

Colombian star's kids disappear

AFP, Bogota

Two of Colombian football star Pedro Pablo "Pepe" Portocarrero's children disappeared while playing in a Bogota park, police said Tuesday.

According to police, the two children, aged five and three, had been playing Monday evening in the park, but when their mother went to fetch them, she found only their bicycles.

Police, who continued to search for the children in the neighborhood, declined to call the disappearance a kidnapping.

Portocarrero, a star with the Atletico Huila and several other Latin American teams, told a local radio station that little was known about the children's disappearance, and urged anyone who knows their whereabouts to contact police.

Robinho dedicates debut to Perez

MADRID

Robinho has dedicated his stunning Real Madrid debut to club president Florentino Perez.

The Brazil international winger turned in a dazzling 25 minute cameo for Real in their 2-1 win at Cadiz and told AS: "I dedicate my performance at Cadiz to Florentino Perez and Jose Angel Sanchez (marketing chief of Madrid). They are the two people who have helped me most when I was experiencing very bad moments at Santos.

"I want to pay back the fans of Real Madrid for their affection by scoring many goals. I want to pay back all the commitment and faith the club has shown me by doing everything I can on the pitch. I know I made the right choice in Real Madrid.

"To play here is easier than I thought. Madrid is the best team in the world and with the best players in its squad."

-- Internet

Source

Godfather Berlusconi!

REUTERS, Milan

Ukrainian forward Andriy Shevchenko says he plans to take up an offer from Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi to become his son's godfather.

European player of the year Shevchenko added on Tuesday that he and his U.S.-born wife had agreed to baptise their children, alternatively, as Catholics and as Orthodox, the majority faith in ex-Soviet Ukraine.

"Yes, I did get such an offer. As soon as an opportunity arises for the Prime Minister -- he is a very busy man -- the (baptism) ceremony will take place," Shevchenko told a news conference.

"It will take place according to Catholic tradition. That's what we decided in our inter-ethnic family. When we have a second child it will be done according to Orthodox tradition."

Shevchenko is married to U.S. model Kristen Pazik and the couple's first child, son Jordan, was born last October.

The Ukrainian player is on good terms with Berlusconi and recently spent some time at the Prime Minister's villain Sardinia.

Ukraine lead their World Cup Group Two qualifying group with 23 points. They play in Georgia on Saturday and will qualify if they win. They close out the campaign against Turkey and Albania.

Shevchenko denied suggestions that he was interested in a transfer to English champions Chelsea.

"I have just clinched a long-term contract with my club," he said. "I want to stay as long as possible."

He also rejected any notion that he was about to take on either Italian or his wife's American citizenship.

"No and no yet again. I am Ukrainian and proud of it," he said. "I intend to stay Ukrainian. After all, I'm captain of the national side. That should say it all for you."

Maradona's Ferrari fetches a fortune

AP, Buenos Aires

A red 1996 Ferrari Spider owned by former Argentine soccer star Diego Maradona has been auctioned on the Internet for \$670,000 US.

A website manager for MercadoLibre.com said Thursday that the winning bidder, an Argentine whose wasn't identified, beat more than 150 other serious contenders in frenzied, fast-paced bidding.

Juan Martin De la Serna said auctioning drew more than 100,000 visitors.

De la Serna said the current owner, who acquired the car in 2000, wasn't being publicly identified. Maradona, who reportedly owned the car from 1996 until 2000, used to be seen driving it to the training field of his beloved Boca Juniors squad.



PHOTOS: INTERNET SOURCE

Fans wearing replica jerseys of England star Michael Owen cheer on as the former Liverpool and Real Madrid striker walks across the pitch with his daughter Gemma Rose at St James' Park after signing for Newcastle United on Wednesday.

Owen welcomed from the heart



AFP, London

Michael Owen admits he signed for Newcastle because he feared a move to Liverpool would break down and condemn him to another season on the Real Madrid subs' bench.

"I was uncertain that a Liverpool bid would be accepted in time and I wanted to play for a club who really wanted me," he told The Times on Wednesday of his 17 million pound move to Newcastle.

But The Sun reports he was given a get-out clause after 12 months of his 80,000-pound-a-week four-year deal at St James' Park although Newcastle have since denied that.

Owen revealed Newcastle's former England captain Alan Shearer played a major role in persuading him to join the Magpies.

The England striker was won over by the Magpies when he visited Tyneside on Monday.

"Alan was a great help through-

out and instrumental in my decision," he said.

"I had spoken to him many times over the past few weeks and he should work for the Newcastle tourist board when he finishes playing football.

"He even offered to give up his number nine shirt but I have declined. Number 10 will do for me.

