

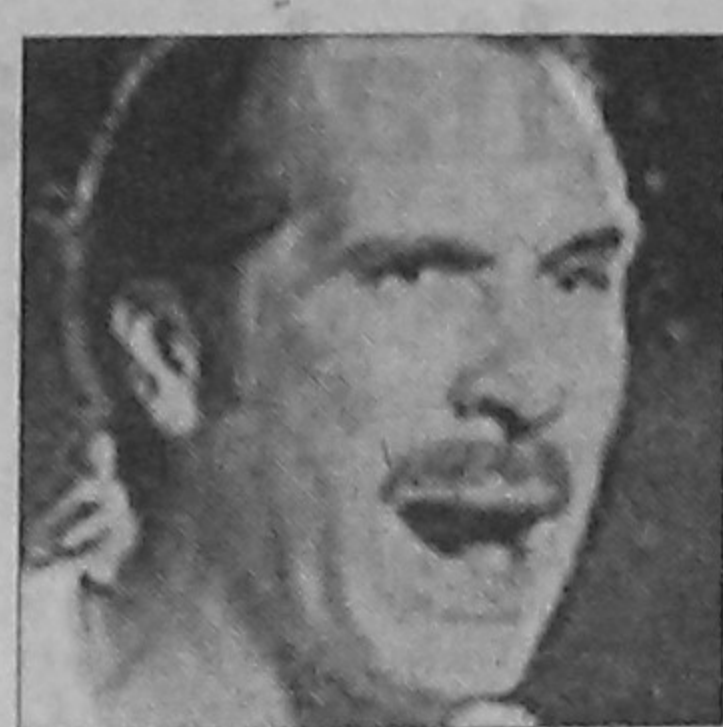
Stubborn Seaman

Football

INTERNET, London

Under-fire England goalkeeper David Seaman insists there is 'no way' he is ready to give up international football. And the Arsenal veteran hopes it is a 'long, long time' before he decides to end his England career...

that." Seaman won his 75th cap against Macedonia, a month into his 40th year.



DAVID SEAMAN

Championships come round he will be 41, but does not envisage stepping down in the near future.

"All I can do is just get on with it and play my game," he added. "It is not the end of the world. When I finish football I go home to a happy family."

Seaman also stepped into the recent racism row that blighted England's Euro 2004 qualifier in Slovakia. The keeper witnessed England team-mates Ashley Cole and Emile Heskey receiving abuse and believes police should clamp down harder on the culprits...

