



(L. R) Juergen Klinsmann, Carlos Alberto Parreira, Ricardo Lavolpe and Jose Pekerman.

Four men, one sweetheart

AFP, Nuremberg



This weekend's Confederations Cup semi-finals are being contested by teams managed by vastly different personalities with, it would seem, only one point in common - football.

One is the eternal student who never set foot in a university, another a noted seascape painter and amateur photographer, the third a chain-smoking coffee-guzzling Tom Selleck doppelganger, the fourth a poker-faced master tactician.

Step forward Jurgen Klinsmann, Carlos Alberto Parreira, Ricardo Lavolpe, and Jose Pekerman - the respective coaches of Germany, Brazil, Mexico and Argentina.

Klinsmann, who at a mere 40 is very much the baby of the quartet, is an acutely bright, positive, free-

thinking soul, prone to driving a Beetle convertible down the open road in his adopted homeland in the United States.

The 1990 World Cup winner's appointment as coach of the Mannschaft last summer had the same effect as a tornado sweeping through a sleepy country town.

Not a man constrained by convention he has injected vital new life to a weary national side that was going nowhere, fast.

The gamble in appointing a man whose only previous coaching experience was riding on a Greyhound bus in California has paid off handsomely - witness Germany's showing here this month.

The knives that were being sharpened to attack him by among others the big-selling Bild newspaper have had to be put away as Klinsmann's young attacking side has wooed a nation hungry to once again experience the sweet taste of success.

He's married to Debbie, a model who when she first met him a few years ago was deceived by his boyish charm and offered to buy him a Coke, thinking he was an impeccable student.

Little did she know the recipient of her generosity was one of the world's most successful and wealthy footballing greats.

At the other end of the experience spectrum one finds Parreira, the unflappable 62-year-old who is in his third spell as Brazil coach.

Nothing seems to faze the man who when he is not winning World Cups is to be found at his easel or behind a camera lens.

Parreira has put on two exhibitions of his paintings, saying at the latest showing: "I know the only reason I've been asked to do this is because I'm coach of Brazil but it makes me very proud.

"I find painting relaxes me, gives me tranquility."

Parreira's devotion to the game is

such that a few years ago he was offered and accepted the task of trying to rehabilitate Flumenenses, the Argentinian club that had fallen on hard times in the third division.

He led them to the third division championship and promotion before moving on to pastures yellow and green.

Just as Klinsmann's CV is blank in the column marked 'Previous managerial experience' Parreira's is pages long having guided Brazil to 1994 World Cup success and also guided Kuwait and the UAE to sup at football's high table.

Staying in South America the wily grey-haired Pekerman turned down the Argentina job when he was first offered it in 1998 preferring to continue the work he was doing as youth coach.

He is like a father to many of his players, like Javier Saviola and Juan Riquelme, who have been under his wing since the ages of 17.

You wouldn't get rich if you were to

receive a dollar for every time he smiled - Pekerman keeps his emotions under wraps.

And while he may be revered by the Argentina players and fans Pekerman's appointment as successor to Marcelo Bielsa in September last year left Diego Maradona for one distinctly unimpressed.

"He's a coach for youth players. He's not a coach for adults," said the Argentine football legend of the manager whose success at youth level earned him the nickname 'The Fabulous Pekar-boys'.

Subsequent events may have led Maradona to reassess that opinion.

Pekerman, 55, has three pets - Qatar, Malaysia and Argentina - named after the countries where he won his three World Youth Championships in 1995, 1997 and 2001.

Lavolpe, who with his hangdog expression and bushy moustache bears more than a passing resemblance to the actor Tom Selleck, also

had a host of critics notably Mexico's most famous player, Hugo Sanchez.

The feud between the two men reached such a point recently that Lavolpe challenged him to a televised debate.

But it's hard to find fault with a coach who has led Mexico to a 21-match unbeaten run.

A master student of the game, the third goalkeeper in Argentina's 1978 World Cup winning side has been known to spend an evening out in a restaurant rearranging the glasses and cutlery on his table to explain his latest tactical ideas.

