

Tofting retires

AFP, Wakayama
Danish midfielder Stig Tofting announced here on Sunday he was retiring from international football in the wake of his country's 3-0 defeat by England in the second round of the World Cup.



RED DEVILS GEARING UP: Belgium coach Robert Waseige (C) supervises his team's practice at Kobe Wing Stadium yesterday.

England breathing football

AFP, London
The emphatic victory over the Danes in the Japanese city of Niigata has set the stage for a classic quarterfinal tie with Brazil, who must first overcome Belgium.

England cricket captain Nasser Hussain also congratulated the nation's footballers. Hussain, leading England in the third and final Test against Sri Lanka here at Old Trafford, where veteran batsman Alec Stewart scored a century, said in a statement: "It has been a great day for British sport and Alec Stewart."

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will still be singing over my Sunday lunch at this rate, I wouldn't have missed it for the world." In the Kro Bar in Manchester, northwest England, owned by Dane Mark Ruby, fans from both countries watched the clash either draped in England's red and white St George flags or wearing traditional Viking helmets, depending on their allegiance.

He couldn't take it!

AP, Tokyo
A Japanese soccer fan died Sunday after suffering a heart attack at the stadium just before Sunday's Senegal-Sweden World Cup match, police and fire department officials said.

No neighbourly love

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equipped to do so and, for once, it seems the players might actually believe it. "We are playing some great football at the moment and we are confident we can get through," goalkeeper Oscar Perez said on Saturday.

attacking from the first minute." Mexico beat Ecuador and Croatia in their group and got the better of Italy before drawing 1-1 with their brand of quick inter-passing and clever lay-offs that is very difficult to defend against when it goes well.

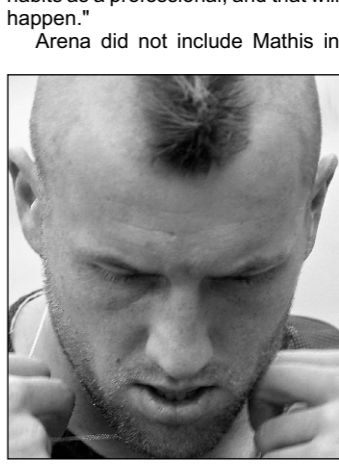
CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer
ACROSS 36 Harbor structures 1 Took a powder 23 Hot spot in Helsinki 37 Perry Mason's clients 2 Glittery fabric 3 Leave out 24 Stencil 4 Rampart 25 C.S.A. soldiers 26 Unpaid 27 Quaker's address saying, 28 Football inter-mission 7 "The Student Prince" composer 33 "Little Women" quartet, e.g. 35 Tackle's team-mate 36 School org. 38 Duck down 39 Gets closer 42 Terrible guy? 43 Pleasant 44 Marri-ment 45 Enervate 46 Expert 48 "The Gold Bug" author

CRYPTOQUIP
R F K K N N K E R Z Y N
T X E T L R K Z L V E W H Z V P
X Y Z - N V E J Y R Y V E K J P X E A L .
R F K H W Y A K N V W J N X L F
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IN SCHOOL, I ASSUME SHARPSHOOTERS MUST PAY ATTENTION IN "TRIGGERNOMETRY" CLASS.
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: N equals C
The Cryptoquip 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.

CUP CORNER
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"Whatever does one stand to lose against the magic "R"s (Ronaldo, Rivaldo, Roberto Carlos, Ronaldinho)? Nothing!" claimed the newspaper La Derniere Heure.
"Any defeat other than a rout will be considered honourable."
ONLY FOR GUUS
AFP, Seoul
Guus Hiddink may be a foreigner, but he can have South Korean citizenship any time he wants for his success in transforming the national football team, the government has made it known.
The team and their Dutch coach have been showered with acclaim and gifts since beating Portugal 1-0 on Friday to reach a second round clash with Italy.
The Dutchman earned a million dollar bonus for meeting the Korean Football Association's target of a second round place, media said amidst reports linking Hiddink to a move to Dutch team PSV Eindhoven.
Now fans' demands that Hiddink be given Korean nationality are being taken seriously by the government which has said it is prepared to bend the normally tight immigration rules for the new national hero.
Justice ministry officials told the Yonhap national news agency that Hiddink would be given nationality if he wanted, even though he does not meet normal criteria for a passport.
BLATTER VOTES FOR BLATTER
AFP, Berlin
FIFA President Sepp Blatter has reiterated his view that the Oceania conference deserves an automatic qualification spot at the World Cup finals.
Blatter said the fact that the nation which wins the 2002 World Cup will have to enter the qualification round for the next tournament meant that a place would be freed up for nations such as Australia.
"I believe that Oceania deserves a straight qualification place," Blatter told the Welt am Sonntag newspaper.
"The fact that even the world champions no longer receive an automatic qualification place means their place could be taken by Oceania."

