



PHOTO: AFP

WORLD CHAMPS IN 20 YEARS! A South Korean baby is lifted by his father at the stands of Daegu yesterday.

## Peace Korea

**AFP, Seoul**

Hundreds of thousands of soccer fans chanted "Peace Korea" in the streets of major cities in South Korea hours after a sea battle Saturday with the rival North cast a shadow over the World Cup.

But an estimated four million people still donned their red T-shirts for one last Korea-mania party even though South Korea lost the third place playoff 3-2 to Turkey.

Fans danced in the street with about one million packed into central Seoul crowded around the giant television screens that have become a focus of Korea's football patriotism during the World Cup.

Organisers decided the consolation final in Daegu should go ahead despite the battle in the Yellow Sea between the North and South Korean navies which left five South Korean sailors dead or missing and 22 injured.

President Kim Dae-Jung maintained a plan to attend the World Cup final in Japan on Sunday.

Hundreds of thousands of fans in the Gwanghwamun district of cen-

tral Seoul prayed for those killed in the gunbattle before the match started.

"In a wish for peace on the Korean peninsula, let's start with chanting 'Peace Korea' today," a leader of the Red Devils supporters club told the massed fans.

The fans chanted "Oh Peace Korea" for several minutes.

South Korea's chief World Cup organiser Chung Mong-Joon, a vice president of FIFA, football's governing body and a possible candidate for South Korea's presidential election in December, said: "This was a very unfortunate incident and I hope that it does not lead to greater conflict."

He added: "I hope that North Korea's actions were not motivated by the World Cup in any way."

The solemn mood quickly evaporated to be replaced by the raucous festivities seen for South Korea's previous World Cup matches with fans dancing, clapping and chanting slogans for the national team.

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## Goals galore

**AFP, Seoul**

Goals, goals and more goals. It's what everyone wants to see at every World Cup - and the 17th edition of the greatest show on Earth hasn't disappointed.

As always, some have been spectacular, several mundane, others controversial and some more important than others.

But it's the spectacular that whets the appetite - and plenty of impressive strikes have hit the back of the net from Seoul to Shizuoka over the past month.

Pape Bouba Diop's first goal of the entire finals for Senegal was far from a netbuster, bundled in from close range - but its effect on the competition was massive.

It led to the eventual elimination of holders France.

But it wasn't long before the first pile-driver arrived.

Uruguay's Dario Rodriguez sent a rocket past Denmark keeper Thomas Sorensen in the opening phase but his country still lost the game to Jon Dahl Tomasson's double.

The South Americans were at it again when Diego Forlan chested down a high ball and cracked a memorable volley past Senegal keeper Tony Sylva from more than 30 yards.

But Uruguay still crashed out

after their 3-3 draw.

Every football fan in the world wanted to see what sort of shape Ronaldo was in after years of injuries. A hooked volley against Turkey was the emphatic answer, the first of six goals at the tournament ahead of the final.

Turkey and Brazil met again in the semi-final and Turkish keeper Rustu Recber must have been sick of the sight of the "Phenomenon" after Ronaldo toe-poked another effort past him for the only goal.

German star Miroslav Klose's hat-trick of headers against Saudi Arabia were almost identical - although his celebratory forward somersaults don't feature in the coaching manual.

Nor does the cartwheel of

Robbie Keane of Ireland, whose injury-time effort against Germany came into the crucial rather than cracking category.

Finesse and technique were the order of the day when South Korea's veteran striker Hwang Sun-Hong treated watching President Kim Dae-Jung to a virtuoso volley following Lee Eul-Yong's perfectly-weighted pass from the left, the ball flying past Jerzy Dudek in the Polish goal.

That sent the Koreans on the way to their first ever World Cup success in 16 attempts and was the perfect way for Hwang to celebrate his 50th international goal.

US defender Jeff Agoos hit

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## Hot little R

**AFP, Yokohama**

After spending six months frozen out of football last year, Ronaldinho has come in from the cold to help Brazil into the World Cup final against Germany.

The story of their campaign may have been the rebirth of Ronaldo, but it is the Inter Milan star's 22-year-old team-mate who has done as much as anyone to keep Brazil on course for a fifth title.

Ronaldinho's blinding pace unhinged England's defence in the quarter-finals to set up a goal for Rivaldo, and his audacious free-kick caught out David Seaman to seal a 2-1 victory for Brazil.

Arguably he has been the most important component of Brazil's vaunted "Triple R" strike-force, surging forward from just behind Ronaldo and Rivaldo and pulling opposing defenders out of position.

"It's a real plus that he is coming back for the final," Ronaldo said, commenting on Ronaldinho's return following his suspension for a harsh sending off against England. "We've replaced him very well so far, but he is a match-winner."

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PHOTO: AFP

HOT CHILLI! Brazil's new sensation Ronaldinho Gaucho in training at Yokohama yesterday.



PHOTO: AFP

WHO NEEDS TO WATCH THE FINAL? Brazilian spiritual leader and fortune teller Nevas do Amaral, who predicted a 2-1 victory in the final for Brazil with Germany scoring in the first half and Ronaldo and Rivaldo returning the compliment in the second half, busy with his magic in Sao Paulo yesterday.

