

Euro glory tempts Shearer U-turn

AFP, London

Newcastle United's continuing run in the UEFA Cup could help persuade striker Alan Shearer to extend his career, club officials hope.

The Magpies have drawn a quarterfinal clash with Sporting Lisbon and if successful they could be back in the Portuguese capital for the final on May 18 which could represent a grand finale for the popular England striker.

Shearer, closing in on the club's all-time scoring record of 200 goals, is due to bow out at the end of the season to concentrate on his media work.

However, manager Graeme Souness has not lost hope of persuading him to extend his career by another season, something which might be enhanced with a first medal at his hometown club.

"It is down to Alan at the end of the day, the decision is down to him," said director Russell Cushing, the club's representative at the draw.

"If he breaks the record or is near Jackie Milburn's record, will it make a difference? He is such a determined, single-minded character, who knows?"

Dhaka stumble

FROM PAGE 12

To save Khulna in their last game against Sylhet, smote three sixes and two boundaries in a breezy 60 off 71 balls as his side raced to 201-6 in 47 overs.

Tushar Imran contributed 35 while Bashar scored just 17 in his comeback match.

Earlier, Chittagong without their six frontline players managed just 195-7 with national discard Faisal Hossain scoring 52 off 87 balls.

Mashrafe also played a part in the Chittagong demolition picking up two wickets giving away 34 runs in 10 overs.

SYLHET-BARISAL

Experienced paceman Hasibul Hossain took four wickets as Barisal were dismissed for 117 in 27.2 overs.

Hasibul finished with four for 22 in six overs after the visitors decided to bat first.

National seamer Tapash Baisya and left-arm spinner Enamul Haque gave good support picking up two wickets each.

Opener Imran Ahmed was the top scorer with run-a-ball 35.

In reply, Sylhet raced to 121-5 in 28.5 overs with opener Golam Mabud making 30 and Rajin Saleh contributing 26.

SCORES IN BRIEF

DHAKA-RAJSHAHI RAJSHAHI: 207 all out in 47.1 overs (Moniruzzaman 37, Reza 27, Mushfiqur 37, Hasanuzzaman 58; Munir 3-35, Mahmud 2-32, Mehrab Jr 2-35)

DHAKA: 172 all out in 43.4 overs (Rashedul 25, Ashraf 28, Mehrab Jr 30, Riyad 24, Mahmud 39; Shahjada 2-20, Shafaq 3-38, Mushfiqur 2-29). Result: Rajshahi won by 35 runs.

KHULNA-CHITTAGONG CHITTAGONG: 195 for 7 in 50 overs (Tamim 19, Masum 27, Dhiman 16, Ehsanul 26, Faisal 52, Arif 27; Mashrafe 2-34, Manjurul 2-28, Jamal 2-20)

KHULNA: 201 for 6 in 47 overs (Shafiq 37, Bashar 17, Tushar 35, Mashrafe 60 not out, Salim 17 not out). Result: Khulna won by four wickets.

SYLHET-BARISAL BARISAL: 117 all out in 27.2 overs (Imran 35, Salahuddin 20, Nadif 18; Tapash 2-22, Rezaul 1-18, Hasibul 4-22, Enamul 2-17)

SYLHET: 121 for 5 in 28.5 overs (Mabud 30, Rajin 26, Kapali 16, Ezaj 24 not out; Salahuddin 1-8, Nadif 1-20, Imran 1-11). Result: Sylhet won by five wickets.

Bucknor press-ed

FROM PAGE 12

South African umpire Rudi Koertzen in the drawn opening Test at Mohali last week after Pakistani fielder Asim Kamal had appealed for a bat-pad catch off leg-spinner Danish Kaneria.

TV replayed suggested the ball had hit the bat and pad on way to the fielder.

Tendulkar was then on eight and went on to make 94, six runs short of what could have been a world record 35th Test century.

