

The 'little Maradona'

Born in Oliena, a mountainous, remote corner of northern Sardinia, on 5 July 1966, the small, wafer thin but precocious Gianfranco Zola plays for lower league sides Noreuse and Torres until he was 22.

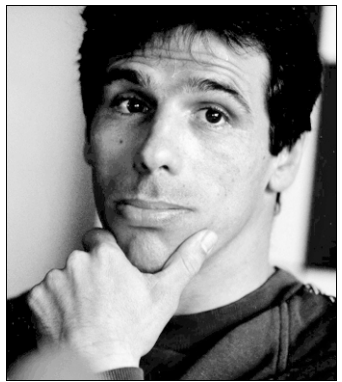
After seven seasons in London for Chelsea, Zola takes his family back to Sardinia fulfilling a promise to finish off his footballing days in his homeland.

In a recent interview with FIFA.com the genius who has revolutionised Calgiri even at the age of 39, talks about his late arrival on the football scene and the help he received from Diego Maradona.

Question (Q): Would you describe yourself as a natural? Gianfranco Zola (GZ): I really worked hard to become a footballer.

and wanted to learn, and he really was a big help. Q: Did he give you any special advice? GZ: Everybody was close to Maradona because he was a very kind boy.

Q: What was it like to be in the dressing room with Maradona and these big players? Weren't you a bit intimidated? GZ: Well at the beginning yes obviously. For me everything was new.



GIANFRANCO ZOLA

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very human and simple as a man. I remember many things, first day, for example, when we met and he said 'finally I've found someone smaller than me' (laughs).

Ashrafat scripts

FROM PAGE 12 right-hander clobbered 18 boundaries and a six in his 154-ball knock. His partner Sabbir remained 103 not out with the help of 15 fours.

CORES IN BRIEF

DHAKA-RAJSHAHI RAJSHAHI: First innings 217 and second innings 253 all out. (Farhad 9, Naem 110 n.o., Anisur 35, Shahajada 10, Alamgir 27, Moniruzzaman 30, extras 23; Talha 2-38, Mahmud 3-55, Riyad 2-27).

Rain robs Australia

FROM PAGE 12 The draw means the three-match series will be decided in the final Test starting in Auckland on Saturday after Australia won the first Test.

Coming out of the Wall's

FROM PAGE 12 West Indies in Mumbai in 2002 he became only the fourth player in Test history, after West Indian Everton Weekes, Australian Jack Fingleton and South African Alan Melville, to score hundreds in four consecutive innings.

Liza dethrones Rani in nat'l women's chess

SPORTS REPORTER Shamima Akhter Liza dethroned International Women's Master Rani Hamid when the youngster became unbeaten champion in the 26th National Women's Chess Championship yesterday.

BRIEF SCORES AUSTRALIA: First innings 570 for 8 declared (Martyn 165, Gilchrist 162, Hayden 61, Warne 50; Franklin 4-128).

Fleemo latest on Aussie hit list

AFP, Wellington New Zealand's Stephen Fleming has joined an exclusive club of world cricket captains scalped by Australia.

Inzamam wants a gift

FROM PAGE 12 Africa. "That was a very difficult period. Everybody said my career was over but I knew I had plenty of cricket left in me," said the middle-order batsman, who scored just 19 in six games during the World Cup.

Belal throws

FROM PAGE 12 from the left and shrugged off his marker Faisal Mahmud before placing home a left-footer. Biplab was also responsible for the third goal when Paul's decent curling shot from the left flank beat him at the near post.

Adriano to miss qualifiers

AP, Rio de Janeiro Inter Milan striker Adriano has been ruled out of Brazil's World Cup qualifiers against Peru on Sunday and Uruguay the following Wednesday because of a knee injury.



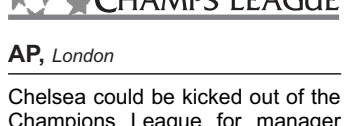
AP, London Chelsea could be kicked out of the Champions League for manager Jose Mourinho's claims that Barcelona coach Frank Rijkaard influenced referee Anders Frisk during their game last month.

