a goalkeeper and star of Iran's 1998 World Cup campaign, was admitted to Kasra Hospital on Sunday and has been in a coma ever since. Hospital sources said Abedzadeh's life was not in danger however.
"We are here because he gave us so many moments of happiness and glory," one of Abedzadeh's well-wishers said outside the hospital here Monday.
The former goalkeeper became a folk hero in Iran when the team successfully qualified for the France World Cup four years ago, pulling off a series of saves in the memorable 2-2 play-off draw with Australia in qualifying.
He also kept goal for Iran in their politically charged first round match against the United States, a game dubbed the 'Mother of all football matches'. Iran won 2-1.

Ridsdale let off easy

AFP, London
Merseyside police confirmed Monday they would not be taking any action against Leeds chairman Peter Ridsdale following his controversial post-match walk round Goodison Park.
Following Sunday's goalless English Premiership draw with Everton, where Leeds supporters had continually chanted verbal abuse at club coach Brian Kidd, Ridsdale left his seat in the directors' box and walked round the ground to urge the malcontents to lay off David O'Leary's deputy and get behind the team.
That gesture may yet land him in trouble with the Football Association (FA) following Cardiff chairman Sam Hammam's notorious walkabout during the Welsh club's shock FA Cup victory over Leeds earlier this season.

Spanish Cup First scalp to treble?

Football
AFP, Madrid

Real Madrid will be hoping to secure the first leg of an unprecedented centenary-year treble here Wednesday when they face Deportivo in the Spanish Cup final.
Deportivo to the Spanish Cup final. Real the club lobbied successfully to have the Cup final staged in their own Santiago Bernabeu stadium and then negotiated their way through to face Deportivo La Coruna.
Millions of Real supporters around the world expect their team to comfortably lift the trophy, and hope they go on to win the league followed by being crowned the champions of Europe.
Not even during their halcyon era of 1956 to 1960, when Real won the European Cup five years in succession, did they also do the domestic double.
However, Deportivo might have a nasty shock in store for Real, despite the fact that the team with royal approval has not lost at home in any competition this season.
"It could be like the 1950 World Cup final, when Uruguay beat Brazil in the Maracana stadium, despite the fact that nobody believed it could happen," said Deportivo coach Javier Irureta.
Another who believes that the Galicians can cause an upset is the Dutch legend Johan Cruyff, who knows Spanish football intimately from his days as a Barcelona player and coach, and who is now a Spanish media pundit.
"All the pressure will be on Real," Cruyff said in Spanish sports daily Marca. "If they win, then everyone will just say that it was their destiny, but if they lose, it will be seen as a disaster. If Deportivo can repeat the form they had against Juventus in the Champion's League, then they could run out as winners."
However, if history is any guide,

then Real will lift the Cup for the 18th time, a huge tally compared to Deportivo's solitary victory in 1995.
The big worry for Real Madrid coach Vicente Del Bosque concerns the fitness of Luis Figo.
Figo is still recovering from a sprained ankle suffered two weeks ago and no decision on whether he will play will be made until Wednesday.
If the World Player of the Year is not ready then England midfielder Steve McManaman is likely to deputise, despite his lacklustre form of late.
Del Bosque is also expected to opt for Cesar Sanchez in goal, rather than Spanish number one Iker Casillas.
Cesar has played in Real's last two games. "And if I think it is convenient to play Cesar, then I'll do so without giving any more explanations," said Del Bosque.
Irureta's dilemma is over whether to use the Dutch striker Roy Makaay or his Spanish international Diego Tristan.
He has rarely played both men alongside each other this season, usually opting for one or the other to partner the World Cup-bound Juan Carlos Valeron.
Tristan is the team's top scorer with 12 league goals but Makaay scored the decider in their 1-0 win at Sevilla on Saturday, when Tristan was rested, and has proved himself reliable at finding the net in the past.
PROBABLE TEAMS
Real Madrid: Cesar Sanchez; Michel Salgado, Francisco Pavon, Fernando Hierro, Roberto Carlos; Ivan Helguera, Claude Makelele; Steve McManaman or Luis Figo; Zinedine Zidane, Raul Gonzalez; Fernando Morientes.
Deportivo La Coruna: Francisco Molina; Lionel Scaloni, Noureddine Naybet, Cesar Martin, Enrique Romero; Victor Sanchez, Mauro Silva, Sergio Gonzalez, Fran Gonzalez; Juan Carlos Valeron, Diego Tristan or Roy Makaay.

