

School v'ball

OUR CORRESPONDENT
Nizamuddin High School blanked Dakhin Kamarjani High School 3-0 sets in the inaugural match of the school volleyball tournament at the Gaibandha Stadium yesterday.

Rebel UK tour?

BBC ONLINE, London
Zimbabwe's 15 rebel cricketers are trying to stage a tour of social matches across Britain to finance their considerable legal bills.

Folb told BBC Sport: "I'm trying to formulate a Zimbabwe Exiles side to get them playing once again."
"I'm absolutely speechless that the authorities are otherwise going to lose a great cricketing side."

Batsman Grant Flower told Australian newspaper The Age: "There are quite a few logistics to sort out. But it is a possibility because the guys have got some good marketability in England at the moment."

The cricketers walked out over a selection dispute sparked by the sacking of captain Heath Streak. After almost two months of rowing, the players themselves were axed last week.

Batty equals

FROM PAGE 13
outfielder is seven, held jointly by Surrey's Micky Stewart against Northamptonshire at Northampton in 1957 and Tony Brown for Gloucestershire against Nottinghamshire in 1966.

Army march

FROM PAGE 13
doubled the margin after nineteen minutes, won the man-of-the-match award for the third consecutive game in the final round.

Schools kabadi

FROM PAGE 13
In the day's other match, Brahmanchour Govt. Primary School overwhelmed Islami Adarsha High School 91-42.

ZZ waits for D Day



AFP, La Grande Motte (France)

France star Zinedine Zidane is in a hurry to play England in what he calls a D Day match in the Euro 2004 championships in Portugal on June 13.

The FIFA World Player of the Year is keen to throw off the disappointment of a calamitous end of season with Real Madrid and he sees the England match as the ideal way of starting afresh.

"It's good we start with England, it means you have to be on top of the job from the kick-off," he said at the France training camp.

"When you start with an easy match it sometimes means you are not fully concentrated. We know we have to win this match, we have to be ready for D Day."

He said Real's run of defeats had been hard to accept.

"I hate losing but we seemed to get into a spiral. It became a psychological problem. We couldn't stop thinking we might lose," he said.

Five league defeats in a row meant Real, knocked out of the Champions League by Monaco in the quarter-finals, finished without a trophy for the first time in five years.

Keane inspires Ireland

Football
AFP, Dublin
Roy Keane's return to the Ireland national team was capped by a morale-boosting 1-0 victory over Romania here on Thursday.

The Manchester United midfielder, who only played after passing a late fitness test, lasted the full 90 minutes and was still on the pitch when Matt Holland volleyed in the winner five minutes from the end.

It was a highly creditable victory for the Irish against a team that beat Germany 5-1 only last month.

Keane performed with his customary drive and discipline in his first match for his country since walking out on the national squad before the 2002 World Cup finals in Japan following a bust-up with then manager Mick McCarthy.

The 32-year-old had retired from international football but was persuaded to return to the fold by new manager Brian Kerr earlier this year. After winning his 59th cap on

Ferrero falls too

French Open
AFP, Paris
Stricken Spaniard Juan Carlos Ferrero joined fellow defending champion Justine Henin-Hardenne on the French Open scrapheap on Thursday as the second Grand Slam event of the season was hit by another shockwave.

Ferrero, whose participation in the tournament had been in doubt because of wrist and rib injuries, lost his second round match 6-4, 6-2, 6-3 to tournament debutant Igor Andreev of Russia.

"I couldn't play my best tennis. I wasn't good physically and wasn't arriving at the ball at the right time," said 24-year-old Ferrero.

"I was hitting the ball too late and I couldn't push hard enough. My ribs felt alright, but then I started having cramps in my left leg which made it so difficult to stay in the match."

"When you are defending a title, you have to be 100 per cent. But I don't regret my decision to play."

He promised that France were keen to make amends for their disastrous 2002 World Cup when the 1998 winners could draw only one match -- 0-0 with Uruguay -- and lost to Senegal and Denmark to go home without scoring a goal.

"We don't want to rake over old ground but we know what we have to do -- be ready for D Day."

"We've got some world-class players, someone like Robert Pires, and we're a compact block."

Zidane missed the first two matches in the 2002 World Cup with a high strain and Pires was unable to go to the tournament because of injury.

France, the 2000 European champions, can count on Pires, Thierry Henry, Patrick Vieira and Sylvain Wiltord from English champions Arsenal.

The strike force for a friendly work-out against Andorra at nearby Montpellier on Friday was made up of Henry, Manchester United's Louis Saha and Juventus' David Trezeguet.

Juventus fullback Lilian Thuram was moved to partner Chelsea's William Gallas in the centre of defence to make up for injured captain Marcel Desailly.



ZINEDINE ZIDANE
Champions League in August.
"So I'm in a hurry to start Euro 2004, get my teeth into something new, and that goes for all of us here."

