

Collina may run final

REUTERS, Yokohama
All six officials for the World Cup semifinals on Tuesday and Wednesday are from Europe following widespread criticism of inexperienced linesman and referees at the tournament.

The likelihood now is that Italy's Pierluigi Collina, generally accepted as the best referee in the world, will run the final in Yokohama on June 30. The vastly-experienced Urs Meier of Switzerland will referee the Germany v South Korea match in Seoul and Kim Milton Nielsen of Denmark takes charge for the Brazil v Turkey game in Saitama, FIFA said. Their appointments show FIFA has heeded complaints that poor decisions by inexperienced officials, who came from outside the traditional soccer hot-beds of Europe and South America, cost the likes of Spain and Italy dearly at the finals.

Collina, 42, from Viareggio, has already refereed two matches at the finals including the highlight clash of the first round which ended in a 1-0 group F win for England over Argentina. He also handled co-hosts Japan's exit 1-0 at the hands of semifinalists Turkey in the second round in Miyaki. The Italian was named the best referee in the world for the fourth time in January. His impressive CV of top matches includes refereeing the 1996 Olympic final won by Nigeria. England manager Sven-Goran Eriksson summed up his appeal: "Collina, he is a guarantee -- I guess he's one of the best, if not the best referee, in the world today."

WC awards

REUTERS, Yokohama
The most entertaining team at the World Cup finals will receive an award at the end of the month-long tournament for the first time. FIFA, world soccer's governing body, said five awards will be given out after the final on June 30 in Yokohama: Golden Shoe Award for the top goalscorer. If two or more players finish with the same number of goals, their "assistants" will be counted to separate them. Golden Ball for the most outstanding player, voted for by media attending the finals. Fair Play Award to the team with least bookings and red cards. The team's general behaviour will also be taken into consideration. At present Belgium narrowly lead Sweden.

Award for the most entertaining team, which will be voted for by fans on the FIFAworldcup.com website. Yashin Award for best goalkeeper. Named after late Russian goalkeeper Lev Yashin, this will be decided by FIFA's Technical Study Group.

Ronaldo trains

FROM PAGE 16
tournament's joint top-scorer on five goals along with team-mate Rivaldo and Germany's Miroslav Klose.

But he is not worried if one of the others beats him to the Golden Boot as long as Brazil win the event to make up for their 3-0 final loss four years ago to France. "I am not worried about being top scorer - I just want to get as many goals as possible to help Brazil win the World Cup. That is all I'm thinking about at the moment."

Meanwhile in another scare for Brazil, goalkeeper Marcos limped out of the training session after colliding with his teammate Edilson. However doctor Runco played down the incident and said there was no question of Marcos missing the semi-final. "We took him off as a precaution. He's got a bruise on his thigh but he's fine," Runco said. Juninho Paulista is likely to win a place back in the starting lineup in place of the suspended Ronaldinho. Juninho, who was dropped for the England game, played in midfield during the training session.



PHOTO: AFP

FORGET THE PAST, CONCENTRATE ON FUTURE: Turkey coach Senol Gunes tries to make his boys understand something during a practice session at Komaba Stadium near Saitama yesterday. Turkey take on Brazil, who have already beaten them in the first round, in the second semifinal tomorrow.

Want the Cup only

AFP, Saitama

Brazil striker Ronaldo insists the hard work he has put in to recover from serious knee injuries can have a happy ending with him helping his country to land a fifth World Cup.

Invited to make a television appearance Sunday evening as part of the tournament's FIFA World Cup this week's show in Saitama, where Brazil are preparing to face Turkey in Wednesday's semi-final, Ronaldo said he hopes to be back in time from a thigh muscle injury. "I have played a lot of games and as you may know I wasn't able to play for a couple of years," Ronaldo said in allusion to his struggles to overcome career-threatening knee injuries.

"It's hard work - but I have three more days to get better," said the 25-year-old, who went off after an hour in Friday's win over England. Insisting he fully intended to be involved against the Turks, Ronaldo added that "I am going to give absolutely everything for this World Cup."

The Inter Milan star's five goals have been instrumental in taking the South Americans through to the last four and he netted against the Turks in his side's opening group match. Ronaldo was pleased to be asked about his son Ronald by 60 young fans drawn from the four semi-finalists: Brazil, Turkey, South Korea and Germany. "I'm really happy they are interested in him," he said. Ronaldo is facing stiff competition from teammate Rivaldo and Germany's Miroslav Klose for the golden boot as top goalscorer at the event - all three have five goals to date.

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All-star samba

AFP, Yokohama

Nearly half of the 33 players in the squad for the World Cup All-Star team come from the semi-finalists, with Brazil leading the way with six players.

