

Beginning of the end?

Football

AFP, London

David Beckham might have had enough of Alex Ferguson after the Manchester United manager refused to apologise for the dressing room bust-up that left the England captain with a cut eye.

Ferguson accused Beckham of 'cocking-up as a footballer' during a four-letter tirade that sparked a bust-up following Saturday's 2-0 FA Cup defeat by Arsenal.

A red-faced Ferguson swore at the top of his voice before finally kicking a boot across the dressing room. It struck Beckham above the left eye and caused a cut requiring two stitches.

The bust-up, reported by the Sun newspaper, was later confirmed by Ferguson.

"That happens in a dressing room. It's one of those freak acts of nature that happens and it's over," said the volatile United boss.

"I mean it's a freak it will never happen again."

Before Ferguson's confirmation Manchester United had been keeping studiously quiet about the affair.

"Whatever happens in the dressing room remains private," a club spokesman had said.

A grim-looking Beckham was seen driving his car to training Monday morning with the damage clearly visible to his left eye.

Beckham reportedly went wild with anger and the pair had to be separated by two team-mates to prevent a fight after Beckham spat at Ferguson.

It now threatens Beckham's entire future at Old Trafford and could undermine United's whole season, as they bid for a treble of Premiership, League Cup and Champions League.

A source said 27-year-old Beckham had to hold his Posh Spice wife Victoria back from confronting the 61-year-old Ferguson.

"This will run up and run and we fear it could prompt David to leave United for good," the source said.

Already AC Milan and Real Madrid have alerted agents to seek possible talks with the superstar, who still has two and half years left on his 90,000 pounds (150,000 dollar) a week contract, the Sun



PHOTO: INTERNET

THAT'S FOR REAL! English soccer star David Beckham at training yesterday with the cut above his eye.

reported.

The showdown brought to a head a simmering unease between Ferguson and Beckham, which stretches back nearly four years.

While Beckham refers to the Scot as a father-figure and the manager respects the player's professionalism, there are still problems.

Ferguson has always been irritated by Beckham's celebrity status and has grown tired of the circus surrounding him. Far from blaming the media for the attention Beckham is given, he believes the player is at fault for bringing the pressure on himself. Last November, Ferguson said nobody should feel sorry for the player having to put up with being under such a spotlight.

Beckham is paid 1.4 million pounds (2.5 million dollars) a year by Adidas to wear their Predator boots. They supply him with boots bearing the names of his sons, Brooklyn and Romeo. It was not sure if it was one of his own boots that struck him in the face.

"He has a lifestyle he enjoys and I don't know how he does it. I don't know how he can live that life, because of the attention he gets all the time. David enjoys it. He realises he has a star status and a lot of it is by his own design," Ferguson said.

"He has cultivated it himself. He likes to dress in a certain way, changes his hairstyle and is not aware how that is portrayed by a lot of people. I say that to him time and again."

The first real cracks in their relationship came back in September 1999.

Ferguson fished Beckham for appearing at a fashion show wearing a bandana on his head the night before the team flew out for a

Champions League match.

The boss thought the image was absurd and Beckham in turn was furious at being torn off a strip for it.

What Ferguson hates most of all is what he feels is lack of professionalism.

So when, in February 2000, Beckham failed to turn up for training, claiming his son Brooklyn was ill, the boss was left raging on learning later that the player's wife, Victoria, had been pictured out shopping.

When Beckham returned to training the next day, Ferguson went mad in front of the other players and sent him home.

Beckham was subsequently dropped for the following game against Leeds.

And Ferguson was expected to use the excuse of a leg injury to drop Beckham for Wednesday's Champions League game against Italian giants Juventus at Old Trafford.

Beckham trained Monday with the cut clearly visible.

That cut is now set to become as infamous as 'The Foot' which was the centre of national attention after Beckham fractured it and almost missed going to South Korea and Japan for last year's World Cup.

Ferguson's ballistic temper was criticised by management consultants.

