

Premiership Trail-blazing Gunners

Football

AFP, London

Reigning champions and Premiership leaders Arsenal broke an English league goalscoring record that had stood for over 70 years with a 4-1 win away to Leeds United on Saturday.

Nigeria striker Nwankwo Kanu's first goal of two in the ninth-minute meant Arsenal had scored in 47 consecutive league matches.

That was a new record for all four of England's professional divisions, surpassing the mark set by Chesterfield in the old Third Division North way back in the 1929-30 season.

Kolo Toure's 20th minute header and Thierry Henry's strike two minutes after the break put Arsenal well on top.

Leeds grabbed a consolation six minutes from time when Harry Kewell followed-up after England keeper David Seaman had made a double save from Lee Bowyer.

But barely two minutes later Kanu broke clear to seal Arsenal's victory as Arsene Wenger's double-holders equalled Manchester United's Premiership record of 29 games unbeaten and stretched their lead over Liverpool to five points.

But victory for Gerard Houllier's men at Manchester City later Saturday would keep the gap at two points.

Arsenal, worryingly for the rest of the Premiership, were not at full strength.

Dutch striker Dennis Bergkamp

was out with an Achilles problem, his place taken by Kanu.

And Ivory Coast international Toure was only playing after Wenger decided to rest influential Swedish midfielder Freddie Ljungberg following Arsenal's 4-0 Champions League thrashing of PSV Eindhoven on Thursday.

veteran England centre-half Martin Keown sidelined by a hamstring injury.

Despite the changes, Arsenal did not have to wait long for their lead. England full-back Ashley Cole dispossessed Gary Kelly down the left hand side. He fed Toure, who had gone through the inside of himself, unselfishly squared the ball across the six-yard boss where the unmarked Kanu comfortably sidefooted the ball past Leeds' goalkeeper Paul Robinson.

But in the 18th minute England international Robinson rescued Leeds, parrying a well-struck Henry shot that crowned a flowing Arsenal counter-attack.

However, a couple of minutes later Arsenal had doubled their advantage. Another superb display of passing and movement culminated with Sylvain Wiltord's cross being expertly headed back past Robinson by Toure.

Arsenal were in complete control, Leeds restricted to occasional long range shots.

But Seaman was tested four minutes from half-time, the ponytailed keeper quickly off his line to block Kewell's shot.

However, half-time meant Leeds could not maintain their momentum and two minutes after the interval Arsenal were 3-0 ahead.

Kanu's defence-splitting pass from just inside the Leeds half fell perfectly for the onrushing Henry.

He outpaced Radebe and, left one-on-one with Robinson, calmly steered the ball into the far corner.

Leeds had come close early in the second half when Mark Viduka's curling free-kick just went past Seaman's far post after England centre-back Sol Campbell was booked for not retreating.

And midway through the second half Terry Venables side almost got a foothold in the game when England striker Alan Smith's header from Bowyer's free-kick hit the crossbar with Seaman beaten.



Arsenal's Kanu celebrates in unusual style after scoring against Leeds United during their Premiership clash in Leeds yesterday

Meanwhile, at the back, promising Frenchman Pascal Cygan made his full debut for the Gunners with

Leeds' South Africa defender Lucas Radebe. Toure, who might have shot

Media Merit Cup

SPORTS REPORTER

The Daily Janakantha and the Kiralok moved into the final of the Media Merit Cup football tournament yesterday.

Janakantha won the first semifinal against UNB 2-1 and Kiralok then beat Banglabazar Patrika in tie-breaker (2-1) after the match ended in a goalless draw at the Bangabandhu National Stadium.

The final would be held tomorrow morning at the same venue.

'Gravedigger's' victim?

from page 13

Gloucestershire's statement said: "His (Snape's) relationship with the cricket management over the past 18 months has been very poor and reached a stage where we don't think it will improve.

"Further, competition for places in the middle order and lower middle order will be fierce next year and we want to give every chance to a number of young all-rounders with considerable potential.

Snape joined Gloucestershire from Northamptonshire in 1999, helping them to win five trophies in his first two seasons.

Despite his subsequent problems at county level England, whose chairman of selectors David Graveney is himself a former Gloucestershire off-spinner, have kept faith with Snape.

