

Ronaldo's fiancée pregnant

AP, Rio de Janeiro

Real Madrid superstar was late in returning to Spain because his fiancée, Daniella Cicarelli, is reportedly pregnant and was hospitalised on Thursday in Brazil after fainting at a wedding.

The striker has a five-year-old son, Ronald, by his first wife, Brazilian footballer Milene Domingues.

Ronaldo had been expected to arrive on Friday with teammate Roberto Carlos to prepare for Madrid's Spanish league match against Albacete on Sunday. The two were in Brazil for their country's World Cup qualifying match.

Madrid said on its website it had given Ronaldo permission to postpone his return, and coach Vanderlei Luxemburgo said Ronaldo would be available on Sunday.

On January 30, Ronaldo missed his team's league game with Numancia after remaining in Brazil. Local news reports said it was because his older brother, Nelinho, had fallen ill.

AFC FOOTBALL FESTIVAL

Bad day for local boys

SPORTS REPORTER

After the opening day's success, Bangladesh teams failed to raise their game against Pakistan yesterday in the AFC U-13 Football Festival at BKSP.

Bangladesh were held by Pakistan to a goalless draw. Bangladesh A went down to the same opponents 1-0.

Bangladesh A also lost to Sri Lanka by a solitary goal, drew goalless with Nepal before restoring some pride with a 1-0 win over Bhutan.

The hosts' main team, however, recorded identical 2-0 victories against Bhutan and Sri Lanka but were beaten 1-0 by Nepal.

In the day's other matches, Nepal crushed neighbours Bhutan 5-0 and drew 0-0 with Pakistan while the Bhutan-Sri Lanka match ended in a goalless draw.

Partex squash

SPORTS REPORTER

Babu and Swapan of British Club won their respective B Division matches in the Partex Open squash tournament at the Gulshan Club yesterday.

Babu blanked Selim 9-4, 9-2, 9-6 while Swapan beat Barun 9-1, 9-4, 9-6. In the day's other matches in the B Division, Arzoo defeated Dulal 9-6, 9-5, 9-6 and Tarek beat Kiki 9-2, 9-4, 9-6.

WI pace

FROM PAGE 12

Aleem Dar offered them the sanctity of coming back on Sunday.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at stumps on the third day of the first Test between West Indies and South Africa at the Bourda Oval on Saturday:

WEST INDIES: First innings 543 for five declared (W Hinds 213, Chanderpaul 203 not out)

SOUTH AFRICA: First innings (overnight 2-0)

Smith c Browne b Collins	2			
De Villiers c Browne b King	41			
Rudolph c R Hinds b Powell	0			
Kallis b Powell	0			
Gibbs lbw b Collins	5			
Boucher not out	32			
Hall c Collins b King	2			
Boje not out	21			
Extras: (lb-6, w-1, nb-20)	27			
Total: (For 6 wickets in 37 overs)	130			
Fall of wickets: 1-15, 2-16, 3-16, 4-30, 5-75, 6-95				
To bat: Ntini, Langeveldt, Nel				
Bowler	O	M	R	W
Collins	12	2	33	2
Powell	10	1	42	2
King	9	1	32	2
R Hinds	6	2	17	0

GM battle

FROM PAGE 12

Rajib has just one norm.

"We hope they can achieve the all-important norm from the tournament but it won't be easy as they face a serious challenge from some really good foreign players," said Syed Sajjaduddin Ahmed, general secretary of BCCF at a press conference yesterday.

"All the previous tournaments were robin league, but this time we have arranged the meet on Swiss League, so that more players can earn norms," he said.

Both players need 8.5 points from matches involving three GMs and five IMs or Fide Masters to earn a GM norm. Besides, the rating average of 11 players would be 2381.

The local challenge, which will be led by Ziaur and Niaz, also sees Fide Master Sheikh Nasir Ahmed, Khondaker Aminul Islam, Abu Sufian Shakil, Mehdi Hasan Parag, Mohammad Javed and national women's champion Shamima Akhter Liza competing.

The champion will receive \$1,600 while the runner-up gets \$1,100 respectively. Sponsors United Insurance and United Leasing Company is bearing the entire expenses of the meet amounting to Tk 10 lakh.



