

Maradona guarded about national team role

REUTERS, Havana

Soccer great Diego Maradona, who was offered an advisory job on Argentina's 2006 World Cup team on Thursday, said he did not see a role for himself on the team he led to glory in 1986.

"I'd rather stay at home than be a decorative figure who decides nothing," he said on Cuban television.

Argentine Football Association president Julio Grondona said there was a place for Maradona on the national team, though his exact role has not been defined.

Maradona said he would speak to Grondona, but did not see much future in the offer.

"I don't want to get in anybody's way. I am not clear about what my role could be," he said, adding that Argentina coach Jose Pekerman should be free to select his own players.

The former Argentina captain said world champions Brazil were odds-on favorites to win the Cup in Germany.

"Brazil is one notch above everyone else," he said.

ENGLAND FRIENDLY

Argentine squad announced

AFP, Buenos Aires

Argentina squad for friendly international against England in Geneva on November 12 announced by coach Jose Pekerman:

SQUAD

Keepers: Roberto Abbondanzieri (Boca Juniors/ARG), Leonardo Franco (Atletico Madrid/ESP)

DEFENDERS: Roberto Ayala (Valencia/ESP), Gabriel Milito (Real Zaragoza/ESP), Juan Pablo Sorin (Villarreal/ESP), Diego Placente (Celta Vigo/ESP), Fabricio Coloccini (Deportivo La Corogne/ESP), Walter Samuel (Inter Milan/ITA)

MIDFIELDERS: Sebastian Battaglia (Boca Juniors/ARG), Daniel Bilos (Boca Juniors/ARG), Maximiliano Rodriguez (Atletico Madrid/ESP), Juan Roman Riquelme (Villarreal/ESP), Lionel Messi (Barcelona/ESP), Javier Zanetti (Inter Milan/ITA), Esteban Cambiasso (Inter Milan/ITA), Mario Santana (Palermo/ITA), Luis Gonzalez (FC Porto/POR), Martin Demichelis (Bayern Munich/GER)

STRIKERS: Javier Saviola (Sevilla/ESP), Julio Cruz (Inter Milan/ITA), Hernan Crespo (Chelsea/ENG), Carlos Tevez (Corinthians/BRA)

It's not Langer

FROM PAGE 12

Asked how confident he was of playing, he said: "No doubt, 100 per cent."

"I'll probably be a bit sore for a while. I'm not trying to be a hero but it's only pain, mate."

Buchanan said: "It's going to be pretty important that we try to settle the side as quickly as we can."

Langer was one of the best batting successes in the failed Ashes campaign against England last month, topping Australia's averages with 394 runs at 43.77.

With 22 centuries and 7,023 runs in 94 Tests at an average of 45.90, he is Australia's eighth-highest scorer.

SL need

FROM PAGE 12

given away his wicket. Sanath Jayasuriya has found ways to get himself out even against deliveries he would smash to the fence nine times out of ten. Chaminda Vaas has taken an almighty pounding.

TEAMS

INDIA (probable): Virender Sehwag, Sachin Tendulkar, Venugopal Rao, Rahul Dravid, Yuvraj Singh, Mahendra Singh Dhoni, Irfan Pathan, Jai Prakash Yadav, Ajit Agarkar, Harbhajan Singh, Murali Kartik. Supersub: Sree Santh.

SRI LANKA (probable): Sanath Jayasuriya, Kumar Sangakkara, Marvan Atapattu, Mahela Jayawardene, Tillakaratne Dilshan, Russel Arnold, Upul Chandana, Farveez Maharoof, Chaminda Vaas, Muttiah Muralitharan, Nuwan Zoysa. Supersub: Dilhara Lokuhettige.

Shitoryu body elected

SPORTS REPORTER

Film star Masum Parvez Rubel was nominated president and Nazmul Hasan Avi secretary in the 21-member executive committee of the Bangladesh Shitoryu Karate-Do Union.

The committee was re-structured for next three years in its annual general meeting on Saturday. The meeting also decided to hold the Sixth National Shitoryu Karate Championship shortly.



