

Light, camera, football!

AFP, Beijing

China's hugely popular football coach and star striker are making their acting debuts in a steamy soccer-based drama, as television stations go World Cup-crazy ahead of the country's imminent debut at the event.

Bora Milutinovic and pin-up player Yang Chen have cameos in "Zhuang Zhi Xiong Xin", or "Lofty Ideals, Great Ambitions", relentless previews of which have bombarded viewers in recent days.

Elsewhere on the nation's screen, commercials and even English language lessons are centered around China's efforts at the World Cup next month.

"Midfield. Defense. Attack," a voice pronounces in slow, clear English on a program teaching the basics of a footballing vocabulary, as the words flash on the screen above their Chinese translations.

On another channel, a drama features a taxi driver taking a beating from three customers for the apparent crime of dismissing the appeal of football.

The game has long been revered by hundreds of millions of fans in China, and with excitement mounting ahead of the World Cup finals, television programmers -- not to mention advertisers and newspapers -- are cashing in.

Chinese fans endured 44 years of sometimes agonisingly close shaves at qualification before Serbian coach Milutinovic reaped success with a team now hailed, along with their manager, as national heroes.

Both Milutinovic and his charges, who arrive in South Korea this weekend ahead of the tournament, are inescapable.

Milutinovic's smiling face and broken Chinese have been splashed all over sets in recent days via seemingly non-stop advertisements for air conditioners, DVD players and other products.

China's football press estimates Milutinovic has earned up to three million dollars in commercial ventures, although the veteran coach insists he is not doing it for the money, but to better "popularize Chinese football".

Other advertisements tug unashamedly at the heart-strings of nationalistic fans. In one, a little boy approaches a Chinese player and rather than asking him for an autograph, hands the man soft drink can filled with soil.

"There are home fields everywhere," the boy simpers at the player, who is later seen pouring the Chinese dirt onto a foreign football pitch, drawing strength from the wise words.

The acting performances come in a drama centred around a love triangle involving the beautiful foreign-educated daughter of a soccer club owner, the club's coach and its top player.

Although the show breaks political boundaries -- the daughter is played by a Taiwanese star, the coach is an actor from Hong Kong while the player is a heartthrob actor from the mainland -- fans will be more interested in the acting skills of Milutinovic and Yang.

"Playing soccer is hard, but acting is even harder," admitted Yang, a German-based striker who will be China's main hope for goals in their first round games against Brazil, Costa Rica and Turkey.

Yang did not say whether the circumstances surrounding his move to Eintracht Frankfurt are mirrored in the drama. In its plot, the star player runs away to Germany after he is spurned by the club owner's daughter -- who is herself madly in love with the coach.

Yang's role in the show is to coach the lovelorn player back into shape, just in time for him to be selected by Milutinovic for the Chinese squad.

But with China playing poorly in a series of warm-up matches over recent weeks, it remains to be seen if their real World Cup drama will have such a happy ending.



PHOTO: INTERNET

Argentines (L-R) Juan Sebastian Veron, Mauricio Pochettino, Walter Samuel, Pablo Cavallero, Pablo Aimar and Gabriel Batistuta jog at the J-Village camp in Naraha, north of Tokyo yesterday.

Batigol wins 9 war

Number 10 Diego's only



AP, Naraha, Japan

Argentina coach Marcelo Bielsa said Wednesday that Gabriel Batistuta will wear the No. 9 shirt at the World Cup, fueling speculation that the AS Roma striker may have won the battle with Hernan Crespo to lead Argentina's attack.

Bielsa revealed his final 23-man squad at the team's training camp. It's a list, however, that ends with No. 24 -- assigned to goalkeeper Roberto Bonano -- after Diego Maradona's No. 10 was definitively withdrawn from use in homage to the midfield legend.

The rivalry for a starting place between Batistuta -- Argentina's

all-time leading scorer -- and Lazio's prolific striker Crespo has been intense and the source of frenzied speculation in Argentina.

While the No. 9 may have been handed to Batistuta merely as a mark of respect for his track record, the announcement of the squad numbers added fuel to the fire.

Despite constant pressure back home -- and from the likes of Maradona -- to play Batistuta and Crespo together, Bielsa insists the two players are too similar in characteristics.

Bielsa also favors a 3-3-1-3 formation, with two wide players supporting a sole striker.

He has said Batistuta and Crespo would most likely feature together only if Argentina has to chase a game.

Bielsa is spoiled for choice with an enviable array of talent that

cruised through the qualifying stages. The Argentines have since been installed as firm favorites to win its third World Cup title.

