

## Zico's most emotional evening

REUTERS, Cologne

Former Brazil playmaker Zico said it was an emotional experience to lead Japan against the country of his birth in the Confederations Cup on Wednesday.

"It was a very nice, emotional thing to be up against Brazil," Japan coach Zico told reporters after the 2-2 draw.

"When I heard the national anthem my heart was pounding. I was always on their side and now I'm with the opposition.

"I've listened to this anthem since I was a kid at school and I played in that shirt for 10 years," said Zico, 52.

"I know other people have been in the same situation but I wouldn't wish the experience on anyone else. When you have such strong roots as I do with Brazil it's much harder."

Within four minutes of the kick-off, Zico's blood was boiling as Japan's Akira Kaji was denied a goal by an offside decision that appeared marginal at best.

"My brother always used to say that a goal can change history," said Zico.

"Mistakes only seem to happen in favour of the big team. Everyone in the stadium saw that the goal was outside but the assistant raised his flag."

Zico played in three World Cups for Brazil and is remembered as one of the finest players ever produced by the world's most successful footballing nation.

### ISLAMIC GAMES

## Sabura to swim in six events

BSS, Dhaka

Sabura Khatun will take part in the six events of the 4th Islamic Women Games swimming competition.

Sabura, the only swimmer in the Bangladesh team, will compete in the 200m, 400m and 800m freestyle, 100m and 200m backstroke, and 200m individual medley, a Bangladesh Swimming Federation official said yesterday.

Tehran, the capital of Iran, will host the meet for the women of the Muslim world from September 22 to 28 this year. Apart from swimming, Bangladesh will take part in shooting and athletics in the Games.

## Major Atiq replaces Arun

BSS, Dhaka

Major Atiqur Rahman has been named as coach-cum-manager of Bangladesh Swimming team for the 11th FINA World Championships in place of Arun Kumar Nandi.

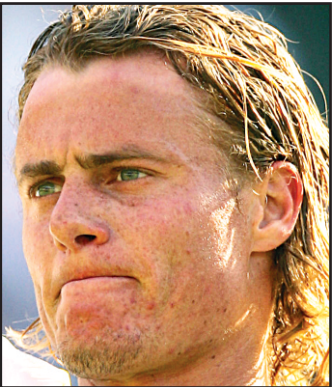
The Bangladesh Swimming Federation (BSF) earlier decided Arun Kumar Nandi as coach cum manager of the team, but it has changed the decision at a recent meeting. BSF General Secretary Shahabuddin Ahmed said yesterday.

A four-member Bangladesh team -- two swimmers and two officials -- will take part in the FINA Championships, to be held in Montreal, Canada from July 16-31.



## Did U Know?

Australia's 249 for five is their lowest total in 50 overs against Bangladesh. Their previous lowest against Bangladesh in 50 overs was 254 for seven at Darwin on August 6, 2003.



Lleyton Hewitt

"England talk themselves up every time and obviously they've got a bit better this year but our side's still proven."

# Parriera enjoying it

AFP, Cologne



Carlos Alberto Parreira left no one in any doubt that Brazil were intent on playing the role of party wrecker when they take on hosts Germany on Saturday.

The dream Confederations Cup semi-final in Nuremberg will be a no holds barred encounter with Parriera stressing his hunger for victory.

"I came here with two targets. One was to field 20 players in our three first games - the second was to qualify for the semi-finals.

"We've achieved both - now I'm finished watching players, I will play the best possible team against Germany.

"It was a calculated risk making changes, but there'll be no more experimenting now - we want to win this competition."

Brazil booked their Nuremberg date against Jurgen Klinsmann's team through the back door as Group B runners-up, on goal difference, having finished level on points with Japan with whom they drew 2-2 here on Wednesday night.

Assessing the upcoming match Parreira, in his third spell as Brazil coach, said: "It's going to be very difficult, it's always tough playing the home team.

"It's hugely important to Germany for next year. They rested some good players for their last game (against Argentina) and have also had a day extra to rest."

Parreira was visibly worried about the state of his players' health.

"My good players are exhausted, they've not played at the top level that we're used to here but it's understandable.

"Exhaustion can be both physical and mental, some are on a 25 day run without a break after the end of their domestic leagues and then straight on to World Cup qualifying and then here."

With that in mind Parreira gave his squad a day of rest at their base near Leverkusen on Thursday after Wednesday's tightly fought game.

Robinho, described as a national 'treasure' after his virtuoso performance in the opener last week, put Brazil ahead in the tenth minute before Shunsuke Nakamura levelled. Ronaldinho added Brazil's second before the break and the world champions looked to be

heading for all three points before super sub Masashi Oguro came up with an 88th minute equaliser.

"I enjoyed the first half, but not so much the second," smiled Parreira.