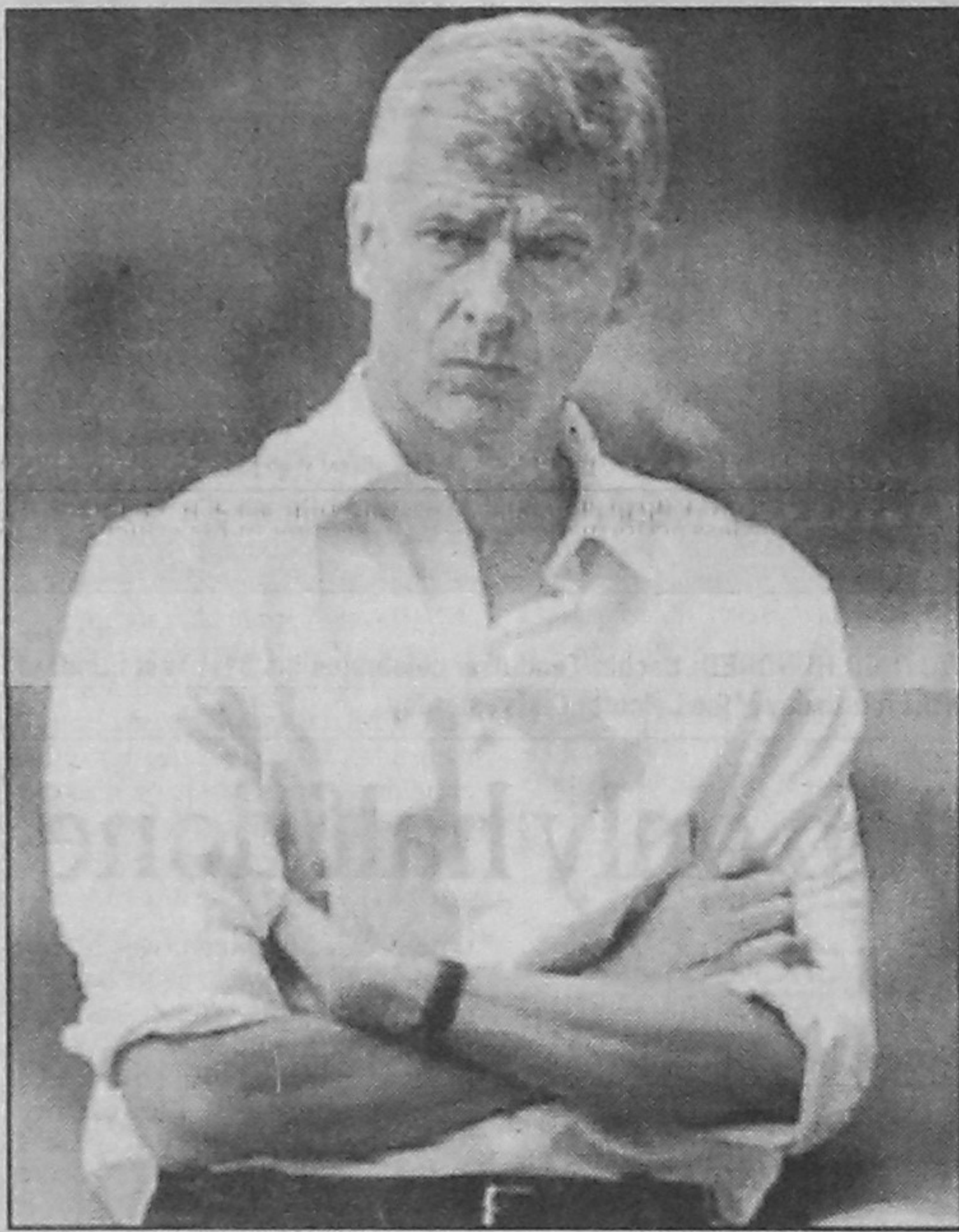
Arsenal still best

Football

INTERNET, London

Arsene Wenger reckons Arsenal are putting the fun back into football by losing. The north London club's chief believes fans throughout the country are finding it amusing to see the double-winners going through a rough patch...

as we have shown in the past and will show again. I'm not worried at all about the future of this team." Arsenal's run is currently their worst for 19 years, though Wenger has experienced a similar one before...



THIS IS SERIOUS... Wenger wants a smile on his face

Presidential praise for Ronaldo

Football

AFP, Sao Paulo

Brazil's new president Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva has warmly welcomed Ronaldo's offer to help his government fight hunger in Brazil.

solidarity," said the former factory worker. Ronaldo said he had been heartened to hear of Lula's initiative to set up a Department of Social Emergency.

Reyna ruled out

Football

REUTERS, Sunderland

United States captain Claudio Reyna faces six months out of action after it was confirmed that the midfielder had ruptured a cruciate knee ligament playing for his English club Sunderland.

time in Los Angeles. Sunderland manager Howard Wilkinson, who has only been in charge for two matches, tried to put a brave face on the loss of one of his most important players.