SQUAD

1, German Burgos, 2, Roberto Ayala, 3, Juan Pablo Sorin, 4, Mauricio Pochettino, 5, Matias Almeyda, 6, Walter Samuel, 7, Claudio Lopez, 8, Javier Zanetti, 9, Gabriel Batistuta, 11, Juan Sebastian Veron, 12, Pablo Cavallero, 13, Diego Placente, 14, Diego Simeone, 15, Claudio Husain, 16, Pablo Aimar, 17, Gustavo Lopez, 18, Kily Gonzalez, 19, Hernan Crespo, 20, Marcelo Gallardo, 21, Claudio Caniggia, 22, Jose Chamot, 23, Ariel Oretga, 24, Roberto Bonano.

The spine of the team will be formed by defender Roberto Ayala

(No. 2), midfielder Juan Sebastian Veron (No. 11) and either Batistuta or Crespo (No. 19.) up front. But the goalkeeping position is still up for grabs, with German Burgos and Pablo Cavallero fighting it out.

Burgos was given the No. 1 jersey and Cavallero No. 12. Other numbers of note were No. 14 for Diego Simeone, Argentina's most capped player, while Claudio Caniggia, recovering from injury, was given No. 21.

But it was the No. 9 shirt that captured the imagination of the Argentine press corps at the training camp.

Hungry for a scoop, newspapers also noted what they considered another sign: Bielsa called Batistuta over for a chat, which, they noted, lasted just over two minutes, 30 seconds. Moments later, "Batigol" burst through to score the match winner.

Brazil bigger, better!



AP, Kuala Lumpur

Coach Luiz Felipe Scolari said Tuesday that a new, more powerful Brazil, capable of wresting a record fifth World Cup, has emerged from the ashes of a disappointing qualifying campaign.

"When we started the qualifying tournament, we did not act as a team, and that affected our performance," Scolari told a news conference. "Now we have a very good team. I think the situation is entirely different."

The star-studded squad got down to serious training Tuesday, a day after arriving in this Southeast Asian country from Spain for its last training stop before heading to South Korea.

Toward the end of a two-hour morning session, the strikers Ronaldo, Rivaldo, Denilson, Luizao and Edilson -- along with attacking midfielder Ronaldinho -- carried out shooting drills under Scolari's watchful eyes.

Rivaldo appeared to have recovered from knee problems that forced him to sit out several Spanish league games for Barcelona and Brazil's 3-1 victory in last weekend's friendly against Catalonia.

At a second session Tuesday evening, Scolari put the team through set pieces. Ronaldo, Roberto Carlos, Rivaldo, Ronaldinho -- all dead ball specialists -- took turns at free kicks and penalties.

Each goal was greeted by loud cheers from a small contingent of fans -- most of them relatives of Brazilian expatriate workers in Malaysia -- who sang songs and waved banners during the session at Kuala Lumpur's Bukit Jalil stadium.

The world will have its first glimpse of Scolari's new side, complete with the Ronaldo-Rivaldo partnership, when it faces Malaysia in a friendly Saturday.

"The starting lineup here will probably be the same as the match in Catalonia, with the additions of

Rivaldo and Roberto Carlos," Scolari said.

Team captain Emerson, who plays for Roma, said that Brazil's Group C opener against Turkey on June 3 will be difficult because the first match "is always tough. It is a psychological thing."

But Brazil is expected to easily dominate the group, which also includes China and Costa Rica. Emerson said that he wants to make up for the loss to France in the final four years ago.

"I was not happy about the final outcome against France," Emerson said. "But in life, we can't always win. I only hope that things will change this time around."

Emerson picked Paris St. Germain star Ronaldinho -- part of the vaunted Triple R offense with Ronaldo and Rivaldo -- as Brazil's player to watch.



LUIZ FELIPE SCOLARI

"He is in excellent shape and he showed this in our last few matches," said Emerson, Brazil's midfield enforcer. "I am sure he will do well in the World Cup."

Despite having some of the best players in the world, Brazil only scraped through qualifying to make the cut for South Korea and Japan, maintaining its record of playing in every edition of the World Cup.

Scolari made no apologies for stressing hard defense over the samba-style offense that Brazil has long prized.

"Our objectives are clear," Scolari said. "Under me, I run the team like an enterprise. We must show results."

Spanish armada arrive



AP, Seoul

The Spanish squad arrived in South Korea on Tuesday to acclimatise and prepare for the soccer World Cup, where it hopes to shed its perennial "underachiever" tag.

