

Still in love with Inter?

Football

MILAN

Real Madrid ace Ronaldo would openly accept a return to Inter, says new Nerazzurri signing Santiago Solari.

The winger left the Spanish giants last week after receiving a glowing reference from the Brazilian forward.

"Ronaldo told me about the atmosphere here and said that I would fit in well," the Argentine stated. "He even added that he would happily return!"

This is not the first time that Ronaldo has been associated with a move back to Inter following his exit in 2002.

However, it seems highly unlikely that Ronaldo could re-sign this summer even if there has been talk of an Adriano-Ronaldo swap deal.

Adriano meanwhile said on Friday he knew nothing about a possible move from Inter to Real.

"A friend told me about it and then I read about it in the Italian media," he told reporters in Rio de Janeiro after hearing of speculation that he could follow in the footsteps of Ronaldo.

"I was happy and surprised. It's nice to know that our (my) work is being recognised by the world's most important teams."

"But at the moment, my wish is to stay with Inter and the club wants me to stay as well."

Adriano, who arrived in Italy as a 19-year-old, said that the departure of his former striking partner Christian Vieri, who has crossed town to AC Milan, would give him a more important role next season.

"His departure has increased my responsibility in the team," said Adriano. "He was an important player who took on this responsibility in decisive moments, but unfortunately we didn't win the title and now it has passed to me."

Inter owner Massimo Moratti also denied receiving an offer from Real Madrid for Adriano.

"I never received that offer from Real Madrid, so it's not true," Moratti told the club's official website, www.inter.it.

However, Moratti who is currently in negotiations to sign Udinese midfielder David Pizarro, has not ruled out a possible move for Real winger Luis Figo - but only after the club has resolved the futures of several current members of the Inter squad.

"It would be nice to have Figo," Moratti admitted.

"But first we have to conclude other transfers and evaluate the structure of the team." Internet Source



Real Madrid star David Beckham acknowledges the applause from fans following a friendly match against Chivas De Guadalajara at Soldier Field in Chicago, Illinois on Saturday.

The most wanted

Football

CHICAGO

They mobbed the Museum Campus -- those with tickets and those without -- for the man who bends it like Beckham.

That would be Britain's David Beckham himself, one of the world's most popular athletes, in Chicago for a soccer bout between his Real Madrid team of Spain, and Chivas Guadalajara, Mexico's most popular sports team.

"He is such a hunk," said Julie Ruben of the North Side, who snagged last-minute tickets for Saturday's exhibition game for girlfriend Melissa Knopf and herself.

"I could care less about the game. I just want to be able to stare at him."

Ruben and Knopf were among dozens of the female persuasion drooling over Beckham, husband of the Spice Girls' Posh Spice and the world's highest-paid soccer player, raking in \$30 million a year.

But the rainbow-colored crowd of 54,432 who turned out for the Soldier Field match had just as much love for Beckham's teammates and other soccer superstars who'd brought international powerhouse flavor to Chicago.

Zinedine Zidane of France, Luis Figo of Portugal, Brazil's Ronaldo, Real Madrid, holder of nine European Cup titles, boasts five of the world's nine richest soccer players and 500 million adoring fans

worldwide.

Maria Vazquez of Bridgeport arrived at Soldier Field with seven siblings in tow, including 4-year-old brother Osvaldo, 5-year-old sister Nancy and 9-year-old brother Christian, the three of whom were bedecked in Chivas team jerseys.

"We're from Mexico. We had to get tickets," Vazquez said.

As the masses poured in, with a huge representation from countries where soccer is king, Lake Shore Drive at Roosevelt bottlenecked into a virtual parking lot and a sea of people snaked through the campus.

"Who cares about Real Madrid? I hope they lose. We're from Guadalajara. We're supporting Chivas," said Salvador Herrera of the Northwest Side, who, with friend

Victor Romeras, had purchased tickets as soon as they went on sale. Fans paid \$40 to \$125 for legal tickets. Others willingly paid more.

"I would have spent whatever it took to come with my son," said Emmanuel Oyin of the North Side, proudly pointing out the scene to 4-year-old son Emmanuel Jr. "I'm Nigerian. I've played soccer all my life. It's in my blood."

Alejandro and Adelina Arce drove from Waukesha, Wis., so that their son, Alex, 9, could see his soccer hero play.

"My favorite player is Ramon Morales. He plays the middle, and he's cool," said Alex. "I've been playing soccer since I was 6... I'm going to be just as good as all these big stars one day." Internet Source

Get the Ronaldo mobile!

Football

ABU DHABI

This is the either some of the best or some of the worst niche marketing ever. Siemens is doing a new limited Ronaldo (as in Ronaldo the Brazilian superstar) version of their CX65 cellphone that will reportedly only be sold at a couple of chains in the

latest technology and housed in distinctive style of the great man himself.

