

Makelele on his own

Football

AFP, Madrid

English Premiership side Chelsea have apologised to Real Madrid for their attempt to lure French international Claude Makelele and told the Spanish giants that the bid for the midfielder was off, Real sporting director Jorge Valdano claimed Friday.

Makelele is currently refusing to train with Real Madrid due to a salary dispute and the Spanish champions have insisted he is not for sale.

His agent Marc Roger had claimed that the issue will be resolved as soon as Real president Florentino Perez returns from holiday on Monday.

But Valdano told Cadena Ser private radio Friday that Real had contacted the London club who apologised for the debacle and renounced any bid for the 30-year-old.

He said that Chelsea bosses said that they had been misled into believing that the Spanish club were interested in selling the Frenchman.

"Nothing could be further from the truth and Chelsea firstly said they were sorry and secondly withdrew their intention of holding a meeting with us, neither Monday nor later I hope," said Valdano.

He added that Makelele would have to respect his contract and they were confident of their position having consulted world soccer's governing body FIFA over the affair. "The situation is awkward because we don't like to see players in this type of situation but we are very calm because our position is solid from a legal point of view," said Valdano.

"We know that clubs cannot



CLAUDE MAKELELE

contact players who have running contracts. Makelele is under contract until 2006, and so his professional situation is very clear."

The Congo-born player has been absent from the training ground for the past three days, with his agent claiming he is now on sick leave because of the stress brought on by

the situation. Valdano said that if Makelele continued to defy the club "he will put his sporting career in jeopardy and that doesn't seem like a good idea".

"The only thing Real Madrid has to say is that (Makelele) is a very important player for the club and I don't think that the player can be annoyed by such praise."

Real doctors on Friday recommended that Makelele not play in Real's friendly Sunday against Valencia or France's friendly against Switzerland next Wednesday.

A statement issued by the Madrid club said that after an examination by team doctors the player was found to be suffering from a "slight change in his emotional state provoked by his personal and professional situation".

Makelele is said to be unhappy with his comparatively low wages, which are reportedly only a fifth of what the club's high-profile stars like Ronaldo, Zinedine Zidane and Raul earn.

He was hoping to double the reported monthly salary of 125,000 euros (141,000 dollars) he currently earns at Real by joining Chelsea.

The player joined Real in 2000 after two seasons with Celta Vigo, having earlier made his name with French league side Nantes.

Champions Trophy hockey starts amid controversy

AFP, Amstelveen

The 25th Champions Trophy for the top six men's field hockey nations gets underway here Saturday under a cloud of controversy as defending champions Germany have opted to send a second-string team.

German coach Bernhard Peters said he wanted to preserve the seniors for the European Nations Cup in Spain in September which will give the winner a direct entry to next year's Athens Olympics.

"It's inconceivable, both from the physical as well as the psychological point of view, that a team can succeed in two top level tournaments within such a short space of time," said Peters.

In the absence of the 2002 World Cup and Champions Trophy winners the field has been thrown open with the Dutch Olympic gold medalists hoping to take their seventh title at home.

The Netherlands now have the dilemma that Germany avoided.

They need to win in front of their home crowd but also need to win in Barcelona.

Tigers head

FROM PAGE 13 continue getting runs," Whatmore said.

Captain Khaled Mahmud also echoed Whatmore's sentiments regarding the team's goals in Pakistan.

"Two players (Hannan Sarker and Mashrafe-bin-Mortuza) did well in Australia. If we can get a few more individual performances like that from this tour, that will be our achievement. That will also be good for the team.

"It's a collective effort. We need play well together throughout a day. If that happens, the spirit of the team will naturally go up," said Mahmud.

Mahmud said that they made almost 300 runs against Australia in the first innings of the Cairns Test, and against a substantially weaker opposition, there was no reason why they should not score more than 400 runs on the odd occasion.

The Tigers skipper was critical of his own performance in Australia and vowed to get things right in Pakistan.

