Ronaldo returns in September

AFP, Rio de Janeiro

Brazil coach Carlos Alberto Parreira said Thursday that Ronaldo will make his return to the national team in the World Cup qualifier against Chile in September

Ronaldo was left out of Brazil's 3-1 defeat to Argentina on Wednesday for having asked to be omitted from the June 15-29 Confederations Cup in Germany for personal reasons involving his fiancee Daniella Cicarelli.

"Ronaldo is certainly very important for Brazilian football and will return to the team as previously announced," Parreira told the online version of the Brazilian sporting daily Lance!

Initially named in the 22-strong squad for the World Cup qualifiers against Argentina and Paraguay last Sunday, the Real Madrid star was dropped after his request to miss out on the German tourna-

Wednesday's defeat left Brazil, the reigning world champions, needing three points from their last three matches to guarantee a place in the football showpiece in Germany next year.

Argentina's win guaranteed



I SHOULD HAVE BEEN THERE! Brazilian superstar Ronaldo (L) watches the Brazil-Argentina World Cup qualifier from his house in Rio de Janeiro on

70.000 fans.

Surrounded by scores of security

"It's been a long time and I have

missed Napoli and the people of

Naples," said the 1986 World Cup

"I hope to come back to Napoli

again. Remember me with all your

heart with the same affection that

you have showed me this evening."

dona, who despite recent health

ning," said the central defender.

who spent 11 seasons with Napoli

before joining Juventus where he

"I want to thank my colleagues

and above all the 70,000 people

here. I am very happy that they

were able to see Diego. It was

wonderful to see him again after 14

Barcelona in 1984 and used their

underdog status as a motivational

tool, turning the club into a symbol

But he fled in 1991 after receiv-

ing a 15-month ban for testing

positive for cocaine and was inves-

Neapolitan mafia vice ring.

olaver after leaving Italy.

local rivals Avellino.

tigated for alleged connections to a

spectacular fall from grace and

despite moderate success elsewhere he was never the same

It proved to be the start of a

Napoli have fallen on hard times

But they could be promoted to

since he left and are currently in the

the second division if they win a

two-legged play-off final against

of southern working class pride.

Maradona joined Napoli from

problems looked fit and well.

finished his career

Ferrara paid tribute to Mara-

"It was an unforgettable eve-

guards, he blew kisses to the crowd

and twirled a Napoli scarf above his

head before taking the microphone.

Satisfaction quaranteed!

Around 40,000 prostitutes will offer their services to football fans at the 2006 World Cup in Germany, according to experts.

Supporters from across the globe will flock to watch their respective teams in action at the World Cup, running from June 9 to July 9, offering a bigger market for prostitutes to exploit

"It goes without saying that the World Cup is a great opportunity to make money," said Katharina Cetin, an official at the Hydra prostitute advice centre in Berlin

Cologne and Dortmund, two of the host cities for the World Cup, have even erected a number of wooden 'sex huts' for the fooball showpiece with condoms and showers at hand.

The idea is to keep the prostitutes and their clients away from public places and Berlin is consider-

ing following suit "It is better than having the couples in public areas," explained Dirk Lamprecht, a member of the

administrative council in Berlin. Prostitution was legalised in Germany in 2001 but only in desig-

Rangamati soccer

OUR CORRESPONDENT

Borkol moved into the semifinals of the Zila Parishad Junior (Under-14) Gold Cup football tournamen defeating Sujon Smriti Sangsad 3-2 in the tiebreaker in a quarterfinal match at local stadium yesterday. Both sides were tied at 2-2 after

90 minutes. The winners will now play Sapchhari Ribeng Club in the second semifinal on June 13. Kaptai meet Rangamati Sadar in the first

semi tomorrow. Shoaib sad at **Moody exit**

BBC ONLINE, undated

Shoaib Akhtar has voiced disap-Worcestershire's Director of Cricket Tom Moody.

The Pakistan paceman will make his debut for the club in Sunday's game against Bangladesh

But he said: "What prompted the move here? Tom Moody. It's as simple as that. He was the biggest reason."

Moody left to become coach of Sri Lanka's national team, leaving former wicket-keeeper Steve Rhodes to take charge of the first team at New Road

"I think Steve is going to do well. I've spoken to him a few times and he has a lot of experience. He seems like a gentleman and easygoing," said Shoaib.

"I think what matters is that the 15-16 guys, along with the coach, have to work together. No coach can go in and make things happen on his own."

"The team has to listen to the coach and the coach has to listen to the team and work things out together and make things happen.'

PEPSI VOLLEYBALL

Pabna clinch title

SPORTS REPORTER

Pabna clinched the Pepsi interdistrict women's volleyball title outplaying Rajbari 3-0 at the Dhanmondi Women's Sports Complex yesterday.

Tangail finished third beating Rajshahi by same margin in the place-deciding match.

State Minister for Cultural Affairs Begum Selima Rahman witnessed the match and distributed prize among the winners.

