

Chelsea, Liverpool & Inter in last 16

UEFA CHAMPS LEAGUE
REUTERS, London.

European champions Liverpool, Inter Milan and Chelsea moved into the last 16 of the Champions League on Wednesday, although Liverpool took their place despite being held to a goalless draw at Anfield by Real Betis.

That point was enough to see them through from Group G along with English rivals Chelsea, who also advanced after a comfortable 2-0 win over Anderlecht in Brussels, the Belgian side's record-extending 12th successive Champions League defeat.

Ten teams are now through to the last 16 with Liverpool, Chelsea and Inter joining Arsenal, Ajax Amsterdam, Barcelona, Bayern Munich, Juventus, Olympique Lyon and Real Madrid in the first knockout round.

Despite failing to win, Liverpool (11 points) did enough to qualify and will either finish first or second in the group depending on the outcome of their last match at Chelsea (10 points) on December 6.

Chelsea raced into a 2-0 lead after only 15 minutes against Anderlecht in Brussels with goals from Hernan Crespo and Ricardo Carvalho, but despite dominating the English champions could not score again. Neither, unsurprisingly, could Anderlecht who have now gone five games without a goal in this season's competition proper. Chelsea at least ended a year's wait for an away win in the competition after five defeats and a draw.

Inter Milan had good reason to celebrate their place in the last 16 after a thumping one-sided 4-0 win over Artmedia Bratislava at a deserted San

Siro in Group H.

It was the last of their four matches to be played behind closed doors after crowd trouble against AC Milan last season and was secured with a superb

Rangers kept their hopes alive in the same group by drawing 1-1 at Porto leaving Inter confirmed in top spot on 12 points, followed by Rangers (6), Artmedia (5) and Porto (4).



Lyon's John Carew (L) back-heels between the legs of Real Madrid defender Roberto Carlos to level the scores during their Champions League clash at Madrid on Wednesday.

hattrick from Brazilian Adriano. Inter also took the field with no Italians in the side and only one European -- Portuguese Luis Figo who scored their opening goal.

Inter's arch-rivals AC Milan also produced a 4-0 win with a blistering performance against Fenerbahce in Istanbul with European Footballer of the Year Andrei Shevchenko going one

better than Adriano by scoring all four goals in their Group E victory.

The result was in stark contrast to Milan's last match in Istanbul when they lost the Champions League final to Liverpool in May after being 3-0 ahead, but there was no hint of a repeat of that nightmare on Wednesday as they dominated throughout.

Schalke 04 crushed Group E leaders PSV Eindhoven 3-0 in Gelsenkirchen with a hattrick, including two penalties, from Levan Kobiashvili and with one match to play AC Milan and Schalke have eight points and PSV seven with all three still hoping to qualify. Fenerbahce are out of contention on four.

Lyon (13 points) secured top place in Group F ahead of Real (10 points) although they lost their 100 percent record after the teams drew 1-1 at the Bernabeu.

Guti put Real ahead in the first half and Norwegian striker John Carew equalised for Lyon late in the second.

Lyon cannot be knocked off top spot even if they lose their last match at home to Rosenborg Trondheim and Real win at Olympiakos because the French champions have a better head-to-head record after beating Real 3-0 in September.

Rosenborg equalised two minutes from time against Olympiakos, who finished with 10 men, to draw 1-1 and secure a UEFA Cup spot by guaranteeing third place in the group.

Olympiakos were denied their first-ever away win in the Champions League after 27 failures but at least ended a run of six successive defeats in the competition.

The final matchday takes place on December 6 and 7 before the knockout phase begins in February.

Fourth loss for England U-19s

SPORTS REPORTER

England Under-19 team's losing streak in the tour of Bangladesh continued as they crashed to their fourth consecutive defeat to Bangladesh Cricket Board High Performance (HP) squad in Khulna yesterday.