Serie A's silent tribute

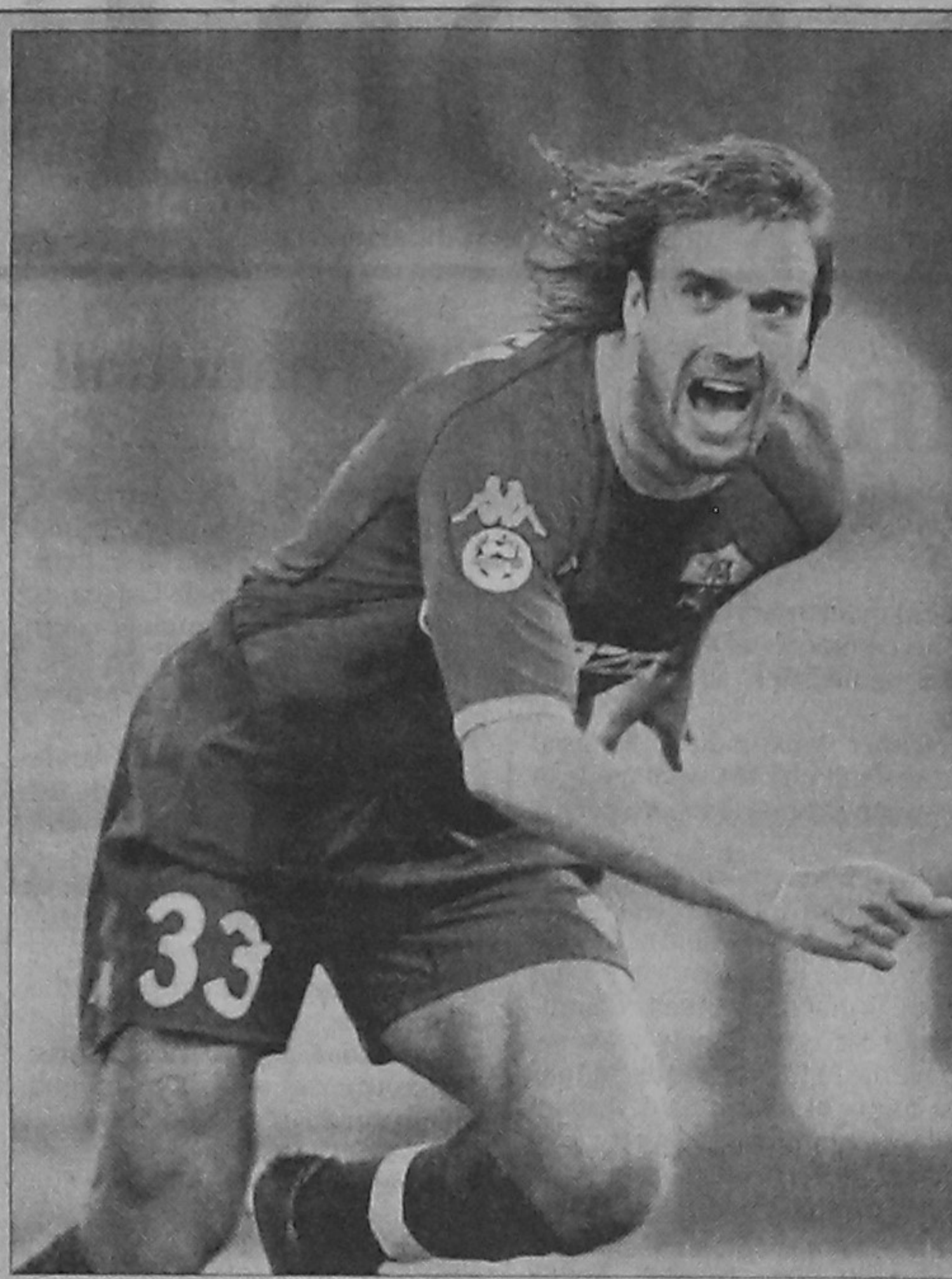
AFP, Rome

The Italian Football Association (FIGC) said Friday there will be a minute's silence before all Serie A matches this weekend in memory of those who died in the earthquake which hit southern Italy.

Uruguayans want their money

REUTERS, Montevideo

Uruguay's national players are considering taking legal action against their football federation in a bid to obtain 2 million dollars they claim they are owed in World Cup prize money, their lawyer said Friday.