THIS ONE'S A CLASSIC! Newcastle United duo Lee Bowyer (2nd from L) and Kieron Dyer (3rd from L) trying to beat the living daylight out of each other while teammates and an Aston Villa player try to restrain them at St James Park on April 2.

Brawling duo apologises

Football

REUTERS, Newcastle

Newcastle United team mates Kieron Dyer and Lee Bowyer apologised to "everyone connected to the club" after they were sent off for fighting each other late in their side's 3-0 home defeat by Aston Villa on Saturday.

The two England internationals were involved in the remarkable fight eight minutes from time when Newcastle were already down to 10 men after Steven Taylor had been sent off for handball.

It was a dreadful turnaround for the club only a day after the good news that striker Alan Shearer had decided to play on for another year and both Dyer and Bowyer appeared at a post-match news conference to offer their apologies.

"We would like to apologise to the fans, the chairman, the management staff, all the players, to every-

one connected with Newcastle, my family and everybody who witnessed what happened today," said Bowyer, who left the field with a huge rip down the front of his shirt.

"We are sincerely sorry," added the midfielder, no stranger to controversy in his days with former club Leeds United.

Dyer, booed by the Newcastle fans earlier this season for refusing to play out of his preferred position, added: "We are team mates, we have disagreements but we should not be fighting in front of 50,000 people. We are deeply sorry."

Manager Graeme Souness, a renown hard man midfielder for Liverpool and Scotland, said he had never seen such an incident before.

"It's a first for me," I've never witnessed that before."

Souness said that Dyer appeared to be the innocent party.

"I have been told by Dyer that he did not throw any punches, he was on the receiving end.

"Bowyer was indefensible. He

was guilty of throwing more than one punch and has to accept any punishment coming his way."

Souness said that the two players would be subject to internal discipline but said he expected both to continue playing at the club.

"I can envisage both of them playing again, but if it ever happened again that would be it for the pair of them, they've hurt the customers today."

Souness said that frustration at the way the game was going and at penalty decisions - one not awarded to Newcastle and one of the two that did go to Villa - were probably a factor.

"Anyone who sees those pictures will find it hard to understand how team mates act like that," he said.

"I'm not condoning what they did in any way but the referee had a very disappointing game today and the frustration our players felt going down 3-0 has shown itself with someone wanting to go boxing.

PRIMERA LIGA Villarreal on course

REUTERS, Madrid

Villarreal strengthened their hold on a Champions League place after convincing 3-1 win over Athletic Bilbao on Saturday moved them up to third in Primera Liga.

Manuel Pellegrini's side, Spain's only remaining team in European competition this season, now have 50 points and a game in hand on second-placed Real Madrid, who are seven points ahead of them.

Two goals from striker Jose Mari and a third from Uruguay striker Diego Forlan, his 18th of the season, were too much for Athletic, who had levelled the scores at 1-1 through striker Santi Ezquerro. Valencia missed out on the chance to move into the Champions League places despite staging a fightback from 2-0 down to earn a point against Real Zaragoza.

Substitute Bernardo Corradi pounced on a defensive error to pull a goal back for the visitors in the 81st minute before defender Marco Caneira stroked home the leveller soon after. Caneira was later dismissed for a second yellow card.

Zaragoza had taken the lead against the run of play when David Generolo scored with a fierce 30 metre shot just before the break.

Valencia's David Albelda headed Savio's inswinging cross into his own net after 50 minutes but Zaragoza failed to build on their two-goal advantage.

Two goals in three minutes from Gari Uranga and Valery Karpin all but guaranteed Real Sociedad's Primera Liga survival as they swept aside struggling Osasuna 2-0.

TOP SIX

English Premiership table after Saturday's late kick-off match (played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, goals against, points):

Chelsea	31	25	5	1	61	11	80
Arsenal	31	20	7	4	72	33	67
ManUtd	31	19	10	2	48	17	67
Everton	30	15	6	9	35	32	51
Liverpool	31	15	5	11	44	31	50
Bolton	31	13	7	11	38	35	46

KARTHIKEYAN CRASHES OUT

Alonso takes Bahrain glory

BBC ONLINE, Manama

Fernando Alonso cruised to his second consecutive victory with a dominant drive at the Bahrain Grand Prix here on Sunday.

The Renault driver beat Toyota's Jarno Trulli and McLaren's Kimi Raikkonen as Ferrari's gamble on an early debut for their 2005 car failed to pay off.

