

Edu undecided

AFP, London

Brazil midfielder Edu's future at Arsenal could be decided this week with the English champions stalling over offering him a new contract.

Edu's contract expires in the summer and he has been linked with Spanish trio Real Madrid, Barcelona and Valencia.

"I'm not sure if I want to stay or not because the club have let the situation go on this far," the 26-year-old told BBC Sport.

"If they had really wanted to sign them they should have come up with an offer six months before indicating they wanted to sign me and that's made me think."

Edu's brother and representative Amadeo Fensao has said that Arsenal's current offer was well short of what he was seeking.

Edu added: "My brother is due to come to London on Thursday. There is a meeting planned for 6 or 7 January to sort it out with Arsenal."

"Now I have a choice to stay or go. I want to sort it out as soon as possible, that's in the best interests of both the club and myself."

"I'm going to make my decision after the meeting later this week."

But he said he was encouraged by manager Arsene Wenger's support.

"I still have a good relationship with Arsene Wenger - he's always said he wants me to sign."

Edu is able to begin negotiations with other clubs because FIFA regulations allow players to start talks six months before their contracts expire.

The midfielder, who broke in to the Brazil side in 2004, admitted he had been flattered to have been linked with the three Spanish giants.

"I've just heard stories from the news that the Madrid president Florentino Perez, the Valencia people, as well as Barcelona are interested. That's nice, but I've never talked to them, so I can't say they want me sign 100 percent," he said.

Primera Liga



No regrets!

Football

AFP, London

have thought about it a lot since the incident and there was nothing I could have done differently - apart from running faster than (former British sprinter) Linford Christie."

Carroll and Lewis's combined blunder has re-opened the debate about whether video technology should be used to rule on such decisions in the future.

The issue is due to be discussed at an International Football Association Board meeting in Cardiff on February 26.

And with the Football Association and their Scottish and Irish counterparts all set to vote in favour of trialling a new ball containing a microchip which can determine whether it has crossed the line within seconds, it seems certain some kind of extended experiment will be sanctioned in the near future.

It would be a move welcomed by Lewis, especially if it saves him from another nightmare moment.

His next appointment comes on Friday at Turf Moor, when he will run the line in the FA Cup third round tie between Burnley and Liverpool.

"My view, and I think it is shared by most referees, is that for matter of fact issues like whether the ball has crossed the line, technology should be introduced," said Lewis.

"Any decision where the law states 'in the opinion of' should be left as they are."

Maradona back in Cuba

Football

REUTERS, Buenos Aires

months after spending 10 days in the intensive care unit of a Buenos Aires hospital with heart and breathing problems.

Although he had spent much of the last four years at a spa on the Caribbean island, he has been subjected to a much stricter regime in his latest bout of treatment.

Maradona appeared on several television shows during the last month where he seemed to be in good spirits.

"I always said we were going to see another Diego, a different Diego, because he has not been consuming drugs," Damboriana said.

Maradona's doctor Alfredo Cahe said in November he opposed the ex-Argentine captain's decision to interrupt the treatment.



DIEGO MARADONA

Chelsea wooing teenagers?

AFP, Lisbon

Portuguese side Sporting Lisbon said Wednesday they would file a formal protest to FIFA about an alleged approach by Chelsea for three of its 15-year-old trainees.

The Lisbon-based club accused the English Premiership leaders in a statement posted on its website of "trying to recruit the players by ignoring the most elementary FIFA rules."

Sporting said it was aware that the three players -- Adrien Silva, Fabio Ferreira and Ricardo Fernandes -- had been training with Chelsea without proper authorization.

Portuguese sports daily "O Jogo" reported Tuesday that the three players, who had not yet signed a formal contract to pursue training with Sporting, were poised to join Chelsea.

If the complaint goes ahead it will be the second time in the last year that a Portuguese club has filed a complaint with the world's football governing body over Chelsea's recruitment tactics.

