

Fergie blasts Wenger again

Football AFP, Manchester

Manchester United manager Sir Alex Ferguson has blasted rival Arsene Wenger, accusing him of having a "mental problem" with striker Ruud van Nistelrooy.

Sol Campbell, but he accepts his responsibility and we do too. "Wenger obviously has a problem with him. I can't understand it, I really can't. But Ruud knows that he has the support of all the club and that's the important thing."

doing is saying nothing and we believe that to be the correct attitude," added Ferguson. "There was supposed to be an agreement between the two clubs that neither would say anything, but that has obviously been washed aside by Arsenal's actions during the week."

Goal-happy Owen

Football REUTERS, Madrid

Michael Owen says scoring three goals in three games for Real Madrid has been the perfect way to help him settle at his new club.

"I'd like the run to continue," he said. "But I'd also like the run to continue with the team. We're winning games now and we're playing a little bit better step by step, so if my goals can help that then great, but the team

more for the team. Just because I've scored a few goals it doesn't mean that you're playing to the best of your ability so obviously I'd like to keep improving. It's a massive challenge for me.



MICHAEL OWEN

Serginho laid to rest

Football REUTERS, Rio de Janeiro

Sao Caetano defender Serginho, who died on Wednesday after collapsing on the pitch during a Brazilian championship match, was buried on Friday while police launched an investigation into his death.

Luiz told reporters that routine tests carried out earlier this year had shown the 30-year-old, full name Paulo Sergio de Oliveira, had a heart condition.

Fabriciano on Thursday and lay in wake until Friday morning. Hundreds of people filed past to pay their final respects.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS 1 Traffic noise 5 Witnessed 8 Sail support 12 Exceptional 13 Altar affirmative 14 "GWTW" acreage 15 Unrepaired 16 In sequence 18 Rock duo - Dan 20 Catch with a ruse 21 Reveille's opposite 23 Fashion designer Anna 24 Top of the angelic hierarchy 28 Strike breaker 31 Expert 32 Blender setting 34 - moment 35 Ness, e.g. 37 Pepper or York 39 Erstwhile acorn 41 High-lander

Crossword puzzle grid with numbers 1-30 and letters P, U, N, E, E, J, U, Q, P, B, K, P, X, V, B, A, Q, U, Z, P, S, B, V, Z, B, Z, I, Z, S, Z, I, U, L, I, Q, Q, M, L, J, N, R, S, X, P, G, Q, U, J, K, Q, J, M, Q, A, R, P, E, U, Q, I, G, P, L, Q.

CRYPTOQUIP P U N E E J U Q P B K P X V B A Q U Z P S B V Z B Z I Z S Z I U L I Q Q M L J N R S X P G Q U J K Q J M Q A R P E U Q I G P L Q. Saturday's Cryptquip: I LIKE TO BELIEVE A SQUIRREL'S LIVING QUARTERS COULD BE CALLED A NUTCRACKER SUITE.

Bangladesh men

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Rahman beat FM Faisal Khairallah, International Master Reefat bin Sattar beat FM Najjar Ahmed, IM Abdullah Al Rakib beat IM Eid Fadi and IM Enamul Hossain Rajib beat Mahmoud Abdulaziz.

Rajib was the top performer for the country securing 7.5 points out of 12 games while Zia finished with 7 points out of 12 games.

In the women's section, Syeda Shabana Parveen Nipa beat Nadezhda Antonova, Zakia Sultana drew with Zebo Ulughozhaeva and WIM Rani Hamid lost against Elena Nuritdinova.

Club Cup hockey

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international Musa Miah came up with a double strike in two minutes to seal the fate of the one-sided encounter.

Sonali Bank will take on Wari Club at 3pm today at the same venue.

Tigers look

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second Test. Most of the squad spent their time playing a few rounds of golf at the Bhatiani Golf and Country Club.

During the Tigers' practice former South African spinner Pat Symcox, ESPN-STAR Sports commentator Allan Wilkins and former Kiwi paceman Danny Morrison praised Mohammad Rafique while having a close look at his action.

GP, Biman FROM PAGE 13 Jagannath Hall ground of Dhaka University.

SCORES IN BRIEF CUP COMPETITION ARAF APPAREL: 141 for 5 in 20 overs (Ehsanul 57, Saikat 3-29)

AKTEL: 114 all out in 20 overs (Uttam 24, Kamrul 3-12, Nuruzzaman 2-14)

Result: Araf won by 27 runs. GRAMEENPHONE: 142 for 8 in 20 overs (Shamimul 46, Hasibul 2-29, Habib 2-27)

ROBINTEX: 77 for 7 in 20 overs (Salahuddin 21, Enamul 4-9) Result: GrameenPhone won by 65 runs.

