

LUIZ FELIPE SCOLARI
Scolari in charge for Paraguay game

REUTERS, Rio de Janeiro

Luiz Felipe Scolari, whose future as coach is in doubt, will lead Brazil when they meet Paraguay in a friendly on August 21 in their first game since the 2-0 World Cup final win over Germany last month.

Scolari, whose agreement with the Brazilian Football Confederation (CBF) officially ended at the conclusion of the World Cup, would still be in charge against Paraguay, the CBF has said.

The man known as Big Phil, who in only 13 months led Brazil out of the doldrums to World Cup glory, has not yet decided whether he will stay in the job and is due to meet CBF president Ricardo Teixeira next week to discuss his future.

But the CBF said in a statement on its website that Scolari would take charge against Paraguay and that he would have a full-strength squad to choose from.

"Coach Luiz Felipe Scolari will have at his disposal all the players who took part in the World Cup," said the CBF. "The coaching staff of the Brazil team will be the same. The Paraguay team will bring their main players."

The statement said that the match would be played in the North-Eastern city of Fortaleza.

Senegal had originally been put forward as Brazil's opponents for the match.

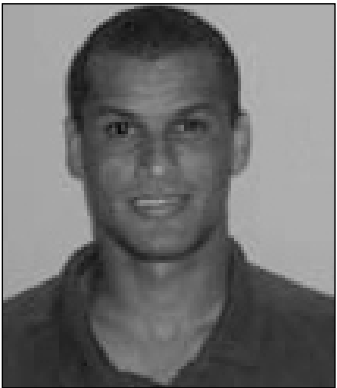
Rivaldo plans Barca farewell

REUTERS, Madrid

Brazilian World Cup winner Rivaldo will delay his arrival at new club AC Milan to stop over in Barcelona.

Rivaldo, who announced the change of plans on his website, said he would now join up with his new team mates in Madrid on Saturday.

AC Milan are playing in a four-team tournament along with Real Madrid, Liverpool and Bayern Munich over the weekend and Rivaldo will be present for his new



RIVALDO

team's first game against Bayern on Saturday, although he is not expecting to play.

"In the end I won't be going to Milan on Thursday," said Rivaldo, who signed for AC Milan this week after being released from Barcelona with a year still to run on his contract.

"Before that I want to bid farewell to Spanish fans and journalists and to do that I'll give a news conference on Friday at a hotel in Pedralbes (Barcelona).

"The next day I'll travel to Madrid to join the Milan party and after that I'll be available for my medical and official presentation, on Monday or Tuesday."

England start with Portugal

REUTERS, London

England will warm up for their Euro 2004 qualifying campaign with a friendly international against the tournament hosts Portugal.

The match at Villa Park on September 7 will be England's first game since losing 2-1 to Brazil in the World Cup quarter-finals in Japan.

Portugal, who surprisingly failed to qualify from the group stage of the World Cup, will be England's only opponents before Sven Goran Eriksson's side play their first two European Championship qualifiers against Slovakia and Macedonia in October.

Villa Park, home of English premier league side Aston Villa, has already proved lucky for Eriksson as it was the venue for his first game in charge when England beat Spain 3-0 in February last year.

What's eating Brazil?



Football

REUTERS, Rio de Janeiro

One month on since they beat Germany to claim an unprecedented fifth World Cup title, Brazil's celebrations have been replaced by a more familiar routine of controversy, intrigue and chaos.

Coach Luiz Felipe Scolari, still adapting to his new-found status as a celebrity, has ruffled feathers of some rather big birds with some typically brash comments.

Two members of Brazil's squad have found themselves unwanted by European clubs and the domestic scene has been very much its usual self as a flurry of court injunctions threaten to wreak havoc with the Brazilian championship.



RONALDO

Eight years ago, Brazil's fourth world title was tainted after the delegation returned home with a plane-load of electro-domestic goods and demanded they be allowed to import them duty free. The head of Brazil's tax service resigned in protest after the government gave in.

Nothing as serious has happened this time but commentators are still questioning whether, despite five world titles, Brazil have learned one of the most important lessons in sport: how to take victory the right way.