And given that backing, Snape should secure another county deal elsewhere.

Busan welcomes

FROM PAGE 13

Events at Gimhae International Airport and Yongsudan Park in downtown Busan will celebrate the arrival of the 'Flame of Reunification.'

Traditional peasant music and dance performances will greet the relay runners at Gimhae International Airport, while the police brass band plans a trumpet fanfare to welcome the flame's arrival.

Citizens and students of Busan will line the roads to cheer on the relay runners and car parade.

A torch-welcoming ceremony is scheduled for 6:40 pm local time at Yongsudan Park.

A series of pre-event and torch preservation shows are also scheduled, including a performance by the Baeksan Succession Society's folk music troupe, a drum and fife band and other traditional Korean classical musical and choral performances.

Co-ordinators for receiving flames from all 44 participating countries and regions said they are currently in possession of flames from 27 countries. Flames collected from the countries that sent teams to Busan will be lit around Busan Asiad Main Stadium for the duration of the Games.

Mercury going

FROM PAGE 13

Venkatsai Laxman, Sachin Tendulkar, Rahul Dravid, Yuvraj Singh, Mohammad Kaif, Anil Kumble, Harbhajan Singh, Javagal Srinath, Zaheer Khan, Dinesh Mongia, Ajit Agarkar, Jai Prakash Yadav.

Umpires: David Shepherd (England) and Steve Bucknor (West Indies).

Unification boat crosses divided waters

14th Asian Games BUSAN 2002 AFP, Busan

A North Korean passenger boat carrying hundreds of Asian Games supporters arrived here Saturday in a landmark visit to South Korea.

The 9,672-tonne Mangyongbong 92, carrying 343 North Korean supporters, including a 150-member music band, pulled in at Dadaepo Port amid cheers from hundreds of Busan citizens waving "unification flags" and banners.

It marked the first time that a North Korean passenger boat has entered South Korean waters and moored at a port in the capitalist rival since the end of the Korean War of 1950-53.

It was also at Dadaepo Port where a group of North Korean armed agents landed in 1983, triggering a bloody gunbattle.

Civilians and fishermen on some

50 boats rode out to the sea to welcome the North Koreans on Saturday as hundreds of the unification flags were hung from windows of apartment buildings near the port.

The North Korean boat was marked with the North's national flag -- a red star and blue and red stripes -- but it also flew a unification flag, commonly used by the two sides and decorated with the blue Korean peninsula image.

"Thank you all for welcoming us so warmly," Li Myong-Won, who led the cheering squad, told the audience. "We'll root for not only our athletes but for the unification of the fatherland."

The North Korean supporters, mostly women decked in brightly colored Hanbok, the traditional wear of flowing robes, waved unification flags on the deck as their music band struck up a North Korean tune "Happy to see you" which is catching on in the South as well.

South Koreans responded chanting "Tongil Joguk (Unified

Korea)."

The North Korean supporters moved to Changwon City in the west of Busan to root for the North Korean football squad in a preliminary match against Hong Kong.

The Asian Games, which is officially scheduled from September 29 to October 14, virtually got underway with football preliminaries that kicked off on Friday.

The Busan Asiad will be the first time the communist North will take part in a sporting event hosted by the South, and serves as a tangible sign of improving inter-Korean ties following the resumption of inter-Korean dialogue in August.

South and North Korea have agreed to allow their athletes to march together in the opening ceremony under a unification flag.

The two Koreas have combined flames lit at the North's highest peak, Mount Paektu, and the South's highest peak, Mount Halla, to make a "unification flame" which will keep burning during the Asiad.

Ferrero thru'

AFP, Hong Kong

Spain's Juan Carlos Ferrero feels more at home on the slow clay of Europe, but he declared a new-found liking for hard courts after cruising into the final of the Salem Open on Saturday.

The second seed ripped through French serve volleyer Jerome

Golmard in just over an hour for a 6-4, 6-1 win, his fourth straight sets win of the tournament.

"I'm feeling so good right now," Ferrero said after the match, high-lighting to reporters the fact he had not lost set this tournament.

"I haven't won a tournament without losing a set before, I'd really like to do that."

Ferrero, ranked six in the world, has won just one tournament on hard court, taking the title at Dubai

last year, out of a career total of six.