Co-hosts South Korea have four players and Germany and Turkey three apiece in the list reduced from the original 53. Brazil's triple-R attack of Rivaldo, Ronaldo and Ronaldinho offer the possibility of a mouth-watering strike force if they make the final 11 selected by FIFA's technical study group.

The other three Brazilians are goalkeeper Marcos and defenders Roberto Carlos and captain Cafu. Korea's hopefuls for the final all-star team are headed by captain Hong Myung Bo and goalkeeper Lee Woon-Jae who was the Korean hero when they beat Spain in a penalty shoot-out to become the first Asian team to reach a World Cup semi-final.

Midfielder Yoo-Sang-Chul and striker Ahn Jung-Hwan make up the Korean list. German keeper and captain Ollie Kahn, midfielder Michael Ballack and striker Miroslav Klose are the only Germans with a chance of making the final 11.

Turkey are represented by keeper Rustu Recber, defender Alpay Ozalan and striker Hasan Sas. English goalkeeper David Seaman, selected in the original 53-

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Sorry for Seaman

REUTERS, London

Brazil striker Ronaldinho says he was saddened to see David Seaman in tears after England's World Cup quarter-final defeat and hopes his winning goal would not damage the England goalkeeper's reputation.

England number one Seaman was pictured weeping after the 2-1 defeat last Friday, blaming himself for conceding Ronaldinho's goal from a long-range free kick. "I really was very sad when I saw those images of Seaman crying on the television," Ronaldinho was quoted as saying in Monday's Daily Mirror. "I have been a great admirer of him for a long time. He is a great player with a great past. It would be a terrible mistake if people changed their thoughts about him because of one isolated moment like that."

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Pride of Asia

FROM PAGE 16
"miracle of the Han (River)" -- a phrase often used to define Korea's economic ascent from the sheer ashes of the 1950-53 Korean War.

Fourteen years later, they are trying to use another global sporting event as a chance to bolster the country's recovery from the agonies of the 1997-98 Asian financial crisis. To prepare for the soccer tournament, 10 brand new stadiums have been built in 10 venue cities, including the largest football-only stadium in Asia.

"These construction activities surely must have helped buttress domestic demand, which, next to China, proved the most resilient in Asia," Jim O'Neil, an economist at Goldman Sachs, said in a report. Korea's World Cup Organising Committee forecast that simply hosting the tournament would result in a 8.8 trillion won windfall and create 35,000 jobs, the report said.

South Korea, Asia's third largest economy, has outperformed the region during the recent global slowdown by making full use of all the levers of economic policy, including pump-priming measures such as tax breaks and budget expansion.

Growth is forecast to accelerate to 5.7 percent in 2002 after a three percent rise last year. "With the World Cup, a tremendous energy is gushing out of Korean people," President Kim Dae-jung said on Monday during a meeting with foreign investors including the chairman of Credit Lyonnais Securities Asia, Gary Coull.

The president stressed South Korea's strategic location. "Korea is now making a jump out to the world. Foreign companies, wanting to advance to China, Japan and Russia, can make a win-win story by joining hands with Korea." Hyundai Economic Research Institute estimated that each victory in the World Cup would enhance the corporate images of South Korea's 100 biggest companies by one percentage point, which in money terms amounted to a combined \$10 billion.

"As the business hub of Asia, the environment for foreign investment in Korea is improving drastically," said President Kim said boldly.

CUP CORNER

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Cup final match and attend the tournament's closing ceremony, his office said Monday.

Kim plans to fly to Tokyo early Sunday and travel to Yokohama, a port city near the Japanese capital where the championship match and closing ceremony will be held later in the day, chief presidential spokeswoman Park Sun-sook said.

During his three-day stay in Japan, Kim also will meet Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi in Tokyo on Monday and pay a courtesy call on Emperor Akihito on Tuesday, she said.

The Japanese emperor was invited to attend the World Cup's opening ceremony in Seoul on May 31, but Tokyo instead sent his cousin, Prince Takamado, and Takamado's wife, Princess Hisako. Koizumi visited Seoul on May 31 to watch the Cup's opening match between defending champion France and Senegal and attend its opening ceremony.

Also on Monday, Korean Air said it will give some 350 South Korean soccer fans -- members of the "Red Devils" support club -- a free ride to Japan if South Korea advances to the championship match. TURKS REUNITED

REUTERS, Saitama
Turkey players reunited with their wives and girlfriends on Monday after they flew in to Japan to encourage the side in their World Cup semi-final against favourites Brazil on Wednesday.