Only a limited number of Ronaldo phones will be sold exclusively in Axiom and Fono stores in the UAE this month.

The Ronaldo Limited Edition CX65 mobile phone is a classy product of elegant design with a brilliant, extra large, high quality color screen, integrated camera for video



United Arab Emirates.

The special specialties of the phone mainly seems to come from the engraved Ronaldo signature on back (there are probably special Ronaldo wallpapers, too), but they're also throwing in an autographed Ronaldo photograph and mini soccer ball for your trouble.

For the millions of die-hard fans of the star striker this is a chance to own a mobile phone packed with the

and photography and 11MB capacity of storage space. It will be the first and only CX65 phone to be elegantly cased in a black, matt finish.

Earlier this year, Siemens acquired the personality rights of the star striker for a period of two years, whereby the football star will advertise for the company in commercials and advertisements until the end of the 2006 football season. Internet Source

Real prevail on non-stars

Football

REUTERS, Chicago

Real Madrid staged a late rally to overcome Mexican side Chivas Guadalajara 3-1 in Chicago, in the opening match of their six-game friendly tour of the United States and Asia.

After a lackluster first half, the match burst into life in the 73rd minute when Francisco Palencia gave Chivas a surprise lead, pouncing on Jhonny Garcia's pass to score from close range.

Real responded impressively with goals from Alvaro Mejia, Guti

and Roberto Soldado.

Meijer headed the 77th minute equalizer from David Beckham's free kick and three minutes from time midfielder Guti found the net with a blistering strike from outside the penalty area.

Soldado added the third seconds before the final whistle.

"It was a very good game for us and very important," Beckham said. "Chivas worked very hard and that was what we needed."

Madrid's next match is against Los Angeles Galaxy on Monday before they continue the tour in Beijing, Tokyo and Bangkok.

The Spanish league kicks off at the end of August.

Maradona can't pay his hospital bills!

XINHUA, Buenos Aires

Diego Armando Maradona will make a commercial for Swiss Medical Group of Argentina, in order to pay the debt in the hospital where he stayed for nearly a month in 2004.

The agreement includes a 10-year medical coverage for the legendary player and his family, according to information released Friday by local business daily El Cronista.

Maradona made the commercial a month ago for the Argentine group, owner of the clinic and Maternidad Suizo-Argentina where he received attention for a cardiorespiratory crisis in April and May last year.

The former Argentine striker has reappeared in public life after a problem related to drug use and overweight, and several de-tox attempts in special clinics.

Among the proposals offered to Maradona, is his debut this month as an anchorman in a television program and a documentary on his life that will be directed by Bosnian filmmaker Emir Kusturica.



Argentine soccer legend Diego Maradona shows off his trickery during a friendly beach football match in Cesenatico, central Italy on July 12.

English confidence

FROM PAGE 12 chances, McGrath makes it clear England can afford no loss of form from the Durham fast bowler -- or anyone else.

"In South Africa (last winter) I thought England had a far better team and should have beaten them easily -- but Harmy didn't perform as well as I thought he would," he said. "Matthew Hoggard bowled pretty

well, and that helped them out. They won't get away with one or two key guys not performing this series. If that happens then I think we'll win and win well.

"They still rely on a few guys too heavily -- the openers, for example -- and for them to have any chance in the series they have to all perform in this series."

The Aussies have plans in place for England's opening pair Marcus Trescothick and Andrew Strauss. McGrath, in mind of his initial task to try to part the pair, appears to be confident in his work.

"We hadn't seen a great deal of Strauss, so it was good in the one-dayers to get a bit more of a look at him and how he plays and think up a few more plans. We're pretty happy there," he said.

"Tres is always the same. He doesn't really move his feet but he's got a pretty decent eye -- so our plans won't be too different to them to what they've been in the past."

Early wickets are high on Australia's agenda, and particularly McGrath's. "The times when we've bowled well to the openers and taken early wickets, it's really put pressure on their middle order," he said.

"There's only been the one decent partnership (in the NatWest one-day matches). That was up at Headingley when they put on 100 runs, and then Vaughany came in and looked confident from the start.

"But before they had been four and five for 80. To me the opening partnership is a massive key to England doing well, so if we can get early wickets I think it opens up their middle order.

"To me body language is the biggest key, and that is one thing Australia does so well," he stressed.

Referee: Mansoor Azad.

Biggies divided

FROM PAGE 12 The management is also thinking to release a few players.

"We have yet to get used to this culture but it will take some time," he said adding that the new system would be more suitable for a professional league.

Managers of Brothers Union, Abahani and Muktijoddha Sangsad believe that no club will release their players at this stage and they are not interested at all.

Brothers manager Amer Khan said, "We are not thinking to recruit or release any booters. So we didn't approach the others. Also, no club has shown interest in any of our players."

He thought that a transfer in the middle of the league was not at all ideal with the clubs not having professional set-up.

