

Brazil's motivation

AFP, Frankfurt



Brazil will be looking for a confidence-boosting run in the 2005 Confederations Cup ahead of their final World Cup qualifiers after last week's resounding 3-1 defeat by Argentina.

That painful stumble on the road to Germany next year left the world champions requiring three points from as many games to secure an automatic ticket to the 2006 finals.

"I think we learned a lesson from that result," coach Carlos Parreira said ahead of Brazil's fifth straight appearance in the Confed Cup.

"One grows in defeat if you learn what mistakes were made and avoid committing the same errors again.

"Argentina deserved to win, and it showed us we must be prepared to face similar rivals here and in the World Cup next year."

AC Milan's Kaka is eagerly awaiting the opportunity to get one back on their South American neighbours.

"We could face them in the semi-final or final. Hopefully that'll

happen because it's always great to play against Argentina, and now we have special motivation."

Parreira has kept faith with his attacking quartet comprising Italian Serie A duo Kaka and Adriano, the young Robinho and FIFA Footballer of the Year Ronaldinho.

"I'm not going to change my plans just because of the Argentina defeat," he insisted.

But missing from action are Ronaldo, the Real Madrid attacker crying off after breaking up with fiancée Daniella Ciccarelli, his teammate Roberto Carlos and AC Milan's Cafu, the last pair being given a rest.

Parreira's squad includes mid-fielder Marcelinho, the Hertha Berlin player who was voted German Player of the Year by Kicker magazine

Playing in Group B the Brazilians kick off against European champions Greece in Leipzig on Thursday, with Mexico next up on Saturday and Japan two days later.

"There are eight teams here, with three considered as favourites for next year's World Cup - Argentina, Brazil and Germany. With that trio in action we're in for a great competition," Parreira added.



PHOTO: AFP

New sensation Robinho entertains his Brazil teammates by playing a samba drum on the team bus after the morning training session in the Bay Arena stadium in Leverkusen on Sunday.

Blatter's 'order' for Liverpool

AFP, London

FIFA president Sepp Blatter has told Liverpool they will not be allowed to pull out of the World Club Championship in Japan in December.

Liverpool face an extended fixture list following UEFA's decision allow the Anfield club into next season's Champions League first qualifying round as defending champions.

But Blatter has said he will not tolerate any plans to lighten the load by withdrawing from December's World Club Championship in Japan.

The tournament will incorporate the Toyota Cup, a play-off between the European and South American club champions.

"They must play the Toyota Cup because it is binding for them for 2005," Blatter told the Daily Mail.

"The cup is in Japan and they will have to travel. Do you think they won't play? They will play."

SL to play seven ODIs in India

AFP, Colombo

Sri Lanka will play as many as seven one-day internationals during their tour of India later this year, a cricket official said here on Monday.

"We will play seven one-dayers instead of the five that had been planned earlier along with three Test matches," said Tryphon Miranda, secretary of the Cricket Interim Committee.

Mirando said that apart from Sri Lanka's tour of India in November, they were also likely to visit India for a tri-nation series next year.

Sri Lanka were originally scheduled for a five-match one-day series in India in April but the tour was called off due to the reluctance of Indian players to take part soon after a gruelling tour by Pakistan.

Mirando, who visited India over the weekend to discuss the schedule, said the two countries were also planning a series between their 'A' sides.

Sri Lanka have a packed schedule from July this year to July 2006 during which they will play 15 Test matches and a minimum of 44 one-dayers.

Sri Lanka will host the West Indies for two Tests in July after which India will join them for a tri-series from August 2-14.

Worcester win

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Asked whether the decision of Worcestershire captain Ben Smith to bat first was a good omen, Bashar said he was a bit surprised.

"If we had won the toss we would have certainly fielded first. It was decided during the team meeting the previous night. The thinking was that in England the ball swings more in the morning.

"It was a typical English wicket. Although we won the game with plenty of overs to spare, it was not an easy wicket to bat on."

The Bangladesh captain said that he was happy to see Ashrafur return among the runs.