Thursday, Keane now has his sights set on leading Ireland to the World Cup finals in 2006.



Ireland's Roy Keane (L) runs with the ball on his international return in a friendly against Romania in Dublin on Thursday.

Maradona set to move to Brazil

AFP, Buenos Aires

Football legend Diego Maradona, who is undergoing drug rehabilitation therapy in Argentina, is set to go to Brazil in the next few days to continue his treatment, medical sources told AFP on Thursday.

The 43-year-old, in a psychiatric hospital in the western suburbs of Buenos Aires since May 9, is set to be transferred to Sao Paulo but will be accompanied by his current medical team.

The same sources believed he would make the move sometime from Saturday to Monday.

The decision for the transfer was taken during a meeting including family and friends of the 1986 World Cup winning captain and medical staff.

Maradona, who came close to death last month with heart and lung problems, has been fighting a well-documented cocaine problem since 2000.

Giuly out

AFP, Monaco

Monaco playmaker Ludovic Giuly has pulled out of France's Euro 2004 squad with a torn groin muscle.

He was injured in Wednesday's European Champions League final defeat to Porto.

The French medical staff said he would be out for six weeks.

Giuly was not a first-team choice for the defending European champions.

Butragueno to replace Valdano

REUTERS, Madrid

Former player Emilio Butragueno will succeed Jorge Valdano as the sporting director of Real Madrid, club president Florentino Perez said on Friday.

Valdano said on Thursday that he would be stepping down with effect from June 11, the date on which the club has called an extraordinary general meeting of its members to lay out the schedule for the presidential election in July.

"Emilio will take over the job," Perez told Spanish radio station Onda Cero. "He and (new coach Jose Antonio) Camacho will be responsible for planning next season."

"That is the case for the moment but as for the future we will have to see what happens in the elections."

Butragueno, who has become a symbol of the Real Madrid team that won five consecutive league titles between 1986 and 1990, has been Valdano's deputy for the last four years.

He played alongside Camacho who took over as coach at the start of the week after the dismissal of Carlos Queiroz.

Vintage Ballack



REUTERS/AFP, Berlin

Germany's 7-0 thrashing of modest Malta might not be that relevant but Michael Ballack's great show certainly was.

The nation's Euro 2004 hopes rest heavily on the Bayern Munich midfielder, who strongly suggested with four goals and fine playmaking throughout Thursday's friendly that he could peak just at the right time.

The elegant 27-year-old has been criticised for below-par performances for Bayern this season.

Former Germany midfielder Gunter Netzer even compared him to Andreas Moeller, regarded as the greatest German under-achiever of the past 15 years.

Even Netzer, now a television commentator, was lost for words after Ballack's classy display on the Freiburg pitch.

"This time there is absolutely nothing negative to say about Ballack," Netzer said during his match commentary. "What he's doing is perfect."

Not since Gerd Mueller, in a 5-1 win over Switzerland in 1972, had a Germany player scored four in an international.

Ballack opened the scoring with a left-footed shot on the quarter hour mark. The Malta defence afforded him an ocean of space, something he is unlikely to get in Portugal, and made the same mistake two minutes later when Ballack headed in a Philipp Lahm cross.

Further goals from Jens Nowotny and Torsten Frings saw Germany, captained by Liverpool's Dietmar Hamann, coasting through the second period carving chance after chance.

Fredi Bobic should have had a



MICHAEL BALLACK

hat-trick, instead settling for a late goal, but it was Ballack who grabbed that honour scrambling the ball into the net in the 59th minute.

A fourth goal followed for Ballack after Malta had their goalkeeper sent off for a challenge on Miroslav Klose.

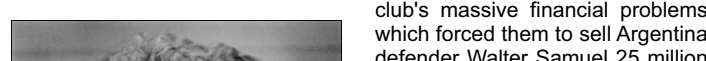
Ballack, who was instrumental in Germany's run to the 2002 World Cup final, had a frustrating season with Bayern but he never let Germany down, scoring decisive goals in their qualifying campaign for Euro 2004.

"I am ever so pleased for him," Germany coach Rudi Voeller, who has stood by his playmaker, said.

Not only did Ballack prove a point but he also helped Germany restore pride after a traumatic 5-1 defeat by Romania in their previous friendly outing last month in Bucharest.

"The first game after such a heavy defeat is always important," said Ballack. "We played with a lot of a dedication. Scoring seven goals is always an achievement."

Juve go for Capello



AP, Rome

behind champions Milan and Roma, and lost the Italian Cup final to Lazio.

Capello's first job will be to work out a new deal for disgruntled France star David Trezeguet.

He had a year left on his contract at Roma but was unhappy with the club's massive financial problems which forced them to sell Argentina defender Walter Samuel 25 million euros (30 million dollars) last week to Real Madrid.