In April 2004 European Champions FC Porto filed a formal protest to FIFA over Chelsea's efforts to woo the club's coach Jose Mourinho.

The Portuguese coach signed with the London team in June.

WELL DONE IN SIX MINUTES! Real Madrid's new manager Brazilian Vanderlei Luxemburgo (C) congratulates his charges after they beat Real Sociedad in Madrid on January 5. The two teams returned to play the final 2 mins 40 secs of regulation time and another 4 minutes of injury time after the original match was suspended due to a bomb threat on December 12.

Premiership

Saints stay in trouble

AFP, London

Former England striker Kevin Phillips was on target twice but Southampton had to settle for a point in a 3-3 draw with Fulham on Wednesday which left the Saints still rooted in relegation trouble.

It was only Southampton's second point from the hectic four-match Christmas schedule and it also left manager Harry Redknapp, whose son Jamie was making his debut, waiting for his first victory.

"It was a good entertaining match with chances created at both ends - but we're disappointed, because it's a game we wanted to win," said Phillips.

"We showed a lot of courage but couldn't hang on to the lead. We have to keep taking the positives from each game and keep working hard."

"The manager has brought in two quality players (Jamie Redknapp and Calum Davenport) - but we need to get more points on the board."

In a thrilling first-half, Fulham snatched the lead in the 20th minute when Papa Boupa Diop edged a free-kick from Mark Pembridge past Antti Niemi in the Southampton goal.

But within 50 seconds of the restart, the Saints were level when Phillips beat the offside trap to head home a cross from Fabrice Fernandes.

Eight minutes later Phillips was on target again to give Southampton the lead.

Fulham striker Tomasz Radzinski was caught in possession by Jamie Redknapp who released Phillips. The former England man then nipped past the challenges of Zeshan Rehman and Zat Knight to curl a low shot past Edwin van der Sar in the Fulham goal from 18 yards.

However, the Londoners were level just two minutes before half-time when Niemi parried a Luis Boa Morte drive which fell to Steed Malbranque who volleyed home from 15 yards.

Fulham then went looking for the lead and Radzinski made up for his earlier error by firing his team in front five minutes into the second half.

Boa Morte took the ball off Redknapp and Radzinski finished off his team's quick break with a clinical finish to register his fourth goal in the last five games.

Collins John then had a chance to make it 4-2 but Niemi saved with his legs.

Incredibly, the Saints made the most of their good fortune by pulling themselves level again in the 71st minute.

Anders Svensson hit a low cross from the left where Liam Rosenior, under pressure from Peter Crouch, turned the ball into his own net.

Football

AFP, Madrid

Real Madrid and Real Sociedad managed to finish their match almost a month after they started, and the hosts made the most of their second chance by grabbing a late winner for a 2-1 victory here on Wednesday.

Goals from Ronaldo and Nihat Kahveci had left both sides level pegging when the match had to be suspended on December 12, but a Zinedine Zidane penalty gave Madrid coach Wanderley Luxemburgo a winning start at his new club.

The two teams played out the final 2mins 40secs of regulation time and another four minutes of injury time on Wednesday after referee Vicente Lizondo Cortes had no choice but to call a half time around after an apparent bomb threat from the Basque nationalist group ETA.

"We showed complete concentration and great motivation," said Luxemburgo after the bizarre finale, which saw Real Sociedad make a round trip of 700 miles for just a few

TOP SIX

Spanish football league standings after Wednesday's match (played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, goals against, points):

Barcelona 17 13 3 1 35 11 42
Valencia 17 9 5 3 27 12 32
Real 17 10 2 5 26 13 32
Sevilla 17 9 4 4 21 18 31
Espanyol 17 9 3 5 18 12 30
Betis 17 7 6 4 22 20 27

The match was played out in

Fernando Morientes alongside Ronaldo rather than England striker Michael Owen.