"It was good to see one of our batsmen dominating which we have hardly done before. It obviously took the pressure off us. It was bad luck that he fell to a magnificent catch," he said. "Worcestershire are certainly far better opponents than Derbyshire were," claimed Bashar.

Bangladesh returned to London today and they will train at The Oval tomorrow (Tuesday) morning where they face England in the opening match of the NatWest Series on June 16.

Time for experiments

AFP, Frankfurt



The Confederations Cup in Germany is the main dress rehearsal for the World Cup in 12 months

in 12 months time and organisers will use the competition to practice new rules regarding offside and unsporting behaviour.

In February, the International Football Association Board (IFAB) agreed to clarify the complicated active or inactive offside rule and officials will put this into practice at the Confederations Cup, running from June 15 to June 29.

The question of when a player is

seen to be interfering with play has been answered by the IFAB with three examples:

- Interfering with play means playing or touching the ball passed or touched by a team-mate.

- Interfering with an opponent means preventing an opponent from playing or being able to play the ball by clearly obstructing the opponent's line of vision or movements or making a gesture or movement which, in the opinion of the referee, deceives or distracts an opponent.

- Gaining an advantage by being in an offside position means playing a ball that rebounds to him off a post or crossbar or playing a ball that rebounds to him off an

opponent having been in an offside position.

In addition to the offside rule officials have been handed guidelines of when to issue yellow cards for unsporting conduct.

The IFAB rules stipulate that if a player from the side that has been penalised deliberately touches the ball after the referee stops the game for a free-kick, this will be considered as delaying the restart of the game and shall be sanctioned with a yellow card.

These sanctions shall also be applied to players who touch the ball after conceding a throw-in or corner kick and to players who keep hold of the ball after their team has conceded a goal.

Owen ready for Premiership return

AFP, London

Michael Owen is ready to open talks with English Premiership clubs after discovering Real Madrid want to use the England striker in a player-plus-cash deal.

The 25-year-old insists he is happy in Spain but acknowledges he will be unable to stay if Real president Florentino Perez wants to use him to get another player.

"If someone comes and tells me there is a club interested in me and that I have to go, then I'll have to do it," he told The Sun.

Real have Owen lined up for a proposed swap for either Arsenal's Jose Antonio Reyes, Liverpool's Steven Gerrard, Manchester United's Ruud van Nistelrooy or Cristiano Ronaldo.

Owen realises that a second year without a trophy is too much for Real.

"The president and the management will decide which players have to leave and which will come," he said.

Owen was bought by Real from Liverpool in June last year for 12 million euros.

Pele, Dunga see repeat final

AFP, Berlin

Pele predicts the 2006 World Cup final will be a repeat of four years ago when Brazil defeated Germany 2-0 in Japan.

Germany host the next World Cup and Brazil's three-time World Cup winner believes the two nations will be in the World Cup final again on July 9 2006.

"Brazil and Germany will face one another in the final," said Pele who was in Brazil's winning teams in 1958, 1962 and 1970.

"Germany always seem to have a good team for the World Cup and with home support they will reach the final again."

Germany and Brazil are currently taking part in the Confederations Cup, running from June 15 to June 29, in a dress rehearsal for the main event a year later.

Meanwhile, Carlos Dunga, who skipped Brazil to the 1994 World Cup title, also echoed Pele's sentiments saying the South Americans will face Germany in the World Cup final next year.

"Brazil will reach the World Cup final because of the level of their game and their extraordinary talents like Ronaldinho, Ronaldo, Robinho, Kaka and Adriano," said Dunga.

"Germany will benefit from playing at home and they will have strong support."

Prince explains

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"Surely we have considered the National League performances. That is why players like Nazimuddin, Hasanuzzaman and SK Russel are here. Some of the top performers of the NCL could not be picked as they did not fit in our composition for the team. But they will surely be considered for future assignments."

The residential camp of the Bangladesh A team began yesterday at the BKSP with ten players including stand-by wicket-keeper Shahin Hossain reporting for duty.

Left-arm spinner Enamul Haque is nursing a minor injury and will join later. Four players are currently touring England with the national side while paceman SK Russel and another stand-by player Mehrab Hossain (Jr.) are playing in the Darwin league in Australia.