"What we could be looking at here is a case of bullying. But the real difficulties arise when the bullying has been going on for some time," Tony Mellish, a Trades Union Congress health and safety expert, said.

Gareth Hughes, a clinical psychologist, said there was nothing wrong with anger but Ferguson was wrong to have let himself get carried away.

"Management by fear is not a great idea," he said.

Jimmy Greaves, football commentator and former England player, said: "If anyone thought Fergie was calming down after turning 60, they are very wrong. He will need to make up with the player before the situation starts to overshadow their season."

Former United striker Mark Hughes described the manager's "hairdryer" treatment.

"He would stand nose-to-nose with you and just shout and bawl, and you would end up with your hair behind your head."

Leicester manager Micky Adams said Ferguson's confrontational style was out of place in modern soccer.

"We've seen now with Arsene Wenger and Gerard Houllier that the more mild mannered approach is better with the modern day player," he said.

"What Manchester United will be disappointed about is the fact that it has got out into the wider world."

With nearly every paper in Britain carrying front page pictures of Beckham's split eye, Manchester United said Tuesday Ferguson would hold a press conference later in the day.

Ferguson, 16 years with Manchester, is currently negotiating a new contract.

It was a year ago that Fergie declared a U-turn on his retirement plans. He had been set to quit Old Trafford last summer but chose to stay on.

He was immediately set up with a new three-year contract that extended his tenure until the summer of 2005.

Hot-headed managers

AFP, London

Manchester United boss Alex Ferguson's alleged bust-up with England captain David Beckham is only one of the many tales of managers involved in bust-ups with players.

Probably the most extreme reaction by a club boss came when Grimsby manager Brian Laws broke Ivano Bonetti's cheekbone in 1996 after the Italian threw food at him during a dressing-room confrontation.

Trevor Francis was fined 1,000 pounds (1,600 dollars) last year for cuffing his Crystal Palace goalkeeper Alex Kolinko around the ear. Francis was upset when he saw the Latvian laughing after Palace conceded a goal.

Steve Claridge punched Cambridge manager John Beck in the face after disagreeing with Beck's tactics which included cold showers before games and hypnosis.

Southampton's Lawrie McMenemy once threw a fully-clothed Mark Wright into the bath when the England defender questioned his authority.

Advice from 'cool' Wenger

AFP, London

Arsenal's French manager Arsene Wenger has told Manchester United's fiery Scottish boss Alex Ferguson to stay cool.

Ferguson is in trouble for a dressing-room bust-up that left England captain David Beckham with a cut eye.

And Wenger admits it is difficult for soccer managers to keep emotions in check.

"The bigger the animal is inside you, the more you have to keep it under control," he told The Sun said Tuesday.

"There is a big animal inside me but you learn to control your emotions most of the time."

"It is not difficult to lose it and everybody has a different way of keeping themselves in check."

"There is no right and wrong way for managerial success. We're all different, we all have strong points and weaknesses."

"You need passion to survive in this job. You can't just switch that on and off and sometimes you do suffer a gut reaction. I have never yet met a manager who doesn't care. The biggest problem is handling the disappointment and, of course, you get frustrated when you lose."

"The important thing in football is to realise that when a game is over, it's over. You start to think about the next match straight away."

MU's toughest test yet



AFP, Paris

Manchester United's resilience under pressure, a feature of their 1999 treble-winning season, has a huge test on Wednesday at home to Italian giants Juventus in the Champions League.

Saturday's FA Cup defeat to Arsenal at Old Trafford, further Roy Keane revelations on his ongoing hip problems and David Beckham's bizarre dressing room eye injury, means the Red Devils will need all the mental strength they can muster in midweek.

In other matches Wednesday under-pressure titleholders Real Madrid host Borussia Dortmund, Lokomotiv Moscow travel to AC Milan and FC Basel greet Deportivo La Coruna.

United's Ruud van Nistelrooy had a poor game in the 2-0 FA Cup fifth round defeat against Arsenal and Juventus might be thankful they are facing him and not Gunners' striker Thierry Henry.