BANGLADESH BIMAN: 131 for 8 in 20 overs (Jahangir 61, Alamgir 2-16)

CITYCELL: 122 all out in 19.4 overs (Hasanuzzaman 33, Aminul Islam 2-19)

Result: Biman won by 9 runs. PLATE COMPETITION EPYLLION: 107 for 7 in 20 overs (Sadat 41, Nadif 3-20, Talha 2-12)

BEXIMCO: 109 for 2 in 18.3 overs (Sajjad 47 not out, Al Shahrar 24, Akram 22 not out)

Result: Beximco won by 8 wickets. ACME LABORATORIES: 139 for 5 in 20 overs (Faisal 38, Nasiruddin 33, Hannan 31 not out)

PARTEX: 71 all out in 16.1 overs (Tariq 14, Ahsanullah 4-12) Result: Acme won by 68 runs.

Remembering the Rumble

Boxing REUTERS, London

The action was set for 0400, two or three hours before the African dawn. That did not stop over 60,000 people crowding the Stade du 20 Mai for one of the landmark sporting occasions of the century.

When the Rumble in the Jungle was done, the battle lost and won, there was a torrential thunderstorm which flooded the stadium and cut TV communications.

But the outside world knew by then that Muhammad Ali had produced one of the most astonishing feats in boxing history to knock out the fearsome George Foreman and regain the world heavyweight title.

The venue was Kinshasa, in Zaire, now known as the Democratic Republic of Congo. The date was October 30, 1974. The Thriller in Manila between Ali and Joe Frazier was another 11 months down the line.

The bizarre Kinshasa start-time was, of course, to cater for closed-circuit TV in the United States. Thirty years on the victor, now 62, battles the ravages of Parkinson's Disease; the loser, at the age of 56, is, remarkably, contemplating fighting again.

All those years ago, titleholder Foreman was considered unbeatable with a 40-0 record including 37 knock-outs.

His eight previous bouts had ended in the first or second rounds and he was widely viewed as the heaviest puncher the sport had known.

Ali was Ali -- a PR dream, a walking quotes-bag, poet, and showman supreme. But last and not least he was a highly skilled fighter and tactician. A man who could take a punch although in later years his health was to pay a melancholy penalty.

The fight was largely put together by Don King, then a fledgling in the sport. The purse was \$10 million, split 50/50, with most of it coming from the Zaire government of President Mobutu, keen to raise the profile of his country.

Ali flew in with his costly 35-

strong entourage a month in advance of the original scheduled date of September 25. A week before the big day Foreman cut an eye in training and the bout had to be put back.

reason it's called that is because it's thrown in the ghetto at three in morning which is when me and George are gonna fight."

And the poetry: "Float like a butterfly, sting like a bee"



A file photo of the robe and trunks worn by boxing legend Mohammad Ali during his epic title bout against George Foreman in Kinshasa, Zaire on October 30, 1974. The fight became known as 'Rumble in the Jungle.'

More time for the wit and wisdom of Ali, caught and recalled in Thomas Hauser's book Muhammad Ali, His Life and Times.

"I got a punch for George. It's called the ghetto-whopper and the

it was part of the strategy hit on by the challenger after the first round. Apart from dancing on his feet, Ali was thinking on his feet.

The ring surface proved slow and Ali quickly concluded not even he could dance all night (or morning, as it was).

He decided instead to entrench by the ropes, duck and take the blows and tire his opponent out.

The blows came in, some so fierce even the battle-hardened at the ringside shuddered. But gradually they became slower and less punishing.

Ali taunted: "Hit harder. Show me something, George. That don't hurt. I thought you were supposed to be bad."

By round eight, Ali felt ready to emerge from the ropes where much of the fight has been conducted.

A fierce right-hander to the head and the "rope-a-dope" champion was down.

Had it been in the first round he would have got up. Mid-fight, like the pro he was, Foreman lay looking at his corner who signalled him to wait, regroup, clear his head -- and then rise.

But when the get-up call came and with the referee counting apace Foreman failed to make it.

The Rumble was over. Foreman had been knocked down in other fights but got up to win. He now accepts Ali was too smart and even if he had risen he would have lost.

Ali had his title back. He was \$5 million richer. He was more feted and famed than ever. People lined the soggy jungle roads as he returned to the compound in N'Sele where he had been for two months.

Then what? Newsweek writer Pete Bonventre caught up in N'Sele with Ali about three hours after the fight and has told in Hauser's book how he found the champion sitting on a doorstep showing a magic trick to some children.

He wrote: "And it was hard to tell who was having a better time, Ali or the children."

"I don't care what anyone says, there'll never be anyone like him again."