Controversy began right after the final whistle in Yokohama, when several players flouted FIFA regulations by celebrating in T-shirts bearing religious messages.

Two days later, a victory parade in Rio de Janeiro turned sour when the exhausted squad voted to turn back before reaching the end of the route. Angry fans threw stones at the team bus.

This week Scolari, who preached unity and internal harmony throughout the World Cup, was being accused of breaking his own rules with his comments on Ronaldo.

The man known as Big Phil, never the most diplomatic, questioned whether Ronaldo would ever regain the power and explosive

acceleration he possessed before two knee operations.

He then claimed that Ronaldo, whose comeback from injury was the highlight of the tournament, was a "spoilt player".

The Phenomenon, as Ronaldo is nicknamed in Brazil, hit back, claiming that he was "200 percent fit." In a statement on his website, he thanked Scolari for showing faith at a time when many had doubted him but added: "One of the most important things about winning is knowing how to act afterwards."

The two acted quickly to patch up any possible row -- Ronaldo has removed the comment from his site -- and most commentators interpreted Scolari's "spoilt" comment as an unfortunate choice of words rather than a deliberate insult.

"He was probably right on both counts but he didn't need to say



ANDERSON POLGA

either," said Juca Kfour, columnist in the sports daily Lance.

Unfortunately for Big Phil, he had already stirred up public opinion with an astonishing attack on Pele.

During a skiing holiday in the Chilean Andes, Scolari claimed that "Pele knows nothing about football" and added: "If you want to win a title, you have to listen to what Pele says and then do the opposite."

At least his services remain in demand.

He is expected to be given the chance to stay on as Brazil coach next week although both Chile and Mexico have been discussing the possibility of hiring him.

The same cannot be said for some of his team, however.

Midfielder Kleberon, outstanding in the final, and central defender Anderson Polga are still with their Brazilian clubs after the expected flurry of offers from Europe failed to materialise.

Kleberon's club Atletico Paranaense admit they want to offload him but their asking price of dollars 20 million appears too high.

Polga cannot find any takers, he may also have to accept a wage cut to stay at his financially-troubled club Gremio.

His frustration boiled over this week when he was involved in a

training ground clash with team mate Rodrigo Fabri. "It's a tense atmosphere," he admitted. "My contract is due to finish soon and I'm trying my best not to think about it."

Other players have been more fortunate.

Luizao, reserve to Ronaldo at the World Cup, has joined Germany's Hertha Berlin from Gremio, reserve fullback Belletti has moved to Spain's Villareal from Sao Paulo and midfielder Gilberto Silva has left Atletico Mineiro for English champions Arsenal.

Luizao spoke of his relief in leaving behind the chaos of Brazilian football, where an increasing number of players have gone to court in an attempt to receive wages and other earnings they say that clubs have failed to pay them.

Brazilian soccer, which last year was the subject of two



KLEBERON

Congressional investigations, remains in a chaotic state despite its success on the world stage.

The president of Flamengo, the country's most popular club, has been thrown out of office for alleged misuse of funds while the Brazilian championship -- due to start in 10 days -- has been the subject of the usual rows over which teams should take part. Court injunctions have been flying as clubs attempt to win the right to take part off the pitch rather than on it.

The biggest confusion involves Figueirense and Caxias, whose crucial promotion match last year was interrupted by a pitch invasion with one minute remaining and Figueirense leading 1-0.

Asporting tribunal bizarrely ruled to deduct Figueirense's points -- but not their goal, which meant they still qualified for the First Division on goal difference.

Last week Caxias managed to get the decision overturned in a civil court but that decision itself was overturned by another court two days later. Caxias are planning further action -- all in breach of FIFA regulations which ban sporting disputes from being taken to civil courts.

Capriati, Dokic advance

AFP, San Diego

Second seed Jennifer Capriati and sixth seed Jelena Dokic advanced to the third round of a 750,000-dollar WTA hardcourt event with straight-set triumphs here Tuesday.

Capriati eliminated fellow American Ashley Harkleroad 6-3, 6-1 while Yugoslavia's Dokic defeated Spain's Gala Leon Garcia 6-2, 7-5.