"I'm a fighter. That's my nature and I will keep on trying to lead by example," said Mahmud.

After the Test series, middle order batsman Tushar Imran, all-rounder Mushfiqui Rahman and pacer Hasibul Hossain will join the team for the five-match one-day series.

Ajax

FROM PAGE 13 said yesterday that today's scheduled game between Mohammedan and Mariner Young's have been shifted to tomorrow due to unavoidable circumstances and all other games will be bodily shifted.

TOMORROW'S MATCH

Mohammedan SC vs Mariner Young's (4:15pm)

Anwar

FROM PAGE 13 said.

Anwar said protesting Wasim's captaincy in 1994, a fine imposed on him in a match-fixing case and losing the World Cup quarterfinal against India in 1996 were the main regrets in his career.

Anwar was one of six players fined 100,000 rupees (around 1,700 dollars) in a match-fixing inquiry in May 2000.

Anwar said he would love to get coaching assignments to help Pakistan cricket and plans to do commentary in future.

"Saeed Anwar was a great player and deserves highest accolades for a marvellous career and Pakistan Cricket Board pays him the greatest of tributes," said PCB chief executive Ramiz Raja, a former captain and fellow opener.

"Anwar was a terrific player and gave a lot to Pakistan cricket. He was perhaps the most naturally gifted player that Pakistan ever had."

Hussain

FROM PAGE 13

to his teammates. "I'm really pleased for the team because we took a bashing after Lord's and rightly so.

"It was nice to come out and show people that we can actually play this game," Butcher added.

"It's great too for Nasser. He really wears his heart on his sleeve and everyone saw today how much that century meant to him. He was a fantastic captain and he also took a battering personally.

"You know when the vultures start circling he's going to do something good."

South Africa captain Graeme Smith remained upbeat after England enjoyed their first day of dominance in the series.

"To keep them under 300 when two of their batsmen got hundreds, was a good effort. We had three lbws which could have gone our way would have changed the face of the day.

"The guys stuck at it well. I'm not too unhappy. There's a long way to go."

Premiership preview

Here we go

Football

LENIN GANI

In recent times when it comes to the English Premiership, there is no real need to predict the likely champions because it always boils down to a two-horse race between

Manchester United and Arsenal while the other 18 clubs have to fight for the scraps.

That may sound hard to fathom considering what a Russian oil tycoon has done in the close season for Chelsea.

To see whether the Roman Empire does impose itself we don't have to wait anymore because a new season with all its thrills and spills kicks off today.

CHELSEA: Billionaire Roman Abramovich after acquiring control of the trendy London club, wasted no time in plotting to break the duopoly by getting a host of names, which reads like a who's who of football.

Chelsea have always boasted one of the best defences. But the arrival of Southampton's exciting prospect Wayne Bridge and Glen Johnson, who made a name for himself at West Ham in their losing battle to avoid relegation; it will mean even tougher times for opposing strikers. They take away a lot of the burden off Marcel Desailly's shoulders.



DAMIEN DUFF

However, Claudio Ranieri's main concern could be the lack of a midfield enforcer. The Blues don't have somebody like a Patrick Vieira or Roy Keane to win the ball.

Frenchman Emanuel Petit would usually fit that role but under the circumstances it appears unlikely he will be guaranteed his position. May be if Adrian Mutu, the combative Romanian, manages to settle in will that trouble-spot be solved.

Damien Duff, who lit up the World Cup for the Republic of Ireland, is certainly going to make his presence felt down the left flank with his runs at defenders and providing pinpoint crosses for the front men to feed off.

Juan Sebastian Veron was regarded a misfit during his time at Old Trafford. The Argentine international found it difficult to settle. Joe Cole, the exciting England teenager, was tempted to believe his football would improve with a move from West Ham.

Although Chelsea may have untold riches in the middle of the park the Russian revolution might have to wait because it is a whole new team so they will need time to adjust.

