



ROYAL TREATMENT: (1) Real Madrid's new signing David Beckham arrives at the La Zarzuela Clinic in Madrid for his medical yesterday. (2) A police car and four motorbikes escort the car carrying Beckham after the superstar arrived at Torreon air base, near Madrid.

## Beckham through medical

Football

REUTERS, Madrid

Soccer star David Beckham successfully completed a comprehensive medical examination on Tuesday to effectively seal his move from Manchester United, Real Madrid's official website said.

"David Beckham has overcome the exhaustive medical examination," the club's website reported.

Earlier, Beckham flew into the military airbase of Torrejon on the outskirts of the Spanish capital to seal his move from Manchester United to Real.

Beckham touched down in a private jet at 1102 GMT and the smiling England captain, wearing a white shirt matching the club's colors, was met by club officials.

Real Madrid's Web Site said the player was accompanied by his wife Victoria, although the former Spice Girl was not visible from the car. Beckham was surrounded by minders on his way out of the airport and his car was given a police escort on the drive from Torrejon, some 15 miles outside the city, to the Zarzuela clinic on the north road to La Coruna.

About 30 fans were waiting outside the base to greet the midfielder.

Real have done a deal with Manchester United to sign Beckham for a fee of between \$28.8 million and \$40.4 million, depending on the Spanish club's performances in the Champions League over the four seasons of his contract.

One of the questions still to be resolved is the shirt number to be worn by Beckham.

The number four shirt of departing captain and center-back Fernando Hierro is the only free shirt at the moment but that could change if Fernando Morientes is transferred before the start of the new campaign.

That could see Ronaldo taking the number nine and Beckham being handed number 11, but it is unlikely to be decided before his presentation Wednesday.

The number seven worn by Beckham for both Manchester United and England is held at Real by Raul, the immensely popular Spanish international striker, and is not up for discussion.

"I don't even think of taking that off Raul," Beckham said after his move to Real had gone through. "For me, he is the king of Real Madrid."

## Zagallo promises sixth



SW, Sao Paulo

The assistant coach of the Brazilian national team, Mario Zagallo, said that it isn't a shame that Brazil was sent out of the Confederations Cup and promised the supporters that Brazil will win their sixth World Cup in Germany 2006.

"We have already got five world cup titles and there will be a lot more in our future. We are thinking about winning the sixth World Cup in Germany," said Zagallo, who won as a player in 1958 and 1962, one as

coach in 1970 and another one as assistant coach in 1994.

"The actual coach is thinking more about the future than the present so it isn't a shame that Brazil got sent out of the Confederations Cup at this moment. We don't have to consider this as a tragedy because the coach Carlos Alberto Parreira had the chance to see many young players in action and he will make some conclusions that will be very useful in the future."

"Obviously everyone wants to win always but sometimes when you lose you find better ways for winning later. We haven't lost time, we won it. I don't see this performance as a shame. I accept the critics but I must say that we have seen very good players in action."

On the other hand, Zagallo admitted that Brazil didn't use the complete squad because the stars of the team are on holidays and Parreira wanted to watch new players.

"We have a long period of two years and a half for finding the ideal team. If we hurry ourselves, that will be the worst enemy of perfection."

## Ronaldo not worried

REUTERS, Rio de Janeiro

Brazil striker Ronaldo has brushed aside the dismal recent performances by the five-times world champions, saying they will perform when it matters.

"It's always been like that with the national team. We run into difficulties, but when it matters we get what we want just as we did at the World Cup last year," he told reporters.

Brazil has played nine games since the World Cup final against Germany one year ago, winning three, drawing three and losing three.

They were knocked out of the Confederations Cup in France in the first round after sending an experimental team with 11 uncapped players. Ronaldo was among the players rested.

Ronaldo said he was satisfied with his first season at Real Madrid following his controversial transfer from Inter Milan.

"It was good because I scored 23 goals and we won the championship," he said. "I hope to improve next year, scoring more goals and winning more titles."

"Real Madrid's philosophy is to have the best players... competition is good in any team. There's room for everyone."



FOOTBALL FOR FUN: Superstar Ronaldo (L) showing off during an exhibition match with some of his friends in Rio de Janeiro on June 30.

## Bully Fergie!

Football

AFP, London

Manchester United manager Alex Ferguson has been exposed as a dressing room bully who rules Old Trafford by fear.