His other five titles have been on his beloved clay, including his only triumph this year in a Masters Series event in Monte Carlo.

But he said being a touch more aggressive compared with clay, coupled with a couple of weeks of tough practice in Spain leading into the tournament, were the two biggest factors for his extraordinary form here.

"I have really enjoyed playing this week on the hard courts," Ferrero said.

In Sunday's final, Ferrero will play either compatriot and number three seed Carlos Moya or Sweden's Jonas Bjorkman, who were due to play their semi final here later Saturday night.

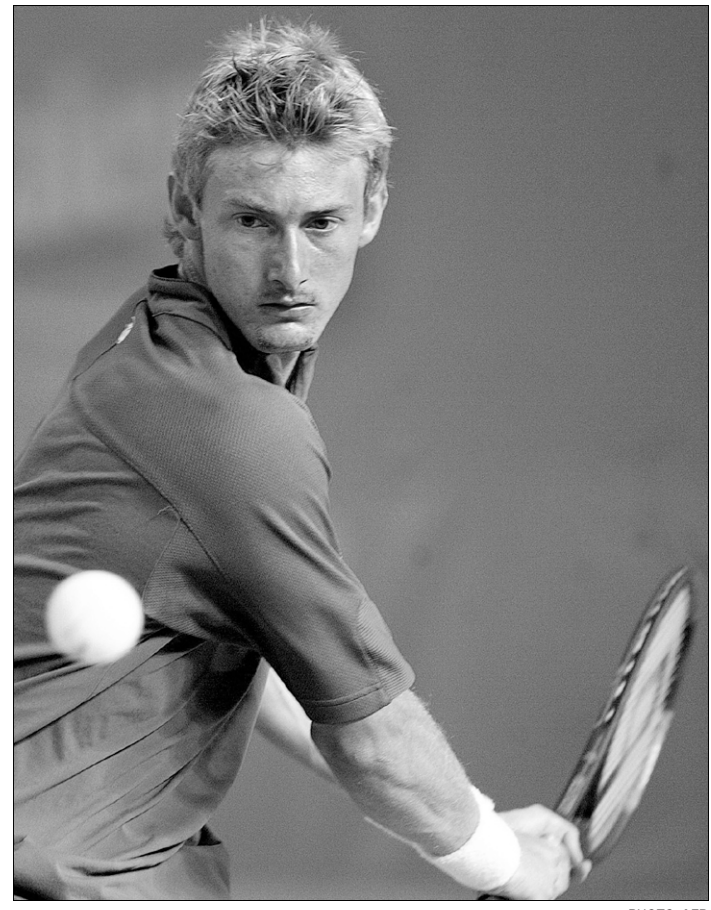
Ferrero is equal fifth in the Champions Race with Moya, with only the top seven guaranteed a spot at the elite, season-ending Masters Cup in Shanghai, China, in November. The eighth position goes to one of this year's Grand Slam champions who otherwise don't qualify.

Ferrero rarely missed with his heavy topspin groundstrokes off both flanks against Golmard, and it was his backhand that caused the most damage with devastating shots down the line winning him several breakpoints throughout the match.

For Golmard, ranked 136 in the world, it was a case of being too anxious to get into the net that caused him to make far too many unforced errors.

He had had a dream run at this year's Hong Kong Open, knocking out fourth seed Alex Corretja in the second round and fifth seed Juan Ignacio Chela in the quarter finals.

But the Frenchman was unable to hold his own from the baseline with Ferrero, partly because of a severe blister on his smallest toe on his right foot that needed medical attention in between sets.



Spaniard Juan Carlos Ferrero plays a backhand against Jerome Golmard of France in the semifinals of the Salem Open yesterday.

Aravinda talks of retirement

AFP, Colombo

Reliable Sri Lankan batsman Aravinda de Silva said Friday he was likely to retire from international cricket after the ongoing ICC Champions Trophy one-day tournament here.

"This is probably the last tournament I'm playing at home," said Aravinda, who played a crucial role in his team's seven-wicket victory over Australia in the day-night semifinal at the Premadasa Stadium.

He took one wicket for 16 runs off 10 tight overs of off-spin to put pressure on Ricky Ponting's team early in the innings. He was named man-of-the-match for his economical bowling.