PHOTO: AFP

LET US FIX YOUR NOSE! AC Milan's Alessandro Nesta (L), Jaap Stam (2nd R) and goalkeeper Dida (C) confront Juventus' Romanian international Adrian Mutu at the San Siro stadium in Milan on Saturday.

SERIE A

Milan conquer Juve



Football

AFP, Milan

AC Milan ended Juventus' 100 per cent league record in style with a 3-1 victory over the Serie A leaders on Saturday.

Carlo Ancelotti's side blew away the reigning champions with three first-half goals as Milan recorded their seventh straight win and cut Juve's lead to just two points.

Clarence Seedorf's deflected drive put Milan ahead before Kaka's unstoppable half-volley and an Andrea Pirlo free-kick left Juve on their knees at the interval.

David Trezeguet pulled one back for the visitors in the 76th minute.

Juve, who won their first nine matches for the best ever start in Serie A, have 27 points from their 10 matches played, while second-placed Milan have 25.

Inter Milan are eight points off the pace in third place after they were held to a 2-2 draw at Sampdoria in the day's early match.

Seedorf said his goal was the key to victory as it forced Juventus, whose mean defence had conceded just two league goals before the match, to open up.

"It gave us the upper hand and meant Juventus couldn't just sit back," said the 29-year-old Holland international.

"There was more space, particularly down the wings, and we made the most

of the chances. Our defence were excellent, too.

"It showed that we are at least on a par with Juve."

French midfielder Patrick Vieira returned to Juventus' starting line-up after recovering from a groin strain, while third-choice keeper Antonio Chimenti was handed the gloves in the absence of injured pair Gianluigi Buffon and Christian Abbiati.

Juve captain Alessandro Del Piero made way for Zlatan Ibrahimovic, who partnered Trezeguet in attack.

Milan's leading striker Andriy Shevchenko, injured in a Champions League match 10 days ago, failed to even make the bench.

Juventus fell behind in the 13th minute to the delight of the vast majority of the 80,000 fans packed into the San Siro.

Seedorf cut in from the left and exchanged passes with Alberto Gilardino before shooting right-footed from 20 yards. The Dutchman's effort wasn't particularly well struck but it clipped Vieira's outstretched toe and looped over Chimenti.

Capitalising on every Juve error and moving the ball upfield with speed and precision, Milan underlined their superiority in the 26th minute.

Pirlo's free-kick caused panic in the Juve defence and Brazilian midfielder Kaka hooked the loose ball into the top corner.

Juve's hopes of a comeback were extinguished a minute before half-time.

Chimenti appeared to have Pirlo's

25-yard free-kick covered but he allowed the ball to escape his grasp and Juve went in at the break with a mountain to climb.

Milan, whose defeat in the same fixture last season practically handed Juve the title, were caught napping 14 minutes from time when Trezeguet raced on to Vieira's sublime chip and goalkeeper Nelson Dida let the Frenchman's half-volley slip through his fingers.

The goal proved to be a momentary blip for Milan who have been in imperious form after taking just four points from their first three matches.

In the early match in Genoa, Aimo Diano struck twice for Sampdoria only for Esteban Cambiasso and Ivan Cordoba to reply for the visitors, with all the goals coming before half-time.

Inter, beaten 3-2 by Roma on Wednesday, pushed hard for an equaliser but Sampdoria came closest to sneaking victory when Emiliano Bonazzoli's header struck the crossbar six minutes from time.

TOP SIX										
Italian football league table after Saturday's matches (played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, goals against, points):										
Juventus	10	9	0	1	19	5	27			
Milan	10	8	1	1	21	8	25			
Inter	10	6	1	3	20	10	19			
Florentina	9	6	1	2	20	11	19			
Palermo	9	4	3	2	17	14	15			
Chievo	9	4	3	2	12	9	15			

PRIMERA LIGA

Real pass Betis test



Football

AFP, Madrid

Goals from Robinho and second-half substitute Alvaro Mejia helped Real Madrid reverse their mini-slump, after having lost their two previous games in the last week, with a 2-0 win at Real Betis on Saturday.

"Victory was important but it wouldn't have mattered if we had lost today because we went out there and played, and played well," said a relieved Real Madrid coach Wanderley Luxemburgo.