France central defender Mikael Silvestre had perhaps one of his poorest performances this season and United's backline will need more steel in facing the resurgent Old Lady of Turin in Juventus.

United battled back from two goals down to record a 3-2 Champions League semi-final win at Juventus in 1999, the last time the European giants met.

United famously went on to win the trophy, with Ole Gunnar Solskjaer grabbing the last-gasp winner which sealed a stunning 2-1 triumph over Bayern Munich at the Nou Camp stadium.

Roy Keane, suspended for the 1999 final, told the Manchester Evening News that despite the loss to Arsenal there was all to play for in silverware.

"It was a big match for both clubs on Saturday but there are still a lot of prizes out there to be won."

"We still have the European Cup, we still have a chance in the championship and we have the League Cup final against Liverpool. It is not all doom and gloom."

"It is dangerous for us to be looking beyond Juventus on Wednesday. They will probably have had someone here on Saturday and will be thinking they

can probably come here and get something.

"But we will get on with it. This is where the season really kicks into overdrive. People say it is another critical six days for us in the Champions League but is there a week at Manchester United when it is not critical?

However Keane revealed he may need a hip-replacement operation

WEDNESDAY'S FIXTURES	
Group C	At Madrid
Real Madrid (Spa) v Borussia Dortmund (Ger)	At Milan
AC Milan (Ita) v Lokomotiv Moscow (Rus)	
Group D	At Manchester
Manchester United (Eng) v Juventus (Ita)	At Basel
FC Basel (Swi) v Deportivo La Coruna (Spa)	

tion by the time he is 45 and considered retirement from football when his surgeon told him the extent of the damage.

The 31-year-old, tough-tackling midfielder had a hip operation by specialist Richard Villar on September 3 last year.

Beckham meanwhile has a serious fitness doubt after receiving a nasty gash above his left eye which required two stitches.

The damage was done by a flying boot kicked by manager Alex Ferguson in the Old Trafford dressing room after the Arsenal defeat.

Ferguson, nicknamed The Hairdryer because of the ferocity of his verbal blasts, admitted his part in what he called "a freak accident".

Italian league leaders Juve are out to end United's 100 percent record from their opening two second phase games and increase their own chances of making the last eight.

United lead group D with six points, two points ahead of Juventus, with Deportivo La Coruna third with a point and Switzerland's Basel bottom with no points from their two matches.

Juventus coach Marcello Lippi said: "Manchester United may have lost but it just shows you what a

great team Arsenal are - they are one of the best squads in Europe.

Juventus will badly miss captain Alessandro Del Piero who is out of action for two months after picking up an injury in a league match in early February.

However French striker David Trezeguet said he is up for the match.

FC Basel host Deportivo La Coruna of Spain in the pool's other game with both sides up against it if they want to qualify for the quarter-finals which only the top two teams will reach.

The Spaniards hit the road without injured Brazilian midfielder Mauro Silva.

In Group C, AC Milan defend their 100 percent record so far against second-placed Borussia Dortmund and Real Madrid will need to come back from bottom spot and just one point at home to Lokomotiv Moscow to give themselves a chance of making the last eight.

But Real's Brazilian World Cup winning striker Ronaldo insisted their slip-up against Osasuna in the Spanish league at the weekend would have no bearing on the Borussia match.

Zulu ranks

FROM PAGE 16
Cup progresses.
TOP MEN
5 points Lance Klusener (SA),
4 Wasim Akram (Pak), Tim de Leede (Hol), Herschelle Gibbs (SA), Sanath Jayasuriya (SL)
3 Andre Adams (NZ), James Anderson (Eng), Ian Billcliff (Can), Austin Codrington (Can), Stephen Fleming (NZ), Jason Gillespie (Aus), Brian Lara (WI), Thomas Odoyo (Ken), Chaminda Vaas (SL), Craig Wishart (Zim).