A taste of things to come

AFP, Berlin



With 12 months to go until the 2006 World Cup football fans have an early taste of what to expect when the Cup starts in Germany on Wednesday.

For Germany coach Jurgen Klinsmann's team and the World Cup organising committee this competition serves as a dress rehearsal for the main event.

"Germany must prove it is ready for the big test in 12 months' time," said Franz Beckenbauer, who heads the organising committee.

Germany's hope of having a clean-cut image ahead of the finals evaporated in January when referee Robert Hoyzer revealed German officials were involved in match-fixing.

The tournament has been dubbed the 'mini-World Cup' and the winners, along with World Cup champions Brazil and Germany, will be hoping for a confidence boost ahead of next year's finals.

South America, Asia, Africa, Oceania, North America and Europe are all represented in the tournament, which runs from June 15 to June 29, and Beckenbauer believes the global appeal will help make the tournament a success.

"The real charm of the Confederations Cup is the coming together of different footballing cultures and approaches to the beautiful game," Beckenbauer enthused.

While the competition is being hailed as a celebration of football, the 2003 version in France is probably best remembered for the tragic death of Cameroon midfielder Marc-Vivien Foe.

Foe, 28, collapsed on the pitch during his country's 1-0 semi-final win over Colombia.

Eight nations will contest the Confederations Cup with Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Germany, Greece, Japan, Mexico and Tunisia under the spotlight.

They are pooled into two groups with the top two teams from each progressing to the semi-finals. The final is played in Frankfurt.

Germany and Argentina are favourites to progress from Group A with African champions Tunisia and Australia the rank outsiders.

"It may seem unrealistic but we will go into every match aiming to win," said Australian coach Frank Farina. "I hope we will be playing more than the three group matches."

With home support, three-time World Cup winners Germany have high hopes but the hosts will not be complacent, with Mexico 1999 a painful memory.

Germany lost 4-0 to Brazil and 2-0 to the United States to crash out at the opening group hurdle then.

"The most important thing at the Confed Cup is that we find out we are capable of doing something at the World Cup in 12 months time," said Klinsmann, whose team are deprived of competitive matches because they get an automatic World Cup place by virtue of being hosts.

The competition offers all the teams the chance to get a closer look at five World Cup venues in Frankfurt, Cologne, Leipzig, Nuremberg and Hanover, and Argentina coach Jose Pekerman said he could see the value of the tournament.

"I like this cup because we can play some good matches without travelling," he explained. "But at some stage I will have to consider resting players."

After a gruelling domestic campaign many have questioned the timing of this tournament, with critics arguing that players need a holiday rather than putting more strain on their limbs.

favourites in Group B, which also contains Mexico, Japan and Greece, and coach Carlos Alberto Parreira hopes to unearth some new talent.

"Someone always makes their name in this competition and we will give some new players a chance," confirmed Parreira.

The 21-year-old Santos forward Robinho - the most talked about talent in Brazilian football - is likely to be given the chance to shine in Ronaldo's absence.

In Mexico 1999 a 19-year-old Ronaldinho took the competition by storm and has gone on to become one of the best players in the world with Barcelona.



PHOTO: AFP

WHERE DO YOU THINK YOU ARE GOING? Michael Ballack (L) tries to hold back striker Kevin Kuranyi during a training session of the German national football team at the Brentanostadion stadium in Frankfurt on Monday.

"Tournaments like this should be abolished because the players are just too tired," Brazil and Real Madrid superstar Ronaldo said.

Ronaldo has pulled out of Brazil's squad for the tournament while other stars such as Greece midfielder Theo Zagorakis are still playing for their clubs.

Zagorakis will miss his country's first two group matches as he is taking part in Bologna's two-legged Serie A relegation play-off against Parma on Tuesday and Saturday.

World Cup winners Brazil are

Having secured qualification for the World Cup, Japan can concentrate on this competition but have lost two key players through injury in SV Hamburg striker Naohiro Takahara and Feyenoord midfielder Shinji Ono.