Mad Max Mathis

REUTERS, Chonju
Mad, bad, mohicaned striker Clint Mathis is the X factor in the U.S. team that takes on Mexico on Monday for a place in the World Cup quarter finals.
When on form, he is dangerous and unpredictable, strong in the air and on free kicks, and known to shoot from pretty much anywhere - the sort of player who creates goals out of nothing.
But in the last month, coach Bruce Arena has questioned the fitness and hard-partying lifestyle of the 25-year-old firebrand from Georgia, who missed most of the 2001 season after surgery on an injured knee.
"Clint really wants to move forward, he has got to bend a little bit towards conforming to the way professionals on big clubs have to act," Arena said.
"I think he's got a real good future if he can just develop some better habits as a professional, and that will happen."
Arena did not include Mathis in the team that notched up a famous 3-2 victory over Portugal in their first



CLINT MATHIS
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group D game.
He came back in style in the next game when he scored against South Korea to give the Americans a 1-1 draw but failed to shine against Poland on Friday, who scored twice in the first five minutes and went on to win 3-1.
So Mathis will be keen to prove he is back on top form on Monday and parlay a strong showing into a chance to play professionally in Germany, Italy or England.
"My life could change drastically after two months," Mathis said before the World Cup.
"You've got to take the bull by the horns. It's not going to help me or the team to go out there and worry about failing. I know if I didn't have the ability, I wouldn't be here."

Cavalier days over

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vincing scoreline, the Central Americans carved out enough chances to have scored half a dozen goals.
The Brazilians have been bombarded with Scolari's videos since they left home more than a month ago, and they have also been given detailed instructions on how to open up the packed Belgian defence.
"I'm sure they know absolutely everything about us and we know 80 percent or 90 percent of everything about them," said Scolari.
Rivaldo, who scored three of his team's first round goals, said: "We know we will have problems. If they played on the counter-attack against Russia, you can be certain they will play with the 11 in defence against us," said the former World Player of the Year.
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PROBABLE TEAMS

Brazil: (Formation 3-5-2; Jersey numbers in the beginning): 1-Marcos; 3-Lucio, 4-Roque Junior, 5-Edmilson; 2-Cafu, 8-Gilberto Silva, 6-Roberto Carlos, 19-Juninho, 11-Ronaldinho; 10-Rivaldo, 9-Ronaldo.
Belgium: (Formation 4-4-2; Jersey numbers in the beginning): 1-Geert De Vlieger; 15-Jacky Peeters, 3-Glen De Boeck, 16-Daniel Van Buyten, 5-Nico Van Kerckhoven; 11-Gert Verheyen, 10-Johan Walem, 18-Yves Vanderhaeghe, 8-Bart Goor; 7-Marc Wilmots (captain), 22-Mbo Mpenza.
Refere: Peter Prendergast (Jamaica)

Plus-Minus

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continued criticism of his defence but his angry gesticulations on the touchline suggest that even he is worried by some of the lapses. Scolari said after the Costa Rica game that he would lock his players up in a room and show them a video of their worst half hour in an attempt to correct their mistakes.
BELGIUM STRENGTHS: Captain Marc Wilmots, taking part in his fourth World Cup, continues to impress with his goal threat from midfield and he has scored three already. Team is physically strong and experienced, difficult to break down.
BELGIUM WEAKNESSES: Rigid 4-4-2 formation favoured by coach Robert Waseige allows little room for flexibility. Waseige has been loathe to play striker Wesley Sonck, leaving the attack short of pace. Defensive injuries and lapses cost the team in a disappointing group campaign when they drew with Japan and Tunisia before beating Russia. Flemish-speaking media have already turned against the coach.