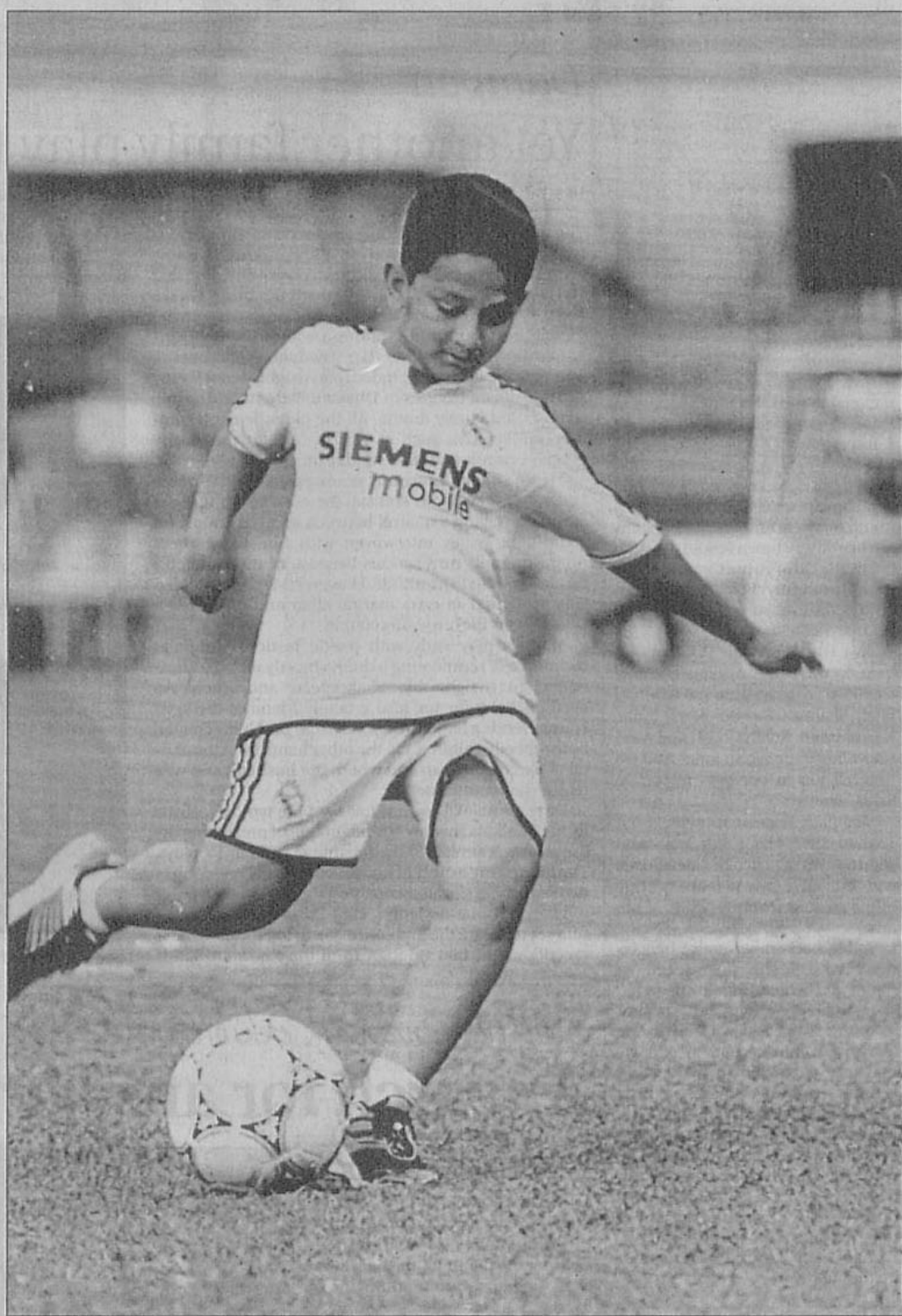


Talk Turkey

(India's star batsman)

"It's an elite club with big names who are altogether in a different league. It's a nice feeling."

After becoming the fifth player to cross 10,000 runs in Test cricket.