Ronaldinho, acting as captain for the night, also pointed to some missed opportunities.

"The important thing is progressing, but we had bad luck.

"I believe that we created the better opportunities to win the match, but we did not take them. We need to start taking them."

Marcos replaced Dida in goal and he conceded he had not had a flawless game.

"I haven't played for 20 days and despite training, I felt a bit rusty."

Hertha Berlin defender Gilberto is adamant Brazil can beat his adopted country.

"The German team had a bad time, but it is growing and some players are very successful. The match will be difficult, but we can win.

"We have techniques that the Germans don't have, but they know about them and that's why it's going to be hard to tough."

# Lucio can't wait

AFP, Nuremberg



Brazilian international defender Lucio is determined to defeat Germany in Saturday's Confederations Cup semi-final to win bragging rights in the Bayern Munich dressing room.

Bayern duo Ze Roberto and Lucio come face-to-face with several of their club team-mates in the Nuremberg semi-final and while patriotic pride is at stake the tongue-in-cheek comments next season at Bayern are also important.

"I cannot wait to face my Bayern team-mates," enthused Lucio. "I

cannot bear the thought of losing against (Michael) Ballack, (Bastian) Schweinsteiger, (Oliver) Kahn and (Sebastian) Deisler."

Schweinsteiger is actually suspended for the match and goalkeeper Kahn will miss out with Jens Lehmann in goal but Deisler and captain Ballack are two Bayern stars set to start.

"I have a lot of respect for the Germany midfield and an attack that is always capable of getting a goal," lauded Lucio.

Germany average three goals a game in the Confederations Cup but Lucio hopes his inside knowledge can aid the Brazilian cause.

"My Bayern team-mate Ze Roberto and I can offer a few tips but our coach (Carlos Alberto Parreira)

has the Germany players on video anyhow," Lucio declared.

The physical condition of the Brazilian players has come under the microscope following the 2-2 group draw with Japan and Lucio admits the legs are tired after a long season.

"We are all tired and need to rest but the most important thing is we have reached the semi-final," said the former Bayer Leverkusen man.

"I am highly motivated although it will be difficult as Germany have home support."

The match is the first time Brazil and Germany have met in a competitive match since the 2002 World Cup final when Brazil triumphed 2-0, with Ronaldo scoring both goals.

## Mexican duo kicked out

AFP, Frankfurt

Indiscipline and not doping was behind the expulsion of two Mexican players from the Confederations Cup, Franz Beckenbauer stated on Thursday.

Salvador Carmona and Aaron Galindo were kicked out of the competition by Mexico coach Ricardo Lavolpe on Tuesday, with rumours abounding that the duo had tested positive for nandrolone.

But Beckenbauer, head of Germany's 2006 World Cup committee, said he had been told by FIFA president Sepp Blatter that drug taking had nothing to do with the scandal.

"He (Blatter) assured me that this was purely a disciplinary matter and nothing to do with doping.

"And we've got no reason to question it."

Reports that the two defenders had taken the banned steroid emanated from two Mexican newspapers, El Universal and Reforma, which suggested the positive controls had been taken before the start of the Confed Cup.

This was strongly denied by Lavolpe, who said: "The journalists should be concerned with judging the sporting quality of our team. Everything else is only a matter for us.

"I don't ask you whether you've got marital problems at home?" he told a press conference.

The Argentina-born coach stressed that he had sent the players home for breaching the team's "code of conduct".

On Wednesday FIFA spokesman Markus Sieglar dismissed the notion of positive tests.

## Greece go out without scoring

AFP, Frankfurt

Mexico will face Argentina in the semi-finals of the Confederations Cup after a 0-0 draw against Greece in their final Group B match.

The scoreless draw, the first of the tournament so far, helps Mexico stretch their unbeaten run to 21 games and Ricardo Lavolpe's team progress into the last four as group winners ahead of Brazil, who face Germany in the semis after drawing 2-2 with Japan.

Mexico won the competition in their homeland back in 1999 and if they can continue their unbeaten run for two more games the trophy will be theirs again.

For European champions Greece a solitary point is scant reward from this competition and the fact that they failed to score in three group games leaves German manager Otto Rehnhagel with a lot of thinking to do.

"It goes without saying that we wanted to be more successful," said Rehnhagel. "We obviously have a problem in attack as we have not scored for five games and you can not win games without scoring."

Greece must now concentrate on qualifying for the World Cup in 12 months time and they face a real struggle, currently lying third in their group, eight points behind Ukraine and one point adrift of Turkey.

"I hope to get some of our top players back and maybe they can make the difference and help us qualify for the World Cup," Rehnhagel declared.

## Maradona to become a Boca director

REUTERS, Buenos Aires

Diego Maradona has accepted an offer to take on a director's role at Boca Juniors, club president Mauricio Macri said on Wednesday.