"I will regard playing alongside him in his last season as an honour. He has been, and still is, a great striker and there is no way that Newcastle should be where they are in the table with that calibre of player."

Owen admitted he was also taken aback by the response he has already received from the Toon Army after agreeing terms on a four-year deal.

"I have been watching the TV and seen the queues at the club shop. From what I can tell 99 per cent of the fans are delighted that I have chosen Newcastle and are not wondering about how I got there," he said.

"I have a lot of good memories of scoring goals at St James' Park -

including a hat-trick on my first visit with Liverpool.

"I was clapped off by the home fans that afternoon and I only hope I can give them plenty of other reasons to cheer me.

"It will be like winning the World Cup to win a trophy."

Owen spent most of last season behind Brazil star Ronaldo and club captain Raul in the Madrid pecking order and was pushed further down when Madrid signed Brazil pair Robinho and Julio Baptista in the summer.

And England coach Sven Goran Eriksson told him that if he was unable to get first-team football then his place in the England squad for the 2006 World Cup would be in doubt.

Newcastle are currently second-bottom of the Premiership without a league goal in four matches and one point out of a possible 12.

But they can now count on a strike force that includes Owen, Shearer and 9 million-pound Spaniard Albert Luque from Deportivo La Coruna.

Oval Ashes profiteers caught out

BBC ONLINE, undated

Some lucky cricket fans who thought they had failed to get tickets for the final Ashes Test at The Oval have been given a second chance to attend.

Around 300 people who tried to resell tickets and broke the terms and conditions have had them cancelled.

That means around 1,500 tickets for each day have been re-sold to some of the 20,000 fans who went on the waiting list for tickets back in November 2004.

All the reclaimed tickets have now been sold and all five days are sold out.

"People are still phoning up but we're keen to let everyone know we are sold out for all five days," Surrey spokesman Sam Stretfeild told BBC Sport.

PCB likely to have paid selectors

CRICINFO, undated

The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) might soon appoint a paid selection committee in order to professionalise the process of finding, nurturing and selecting talent throughout the country.

Abbas Zaidi, the PCB director, told Cricinfo that the proposal had been mooted at a meeting of the board's ad-hoc committee last month and was now under serious consideration.

"Nothing concrete has come of it yet but it is definitely under consideration. We have no idea yet of how much time it will take to happen but it will happen."

PREMIER DIV HANDBALL Wins for Surjodoy, Old Ideals

SPORTS REPORTER

Narinda Pragati Boys Club beat Surjodoy Kirra Chakra 18-6 in the Cute Premier Division Handball League at the Outer Stadium handball court yesterday.

The winners led the first half 9-2. Old Ideals outplayed Victoria Sporting Club 27-23 in the day's other match after leading the first half 15-10.

Kiwis reach final

FROM PAGE 12 scored two. New Zealand sank to 149 for seven in the 35th over.

Styris steadied the innings with Daniel Vettori in an eighth-wicket stand of 79 that ended in the 48th over when Vettori was caught on the cover boundary by a diving Brendan Taylor off Blignaut for 47.

Two balls later Blignaut bowled Styris for 63.

In reply, Zimbabwe stumbled to five for two in the sixth over and to 93 for six in the 35th.

Stuart Carlisle propped up an end for 87 balls for his 30, which included a solitary four, and Vusi Sibanda's bright 21 came off 30 balls.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard of the Videocon Cup tri-series one-day international between New Zealand and Zimbabwe at the Harare Sports Club ground on Wednesday:

NEW ZEALAND				
Vincent c Taibu b Streak	0			
Fleming c Blignaut b Ireland	23			
Astle c Taibu b Ewing	61			
McMillan c Taylor b Blignaut	5			
H Marshall c Chibhaba b Ireland	7			
Styris b Blignaut	63			
Oram lbw b Ewing	5			
McCullum c and b Ewing	2			
Vettori c Taylor b Blignaut	47			
Mills not out	1			
Bond c Utseya b Blignaut	5			
Extras: (lb-6, nb-1, w-12)	19			
Total: (All out in 49.1 overs)	238			
Fall of wickets: 1-0, 2-39, 3-60, 4-67, 5-129, 6-147, 7-149, 8-228, 9-230				
Substitute: Patel				

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Streak	10	1	46	1
Ireland	10	0	61	2
Blignaut	9.1	0	46	4
Ewing	10	0	31	3
Utseya	10	0	43	0