Quips&Quotes

FROM PAGE 16
ing the next challenge from England.
"His leadership skills made him the icon that he was. The passion with which Cronje played meant he was always keen and always believed we could win from any situation."
South Africa's Herschelle Gibbs on the qualities of late skipper Hansie Cronje.



BTV Cricket World Cup 2003 Preliminary Round Sri Lanka vs Canada Live at 1:45 pm
ESPN Taking Guard Day 11 WC Cricket Talk Show Live at 1:00 pm Sportscentre Hindi Sport News Live at 8:30 pm Follow Through Day 11 WC Cricket Programme Live at 10:00 pm UEFA Champions League Real Madrid vs Borussia Dortmund Live at 1:30 am (Thursday) STAR Sports Football Asia Repeat at 12:30 pm Taking Guard Day 11 WC Cricket Talk Show Live at 1:00 pm Sportsline Tonight Sport News Live at 8:00 pm Follow Through Day 11 WC Cricket Programme Live at 10:00 pm

Star WHIZZ KID OMPETITION 19

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The Daily Star

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Competition closes at 8 pm Feb 22, 2003 and draw shortly afterwards

1. Name who became AFC's team of the month in January	Bangladesh	Sri Lanka	India
2. Who finished first in the Prof Abdur Razzak 29th National Chess Championship qualifiers?	Nasir	Aminul	Talbur
3. Who clinched the Pan-Pacific Open tennis title?	Davenport	Hingis	Serena
4. Bangladesh beat KwaZulu-Natal in their second World Cup tied-up match by:			
Name			
Class			
School Address			
Phone: (If any)			

Veteran feelings

FROM PAGE 16
"Our friendship began when Donald hit me on the chin with a short ball. They put in 20 stitches on the chin and the scar still remains.

"I always remind him of it when we meet."

Wasim said his mentor Imran Khan's advice to always be positive under pressure should hold Donald in good stead.

"Imran's never-say-die approach was infectious, he always told me to be positive under pressure and I would advise Donald to do the same," said Wasim, who claimed 19 wickets when Pakistan won the 1992 World Cup.

New Zealand captain Stephen Fleming, who scored a match winning 134 not out in Sunday's win over South Africa, also backed Donald.

"Allan's under huge pressure. But he still has the experience to win the Cup for South Africa," Fleming said.

The hosts need to win all their remaining three matches in Pool B to stay in contention.

Wasim said South Africa were unlucky to have a bad start.

"It goes down to bad luck, losing by three runs to the West Indies and losing to New Zealand after scoring over 300," he said.

Wasim said the pressure which comes by being the hosts in telling on Shaun Pollock's men.

"I played two World Cups in Pakistan and went through enormous pressure as people expect you to win every game. South Africa are now feeling the same pressure."

HOW THEY COMPARE
Playing records of Pakistan's Wasim Akram and Allan Donald of South Africa:
WASIM AKRAM
Born: June 3, 1966, Lahore
Tests: Matches 104
Batting: Runs 2,998, Highest Score

257no, 100s 3
Bowling: Wickets 414, Best Bowling 7-119 v New Zealand at Wellington, 1993-94, Average 23.62, 5wkts 25
One-day: Matches 352
Batting: Runs 3699, Highest Score 86, Average 16.58, Wickets 498, Average 23.50, Best Bowling 5-15 v Zimbabwe in Karachi, 1993-94, 5wkts 6
ALLAN DONALD
Born: October 20, 1966, Bloemfontein
Tests: Matches 72
Batting: Runs 652, Highest Score 37, Average 10.68
Bowling: Wickets 330, Best Bowling 8-71 v Zimbabwe at Harare 1995-96, Average 22.25, 5wkts 20
One-day: Matches 163
Batting: Runs 95, Highest Score 13, Average 4.31
Bowling: Wickets 272, Best Bowling 6-23 v Kenya at Nairobi, 1996-97, Average 21.68, 5wkts 2

Canada versus Murali

FROM PAGE 16
both him and the pitch, it's all pretty much guess work.

