

## The Diego show

AP, Buenos Aires

Diego Maradona is getting ready for prime time as host of his own weekly television show.

The hero of Argentina's 1986 World Cup title announced on Wednesday night plans for his own talk show scheduled to begin airing on Argentine television in the coming months.

"We going to invite Pele and we're looking to have Ronaldo on," he said, referring to the Brazilian soccer luminaries. "I'm going to invite whoever expresses interest in coming on the program. The idea is that the guests come on the show and open themselves up and say whatever they feel."

Other potential guests include players from the Italian national team and Real Madrid defender Roberto Carlos, Maradona said.

Maradona is combining with one of Argentina's leading television producers to put on the show, which will be called "The night of No. 10", a reference to his uniform number he wore while playing.

The 44-year-old Maradona is also considering a return to soccer for the first time since his retirement in 1997.

Argentine club Boca Juniors has offered him a job as talent scout at the team where starred during the 1980s and 90s. But he has yet to publicly comment on whether he intends to accept the offer.

## ITALIAN CUP

### Totti sets up Inter date

REUTERS, Milan

An 81st-minute goal from Francesco Totti gave AS Roma a 2-1 (aggregate 3-2) win over Udinese in the semi-finals of the Italian Cup on Thursday.

Roma now meet Inter Milan in the two-legged final on June 12 and 15.

The victory also earned Roma a UEFA Cup berth as Inter have gained a spot in the Champions League qualifying round through their guaranteed third-place finish in Serie A.

Brazilian Mancini put Roma in front with a 21st-minute header from a deep cross by Leandro Cufre. Antonio Di Natale levelled for Udinese from close range in the 57th.

The game looked to be heading for extra-time when Mancini was brought down by Udinese's Slovenian keeper Samir Handanovic and a penalty was awarded.

Handanovic parried Totti's spot-kick but the Roma captain pounced on the loose ball to score.

Udinese had their Chilean midfielder David Pizarro sent off in injury time for retaliating against Vincenzo Montella.

The win was a timely boost for Serie A strugglers Roma.

Coach Bruno Conti, whose side are three points off the relegation zone with two games remaining, will be without match-winner Totti for Sunday's trip to rock bottom Atalanta.

Totti must serve the last game of his five-match suspension.

Udinese are level on points with Sampdoria in the fight for fourth place in Serie A, which also yields a place in the qualifying round of the Champions League.

Inter reached the final after a 3-1 (aggregate 4-2) win over Cagliari on Wednesday.

## Anwar reduces

FROM PAGE 12	Bowler	O	M	R	W
	Tapash	6	0	28	1
	Anwar	13.1	2	67	3
	Aftab	5	1	10	0
	Rafique	7	2	22	0
	Enamul	3	0	17	1

**BANGLADESH:** Mushfiqur Rahim, Aftab Ahmed, Nafees Iqbal, Rajin Saleh, Mohammad Ashraf, Enamul Haque jnr, Javed Omar, Mohammad Rafique, Anwar Hossain, Khaled Mashud (Capt, Wkt), Tapash Baisya.

## CONFEDERATIONS CUP

# Parreira's scheme for Ronaldo

### Football

REUTERS, Rio de Janeiro

Brazil coach Carlos Alberto Parreira has included Ronaldo in his squad for next month's Confederations Cup, saying that playing for his country will help the striker forget his personal problems.

Ronaldo split up from his fiancée Daniella Cicarelli last week, less than three months after the couple threw a lavish engagement party at a castle outside Paris.

"This can upset the life of any person," Parreira told reporters on Thursday. "He's going to spend more than one month with the national team in the World Cup qualifiers and the Confederations Cup."

"This will be good for him. He will

forget his problems."

The Real Madrid player said last month that he wanted at least four weeks off during the European close season.

Ronaldo has also been chosen in Brazil's squad for the World Cup qualifiers at home to Paraguay on June 5 and in Argentina three days later.

Brazil are second in the 10-nation South American World Cup qualifying group with 24 points from 13 games, four behind Argentina.

The top four teams qualify for the 2006 finals in Germany while the fifth nation goes into a playoff against the winners of the Oceania region for another place.

Parreira reiterated that he wanted Brazil, the only country to have played at every World Cup finals, to qualify with games to spare

and that the Paraguay match was as important as the clash with Argentina.

"Paraguay always make it difficult for Brazil and they have one of the most experienced teams in the competition," said Parreira.

"The game will be fundamental because if we win we practically guarantee our place at the Cup."

There were no major surprises in the World Cup squad which, apart from three changes, will also travel to Germany for the Confederations Cup.