Macri said that Maradona, who had previously been offered a job as youth team coach, would take over as football vice-president in August.

"He will take part, give his opinion, help us run the professional squad," Macri told reporters, adding that Maradona would help in the selection of a new coach.

The 44-year-old Maradona has made a good recovery after undergoing drug rehabilitation last year and a gastric bypass operation in Colombia in March.

Maradona's doctor Alfredo Cahe has said the former Argentina captain had lost more than 33 kgs since the stomach stapling operation surgery in the Caribbean city of Cartagena.

## U-13 football camp from July 1

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) will launch an under-13 football camp in the city from July 1.

The selected 35 booters have been requested to report to BFF's age-group coaches Jobair Nipu and Syed Goham Jilani on July 1 at the Brothers Union ground in Gopibagh at 7.30 am. The weekly camp will be held on only Thursdays and Fridays.

# Sharapova breezes thru



## WIMBLEDON

AFP, London

Title-holder Maria Sharapova needed just 45 minutes to move regally into the third round at Wimbledon on Thursday showing no mercy to 15-year-old Sesil Karantantcheva.

The 18-year-old Russian second seed won 6-0, 6-1 on the hottest day of the championships so far and has dropped just five games in two ties.

It was also her 19th win in a row on grass taking in back-to-back titles at Birmingham and last year's Wimbledon crown.

The bubbly Karantantcheva had defeated Venus Williams last month to reach the quarterfinals of the French Open in Paris, but the Bulgarian looked shell-shocked faced with the sheer power of the much taller Sharapova.

Her relief was manifest when she finally managed to win a game at 6-0 and 3-0 down in the second, but a few minutes later she was heading back inside and Sharapova was blowing kisses to the crowd.

"I just played great tennis today," the Russian said.

"I played much better than in the first round when there was a little bit of nerves and hopefully I can keep improving from now on in."

Joining her in the second round was the champion in 2000 and 2001 Venus Williams of the United States who hit back from an indifferent start to defeat Nicole Pratt of Australia 7-5, 6-3.

There was another big win for Greece's improving Eleni Daniilidou, the conquerer of French Open champion Justine Henin-Hardenne in the first round.

She coasted past Laura Granville of the United States 6-2, 6-0 and has a clear chance of making it through to the quarterfinals in the bottom half of the draw.

Also going through were French



MARIA SHARAPOVA

PHOTO: AFP

16th seed Nathalie Dechy who sent packing the last British hope in the women's tournament Jane O'Donoghue, Slovak 20th seed Daniela Hantuchova in three sets against Shahar Peer of Israel and Katarina Srebotnik of Slovenia.

Srebotnik, who defeated South Korea's Cho Yoon-Jeong 7-5, 6-4, will be the next opponent for Sharapova.

In the men's tournament, 19-year-old Frenchman Richard Gasquet needed three tie-breaks to defeat Belgian qualifier Gilles

Elsener 7-6, 7-6, 6-7, 6-2. Gasquet, the winner at Nottingham on grass last week, will meet French Open winner Rafael Nadal in the third round if the Spaniard makes it through his tie later in the day.

Igor Andreev made it three Russians through to the third round with a 6-4, 6-2, 3-6, 6-3 win over Davide Sanguinetti of Italy, while Jiri Novak of the Czech Republic got the better of France's Fabrice Santoro 6-1, 4-6, 7-6, 6-3 in a battle of the veterans.

# Leading the way

FROM PAGE 16

Growing up in Hyderabad, Mirza idolised cricket star Sachin Tendulkar and harboured hopes of one day becoming a doctor.

That was until she walked onto a tennis court during one school holiday and discovered she had an exceptional talent.

"The coach called my parents up a month later and said: 'You should come watch her because I've never seen a six-year-old hit a ball like that,'" she recalls.

"You know, my parents came. Things kept falling in place. Not like we decided one day that we're going to be a professional. It just kept happening. I started playing tournaments. That's how it all began."

Mirza's record-breaking exploits

this year have made her almost as famous in India as Tendulkar.

Earlier this year, she became the first Indian woman to win a tour title when she captured her hometown tournament and then achieved another first by making the third round of the Australian Open.

She giggles as she says she counts the cricketing superstar among her friends.

Her feisty performance against the US Open holder on Wednesday was closely followed by sportsman Indians, who recently voted her second in a television poll for the country's youth icon, behind Bollywood star Shah Rukh Khan.

The 18-year-old returned to Hyderabad to an amazing reception after her Australian Open campaign,

where she became the first Indian woman to reach the third round of a Grand Slam, and despite her loss on Wednesday, Mirza was inundated with calls after the match.

"My phone hasn't stopped buzzing since then. I got a lot of messages saying, 'Even though you lost, you won the match.'"

"I think I'm going to feel bad about it for a long time. You know, there's nothing I can do about it," she said.