Trap not looking beyond finals

Football
AFP, Milan

Italy coach Giovanni Trapattoni has refused to rule out staying on at the helm of the national team after the World Cup in the summer, it was reported here Tuesday.
Trapattoni had previously indicated that he will move on when his contract expires on July 30, but his remarks in Tuesday's Gazzetta dello Sport indicate he is prepared to stay on at least in the short term.
"We could prolong it at least until the end of the year," said Trapattoni, who at the age of 62 has never had to apply for a coaching job and says he never will.
"But if someone calls me then I could go - because someone always calls me. But if they don't I could still do other things. I have always wanted to work with youngsters or I could even join world governing body FIFA's coaching staff."
But Trapattoni appeared to rule out a coaching job abroad, admitting he had struggled to master the German language when he was in charge of Bayern Munich.
"There is no chance of going to



GIOVANNI TRAPATTONI

England," said Trapattoni who replaced Dino Zoff in 2000 when the latter resigned after Euro 2000. "I tried to study English when I went to Juve, and then I went to Germany. Now I get mixed up between English and German. I can't really speak German, I just garble it."
Trapattoni has coached some of the world's biggest clubs in his career, including AC Milan, Juventus, Inter Milan, Bayern as well as Fiorentina and Cagliari.
He has one seven Italian titles, one German title, one European Cup and one Intercontinental Cup as well as a host of lesser prizes in that time.

Ronaldo expected in Italy Sunday

Football
AFP, Milan

Inter Milan's injury-plagued Brazilian star Ronaldo will return to Italy on Sunday after a month-long spell recuperating in Rio, the player has confirmed.
Ronaldo, who pulled a leg mus-



RONALDO

cle during a Serie A match against Piacenza in late December, has been in Brazil since the start of February.
The former world footballer of the year's prolonged presence in Rio, where he was guest of honour at the world-famous carnival last month, was initially reported to have irked Inter's coach Hector Cuper.
However the Italian league leaders later said Ronaldo was in Rio with their blessing, adding that there were 'climatic and psychological' benefits for the player by staying in the city.
According to Ronaldo's physical trainer, Nilton Petroni, the player's recovery is almost complete. "We did a series of 100 metre sprints on Monday and there was no pain or reaction," Petroni said.

15-year-old Milan boss?

Football
AFP, Milan

The 15-year-old son of AC Milan boss Silvio Berlusconi could replace his father as president of the Italian football giants, it was reported here Tuesday.
Luigino Berlusconi was among six people mooted by the Gazzetta dello Sport for the job, which will come vacant if Berlusconi senior steps down as expected.
Berlusconi is widely reported to be on the brink of relinquishing the president's post, to avoid a conflict of interests between his job as Italy's prime minister and his many business interests.
Tuesday's Gazzetta identifies five men and the boy, three of whom are members of the Berlusconi clan, as possible successors to the premier who took the reins at AC



SILVIO BERLUSCONI

Milan in 1986 and will remain the owner even if he quits.
The paper admits Luigino is a long shot but adds: "After his dad Silvio he is the biggest Milan fan in the family. He may be 15 but who knows?"
It goes on to suggest that Luigino could be given the title of president

with current AC Milan vice-president Adriano Galliani acting as a sort of Prince Regent, gradually grooming Luigino.
Berlusconi's oldest son Piersilvio and his brother Paolo have also been tipped to fill the position while AC Milan playing legend Franco Baresi, a member of the board, is also favoured by many.
Many feel Galliani would be the sentimental choice as he has been president in all but name since Berlusconi moved into the world of politics.
The least likely of the six candidates mentioned in the paper is Italian politician Fausto Bertinotti whose name was only mentioned as a joke by Paolo Berlusconi.
Like the centre-right prime minister, Bertinotti is a fanatical AC Milan fan but is also a hardline Communist. Paolo Berlusconi believes his brother could woo more left-wing voters by giving Bertinotti the job.