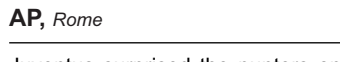
Roma, whose debts are believed to be more than 200 million euros, are also expected to offload Brazilian midfielder Emerson as they attempt to ease their crippling financial problems.

Rome-born Claudio Ranieri, expected to be paid off by English Premiership side Chelsea next week, could be a favourite to take over at Roma.

"Fabio Capello has signed a three-year contract," said a Juventus spokesman.

Lippi, who guided Juve to last season's Serie A title, decided last month it was time to take a break.

Juve go for Capello



AP, Rome

Juventus surprised the punters on Friday by naming former AC Milan European Cup winning boss Fabio Capello as their new coach on Friday to succeed Marcello Lippi.

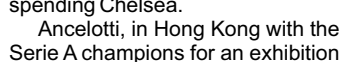
Former Juventus player Didier Deschamps, who guided Monaco to Wednesday's Champions League final, had been a favourite to take over.

Capello, 57, had been coach at AS Roma from 1999, leading them to the 2001 title, and coached AC Milan to three successive Italian league titles as well as the 1994 European Cup.

He also had one year at Real Madrid. He had been linked with a move to an English club.

Juventus finished third in the Italian championship last season,

Ancelotti relieved



AFP, Hong Kong

Galliani and Chelsea's billionaire Russian owner Roman Abramovich reportedly met in Italy this week.

But Ancelotti said he had no knowledge of a meeting. "I don't know anything about it," he said. "I was on a plane to Hong Kong."

AC Milan coach Carlo Ancelotti expressed relief here Friday at star striker Andrei Shevchenko's decision to resist the overtures of big-spending Chelsea.

Ancelotti, in Hong Kong with the Serie A champions for an exhibition match on Sunday, said the Ukrainian hitman was wise not to swap Stamford Bridge for the San Siro.

"He's a great player and AC Milan are a great team. A great player should stay with a great team," said Ancelotti, after Shevchenko agreed a new five-year deal that runs until 2009.

Ancelotti also brushed off reports that other members of his squad might be targeted by English teams.

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Milan vice-president Adriano

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Italy to honour Agnelli

Football
REUTERS, Milan
Italy will wear black armbands in their friendly match with Tunisia on Sunday to mourn the death of Fiat chairman and honorary president of Serie A club Juventus Umberto Agnelli.

Agnelli, who was also president of the Italian Football Federation (FIGC) from 1959 to 1961, died late on Thursday of cancer at the age of 69.

The Italian news agency ANSA said a minute's silence would be observed before the start of Sunday's game in Tunis and at all Italian league games at the weekend.

The FIGC has also asked the organisers of the European under-21

championship in Germany to allow a minute's silence before Italy's match against Serbia and Montenegro on Saturday.

Italy coach Giovanni Trapattoni, who worked under the Agnelli family at Juventus, said he was saddened by the loss.

Conte parts with Juventus

AFP, Turin
Former Italy international Antonio Conte has decided to leave Juventus, the player himself said during a press conference here on Wednesday.

The 35-year-old defensive midfielder arrived at Juventus in November 1991 from Lecce, with whom he had made his professional debut in 1986.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
1 High-speed number
5 Overly theatrical
9 Witnessed
12 Malaria symptom
13 Jai—
14 Ms. Thurman
15 A real sharpie?
17 "Friends" cast member
18 Football injury site
19 Stallone role
21 Filched
24 Reverb-erate
25 Possess
26 Highly rated, perhaps
30—
31 Partners
32 Carte lead-in
33 Please, in Cadiz
35 Attention getter
36 "—off to see ..."

DOWN
1 Treasure seeker's aid
2 Past resort lake
3 Mongrel
4 Yell, targets
6 "I cannot tell"—
7 Chap
8 Stabs
9 Corn and lima
10 Beyond control
11 Cera-ceous
12 Malaria symptom
13 Jai—
14 Ms. Thurman
15 A real sharpie?
17 "Friends" cast member
18 Football injury site
19 Stallone role
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24 Reverb-erate
25 Possess
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Solution time: 21 mins.
W A D I O U R B A K E
O V E N W A I R E O R A L
K E E P I N T H E C A R S
U G H A M
A B A T U S D O S E
P L U S G O F O R T I E
B A T S E R I E D A S
H O P T O I T S O R E
H A D A R E L A X
S T R O B E K I N
P O I N T S T E P O N I T
A R G O T A M A R O C K
M E S S C O P A R C O

CRYPTOQUIP
L W A L V Q A B E V P G U V D W F E
L A W Y U , Q Y F G U U G J G A B D W X B
U Z W F P X P Q J G Z W N N Q P B
G J G A V L E G A !
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: DO YOU THINK A VERY GUNG-HO GOLFER WOULD HAVE THAT FAIRWAY LOOK IN HIS EYES?
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: L equals F
The Cryptoquip is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.