



Zimbabwe defender Dezidetio Kapenya fails to clear the goal-bound attempt from Egypt's Mido (No. 9) at Sfax on January 25.

Pharaohs smile as Lions draw

AFP, Tunis

Defending champions Cameroon, bidding for their third successive African Nations Cup crown and fifth in all, suffered a setback in their opening match of the 2004 tournament when they were held to a 1-1 draw by Algeria in Sousse.

That result allowed four-time winners Egypt to take top spot in Group C thanks to a come-from-behind 2-1 win over Zimbabwe in Sfax while, in Tunis, Guinea also recovered from a goal down to beat the Democratic Republic of Congo 2-1 in Group A.

Veteran striker Patrick Mboma, recalled to the squad just before the tournament after the intervention of President Paul Biya, put Cameroon ahead after 43 minutes and Brahim Zafour levelled for Algeria in the 52nd minute.

The build-up to the clash in Sousse was overshadowed by the all-in-one body suits of Cameroon, who were given the go-ahead just hours before the kickoff to wear a garment world governing body FIFA considers illegal.

The African Football Confederation said the reigning champions can wear the body suit in first round fixtures, but must change if they reach the knockout stages.

Cameroon deservedly took the lead when Mboma, joint leading scorer at the 2002 finals in Mali, rose unchallenged to head the ball into the net.

But Algeria levelled seven minutes into the second half as a corner fell loose inside the penalty area and half-time substitute Mohammed Barakat grabbed the winner with a header.

"We played well in the first half but I want to believe that the pressure of this being our first game to us," said Egypt coach Mohsen Salah.

"But in the second half I told the players to press harder for a goal. And the Zimbabwean goal only seemed to motivate my team."

In Tunis, former Liverpool

striker Titi Camara inspired Guinea to a second half fightback and a 2-1 win over the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Camara, who now plays his football in Qatar, played a telling role throughout the match and scored the equaliser that was to set up Guinea's win.

Ekakanga Masudi had given DR Congo a first half lead but after Camara's leveller, it was Guinea who finished the strongest with Pascal Feindounou scoring the winner.

"We deserved to be behind at half-time but I told the players at the break that they have to use their strengths and after the interval they played with more freedom and found plenty of space," said the team's French coach Michel Dussuyer.

The result puts Guinea equal top of Group A with hosts Tunisia who defeated Rwanda 2-1 on Saturday.

Dad won't let Robben go to Chelsea

AFP, London

Highly-rated Dutch teenage striker Arjen Robben has been ruled out from joining big spending Premiership side Chelsea by his father who blasted the London side for lacking any structure and owner Roman Abramovich as having no idea what football was about.

The PSV Eindhoven forward's father Hans is also his agent and added his son would only go to Chelsea over his dead body indicating a clear preference for him to go to Manchester United who he said were a professional outfit.

His favouring United may not go down well with PSV who were irritated that United invited the 19-year-old over for talks without their knowledge - relations between the two clubs had already been soured over Ruud van Nistelrooy's transfer.

PSV admitted they had invited Chelsea to talk to Robben, who has scored 16 times in 48 appearances for PSV and is thought to be a probable for the Dutch Euro 2004 squad later this year.

"My son will not go to Chelsea. Over my dead body will he go there," Hans Robben told the Sunday Mirror.

"They have an owner who has no philosophy or structure at the club. Chelsea just buy expensive players all over Europe and think it will make them a great team."

"But my son has been to see Sir Alex Ferguson and nobody knows better why organisation and a good structure at a top club is so important."

"Old Trafford is the only place he wants to play and if he can't play there he would rather stay at PSV."

"In fact he would rather play in their reserves than go to Chelsea. It's as simple as that."

PSV officials said that if United wanted to pursue their interest in him they would have to come to the Netherlands like Chelsea had done to talk to him and the club.

Zidane took creatine

AFP, Turin

Real Madrid star Zinedine Zidane admitted at the Juventus doping trial here Monday he took the muscle growth supplement creatine while he played in Italy.

"I took creatine, only when I played for Juventus. It was never the case when I played in France and hasn't happened since I've been playing in Spain," the FIFA World Player of the Year told the court.

"It's useful and I need it to play 70 matches a season," he added.

Creatine is banned in France but can be bought over the counter in



ZINEDINE ZIDANE

several European countries, including Italy and Britain. It is not on the International Olympic Committee's list of banned substances.

The France playmaker also said he was given vitamin injections at Juventus.

Zidane played for Juventus from 1996 to 2001.

The 31-year-old joined Real Madrid for a world record 75 million euros (90 million dollars) from Juventus in 2001.

Two Juve officials are on trial over charges relating to the doping of players from the club over a four-year period in the 1990s.

The prosecution alleges that Juventus managing director Antonio Girauda and club doctor Riccardo Agricola supplied pharmaceutical products to several of the club's players between July 1994 and September 1998.