Angel dismisses transfer talks

Football
AFP, Bogota

"I hear rumours that I'm going, but as far as I know nobody has made an offer," said Angel, who has been linked with a move to Lazio, AC Milan and Parma.
"Unless that happens the situation is clear: I'm an Aston Villa player and I'm staying here till my present contract ends," said Angel, who signed a four-year deal with Villa from River Plate in January 2001.
"All my thoughts now are on the English championship and making sure that I give 100 percent in every match."
"Of course it's nice to hear clubs are interested in me - it means I

must be doing something right - but at the moment it's just rumour and speculation. The here and now is Aston Villa."
Angel, who scored in Villa's 2-1 win over West Ham on Saturday, said he had not been bothered by the sudden resignation of manager John Gregory and subsequent appointment of Graham Taylor.
"Mr Taylor spoke to me when I arrived and told me that he saw me as an important member of the squad and that has motivated me," Angel said.

Argentine govt threatens shutdown

AFP, Buenos Aires

The Argentine government could on Tuesday decide to suspend all matches from the country's top four leagues due to a wave of football related violence at the weekend.
A top government official, speaking under anonymity, told AFP: "... the decision to suspend all football matches from the top four leagues could be taken on Tuesday (following an emergency meeting between the Argentine federation and police chiefs)."
Over the weekend violent clashes left dozens of people, including 17 police officers, injured.
One fan is in a life-threatening condition after being assaulted with a knife, while another also had to be hospitalised after being shot.
The most violent clashes took place at the grounds hosting the River-Plate v Nueva Chicago and Boca Juniors v Chacarita Juniors matches.
In the month of February alone three people died due to football-related violence.

Nigeria look for foreign coach

AFP, Lagos
Nigeria will appoint a foreign coach for this year's World Cup following the sacking of Shaibu Amodu, it was reported here Tuesday.
"Plans are at an advanced stage to employ a foreign trainer for the World Cup," Nigeria Sports Minister Ishaq Mark Aku told weekly sports newspaper Sports at 7.
"We're discussing with sponsors and some friends of Nigeria and they have agreed to take care of his remuneration while he is with us," he added.
This new position is a sharp departure from that recently held by the sports minister that Nigeria did not take on a foreign handler for the World Cup.

Another Colombian tragedy

Football
AFP, Bogota

An official with a Colombian First Division club was shot dead here Tuesday, sparking fears about football security in the violence-wracked country.
The murder comes at a time when Colombian football is trying to reassure officials in neighbouring countries over security.
Several clubs from other coun-

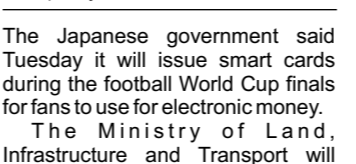
tries due to compete against Colombian teams in Copa Libertadores ties have voiced fears for their safety, asking for games to be moved to other venues.
Meanwhile Venezuela announced on Monday it would not send any representatives to the South American Games, due to be held in Colombia from April 6-16, citing security concerns.

5,000 smart cards for fans

AFP, Tokyo

The Japanese government said Tuesday it will issue smart cards during the football World Cup finals for fans to use for electronic money.
The Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport will

issue 5,000 cards for purchase by World Cup ticket holders as part of an experiment in using smart money.
The cards will be programmed to provide up to 3,000 yen (22.6 dollars) -- with up to 1,000 yen able to be used for public transport in Sapporo in northern Japan, up to 1,000 yen to be used at selected Japanese shops and official World Cup outlets and up to 1,000 yen in



selected shops in South Korea, a ministry official said.
The cost of purchases will be deducted from the electronic tally by special machines that will be set up in tournament co-hosts Japan and South Korea, the transport ministry said in a statement.
The pilot project will be conducted in cooperation with World Cup sponsor MasterCard International, the statement said.