Blatter red cards racism

AP, Zurich The president of soccer's governing body stressed Monday that racism must be eliminated at stadiums, his comments coming one day after Real Madrid star Ronaldo threw a water bottle at fans for insulting him and his mother.

Chelsea could be thrown out

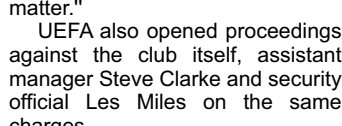
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N Korea open doors to journalists

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Robinho seeks Luxenburgo assurance

INTERNET SOURCE Santos whiz Robinho has spent the week in contact with Real Madrid over the future of coach Vanderlei Luxemburgo.

Morientes woes for Liverpool

THE GUARDIAN The repercussions of a furiously contested Merseyside derby hit hard at Anfield Monday night when the Liverpool striker Fernando Morientes was ruled out for up to three weeks with a torn thigh muscle.

United revenues slump

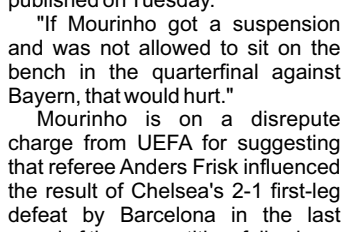
AFP, London Manchester United, the world's richest football club, posted Tuesday a 54-percent slump in half-year profits to 12.4 million pounds (17.9 million euros, 23.6 million dollars).

Bandarban cricket

OUR CORRESPONDENT Bandarban Youth Cricket Club recorded a massive ten-wicket win against College Hostel XI in the Bandarban DSA Cup Cricket League at the local stadium yesterday.

Meier wants ban on Mourinho

REUTERS, Frankfurt Former referee Urs Meier has urged UEFA to hurt Chelsea coach Jose Mourinho by banning him from the touchline for next month's Champions League quarterfinal against Bayern Munich.



SHAMIMA AKHTER LIZA

another point for her hence the title. Rani Hamid was in the second position with 8.5 points.

Taking tennis to next level

AFP, Indian Wells Federer said. "They would serve and volley more or play more aggressive or more safe."

BRAC in qtrs

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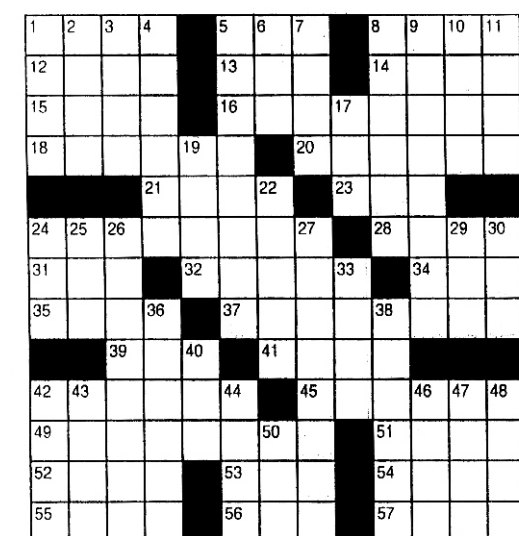
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CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS 1 Put peaks to end 5 Inaccurate 8 Portent 12 Protuberance 13 Shuffleboard stick 14 Ashen 15 Fleet from far away 16 Discussion in writing 18 Chest of drawers 20 Interlaced 21 Waitstaff's due 23 Angeles 24 Foot-operated levers 28 Appellation 31 "Eureka!" 32 Tending to leak slowly 34 Charged bit



CRYPTOQUIP NJ S LPBCPU ASI S HWONVI SC XSOLSHNOH, EW BVPQL XW BSQQWL "CEW ANTSUL PJ H SVTW" Saturday's Cryptquip: GRILLS AND STEAM IRONS ARE FLYING OFF THE SHELVES. THEY'RE DEFINITELY HOT ITEMS. Today's Cryptquip Clue: H equals G

Fischer plays Icelandic defence

AFP, Reykjavik Chess legend Bobby Fischer was on Monday granted citizenship by the parliament of Iceland, a move which could allow him to avoid deportation from Japan to the United States where he is wanted for violating sanctions against the former Yugoslavia.