Dokic will next face Russia's Anastasia Myskina, who rallied to oust Italy's Francesca Schiavone 1-6, 6-3, 6-4.

Top seed Venus Williams, idle until Wednesday, will open against Slovakia's Janette Husarova, who reached the second round with a 6-3, 6-1 triumph Tuesday over Italy's Adriana Serra Zanetti.

MacLaurin leaves

FROM PAGE 13
chairman for the benefit of the whole game."

Assuming there is more than one candidate to succeed MacLaurin, ballot papers will go out to the counties on August 29 with the result being announced on September 13.

Many feared MacLaurin was intent on continuing to centralise power at the ECB. With central contracts counties have lost control of their top names and most England players rarely feature at county level.

Thorpe gunning

FROM PAGE 13
England's Sarah Price led the way in qualifying for the women's 100m backstroke in a Commonwealth Games record time of 1:01.16. Defending champion Gaiann Rooney of Australia continued to struggle.

Rooney, the world champion in 200m freestyle, finished out of the medals in that event on Tuesday, and posted just the ninth-fastest 100m backstroke time -- still enough to make the semi-finals.

The women's 100m freestyle produced yet another Australian top qualifier, but a less familiar one.

Jodie Henry, 18, won her heat in 59.79, with Scotland's Alison Sheppard posting the morning's second-fastest time of 56.04.

"I don't want to be the fastest in!" a dismayed Henry said of her top seeding for the semi-finals. "I don't like it. I'm just not used to it."

Tendulkar

FROM PAGE 13
Courtney Walsh to chase down 308 for a one-wicket win over Australia.

Commentators feel the major reason for Tendulkar's lack of success in big matches is the enormous weight of expectation.

Seen as a national icon, anything less than a century from him is seen as a failure by millions of his passionate fans.

"No other player suffers so much from doubt of expectation," former England captain Michael Atherton said.

Newspapers and websites have this week been flooded with letters slamming Tendulkar, something new for the only player spared the wrath of emotional Indian fans over the last decade.

But chief selector Chandu Borde was confident Tendulkar would bounce back in the next three Tests to silence his detractors. "I am sure something is waiting to happen. He will get back."

Wassan added: "Sachin is facing a trial by fire of a kind he hasn't so far in his career."

"This will be the true test of his character."

Trevor speaks

FROM PAGE 13
Waugh have said they won't tour Pakistan, but Test captain Steve Waugh left the decision to the ACB.

A proposed tri-series, also involving Australia, next month has been shifted to Nairobi, Kenya. "Pakistan is capable of providing full security but it would be tough for players," said Chappell, who played five Tests and 20 one-day internationals for his country.

He is more famous though for his "under arm bowling" in a match against New Zealand in the 1980s. He also served as Bangladesh's coach from March 2001 to February this year before being sacked after he failed to change Bangladesh's fortunes.

The Pakistan Cricket Board said it would continue to press hard for the series to be played on home grounds.

"We await a reply from Australia on the tour. President Pervez Musharraf has also talked to the Australian Prime Minister John Howard so things are going on," PCB director Chishty Mujahid told AFP.

Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and the United Arab Emirates are neutral options available if Australia decides against touring Pakistan. Pakistan's home series against the West Indies was played in Sharjah in February-March this year after the West Indies declined to tour Pakistan over security fears.

Chappell added that he felt Pakistan was a favourite to win next year's World Cup in South Africa.

"Pakistan has a very good combination and if they field better and improve running between the wickets then they can win the World Cup," he said.



South African Shaun Bownes (R) on his way to winning the 110 metres hurdles gold ahead of Colin Jackson (L) of Wales at the Commonwealth Games in Manchester on July 30.

Jackson shocked, Freeman rejoices



REUTERS, Manchester

South Africa's Shaun Bownes spoiled Colin Jackson's Commonwealth Games farewell by winning the men's 110 metres hurdles on Tuesday while Olympic champion Cathy Freeman made an emotional, winning return to competition.