Abahani manager Satyajit Das Rupu questioned the necessity of the new transfer system.

"Would teams like Mohammedan or Brothers agree to release their players? It would not be right to make a comment now. I will give my reaction after seeing what happens," Rupu said.

Muktijoddha manager Abdus Sattar said they will stay out of the market. "We are happy with our reserve bench," he said.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

- | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------|
| ACROSS | DOWN |
| 1 Big fish story? | 1 Pokes |
| 5 Slot-machine symbol | 2 "And pretty maids all in..." |
| 8 Dance lesson | 3 Bit of trickery |
| 12 Met melody | 4 Lustrous fabric |
| 13 Moreover | 5 Foundation and joy |
| 14 Icicle location | 6 Stud fee? |
| 15 Piece of hardware | 7 Vitamin stat |
| 16 Cult sci-fi series | 8 Type of bird dog |
| 18 Honey-bunch | 9 The O'Hara estate |
| 20 Dickens title | 10 Big name in dare-devilry |
| 21 Dawn goddess | 11 Lapdog, for short |
| 22 Exist | 17 Avis adjective |
| 23 Our first orbiter | |
| 26 Fledgling business | |
| 30 Atmosphere | |
| 31 Trouble | |
| 32 Equal (Pref.) | |
| 33 Stiffly formal | |
| 36 Joined by heating | |
| 38 TV | |
| | 19 Heavy weight |
| | 22 Noshed |
| | 23 It may be noble |
| | 24 Torched |
| | 25 Historic period |
| | 26 Sauce source |
| | 27 Frank McCourt memoir |
| | 28 Work with |
| | 29 Spacecraft compartment |
| | 31 "Explain yourself" |
| | 34 Wish otherwise |
| | 35 Ball of yarn |
| | 36 Ever-green |
| | 37 Loosens |
| | 39 Hit hard |
| | 40 Cellular, in really ads |
| | 41 Suit to -- |
| | 42 "Phooey!" |
| | 43 Boast |
| | 44 Never again? |
| | 45 Will-wisp link |
| | 46 Cranny |
| | 48 Improve in the bottle |

Solution time: 21 mins.

BAAL SOP CAAN
RIMA ADO ANNE
ODOR DEMERITS
SERVED PRIMES
AGES NEA
DEMEANOR STAB
AGO DEWEY ONE
WORLD DEMOCRAT
TERR DIKE
ALLIGATOR NONGRAM
DEMANDED TODD
AMEN LIVE ELIA
MART TAR RANT

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
12						13			14		
15						16					
18						19			20		
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23	24	25				26			27	28	29
30						31			32		
33						34	35		36	37	
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47						48			49		
50						51			52		
53						54			55		

CRYPTOQUIP

LMIS SYMK EBVE QFRZE
ISV TMKF IKMVE IR
YGGVYK UCFIKB, QCI SVK

K R R I U L V K V U S R L M Z T
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: THE PENCIL MANUFACTURING COMPANY FOREMAN GOT FIRED. HE COULDN'T GET THE LEAD OUT.
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: R equals O

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.

England to tour in March 2006

Cricket

PTI, Mumbai

England would make a full tour of India for three Tests and seven one-day internationals in March-April of 2006, a top Indian Cricket Board official said on Saturday.

England would be visiting India by February-end after finishing their engagements in Pakistan to play three Tests and seven One-day internationals. The programme has been fixed for March-April, 2006 after India's tour of Pakistan and participation in the Asia Cup, also to be held in Pakistan, BCCI Secretary SK Nair said on Saturday.

The programme for England's visit was finalised during the ICC meetings held in June, he added.

England last visited India in 2001-02.

Nair also said that India were scheduled to visit the West Indies on a full tour after the home series against England. The visit would be in June, 2006, but the final details are yet to be worked out, Nair said.

The BCCI Secretary also said that India would host the ICC Champions Trophy in October-November, 2006.

SCHEDULE

India's international programme after the forthcoming tri-series in Sri Lanka: August-September (2005): Tri-series in Zimbabwe featuring India,

New Zealand and Zimbabwe and a Test series against the hosts.

October: Seven-match ODI series against Sri Lanka at home (under negotiation).

November: Five-match ODI series against South Africa at home.

December: Three-Test series against Sri Lanka at home.

January-February (2006): Three-Test and five-ODI series against Pakistan in Pakistan.

February: Asia Cup in Pakistan.

March-April: Three-Test and seven-ODI series against England at home.

June: Test and one-day international series against West Indies in West Indies.

October-November: ICC Champions Trophy in India.

Lawson reported for suspect action

CRICINFO, Colombo

West Indies bowler Jermaine Lawson has been reported for a suspect bowling action, the ICC confirmed on Sunday.

Lawson's action was called into question by the match officials after the first Test against Sri Lanka in Colombo, and they immediately reported him.