## Faith rests

**REUTERS, Sao Paulo**

Brazilians torn between their faith in God and their faith in the nation's soccer team on Sunday morning can rest easy.

Some of Brazil's most popular churches are pushing back their morning mass so that their flock can cheer the country's soccer team onto what could be a record fifth World Cup title, and hopefully say thanks afterward.

For the first time ever, Sao Paulo's Sao Bento Monastery will start the city's most well-attended Sunday mass an hour later to make room for Brazil's showdown with Germany.

"Out of respect for our faithful who come to mass, we've delayed service a bit," said Dom Joao

Evangelista, head monk at the monastery, whose Gregorian chant-filled mass has made it a favourite among Brazilians on Sunday.

Even Father Marcelo Rossi, a young, guitar-strumming priest whose grass roots popularity rivals star striker Ronaldo's, shortened his 6 a.m. (0900 GMT) mass broadcast live on television to make room for the 8 a.m. (1100 GMT) game. His 9 a.m. (1200 GMT) mass has been cancelled.

A huge number of people across the country will watch the game Sunday morning, whether it be in bed, over coffee at breakfast or on the big screens located for public viewing across the country.

But for some of Sao Paulo's most infamous criminals, Sunday will be a day of true punishment. Renowned kidnapper Wanderson Nilton de

Paula Lima, known as "Andinho," and his inmate colleagues won't be allowed to watch the game from their maximum security prison cell.

"They ask who's winning, which teams are qualifying, but they won't be able to watch the game," said prison director Antonio Sergio de Oliveira.

In downtown Sao Paulo, street sellers are slashing prices on their World Cup wares trying to get rid of the T-shirts, banners, horns and every other item painted the colour of Brazil's green and yellow flag.

Arclino Brito says he has cut the price on Brazilian flags to 1 real (35 cents) for a dozen from 2 reals for one. His price for a green and yellow

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## Of a perfect German

**INTERNET, Yokohama**

Whatever Michael Ballack feels inside right now - and you have to suspect it is a combination of bitterness, rage and frustration - to the outside world he must epitomise the image of the consummate, calculating and professional German footballer.

Aside from a very minor and highly understandable outburst as he came to terms with the knowledge that he would miss the World Cup final through suspension, Ballack has outwardly taken this massive

personal setback in his stride.

He has even forgiven, publicly at least, teammate Torsten Frings for giving the ball away to the Koreans and compromising Germany to such an extent that he felt it necessary to make the foul which earned that fateful booking.

Cynical, professional... call it what you will, Ballack did what he had to do and there were no Gazzastyle tears afterwards - not on the pitch, at any rate.

Of course, in Paul Gascoigne's defence, the England star also felt he was unlucky to receive his yellow card during the 1990 World Cup

semifinal against, ironically, Germany.

Ballack, at least, does not have that added frustration but, whatever, the reactions of two players of similar age and international experience couldn't have been more marked. Gazzablubbed, Ballack went upfield and scored the winning goal.

Perhaps, though, Ballack is simply more used to things going spectacularly wrong.

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PHOTO: AFP

BEND IT LIKE RIVALDO: Superstar Rivaldo practising free-kicks while Ronaldinho looks on at Yokohama yesterday.

## Man on a mission

**AFP, Yokohama**

Brazil star Rivaldo is determined to bring the curtain down on his World Cup career in the best possible fashion - with victory over Germany in Sunday's final.

The 30-year-old Barcelona ace said Saturday he does not expect to be on the international scene in 2006, and that the showdown with Germany will be his last match in the World Cup.

"Because of my age I think I can say this is going to be my last World Cup game. So I want to win it," Rivaldo told reporters.

The former FIFA World Footballer of the Year is still smarting from Brazil's collapse in the 1998 World Cup final, and is determined to atone for that defeat by beating the Germans.

Rivaldo feels the loss to France also unfairly deflected attention away from his own performances throughout the 1998 tournament - making him hell-bent on finishing with a flourish.

"In the 1998 World Cup I played very well in all the games," Rivaldo said. "Everybody said that if Brazil had won the final I would have been chosen as the best player of the World Cup. But we lost and I was chosen as the fifth best."

Rivaldo has had a mixed World

Cup in Korea and Japan, cast as a villain for faking injury against Turkey in the first round but showing flashes of genius as Brazil have powered into the final.

With five goals so far - one behind team-mate Ronaldo - Rivaldo could end up winning or sharing the coveted Golden Boot for tournament top goalscorer if he gets on the score-sheet against Germany.

He insists though that personal glory is irrelevant when placed beside the needs of the team.

"If I score, great. If I can win the golden boot, then that would be nice. But the priority is the team and that's all I'm thinking about," he said after Brazil enjoyed a light-hearted training session at the Yokohama Stadium here on Saturday evening.

Contemplating his last appearance in the World Cup, Rivaldo said he also believed other players in the squad would be wise to adopt a similar approach.

"It's important that some of the other players start looking at Sunday as their last ever match in a World Cup, even the ones that are only 23 or 24."

"I've told them that a lot can happen in four years - they should treat this match as if they are never going to get another chance," he said.



PHOTO: AFP

A TRUE TEAM-MAN: Star German playmaker Michael Ballack (L) jogs with teammates Christian Ziege (C) and Dietmar Hamann at Yokohama yesterday.