Real were without Ronaldo, Julio Baptista, Zinedine Zidane and David Beckham, the England captain rested after a flare up of his back problems in Real's 3-1 loss at Deportivo La Coruna on Wednesday. After a tepid first half hour, Robinho gave Real the lead in the 30th minute, finishing off a neat move through the midfield orchestrated by captain Raul Gonzalez.

Mejia, who scored his first professional goal for Real after five years on their books and having worked his way through from their third team, added Real's second after 79 minutes with his first touch of the game.

However, Betis were unfortunate not to level in the 77th minute when Edu crashed the ball past Iker Casillas and off the crossbar.

"We scored with two counter-attacks and that's football, you can talk about many things but we came here and won, and that's not easy to do at Betis," added Luxemburgo, after a game that only came to life in the final 20 minutes.

Real travel to Norway on Sunday ahead of their Champions League match with Rosenborg, with Beckham expected to return to action after missing out on his first game of the season.

Betis have now lost their last four matches, starting with their 4-0

hammering at Chelsea in the Champions League ten days ago, and conceded 14 goals in that time while only scoring two.

The English-based side play host to the Sevilla Premiership leaders on Tuesday.

"At least we went out to try and

'Lampard is the best'

AFP, London

Chelsea manager Jose Mourinho hailed Frank Lampard as the best player in the world after the midfielder inspired his team to a 4-2 victory over Blackburn at Stamford Bridge.

The England man calmed the Premiership champions' nerves with a crucial third goal on the hour after spirited Rovers had staged a stirring fightback to wipe out their initial two goal lead.

And Mourinho believes it is time the former West Ham midfielder was given some kind of recognition on the world stage after taking his tally in a stunning season to 10 league goals.

The Portuguese boss said: "I would ask the people who are responsible for giving out these beautiful international awards what they are doing at weekends."

"It's only in England that he gets the recognition he deserves in terms of winning individual trophies."

"He is the best player in the world - because he plays every game. There are other great players in the world of football but they play well once a month."

"This man is top every game and I wouldn't swap him for any other player in the world. I don't know a weak point where he can improve - I just hope he carries on playing like this."

TOP SIX

Spanish football league table after Saturday's matches (played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, goals against, points):

Real	10	6	0	4	21	11	18
Osasuna	9	6	0	3	12	10	18
Getafe	9	5	2	2	16	12	17
Celta	10	5	2	3	14	10	17
Barcelona	9	4	4	1	19	10	16
Sociedad	9	5	1	3	15	14	16

The Prince's day out

AFP, London

Britain's Prince William joined Premiership football side Charlton Athletic for training and a fact-finding tour on Friday ahead of his appointment to the presidency of the English game's governing body.

"I'm not as fit as I thought I was. I should be a lot fitter," complained the 23-year-old after completing a warm-up jog with players at Charlton's New Eltham training ground, in southeast London.

William, who is second in line to the British throne and has recently announced his intention to join the army, is due to replace his uncle, Prince Andrew, as president of the Football Association next May.

The young royal said he was keen to have a "hands-on" approach to the job -- despite it coinciding with the start of his officer training -- and get more young people involved in the sport.

"I really want to try and get more kids involved in football," he told reporters after meeting Charlton manager Alan Curbishley to get an insight into the day-to-day running of a football club.

"The power of football is huge and I think it needs to be harnessed and at the same time the sportsman side of football is a key issue to focus on."

"The image of the FA has its own light. I just want to be helpful and be a contributor. I don't just want to be a figurehead. I want to help football... and generally support football in every way I can."

William was forced to eat his words about young people, however, when he was embarrassed during a kickabout with boys and girls from Charlton's award-winning community training programme.

Fleming, Styris

FROM PAGE 12

squad Saturday, replaced Kallis.

New Zealand brought back Hamish Marshall, with Jacob Oram dropping down to the substitute role in place of James Franklin, who was unavailable because of a backspasm.