Tvangle

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through Oliver Neuville, and it was probably the first time they had really penetrated the Paraguayan defence. Rudi Voeller's side will know they will have to lift their game against better sides, but for now, they will be satisfied, because in Germany, it doesn't matter how you get the job done, as long as you get it done.
Which is the philosophy England adopted during the first round? Saturday against Denmark however, they played with more flair, and finished the game off in the first half itself. Denmark never looked like a side that belonged in the last 16 of the World Cup, especially the goalkeeper, Thomas Sorensen. His performance between the posts showed what Denmark missed with the departure of Peter Schmeichel. In fact, all three goals that England scored could have been avoided if the Danes had been more careful. The first and third were both

goalkeeping errors, and on the second one, the ball got through to Owen only because a Danish defender deflected the ball onto him. The English defence, which continues to look the best in the tournament so far, never going to allow Tommason and co to get three goals back, and in the second half, the game just petered out. David Beckham had his best game since his return, but he will know he can do better, and Emile Heskey has probably got himself at least one more start with the goal he scored. England may not match up to many of the teams on a man to man basis, but this side has the spirit to lift its game on the big occasions and play beyond themselves. They will wait for the result of the Brazil versus Belgium game now, and surely hope for Belgium, but whoever they play, Sven Goran Eriksson's men are sure to fight till the end.

Last of the Latinos

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where - Turkey and their endless arguing, Portugal who were involved in ugly scenes against South Korea, and Germany and Cameroon, who produced a vicious first-round match.
Former Brazil striker Tostao, who played in the 1970 World Cup team and is now a newspaper columnist, thinks South American soccer has been homogenised by Europe, where so many of the continent's top players now earn their living.
"In the past, the difference between the European and South American schools was clear.
"In Brazil and the rest of the world, science and the work of coaches brought advances but were given too much importance. They stopped the enjoyment and playing around. Football became an adults' game, serious and scientific.
"South American football copied the pragmatism and tactical discipline of the Europeans, who themselves learned a lot from the creativity and ability of the South Americans. It's all become the same, and that's what we've seen in this cup."
Pre-tournament favourites Argentina, Ecuador and Paraguay appeared to have peaked during the 18-match qualifying campaign.
Argentina were deprived of key defenders Roberto Ayala and Nelson Vivas due to injury while coach Marcelo Bielsa, who barely altered his team during the qualifiers, chopped and changed before they went out in the first round's "group of death."
The only thing Bielsa stood by

was his refusal to field strikers Gabriel Batistuta and Hernan Crespo together in attack, even when Argentina were pressing desperately against Sweden in their final game.
Paraguay, who sacked coach Sergio Markarian after the qualifiers for what appeared to be political reasons, had their moments but could never reproduce the flowing football they had played in the previous 12 months.
In spite of everything, the line between success and failure was very thin.
Argentina needed only to convert one of a flurry of chances against Sweden to have progressed.
Perhaps Bielsa is now ruing his decisions to leave the gifted Javier Saviola and Juan Roman Riquelme behind and pick veteran Claudio Caniggia, who did not kick a ball in anger but was still sent off - from the substitutes' bench - during the Sweden game. Uruguay also wasted a handful of opportunities against France, when they drew 0-0, and would still have qualified if Richard Morales had managed to put away a last-minute header in their 3-3 draw with Senegal.
Their team, however, is young and could go further in four years' time.
Paraguay were sunk by a late German goal in the last 16 as history almost repeated itself - they went out to a golden goal against France in the second round four years ago - but could have easily avoided the Germans had they kept their nerve and won their first round group.

Shell-shocked

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during the last 15 minutes, but he shrugged when asked if he was proud that the team had advanced to the second round by pulling off a draw that ousted two-time champion Argentina.
"It doesn't matter," he said.
The game was broadcast live at 8:30 a.m. (0630 GMT) in Sweden and many bars and restaurants with televisions opened early to accommodate fans.
Swedish laws prohibit alcohol sales before 11 a.m., but an exception was made in some cities for beer during the World Cup, which opened in Seoul, South Korea, on May 31.
Sweden, which finished third in the 1994 World Cup in the United States and lost in the final at home in 1958, missed the tournament four years ago.