Turkey had planned to bring wives to join the players after they qualified for the second round but cancelled the idea when they realised the logistical problems and their uncertain programme. Turkish staff said the wives, including coach Senol Gunes's wife Semra, would not be staying in the same Saitama hotel as the team but in nearby Tokyo. WET SEMI

REUTERS, Seoul
Cloudy weather conditions are forecast for Tuesday's World Cup semifinal between South Korea and Germany and there is an outside chance of rain.

"We have from 20 to 30 per cent chance of showers, but the chance will be decreasing by the end of the day," an official from the Korea Meteorological Administration said on Monday. The match kicks off at 8:30 p.m. (11:30 GMT), with both sides saying they are ready for wet conditions.

A spokesman for the German team told South Korea's SportToday newspaper on Sunday that rain could help them. "If it rains, the speed of the ball's roll will increase, and that's good for us," the spokesman was quoted as saying. However, South Korea coach Guus Hiddink told newspapers that some rain would favour his team's style, adding that he had been preparing for wet conditions.

Phenomenal

AP, Yokohama

Ronaldo's done it the quickest. He's also tried the most. And he doesn't seem to want others to have a go.

If statistics are anything to go by, the Brazilian striker stands the best chance of winning the Golden Boot for the top scorer at the World Cup. But teammate Rivaldo and Germany's Miroslav Klose -- tied with Ronaldo with five goals each -- will be hoping they come up trumps.

Ronaldo's five goals came in 392 minutes of play. He's had 20 shots, 14 of which were on target. He didn't have a single assist. Klose's five came in 419 minutes. He had 14 shots -- 8 on target -- and two assists.

Rivaldo's five came in 430 minutes. Like Klose, he had 14 shots, 8 on target, but only one assist. Rivaldo has remarkably scored a goal in every game so far, and is also Brazil's penalty taker. One of his goals came from the spot -- and another from a free kick.

Klose can lay claim to having scored all his goals without using either foot, and only his head. One thing's for certain, though. The Golden Boot is heading for Brazil or Germany, unless Turkey's Urmit Davala or South Korea's Ahn Jung-hwan -- who have two goals each alongside Brazil's Ronaldinho -- get an avalanche of goals in the rest of the tournament.

True colours
AFP, Yokohama: Brazil will be back in their traditional yellow for Wednesday's semi-final against Turkey after an outing in deep blue against England.

South Korea switch back to their first choice strip of red shirts and blue shorts to meet Germany after ousting Spain in white.

tigers, with a disconcerting high-tempo pressure game. But perhaps most importantly, there is a real belief among the people, the "Red Devils" that their team can succeed. With Tangun in mind, and the gods on their side, who is to say that Korea won't be crowned world champions. Surely, then the tale would have to be told by Hollywood.

FROM PAGE 13
between the national team and the Tangun legend. Named the Taeguk warriors, after the flag, coach Guus Hiddink's team have a philosophy very much reminiscent of the sacrifice of the bear. And, as has already been demonstrated in their incredible, unprecedented run overcoming powers like Portugal, Italy and Spain, the Taeguk Warriors play like

Success mystery

REUTERS, Seoul

Luck, home advantage and an inspirational coach -- all have been used to explain how South Korea have become the first Asian team to reach the last four of a World Cup.

No-one who has experienced the 'red noise' of the home crowds, seen video replays of some of the refereeing decisions or noted the way in which the players respond to the exhortations of their Dutch coach Guus Hiddink, could dismiss the importance of these factors.

But nor can it be denied that South Korea have radically changed the face of Asian football in this tournament, offering an approach that is sure to become a model for other aspiring soccer nations across the globe.

South Korea, who have beaten Poland, Portugal, Italy and Spain so far, are easily the best Asian football team ever and arguably the strongest side to have emerged from outside the traditional strongholds of the game in Europe and South America.

Before them, Cameroon reached the quarter-final in 1990 beating Argentina, Romania and Colombia before losing, after a highly dubious penalty award, to England in extra-time of their last eight tie.

But while the African side, who had been crushed 4-0 by the Soviet Union in the group stage, were a team brimming with talent, they were hampered by indiscipline -- not something Hiddink has had to worry about.

Four years ago in France, Iran and Japan appeared to present a new wave of promise for Asian football. The Iranians had players like Karim Bagheri, Khodadad Azizi and Ali Daei all with experience of top flight football in Germany's Bundesliga, while Japan's Hidetoshi Nakata was on the brink of a move to Italy's Serie A.

But neither side were able to progress beyond the group stage and while there was no doubt that they were closing the gap in terms of technique there was still something lacking. Exactly what that missing ingredient was has only really been truly understood with South Korea's success.