Parreira said experienced full-backs Cafu and Roberto Carlos would be excused the Confederations Cup as he tested younger alternatives Cicinho of Sao Paulo and Leo of Santos.

Turkish-based Alex also replaces midfielder Ricardinho

while PSV Eindhoven goalkeeper Gomes will be added to the squad alongside Dida and Marcos.

### WORLD CUP QUALIFYING SQUAD

**Goalkeepers:** Dida (AC Milan), Marcos (Palmeiras)

**Defenders:** Juan (Bayer Leverkusen), Lucio (Bayern Munich), Luisao (Benfica), Roque Junior (Bayer Leverkusen), Cafu (AC Milan), Belletti (Barcelona), Roberto Carlos (Real Madrid), Gilberto (Hertha Berlin)

**Midfielders:** Emerson (Juventus), Gilberto Silva (Arsenal), Ze Roberto (Bayern Munich), Juninho Pernambucano (Olympique Lyon), Renato (Sevilla), Kaka (AC Milan), Ricardinho (Santos)

**Forwards:** Ronaldo (Real Madrid), Adriano (Inter Milan), Robinho (Santos), Ricardo Oliveira (Real Betis), Ronaldinho (Barcelona)

# Red going black in protest

### Football

REUTERS, London

Manchester United fans will dress in black at Saturday's FA Cup final against Arsenal to mourn the club's takeover by U.S. financier Malcolm Glazer.

Some supporters have advocated radical action, such as a pitch invasion at Cardiff's Millennium Stadium, but fans' groups fear a major incident would be a huge own goal for the club at English soccer's show-piece occasion.

"One of the core issues for United fans is that Glazer will show no respect to our club's history and tradition, so it would be remiss of fans to do anything that could taint

such an intrinsic part of English football's tradition," the groups said in a statement.

Fans opposed to Glazer, who is paying 790 million pounds (\$1.5 billion) for United, say he knows nothing about football and will cream off the profits of the world's richest soccer club to pay off his huge debts in purchasing the club.

"We are asking for fans to wear black to mark the death of our club and regard this match as the last to be played whilst the spirit of Manchester United was still alive," said Colin Hendrie of the Independent Manchester United Supporters Association.

A coalition of supporters' groups including IMUSA has issued a statement calling for peaceful protest at the game. Fans burned Glazer's effigy and stopped traffic in

Manchester after the takeover was announced last week.

"The supporters' coalition wishes to make clear that it has no intention of encouraging disruption of the match itself."

"The coalition urges United supporters to continue the on-going successful campaign of boycotting United's key commercial backers."

South Wales Police said they had no special policing plans for the match. "If people do protest in an unlawful manner we will respond appropriately," a spokesman said.

"The FA Cup is no different to any other occasion in which people act unlawfully."

"As for any demonstrations, South Wales Police has a long experience of allowing people to express their views in a lawful

manner and the FA Cup final will be no exception," a statement from Chief Superintendent Graham Davies, the force's operations manager, said.

Manager Alex Ferguson, in charge at United since 1986, asked for total focus on the match and called for "a united front on Saturday, players and supporters together, to win this cup".

United, the holders of the cup, have failed to win the league title for the past two seasons and Ferguson's future at Old Trafford is uncertain following Glazer's takeover.

They will not want the 2005 final to be remembered for the wrong reasons. In 1999-2000 they opted out of defending the trophy to take part instead in a club world championship in Brazil, a decision widely condemned in England.

## PREVIEW: PRIMERA LIGA

# Target Champions League spots

### Football

REUTERS, Madrid

Villarreal face champions Barcelona at the Nou Camp on Sunday (kickoff 1900 GMT) as one of five teams in with a chance of securing the two remaining Champions League berths.

Real Madrid are guaranteed second in the standings but Villarreal, Sevilla, Real Betis, Espanyol and Valencia are also vying for a spot in European football's elite club competition.

Villarreal, who have a two-point cushion over fourth-placed Sevilla, are taking nothing for granted against a Barcelona side they believe will be anxious to impress the fans in their final home game of the season.

"They've been playing very well and will want to put on a good show in front of their home fans even though they've won the title already," Villarreal forward Jose Mari said.

"Having said that, it's certainly better to play them now that there is nothing else at stake for them."

Villarreal crushed the Catalans 3-0 at the Madrigal at the start of the year, with former Barca player Juan Roman Riquelme orchestrating the victory and Uruguayan striker Diego Forlan scoring twice.

Riquelme is doubtful for Sunday's match but former Manchester United player Forlan will start.