Diego gets Napoli farewell

Football

Diego Maradona has been granted a special testimonial match so he can say a proper farewell to Napoli the team he helped turn into one of the most feared in Europe during the late 1980s and early 90s.

The 44-vear-old Argentine legend returned to Naples on Thursday, his first visit to the Italian city since leaving under a cloud of controversy 14 years ago. Maradona, who led Napoli to two

Italian league titles and a UFFA Cup triumph in seven seasons, came back to appear in a benefit match for his former Napoli team-mate Ciro Ferrara, who is retiring from football. "Diego will return to Napoli on

October 30 for his farewell match,"

said Rosa Iervolino Russo, the Mayor of Naples. Maradona, who didn't play in Ferrara's match due to a knee injury,

stole the limelight when he did a lap of honour before kick-off in front of



Argentine legend Diego Armando Maradona shows off his magical ball controlling skills at the San Paolo stadium in Naples on Thursday while attending former Napoli teammate Ciro Ferrara's farewell match.

Harmison misses warm-up

BBC ONLINE, London

England fast bowler Steve Harmison has been ruled out of Saturday's Twenty20 warm-up game against Hampshire because of an ankle injury.

Harmison first felt pain in his left ankle during the second Test against Bangladesh at the Riverside.

He was given a cortisone injection to ease the discomfort.

But he has not recovered enough to be risked at the Rose Bowl, where England will also face Australia on Monday in a Twenty20 international.

No decision has yet been taken on Harmison's participation in that game, and it is not thought the injury

"He also had some scans earlier this week and they were all clear." a team spokesman commented.

Bangladesh

FROM PAGE 12 the total before he was last man out.

SCOREBOARD

BANGLADESH

Scoreboard of the Bangladesh innings in the one-day (D/N) practice match against Derbyshire at the County Ground on Friday:

Omar c Sutton b Sheikh	ç
Igbal run out	(
Saleh c Stubbings b Sheikh	4
Imran run out	4
Bashar c sub b Walker	49
Aftab c Sutton b Walker	26
Mashud c Sutton b Walker	1
Rafique c Dean b Botha	36
Mahmud b Gray	1
Mortuza c Sutton b Gray	(
Nazmul not out	
Extras: (lb-2, w-10)	1:
Total: (All out in 46.1 overs)	189
Fall of wkts: 1-5, 2-16, 3-19, 4	-99,
127, 6-134, 7-147, 8-177, 9-1	77, 10
400	

189.			•	
Bowler	0	M	R	W
Dean	6	0	23	C
Sheikh	8	1	15	2
Hunter	8	0	45	C
Gray	10	0	40	2
Botha	8.1	0	40	1
Walker	6	0	24	3

Toss: Bangladeshis DERBYSHIRE: S Stubbings, G Welch, J Bryant, L Sutton, J Moss, A Botha, M Sheikh, A Gray, N Walker,

The countdown

FROM PAGE 12 programme, which the artist later presented to the gathering.

Precisely 365 days ahead of the biggest single sports event on the planet, Schily emphasised the key role played by the forthcoming FIFA Confederations Cup from 15 to 29 June. The tournament was a vital pulse check for the German football team, but just as importantly, a test of every organisational element. "This small-scale World Cup will tell everyone - organisers, security personnel, and volunteers alike what we're doing well and where we have to improve. We cannot let up in our efforts," declared the Minister, whose remit includes sport.

Schilv accepted Germans were renowned as good organisers, and expectations were correspondingly high. "But we want to achieve more," the senior politician insisted. "Our goal is to stage a festival of football, which is truly 'A time to make friends'. We want to boost our nation's image. We will only succeed if everyone continues to invest passion and commitment into the preparatory phase."

The event to commence the countdown correspondingly focused on forward planning for the 2006 FIFA World Cup. "You can rely on Germany," Blatter enthused. "Whenever we come forward with a question, they're ready with an

Liverpool granted wish

CHAMPS LEAGUE

Liverpool will be able to defend their Champions League trophy next season after European football's governing body UEFA changed their

But they will have to play in six qualifying games to reach the group stage and will have no country protection which means they could be drawn against one of the four other English clubs -- Chelsea, Arsenal, Manchester United or

They will go into the competition's first qualifying round with their opening match on July 12 or 13.

UEFA had been under pressure to change their rules after Liverpool beat AC Milan on penalties in an astonishing final in May after being 3-0 down at half-time.

But they had failed to qualify from the English Premiership after finishing fifth and under existing rules the English Football Association was asked to put Liverpool into next season's competition ahead of fourth-placed

Spain set the precedent in 2000 when Real Madrid were crowned European champions but finished fifth in the Primera Liga. The Spanish FA entered Real for the following season's Champions League and relegated fourth-placed Real Zaragoza to the UEFA Cup. But the English FA said their

rules did not allow them to replace Everton with Liverpool.

UEFA chief executive Lars-Christer Olsson said there was no question of Liverpool being allowed a pass into the third qualifying round, only whether the rules would be changed to admit them to the competition at the earliest stage.