Hiddink's side play the game at pace, they close down their opponents, and crucially, they are as hard and aggressive as any European side. The Dutchman has made no secret of the fact that he has installed some bite and a necessary bit of badness to his team. "I've been a little bit mean to them to give them examples. Sometimes in training I did mean things to them. And nobody reacts," he said. "Then after five minutes I came back and asked, 'You accept what I did? You accept what I did?' I got angry that they accepted me being mean. I told them they have to be mean as well," the Dutchman said recently. Add that attitude to an impressive overall fitness-level, strong

Tangun spirit

FROM PAGE 13
between the national team and the Tangun legend. Named the Taeguk warriors, after the flag, coach Guus Hiddink's team have a philosophy very much reminiscent of the sacrifice of the bear. And, as has already been demonstrated in their incredible, unprecedented run overcoming powers like Portugal, Italy and Spain, the Taeguk Warriors play like

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FACT BOX

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FINAL GROUP STANDINGS

Table with 7 columns: Rank, Team, P, W, D, L, F, A, Pts. 1. Germany (3, 2, 1, 0, 11, 1, 7), 2. Ireland (3, 1, 2, 0, 5, 2, 5), 3. Cameroon (3, 1, 1, 1, 2, 3, 4), 4. Saudi Arabia (3, 0, 0, 3, 0, 12, 0)

SECOND ROUND
June 15, in Sogwipo, South Korea
Germany - 1 (Oliver Neuville 88)
Paraguay - 0

QUARTERFINAL
June 21, in Ulsan, South Korea
Germany - 1 (Michael Ballack 39)
United States - 0

Group Stage, South Korea
June 4, in Pusan, South Korea
South Korea - 2 (Hwang Sun-hong 26, Yoo Sang-chul 53)
Poland - 0

June 10, in Taegu, South Korea
South Korea - 1 (Ahn Jung-hwan 79)
United States - 1 (Clint Mathis 24)

June 14, in Incheon, South Korea
South Korea 1 (Park Ji-sung 70)
Portugal - 0

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Table with 7 columns: Rank, Team, P, W, D, L, F, A, Pts. 1. South Korea (3, 2, 1, 0, 4, 1, 7), 2. United States (3, 1, 1, 1, 5, 6, 4), 3. Portugal (3, 1, 0, 2, 6, 4, 3), 4. Poland (3, 1, 0, 2, 3, 7, 3)

SECOND ROUND
June 18, in Taejeon, South Korea
South Korea - 2 (Seol Ki-hyeon 88, Ahn Jung-hwan 116)
Italy - 1 (Christian Vieri 18)

QUARTERFINAL
June 22, in Kwangju, South Korea
South Korea - 0
Spain - 0 (South Korea won 5-3 on penalties)

PREVIOUS MEETINGS:
1994-Germany 3 South Korea 2-World Cup-US
PREVIOUS WORLD CUP APPEARANCES:
Germany: 1934, 1938, 1950, 1954 (champions), 1958, 1962, 1966, 1970, 1974 (champions), 1978 1982, 1986, 1990 (champions), 1994, 1998.

South Korea: 1954, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998.
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discipline and a sophisticated approach to tactics and it is clear why the Koreans are different from any Asian side before them. Hiddink's team play a 3-2-3-2 formation with Yoo Sang-chul and Kim Nam-il the lynchpins of the midfield, ensuring the defence is never over-exposed and they close down the vital zone between the backline and the midfield, the so-called 'second wave' area in which opposition playmakers look to exploit space.

Players of the quality of Italy's Francesco Totti and Spain's Juan Carlos Valeron found it hard to gain much room for movement in that area and while South Korea's strength is collective rather than individual, the contribution of Yoo has been crucial. A compact and tidy player, Yoo is more than just a 'holding man' -- he dictates the play from his deep position, prompting the attacks while maintaining an impressive positional sense and reading of the game that suggest not all Korea's success has been imported by Hiddink.

In attack Ahn Jung-hwan enjoys a largely free role, frequently pulling out wide to stretch the defence and leaving gaps for attacking midfielders Lee Young-pyo and Park Ji-sung to move into.

Enrique bids
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of having played for both of Spain's most glamorous clubs. He spent five seasons at Real Madrid before transferring to arch rivals Barcelona in 1996 and hard core Madrid fans have still never forgiven him. A headstrong player, particularly in his younger days, he has been sent off many times throughout his career and is often jeered by fans wherever he plays in Spain. His titles include Olympic gold on home soil in 1992, the European Cup Winners Cup, three Spanish league titles and three Spanish Cup wins.

FROM PAGE 16
programme, placing sniper squads and trucks with anti-biochemical gear at the Seoul stadium where the semi-final is scheduled to begin at 8:30 p.m. (11:30 GMT). "Police, obviously, have to control the crowd, so they are putting on more police officers, but for our military side, this is just another game," a ministry official said. "You've seen our people, they even clean