A chain smoker, the 53-year-old was handed a cup of coffee on the training ground the other day only to inquire dryly of one of his backroom team: "How do you expect me to enjoy a coffee without a cigarette?"

After leading Mexico to the CONCACAF title the Argentina-born coach has made sure by his results that he is no longer the butt of criticism.

Robinho is destined for Europe

AFP, Bergisch-Gladbach

Brazil coach Carlos Alberto Parreira said on Thursday it was inevitable that the new star of Brazilian football, Robinho, would move to a European club soon.

"I think it is high time to end the hypocrisy in all of this. This story about the transfer of Robinho has been running since December," Parreira said at the team's training base where they are preparing to face Germany in the Confederations Cup semi-final on Saturday.

"I think it is inevitable that sooner or later, Robinho will be another Brazilian player to leave the country."

The coach said the 23-year-old forward from Pele's old club Santos had not told him about his future plans and he had not asked.

Robinho is widely rumoured to be in negotiations to join the star-studded cast at nine-times European champions Real Madrid.

Welsh team first up for Liverpool

AFP, Nyon

European champions Liverpool will open their title defence against Total Network Solutions (TNT) of Wales in the Champions League's first qualifying round next month.

Friday's draws at UEFA's headquarters in Switzerland which also included the second qualifying round, gave Liverpool a place against either HB Torshavn of the Faroe Islands or Lithuania's FBK Kaunas if they beat TNS.

The holders were given special clearance by European governing body UEFA to enter the competition after failing to secure a place through the Premier League, having finished just outside the top four.

Liverpool, who beat AC Milan on penalties in last month's final after trailing 3-0 at halftime, will play the first leg at Anfield on July 12-13 and the away leg on July 19-20.

Ashraful's

FROM PAGE 12

especially for Bangladesh. He asked me to be more consistent, to realise that I have a responsibility towards my team."

"He (Ganguly) also told me to keep looking to score runs all the time and never to let go my aggression," Ashraful said.

He also expressed thanks to coach Dav Whatmore's advice which "brought a huge change in my batting."

"I will not be gifting my wicket anymore. The important thing will now be to stick around and make the bowlers fight for my wicket," said the 20-year-old middle-order batsman.

CA relieves Symonds



AFP, Melbourne

Cricket Australia said there would be no further action taken against Andrew Symonds but they would examine further the management of internal team disciplinary issues.

In response to media reports here that Symonds faced further repercussions over his boozy night out in Cardiff, Cricket Australia chairman Bob Merriman said the majority of CA directors wanted no further action taken against Symonds.

The 30-year-old all-rounder, man of the match in Australia's 57-run one-day win over England in Durham Thursday, was banned for two games and fined for a drinking binge the night before Australia's shock loss to Bangladesh in Cardiff last weekend.

There were media reports that some CA officials were concerned

Symonds may have breached the conditions of his lucrative playing contract.

But Merriman, in London for International Cricket Council meetings, issued a statement late Friday, which said there would be no further action against Symonds.

However Merriman said the CA Board would review the formal link which underpins the management of internal team disciplinary issues, which has operated since late 2003.

He said the Board would also look at the requirements of the Code of Behaviour and player contracts.

The Australian newspaper Friday said CA was advised of Symonds' penalty -- decided by skipper Ricky Ponting, coach John Buchanan and team manager Steve Bernard in Cardiff -- after it was handed down.

"A number of principles have been raised which need clarification or reconfirmation at a Board level," Merriman said in the CA statement.

"These include the Boards very strong commitment to managing Australian cricket in a manner which is open, honest and timely.

"It is also appropriate for the Board to review the formal link between the processes which underpin the management of internal team disciplinary issues as operated since late 2003; and the requirements of the Code of Behaviour and player contracts.

"It is fully understood Cricket Australia has always had the right to manage the disciplinary process in accordance with the Code of Behaviour and/or the player contracts.

"The majority of directors have concluded there should be no further action against Symonds."

Symonds, one of the world's leading one-day cricketers, is said to be on an annual retainer of 200,000 dollars (156,000 US dollars).