Led by coach Jose Antonio Camacho, some 40 players and staff flew to Kimhae Airport near Busan on the south coast. Spain is among the early arrivals for the World Cup, which is being co-hosted by South Korea and Japan. Soccer's quadrennial showpiece opens May 31 in Seoul and ends June 30 at Yokohama, Japan.

After receiving wreaths of flowers from South Korean soccer officials, the Spaniards were driven by bus to nearby Ulsan, an industrial

city where it will set up its training camp. The city, one of 10 South Korean World Cup venues, is 300 kilometers (186 miles) southeast of the capital, Seoul.

In Group B, Spain will play first-round matches against Slovenia on June 2, Paraguay on June 7 and South Africa on June 12.

Boasting many of the world's top clubs and players, Spain has regularly been tipped among the favorites to win a title only to be knocked out in the early stages.

Spain, 8th in FIFA's world rankings, will make its 11th World Cup appearance this year. Reaching the semifinals in 1950 is Spain's best performance to date.

Camacho hopes that this year will be different for his talent-laden lineup, which features Real Madrid duo Raul Gonzalez and Fernando Morientes as well as the imaginative Diego Tristan of Deportivo La Coruna, the domestic league's top

scorer with 21 goals.

In midfield, there's Barcelona's Luis Enrique Martinez, Lazio's Gaizka Mendietia and Deportivo's Juan Valeron, who many observers have begun comparing with the world's top midfielder, Zinedine Zidane of France.

Spain topped its European World Cup qualifying group with a 6-2-0 record and a 21-4 goal difference. Its opponents were Austria, Israel, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Liechtenstein.

On Sunday, England's injury-plagued World Cup squad flew to South Korea for its final training before heading for Japan for the tournament's cutthroat Group F competition against Argentina, Sweden and Nigeria.

The English will play South Korea in a tuneup match Tuesday and will fly to Japan on Saturday for another tuneup against Cameroon the following day.

Round 3, Draw in Rajshahi

Competition Information, Prizes and Rules

Information

- A. The Daily Star Rangs Toshiba World Cup Quiz 2002 is a series of competitions on World Cup Soccer being held in Japan & South Korea from May 31 to June 30. There will be SIX rounds of competition.
- B. Each round will have a separate draw with attractive prizes from the house of RANGS TOSHIBA as per announcement.
- C. Participants of all the SIX rounds will automatically qualify for the Bumper Draw, which will have even bigger prizes.
- D. For each round, a set of questions including a photographic Quiz will be published in The Daily Star.
- E. Names and addresses of all prize winners will be published in The Daily Star.
- F. Winners will have to collect their prizes from The Daily Star office after satisfactory authentication of their identity.
- G. Any taxes or levies, as per law, for all the above prizes will have to be borne by the prize winners.

PRIZES UP FOR GRABS

Prize	Item	Model	Winner
1st	One 21" Toshiba Flat TV	CT 21D3XE	YOU
2nd	One 8.5 CFT Toshiba Refrigerator	SR R18BPT	YOU
3rd	One Toshiba Semi Auto Washing Machine	7H 7000B1	YOU
4th	One Toshiba Rice Cooker	1.8Ltr. RC 186KE	YOU
5th	One Toshiba Dry Iron	TA-A20C	and YOU
6th	A SPECIAL PRIZE WILL BE UP FOR GRABS FOR THE LOCALS WHO ATTEND A QUIZ DRAW. SPECIAL PRIZE WILL BE GIVEN IN EVERY ROUND. SO, WATCH OUT FOR THE DRAW IN YOUR AREA.		

QUIZ SCHEDULE

Round & Draw	Starts	Answers must reach by noon	Lucky Draw for prizes
1 Barisal	12 April	25 April	26 April
2 Khulna	26 April	9 May	10 May
3 Rajshahi	10 May	23 May	24 May
4 Sylhet	24 May	6 June	7 June
5 Chittagong	7 June	20 June	21 June
6 Dhaka	21 June	28 June	29 June