The visitors, who will be involved in a triangular series with Bangladesh and Sri Lanka next month, reached 197-9 while chasing 214 in the limited-overs match at the Khulna Divisional Stadium.

The two sides will meet again today.

SCORES IN BRIEF

HP SQUAD: 213-9 in 50 overs (Rahman 61, Shamsur 30, Nadif 33, Sonnet 17, Hamilton 3-29, Moeen 2-34).

ENGLAND U-19s: 197-9 in 50 overs (Chopra 37, Brown 22, Moeen 23, Wright 23, Hamilton 42, Mosharraf 3-38).

SL-Bangladesh U-17 qualifier today

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh will face Sri Lanka in the second leg of the AFC Under-17 Football Championship qualifying round in Colombo today.

The visitors will begin the game with an edge after winning the home match 3-0 at the Bangabandhu National Stadium on November 21. The winners will book a place in the finals to be held in Singapore in September 2006.

Ref Dalil Khan no more

SPORTS REPORTER

Mohammed Sporting Club yesterday consoled the death of famous FIFA referee and footballer Dalil Khan.

Dalil, who was 80, died of old age ailment at his residence in Mirpur on Wednesday. He was not only regarded as one of the best match officials of the country but also famous for his strong personality.

AFRO-ASIAN CRICKET BD U-19' last match today

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh will be pitted against South Africa in their last league match today in the Afro-Asia Under-19 cricket tournament in Visakhapatnam, India.

Bangladesh, who were out of contention for a place in the final after losing the first two matches to India and Sri Lanka, have beaten Zimbabwe and Pakistan in a row.

2007 World Cup tickets go on sale May 1

REUTERS, Kingston

Tickets for the 2007 Cricket World Cup (CWC) in the West Indies will go on sale on May 1, 2006, and start at 10 US dollars, officials said.

More than 800,000 tickets will be available and will range from 10 dollars for warm-up matches to 300 dollars for a luxury seat at the final, CWC commercial manager Stephen Price said.

"Everyone will have an equal chance to buy a ticket and there are prices for every pocket," Price told a news conference on Wednesday.

Purchases will be restricted to a maximum of four tickets per match. Applications can be made online at www.cricketworldcup.org.

Another 'fifty' for Botham

BBC ONLINE, undated

Ian Botham, one of English cricket's greatest players, is celebrating another milestone.

The former all-rounder, known as Beffy, turned 50 on Thursday and to mark the occasion the England team on tour in Pakistan penned him a special message.

It reads: "Congratulations Ian. This must be one of your slower 50s. You are an inspiration to many of us in the dressing room for the way you played the game. We wish you all the best on reaching this milestone."

Botham, who played in 102 Tests from 1977 to 1992 scoring 5,200 runs and taking 383 wickets, is in Pakistan commenting on the Test series.

He will celebrate with a party in Lahore before heading off to a charity golf tournament in Bangalore in India.

Emperor strikes back

UEFA CHAMPS LEAGUE
AFP, Milan

The city of Milan's two Champions League contenders flexed their muscles with 4-0 victories on Wednesday and stunning hat-tricks from strikers Andriy Shevchenko and Adriano.

Neither Inter nor AC Milan went into their matches against Artmedia Bratislava and Fenerbahce in good form and their two main strikers had both been below par in recent weeks.

Rivals will be well advised not to underestimate the two clubs or their forwards now.

Ukrainian Shevchenko's four goal performance for AC Milan in Istanbul was the more impressive of the two displays, given it came away from home against tricky opponents, but Brazilian Adriano's three goals for Inter were arguably more significant.

The Brazilian has been struggling this season, managing just five goals in Serie A -- three in the opening day victory over lowly Treviso.

The powerfully built forward had not

scored at all in the Champions League group stage and has faced suggestions in the media that he has not been fully focused on his game.

He returned late from international duty with Brazil in October, receiving a public rebuke from Argentine teammate Juan Sebastian Veron, and missed a training session after oversleeping -- prompting speculation about his lifestyle.