Barca get shirty

AFP, Madrid

Spanish league leaders Barcelona are close to signing a shirt sponsorship deal worth between 13 and 17 million euros, the La Vanguardia newspaper reported on Friday.

The club confirmed that they are in talks with an internet company, betandwin.com, and if the deal is agreed, it will be the first time in the team's history that they have carried a shirt sponsor.

"The two parties are negotiating the duration of the contract which will be three to five years," said a club spokesman.

The value of the agreement would put Barcelona second on the list of most lucrative shirt sponsorship deals in Europe.

Bayern Munich lead the way with a 17-million-euro deal with Deutsche Telekom, Manchester United (Vodafone, 12 million euros), Real Madrid (Siemens, 12 million euros), AC Milan (Opel, nine million euros) and Arsenal (O2, eight million).

Agassi no Haas-been

Tennis AFP, Stockholm

Top seed Andre Agassi solidified his bid for a spot in next month's ATP season final as he recorded a 7-6, 7-6 semifinal victory here on Saturday over Tommy Haas at the 632,750-euro Stockholm Open.

The 34-year-old legend looked sharp indoors at the Kungliga Tennishallen as he spent two hours in defeating Germany's fourth seed for the sixth time in nine meetings.

The American now stands one victory away from his 60th title as he plays Sunday against the winner from Sweden Thomas Johansson and wild card teenager Michael Ryderstedt.

Johansson was the last local to

win the home event, lifting the title in 2000.

Agassi, with wife Steffi Graf watching from a discreet corner of the balcony-level players' box along with infant son Jaden Gill, has now won his last two meetings with Haas with the pair playing three times in the past three months.

Haas won a quarterfinal in Los Angeles on the way to the title while Agassi got his own back at their next event in Toronto.

The veteran has improved his standing in the race for the eight-man Masters Cup, standing eighth as the week began.

But with number seven Tim Henman going out in the Basel quarterfinals and needing to defend a title next week as the regular season wraps up in Paris, the scenario looks promising for Agassi, nearly two decades in the game.

Against Haas, the top seed stayed sharp from his favoured position at the baseline, forcing the German into the errors in a tight, hard-fought contest.

The American wrapped up the victory as he sprinted to 5-1 in the second tie-breaker, holding off a brief fight-back from the German before claiming the win on Haas' 14th unforced error of the afternoon.

At the start, Agassi put Haas under immediate pressure, forcing the German to escape break points on his first two service games. But Agassi faced the same problem in the sixth game, saving two as he levelled at 3-all.

Haas earned the first break taking a 5-3 lead. But the deficit only inspired Agassi to close it, with the veteran breaking back in the next game for 4-5 and squaring it up with an ace, 5-5.

Federer skips Paris meet

AFP, Paris

World number one Roger Federer confirmed on Friday that he will not take part in the 2.45-million-euro Paris Masters here next week after failing to recover from a thigh injury.

The Swiss ace, the winner of Wimbledon and the Australian and US Opens this season, tore a muscle in his left thigh while practising for the Basel tournament on Monday.

He still hopes to recover in time for the season-ending Masters Cup in Houston from November 15-21.

Sanath's counter-attack

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"To have overhauled him and to have the most runs scored is another feather in my cap and it's a great satisfaction," Jayasuriya said.

The veteran opener also set the new record for most Test appearances for Sri Lanka with his 94th Test cap in Karachi, going past de Silva.

Pakistan trail the two-match series 0-1 after their 201-run defeat in the first Test at Faisalabad.

SCOREBOARD Scoreboard at stumps on the third day of the second and final Test between Pakistan and Sri Lanka at the National Stadium in Karachi on Saturday:

SRI LANKA: First innings 208 (Kaluwitharana 54, Atapattu 44; Razzaq 5-35, Kaneria 3-72)

PAKISTAN: First innings (overnight 298-4) Hameed c Sangakkara b Maharoof 3 Farhat lbw b Vaas 72

Younis c Samaraweera b Herath 124 Inzamam c Jayawardene b Vaas 117 Afridi b Vaas 9

Papers call 'em

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been the best lesson learned." The Herald Sun ran a main sports headline "Aussies conquer the final frontier", while The Age's front page headline was: "After 35 years, sweet taste of series victory."

Peter Roebuck wrote in The Age: "Every man played his part in the ruthless execution of an opponent weakened by injuries, poor selection and bad management, and unable to recapture the form of yesterday."

Columnist Mike Coward said in The Australian the current side were among the sport's best teams. "They have been the peerless team of the modern era, dominating the 1990s and 2000s as the West Indies did in the 1980s," Coward wrote.



American Andre Agassi plays backhand against Tommy Haas of Germany at the Stockholm Open on October 29.

PHOTO: AFP