

USA start WC preps May 1

AP, Chicago
The US soccer team will gather in Cary, North Carolina, on May 1 for its final training camp before leaving for the World Cup.

The Americans will practice at State Capital Soccer Park, which has six fields and opens next month in a suburb of Raleigh, the US Soccer Federation said Friday.

After the 10-day camp, the United States have exhibition games against Uruguay on May 12 at Washington; against Jamaica on May 16 at East Rutherford, New Jersey; and against the Netherlands on May 19 at Foxboro, Massachusetts.

The US team plans to leave for South Korea on May 23 in preparation for its World Cup opener against Portugal on June 5. The Americans then play South Korea on June 10 and Poland on June 14.

Between now and the final training camp, the United States have exhibition games at Germany next Wednesday, against Mexico in Denver on April 3 and at Ireland on April 17.

Adams told to be serious

AFP, London
Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger warned veteran centre-back Tony Adams it was "now or never" if the defender wanted to be an active member of the north London club's bid for an English Premiership and FA Cup double.

Adams is set to give Arsenal a boost following their midweek Champions League exit with his comeback in Saturday's FA Cup quarterfinal replay against Newcastle for only his seventh start of an injury-ravaged season.

Fellow England international Ashley Cole is also expected to return to the starting line-up after a knee injury.

The last time Adams returned after a foot problem in the FA Cup fifth round against Gillingham last month though, he suffered a setback.

Wenger knows a similar recurrence could rule the 35-year-old out for the rest of the season, when he will reconsider his stated plans to retire.

"Tony has a chance to play. We have got him through some hard training sessions so we will see," said Wenger.

"We have many centre-backs and they have all done well. If we want to give him a chance to come back then it is now or never."

"I rushed him back against Gillingham and I made a mistake. Since then, he has been very patient," the Frenchman added.

And Wenger insisted his side had the resilience to land some silverware for the first time since 1998.

"We will respond well and going out of Europe gives us a better chance to win the championship and the FA Cup," added Wenger.

Tebily finally leaves Celtic

AFP, London
Ivory Coast international Olivier Tebily put an end to his miserable stay at Scottish champions Celtic on Friday by signing for English First Division side Birmingham City in a 700,000-pound (one-million-dollar) deal.

Tebily moved to Celtic for 1.2 million pounds in July 1999 when he was signed by former coach John Barnes but he struggled to settle into the defence.

Despite recent injuries to key defenders, manager Martin O'Neill still opted to call on youngster Stephen Crainey and left Tebily frustrated on the bench.

Celtic have negotiated a sell-on clause into the deal which will entitle the club to a percentage of any future profit Birmingham might make on the player.

Leverkusen after Landon

AFP, New York
German league leaders and Champions League quarterfinalists Bayer Leverkusen have opened negotiations with American World Cup player Landon Donovan.

A league source said Friday that the 20-year-old San Jose player, who signed a deal with the German club in 1999 but left for the Earthquakes in 2001, has been approached with a new deal that would begin at the end of the World Cup.

Donovan will play for the United States in the World Cup finals that start in late May in Japan and South Korea.

The Earthquakes open the defence of their Major League Soccer (MLS) crown on Saturday.



Newcastle United's Sylvain Distin (L) tries to intercept Arsenal's Fredrik Ljungberg during their English Premiership clash at Highbury in London on Saturday.

Arsenal gun Magpies down

Football

AFP, London
Arsenal bounced back from their European exit in midweek to book a place in the FA Cup semi-finals with a 3-0 home win over Premiership rivals Newcastle on Saturday.

The Gunners, who failed to make the quarter-finals of the Champions League on Wednesday, stormed into a two-goal lead in the opening eight minutes of their quarter-final replay at Highbury.

Robert Pires lashed home Arsenal's opening goal with a stunning right foot curler before setting up Dennis Bergkamp for an easy tap-in.

England defender Sol Campbell headed the third goal early in the second half as Arsenal stroled to a comfortable victory to set up a semi-final clash against Middlesbrough at Old Trafford on Sunday, April 14.

Bergkamp said the win was the perfect tonic after crashing out of Europe.

"We've got enough experience in the team and in management that we know we have to respond in such a way," he told Sky Sports.

"You can't just wait and let the game come to you, you have to go out and try as hard as possible, and that's what we tried and we managed to do it."

Gunners' boss Arsene Wenger's joy at the result was tempered by an injury to Pires after half an hour.

"We could lose Robert for a while

because he has twisted his knee. It's very sad," Wenger said. "I'm worried because his knee is swollen and that's not a good sign after the game."