"I'm glad I was able to do that (put pressure on Australia), especially when I'm probably playing the last tournament at home," said Aravinda, who will turn 37 next month.

"This was an important semifinal and I really like challenges. I like to take responsibility on my shoulders in a big game," said Aravinda, who has scored more than 6,000 runs in 93 Tests with 20 centuries.

His biggest moment came in the 1996 World Cup final against Australia at Lahore in Pakistan when he hammered a century and took three wickets to lead his team to victory.

Aravinda said he had not decided whether he would be playing in the World Cup in South Africa next year.

"I don't know whether I'll be going to the World Cup. I'll probably have a chat with the selectors after this tournament and then decide," said Aravinda, who has scored 8,758 runs in 286 one-dayers with 11 hundreds.

Srinath changes

FROM PAGE 13 India's tour of the West Indies in June, but said he was available for one-dayers and was keen to play in next year's World Cup in South Africa.

The national selectors, however, ignored him for the NatWest Trophy in England and the ongoing ICC Champions Trophy here.

Srinath played for English county Leicestershire for a short spell before being summoned here to replace an injured Ashish Nehra.

"We were disappointed when he announced his retirement because we needed him in England. We always wanted him to play Test cricket," Ganguly said.

Afghans amerced

FROM PAGE 13

Scores at 1-1 in the second half. Hong skipped through a static Hong Kong defence and rifed his shot post keeper Fan Chun-Yip, sending the underdogs' defenders slumping to the turf in dismay.

North Korea, who had been shaken when Hong Kong equalised on 66 minutes through a free-kick by Chan Wai-ho, could not disguise their relief at the final whistle.

The Korean players celebrated joyfully, jogging over to one corner of the stadium to applaud fans waving the special 'unity flag' depicting a blue Korean peninsula on a white background.

Japan's inexperienced squad struggled against unfancied Palestine before securing a 2-0 victory.

Urawa Red striker Tatsuya Tanaka opened the scoring in the 66th minute after gathering a pass from Yoshito Kubo who had fluffed a penalty kick only a minute earlier.

Japan's second goal came through Cerezo Osaka defender Yuichi Nemoito in the 79th minute when he picked up a rebound just inside the right side of the penalty area and flicked his finish past Palestine keeper Ramzi Saleh.

Palestine, third in the Arab Games in 1999, could only manage one shot on goal in the first half and lacking their best strikers Ziad El-Kurd and Fady Lafy due to club commitments in Jordan.

In Saturday's other matches, Kuwait crushed Pakistan 6-0 and Bahrain defeated Uzbekistan 3-0 to confirm the form they showed last year when they defeated Iran during their World Cup qualifying campaign.

Nasrat Al-Jamal grabbed a late equaliser to give Lebanon a 1-1 draw with Qatar.

Who's to blame?

FROM PAGE 13

Team without any training was a sheer stupidity.

Kottan, the Austro-Hungarian coach, said prior to the team's departure that he had never been into such a weird circumstance before.

"I have never been in such an awkward position in my whole coaching career. There was no camp, not enough practice matches and again we are going for the biggest competition of Asia."

"Naturally, I don't have any aim in this Games and neither anybody should expect anything since you know that we are going without a single day's practice," said Kottan before the team flew off to Bangkok last week.

Rallying behind the coach, Manik said, "He (Kottan) was right in his demand and BFF should have listened to him. Now it would haunt us for many years that we lost to India 0-3."

Yao towers over Kuwait

14th Asian Games BUSAN 2002 AFP, Busan

Yao Ming was unwilling to address his National Basketball Association future, but the Chinese giant demonstrated his superior skills here Saturday in a 78-45 rout of Kuwait.

The first NBA No. 1 draft pick from outside the United States produced game highs of 15 points, 13 rebounds and five blocked shots for China in the Asian Games basketball opener.

Chinese officials have not released Yao to play for the NBA's Houston Rockets, who remain confident Yao will be in uniform when the season opens in a month. His rookie contract, worth up to 15.6 million dollars, remains unsigned.

For now, Yao must be content to dominate the minnows of the basketball world instead of swimming with world-class NBA sharks in pre-season training games.

The 2.25m Chinese giant scored nine points, pulled down 10 rebounds and swatted away four shots in two quarters to give China a 42-17 half-time edge.