Safin crashes out, Roddick rolls on



AFP, London

Marat Safin's latest attempt to conquer Wimbledon ended in bitter disappointment and frustration on Friday when he was knocked out in the third round by Spanish serve-and-volleyer Feliciano Lopez.

The fifth-seeded Russian, bidding to win a third Grand Slam tournament on his least-preferred surface, meekly surrendered the Court One tie to the man who beat him at the Olympics last year losing 6-4, 7-6, 6-3.

Left-hander Lopez, the 26th seed, now faces either Croatia's 10th seed Mario Ancic or French teenager Gael Monfils for a place in the quarterfinals while Safin, the reigning Australian Open champion will concentrate his efforts on the final Grand Slam of the season, the US Open.

Safin, 25, came into the tournament claiming to have discovered a liking for grass after finishing runner-up to Roger Federer in Halle two weeks ago.

But after convincing displays in the first two rounds, where he saw off Paradorn Srichaphan and 2003 finalist Mark Philippoussis, Safin looked a forlorn soul as he joined fellow draw cards Tim Henman and Rafael Nadal on the sidelines here. Lleyton Hewitt's impressive Wimbledon campaign has rolled into the third round with a convincing 7-6, 6-4, 7-5 victory over injury-hit American Justin Gimelstob.

Gimelstob, who had to receive treatment on his shoulder during the

match, mounted a brave challenge against the third seeded Australian as he attempted a third comeback from a series of debilitating injuries.

However, Hewitt was commanding in his response, and although stretched at times completed a comfortable victory to set up a fourth-round meeting with burly American Taylor Dent.

"I didn't take my opportunities and I couldn't adapt my game to him. I just didn't play well enough to win," said Safin.

Lopez, watched by doubles partner Nadal, will be playing in the round of 16 for the third time here.

He was broken in the third game of the opening set and then collected a warning for ball abuse in the

eighth for launching the ball out of the stadium.

Lopez fought off two break points in the ninth game before taking the first set 6-4 after 32 minutes.

Safin, carrying a serious knee injury, was showing off some smooth volleying at the net but not often enough as Lopez played a steady, solid game.

The 23-year-old Spaniard then clinched the second set tiebreak with a sweet drop volley and was in charge of the third set racing into a 4-2 lead.

A disconsolate Safin gave up the chase. Lopez set up three match points in the ninth game and clinched the tie with his 14th ace after just 1hr 49min on court.



PHOTO: AFP

Marat Safin of Russia jokes during his third round match against Spaniard Feliciano Lopez at the Wimbledon Championships in London yesterday.

Real players does not interest United

AFP, Madrid

Manchester United assistant manager Carlos Queiroz on Friday ruled out a move by the English Premiership side for Real Madrid pair Michael Owen and Iker Casillas.

Former Real Madrid coach Queiroz said that he admired both players but they were not in the plans of the Old Trafford side, nor was Luis Figo, who is set to leave Madrid this summer.

"I admire Casillas but he is not in Manchester's plans. Owen does not interest us either," Queiroz said in an interview with Radio Marca.

"Figo is a fantastic player, who has the quality and professional attitude to still play in any team, but there has been no negotiations," said Queiroz.

Queiroz said that Real have not made an offer for United winger Cristiano Ronaldo, who has been linked with the Spanish side in recent weeks.

"Real Madrid has not contacted Manchester about Cristiano Ronaldo."

Juve told to pay injured fan

AFP, Turin

A court here on Thursday ordered Juventus to pay 100,000 euros, including 10,000 euros in legal costs, to a young AS Roma supporter whose hand was seriously injured when it was hit by a flare during a match.

The Roma fan, whose name was only given as Walter C., was injured during the Rome club's 2-2 draw with Juventus in Turin in May 2001.

He suffered multiple fractures to his right hand and subsequently had a finger amputated when the flare exploded. He was unable to evacuate the area because he had a leg in plaster at the time.

The court ruled that under civil law Juventus were responsible because they had not taken all precautions necessary to protect the Roma fan.