ZIMBABWE	
Taylor c McCullum b Bond	1
Carlisle b Patel	30
Chibhabha c McCullum b Mills	0
Sibanda run out	21
Taibu b Vettori	16
Streak st McCullum b Vettori	18
Coventry c McCullum b Mills	35
Blignaut c Astle b Bond	50
Ewing c Oram b Bond	12
Mahwire c Oram b Bond	8
Utseya not out	0
Extras: (b-1 lb-3 nb-3 w-13)	20
Total: (All out in 49 overs)	211
Fall of wickets: 1-4, 2-5, 3-37, 4-69, 5-87, 6-93, 7-156, 8-188, 9-211	

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Bond	7	3	17	4
Mills	10	2	34	2
Oram	8	1	38	0
Styris	3	0	10	0
Patel	9	0	47	1
Vettori	10	0	46	2
Astle	2	0	15	0
Result: New Zealand won by 27 runs.				
Man-of-the-match: Andy Blignaut.				
Toss: New Zealand.				
Next match: India v New Zealand, Sept.2.				

Police protection

FROM PAGE 12 successful Test captain with 14 wins until Sourav Ganguly passed him in Pakistan last year.

The stylish middle-order batsman, who shot to fame with three consecutive Test centuries on debut against England in 1984, played 99 Tests and scored 6,215 runs with 22 centuries.

In 334 one-day internationals, Azharuddin made 9,378 runs with seven centuries.

Goal feast

FROM PAGE 12 High School 8-0 but Millat High School managed a solitary goal victory over Nababpur Govt High School at the same venue.

At the Mirpur National Bangla School ground, Residential Model College defeated Islami Adarsha High School 4-1 and National Bangla High School thrashed Mirpur Siddhanta High School 6-1.

West End High School beat Saleha High School 4-0 at the Dhanmondi Club ground while the match between Government Laboratory High School and Kakoli High School ended goalless at the same venue.



PHOTO: AFP

American Andy Roddick is disappointed on losing a point against Gilles Muller of Luxembourg at the US Open in Flushing Meadows on Tuesday.

No party for Roddick



AFP, New York

Luxembourg's Gilles Muller stunned former champion Andy Roddick here Tuesday, sending the fourth-seeded American packing 7-6 (7/4), 7-6 (10/8), 7-6 (7/1) in the first round of the US Open tennis championships.

Muller spoiled what should have been Roddick's 23rd birthday celebrations on the Arthur Ashe Stadium court with a display of poise and precision that left Roddick frustrated at every turn.

Apart from one break in the opening set, which the 22-year-old answered in the ninth game, Roddick couldn't make a dent in Muller's serve.

The left-hander fired 19 forehand winners and seven with his two-handed backhand, keeping Roddick uncharacteristically on the defensive.

Roddick's biggest regret was not serving out the opening set after taking an early break and leading 5-3.

In the second-set tiebreaker, the American had the first set point, which Muller saved with an ace, Roddick responding in kind two points later.

Roddick had one more set point at 8-7 in the breaker, but it was Muller who put it away with a backhand passing

winner.

Muller, who defeated French Open champion Rafael Nadal in four sets in the second round at Wimbledon, said he benefitted from luck - including a ball hit to the line in the third-set tie-breaker off the frame of his racquet.

Roddick was left to ponder another year without a Grand Slam title, his 2003 triumph here remaining his lone major victory.

Meanwhile world No. 1 Roger Federer took his first step toward in his title defence with a 6-1, 6-1, 6-1 victory over Czech Ivo Ljano.

For the second time in as many Grand Slams, Minar found himself serving as early-round Federer fodder, having fallen to the mighty Swiss in the second round at Wimbledon.

After capturing his third straight Wimbledon title - at Roddick's expense - the 24-year-old Federer, 24, is trying to become the first player to defend the US Open title since Australian Patrick Rafter in 1998.

American Lindsay Davenport, the only woman to reach two Grand Slam finals this year, opened her campaign with a 6-4, 6-4 victory over China's Li Na.

Davenport, sidelined for the better part of seven weeks after reaching the Wimbledon final by a bad back, needed four match points to subdue Li.

Women's third seed Amelie

Mauresmo advanced with less difficulty, defeating Italian Roberta Vinci 6-3, 6-2.

French Open champion Justine Henin-Hardenne, the seventh seed, routed Czech Zuzana Ondrasova 6-3, 6-0 in 58 minutes.

After missing much of 2004 and the early part of this year battling illness and injury, Henin-Hardenne is climbing back up the rankings and eyeing another Grand Slam title.

She took a long break after a first-round shock at Wimbledon, and said she was ready for the rigors of a Grand Slam challenge.

Last year's beaten finalist - sixth-seeded Russian Elena Dementieva, also advanced with a 7-5, 6-3 victory over Czech Lucie Safarova.