One cannot understand why Ranieri did not try and get a couple of world-class strikers since Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink and Eidur Gudjohnsen couldn't find the goals when they needed it especially in Europe.

PROSPECTS: Chelsea at best can go one better than their fourth-place finish.

MANCHESTER UNITED: Manchester United even without David Beckham (mostly on the subs' bench) in the run-in to their eighth Premiership title showed great fighting qualities. So it came as no surprise when they sold Beckham in the summer to Real Madrid. But one cannot help wonder if the failure to secure Ronaldinho might effectively put to rest their Champions League prospects.

That said they were more than willing to let Veron go to Chelsea knowing full well that another Brazilian World Cup winner Kleberson was on the way.

Kleberson unlike his starry Brazilian mates is a shy defensive midfielder. He will certainly fill the void left by the inconsistent Veron.

Then not long after that Sir Alex Ferguson for once listened to his players and signed up Under-21 Cristiano Ronaldo as Britain's most

costliest teenager. And in keeping with United tradition Ferguson promptly gave the Portuguese striker the famous No 7 shirt.

Ferguson is quoted as saying: "He's a young lad who's going to get better and better."

"There have been some famous players at this club (who have worn number seven). Eric Cantona, Bryan Robson and David Beckham have held the jersey over my time at the club.

"I think it was appropriate that a



CRISTIANO RONALDO

young player like Ronaldo should take it because hopefully he's going to be at the club for a long, long time."

United unlike Chelsea did not go on a spending frenzy. They added just a new goalkeeper American Tim Howard, who was outstanding in the Community Shield last week, and two other players Eric Djemba-Djemba and Frenchman David Bellion.

A quick, aggressive and a good passer of the ball, Djemba-Djemba was part of the Cameroon squad at the 2002 World Cup but he did not make an appearance.

Bellion, on the other hand, is a highly promising young striker who was snapped up by Sunderland from AS Cannes in the summer of 2001 on a Bosman free deal.

The only worrying factor lies in defence. There is no real cover for Wes Brown or Gary Neville. That is something Ferguson has gotten used to every season.

But as long as Ruud van Nistelrooy stays fit the prolific goal-scoring machine will make his Scottish manager a happy man.

PROSPECTS: Manchester United have set the benchmark for others. Coming second would be seen as failure. They will fall short in Europe.

ARSENAL: Arch-rivals Arsenal may have not seen an influx of new players but they have not witnessed an exodus either.

The development of a new stadium means Arsene Wenger has been left with cash to enter the transfer market. However, 'the Professor' had to still find a replacement for the long-serving David Seaman who jumped ship to Manchester City. His exhaustive search ended with Jens Lehmann being his only notable addition.

Lehmann's credentials include domestic and UEFA success with

STAR SPORT PREDICTION	
1.	Manchester United
2.	Arsenal
3.	Chelsea
4.	Liverpool
5.	Newcastle United
6.	Southampton
7.	Manchester City
8.	Everton
9.	Middlesbrough
10.	Blackburn Rovers
11.	Aston Villa
12.	Charlton Athletic
13.	Tottenham Hotspur
14.	Birmingham
15.	Bolton
16.	Portsmouth
17.	Fulham
18.	Leeds
19.	Wolves
20.	Leicester City

Borussia Dortmund and Schalke 04 respectively.

Defence is the once again the key to the Gunners' fortunes. The test will come with Sol Campbell and Martin Keown trying co-ordinate with a new man under the posts.

Having played virtual champagne football until October when Wayne Rooney produced a wonder goal, Arsenal then ran out of steam allowing United to slip back into the race.

At least they start this season knowing skipper Patrick Vieira and Robert Pires have pledged their future to the London club. There were rumours that the pair might be heading towards Italy or Spain.

PROSPECTS: If Vieira and Pires can stay clear of injuries and the

Gunners don't pick up too many suspensions then it has a decent chance to challenge United again.