Nedved, Thuram extend contracts

AFP, Turin

Czech midfielder Pavel Nedved and French defender Lilian Thuram have each extended their contracts with last season's Serie A champions Juventus for another two years.

The contracts of the two players ran initially until June 30, 2006.

Former European footballer of the year Nedved, 32, has been a key player for Juventus since joining them from Lazio in the 2000-01 season.

Thuram, 34, who won the World Cup in 1998 and the European Championship in 2000 with France, arrived at the Turin club in July 2001 after five years with Parma and has flourished as a central defender under new coach Fabio Capello.

Mauresmo moves on

REUTERS, London

While storms gathered around Wimbledon on Friday there was nothing clouding the horizon of Amelie Mauresmo who moved into the fourth round with 6-0, 6-2 rout of American Shenay Perry.

Sixth seed Elena Dementieva, one of several Russian heavyweights in action on a muggy day, progressed with a 7-5, 6-1 defeat of American Mashona Washington.

She could face compatriot Anastasia Myskina in the fourth round, which would be a repetition of the 2004 French Open final.

Svetlana Kuznetsova, who beat Dementieva in the US Open final last year was given a fright against 16-year-old Czech Nicole Pietrangeli, the fifth seed scraping through 7-5, 6-7, 6-2.

The 25-year-old Mauresmo, whose failure so far to land a grand slam title is one of the game's great puzzles, has blossomed in the sunshine this week.

In full flow Mauresmo is a joy to watch and the outclassed Perry, ranked 159 in the world, was a spectator for the first eight games as winners thundered off the Frenchwoman's racket.

BDR, BJMC

FROM PAGE 12

Bangladesh Army 3-2 in the final while Bangladesh Air Force finished third with a 3-1 victory over Bangladesh Police.

In the women's event, BJMC recorded their seventh success outplaying Pabna 3-0 in the final.

Rajshahi beat Rajbari 3-0 to finish third.

Aussie service resumes

FROM PAGE 12

But a partnership worth 79 ended when Solanki, on 34, clipped Hogg low to mid-wicket where Australia captain Ricky Ponting took a diving catch.

England were now 85 for four with Kevin Pietersen, whose whirlwind 91 not out overpowered Australia on Sunday, the new batsman.

But England's biggest hitters were only together for 14 balls as Flintoff, for the third match in a row and second time in as many games against Hogg, holed out driving down the ground.

His 44 came off 61 balls with six fours.

And on 19 any hopes of Pietersen repeating his Sunday heroics ended when he was caught by Michael Hussey, running round the mid-wicket boundary, off Symonds, to leave England 123 for six.

Australia, whose vastly improved ground fielding denied England several boundaries, had now all but won the match.

Earlier, 6ft 7ins Hampshire paceman Chris Tremlett, fresh from taking four for 32 on debut Tuesday, had Gilchrist caught behind by wicket-keeper Geraint Jones, at the

Ballack gets his chance

AFP, Nuremberg



Germany captain Michael Ballack insists the hosts will have respect for the talent in the

Brazil team ahead of the Confederations Cup semi-final here on Saturday, but not too much.

The likes of Per Mertesacker, Thomas Hitzlsperger and Lukas Podolski have only experienced the silky skills of Ronaldinho, Adriano and Kaka on the television, but Ballack insists the inexperienced youngsters will not be overawed.

"Brazil have some unbelievable players and of course we have respect for them," Ballack said. "But as soon as the whistle goes we will get at them and not sit back in admiration."

A 2-2 draw with Olympic champions Argentina in their final Group A match gave Germany a taste of the South American style and Ballack expects a similar game.

"Brazil have the same strengths as Argentina but we are well prepared," declared Ballack.

"We have watched them on video but that does not mean we were sitting down for hours in front of the television screen."

Germany coach Jurgen Klinsmann rested Ballack for the Argentina game and the midfielder finally has the chance to face Brazil in a tournament after the heartache at the 2002 World Cup.

Ballack scored the winning goal as Germany triumphed 1-0 over

South Korea to reach the World Cup final but missed the 2-0 defeat against Brazil due to suspension.