FIND A MUNNA IN HIM? Ajman, the 6-year-old son of former national football captain Monem Munna who died at a young age just over a month ago, playing with a football during the Abahani and Fakirpool match of the Independence Day Gold Cup at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Murderous Martyn

Cricket

AFP, Wellington

Damien Martyn scored his 12th Test century as he went on a batting rampage with Adam Gilchrist to put Australia at a strong 337 for five at stumps on the second day of the second Test against New Zealand here Saturday.

In an unbroken 90-run partnership from 89 balls they wrested the initiative off New Zealand and plundered the second new-ball attack as Australia piled on 166 runs in the final session.

Australia looked to be teetering at 163 for four before Martyn and Simon Katich added 84 off 20 overs and, following Katich's dismissal, Gilchrist continued the onslaught.

Martyn, who pushed his Test average back over 50, offered two chances -- streaky French cuts in the 30s which just missed the stumps -- before opening up.

"There was definitely something there for their bowlers and luck probably didn't go their way today," he said.

"A couple of catches went down and we played and missed a lot. It could easily have been a different day."

Sent in by Stephen Fleming, Australia faced a torrid first hour of prodigious swing, particularly from Chris Martin in the blustery conditions, but the New Zealand pacemen were not able to take advantage of the conditions.

Instead it took the introduction of spinner Daniel Vettori after 15 overs to bring some luck New Zealand's way when he lured Justin Langer into an attempted sweep shot and the ball ballooned off his gloves to the safe

hands of Brendon McCullum.

Langer had been dropped by Fleming off Martin before getting off the mark and had two other nicks off Martin fall just short of the slips cordon, and rode his luck to reach 46 before giving Vettori his 50th Test wicket against Australia.

He struck again in the third over after lunch with the removal of Ricky Ponting for nine.

The Australian captain was struck on the front pad and gave umpire David Shepherd an elementary lbw decision.

A patient Matthew Hayden brought up his half century in 130 balls and moved to 61 before playing an uncharacteristic shot to James Franklin and was caught in covers by Lou Vincent to have Australia at 146 for three.

Scoreboard at stumps on the second day of the second Test between New Zealand and Australia at the Basin Reserve on Saturday:

AUSTRALIA: First innings

Table with columns: Player, Runs, Wickets, Overs. Includes Langer, Hayden, Ponting, Vettori, Martyn, Clarke, Katich, Gilchrist, Extras, Total.

Bowlers: O M R W

Table with columns: Bowler, Overs, M, Runs, Wickets. Includes Martin, Franklin, O'Brien, Vettori, Astle.

Toss: New Zealand

Umpires: David Shepherd (ENG), Rudi Koertzen (RSA)

Match referee: Clive Lloyd (WIS)

Steve Rahul's

FROM PAGE 12 we hope to produce the desired result."

Pakistan captain Inzamamul Haq said the morning session would be crucial.

"The first session on Sunday will be important. If we don't lose wickets we will go for the target but, yes, all results are possible," he said.

Dashing Pakistani opener Shahid Afridi smashed a run-a-ball 59 with nine fours and two sixes to give Pakistan a brisk start.

The tourists now need 327 more runs with nine wickets in hand to go ahead in the three-match series. The first Test was drawn.

"We are confident to force a win but Pakistan will also be confident. It all depends on who plays better cricket," said Dravid.

Only three teams -- the West Indies (2003), India (1976) and Australia (1948) -- have scored more than 400 in the fourth innings to win a Test.

Dravid said Afridi's dismissal in the penultimate over on Saturday was a big relief.

"Getting Afridi out was a big relief. He batted positively and had stayed for a session the target would have looked small," said Dravid.

Dravid's two hundreds in a Test was only the sixth instance in Indian cricket. Sunil Gavaskar did it three times, Dravid twice and Vijay Hazare once.

Ronny double

FROM PAGE 12 found the back of the net with neat left-footer in the 30th minute.

Ujjal made up for his first half failure with a double strike after the break.