Jackson's dream of a third Commonwealth Games title before hanging up his spikes effectively disappeared when he slammed his leading leg into the first hurdle and England's Damien Greaves fell in the lane next to him.

The 35-year-old Welshman quickly recovered from his mistake and flashed home but could not catch Bownes in time.

The big South African, who was given a four-year ban for failing a drugs test in 1995 but allowed to return to competition in 1997, took the gold in 13.35 seconds with Jackson an agonising 0.04 behind.

"I absolutely slammed that first hurdle and, from then on, I was just chasing," said Jackson, whose 1993 world record of 12.91 still stands.

"Once I got over that I was hurdling quite smoothly. That's what cheeses me off and is the most disappointing thing because I have been running well."

Freeman, competing for the first time since her husband was diagnosed with cancer, helped the Australian women's 4x400 metres relay team through to Wednesday's final with an inspiring run.

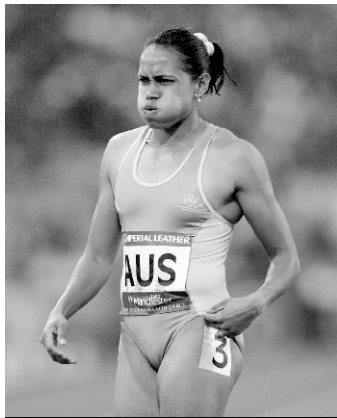
The Australians were way back in fourth position and about 30 metres off the pace when Freeman took the baton from the lead-off runner.

But the 29-year-old brought the 38,000-capacity crowd at the City of

Manchester stadium to life when she lifted the team to third place, right on the heels of the leaders, allowing the final two runners to book Australia a place in the final.

Freeman made her international debut as a bare-footed relay runner at the 1990 Commonwealth Games and, despite going on to win Olympic, world and Commonwealth titles over the past decade, said she was just as thrilled to be running in the relay again.

Tuesday's penultimate night of



CATHY FREEMAN

track and field was a triumphant night for South Africa with the republic winning three of the six gold medals on offer.

Hestrie Cloete, the reigning world champion, gave another demonstration of her class by successfully defending the women's high jump title she won in Kuala Lumpur four years ago with a clearance of 1.96 metres.

She finished six centimetres ahead of England's Susan Jones, who took the silver, and nine centimetres in front of Canada's Nicole

Forrester who got the bronze on a countback from India's Bobby Aloysius.

Okkert Brits ended his frustrating run of near-misses in major championships when he won the men's pole vault with a clearance of 5.75 metres after the event was almost postponed because of a torrential downpour.

Australia's Paul Burgess clinched the silver with a height of 5.70, after earlier missing his first attempts at 5.20 and 5.35, while Dominic Johnson took the bronze with 5.60 to give the Caribbean island of St Lucia its first medal in any sport at the Commonwealth Games.

Australia's reigning world champion Dmitri Markov finished fifth after failing to clear at 5.70.

Beatrice Faumuina captured New Zealand's second gold medal in Manchester when she successfully defended the women's discuss title she won in Malaysia.

Faumuina's winning throw of 60.83 metres was more than five metres off the distance she threw to win in 1998 but was still more than two metres clear of Indian silver medallist Neelam Singh and third-placed Shelley Newman of England.

Salina Kosegi led a Kenyan one-two in the women's 10,000 metres, winning gold in 31 minutes 27.83 seconds.

Her compatriot Susan Chepkemei took silver with Australian mother Susie Power collecting bronze.

The trio broke away from the main pack before the race had reached the halfway stage and were still together until Kosegi made her move 300m from the finish, sprinting away to win comfortably.

Kuerten quits



Tennis

AFP, Toronto

Brazil's Gustavo Kuerten quit in mid-match with hip surgery recovery pain here Tuesday to hand defending champion Andrei Pavel a free ride into the second round of the 2.95-million-dollar ATP Masters Series.

Romania's Pavel won the first set 7-5 when Kuerten, world number one in 2000, pulled out.

The treble French Open winner underwent the hip operation in February and returned to tennis in late April on clay. While producing no spectacular results, the South American plotted a steady course in his come-back.