Barca centre back Oleguer Presas has made it clear that his side have no intention of easing

up just because they have won the title.

"We are very motivated for this one and it is unthinkable that any Barca player will step on to the pitch with anything other than victory in his mind," he said.

Leading striker Samuel Eto'o will have an extra incentive against Villarreal. He needs to add one more goal to his tally of 24 to draw level with Arsenal's Thierry Henry at the top of the rankings for the Golden Shoe award.

Other matches being played this weekend (kickoff 1700 GMT unless stated; league positions in brackets):

**SATURDAY**  
REAL BETIS (5) v REAL ZARAGOZA (9) 1800

Two wins on the trot have put Betis back in the hunt for a Champions League place but they need a win to keep the pressure on city rivals Sevilla who are just above them. In-form goalkeeper Toni Doblas is suspended so former first-choice Toni Prats will deputise.

**REAL MADRID (2) v ATLETICO MADRID (11) 2000**

Although Real's title bid ended with last week's 2-2 draw at Sevilla, they will be anxious to retain bragging rights with a win over city rivals Atletico.

Centre back Ivan Helguera is banned and this could be a last home appearance for Luis Figo who is expected to leave the club in the summer.

With a six-match winless streak in the league, elimination from the Cup and a serious goal

drought, it has been a miserable end of season for Atletico.

A group from the club's radical supporters the Frente Atletico broke down a fence and abused players during training on Thursday.

### SUNDAY

ALBACETE (19) v REAL SOCIEDAD (14)  
Albacete dropped out of the top flight following last week's 1-0 defeat at Villarreal but will be hoping to give fans something to cheer about when they take on mid-table Sociedad. ----

**ATHLETIC BILBAO (8) v NUMANCIA (20)**

Athletic have an outside chance of earning a place in the UEFA Cup, but need victory against relegated Numancia to keep their hopes alive. Striker Ismael Urzaiz will miss out because of suspension. ----

**DEPORTIVO CORUNA (10) v REAL MALLORCA (18)**

Mallorca need to follow up their nail-biting 4-3 win over Athletic last weekend with another victory if they are to continue their bid to escape relegation.

Depor will be hoping to give long-term servants Fran and Mauro Silva a big send off in their final home match before retiring.

**GETAFE (13) v SEVILLA (4)**  
Sevilla were unlucky to be held to a 2-2 draw by Real last weekend and will be confident of cementing their place in the Champions League berths with a win against the Madrid side.

Coach Joaquin Caparros will be looking to youngster Jesus Navas and top scorer Julio Baptista to prise open the Getafe defence.  
**LEVANTE (17) v VALENCIA (7)**

After a 2-2 draw away to Espanyol, last season's champions Valencia must beat relegation-threatened city rivals Levante if they are to have any chance of qualifying for Europe. Former number one keeper Santiago Canizares replaces Andres Palop who was sent off last week.

**MALAGA (12) v RACING SANTANDER (16) 1900**

Racing ensured they would remain in the top flight for another season with a 2-1 win at home to Getafe.

They will be without suspended Israeli forward Yossi Benayoun and face a tough job shackling Malaga's Brazilian striker Fernando Baiano who scored two in the 3-1 win at Sociedad last week.

**OSASUNA (15) v ESPANYOL (6)**

Espanyol will be hoping to take advantage against an under strength Osasuna, who are missing three players through suspension as well as injured defender Rafael Clavero.

## Catch Eto'o

REUTERS, Madrid

Real Madrid striker Ronaldo has said he will be doing all he can to overhaul Barcelona's Samuel Eto'o as the Primera Liga's leading scorer in the final two games of the season.

Ronaldo told a news conference: "It has been an odd season because I had a run of eight games when I didn't score, but I'm four goals behind him and there are two games left so I'll be giving it all I can."

Eto'o is widely credited with having scored 24 goals this season which puts him within a goal of Golden Shoe leader Thierry Henry who will have no further opportunities to add to his tally as the English league season is finished.

According to the Spanish Football League (LFP) Eto'o has scored 25 goals because the referee reported that he got a slight touch to a shot from team mate Deco in his side's 2-0 win over Real Mallorca in February.

Ronaldo is in third place in the scoring charts behind fellow Brazilian Ricardo Oliveira of Real Betis, who has scored 21, and level with Villarreal striker Diego Forlan who has notched up 20 since moving from Manchester United at the start of the season. Real host city rivals Atletico Madrid on Saturday and champions Barca entertain third-placed Villarreal at the Nou Camp on Sunday.