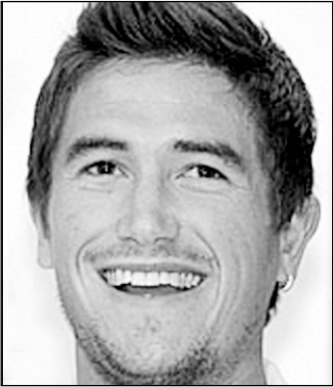
LIVERPOOL: The signing of Australian Harry Kewell was heralded by Liverpool manager Gerard Houllier as a masterstroke by critics getting tired seeing the dull football at Anfield.

Kewell will certainly add a new dimension to Liverpool's play -- width. It is something that has been missing since the days of John Barnes. But even with Kewell one dares to say it will not mean the end of their troubles. They possess too many mediocre French or African players incapable of consistency.

One does not need reminding of the Reds' rollercoaster season when they began with a 14-game winning streak but eventually missed out on Champions League qualification.

Check WHAT TO WATCH for TV timings.

Goalkeeper Jerzy Dudek embodied the topsy-turvy ride -- dropped for one blunder too many he returned to his best form after Chris Kirkland was sidelined with a knee injury.



HARRY KEWELL

Liverpool also suffered in Europe, failing to make it past the first stage of the Champions League -- and then dumped out of the UEFA Cup by Celtic.

PROSPECTS: Failure to reach the Champions League could spell the end for Houllier's reign but more importantly it might hasten the departure of Michael Owen and Steven Gerrard.

NEWCASTLE: Newcastle United will again miss out on the title race because they lack that little bit extra to go the final stretch. With just Lee Bowyer added to the squad, the Magpies fall short again. Until they find an adequate partner for Jonathan Woodgate their defensive frailties will cost them again.

PROSPECTS: While there is no doubt Alan Shearer will produce goals as long as his legs can support the ageing warrior, Newcastle are still two-faced; attacking options in abundance but shown wanting when it comes to temperament. Hard to see them holding on to third place with Chelsea breathing down their necks.

Southampton, Everton or Manchester City should stand in line for a UEFA Cup place.

Southampton always considered perennial strugglers turned the league on its head. The Saints rode on the brilliance of young James Beattie. He was the league's third highest scorer and his exploits earned him an England debut.

If he can repeat his form then they can dream of European football. His partnership with Kevin Phillips, the former Sunderland hero, will be interesting to watch.

The exchange of Wayne Bridge for Graeme Le Saux will solve any short-term defensive problems.

Everton will be hoping to unleash 'Ronaldo' on the Premiership with greater effect. Wayne Rooney's 30-yarder against Arsenal made him an instant star. But if the young

Rooney gets injured which has every chance of happening considering he's barely 17, the Toffees will struggle to emulate last season's superb showing.

After negotiating their return to the top flight and bidding adieu to their Maine Road ground, Manchester City will begin the new 2003-04 campaign without the late Cameroonian international Marc Viven Foe. Also they may have not done enough in terms bolstering the squad. Manager Kevin Keegan, however, maintained his penchant for old goalies when the former England boss said goodbye to Great Dane Peter Schmeichel and welcomed David Seaman. He will be hoping that Nicolas Anelka and Robbie Fowler form a better under-

standing this time round otherwise their will be plenty for the fans to shout about. To help create more goal-scoring opportunities Trevor Sinclair was hired.

Blackburn Rovers may have lost both Ds -- David Dunn and Damien Duff -- but in reality their exit will not be decisive. Duff struggled for form and fitness last term while Dunn fell out with boss Graeme Souness. Australian Brett Emerton has the task of lifting Rovers' spirits.

It is the forward line which should be worrying Souness -- Andy Cole and Dwight Yorke look past their best.

Middlesbrough and Aston Villa have had pretty uninspiring summers. Villa will this time expect to do better especially since David O'Leary came aboard.