"He could be out for a while. We hope we get him back very quickly but the signs are not too good."

Arsenal's clean sheet pleased Wenger, and the Frenchman praised goalkeeper Richard Wright as well as Tony Adams and Ashley Cole, who both returned from injury.

"Richard is a great keeper and he was brilliant today," Wenger added. "He's unlucky to have such a keeper as David Seaman in front of him."

"Tony Adams worked hard and was very good in the air - it was the best I've seen him physically for a long, long time."

"You could see he needed the games - and it was the same with Ashley Cole, who's been out for seven weeks."

"We have a great belief and the way we responded today shows that belief is shared by the team."

Newcastle manager Bobby Robson said his side paid dearly for starting so poorly.

"It is a sad day for us," he said. "The fans got up at four in the morning, we got up 15 minutes after the kick-off."

"We got off to a wretched start and were never able to get back into the game. Arsenal were far better, far more intelligent and took their chances well. We lost to the better side."

The game was only 62 seconds old when Pires opened the scoring. Bergkamp turned Nikos Dabizas

inside out and released Pires on the left flank and the France international bent a shot from the edge of the area past Shay Given and into the corner of the net.

Dutch striker Bergkamp struck the bar from 18 yards moments later but was not to be denied in the eighth minute when he rounded off a flowing Arsenal move which began deep in their own half.

Brazilian midfielder Edu kept possession cleverly before feeding Sylvain Wilford on the left wing.

He picked out compatriot Pires who drilled in a low cross for the unmarked Bergkamp to slot home from close range.

Newcastle were in desperate need of inspiration and it almost arrived from Andy O'Brien, but his flicked header from Nolberto Solano's cross sailed agonisingly wide.

Arsenal then suffered a setback when Pires, hotly tipped to win the Footballer of the Year award in England this season, was carried off on a stretcher.

Given pulled off a superb save to keep Newcastle in the game just before half-time, diving smartly to smother Fredrik Ljungberg's goalbound effort.

Campbell's glancing header made it 3-0 in the 50th minute and Bergkamp came close to adding a fourth but was once again denied by the woodwork.

Newcastle striker Carl Cort had the ball in the Arsenal net 15 minutes from time with a near spot header but his effort was ruled out for offside.

FIFA presidency not Kaiser's cup of tea

AFP, Berlin

German legend Franz Beckenbauer has ruled out a bid for the most powerful job in football, saying he had no immediate plans to run for the FIFA presidency.

Beckenbauer had been touted as the perfect candidate to replace beleaguered FIFA president Sepp Blatter, who faces a bitter election battle to keep his job.

But Bayern Munich president Beckenbauer - a World Cup winner as player and coach with West Germany - has said he has no interest in taking on the job.

"For the moment, I'd say no," Beckenbauer told Saturday's edition of Bild newspaper. "Once we've made a success of hosting the 2006 World Cup I'd rather take up climbing and play a bit of golf," he said.

Beckenbauer also said he expected Blatter to prevail in his election campaign against African candidate Issa Hayatou, saying he did not expect corruption allegations to damage the FIFA supremo.

"After four years, two Somalis have come forward and said there was corruption when Blatter was elected to the presidency in 1998," Beckenbauer said. "Why have they waited until now to come forward? It seems blatant to me," he added.

The collapse of FIFA's marketing partner ISL - which has hit FIFA's finances - could not be blamed on Blatter either, Beckenbauer said.

"The collapse of ISL is the fault of ISL - not Mr Blatter," he told the paper.

Zidane caution

AFP, Paris

Zinedine Zidane has sounded a warning to his country's World Cup rivals, saying France are stronger now than when they won the 1998 tournament.

Zidane, speaking ahead of France's friendly with Scotland next week, dismissed concerns over the world champions' defence and said France would fear no-one in Japan and South Korea.

"I think we've improved, despite what people keep saying about our defence," the Real Madrid star told RTL radio. "We've got a solid, strong group of players, and our attacking game has got better."

France are drawn in Group A with Uruguay, Senegal and Denmark, and kick off the tournament against the Senegalese in Seoul on May 31.

"There's no team that worries us," Zidane said. "Senegal will be really up for it and we'll want to pull off a surprise," he said.

L'pool seek Bowyer

AFP, London

Liverpool are planning a bid for Leeds' United's controversial midfielder Lee Bowyer according to press reports on Saturday.