Rules

- 1. Residents of Bangladesh are eligible to participate in The Daily Star Rangs Toshiba World Cup Quiz 2002. Employees of The Daily Star and Rangs Toshiba and their immediate family members shall not be eligible to participate.
- 2. All entries must be submitted in the original form printed in The Daily Star. Photocopies or reproductions in any form will not be accepted.
- 3. Forms will have to be cut along the dotted lines.
- 4. Participants are to put a tick (X) marked in the box alongside their answer to each question.
- 5. A person may send numerous entries for each round.
- 6. Entry forms should be completed with a ballpoint pen.
- 7. Name, address, father's name and particulars of participants must be clearly written. Each entry form must also bear the signature of the participant and date.
- 8. Incomplete forms will not be accepted.
- 9. Entries must reach the office of The Daily Star on or before the closing date marked on the entry form. Late entries will not be accepted.
- 10. Envelopes of entries must be clearly marked "Star World Cup Quiz 3."
- 11. Entries may be hand delivered or posted to The Daily Star, 19, Karwan Bazar, Dhaka-1215.
- 12. Entries will be placed in a sealed box for the draw to be held on a notified date in public in presence of invited guests and Quiz participants, if any.
- 13. Winners will be decided on the basis of correct entries drawn out from the box.
- 14. Entering this Quiz competition shall be construed as the respective agreement by each participant to abide by all rules, instructions and guidelines as may be issued by The Daily Star.
- 15. Any decision of The Daily Star in the conduct of the Quiz competition's including the answers selected as correct shall be deemed final and binding on all participants and shall not be called in question and/or challenged in any manner whatsoever.
- 16. The Daily Star management, in their absolute

Japan ready for anything



REUTERS, Tokyo

Japanese police, in an apparent bid to cool hooligan hype in local media, have said they do not expect foreign troublemakers to wreak havoc during the World Cup but were prepared for anything -- even September 11-style attacks.

"We will be strict in dealing with those who break the law, but we believe that most of the visitors will be good-natured soccer fans," said Yasuhiko Nishimura, director of the security division at the National Police Agency (NPA).

"We don't think that there will be a large number of hooligans coming into the country," he told a news conference attended by foreign journalists and Tokyo-based diplomats.

Nishimura's comments come a day after a member of the Japanese imperial family expressed concern that too much emphasis on the risk of hooligans may ruin the atmosphere of the tournament which

starts on May 31. Prince Takamado, a cousin of Japan's Emperor Akihito and an honorary president of the Japan Football Association, said that continued reports of police anti-hooligan drills could make local residents of venues concerned about hosting the tournament.

He also told Kyodo news agency that locals might paint all foreign visitors with the same brush if over-reporting to the sort of excessive reporting on hooligans seen in some Japanese media.

"If people avoid foreigners as a whole without recognising exactly who are the hooligans, ordinary tourists are likely to leave Japan with an image of the Japanese as cold-hearted," Kyodo quoted the prince as saying.

Japanese media have played up the dangers of hooligans, even dubbing the northern city of Sapporo the "most dangerous" venue due to the June 7 match between Argentina and England, whose fans have a reputation for causing trouble.

Nishimura said police were ready for the worst, not just in case

troublemakers but also for September 11-style strikes on stadiums or attacks using biological or chemical weapons.

Thousands of police, both in uniform and in plain clothes, will be on guard in stadiums, no-fly zones will be implemented over stadiums and hi-tech military radar planes will patrol the skies nearby.

Security at nuclear power plants will also be stepped up during the tournament, Nishimura said.

But he told the news conference that the NPA was not aware of any attacks planned against the World Cup.


"We have not received any information as of now, of any specific terrorist attacks targeted at the World Cup," he said. Japanese and U.S. sources have also said the FBI will send agents to Japan to give advice on security during the tournament.

Police have said they plan to mobilise the most manpower ever and Nishimura said that during the first round matches, between 3,400

to 7,700 officers will be on duty in and around the stadiums.

The Daily Star RANGS TOSHIBA World Cup Quiz, Round 3 Ends May 23, 2002

Tick (X) the correct answers

1. Last team to qualify for 2002 World Cup finals	Brazil	<input type="checkbox"/>	Colombia	<input type="checkbox"/>	Uruguay	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Who was the top scorer in the 1998 World Cup	Owen	<input type="checkbox"/>	Suker	<input type="checkbox"/>	Zidane	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. How many teams participated in the first World Cup	13	<input type="checkbox"/>	16	<input type="checkbox"/>	32	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Germany won their first World Cup in	1954	<input type="checkbox"/>	1960	<input type="checkbox"/>	1970	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Who is this?		<input type="checkbox"/>	Ronaldo	<input type="checkbox"/>	Beckham	<input type="checkbox"/>
Name (Mr/Mrs/Ms).....Age.....						
Father's name.....Occupation.....						
Address.....						
Telephone (if any).....Signature.....Date.....						

Write with a ballpoint pen in clear BLOCK letters.  
Cut along the dotted lines and mail to OR drop in the Quiz Box at The Daily Star  
You may send as many entries as you like. Envelopes of entries must be clearly marked "Star World Cup Quiz 3."

JOIN The Daily Star BANDWAGON TO BOOST FOOTBALL IN BANGLADESH