



PHOTO: AFP

WE'RE HERE TO REPLACE KEANE! Irish fans in a party mood at Niigata train station yesterday.

IRELAND VS CAMEROON

Keen to forget Keane

REUTERS, Niigata

Ireland manager Mick McCarthy will urge his side to banish the haunting spectre of Roy Keane in their World Cup opener against Cameroon on Saturday.

McCarthy's shock decision to axe his captain and only world class player after a bust-up has left Ire-

land's preparations in disarray and McCarthy's position vulnerable.

Even though midfielder Keane will be watching from his home in England, his massive presence will hang heavy over Ireland's performance in Niigata as African champions Cameroon seek to capitalise in the first game of the finals to be staged in Japan.

McCarthy may welcome the

chance to switch attention back to events on the field, but he knows only victory will be enough to justify his brave deeds at the end of what he called the "worst week of my life."

He told reporters: "Footballers have a wonderful gift to walk over that white line and forget about other things going on, and not worry about anybody else."

But given striker Niall Quinn's

admission that the players have been left "shattered" by the acrimonious Keane affair, McCarthy needs to summon the spirit of 1990 like never before.

Then, as a player under former coach Jack Charlton, McCarthy

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Showmen's time to show off

REUTERS, Hiratsuka

For the real showmen of the World Cup, scoring a goal is only the start of a complex ritual that demands just as much energy and passion -- the celebration.

Gone are the days when a goal scorer would politely wave to the crowd and jog back to the centre circle.

Even kissing and hugging your team mates, considered scandalous at one time, is now somewhat old hat.

These days, the celebration has become an art form in its own right through which a player can give full vent to his excitement, anger or plain weirdness as well as test the limits of officials' tolerance.

For every showman there is a wallflower, like Japan's top midfielder Hidetoshi Nakata who often just smiles shyly and turns away when he scores.

But just as the World Cup that kicks off later on Friday will throw up new names in every area of the pitch, it is bound to make some players famous for their quirky celebrations.

It could well be Nigeria's young striker, Julius Aghahowa, who likes to round off a goal with a spectacular series of handsprings and a trade-

mark backflip somersault.

He says fans have no need to worry that he will tone down his gymnastics for Nigeria's campaign, which begins against Argentina on Sunday.

"When I started scoring I decided to introduce it as my own kind of celebration," the lightning fast 20-year-old said at the Nigeria training camp near Hiratsuka in eastern Japan.

"I saw that a lot of people liked it and loved it and they kept on asking for more so I decided to stick to it."

Aghahowa's way of expressing himself is at least more dignified than the celebration chosen by one his countrymen after scoring against Greece in the 1994 World Cup.

Winger Finidi George sprinted to the corner flag, where he and several other players proceeded to raise a hind leg in a mystifying impression of urinating dogs.

England striker Robbie Fowler also stretched the boundaries of taste when he knelt down near the touchline and pretended to sniff cocaine after a goal for his former club Liverpool in 1999 -- an attempted swipe at allegations he had taken drugs.

It backfired badly and a British

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PHOTO: AFP

THAT CHARACTER IS CALLED 'BIG PHIL'! A father shows his son a cartoon of Brazil coach Luis Felipe Scolari during a World Cup exhibition at Rio de Janeiro on May 30.

'Only Carlos can do it like Beck'

AFP, Tsuna, Japan

Roberto Carlos is David Beckham's only serious rival as the world's deadliest player from free kicks, according to England coach Sven-Goran Eriksson.

The introduction of a new, fast-flying ball for this World Cup has led to predictions that set pieces and players with the capacity to make the ball dip and swerve could play a bigger role than ever in the tournament.

It is clearly not a development that Eriksson is losing any sleep over.

"To be honest if you have Beckham out there, sitting on the bench is more comfortable. I think he's the best in the world," the Swede said on Friday.

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PHOTO: INTERNET

NO BLACKERS AROUND! A German national looks for a ticket to enter Seoul World Cup Stadium yesterday.

Ticket touts disappear

REUTERS, Seoul

Ticket touts, scourge of World Cups past, were either out of business or deep undercover on Friday's opening day of the 2002 tournament.

FIFA officials went so far as to declare World Cup touts here extinct and visits to haunts and locations usually frequented by illegal ticket sellers did not draw an offer to either buy or sell.

Approaches to taxi drivers and members of the public outside the Seoul stadium where Friday's France-Senegal match takes place, as well as nearby subway stations, drew only antagonism.

There were also no signs at any locations of tickets changing hands for money.

"Four years ago in France we had a major problem with the black market," said FIFA spokesman Keith Cooper recalling the last World Cup played there.

"It's the case in all major events whether you are talking about La Scala in Milan or Wimbledon tennis, that tickets are in demand," he told a news conference.

"But the system introduced here appears largely to have reduced, if not eliminated, the black market."

"Maybe I am speaking too soon, but we are fairly pleased with the achievement we've made in eliminating the black market here ... and I hope those are not famous last words," Cooper added.



PHOTO: AFP

NO PLACE LIKE AWAJI: England superstar David Beckham feels the pleasure of Japanese serenity at Awaji on May 30.

Number 10, an attacking myth

REUTERS, Pusan

Pele wore it, Argentina tried to get it withdrawn in honour of Diego Maradona and France could rue its absence in their World Cup opener against Senegal later on Friday.

It is the number 10 shirt -- arguably soccer's most potent symbol of attacking flair and creativity.

Players don't sulk if they can't wear the number five on their back. No one is really bothered if they're given the number 11 rather than the number eight.

But certain shirt numbers come with a weight of history and expectation -- none more so than the number 10.

But what exactly does it symbolise and what kind of player gets to


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Round 4, Draw in Sylhet

(See May 28 issue of The Daily Star for competition information, prizes and rules)

The Daily Star RANGS TOSHIBA World Cup Quiz, Round 4 Ends June 6, 2002

Tick (O) the correct answers

- Bangladesh first played in qualifiers for the World Cup of 1982 1986 1990
- Pele's debut World Cup was in 1954 1958 1970
- France won 1998 World Cup under the captaincy of Deschamps Zidane Desailly
- Which player scored most goals in a World Cup Pele Fontaine Maradona
- Who is this?  Figo Beckham Batistuta

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 4."

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