"But I hope I'll have many more Centre Court matches to play. I hope I'll be here the second Saturday on Centre Court (the women's final).

"It is like a dream come true for me. But I'm definitely not satisfied with what I've got."

# Brazil in semis the hard way

FROM PAGE 16

we've come a long way."

With Robinho and Kaka cutting in from the wings and Ronaldinho bringing the ball forward at dizzying speed, Japan looked in danger of conceding every time they lost possession.

Brazil, their place in the semi-finals on the line after a 1-0 defeat by Mexico, looked more comfortable after taking the lead in the 10th minute.

Ronaldinho's close control took two defenders out of the game in his own half.

The Barcelona forward glided forward and calmly waited for Robinho to complete an angled run before playing the pass. The Santos

forward duly beat the keeper with a precise shot.

Japan, who finished the group in third place on four points, were unlucky not to go ahead in the fourth minute when Akira Kaji outpaced the defence and beat Marcos, only to be pulled up for what looked an incorrect offside flag.

Mitsuo Ogasawara's header from a free kick then bounced on the goal line and out before Nakamura struck the equaliser, crashing in a shot from more than 30 metres to leave Marcos, recalled in place of Dida, with no chance on 27 minutes.

Brazil stepped up a gear and reclaimed the lead five minutes later when Kaka fed Robinho on the left

and he picked out Ronaldinho, who poked a shot that deflected in off the keeper.

The South Americans were electric up front but too often over-elaborated.

Japan survived the rest of the half and almost levelled at the start of the second when Marcos saved the feet of Oguro.

A few minutes later Cicinho had to clear off the line from Nakamura as Japan grew in confidence.

Brazil continued to create chances but lost their cool and would have surrendered their place in the semi-finals but for the last-gasp intervention of Marcos.

## CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

**ACROSS**

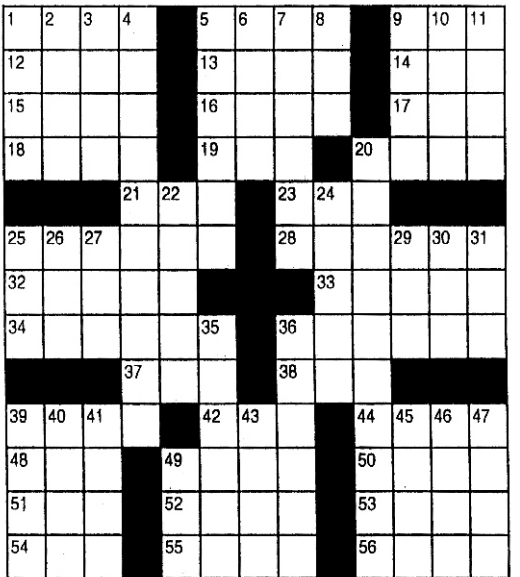
1 Exchange center  
5 Short-billed marsh bird  
9 Glutton  
12 Roll-call response  
13 Ball in a gymnasium?  
14 Corn spike  
15 "Awaiting reply"  
16 Freeway egress  
17 Freudian concept  
18 Brandy flavor  
19 Matter-horn, for one  
20 Lose intention-ally  
21 Archery-bow wood  
23 Anteced-ing  
25 Coming as no surprise  
28 Castle's inner tower  
32 They're all in your head

**DOWN**

1 Patronize the mall  
2 "— Only Just Begun"  
3 Ballwick  
4 TV lawyer  
5 Lie about everything?  
6 Exam format  
7 Cavorted  
8 Pump up the volume  
9 Banana castoff  
10 Shake-spearan villain  
11 Snowball  
20 TV lawyer supporter  
22 Arts offerings  
24 Hotel  
25 Zilch  
26 Praise in verse  
27 Dos' neighbors  
29 Cookie container  
30 Resist-ance measure  
31 Aye under  
35 Nullify  
36 Tahini base  
39 Door-frame part  
40 "Typee" sequel  
41 Hart's mate  
43 Revlon rival  
45 Terrible guy?  
46 Appella-tion  
47 Merri-ment  
49 Binge

Solution time: 27 mins.

JOY ELIS PAPA  
ARE MADE ATOM  
MUSIC BOB JOKE  
ANALYSIS  
MODE MUISANCE  
TAN PORTS GHO  
RHODESIA FRAN  
LATH TAUTENED  
ACME EDGE DNA  
DOES DOES YEN



## CRYPTOQUIP

NJIHL RO EZHAZG QCN

CIIZOLE QYJFL EJCKIZNJK

RL J'E HCF AYCA C

HGZNN LUCRJICAJZI.  
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: I WAS THINKING A HIGHWAY TRUCK STOP COULD POSSIBLY BE CALLED A SEMI-RETIREMENT AREA.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: F equals L

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.