In men's action, 18-year-old qualifier Andrew Murray gutted out a 6-3, 3-6, 3-6, 6-1, 6-4 victory over Romanian veteran Andrei Pavel to keep the British flag flying after the departure of Tim Henman and Greg Rusedski.

Henman, the 12th seed, was clearly hindered by back pain in a 6-4, 6-2, 6-2 loss to rising Spaniard Fernando Verdasco, while Rusedski, seeded 28th, was handed a 7-5, 7-6 (7/3), 6-3 victory by US wild card James Blake.

BD-SL SCOREBOARD

FROM PAGE 12

Manjarul Islam	5	0	18	1	M	B	4	6
BANGLADESH								
Javed Omar run out (Russel Arnold)	14	18	16	3	0			
Shahriar Nafees c and b Tillakaratne Dilshan	39	83	59	6	0			
Tushar Imran c Kumar Sangakkara b Dilhara Fernando	6	24	18	1	0			
Mohammad Ashraful c Marvan Atapattu b Dilhara Fernando	4	8	4	1	0			
Habibul Bashir lbw b Upul Chandana	14	45	29	1	0			
Aftab Ahmed b Farveez Maharoo	2	21	17	0	0			
Manjarul Islam c Mahela Jayawardene b Farveez Maharoo	5	16	8	1	0			
Khaled Mashud not out	39	97	82	5	0			
Mohammad Rafique c Muttiah Muralitharan b Farveez Maharoo	2	10	6	00				
Syed Rassel lbw b Upul Chandana	15	24	15	2	0			
Tapash Baisya not out	22	51	50	0	0			
Extras: (lb-4, w-11, nb-4)	19							
Total: (For 9 wickets in 50 overs)	181							
Fall of wickets: 1-17 (Javed Omar, 4.2 ov), 2-41 (Tushar Imran, 9.5 ov), 3-51 (Mohammad Ashraful, 11.3 ov), 4-79 (Shahriar Nafees, 19.3 ov), 5-84 (Habibul Bashir, 23.3 ov), 6-88 (Aftab Ahmed, 24.2 ov), 7-94 (Manjarul Islam, 26.3 ov), 8-103 (Mohammad Rafique, 28.3 ov), 9-127 (Syed Rassel, 33.4 ov).								

Bowler	O	M	R	W	Extras
Chaminda Vaas	6	1	21	0	(1w)
Farveez Maharoo	7	1	29	3	(4nb, 3w)
Dilhara Fernando	7	1	29	2	
Tillakaratne Dilshan	10	2	38	1	(2w)
Muttiah Muralitharan	10	2	22	0	(1w)
Upul Chandana	10	0	38	2	(1w)

Bangladesh full substitute: Manjarul (Khaled Mahmud, Sri Lanka innings, 26.0 ov)

Result: Sri Lanka won by 88 runs and take 1-0 lead in the 3-ODI series.

Man-of-the-match: Mahela Jayawardene.

Toss: Bangladesh.

Umpires: Asad Rauf (Pakistan) and Asoka De Silva (Sri Lanka)

Second ODI: Ranasinghe Premadasa International Stadium, Sept.2.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS	37 Pick out of a lineup	3 Argonauts' patron	24 Maleficence
1 Scrooge's shout	39 Place	4 Papal official	25 Anger
8 Siestas	40 Early bird?	5 Broadway character	26 "South Park"
4 Skewer	41 Stir up	6 Dessert choice	27 Kachina worshiper
12 Show unoriginality	45 Pantheon members	7 Scattered everywhere	28 Somalian supermodel
13 Indivisible part	48 Shirik work	8 Last word of "Hey Diddle Diddle"	29 Libel
14 Wear a rut in the rug	50 "Mila 18"	9 Sour-dough's prop	32 "The Seventh Seal"
15 Spaniel variety	51 Census data	10 Unfriendly	33 Major-ette's staff
17 Cameo stone	52 Actress Thompson	11 Cowboy nickname	35 Plead
18 Position	53 "Finding —"	16 Bananas	36 Moderate red
19 Swelled head	54 Iditarod terminus	20 Trap	38 Bas-relief medium
21 Have a bug	55 Gridiron stats	23 Amor-phous form	39 "The Crucible" setting
22 "Legal Eagles" actress	1 Low	2 Datebook	42 Hard to look at
26 Khaki material	2 Datebook	3 Amor-phous form	43 Start a garden
29 Chaps	3 Argonauts' patron	4 Papal official	44 Geologic periods
30 Hall of CXII	5 Pantheon members	6 Dessert choice	45 Roscoe
31 Base runner's goal	8 Shirik work	9 Sour-dough's prop	46 Galena, for one
32 Eventual rose	10 Unfriendly	11 Cowboy nickname	47 Slow on the uptake