Michael Schumacher challenged Alonso in the early laps but retired after just 11 laps. Indian Narain Karthikeyan had to quit his Jordan early in the race.

Schumacher qualified second in the new Ferrari.

But the German ran wide at Turn Nine as the Ferrari's electro-hydraulic systems began to falter and Schumacher pulled into the pits at the end of the lap.

Trulli kept Alonso in sight until the first pit stops, but the Renault eased clear thereafter to take a comfortable win.

"It was the hottest race I've ever been in, but the car was extremely strong, especially after the second pit stop," Alonso said.

PREMIERSHIP

Magpies' day to forget

Football

REUTERS, London

Team mates Kieron Dyer and Lee Bowyer were sent off for fighting each other as Newcastle United ended with eight men on the pitch in a 3-0 home defeat by Aston Villa in the English Premier League on Saturday.

Dyer and Bowyer were dismissed by referee Barry Knight after 82 minutes just after Aston Villa went 3-0 up with a second Gareth Barry penalty in seven minutes to end Newcastle's 12-match unbeaten run.

Meanwhile, Chelsea maintained their charge towards a first league title for 50 years as a deflected Frank Lampard free kick and two Eider Gudjohnsen goals gave them a 3-1 win at Southampton that took them to 80 points.

Arsenal nosed ahead in the battle for second as Thierry Henry, who missed France's World Cup matches last week with a calf injury, returned to score a second successive league hat-trick at Highbury in a 4-1 victory over Norwich City.

That took the champions to 67 points, above Manchester United on goal difference after their rivals were held to a goalless Old Trafford draw by Blackburn Rovers.

For once, however, Chelsea were not the main talking point as Newcastle hogged the headlines for the second day running.

On Friday their fans were celebrating the news that skipper Alan Shearer said he would play on for another season but the former England captain was a peripheral figure on Saturday.

Juan Pablo Angel put Villa ahead after five minutes and the visitors wrapped it with two Gareth Barry

penalties.

The first came after Steven Taylor was dismissed after 73 minutes for handball on the line and the second seven minutes later when Angel was brought down.

Dyer and Bowyer then took centre stage. Both players appeared at a post-match news conference to apologise to "everyone concerned with the club".

At Highbury Henry, who scored all three when Arsenal beat Portsmouth 3-0 a month ago, scored after 19, 22 and 66 minutes to take his club tally for the season to 30. Freddie Ljungberg grabbed the other.

Darren Huckerby briefly gave Norwich some hope when he scored after 30 minutes to make it 2-1 but Norwich remained in bottom place with relegation looking increasingly likely.

Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger said: "Today was an interesting day for us. Manchester United dropped points and we are back into second and it's down to us now.

"In any other season 67 points with seven games to go we would be fighting for the championship but Chelsea have an exceptional total."

That total reached 80 as Chelsea accounted for Southampton with one eye on next week's Champions League quarter-final first leg at home to Bayern Munich.

Lampard's long-range deflected free kick put them ahead after 22 minutes and a great run by defender Glen Johnson set up Gudjohnsen for his first after 39.

Southampton, hovering one place above the relegation zone, hit back through Kevin Phillips in the 70th minute but Icelderer Gudjohnsen finished off a sweet passing move six minutes from time.

Manchester United manager Alex Ferguson said that Blackburn, managed by one of his former players Mark Hughes, were a hard team to play against after being held to a draw.

United hit the woodwork twice in the first half before losing their way and Ferguson said: "They slow the game down at every opportunity and it works very well for them."

More bad news for United is that Ryan Giggs pulled a hamstring and will probably miss the FA Cup semi-final against Newcastle in two weeks.

Elsewhere, Liverpool beat Bolton Wanderers 1-0 with an 86th minute header from Igor Biscan to move to within a point of fourth-placed Everton, who play West Bromwich Albion on Sunday.

Middlesbrough won 1-0 at relegation-threatened Crystal Palace with a first half header from Franck Queudrue, while Charlton Athletic levelled in the dying seconds of stoppage time to draw 2-2 with Manchester City.

Jermaine Pennant, who was released from prison on Thursday following a drink-driving conviction, played with an electronic prisoner's tag on his ankle for Birmingham City who drew 1-1 at home with Tottenham Hotspur.