"We'll be discussing how to handle him at our team meetings, we'll definitely have a plan going into the game."

"It's definitely a challenge, and it's one of the reasons why you play the game."

"The standard we usually play in the ICC (Trophy) means you don't really come up against quality opposition of that class, and it takes a period of time to get used to that," added Billcliff, whose 42 in Durban helped Canada to a shock victory over Bangladesh in their tournament opener.

If the Canadian top order can survive Vaas, it seems certain they will be given a severe examination by the ever-smiling, ever chattering 'Murali'.

But at least Muralitharan does not present a physical danger.

Many of the minor teams have admitted feeling naked fear at the prospect of facing the likes of pace bowlers Brett Lee of Australia and Pakistan's Shoaib Akhtar.

Namibia's Rudi van Vuuren, who

was also in his country's 1999 rugby union World Cup squad, said earlier: "Knowing my capabilities as a batsman, I'd rather take on Jonah Lomu one-on-one than Brett Lee."

The 30-year-old Billcliff, who has played domestic first-class cricket in New Zealand, added: "Murali...poses a very different sort of challenge from the out-and-out express bowlers."

"He's one of the greats in world cricket and I'll really enjoy testing myself against him."

"On the good wickets that we're playing on at this World Cup, there's not too many spinners that you would class as attacking spin bowlers. Murali is one."

LINE-UPS
SRI LANKA (from): Sanath Jayasuriya (captain), Marvan

Atapattu, Mahela Jayawardene, Kumar Sangakkara, Aravinda De Silva, Russel Arnold, Jehan Mubarak, Avishka Gunawardena, Hashan Tillakaratne, Muttiah Muralitharan, Chaminda Vaas, Dilhara Fernando, Prabath Nissanka, Charitha Buddhika.

CANADA (from): Joseph Harris (captain), Ashish Bagai, Ian Billcliff, Desmond Chumney, Austin Codrington, John Davison, Nicholas de Groot, Nicholas Iff, Davis Joseph, Ishwar Maraj, Ashish Patel, Abdool Samad, Fazil Sattaur, Barry Seebaran, Sanjayan Thuraisingam.

Umpires: David Shepherd (Eng) and Neil Mallender (Eng)

TV umpire: Kevan Barbour (Zim)

Match referee: Wasim Raja (Pak)

FORM GUIDE			
FROM PAGE 16 Dec 17 2002 Canada (won 1 lost 1) Feb 15 2003 Feb 11 2003 No other matches No head-to-heads, Canada are not Test playing nation	lost to England by 43 runs lost to Kenya 4 wickets beat Bangladesh by 60 runs Canada qualified via ICC Trophy	Brisbane Cape Town Durban	

For a can

FROM PAGE 16
and assault is a sad turn."

The CWC organising committee, in an effort to protect the interests of official sponsors that include Pepsi, has placed arch rival Coca Cola on the CWC Security Directorate's list of items that are banned at World Cup matches.

Branded clothing, hats and bags are also banned from games.

CWC executive director Dr Ali Bacher announced last week that the restriction on umbrellas had been lifted because of the prevailing weather patterns around the country, provided spectators took shelter from the sun and rain beneath unbranded cover.

Williamson, who attended the match with his wife and 13 year old son, said that he was "totally flabbergasted" when he was approached by security staff who insisted that they hand over the offending beverages including those in his cooler bag.

Problem Protea

FROM PAGE 16
Rhodes and Allan Donald caused a stir by claiming they were dedicating the World Cup to Cronje.

In the aftermath of the statement, a leading sports physiologist suggested that the dedication had the potential to split the side.

Ken Jennings added that the pair might even have been expressing their concern about the current leadership of the side.

Kirsten also came to the defence of Allan Donald, who has been fingered more than any other bowler for South Africa's woeful bowling display.

"It's a difficult situation for Allan who has been one of South Africa's best bowlers. I still trust him though Samad, I do the job and I back him all the way."