The young striker opened his account with a spectacular 66th minute header and completed the Youngmen's rout two minutes before the final whistle.

Romario scores again!

AFP, Rio de Janeiro

Brazil's 1994 World Cup winning footballer Romario has become a father for the sixth time though he could have further children after freezing sperm before a vasectomy.

Ivy, born in Rio de Janeiro, was his second daughter from fourth wife Isabelle Bittencourt.

The O Dia newspaper reported: "Although the player decided to have a vasectomy, he has frozen sperm at the Albert Einstein hospital in Sao Paulo and could become a father again."

The 39-year-old striker helped Brazil win the World Cup for the fourth time in Pasadena, California when they beat Italy in the final on penalties following a goalless draw.

He is the second highest scorer ever for Brazil behind Pele with 70 goals in 87 appearances.

Maldini staying at AC Milan till 2007

REUTERS, Milan

AC Milan's 36-year-old captain Paolo Maldini has signed a new contract to keep him at the club until June 2007.

Maldini's current deal with Milan was due to expire in June 2006 but on Friday the club announced a one-year extension had been signed.

The defender, Italy's most capped player with 126 appearances for the Azzurri before his international retirement after the 2002 World Cup, has been in excellent form for the Italian champions.

A one-club player, Maldini made his debut for Milan in January 1985 and has won seven Italian league titles and four European Cups during his time at the club.

The Milan skipper will be almost 39 when his new contract runs out. His long-term defensive partner Alessandro Costacurta, a back-up player these days, signed a new deal in January that will keep him with the club past his 40th birthday.

Clijsters faces Davenport in final

AFP, Indian Wells

Lindsay Davenport routed the reigning Wimbledon champion while Kim Clijsters took no prisoners as the two former champions advanced to the final of the Indian Wells WTA/ATP Masters Series event.

Clijsters continued her remarkable comeback on Friday, beating fourth seed Elena Dementieva 6-4, 6-2 to earn her third final appearance here in five years. But she isn't taking this one for granted.

Clijsters beat American Davenport 6-4, 7-5 in the final two years ago and lost a three-setter in 2001 final to Serena Williams.

The 21-year-old Belgian was sidelined for most of last year with a career-threatening wrist injury.

Clijsters' victory set up a repeat of the 2003 final with top seed Davenport who crushed Wimbledon champion Maria Sharapova 6-0, 6-0 in the other semifinal on Friday.

In the men's draw, Australian Leyton Hewitt advanced to the semifinals when American ninth seed Andre Agassi pulled out just hours before their scheduled Friday match with a toe injury. Hewitt is seeking his third title in four years.

Andy Roddick avenged his 2004 Davis Cup loss to Carlos Moya, rallying to beat the Spaniard 6-7, 6-4, 6-1 and earn the final berth in the men's semis.

Against Russia's Dementieva, Clijsters took advantage of an injury to Dementieva to win the second set and reach the final in just her second tournament back from the injury.

Clijsters knows what it is like to get hurt here. It was at Indian Wells last year where Clijsters suffered the wrist injury that led to surgery in June.

Twenty years on, Heysel memories still pain

REUTERS, Milan



The draw for the Champions League quarter-finals, pitting Juventus against Liverpool for the first time since the Heysel disaster,

has recalled bitter memories for those associated with the Turin club. The European Cup final in Brussels in 1985 was won 1-0 by Juventus but many felt the game

between Juve and Liverpool will be noted for sporting behaviour and calmness and that they will be able to pacify the feelings and bring the two sets of supporters closer together after 20 years," he added.

Zbigniew Boniek, the Polish midfielder in Juve's side at Heysel, said he hoped the build-up to the tie would focus on the games.

"The memory of Heysel is still very much alive after no less than 20 years," Boniek told the news agency ANSA.

"In memory of that tragedy and

between Juve and Liverpool will be noted for sporting behaviour and calmness and that they will be able to pacify the feelings and bring the two sets of supporters closer together after 20 years," he added.

