



Real Madrid and England star David Beckham (L) meets pupils from his old school during the launch of "The David Beckham Academy" in London on March 14. The football academy is due to open later in the summer on the Greenwich Peninsula, near The Millennium Dome (in the background) in East London.

## Becks' academy unveiled

### Football

AP, London

David Beckham is preparing for life after soccer.

The English star unveiled plans Monday for The David Beckham Academy, which opens this summer next to the Millennium Dome in east London, where he grew up.

"There is that certain kind of buzz when you step on a football pitch," Beckham said. "I want to be able get that same kind buzz with the soccer school."

"I'll play up to the point where I feel my legs are getting too old and I can't do it any more at the top level," he added. "When that time comes, that's when I'll go into the soccer school."

After this season, Beckham has two years remaining on his contract with Real Madrid. He arrived at the club 20 months ago, and he's won nothing. He'll turn 30 in May, and he knows Madrid fans are demanding and impatient.

"I'm happy at Real Madrid and want to stay at Real Madrid as long as I can," he said. "But in football and life, you never know what is going to happen."

The midfielder star is bracing himself for the day he leaves soccer, and he knows he does not have the temperament for coaching.

"Management has never been a thing for me and never will be," he said. "I'm just one of those players who has never fancied going into management."

And so his academy beckons. Beckham is setting up the school

with "several million" of his own money. He has hooked up with the Anschutz Entertainment Group, which is developing the vacant Millennium Dome into a 26,000-seat arena and entertainment complex. The school will have two full fields, indoor facilities, classrooms and a dining area. The school will be open to boys and girls ages 8-15.

About 15,000 are expected to enroll, with 10,000 enrolling for free. Others will pay a \$480 fee for a five-day training camp.

Beckham spoke softly as 20 students from his old school ran through basic drills before several hundred photographers and reporters.

"That was a good one, mate," said Beckham, encouraging one student.

"David has never lost touch with the school and the friends he had there," said Clive Moore, the head teacher at Chingford Foundation School - Beckham's old school.

Anschutz is planning to open a sister academy this year in Los Angeles. Timothy Leiweke, president and chief executive of Anschutz, said Beckham's celebrity offers a "unique platform." Leiweke watched Beckham instruct children recently in Los Angeles.

"I saw the sheer joy he has working with the kids - the joy that he brought out of the kids," Leiweke said. "It was something that was natural for us to do as a part of what we were doing at the Millennium Dome."

## Blatter stunned at Frisk situation

### Football

AFP, Paris

World football boss Sepp Blatter on Monday said he was shocked at the recent spate of verbal attacks on referees.

The FIFA president, in his first comment on the decision by Swedish referee Anders Frisk to retire after receiving death threats from Chelsea supporters, urged in a statement: "I call on all concerned parties that they show respect and fair play towards referees."

And Blatter, on the day that European football's refereeing supremo Volker Roth described Jose Mourinho as "an enemy of football" after the Chelsea manager's criticism of Frisk, questioned the conduct of some "managers, directors and players".

"I am shocked by the recent verbal attacks aimed at referees. It is often this irrational behaviour that triggers the anger of supporters."

"I call upon all parties concerned to show respect for referees and for fair play," he said.

Blatter concluded by recalling that "those who attack referees are directly attacking the game of football that is their livelihood."

UEFA's director general Lars-Christer Olsson echoed Blatter's

remarks.

"Everyone involved in football should think twice before making provocative statements which could be taken by others as an incitement to cause trouble," he said.

Frisk announced his retirement on Saturday following death threats from Chelsea supporters after their Champions League match against Barcelona at the Nou Camp last month.

Chelsea went on to win the last 16 clash with a 4-2 home victory after their 2-1 defeat in Spain on February 23 when Chelsea fans threatened to kill Frisk in messages by telephone, e-mail and the post.

"The game is just not worth all that," 42-year-old Frisk said.

### FA CUP SEMIS Big two avoid each other

AFP, London

Holders Manchester United and arch-rivals Arsenal were kept apart when the draw for the semi-finals of the FA Cup was made here Monday.

United were paired away to Newcastle with Arsenal at home to Blackburn Rovers.

Both semi-finals will be played at Cardiff's Millennium Stadium, the venue for the May 21 final, on the weekend of April 16-17.



PHOTO: REUTERS

**TWINS!** Real Madrid's Brazilian superstar Ronaldo (R) poses with look-a-like Hakim Darouiche during his visit to a promotional event at the world's largest CeBIT computer fair in Hanover on March 14.