South Africa's 19-run win in Cape Town extended their winning streak to 11 matches and they have been unbeaten in 16 matches.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard in the third one-day international between South Africa and New Zealand at St George's Park in Port Elizabeth on Sunday:

NEW ZEALAND

Fleming run out (Kemp)	54
Astle c Kemp b Ntini	11
Vincent c Boucher b Ntini	3
HJ Marshall c Smith b Nel	7
Styris b Langeveldt	78
McMillan run out (Pollock)	19
McCullumb b Ntini	19
Adams run out (De Villiers)	25
Vettori c Gibbs b Nel	6
Mills not out	6
Extras (lb-5, nb-2, w-8)	15
Total: (For 9 wkts in 50 overs)	243
Fall of wickets: 1-18, 2-23, 3-49, 4-108, 5-155, 6-203, 7-206, 8-224, 9-243	
Did not bat: Bond	
Substitute: Oram	

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Pollock	10	0	23	0
Ntini	10	0	37	3
Nel	10	2	47	2
Langeveldt	10	0	76	1
Kemp	7	0	40	0
Smith	3	0	15	0

Toss: South Africa

Umpires: S Bucknor and B Jerling

Expected C'wealth

FROM PAGE 12

Milzar Hossain (athletics), Shahabuddin Ahmed (swimming) and Shahidul Islam (weightlifting) -- and Kaiser Islam as armourer for the shooters.

In a welcome move the number of officials have been reduced to three with BOA deputy secretary-general Ishtiaq Ahmed Curren selected as Chef-de-Mission, Bangladesh Weightlifting Federation general secretary Tabiur Rahman as manager and Nuruzzaman as doctor.

The Commonwealth Games participants have already completed their first-phase training and will resume camp on November 12.

Hameed still

FROM PAGE 12

Western Frontier Province city of Peshawar playing a match on the day of the earthquake and said he had never felt so scared in his life.

"The whole pavilion building was shaking violently from side to side and it felt as if it was over for us as we rushed on to the ground," he said adding that aftershocks were a worry.

"The aftershocks continue even now and it is difficult for us to get on with our lives. This morning I was terrified after another big aftershock came," he said.

"These last few weeks I have played just one match. But tomorrow I must try to focus on the cricket against England," he added.

Hameed, who has played 17 Tests and 47 one-day internationals, is only the second batsman in Test history after West Indian Lawrence Rowe to have scored two Test centuries in his debut match -- against Bangladesh in August 2003.

All Fletcher wants is win England's Pak tour opener begins today



Cricket

AFP, Islamabad

England cricket coach Duncan Fletcher said Sunday his team is determined to win the three-match Test series against Pakistan to keep the Ashes momentum going.

"We want to win every Test match from the start and set the mark," Fletcher told reporters, ahead of his team's opening three-day match against Pakistan Cricket Board Patron's XI starting on Monday in Rawalpindi.

England, buoyed by their dramatic 2-1 win over Australia last month which gave them their first Ashes win in 18 years, play three Tests and five one-day matches in Pakistan.

The first Test starts in the central city of Multan on November 12.

"To be honest, the Ashes cannot be

out of the England team's scheme and at the end of the day if you win the Ashes it gives you confidence. But what we don't want is over-confidence and complacency," said Fletcher.

"If we have the confidence and self-belief after beating Australia we can mix it with the best because Pakistan is also a good side," said Fletcher, who was also England's coach when England beat Pakistan 1-0 in 2000.

Fletcher said he was confident his batsmen can handle any spin threat which Pakistani bowlers and pitches offer.

Leg-spinner Warne, despite taking 40 wickets, failed to stop England's victory. But he helped Australia down the World XI in the Super Test in Sydney earlier this month.

Fletcher said he was unsure what type of wickets Pakistan will employ in the Tests.

England's seamers surprised Australia with their ability to reverse-swing the ball in the Ashes series, with Simon Jones taking 18 wickets in four Tests.

Jones is absent from the Pakistan tour after suffering a knee injury.

TEAMS

ENGLAND (from): Michael Vau-ghan (captain), Andrew Strauss, Marcus Trescothick, Ian Bell, Kevin Pietersen, Geraint Jones, Ashley Giles, Alex Loudon, Shaun Udal, Liam Plunkett, Matthew Hoggard, Paul Collingwood, Matt Prior, James Anderson.