Survival experts Charlton can relax in the knowledge their battles with the heavyweights will be definitely spiced up having Paolo Di Canio's at their disposal. The lure of playing at top level persuaded the mercurial talented Italian to abandon West Ham United not long after they were demoted to the First Division.

The same cannot be said of Tottenham Hotspur. Glenn Hoddle has spent the summer break rebuilding his forward line, but has forgotten the midfield and defence. The fans can expect Spurs to end up outside the top ten.

They say that the second season in the Premiership is often the trickiest. If that is the case, then Birmingham boss Steve Bruce didn't hear that because the former Manchester United defender has been too busy signing up Dunn to link-up with a settled Christophe Dugary.

Consolidation will be Bruce's main thought other than making a mockery of Aston Villa in the Midlands derby.

Bolton has established itself as a club that specializes in conjuring great escapes. And seems the bookies are already taking bets. Even this did not deter Europe's premier marksman Mario Jardel coming from sunny Portugal to the cold north of England to ply his trade at the Reebok Stadium. But he will be leading the attack subject to passing a medical.

Ivan Camacho, Jay-Jay Okocha and Youri Djorkaeff will be central to Sam Allardyce's thoughts of staying up.

Leeds United will never be the same again. The core of the team has long gone leaving Peter Reid with very little to work with. He could be the first major casualty of the season.

And if as expected Mark Viduka is granted his wish to leave then Alan Smith, of course if doesn't move to Aston Villa, and the injury-prone Michael Bridges are going to be the last recognizable and experienced strikers left.

A defeat against Newcastle tomorrow will really sink morale. If results don't go their Leeds are destined for the drop.

It will be 'make or break' for Fulham this term. Jean Tigana has packed his bags and gone. The Cottagers also saw left-back Steve Finnan go to Liverpool. The magic of Harrods owner Al Fayed does not appeal anymore.

From caretaker to full-time management Chris Coleman definitely is another manager to have hands full. But the influence of French duo Sylvain Legwinski and Steed

Malbranque might keep Fulham barely afloat.

Of the new clubs in England's elite league, Portsmouth appear best equipped because Harry Redknapp has bought some decent players. Although they are going to found lodged at the other end of the table, in the end they will ride out the storm and learn to avoid it.

There will be no joy for newly promoted Wolverhampton Wanderers or Leicester City. Both clubs are out their depth and will obviously struggle for goals and concede plenty of them before their way out.

FIXTURES

SATURDAY: Birmingham v Tottenham Hotspur, Portsmouth v Aston Villa, Arsenal v Everton, Blackburn v Wolverhampton Wanderers, Fulham v Middlesbrough, Leicester City v Southampton and Manchester United v Bolton Wanderers. **SUNDAY:** Charlton Athletic v Manchester City, Leeds United v Newcastle United and Liverpool v Chelsea.

Clijsters bows out

AFP, Toronto

Russia's Lina Krasnoroutskaya produced the biggest upset of the tournament, defeating new world No 1 Kim Clijsters to reach the quarterfinals of the WTA event here on Thursday.

Krasnoroutskaya, the 19-year-old ranked No. 41 in the world, recovered from losing the first set to record a 1-6, 6-4, 6-1 victory.

Next target Crespo

AFP, London

Free-spending English Premiership side Chelsea are set to make a bid to land Inter Milan's Argentine ace Hernan Crespo, according to reports here Friday.

Chelsea have signed a number of big names since Russian oil tycoon Roman Abramovich took over the club and have now earmarked Crespo as their next target ahead ahead of the August 31 transfer deadline.

According to the Sun newspaper, Chelsea had originally been interested in Crespo's Italian team-mate Christian Vieri until it was revealed during preliminary talks that Crespo could be a more attractive option.

While Vieri is aged 30, Crespo - who Inter signed from league rivals Lazio last year - is only 28 and it is believed that the Serie Club could more easily find a replacement from within the club if the Argentinian was to leave.