Liverpool manager Gerard Houllier is prepared to pay up to 15 million pounds (21.3 million dollars) to land 25-year-old Bowyer, the Daily Mail and Sun newspapers reported.

The England under-21 international was last year cleared of involvement in an attack on an Asian student after a retrial in which his team-mate Jonathan Woodgate was found guilty of affray and sentenced to 100 hours of community service.

Bowyer's relationship with Leeds has been strained since the trial and was made worse by his initial refusal to pay a heavy fine for being drunk on the night of the attack on the student.

However, Bowyer has begun negotiations with Leeds over a new five-year deal but the reports said he was spotted in a hotel in north Wales on Monday with Liverpool's assistant manager Phil Thompson.

Bowyer joined Leeds from Charlton in 1996 for 2.6 million pounds (3.7 million dollars).

Yugoslav squad against Brazil

AFP, Belgrade

Yugoslav coach Dejan Savicevic on Friday named his squad for the World Cup warm up friendly international against Brazil in Fortaleza, north eastern Brazil, on March 27.

Goalkeepers: Dragoslav Jevric (Vitese/Ned), Dragan Zilic (Sartid). Defenders: Zoran Mirkovic (Fenerbahce/Tur), Nenad Dzodic (Montpellier/Fra), Sinisa Mihajlovic (Lazio/It), Mladen Krstajic (Verder/Ger), Dejan Stefanovic (Vitese/Ned), Boban Dmitrovic (GAK/Aus).

Midfielders: Slavisa Jokanovic (Chelsea/Eng), Nikola Zatic (Fenerbahce/Tur), Predrag Djordjevic (Olympiakos/Gre), Ognjen Koroman (Dynamo Moscow), Radovan Krivokapic (Vojvodina), Igor Duljaj (Partizan), Sasa Ilic (Partizan), Branko Boskovic (Red Star).

Strikers: Predrag Mijatovic (Fiorentina/Ita), Savo Mlossevich (Real Zaragoza/Spa), Mateja Kezman (PSV Eindhoven/Ned), Danko Lazovic (Partizan Belgrade).

Stadium ban on Roma



AFP, Nyon

Italian champions AS Roma have been banned from their Olympic Stadium for one European match following a brawl between club officials and players at the end of a Champions League match against Turkish club Galatasaray on March 13.

European football's governing body UEFA on Friday also fined AS Roma 200,000 Swiss francs (120,000-dollars) and severely criticised security arrangements for the match.

Galatasaray received a 40,000 Swiss franc (24,000-dollar) fine but two of its players escaped punishment following the meeting of UEFA's disciplinary body.

Roma coach Fabio Capello was suspended from the touchline for one European match while players Francisco Lima and Francesco Totti were suspended for three matches, UEFA said in a statement.

Argentinian striker Gabriel

Batistuta was suspended for one match.

Fighting broke out between the Italian and Turkish sides at the end of the Champions League Group B match in Rome, dragging in Capello as well as players.

Roma were subsequently eliminated from the Champions League after losing 2-0 to Liverpool on Tuesday.

Galatasaray hailed the UEFA decision as fair. "The decision is just. It is very good," club official Mete Razikli told the Anatolia news agency.

Razikli said that Istanbul-based club had sent several tapes of the brawl to UEFA, which he said, clearly showed that the fighting was triggered by Capello and his players.

"These sanctions are normal. It is what we expected," he said.

UEFA earlier warned European club officials to wipe out the "unacceptable face of football" following recent violence at European championship matches.

UEFA said Roma were warned at half-time by officials about tension on the pitch between the two

teams but failed to take any action.

"A lack of control by state police was evident particularly through their excessive interventions," UEFA noted, while interventions by Roma stewards "were deemed inappropriate".

Galatasaray officials had slammed the reaction of Italian police, while Roma players accused the Turkish players of provoking them.

Roma will now have to play their next home European match at least 300 kilometres (200 miles) away from the Olympic stadium in Rome.

Earlier UEFA director-general Gerhard Aigner told club executives during the Champions League and UEFA Cup draws the violence showed the sport's ugly side.

"This I would qualify as the unacceptable face of football," said Aigner, warning that UEFA would take "concerted action" against the problem.

"I urge all those involved in the game to show restraint, they have a responsibility to their fans, particularly youngsters who hold them in high regard," Aigner said.

Pele's shirt for sale

Football

AFP, London

The shirt worn by Brazilian great Pele during the 1970 World Cup final goes under the hammer here next week after auctioneers Christie's insisted it was genuine.