And he confirmed that there had been no votes against the move. "It was a unanimous decision,"

he added. Liverpool midfielder Dietman Hamann, awarded a new contract

by the club, was thrilled by the change. "It's tremendous news for the club," said the Germany international, who shrugged off concerns

tour of Japan. "We're delighted to be in there and if we have to change something then we will do so

"We start pre-season on June 27 and we've got two or three weeks to get us into physical shape for the

"We'll do our best. We've got to go through the qualifying rounds and we'll do our best to defend the

The UEFA Cup place freed by Liverpool will not go to Manchester City who finished eighth, behind UEFA Cup qualifiers Bolton (6th)

and Middlesbrough (7th). If the Liverpool situation occurs again and the European champions fail to finish in a qualifying place in their domestic competition they will come in at the expense of the fourthplaced side.

The rules will also apply for countries who only get three or two Champions League spots, but there will be a special exemption in the unlikely event of a country with one Champion League spot winning the competition but failing to win their own domestic league.

Liverpool will have the status of lowest-placed English club which means they get less TV money.

Champions Chelsea and Arsenal go straight into the group stage while Manchester United and Everton play in the third qualifying round in August.

It means Liverpool will have to play six matches in order to qualify for the group phase and it could interfere with their pre-season tour

Former Liverpool captain and assistant manager Phil Thompson said: "This is a great decision for

With Liverpool having to play all three qualifying rounds, Rafael Benitez's side will have a busy "I suppose that's a downside but

football. I'm glad they've made the

decision quickly and to our benefit."

Liverpool wanted to defend the title. and if that has to be the case then so be it." Thompson added. Thompson also admitted he

would have been happy for Liverpool to be excluded from the pool of TV revenue.

"It's always been about qualifying and defending your trophy," he "It'll be great for Liverpool but it

wouldn't have bothered me if Chelsea, Manchester United and even dear old Everton had shared that the club would have to cancel its the money. Sports minister Richard Caborn

said: "I'm delighted that UEFA have

decided to allow Liverpool to defend

their trophy. Having made one of the

greatest comebacks in European footballing history, it would have

been wrong if they had not able been able to do so. "This is a triumph for common sense and the spirit of sport. I look forward to the start of the new

ing a powerful impact again. The first qualifying round is to be played on 12/13 and 19/20 July, for which the draw is made on 24

season and the British clubs mak-

The second round is on July 26/27 and August 2/3 and the third round is played on August 9/10 and

Meanwhile, Liverpool's scheduled pre-season tour of Japan is likely to be scrapped following their entry to next season's tournament.

If Liverpool come through the first hurdle in mid-July they will face a second qualifying round scheduled for July 26-27 and August 2-3. At present, the Merseyside club

are due to play friendlies in Japan against Shimizu S Pulse on July 27 and Kashima Antlers on July 30 -commitments they would be unable to meet if the European dates cannot be moved.

"The trip to Japan could be in jeopordy," acknowledged

Thompson said UEFA's decision would force manager Rafael Benitez to recall his stars from holiday earlier than June 27, the date they are currently due to report back for pre-season train-

He is not however expecting any grumbling. "If it is that or playing in the UEFA Cup, I know what every player would take," Thompson told Sky Sports News.

Best arrested

AFP. London

Troubled former football star George Best was arrested by British police on Thursday following allegations he assaulted a female friend of his ex-girlfriend.

Best, 59, went voluntarily to Staines police station in Surrey, southeast England, to be interviewed by officers over claims by Vicky Pope that he attacked her as she tried to stop him getting into his former lover's home.

Federer in last four Tennis third consecutive victory at the pre-

REUTERS, Halle

World number one Roger Federer breezed through to the Halle Open semifinals with a 6-3, 6-4 win over Germany's Philipp Kohlschreiber on

He was joined in the last four by Russian second seed Marat Safin. who beat Olivier Rochus of Belgium 6-4, 7-6, and German Tommy Haas who defeated Spain's Juan Carlos Ferrero

Top seed Federer, aiming for his

Wimbledon grass-court event, was much too strong for the unseeded young German in a match lasting just

"I played tough and consistent and when I needed to serve well I did that too," Federer told a news conference. "I thought today was a solid

performance and exactly what I needed against a player like him," he The 23-year-old Swiss is also going for a third successive Wimbledon title at the All England Club

in London starting on June 20. "I really have the feeling that every match I'm playing on the grass now I'm getting to focus just that extra bit every time I step out again so I'm really

happy," Federer said. The 21-year-old Kohlschreiber, who failed to convert several break points, said the Swiss, who came within two points of defeat against Robin Soderling in the first round, was not invincible on grass.

"You can see he is beatable," Kohlschreiber said. "I think at some point the time will come when he

Federer will play Haas in the semis after the seventh seed overpowered former world number one Ferrero.



women's volleyball competition at the Dhanmondi Women's Sports Complex yesterday.

Players and officials of the Pabna team pose with the trophy after beating Rajbari in the final of the Pepsi inter-district