Argentine star Juan Sebastian Veron says Fergie's infamous "flying boot" incident with David Beckham last season was not a one-off and that the Scot regularly throws plastic bottles around when he loses his temper with his United stars.

But Veron, 28, insists the players respond to Ferguson's shock tactics and it is one of the main reasons behind their incredible success.

"Bottles are thrown in the dressing-room. One time I had to dodge one which flew very close to my head. Ferguson doesn't do it intentionally, he's not looking to hit anybody in particular, but he throws them," Veron told the Daily Mirror.

"Sometimes he's more withdrawn, then he gets close to you to speak to you and when he has to throw a bottle he does. He loses his cool.

"But I don't mind. He corrects things and it doesn't bother me at all. He's very respected at the club. Most of the players know him as he's brought them up from the juniors.

"It doesn't surprise me or worry me. On the contrary, it seems like it encourages me to give everything."

Ferguson is famous for dressing down players he feels have let the side down with an eyeball-to-

eyeball tactic known as the hairdryer treatment.

But none of his outbursts have caused as much uproar as Ferguson's clash with Beckham after United's FA Cup defeat to bitter rivals Arsenal at Old Trafford in April.

Fergie stormed in and kicked a boot lying on the floor that hit England captain Beckham above the eye.

Just three months later Beckham was sent packing to Real Madrid.

He completes his 35 million euro move to the Bernabeu on Wednesday.

Veron admits Ferguson's tactics are different from what he was used to at Lazio before his 28 million pound (46 million dollar) move to Old Trafford.

But the South American insists the players have an unmistakable respect for their manager who coaxed them into a late run to overhaul Arsenal for the title last season.

"He is a great motivator and gives us great belief," said Veron. "I remember a dressing-room talk when he told us we had to win all the matches that were left.

"We had to show we were Manchester United, one of the most important clubs in the world. And everything went well from there on. He showed his personality."

Ferguson has also been one of Veron's most loyal supporters as his form ebbed and flowed since his transfer from Lazio and Veron insists he is happy at Old Trafford despite constant speculation over a return to Italy.

## France v Brazil in May

REUTERS, Paris

France, co-founders of FIFA and creators of the World Cup, will play five-times world champions Brazil in a friendly next May to mark the centenary of the sport's governing body.

FIFA President Sepp Blatter, speaking before Sunday's Confederations Cup final, announced the May 20 Stade de France match as part of a series of events to mark the organisation's 100th birthday next year.

In South America, there will be a match to celebrate the first World Cup staged in Montevideo, capital of twice winners Uruguay, in 1930.

There will also be an issue of commemorative stamps and coins and a series of other celebratory events throughout 2004.

French Football Federation president Claude Simonet, speaking after Blatter, sang the praises of France in its leading role in world football.

Pele, and former France midfielder Michel Platini, now on FIFA's executive committee, talked about the greatness of the game and their memories as players, and the Brazilian broke down in tears when he remembered his late father.

"My father used to teach me, saying you're going to be good player but more important is to be good person, so it's an honour to represent FIFA, the biggest family in the world," Pele said.

"It's a big responsibility, it's important to keep everyone together, black, white, poor, rich, it doesn't matter, and football can do that," he added, choking back the tears as he recalled his humble beginnings.

Both men recalled previous meetings between the two countries.

They include Pele's first World Cup at 17 in 1958, when he scored a hat-trick to help Brazil beat France in the semi-final in Sweden on the way to their first title, and France's win in the 1998 final at the Stade de France.

## Family gets Foe's body

REUTERS, Lyon

The body of Cameroon midfielder Marc-Vivien Foe has been returned to his family for mourning ceremonies in Lyon before the soccer player is flown to his native country to be buried.

Foe, who was 28, died after collapsing during his country's semi-final victory over Colombia in the Confederations Cup last Thursday.

A mass will be said for the midfielder in Lyon's St Jean cathedral on Thursday at 1400 GMT and fans will be allowed to pay him a last homage on Wednesday afternoon, soccer club Olympique Lyon said on their website on Tuesday.

His body will then be flown to Paris and Cameroon on Saturday with Foe's team mates on board the plane.

## Ronaldinho to cost \$52 million

Football

AFP, Paris

Manchester United chief executive Peter Kenyon has been told he can have Paris St Germain's Brazil World Cup star Ronaldinho for 45 million euros (52 million dollars/31 million pounds).