Christie's estimate that the famous canary yellow No.10 jersey will fetch between 30-50,000 pounds (43-71,000 dollars) in the sale on Wednesday.

Christie's spokesman Rik Pike told this news agency on Friday that this was a world record estimate for a football shirt.

The shirt is being sold by former Italy international Roberto Rosato, one of Pele's opponents in the 1970 final which Brazil won 4-1, but who is now recovering from a tumour.

However, the authenticity of the shirt was called into question last month when Brazil's O Globo newspaper reported victorious 1970 coach Mario Zagallo saying he possessed the shirt that Pele had worn until half-time.

The one he wore in the second half was in the possession of the team's physical trainer Admildo Chidol, his son told O Globo.

However, Pike insisted that both Pele and Rosato had confirmed that the shirt being auctioned was the real thing.

"Rosato, who was named defender of the tournament, and Pele swooped shirts at the end of



PELE

full-time," said Pike. "Obviously, he could not receive his winner's medal bare-chested so was given another shirt and this is where the confusion might have arisen," Pike explained.

"I am 100 per cent certain the shirt we are selling is genuine." Pele, still by common consent

What motivated the French

Football

AFP, Paris

Liverpool manager Gerard Houllier says French footballers had to shake off their loser's mentality before they could win the 1998 World Cup.

Houllier, who made a triumphant return from emergency heart surgery to lead Liverpool into the European Champions League quarterfinals on Tuesday, said the success of the current French national side stemmed from their failure to qualify for the 1994 World Cup when he was in charge.

"It was important to get rid of the principle that 'taking part is the most important thing'," said Houllier, quoted in Friday's Liberation newspaper.

"That's what is now changing. When you lose you can react in three ways. Either you say it was in the hands of the gods' which is a sort of atavistic defeatism. Or you can say it was the referee's fault."

"Or you can say nothing at all, get down to work and try to find out why it didn't work."

Houllier said the turning point for French football came when France lost to Bulgaria in 1993 and thus

failed to qualify for the 1994 World Cup finals, prompting Houllier to resign to be replaced by Aime Jacquet.

"I think we became stronger and stronger after that match," said Houllier.



HOULLIER

"A lot of things then fell into place. (Marcel) Desailly and (Youri) Djorkaeff were starting out... and then Aime Jacquet knew exactly what we'd started, where we wanted to go next and what we wanted to do."

The Liverpool boss said young players such as Thierry Henry and David Trezeguet were given a great

deal of big-match experience at lower age groups before being thrown into the big stage.

"When David Trezeguet and Thierry Henry lined up for the penalty shootout against Italy in the quarter finals of the 1998 World Cup, you knew that beforehand they had already played in a lot of junior and under-21 competitions."

"So they were mentally prepared and strong. And that's all down to the work over the last 10 years."

Houllier also pointed to the experience of playing abroad -- most of the squad for this year's World Cup finals earn their living outside France -- as a key factor in the players' development.

The French influence has probably been greatest in English football and Houllier credited Eric Cantona, who won league titles with Leeds and then Manchester United, and Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger for blazing a trail across the Channel.

"Cantona and his success at Leeds and Manchester broke a lot of taboos."

"And Arsene Wenger who won the league and cup double in 1998 and brought quality players like Nicolas Anelka and Patrick Vieira to Arsenal," he added.

Dudek rates Bayer highly

Football

AFP, London

Liverpool goalkeeper Jerzy Dudek believes his club's European Champions League quarterfinal opponents Bayer Leverkusen are the best side in Germany.

Gerard Houllier's side managed to avoid a potential last-eight clash against Manchester United, Barcelona or Real Madrid in Friday's draw and instead must face German league leaders Leverkusen over two legs.

Leverkusen have never even won the German league title and have always been in the shadow of Bayern Munich and Borussia Dortmund.

But Polish international Dudek has personal experience of the German side from his time playing in the Netherlands and believes the English giants are in for a tough test. He said: "I played against Bayer Leverkusen when I was at Feyenoord."

"It was only a friendly match but I could see that they are a very good side. In fact, I think they are the best footballing side in the German league."

Dudek admitted however that the draw could have been tougher for Liverpool, who qualified for the last

eight of Europe's top club competition with a superb 2-0 win over Italian champions AS Roma as Houllier returned to the sidelines five months after heart surgery.

"We'll need to be excellent in both legs if we want to qualify," he added on the club's official website, www.liverpoolfc.tv.

His German team-mate Dietmar Hamann, whose advice will be valuable to the Merseysiders in the run-up to their clash with his fellow countrymen, concurred: "I believe Bayer Leverkusen are probably the most under-rated."