Yao watched most of the second half from the bench, then lingered after his team-mates to sign autographs. As he walked to the team bus, the 2.25m center spoke about 2.35m North Korean star Ri Myong Hun, a possible foe here.

"I know his game," said Yao, who saw the 35-year-old center as a child. "He was playing and my parents took me to watch. I have asked a lot of older players how they feel about him."

But when asked about his NBA situation, Yao just kept walking wordlessly past security guards and entered the bus.

The subject will have to be addressed soon. The Rockets begin pre-season training Monday, when Yao leads China against Hong Kong.

Yao scored five first-half points in the first 3 1/2 minutes as China seized a 9-0 lead. Kuwait rallied within 18-11 at the end of the first quarter but China scored 20 of the next 23 points to seize command.

Menke Batere, who played with the NBA's Denver Nuggets last season, replaced Yao to start the second quarter and scored six points in a 10-3 China run.

Yao returned with 5:48 remaining in the first half and ignited a run of 10 consecutive points for China.

Yao dominated on defense as well, keeping Kuwait shooting from the outside. He made a steal to set up Zhu Fanguyu's 3-point basket 4:18 before half-time, then blocked a shot to set up Chen Ke's fast break layup.

Not everything was to China coach Wang Fei's liking however. "The players worked hard," he said. "They should be more patient and improve their outside defense."

China's reigning Asian champions, who placed 12th at the World Championships earlier this month, are overwhelming favorites to capture gold again. South Korea and the Philippines are the toughest of 11 rivals in the tournament.

The Chinese are without center Wang Zhi Zhi, who joined Yao and Batere to create China's "Great Walking Wall" at the Sydney Olympics.

Wang, whose debut with Dallas in 2001 made him the NBA's first Chinese player, is in a dispute with Chinese officials and trying to secure a new NBA contract.



Yao Ming of China goes for a score against Kuwait during the opening game of men's basketball at the 14th Asian Games in Busan yesterday.

Aussies bow to spin

ICC CHAMPIONS TROPHY SRI LANKA 2002 AFP, Colombo

Australian skipper Ricky Ponting conceded Friday his team failed to cope with the Sri Lankan spin attack in the semifinal of the ICC Champions Trophy one-day cricket tournament here.

"We didn't play the spinners very well and that probably took the game away from us," said Ponting after his team's seven-wicket defeat in the day-night game at the Premadasa Stadium on Friday.

Australia were bundled out for their lowest total of 162 against Sri Lanka in 44 one-day internationals as off-spinners Muttiah Muralitharan (3-26), Kumar Dharmasena (2-30) and Aravinda de Silva (1-16) struck vital blows.

Sri Lanka comfortably surpassed the Australian total, scoring 163-3 to win with 10 overs to spare. They will now meet India in the day-night final on Sunday.

"They brought the spinners on early and put us under pressure," said Ponting.

"The wicket probably turned a lot more than we had expected. It wasn't an ideal one-day wicket, but that's no excuse.

"We got off to a good start and then lost quick wickets against spinners. We couldn't get back into

the game after that."

Australia were 49 for no loss before losing four wickets for eight runs in the space of seven overs as Sri Lankan skipper Sanath Jayasuriya pressed his spinners into the attack after just five overs.

"Sri Lanka played better in each department of the game. They bowled, fielded and batted better," Ponting said, adding the long gap between their last league match and the semifinal was not the reason for defeat.

Australia played their last game against Bangladesh on September 19 and then went to neighbouring Maldives on a holiday.

"We were well-prepared for the semifinal, though we had a few days off," said the Australian captain.

Jayasuriya said his team had put in one of its best performances against a strong Australia.

"I think it's one of our best performances because beating Australia is not easy," he said. "They are the best team in the world, but we had planned well. The first few overs cost us a bit, but we managed to come back into the game."

"Wickets in the sub-continent always help spinners. I wanted to open the attack with spin, but then I thought I would go with seamers Vaas (Chaminda) and Pulasthi (Gunaratne) for a few overs.

"The pitch was slow, but Aravinda bowled really well." Aravinda was named man of the

match for keeping the Australian batsmen silent, conceding just 16 runs in 10 overs for one wicket.