Adriano may have coped more easily with the criticism had he been delivering on the field but he has looked tired and frustrated and conceded he had found it hard to cope with his dry spell and the media talk.

"I'm not angry. I would just like people to tell the truth and not make things up," he said.

"I know I bear great responsibility, I want to work very hard, improve and win with Inter, a great club that has always been by my side," said the Brazilian.

"I have worked hard lately. I have been through some bad times when I wasn't right psychologically. Now I am back on track. I want to continue to work well in the week and be in good physical

shape all the time."

European Footballer of the Year Shevchenko's season has been less troubled, with five goals in eight Serie A appearances and a first-ever World Cup qualification with Ukraine.

But Milan went to Turkey on the back of a 3-1 league defeat to Fiorentina and their 1-0 Champions League loss to PSV Eindhoven which has left their qualification chances from Group E in the balance.

The 4-0 victory was a throwback to Milan's displays three years ago when they won the competition after some superb counter-attacking football away from home -- with the Ukrainian's deadly finishing a key to their success.

Milan vice-president Adriano Galliani said Shevchenko now deserved to be considered among the very best Milan strikers of all-time.

"I believe that with this performance he has now approached the likes of Marco Van Basten and Gunnar Nordahl, he is one of the three best Rossoneri strikers of the post-war period," he said.

Dramatic Faisalabad

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third ball of the innings before Naved bowled Strauss in his opening over.

Two overs later, Akhtar had Bell caught behind and then Naved trapped Vaughan on leg before.

England had a chance of squaring the series in the morning session of the topsy-turvy day, but were in danger of losing it in the afternoon. They needed one early wicket, that of Inzamam, who had only tail-enders to give him company.

Pakistan were only 199 ahead with four wickets in hand when play resumed, but in-form Inzamam saved the match with his brilliant knock.

Inzamam followed his first-innings 109 with an unbeaten hundred to become only the second Pakistani batsman after Hanif Mohammad (1961-62) to score a century in each innings of a Test against England.

The Pakistan captain, who also made 53 and 72 in the first Test at Multan, continued to thrive on the England attack.

He offered a chance on 79 while going for a big shot off spinner Shaun Udal, but Strauss failed to judge a skier at the mid-wicket boundary. Pakistan

were already 256 ahead with two wickets in hand.

Inzamam farmed the strike only when last man Danish Kaneria was at the other end. He was on 81 when Kaneria walked in but batted shrewdly to complete his hundred in the tail-end of the company.

SCOREBOARD

Final scoreboard on the fifth and final day of the second cricket Test between Pakistan and England at the Iqbal Stadium on Thursday:

PAKISTAN: First innings 462 (Inzamam 109, Afridi 92, Yousof 78; Harmison 3-85, Giles 2-85, Hoggard 2-115)

ENGLAND: First innings 446 (Bell 115, Pietersen 100, Jones 55; Afridi 4-95)

PAKISTAN: Second innings (overnight 183-6)

Malik c Bell b Flintoff 26
Tahir b Udal 50
Younis b lbw b Hoggard 27
Yousuf b Flintoff 20
Inzamam not out 100
Afridi b Flintoff 0
Akmal c Jones b Harmison 9
Naved c Jones b Harmison 1
Akhtar c Jones b Hoggard 14
Samil b lbw b Hoggard 5
Kaneria not out 2

Extras: (b-4, lb-8, nb-2) 14
Total: (For 6 wickets in 48 overs) 164
Fall of wickets: 1-1, 2-5, 3-10, 4-20, 5-100, 6-138

Bowler O M R W
Akhtar 11 2 61 3
Naved 12 3 30 3
Sami 6 1 18 0
Kaneria 12 4 27 0
Afridi 7 2 16 0

Result: Match drawn and Pakistan lead the 3-Test series 1-0.

Man-of-the-match: Inzamamul Haq.

Final Test: Lahore, Nov 29-Dec 3.