Liverpool and Juventus officials talked after the draw about marking the occasion in some way but Boniek urged caution.

"It is pointless trying to force gestures of reconciliation from those who have suffered and are still suffering -- it won't change anything," he said.

The president of the Association of Families of Heysel Victims, Otello Lorentini, said however that he wanted to see some commemoration of the tragedy.



PHOTO: INTERNET

FOOTBALL'S DARKEST DAY: A file image showing the aftermath of the crowd riots during the 1985 European Cup final between Juventus and Liverpool at the Heysel Stadium in Brussels on May 29. 39 fans, mostly Italians, died after a wall collapsed. The ill-fated stadium was later torn down.

should never have taken place after 39 fans, most of them Italians, died after a wall collapsed following a charge by Liverpool supporters.

"It is clear that it's a wound that is still open, which it will be hard to ever heal," former Juventus and Italy striker Paolo Rossi said after Friday's draw at UEFA's Nyon headquarters in Switzerland.

Following the disaster, English teams were banned from European soccer for an indefinite period and five years passed before the suspension was lifted.

"Things have improved since then, that night proved to be a lesson for a different football culture," said Rossi.

"I hope that these two matches

out of respect for the pain of the families of the victims I would like it if the build-up to the game would be that of an important match but only in terms of sport," he said.

Boniek said he had given his win bonus to the parents of Heysel victims and had never considered the victory in the final as a success.

"It seemed to me to be everything except a game of football... It was well known that we would have preferred not to have played," he said.

"The important thing is that this game doesn't get put on the wrong track and that we talk only about football. Two clubs that are friends are meeting again. As far as the fans are concerned, everyone will follow

"I just hope that the two clubs want to at least record what happened that evening and record the victims, given that up until today no-one has ever listened to us," he said.

Lorentini said that even before the draw his association had proposed a friendly match between the two clubs to mark the 20th anniversary of the tragedy.

Lorentini, whose son Roberto died at Heysel, said he would not be watching the game.

"No, I won't be watching on television. For twenty years I haven't watched a game on television, just little bits to keep my grandchildren company," he said.

Rio eyes Eng captaincy

Football

BBC ONLINE, London

Manchester United defender Rio Ferdinand revealed his dream to succeed David Beckham as England captain.

Ferdinand will be in Sven-Goran Eriksson's squad for the World Cup qualifier with Northern Ireland to be announced at 1900 GMT on Sunday.

"I'd love to be captain of England one day, that would be great for me," the 26-year-old told the Football Association's website.

"But it's up to the manager and Becks is going to be around for a long time."

Ferdinand is expected to be partnered at the back with Chelsea's John Terry, with Arsenal defender Sol Campbell out injured.

Eriksson must decide whether to hand another chance to Crystal Palace striker Andy Johnson, the top English scorer in the Premiership this season.

Johnson's England career could be over after only one substitute appearance.

But Middlesbrough's Stewart Downing will keep his place in the squad for the World Cup qualifiers against Northern Ireland and Azerbaijan.

Eriksson said: "Johnson is always an interesting case, but Downing will be involved, he is a big consideration."

Johnson failed to make an

impression after being thrown on in an unfamiliar right-wing role for the last 20 minutes of England's drab goalless draw in the friendly against Holland at Villa Park.

Eriksson said: "I was criticised for playing him there, but I think he was happy to do that."

The Swede singled out Chelsea midfielder Joe Cole for praise, but he may have to be content with a place on England's bench for the upcoming qualifiers against Northern Ireland and Azerbaijan.

Eriksson said: "Joe is making an improvement match by match. He has been playing a lot recently and showing much more improved discipline on the pitch."

"He has been working hard and making the right decisions, and he is very much in my mind."

Classy Dravid sets up

FROM PAGE 12

morning session before Pakistan encountered Dravid and Karthik.

Sami did the damage in his lively opening spell when he held a return catch to account for Ganguly, who mistimed a pull after adding just eight to his overnight 40 to leave his home crowd disappointed.