It is charged that, while the drugs in question were legal, they had been used in such a manner that essentially produced the same effects as illicit substances.

Over that period, Juventus won three Italian league titles and the European Cup.

Zidane, former France captain Didier Deschamps and Italian star Alessandro Del Piero are all under suspicion of being given illegal substances by club doctors.

Two weeks ago Juventus defender Paolo Montero, who joined the club in 1996, admitted to having been given creatine, soon after arriving in Turin.

Agricola has insisted many other clubs have also given their players substances such as creatine.

The scandal broke in 1998 when Czech coach Zdenek Zeman, then in charge of Roma, called on the authorities to clean drug cheats out of Italian soccer, aiming his accusations at Juventus.

Serie A

Five-star Milan

Football

AFP, Milan

Roma's title hopes suffered a setback on Sunday after they were held to a disappointing 1-1 draw at home to plucky Udinese.

Two dropped points coupled with AC Milan's 5-0 thrashing of bottom club Ancona saw Roma's lead at the top of Serie A cut to just one point.

Milan can now overtake Roma at the summit if they win their game in hand at home to Siena on Wednesday.

Roma are on 43 points, one ahead of second-placed Milan, while title-holders Juventus are three off the pace after being held to a 3-3 draw at Empoli later Sunday.

Juventus were thwarted in their bid to close the gap on the leaders

with a hat-trick from their French international David Trezeguet cancelled out by a similar effort from Empoli's Tommaso Rocchi.

A rare goal by defender Christian Panucci gave Roma an early lead at the Olympic stadium, but after spurning several gilt-edged chances they grew anxious and invited pressure by defending from deep inside their own half.

Roma goalkeeper Carlo Zotti denied Udinese with some superb goalkeeping but could do nothing to stop their 88th minute equaliser which was no more than the visitors deserved.

The Roma defence failed to clear their lines from a high ball as Udinese piled forward, and Marek Jankulovski pounced to sweep a low shot past helpless Zotti.

Milan failed to break down Ancona in a frustrating first 45 minutes at the San Siro, but they got their

act together in the second-half, scoring five goals in a 26-minute purple patch.

Andriy Shevchenko led the way, scoring his 15th league goal of the season from the penalty spot after Roberto Maltagliati had handled in the box, before turning provider to set up Manuel Rui Costa for Milan's second goal.

Shevchenko was then substituted for Jon Dahl Tomasson, who took over the spot-kick duties when Maltagliati gave away another penalty to put Milan 3-0 up.

Brazilian midfielder Kaka iced the cake with two goals in the last six minutes which left Ancona rooted to the foot of the table and still looking for their first win.

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Brazil miss Olympics

AFP, Vina Del Mar, Chile

Argentina won the South American Under 23 tournament by drawing 2-2 with Chile on Sunday to qualify along with Paraguay for the Athens Olympics.

Argentine keeper Wilfredo Caballero saved an 85th minute penalty by Chile's Joel Soto.

Paraguay beat Brazil 1-0 to qualify.

FA Cup

United made to sweat

AFP, London

Premiership champions Manchester United were the only top-flight side in action Sunday to make it through into the fifth round of the FA Cup.

Sir Alex Ferguson's men did enough to see off battling Third Division Northampton 3-0 at Sixfields despite being without some familiar names.

But it was a different story elsewhere with the day's two all-Premiership ties between Everton and Fulham and Manchester City versus Tottenham both ending in 1-1 draws.

Meanwhile second-bottom Wolves were left to concentrate on league survival after losing 3-1 at home to First Division West Ham.

Sunday's match between the Hammers' league rivals' at the City Ground saw Sheffield United, last season's beaten semi-finalists, enjoy a 3-0 win over struggling Nottingham Forest.

French defender Mikael Silvestre's scrappy first-half opener, an own-goal two minutes after the break by Chris Hargreaves and a close-range tap in from Diego Forlan saw United safely into Monday's draw.

Third Division Northampton though were far from overwhelmed, unlike their 1970 predecessor who were beaten 8-2 by United in an FA Cup tie where legendary striker George Best scored six goals at the Cobblers' old County Ground home.

Earlier the result at the City of Manchester Stadium was an expected repeat of the 1981 FA Cup final between City and Tottenham, which Spurs ultimately won in a replay.

France striker Nicolas Anelka gave City an 11th minute lead before Tottenham's Republic of Ireland defender Gary Doherty levelled in the 57th minute.

The result meant Kevin Keegan's City have won just one of their last 17 matches.

At Goodison, Francis Jeffers's last-minute goal, his first since returning to his boyhood club on loan from Arsenal, salvaged a 1-1 draw for Everton after Fulham had led for most of the second half through one-time Toffees' target Sean Davis's 49th minute effort.

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