It looked like an inspired decision when the unsettled Spanish international, who had not started a game all season, had the first Real chance after barely two minutes.

Riosgo managed to save his side on that occasion but the constant pressure forced Sociedad defender Mikel Labaka to bundle Ronaldo to the ground a minute into injury time, and Zidane stepped up to convert from the spot.

"The way we played here, we could win the league, the Champions League and the cup," bragged Luxemburgo.

"Real Madrid created their chances and we couldn't have done anymore. I had the feeling we were going to be struck by an avalanche," conceded Real Sociedad coach Jose Maria Amoroto.

Real Madrid climb two places to third and now have 32 points from 17 games ahead of their local derby against Atletico on Sunday.

However, the 29-times Spanish champions are still 10 points behind their arch rivals and runaway league leaders Barcelona.

The match was played out in

TOP SCORERS

AFP, Madrid

Leading scorers in the Spanish league after Wednesday's match:

13 - Samuel Eto'o (Barcelona)
9 - Ricardo Oliveira (Real Betis)
8 - Julio Baptista (Sevilla), Nihat Kahveci (Real Sociedad), Ronaldo (Real Madrid), Ismael Urzaliz (Athletic Bilbao)
7 - Chengue Morales (Osasuna), David Villa (Real Zaragoza), Diego Forlan (Villarreal), Maxi Rodriguez (Espanyol), Fernando Torres (Atletico Madrid)
6 - Edu (Real Betis), Santiago Ezquerro (Athletic Bilbao), Albert Luque (Deportivo La Coruna), Michael Owen (Real Madrid)
5 - Marco Di Vaio (Valencia), Javi Guerreiro (Racing), Darko Kovacevic (Real Sociedad), Luis Garcia (Mallorca), Vladimir Manchev (Levante), Savo Milosevic (Osasuna), Walter Pandiani (Deportivo La Coruna), Juan Roman Riquelme (Villarreal), Savio (Real Zaragoza)

Becks' BMW makes a fortune

Football

AFP, London

A 1997 BMW car once owned by England football captain David Beckham has sold for more than 90,000 pounds (128,000 euros, 170,000 dollars) on eBay -- to the dismay of the man who sold it two

months ago for less than a fifth of that. Businessman John Pearson said Wednesday that the realisation of how much money he had lost was "like winning a small lottery jackpot and losing the ticket".

The BMW M3 convertible, bought by Beckham for 42,000 pounds during his first full season at Manchester United in 1997, sparked a bidding war on Internet auction site eBay, receiving 140 bids.

He advertised the car, Pearson said he had opted to sell the vehicle to the first person who came up with the cash.

"I'm pretty annoyed. If I'd have known I would never have let it go for that price. You just have to learn from these things," he said.

"I will follow my own instincts in future and I've written those BMW dealers off my Christmas list, that's for sure."

Despite getting 60 calls as soon as



A 1997 BMW M3 convertible on display at a car show. David Beckham owned one exactly like this one.

No. DACPM/100/2004

Dated: 4 January 2005

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1. Bangladesh Biman Corporation invites offers for Purchase or Lease with Option to Purchase of three-used Airbus A320 family or Boeing 737 family aircraft with standard two-class configuration and similar engine configuration as per tender schedule to be delivered in Bangladesh Biman's livery. Manufacturing date of the offered aircraft must not be more than 10 (ten) years from the date of publication of the tender notice.
2. Aircraft manufacturers or Airlines/Leasing Companies owning or operating or leasing or managing commercial aircraft can participate in the tender. Bangladesh Biman Corporation will not deal with any agent/broker during the process of evaluation and finalization of contract.
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6. Contents of tender notice and tender schedule can be viewed at Biman's Web site: (www.bimanair.com).
7. Bangladesh Biman Corporation reserves the right to accept or reject any or all the offer(s) partly or wholly at any time and/or stage without assigning any reason whatsoever and no claim shall be acceptable in this regard.

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GD-16