TOP SIX

Spanish football league table after Saturday's matches (played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, goals against, points):

Barcelona	29	21	5	3	54	18	68
Real	29	18	3	8	49	25	57
Villarreal	29	14	8	7	51	27	50
Betis	29	13	9	7	47	37	48
Valencia	30	12	11	7	46	32	47
Espanyol	29	13	7	9	37	35	46

Maradona joins Boca party

Football

INTERNET SOURCE, Buenos Aires

The biggest idol of Argentine soccer, Diego Maradona, arrived Saturday at the capital of his country, Buenos Aires, to celebrate the centennial of his beloved team Boca Juniors and the 18th birthday of his daughter Dalma.

Maradona, who retired from soccer eight years ago, in 1997, Saturday will be the protagonist in the "Dinner of the Centennial" with the task of putting out the 100 little candles that will decorate the cake of the celebration, although he will receive help from other guests.

The former soccer star, 43, will also participate in the celebration of the 18th birthday of Dalma at Buenos Aires, according to press reports.

Maradona, who arrived from Venezuela where this week he held a meeting with the leaders of Spain, Brazil, Colombia and Venezuela, is going to take part in the main part of the celebrations of Boca Juniors, with which he got a national league title in 1981.

The Sunday Centennial Party will take effect in La Bombonera Stadium before an audience of 65,000 fans from all over the country recalling its creation by a group of football enthusiast in a humble neighbourhood of immigrants, until reaching the world's summit, and counting among its supporters with the most famous fan, Maradona

The former captain of the Argentine national team, who now faces an intense fight against drug-addiction and obesity, participated in four World Cups and played abroad for Spain's Barcelona and Seville, and Italy's Naples.



BEGINNING OF THE MARADONA LEGEND: A 1981 file picture showing Diego Maradona being carried by fans after winning the 1981 championship with Boca Juniors at La Bombonera stadium in Buenos Aires. Boca, the most popular football club in Argentina, celebrates today its centenary.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

37 Has potential

38 Shrek is one

39 "Surfin'" — a playwright

40 Enormous alternative

41 "Pygmalion"

42 401(k)

43 Huzzah!

44 "Stormy Weather"

45 Past

46 MPH

47 Actor

48 August

49 Staff

50 Executive bellyache singer

51 Glutton

52 Flavorless

53 Actor

54 Past

55 Glutton

56 Flavorless

57 Actor

58 Rhyming tribute

DOWN

1 More mature

2 Sports venue

3 Half a legendary comedy duo

4 That's a laugh!

5 "Seinfeld" role

6 Actress

7 Lean-to

8 — au vin

9 Tulsa sch.

10 One (Pref.)

11 1992

12 Pearl Jam album

13 Kevin's "King of Queens" co-star

21 Form

23 "Anatomy"

24 Nevada town

25 Ultra-modernist bird

26 Flightless bird

27 Mamie's man

30 "The Daba Honey-moon"

31 Personal question?

32 Scott Joplin's music

33 Mess up

36 Destroy

37 Horse-manship

40 "The Dragons of Eden" writer

42 Silent-movie star?

43 Duck

44 Sand-trap club

45 Surround

46 Trampled (on)

48 Nave

49 Every last

crumb

50 GE merger

51 Stein or Altfleck

Solution time: 25 mins.

A	M	P	H	E	A	P	L	A	M	E
L	O	G	E	T	N	A	A	L	U	M
P	O	R	T	R	A	I	T	A	L	E
R	U	M	S	T	A	T	E	L	E	
E	L	I	T	H	I	S	T	R	E	
G	A	I	S	T	O	P	G	A	P	O
G	H	I	S	H	B	E	E	T	O	N
O	R	E	O	S	A	B	E	R	C	A
L	U	C	B	U	M	P	E	R		
P	U	L	L	M	A	N	I	T	O	
E	P	E	E	P	O	R	C	R	E	I
R	O	A	R	H	E	A	D	S	E	
E	N	D	S	A	L	I	E	E	N	S

CRYPTOQUIP

U X V X G N E I Y Y Q V D L N X L J N ,

L A N V V Z N T V X A V D Q L G Y D U

K N R N V Z A Q K N R I V

E A Q U N A V Z J I G L .

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: WHAT COULD A PRIOR PRESIDENT'S DENTURES BE CALLED? THE GEORGE WASHINGTON BRIDGE.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: U equals T

The Cryptoquip is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.