"If we had a major game tomorrow, I'd back him to do the business for us," said Kirsten who admitted that their battle for World Cup survival was frustrating.

"You'd expect to beat these sides nine times out of ten but you have to perform on the day and we just haven't been able to do that."

"As both an individual and as a team, we have to look in the mirror. As a team, the mirror would probably show that in this tournament we have not been clinical enough. We haven't been able to finish the game off."

Football

AFP, London

Holders Arsenal were on Monday drawn to play Chelsea in a replay of last season's final in next month's English FA Cup quarter-finals.

Arsenal, who achieved the double of Premiership and Cup last season, knocked out Manchester United in a fifth round show-stopper at Old Trafford on Saturday.

Chelsea have beaten Arsenal only once in the last five seasons -- and that was in the League Cup. They lost 2-0 to Arsenal in last season's final.

Chelsea manager Claudio Ranieri wanted revenge for that defeat in last year's final in Cardiff.

"Sooner or later we have to beat Arsenal," he said. "We always seem to draw or lose against them. I would have liked to have played them in the final but we have to play them now so that's fine. I'm okay with that."

Chelsea's players would have also preferred to have played Arsenal in the final again.

"If we could have avoided Arsenal until the Final then that would have been great," said Graeme Le Saux. "But we will approach the game positively."

Jesper Gronkjaer added: "We would have preferred not to have been drawn against Arsenal at this stage."

Chelsea have not beaten Arsenal in the FA Cup since 1947, and manager Arsene Wenger is confident of extending that record next month.

"The draw surprised us all," he said.

Mission Namibia

FROM PAGE 16
James Anderson took 4-25, the best figures by an Englishman in one-day international cricket since spinner Vic Marks' 5-39 against Canada 20 years ago.

"James did well considering he hasn't bowled for a couple of weeks," Hussain said.

Sunday's match also saw pace bowling all-rounder Craig White get through 10 overs despite a recent recurrence of the side strain injury that cut short his Ashes tour of Australia.

However, an England spokesman told AFP on Monday that White was fit and available for selection, their only concern being a slight bout of tonsillitis suffered by left-arm spinner Ashley Giles.

But as the Warwickshire bowler lost his place in the side against the Netherlands to Ian Blackwell, who is a better batsman, Giles' absence is unlikely to worry England at this stage.

As for Namibia, coached by

former England one-day international all-rounder Dougie Brown, they will be desperate to improve on the 171-run hiding they received from Pakistan on Sunday where Wasim Akram and Shoaib Akhtar terrorised their batsmen.

And Brown, a Warwickshire team-mate of both Giles and England opening bat Nick Knight, insisted his charges would not be overawed by the task in front of them.

That will certainly be the aim of the England batsmen but with matches against Pakistan, India and in-form world champions Australia still to come, Hussain knows better than anyone that his team's toughest tasks are still ahead of them.

LINE-UPS
ENGLAND (from): Nasser Hussain (captain), James Anderson, Ian Blackwell, Andrew Caddick, Paul Collingwood, Andrew Flintoff, Ashley Giles, Stephen

Harmison, Matthew Hoggard, Ronnie Irani, Nick Knight, Alec Stewart, Marcus Trescothick, Michael Vaughan, Craig White.

NAMIBIA (from): Deon Kotze (captain), Jan Burger, Louis Burger, Sarel Burger, Morne Kagis, Daniel Keulder, Bjorn Kotze, Lennie Louw, Bryan Murgatroyd, Gerrie Snyman, Stefan Swanepoel, Burton van Rooi, Melt van Schoor, Rudi van Vuuren, Riaan Walters.

Umpires: S Venkatraghavan (Ind) and Simon Taufel (Aus)

TV umpire: Nadeem Ghauri (Pak)

Match referee: Mike Procter (RSA)

NOTICE
Dear Crossword wizards, the Star Sport has run out of its stock of crossword and doesn't know when the next consignment will come in. Please bear with us. -- Sports