## Ronaldo buys Grand Prix team

### Football

AP, Mexico City

Real Madrid superstar Ronaldo will own the Brazilian franchise in a new international auto racing series, the A1 Grand Prix.

Sheikh Maktoum Hasher, a member of Dubai's ruling family and series chairman, announced the deal with the Brazilian icon during a presentation Monday of the A1-car during the launch of the new team

Mexico President Juan Cortina introduced the race car, in full Mexican livery, at the prestigious Hipodromo de Las Americas.

Welcoming the first country of the Americas to launch their A1 Grand Prix team, Founder, President and Chairman Sheikh Maktoum said, "I am immensely proud to attend the first launch of an A1 team from the Americas and would like to take this opportunity to welcome them into the growing A1 family."

"I am also very happy to announce on this occasion, that the Brazilian team has been sold to Ronaldo, one of the world's greatest athletes and national hero to the 180 million-strong Brazilian population. A1 Grand Prix is a truly global series reaching every continent in the world and as our footprint continues to expand."

Speaking of his involvement in A1 Grand Prix, Ronaldo commented, "It's an honour to represent Brazil in any way I can whether that's on the football pitch or by backing our national motorsport team. Like football, A1 Grand Prix is a team sport. Ultimately, it will be the country who will win the World Cup of Motorsport, not the driver. We've won the football World Cup more times than any other nation it would be great to win the first ever World Cup of Motorsport to go alongside it."



LET'S SEE WHO GETS KNOCKED OUT! Two Atletico Mineiro players watch as Wagner Machado Xavier (2-L), a fan of Mineiro, fights with referee Luis Carlos Silva (L), after stepping into the field during the match against America which Mineiro was loosing 0-1 in Belo Horizonte, Brazil on March 13.

### Omar Kureishi passes away

AFP, Islamabad

Veteran Pakistani cricket commentator and newspaper columnist Omar Kureishi died in the port city of Karachi Monday, state media said. He was 77.



OMAR KUREISHI

Kureishi died in a hospital where he was admitted last week after an asthma attack, the official Associated Press of Pakistan said.

The author of several cricket books was also member of the International Cricket Council's panel which selects the world's best Test and one-day international players for annual awards, it said.

Pakistan Cricket Board chairman Shaharyar Khan expressed deep sorrow over his death, saying Kureishi had achieved the rare status of becoming a "legend" in the sport during his lifetime.

"His passing away has deprived the cricketing public of a colossus in journalism and broadcasting, who will be mourned by cricket lovers all over the world and especially in Pakistan," Shaharyar said.

**Daffodil and Manarat win**

SPORTS REPORTER

Daffodil and Manarat won their

respective matches in the AIUB 4th

inter-private university cricket

tournament at the BKSP yesterday.

Daffodil (138-4) handed a six-

wicket defeat on Northern

University (136-10) while Manarat (172-10) beat Presidency University (154-10) by 18 runs.

(I--innings; Bat--batting team; R/W--runs/wickets; Ov--over; Tar--target; R--result)

**Eva atop alone**

SPORTS REPORTER

Nazrana Khan Eva beat Shamina

Shammin in the fourth round at the

federation hall room yesterday to

maintain her solo lead in the 26th

National Women Chess Cham-

ionship.

IWM Rani Hamid and Shamima

Akter Liza followed the leader with

3.5 points each. Rani defeated

Masuda Begum and Liza outwit

Afroza Khanam in this round.

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**Kolkatta Test**

SPORTS REPORTER

Tendulkar, Venkatesai Laxman,

Dinesh Karthik, Irfan Pathan, Anil

Kumble, Harbhajan Singh,

Laxmi Pathak, Zaheer Khan,

Yuvraj Singh, Ashish Nehra,

**PAKISTAN** (from): Inzamamul Haq

(captain), Shahid Afridi, Taufiq

Umar, Younis Khan, Yousaf

Yousuf, Asim Kamal, Abdul

Razzaq, Kamran Akmal,

Mohammad Sami, Danish Kaneria,

Mohammad Khalil, Yasir Hameed,

Salman Butt, Shoaib Malik, Navedul

Hasan, Arshad Khan.

**Umpires:** Steve Bucknor (West

Indies) and Darrell Hair (Australia).

**Wanderley Luxemburgo**

(Real Madrid coach)

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