PSG president Francis Graille, due to meet Kenyon and United directors David Gill and Maurice Watkins on Wednesday, has been boosted by major shareholder Canal Plus television's decision to raise 20 million euros for the cash-strapped club.

"If they come with an offer of 45 million euros things can go very fast," Graille told Le Parisien daily.

United were reported to have offered 15 million pounds (24 million dollars).

PSG coach Vahid Halilhodzic

has changed his attitude towards the player. When he was appointed last month he refused to contemplate Ronaldinho leaving.

"Of course if we get a good offer we have to consider it," he said.

World Cup winner Ronaldinho, best known for fooling England goalkeeper David Seaman with a 40 metre free-kick in last year's World Cup quarter-finals, has a contract with the French club until 2006.

The 23-year-old Brazilian's agent Roberto Assis met Graille on Sunday and expects the move to be concluded by the end of the week.

Assis held talks with Kenyon last Friday and emerged confident of a deal being struck.

PSG, whose appeal to the French league's financial watchdog to lift restrictions on transfer dealings, need the cash to buy Bordeaux's Portuguese striker Pauleta.

## Animal in jail!

SW, Rio de Janeiro

Former Brazil International Edmundo has been sentenced to serve 4 years in prison this passed week, for his role in the deadly car crash in Rio in 1995 in which three people were killed.

Edmundo, 32, known as "the Animal" for his wild temperament on and off the pitch, has had a long history of problems. His brother was shot and left to die in the trunk of his car in Rio last December and he faced charges for getting a monkey drunk in 2000 for a birthday party for his then 2-year old son.

Edmundo was drunk at the time of the crash.

His club Vasco da Gama is working hard on getting him an appeal so he can be released to play for them.

## Bowyer joins Magpies

AFP, Newcastle

Former England midfielder Lee Bowyer joined Newcastle United on Tuesday after passing a medical on Monday night.

The 26-year-old put pen to paper at St James' Park on a four-year, 30,000 pound-a-week contract to become manager Bobby Robson's first close-season signing.

"Lee Bowyer passed his medical at St James' Park last night and this morning, officially completed his transfer to Newcastle United," a club spokesman said on Tuesday.

The acquisition of Bowyer, 26, has not been universally popular among Newcastle fans because of his involvement in unsavoury incidents both on and off the field.

Bowyer links up again with former Leeds team-mate and close friend Jonathan Woodgate.

Both were in the dock for an alleged attack on an Asian student in Leeds city centre three years ago. Bowyer was cleared of all charges but defender Woodgate was found guilty of affray.

## Homebound Zola

Football

AFP, London

Chelsea's Italian star Gianfranco Zola was reported Tuesday to have decided to leave London to finish his career on his island home of Sardinia with Italian side Cagliari.

The Daily Mirror said Zola met his agent and lawyer, Naples-based Fulvio Marrucco, in Sardinia Monday night to confirm the move after six and-a-half years in the English Premiership.

The Italian played a prominent role in the season which ended with Claudio Ranieri's Chelsea qualifying for the Champions League.

Zola, who is 37 on Saturday, is out of contract at Chelsea from Tuesday.

He had been keen to play a final season in London but was unhappy

Chelsea had decided to slash his wages. He was reportedly offered a new 12-month deal worth 1.3 million pounds (2 million dollars) -- less than half the 2.8 million pounds (4.6 million dollars) per season Zola earned in his last contract.

The former Napoli and Parma striker was Chelsea's top scorer with 16 goals in his 46 appearances.

But he was reluctant to have to fight for a first-team place next season with Eidur Gudjohnsen, Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink, Carlton Cole and Mikael Forszell.

Cagliari president Massimo Cellino said last week he was confident of signing Zola who had rejected a lucrative move to Qatar.

An Italy international, Zola made 35 appearances for the Azzurri, scoring seven times, and was a member of the squad which lost to Brazil on penalties in the 1994 World Cup final.

## BREAKING BARRIERS



Referee Silvia Regina Oliveira (C) and her assistants Ana Paula Oliveira (L) and Aline Lambert leave the field after a Brazilian championship match between Guarani and Sao Paulo in Campinas near Sao Paulo on June 29. History was made in Brazilian soccer when the all-female officiating trio took charge of a first division match for the first time. Referee Oliveira, who showed eight yellow cards, and assistants Lambert and Ana Paula Oliveira were jeered off the field after disallowing two goals by home team Guarani in their 1-0 defeat by Sao Paulo.