A source close to the Italian club is reported to have said: "We rate Crespo the best pound for pound striker in the world at the moment."

"He has all the attributes you could wish for in a centre forward, but has only just turned 28. Vieri is 30."

Crespo, who shares the same agent as recent Chelsea signing Juan Sebastian Veron - who is also Argentinian - has scored over 100 goals in Serie A, won the UEFA Cup (with Parma in 1999) and scored 19 goals in 36 matches for his country.

Key to some of the world's top players joining clubs is the option of playing in the group stages of the Champions League, considered the biggest club stage in world football.

Chelsea got their European campaign off to a winning start in midweek with a 2-0 victory over MSK Zilina in the third qualifying round of the competition and are aiming to get involved in some lucrative group phase action.

Anderson the one and only

Cricket

BBC ONLINE, London

England fast bowler James Anderson has become the first player to win the young cricketer of the year award unchallenged.

The 21-year-old was unopposed for the accolade, voted for by 175 members of the Cricket Writers' Club.

It is the first time in 54 years that such an event has occurred in the ballot for an honour won by the likes of Ian Botham, David Gower,



JAMES ANDERSON

Michael Atherton and Nasser Hussain.

The Lancashire paceman, and BBC Sport Interactive columnist, broke out on the scene in Australia last winter when injuries left England bereft of fast bowlers during the VB Series.

Two man-of-the-match awards during the World Cup, including a four-wicket haul in the win over Pakistan, enhanced his reputation.

He also claimed England's first-ever one-day international hat-trick against the same opposition during the recent NatWest Challenge.

And Anderson began his Test career with a five-wicket debut bag of Zimbabwean wickets at Lord's.

"Jimmy's emergence as an England star should inspire every young player in the country -- it shows that if you have the talent the opportunities are there," said Cricket Writers' Club chairman Colin Evans.

"He has run away with our award this year and is still eligible for it for the next two seasons."

Players have to be Under-23 to be considered and Anderson will be presented with the trophy, an antique silver inkstand, at the CWC annual dinner in London on 29 August.

England make

FROM PAGE 13

Boucher off Jacques Kallis's fifth ball of the day in what was the all-rounder's first match of the series following the death of his father.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at close of England's first innings at tea on the second day of the third Test against South Africa at Trent Bridge on Friday:

ENGLAND: First innings (overnight 296-3)
Trescothick c Boucher b Hall 24
Vaughan c Gibbs b Pollock 1
Butcher c Boucher b Ntini 106
Hussain lbw b Pollock 116
Smith c Boucher b Kallis 64
Stewart c Smith b Adams 72

Flintoff c Pollock b Hall	0			
Giles b Hall	22			
Kirtley c Smith b Ntini	1			
Harmison c Pollock b Adams	4			
Anderson not out	0			
Extras: (b-9, lb-8, w-4, nb-4)	25			
Total: (All out in 146.3 overs)	445			
Fall of wickets: 1-7, 2-29, 3-218, 4-322, 5-334, 6-347, 7-388, 8-408, 9-440				
Bowler	O	M	R	W
Pollock	36	18	65	2
Ntini	33	3	137	2
Hall	24	6	88	3
Kallis	27	7	92	1
Adams	26.3	7	46	2
Toss: England				

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
1 Business arrangement
5 Shade provider
8 Morsel
12 Reverberate
13 Privy
14 Beyond control
15 Cereal selection
16 TV
18 Summer-time wear
20 Misplaces
21 Author
22 Shark's giveaway
23 Come, — Faithful!
26 Up on the deck
30 Vast expanse
31 Send quickly
32 Through
33 Motorcycle attachment
36 McDonald's machine
38 It'll get you moving

DOWN
1 Cause for Chapter
19 One end of the fairway
21 Author
22 Shark's giveaway
23 Come, — Faithful!
26 Up on the deck
30 Vast ex