"There are those that might think it would be the easiest draw but when you look at the group in overcoming Arsenal and Deportivo La Coruna, that says it all."

The draw sets up the possibility of an all-British semi-final clash, with Liverpool meeting United -- who must face Deportivo -- in the last four should both teams progress.

But no-one from Liverpool was looking that far yet.

Dudek added: "It looks an exciting draw for the semi-finals but first we have to deal with Bayer Leverkusen."

"If we don't approach those two games in the right frame of mind there will be no semi-finals for us."

Back on domestic duty, Liverpool face Chelsea in the Premiership on Sunday.

"They are a football club with a lot

Acting to be dealt with



AFP, Seoul

A top FIFA official on Saturday blamed inflated salaries and prizes in football for the cheating that the international governing body is determined to stamp out at this year's World Cup.

A World Cup referees seminar which ended in Seoul reaffirmed it would clampdown on diving and play acting at the tournament to be held in South Korea and Japan from May 31.

The world body calls the phe-

nomenon "simulation" and FIFA director of development George Cumming said it would be "a major focus for FIFA at this World Cup as we think that simulation is a major problem in the game."

"They are not just trying to cheat the referees, they are also trying to cheat the game of football," he told a press conference.

Cumming blamed a desire to win that "becomes winning at all costs in some cases" for the increased cheating in recent years.

"There is a tremendous pressure because of the prizes in the game. There are tremendous salaries and prizes."

"But some of the players have taken it beyond fair play and we

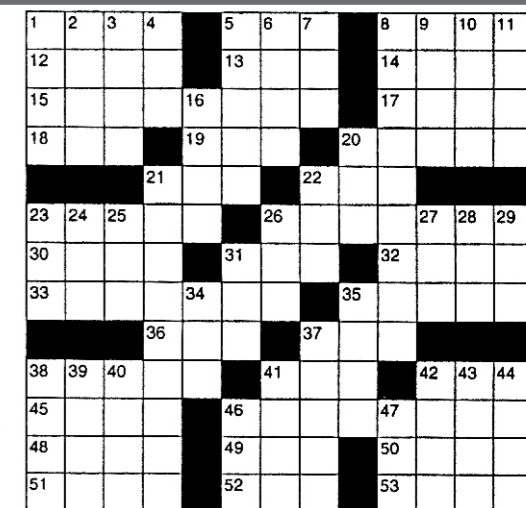
have got to be vigilant to prevent this from happening."

The 72 referees and assistant referees at the seminar spent a lot of time studying videos of notorious dives and play-acting from previous World Cups and other tournaments. FIFA officials said all 32 nations taking part in the World Cup will also be warned in advance about the clampdown.

Cumming said all 71 referees who took part passed physical and medical tests during the four day seminar. Top Italian referee Pierluigi Collina was ill and could not take part but is expected to be given special dispensation as he has already passed the tests this year.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS 37 Buck's male canceler 5 Despondent 8 Head of France 12 - stick 13 Drily humorous 14 Stale 15 No speedster 17 Narc's unit 18 Listening device 19 - Altamoz 20 Repeated word in Poe poem 21 Charged bit 22 Call for help 23 Glistening 26 Sculptures 30 Stitched 31 Believe 32 Land in the water 33 Cop on horseback 35 Conflation indication 36 Embrace 37 Buck's male canceler 38 Do the pots 41 Cowboy's sweetie 42 Ball-bearing 45 Indigent 46 Idler's activity 48 "Omnia vinci" 49 Possessive unit 50 Enthusiastic, plus 51 "You Go - Head" 52 Approvals 53 Disarray 21 At leisure 22 Pigs' digs 1 Basilica area 23 Fast flyer Solution time: 21 mins. TRIAF EBB FIDTO TIRAO GITH AVOW MENTU ONO SELL SATTIN GOAT CTD DRAMAF WINKLER KINTAF TIEAIE BOWLEERS ESTITATE ZIOU JEDI ION SING OMENTUB EDIE BLINK ARIA EDIS



CRYPTOQUIP

Q Z R Z JZFPXOF UAN ZSN

ISZEG INNS. ENK RQJAL GZE

Q UZLWA RE IOZG ZXP WKO. Yesterday's Cryptquip: LOBSTERS SHOULD LEARN TO PLAY BASEBALL. THEY COULD BE INCREDIBLE AS PINCH HITTERS.

Today's Cryptquip Clue: R equals M The Cryptquip is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.