Argentina are another nation who already know they will be returning to Germany next year, having wrapped up qualification with a 3-1 win over Brazil last Wednesday.

The ref enjoyed it so much!



Football

REUTERS, Jerusalem

The memorable Brazil v England match at the 1970 World Cup in Mexico continued beyond the final whistle, according to the Israeli referee.

Abraham Klein, who officiated the game in which Brazil beat reigning world champions England 1-0, said he blew for full time but none of the players

heard and because it was such a terrific match he allowed play to go on.

"Not many people know, but when I blew for time the players didn't hear the whistle and as it was such a great game I let it continue for a few minutes," Klein told NRG, the internet site of Israel's Maariv daily newspaper.

Klein, one of Israel's most accomplished referees, said he could not believe he had been chosen to officiate the match played in the searing heat of Guadalajara.

"(All the officials) wanted this game, but when I opened the envelope I was stunned. At first I thought I was to be a linesman, but then it sank in," Klein said.

The Brazil side which went on to win the World Cup for a third time in 1970 is considered by many to be the greatest team ever.

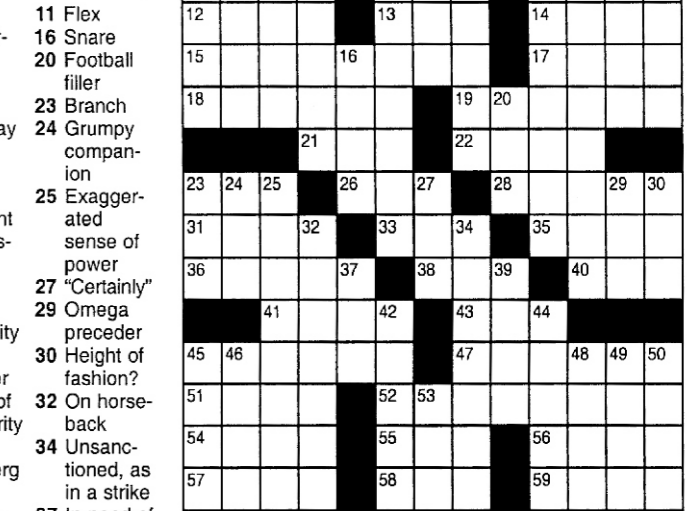
They beat England through a goal by Jairzinho in a match also remembered for a miraculous save by England goalkeeper Gordon Banks.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
1 Waiter's handout
5 Blond shade
8 Quatrain rhyme scheme
12 Start of Oregon's motto (Lat.)
13 Luau bowlful
14 Staminate
15 America's Cup activity
17 PC picture
18 Villainous
19 Muddled
21 "Go, team!"
22 Location
23 Navy big-wig (Abbr.)
26 Wild
28 Role for Jackie
31 Peregrinate
33 Archery-bow wood
35 Tea-spoonful, maybe
36 Marilyn of the 5th Dimension

38 Try the tea
40 Boundary
41 Island dance
43 Part of UCLA
45 Curtain alternative
47 Be philanthropic
51 Roster
52 Hopi dolls
54 Plus-size fashion model
55 DDT-banning org.
56 Young horse
57 Director played by Depp
58 Speck

59 Elbow counter-part
60 Football filler
23 Branch
24 Grumpy companion
25 Exaggerated sense of power
27 "Certainly" precursor
30 Height of fashion?
32 On horseback
34 Unsanctioned, as in a strike
37 In need of repair
39 Milne bruin
42 Requested
44 Quick cut
45 Wasted
46 Prom transport
48 In due time
49 Piece of fiction
50 Italian royal family
53 GIs' mail address



CRYPTOQUIP

I B C F D B C Z L R D T Y

Q C P L E C L Q L J Z C Y R T F, I C

R D L Y D C J D T P L M M B H E

L R H F I R D C Y E H F H R D C Y

Yesterday's Cryptquip: SUPPOSING YOU HAD TO CARRY AROUND MR. BOONE, I RECKON IT MIGHT BE A PAT ON THE BACK.

Today's Cryptquip Clue: D equals T

The Cryptquip 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.