PCB PATRON'S XI (from): Asher Zaidi, Yasir Hameed, Bazid Khan, Misbahul Haq, Asim Kamal, Faisal Iqbal, Imran Tahir, Yasir Arafat, Zulqarnain, Mohammad Irshad, Arshad Khan, Mohammad Asif, Najaf Shah, Shehzad Malik.

Samuels stars with ball too but WI denied win



Cricket

AFP, Brisbane

West Indian all-rounder Marlon Samuels followed up his record 257 with five wickets as Queensland batted out for a draw in their four-day cricket tour match at Allan Border Field here Sunday.

The Caribbean tourists outplayed the Queenslanders for much of the warm-up match ahead of this week's opening Test with Australia, but were denied a merited win by a dogged last-wicket partnership which kept the West Indians at bay.

Samuels backed up his highest first-class score on Saturday with his first career five-wicket haul that has likely clinched him a place in the West Indian team for the Gabba Test, starting on Thursday.

The 24-year-old Jamaican had his critics over his tour selection but his superb all-round performance this weekend was the big positive for Windies' coach Bennett King, faced with

a mounting injury list.

Team vice-captain and key batsman Ramnaresh Sarwan limped off in Sunday's final session with a knee injury.

Sarwan received treatment after appearing to twist his knee while taking a catch at leg-slip off Samuels' bowling.

He failed to participate in the team's warm-down session after the game.

Sarwan joins in-form quick Daren Powell (quad), Wavell Hinds (broken finger) and Brian Lara (finger) on the injured list from the game. Powell failed to bowl a ball in Queensland's second innings after taking four wickets in the first innings.

Lara was forced to bat at number eight in the Windies' batting order and favoured his hand while fielding in the deep.

Windies captain Shivnarine Chanderpaul played down any talk of an injury crisis in the countdown to the first of three Tests against Australia.

Chanderpaul said Lara was a certain starter and made light of the Trinidad great's worrying batting form after he was again dismissed cheaply for one in the tourists' massive 612 for nine.

Boro floor United

FROM PAGE 12

career."

Gaizka Mendietia put Boro ahead as early as the second minute when his long-range shot slipped through the grasp of United keeper Edwin van der Sar.

Boro doubled their lead in the 25th minute when Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink latched onto Mendietia's long cross-field ball, dispossessed the dithering Rio Ferdinand and lashed the ball home.

Then, on the stroke of half-time, Boro went 3-0 up when Aiyegbeni Yakubu scored from the penalty spot after Kieran Richardson, inside his own box, pulled at the shirt of Boro full-back Stuart Parnaby.

Mendietia then scored his second 12 minutes from time after Yakubu powered past Ferdinand and cut the ball back.

But there was no clean sheet for Boro when, deep into stoppage time, Cristiano Ronaldo headed in from a Paul Scholes corner.

Arsenal made it 13 games unbeaten against arch-rivals Tottenham after coming from a goal behind at White Hart Lane to secure a point in a 1-1 north London derby draw.

England centre-back Ledley King put Spurs, who stayed three points ahead of Arsenal, in front before Robert Pires atoned for his part in last

week's penalty mix-up against Manchester City by coming off the bench to score a 77th minute equaliser.

Bolton knocked Charlton, Chelsea's midweek League Cup conquerors, down from second to fifth and went fourth thanks to Kevin Nolan's 72nd minute goal at The Valley.

Simon Davies took Everton off the bottom of the table as he scored the winner in a 1-0 win away to fellow strugglers Birmingham.

Portsmouth overcame what appeared to be Laurent Robert's refusal to take his place on the bench and a 1-0 deficit for a 4-1 win at Sunderland that left the Black Cats at the foot of the Premiership.

Liverpool, after defeats by Fulham and a League Cup exit against Championship side Crystal Palace, eased some of the pressure on manager Rafael Benitez with a 2-0 win at home to West Ham thanks to goals from Xabi Alonso and Bolo Zenden.

Chelsea, following last week's 1-1 draw against Everton and penalty shoot-out League Cup exit against Charlton stormed into a 2-0 lead inside 15 minutes.