SCOREBOARD

Final scoreboard of the day-night semifinal between Australia and Sri Lanka in the ICC Champions Trophy cricket tournament at the Premadasa Stadium on Friday:

AUSTRALIA: 162 in 48.4 overs (S Warne 36, A Gilchrist 31, D Martyn 28; M Muralitharan 3-26, K Dharmasena 2-30)

SRI LANKA Jayasuriya b Warne 42 Atapattu lbw b McGrath 51 S'kara c Gilchrist b McGrath 48 Aravinda not out 2 Jayawardene not out 1 Extras: (b-4, lb-2, nb-6, w-7) 19 Total: (For 3 wkts in 40 overs) 163

Fall of wickets: 1-67, 2-142, 3-160 Did not bat: Russel Arnold, Chaminda Vaas, Pulasthi Gunaratne, Muttiah Muralitharan, Kumar Dharmasena, Upul Chandana.

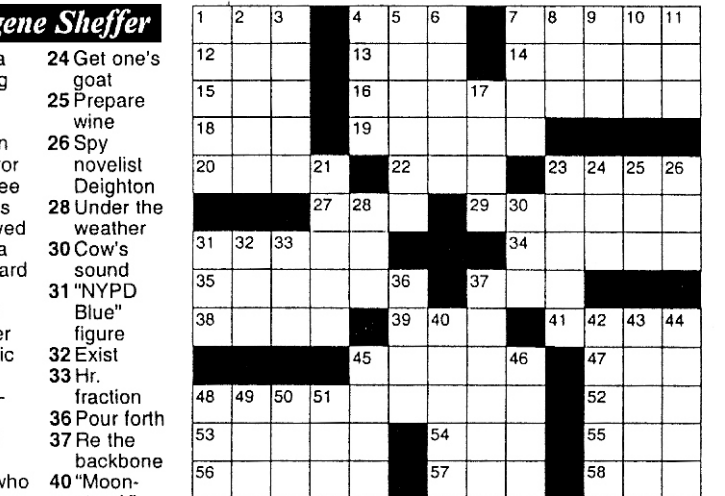
Bowler O M R W

McGrath 10 1 41 2 Gillespie 8 1 28 0 Warne 10 2 25 1 Lee 7 1 39 0 Lehmann 5 0 24 0

Result: Sri Lanka win by seven wickets. Man-of-the-match: Aravinda de Silva.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS 41 Fire 45 Shy 47 Zero-star review 48 Type of bag 52 Honest politician 53 Fad, and then some 54 Hurred abbr. 55 More demure 57 Tarzan song 58 Right angle 59 Sandwich treats 60 Grand-scale 22 Ar follower 23 Use an old phone 27 Disen-cumber 29 Come out 31 Ship of the desert 34 Of wood 35 Camden Yards athlete 37 Fa follower 38 'I Am Sam' star 39 Navagation aid 41 Fire 45 Shy 47 Zero-star review 48 Type of bag 52 Honest politician 53 Fad, and then some 54 Hurred abbr. 55 More demure 57 Tarzan song 58 Right angle 59 Sandwich treats 60 Grand-scale 22 Ar follower 23 Use an old phone 27 Disen-cumber 29 Come out 31 Ship of the desert 34 Of wood 35 Camden Yards athlete 37 Fa follower 38 'I Am Sam' star 39 Navagation aid 3 Stanza serving as a P.S. 4 Roman emperor for three months 5 Followed item 6 Uses a keyboard 7 Inlets 8 Picnic invader 9 Genetic initials 10 'My Sal' fraction 36 Pour forth 37 Re the backbone 40 'Moon-struck' denmed subject 42 Quickly 43 Plotters' doings 44 Dead ringer? 45 Autocrit 46 Say it isn't so 48 Auto-maker's initials 49 7-faced doctor of film 50 Whatever number 51 Conk out



CRYPTOQUIP

Q H Q D Q V N C M C V J F Z C V Q M J F U Q V Q M D C F U Z B U C H J L Z C H . K L K F J J F B H " Z C Q U Q M N Z C J Z C Q U . "

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IN ANTARCTICA, DO YOU SUPPOSE TOURISTS EVER SAY TO EACH OTHER "HAVE AN ICE DAY?" Today's Cryptoquip Clue: Z equals L

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.