## Chelsea beat Bluewings

AP, Suwon

Even a depleted Chelsea proved more than a match for one of Asia's best sides.

A burst of speed from Joe Cole gave Chelsea the only goal it needed Friday as the Premier League champion held off the Suwon Bluewings 1-0 in an exhibition match that was as much about sponsorship as soccer.

Chelsea signed a US\$96 million (£74 million) deal last month with South Korean electronics giant Samsung, which owns the Bluewings.

After a heavy schedule that included some 70 matches over the past season, culminating in its first premiership in half a century, at least seven regulars stayed behind as Chelsea made the long trip to South Korea.

Those who came were more than enough.

Smoke from a massive fireworks display at the opening whistle briefly delayed play after the opening possession.

Trying to prove their worth to the home fans, Suwon tried a little fireworks of their own early, with Brazil's Nadsun Rodrigues de Souza getting three chances. But the Bluewings - the K-League champions - never really stretched Chelsea goalkeeper Petr Cech.

# Sharapova's top ambition

### Tennis

REUTERS, London

Foiled in her bid to become world number one twice in the last month, Maria Sharapova will again gun for top spot next week and at the same time target a second Grand Slam crown.

The Wimbledon champion enters Roland Garros as a favourite for the women's title after an impressive start to the year in which she has reached the semifinals of the Australian Open and landed titles in Tokyo and Doha.

Her claycourt preparation has been steady if not spectacular with a quarter-final showing in Berlin and a semifinal berth in Rome and the



MARIA SHARAPOVA

Russian world number two feels her claycourt game is coming together at just the right time.

"I think I've had a pretty good preparation," the 18-year-old said last week. "You know, I'd rather play well -- play better at a Grand Slam (than at the warm-up events) and just learn the things I need to work on and keep working on them the next week... hopefully (I will) be fresh and ready for Roland Garros."

The willowy Russian said she had been improving her stamina with one eye on the gruelling claycourt Grand Slam.

"This is not an overnight process. I'm not going to change overnight and all of a sudden be Superman and win everything," she smiled.

"But I think I'm a lot better than I was last year in the claycourt season, and that's an improvement. And little by little..."

Last year she fell in the quarterfinals but that was before she took the tennis world by storm with a spectacular victory at Wimbledon.

Sharapova can expect to be seeded second by the French organisers, behind world number one Lindsay Davenport, and will fancy her chances of success -- certainly more so than compatriot and defending champion Anastasia Myskina.

Myskina has been struggling with a nagging shoulder injury which cast doubt over her participation in Paris. Earlier this week she said she would attempt to defend her crown but her coach Jens Gerlach knows it is not just her shoulder which needs fixing.

"She's not the type of person who makes excuses for anything," Gerlach told Reuters, adding that she also needed to rediscover her inner fire.

"She's been a champion and knows how to dig deep like a champion," he said. "If she gets to Paris and wins a couple of good matches, maybe she'll feel the magic of Roland Garros again."

Former champion Justine Henin-Hardenne also hopes to feel the magic of Roland Garros.

"The French Open is something very special for me. I did my best there, I did my worst there," she said last week.

## Gooch's tips for England

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grown stronger under Duncan Fletcher and we have about 15 or 16 players competing for places.

And Gooch pinpointed Vaughan, all-rounder Andrew Flintoff and quick bowler Stephen Harmison as three players who must fire for England to have a chance of winning the series.

Predictably Gooch picked out Shane Warne, currently captaining English county Hampshire, as the tourists' dangerman.

He was at the other end in 1993

when Warne bowled his 'Ball of the Century' to dismiss Gating with a savagely turning leg-break at Old Trafford.

Gooch maintained the spinner was still the biggest threat to Vaughan's chances of making history.

But he stressed there was no chance of England developing a top-class wrist-spinner of their own unless they produced more responsive pitches.

## Australia to host

FROM PAGE 12

In a packed itinerary that will follow Australia's Ashes tour of England, the world champions will also host seven test matches as well as play in three separate one-day competitions.

The highlight of the season will be the October series between Ricky Ponting's men and the Rest of the World. The teams will play each other in three limited-overs internationals in Melbourne before a six-day "super" test in Sydney.

The Australians will also play a three-match Test series against the West Indies in November, in Brisbane, Hobart and Adelaide, then a three-Test series against the South Africans in Perth, Melbourne and Sydney.

Squeezed between those will be a three game one-day series in New Zealand for the Chappell-Hadlee Trophy, with the dates and venues still to be decided.

The annual triangular one-day series with Sri Lanka and South Africa starts mid-January with the top two teams advancing to a best-of-three finals series in February.