GABRIEL BATISTUTA

Watch out for Batigol

Football

INTERNET, Rome

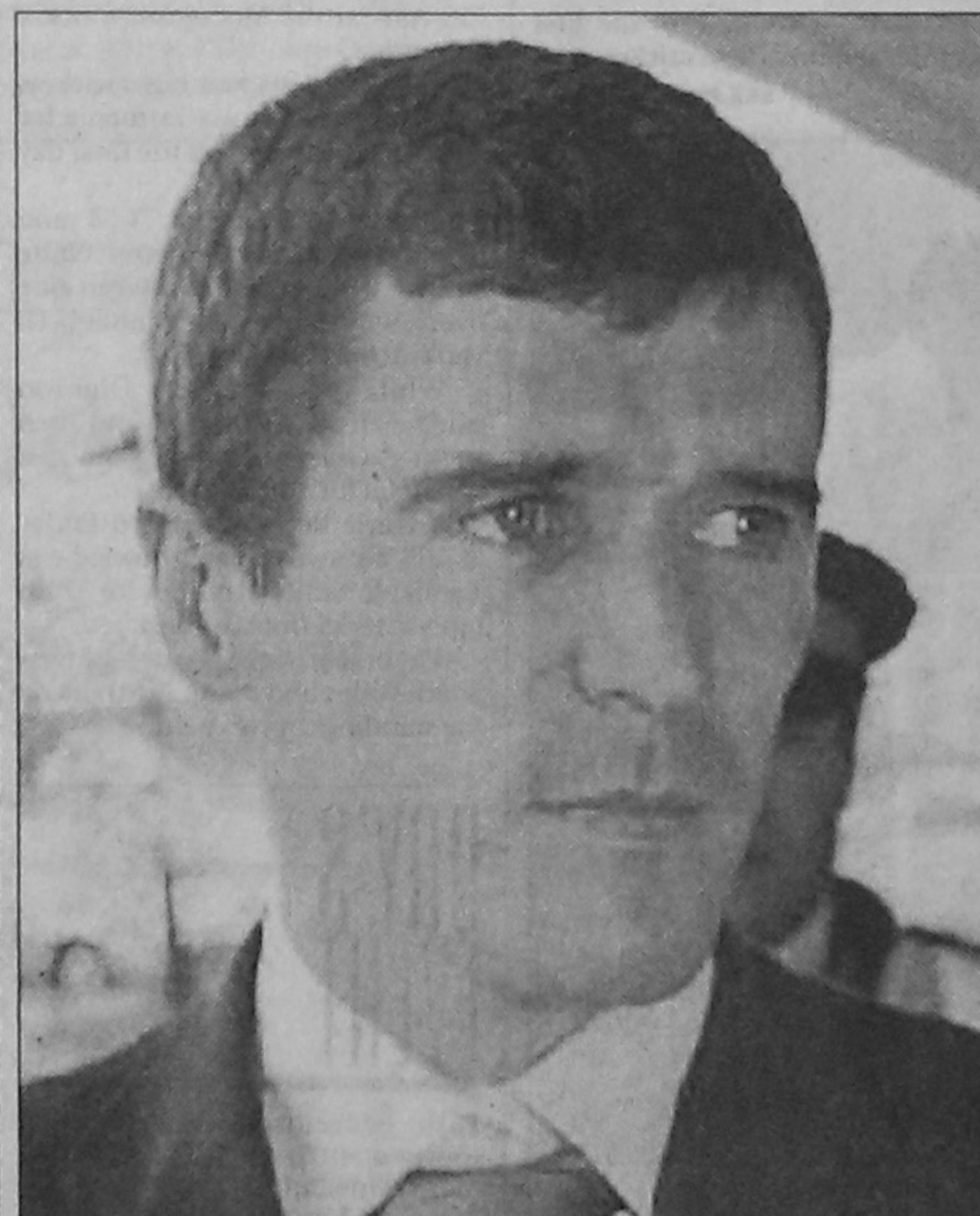
Gabriel Batistuta on Friday night revealed that he would be playing in the Premiership next season. The Argentine superstar dropped the flag on a transfer race between Manchester United, Tottenham, Chelsea and Fulham as he said he will quit Roma and wants to move here on a free transfer next summer.

Keane against appeal

Football

REUTERS, London

Manchester United captain Roy Keane has not appealed to the Football Association over a five-match ban and a record fine of 150,000 pounds, the FA has announced. Keane, who was found guilty on two charges of disrepute by the FA last month, had 14 days to appeal against the decision but Friday's deadline passed without the Irish midfielder contacting the organisation.



ROY KEANE

Costa Rica in state of shock

AFP, San Jose

Costa Rican football was in a state of shock Friday after the suicide of 25-year-old goalkeeper Lester Morgan. Police here said Morgan's body was found in San Rafael de Heredia, 15km north of here, on Friday morning.

Kaiser sees ray of hope

Football

AFP, Munich

German football legend and Bayern Munich honorary president Franz Beckenbauer predicted Friday that the shock elimination of the Bundesliga giants from the Champions League will allow the team to develop home grown talent.

Beckenbauer. "Every year we spend millions of euros on new players. That can be different next year. As a coach I find it a great challenge to train a young player and to bring him into the first team. It's too easy to say I want this or that player."