Sami, Kaneria and seamer Abdul Razzaq finished with three wickets apiece.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at stumps on the fourth day of the second Test between India and Pakistan at the Eden Gardens in Kolkata on Saturday:

INDIA: First innings 407 (Dravid 110, Sehwaig 81, Tendulkar 52; Razzaq 3-62, Afridi 3-80, Kaneria 3-136)

PAKISTAN: First innings 393 (Younis 147, Youhana 104; Kumble 3-98)

INDIA: Second innings (overnight 133-3)

Sehwag b Sami 15, Gambhir b Sami 1, Dravid c Kamal b Kaneria 135, Tendulkar c Akmal b Razzaq 52, Ganguly c and b Sami 24, Laxman st Akmal b Kaneria 22, Karthik b Kaneria 93, Pathan not out 38, Harbhajan b Razzaq 0, Balaji c Akmal b Razzaq 0, Kumble not out 14, Extras: (b-5, lb-5, nb-12, w-1) 23

Total: (For 9 wks decl in 104 overs) 407

Fall of wks: 1-14, 2-23, 3-121, 4-154, 5-321, 6-331, 7-377, 8-378, 9-378.

Bowlers: O M R W. Khalil 12 0 64 0, Sami 23 5 82 3, Kaneria 34 7 123 3, Afridi 15 2 47 0, Razzaq 19 3 80 3, Younis 1 0 1 0

PAKISTAN: Second innings (target 422)

Fall of wks: 1-14, 2-23, 3-121, 4-154, 5-321, 6-331, 7-377, 8-378, 9-378.

Bowlers: O M R W. Khalil 12 0 64 0, Sami 23 5 82 3, Kaneria 34 7 123 3, Afridi 15 2 47 0, Razzaq 19 3 80 3, Younis 1 0 1 0

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Umar not out 29, Afridi c Ganguly b Kumble 59, Younis Khan not out 0, Extras: (b-4, lb-1, nb-1, w-1) 7

Total: (For one wk in 104 overs) 95

Fall of wks: 1-93.

Bowlers: O M R W. Pathan 5 1 23 0, Balaji 4 0 32 0, Kumble 6 1 17 1, Harbhajan 5 0 18 0

PREVIEW: PREMIERSHIP

It's Gerrard's biggest Merseyside derby

Football

AFP, London

Steven Gerrard has billed Sunday's showdown with Everton at Anfield as the biggest Merseyside derby of his career to date and warned his teammates that millions of pounds, not just pride, will be riding on the result.

Barring a shock triumph in this season's Champions League, Liverpool must overhaul their neighbours and secure a fourth-place finish in the Premiership to qualify for next year's tournament.

But they have left themselves with everything to do. An uninspired display in a goalless draw with Blackburn in midweek left Rafael

Benitez's squad trailing Everton by seven points with the time to make up the gap fast running out.

"This one is about a lot more than local pride. There might be millions at stake," Gerrard said.

"It is going to be a massive game for us, a game that will tell us a lot about where we are going to finish the season."

The Liverpool skipper added: "They are very emotional games anyway but this might just be the biggest derby I've played in."

The league is not going to change that dramatically between now and the end of the season, so it is vital that we close the gap. We know it will be a tough afternoon but we believe we are the better team."

Everton boss David Moyes might dispute that last assertion. The Scot

has this season coaxed remarkably consistent performances from a squad that lost its biggest name, Wayne Rooney, at the start of the season, and another key player in Thomas Gravesen, in January.

Some of the money raised by Rooney's sale to Manchester United has been invested in former England striker James Beattie, who could return from three-match suspension in Sunday's match at Anfield.

Beattie has enjoyed a troubled start to his career on Merseyside. After earning his ban for headbutting Chelsea's William Gallas last month, he got caught up in a late-night fracas, prompting Moyes to speak to him about the need for a more professional approach.

"He has to realise that Everton are a big football club with high

expectations, and we expect good standards by all the players