



FOOTBALL CAN WAIT! (L) Brazilian superstar Ronaldo taking a dip in the swimming pool of Lisbon's Hotel Meridien on April 16. (R) Rockstar Luis Figo leads other Portuguese national team players in the recording of a song on April 15 at a recording studio in Lisbon. The song is intended to be the Portuguese national team theme during World Cup.

BRAZIL v PORTUGAL

One half for Ronaldo

pool of the Hotel Meridien in Lisbon after the amazing Sunday that saw him protagonist with Inter. "I had cramps already after ten minutes of the second half and my body is still aching; it was all worth it

friendly. Ronaldo will play one half of the game. "We are satisfied with his participation. He is making every effort to get a place in the squad and he will be used in just one half, as planned," said Scolari, known to Portuguese speakers as 'Felipao' (Big Phil).

goals this season while turning out for Sporting. Many pundits thought Jardel would get the callup he had longed for when Scolari took over the Brazilian team, as "Felipao" helped launch his career while manager at Gremio.

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GERMANY v ARGENTINA

Injury-pegged giants

Germany and Argentina limp into a pre-World Cup friendly here on Wednesday with both countries counting the cost of the wear and tear of club football.

Germany's last match, a 4-2 win over the United States last month. Voller has called up 33-year-old Martin Max of Munich 1860 for his first international inclusion as a reward for hitting 16 goals this season to make him the top scorer in the Bundesliga.

League and the Primera Liga this season. With a fully fit squad, Argentina are one of the favourites for this year's World Cup finals in South Korea and Japan.

WARM-UPS THIS WEEK

Austria v Cameroon, Belgium v Slovakia, Croatia v Bosnia-Herzegovina, Denmark v Israel, England v Paraguay, France v Russia, Germany v Argentina, Ireland v United States, Italy v Uruguay, Japan v Costa Rica, Mexico v Bulgaria, Northern Ireland v Spain, Norway v Sweden, Poland v Romania, Portugal v Brazil, Scotland v Nigeria, Slovenia v Tunisia, South Africa v Ecuador, Turkey v Chile

URUGUAY v ITALY

Nostalgia in the air

Since then Uruguay's football fortunes have declined - their semi-final appearance in 1970 is the last time they came close to a final - while Italy remain one of the giants of the world game and have since added another World Cup in 1982.

Bomb threat at Denmark-Israel tie

Threats ahead of Wednesday's friendly international between Denmark and Israel were being taken seriously after a bomb scare, Danish police said.

The World Cup warm-up match is taking place against the backdrop of Israel's military campaign in the West Bank and on Monday the Danish Football Association (DBU) received a threatening letter signed "Free Palestine".

Denmark have been drawn in group A at the World Cup finals with world champions France, Senegal and Uruguay.

RUSSIA v FRANCE

Anelka's exam day

Youri Djorkaeff has one foot in the door of France's World Cup squad - but Nicolas Anelka is still trying to barge his way in as the world champions prepare to face Russia here Wednesday.



Nicolas Anelka, doing some ball juggling during a practice session of the French national team in Clairefontaine southwest of Paris on April 15.

But while Djorkaeff now appears likely to make Lemerre's final 23 for the World Cup, the jury is still out on Anelka, who has only been given limited opportunities to show glimpses of his old self at Anfield.

"Nicolas has the qualities of a top-level player, but maybe now he has to show them," said Lemerre. "I've picked him because I want to see him play. If he comes on the pitch five minutes from the end I won't get much information from that. I hope to give him as much playing time as possible."

injury. Despite injuries to key players like Robert Pires, Trazeguet and some others, Lemerre has an embarrassment of riches at his disposal. His counterpart Oleg Romantsev on the other hand, has been juggling his resources as World Cup qualifiers Russia seek to pull off a repeat of their 1999 victory at the Stade de France.

PARAGUAY v ENGLAND

Crippled hosts

Sven-Goran Eriksson will dig deep into his reserves for England's World Cup warm-up match against fellow qualifiers Paraguay on Wednesday after injuries robbed him of several key players.

On Saturday, the former Ipswich player scored before setting up the winning goal, as the Magpies clinched a come-from-behind 3-2 win at Premiership strugglers Derby.

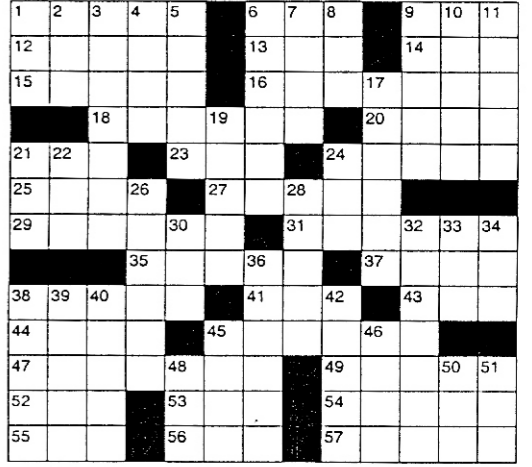
Surprise call-up Matt Jansen is likely to feature at some stage as Eriksson experiments with his attacking options. The Blackburn Rovers striker has earned a late chance to earn a place in the World Cup squad following a string of impressive performances at club level.



Juan Pablo Sorin, the Argentina midfielder, controls the ball on his head during a team training session in Ostfildern-Ruit near Stuttgart on April 16 ahead of Wednesday's friendly international against Germany.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS 38 Drive away 57 Becomes weary some 17 Despot 19 Selects 21 Ostrich's kin 22 - Tin Tin 24 Linguist 25 Mario 26 Injurious 28 Polite refusal 30 One of the Techs 32 Small falcon 33 Historic period 34 New Jersey fort 36 Coffee-flavored liqueur 38 Arrested 39 Summon forth 40 Sat 42 Summarize 45 Clock sound 46 Charisma 48 - judicata 50 Actor Kilmer 51 Curvy character?



CRYPTOQUIP FT EWOL EWM YRRG ASLGGJ JLWT WZ OA'M MV OGQSLWAOGJ O'F QQA AV YR ZTRZ! Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF YOU'RE THINKING OF BUILDING A KITE, IT MIGHT BE A SMART IDEA TO USE FLYPAPER. Today's Cryptoquip Clue: J equals G