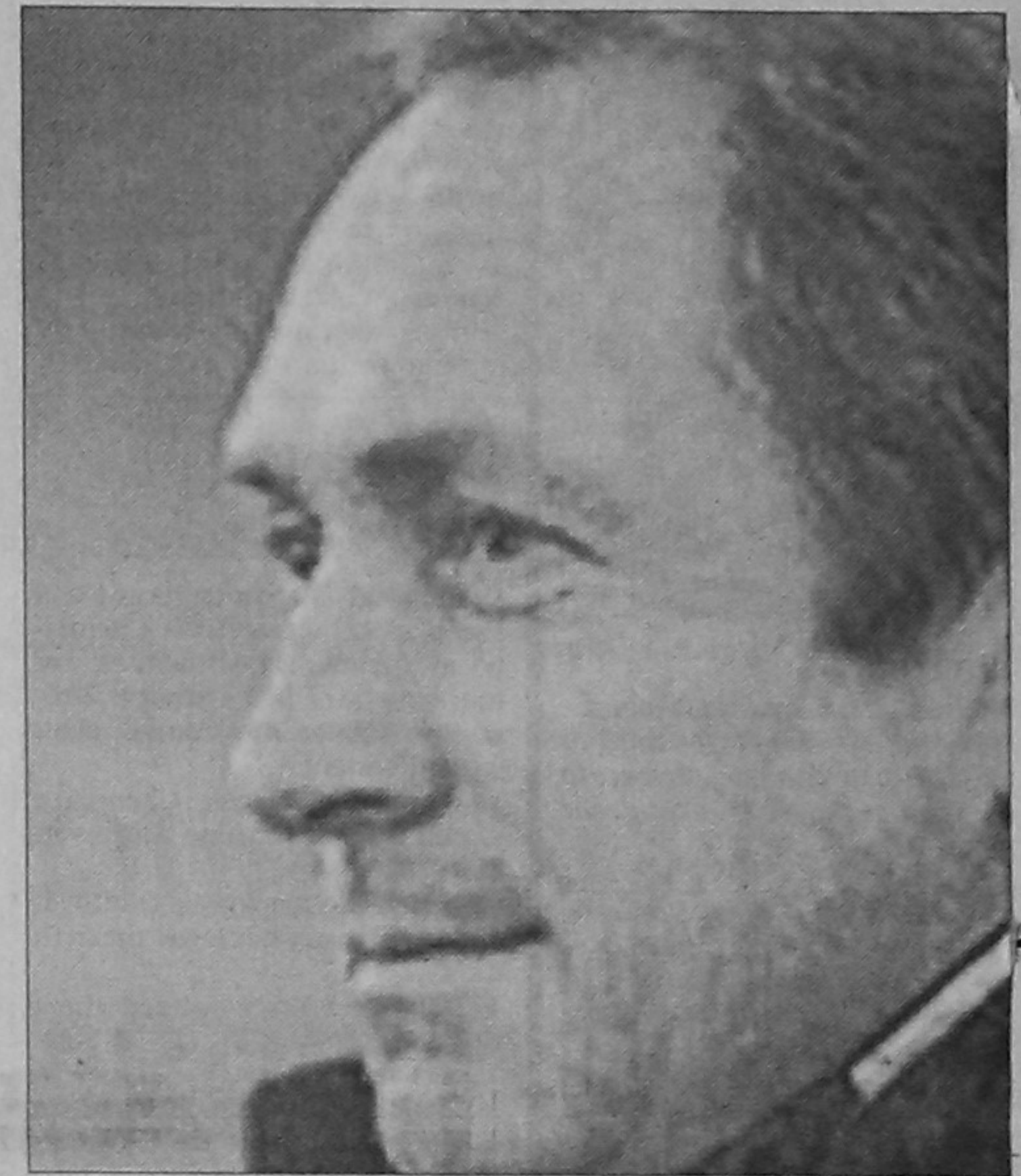
"It's possible that during the winter break the contracts of some will be broken if they want to leave us," said Beckenbauer. There has been speculation in the press about the future of midfielder Thorsten Fink, 35, who has been blocked this season by the arrival of Ballack, striker Alexander Zickler, 28, and defenders Pablo Thiam, 28, and 31-year-old Nino Kovac.

Houllier's prediction

Football

REUTERS, Liverpool

Liverpool manager Gerard Houllier believes the club's long wait for their first title since 1990 will soon be over. The Frenchman, whose side are four points clear at the top of the table, is cautious of openly trumpeting what would be Liverpool's 19th championship victory -- but is confident that success is just around the corner.