"It has all a part of my recovery," Kuerten said of the setback. "I have to be patient. I knew before I came to the court that I did not feel full strength in my legs."

Kuerten skipped the grass-court season to rest, returning a fortnight

ago in Stuttgart, where he lost in the opening round of a rain-marred event.

"Guga" reached the quarter-finals last week on hard-court in Los Angeles, the only player to take a set from champion Andre Agassi.

"It will all take time and I can't expect to play perfectly now," Kuerten said. "Things are different for me than before. I have to listen my body and take it easy, even in practise."

Kuerten exited in steamy conditions of 35 Celsius on the cement of Toronto, shaking hands and walking off against Pavel after losing the first set.

"He said he had problems with his hip," said Pavel, who plays Wednesday against Russian second seed Marat Safin, who won the Canadian title two years.

"There is not much to say in a situation like that. 'Guga' has a voodoo on me, I've never beaten him. I thought it was working again when he broke back for 5-all."

TT gold goes to England

AFP, MANCHESTER

Top-seeded England defeated defending champions Nigeria 3-0 to win the gold medal and regain the men's table tennis team title with Commonwealth men's singles champion Matt Syed remaining unbeaten throughout the competition with ten wins.

Syed was errorless for a long spells and also won 11 straight points between 6-4 in the third game and 6-0 in the fourth during a 11-1, 7-11, 11-4, 11-2 win over the Nigerian number two Monday Meretohun.

And for the second day in a row his win applied pressure which 21-year-old Gareth Herbert, with brilliant serving, took advantage of.

In the semi-finals he had beaten the Indian champion Chetan Baboor - now it was Nigerian number one Segun Toriola.

The score was 11-3, 11-8, 11-2 and the gold medal was made certain on the 27th birthday by Alex Perry, the former English national champion.

In a match of fine loop-the-loop top-spinning rallies he beat Nosiru Kazeem 11-8, 9-11, 11-5, 11-8.

Best doing well



Football

REUTERS, London

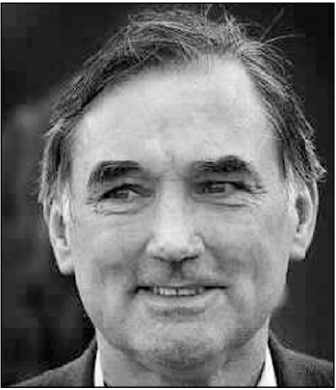
George Best was showing encouraging signs of recovery after his liver transplant but would remain in intensive care for the rest of Wednesday, his doctors said.

The 56-year-old former Manchester United and Northern Ireland footballer underwent a 10-hour operation on Tuesday at the Cromwell Hospital in west London.

"George Best's condition has improved steadily overnight and he is in a very satisfactory state at present," a hospital spokesman said.

"Mr Best is comfortable and recognises family and staff and will remain in the intensive care ward for the rest of the day."

The spokesman added that



GEORGE BEST

Nigel Heaton, the consultant surgeon, and consultant physician Roger Williams were both "very pleased" with Best's progress.

Best, whose old liver had been permanently damaged by alcohol abuse, was admitted to hospital on Tuesday after a replacement organ became available.

He was expected to remain in hospital for about three weeks.

Earlier Heaton told BBC television: "George is stable this morning, he has had a comfortable night."

"He's still on a ventilator but the early signs are encouraging in that his liver is working well. It was quite a difficult operation."

Best is recognised as one of the greatest soccer players in history after a sparkling career at Manchester United from 1963 to 1973.

His extravagant lifestyle took its toll, though, and in March 2000 Best was rushed to hospital after collapsing with severe liver damage.

Best, who now works as a television analyst and newspaper columnist, had been waiting seven months for a replacement liver to become available.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

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CRYPTOQUIP

W Y H L F R L P Z S Q W A R
Z A E X C K H L F J E L R G
P L S C Z X L A R, N C G F J C Z A E

N J W A R Z Q F Q K C A K .
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: WHEN MUMMIES
FEEL LIKE SWIMMING, DO YOU THINK THEY
HEAD STRAIGHT FOR THE DEAD SEA?
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: Q equals P

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.

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