"The final was three years ago and that is a long time in football," said the Bayern Munich star.

"Of course I still think about it but three years has helped heal the pain."

While the Confederations Cup can not be put on a pedestal with the World Cup Ballack hit back at critics saying the competition had no value.

"Some people say this Confederations Cup is not a big trophy, but as far as I am concerned it is an international title.

"It is just 12 months before the World Cup and I want to win this cup."

Ballack insisted Germany must be prepared to attack Brazil from the start but not be too gung-ho.

"We will attack Brazil but are not going for a 4-3 or a 5-4 win."

Germany are averaging three goals a game in the tournament with Australia (4-3), Tunisia (3-0) and Argentina (2-2) all failing to keep out the German attack.

"We know we are in good shape and see what condition Brazil are in," added Ballack.

Brazil have been inconsistent in the competition so far and fatigue has been one reason put forward for the 1-0 defeat by Mexico and 2-2 draw with Japan.

Germany will hope Brazil's batteries are low thus improving their chances of reaching the Frankfurt final on June 29 and ending a miserable run against the big teams.

Farashganj

FROM PAGE 12

TEAMS

ARAMBAGH: Shakil, Ghansa, Murad, Ramjan, Akram, Dulal, Imrul (Faisal), Kallol, Dominic (Rintu), Patrick (Ritu) and Murshed.

FARASHGANJ: Zia (Piru), Faisal, Adafa, Apu, Khaled, Johnny, Kabir, Amirul, Arup, Felix and Walid (Rony).

Referee: Mansoor Azad.

Argentina's work cut out

AFP, Hannover

Argentina say they are ready to live up to their favourite's tag and advertise their World Cup claims against Mexico in the second Confederations Cup semi-final here on Sunday.

The game between the Group A runners up and Group B winners is being held in the shadow of the scandal involving Salvador Carmona and Aaron Galindo.

The Mexican players were sent home on Tuesday in disgrace on suspicion of having taken the banned steroid nandrolone.

While that is hardly the best way for Ricardo Lavolpe's team to prepare for Argentina on the plus side is the return of the talismanic Barcelona defender Rafael Marquez.

Marquez, recovering from a leg injury, had to sit out Mexico's wins against Tunisia and Brazil but was used as a substitute in their goalless draw against Greece.

"I'm proud of what my teammates have accomplished so far. It's a young side that's done well to adapt to the tactics adopted by the manager," said Marquez.

Singing

FROM PAGE 12

But he is as down to the earth as he has been when it comes to facing the reporters, which is perhaps the most difficult job for him.

"I just want to forget what I have done in the last two innings. I know I will start from zero again and my initial target is to score 15 runs so that I can settle in the middle," said Ashraful, who has now become the hot topic even among the English reporters.

This is also going to be the first time Ashraful faces firebrand Australian bowler Brett Lee.

"I played against him in Tests but never played in the one-dayers. He bowls really quick but I think that's not going to be a problem," said Ashraful, who destroyed England fast bowler Steve Harmison on way to a 21-ball 50.

ENGLAND: 209 for 9 in 50 overs (Solanki 34, Flintoff 44, Pietersen 19, G Jones 23, Gough 46; Lee 2-27, McGrath 2-31, Hogg 2-19).
Result: Australia won by 57 runs.
Man-of-the-match: Andrew Symonds.
Toss: England

STANDINGS

Triangular series table after Thursday's match (played, won, lost, no result, tied, bonus points, total points, net run-rate):

England	4	3	1	0	0	2	17	+1.409
Australia	3	1	2	0	0	2	8	+0.264
Bangladesh	3	1	2	0	0	0	5	-2.225

RESULTS

June 16:	England beat Bangladesh by 10 wkts, The Oval
June 18:	Bangladesh beat Australia by 5 wkts, Cardiff
June 19:	England beat Australia by 3 wkts, Bristol
June 21:	England beat Bangladesh by 168 runs, Trent Bridge (d/n)
June 23:	Australia beat England by 57 runs, Riverside (d/n)