GERARD HOULLIER

to the club's recent success. "The recognition goes to the manager, but it is an award I want to share with my staff and my players," he said.

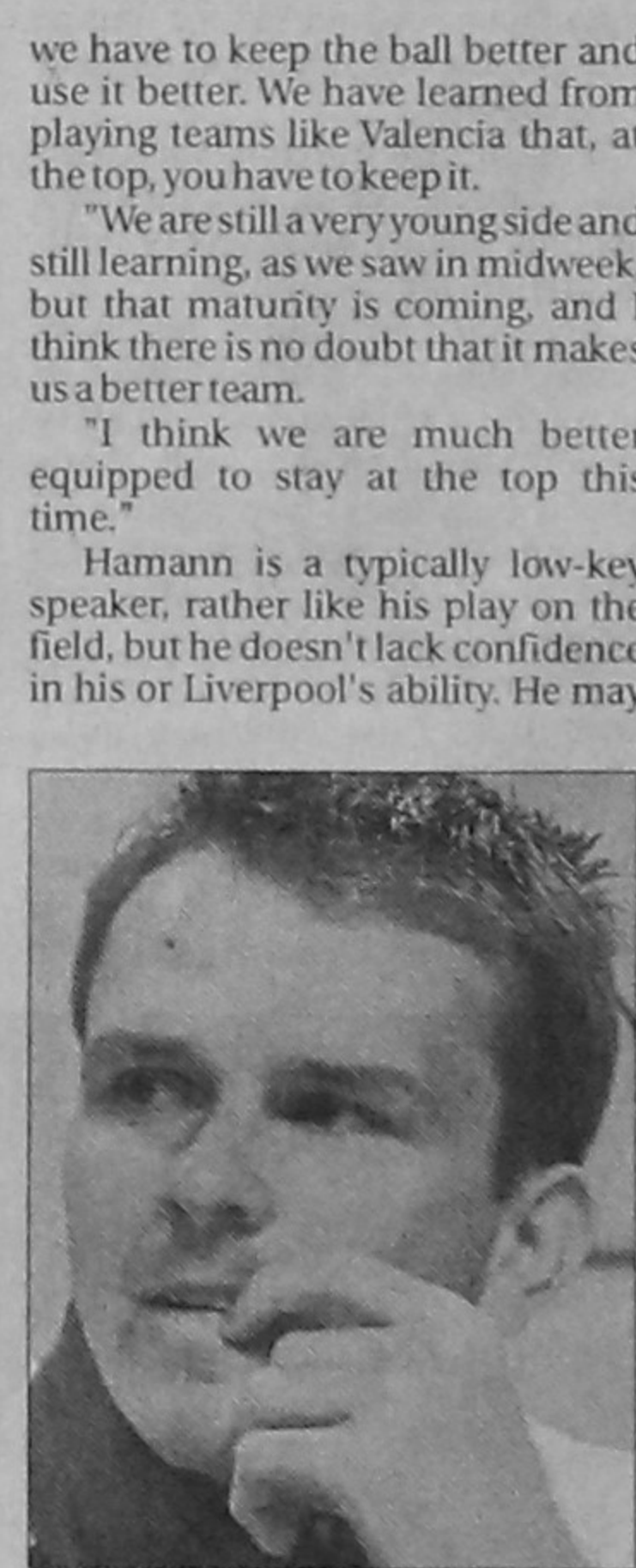
"They were the first side to beat Chelsea away and the first to beat Fulham away, so we have to be wary. The table says we are the best team at the moment, but we are still a team going through a good period of progress and we must keep that going."

Quiet Reds engine

Football

INTERNET, Liverpool

They always say that German engineering is understated, and that certainly applies to Dietmar Hamann. The Liverpool midfielder is a World Cup finalist, and a crucial element of the revival at Anfield - yet you would hardly know he was a Premiership player for all the recognition he gets in England.



DIETMAR HAMANN

not shout it from the rooftops, but he has a definite sense that this could be Liverpool's year, if not in Europe then certainly in the club's pursuit to bring the title back to Anfield.

but what does that matter if we are winning games and the others aren't? Of course we want to play well and play good football, but that is impossible to do all the time, and most of all we want to win. There is a strength about our side and a sense of togetherness that maybe some of the others lack. And that is important."