Pakistan recall

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was banned on Monday for one Test and two one-day internationals for damaging the pitch here, is also missing from the 15-man squad.

Bari said the team were playing well as a unit.

"We don't want to disturb the balance of the team which is very good. The best thing about this team is their fighting spirit even when the chips are down," he said.

SQUAD

Inzamamul Haq (captain), Salman Butt, Shoaib Malik, Younis Khan, Mohammad Yousuf, Asim Kamal, Kamran Akmal, Mohammad Sami, Danish Kaneria, Arshad Khan, Mushtaq Ahmed, Shoaib Akhtar, Navedul Hasan, Hasan Raza, Mohammad Asif.

Security up

FROM PAGE 16

Indian captain Rahul Dravid, seeking another series win after a 6-1 demolition of Sri Lanka earlier this month, was confident the home team will deliver.

"If we play as well as we have been doing over the past month we should win," said Dravid.

Dravid was also confident there would be no disruption of the match.

The match also holds special significance for Indian star Sachin Tendulkar, who will surpass Pakistani Wasim Akram's world record of 356 one-day appearances.

The 32-year-old, who has scored more runs (13,877) and centuries (38) than any other batsman in one-day cricket, played his 356th game in Bangalore.

Best on deathbed

Football

AFP, London

Football legend George Best was on death's doorstep in hospital here on Thursday and unlikely to live another day, his doctors said.

Specialist liver consultant Professor Roger Williams, who has been overseeing Best's treatment, said the 59-year-old was suffering from bleeding complications and his "hours are numbered".

"It is the final stages of this illness. He could die at any time in the next 24 hours. I would be very surprised if he survives another 24 hours," he added.

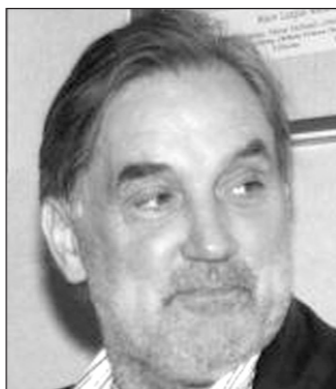
Visibly upset, Williams told reporters outside the private Cromwell Hospital in west London: "I'm afraid Mr. Best is coming to the end of his long road with his illness."

"The situation is that, medically, the intensive care team and everybody concerned have managed to cope with pretty well all the complications except the one that's happened again during the night...this bleeding."

Williams said the haemorrhaging had spread from the former

Manchester United and Northern Ireland winger's lungs to other parts of his body.

"There's really no return from that situation," he added. "It's just not possible to recover from that episode he's had during the night."



GEORGE BEST

"He's still alive, he's still having standard medical care and treatment but I have to tell you that his hours are numbered now and it's all very upsetting for all of us who look after him."

Best, whose battle with alcoholism led to a life-saving liver transplant in 2002, was taken to hospital on October

1 with an infection thought to be linked to immuno-suppressant drugs used to help prevent his body rejecting the new organ.

His health deteriorated rapidly at the end of October when he developed a kidney infection. He had been making daily progress until last week when he suffered a severe setback, developing a lung infection.

Considered among the sport's greats with Pele and Diego Maradona, Best was the first "pop-star" footballer.

He made his professional debut for Manchester United in 1963, aged 17, going on to help the club become the first English side to lift the European Cup in 1968. In the same year he was voted European Player of the Year.

He won 37 international caps for Northern Ireland before heavy drinking took its toll and he quit Old Trafford unexpectedly at the age of 28.

Best's alcoholism brought on a succession of health problems which led to the transplant, during which he nearly died.

He was back on alcohol within a year, however, even after having been told another drink could kill him.

Chess League draw today

SPORTS REPORTER

The number draw of the Dutch-Bangla Bank First Division Chess League, which commences tomorrow, will be held at the NSC conference room today.

All the 16 teams have been requested to submit their squad lists to the Bangladesh Chess Federation before the draw.

Lanka look to Tests

Cricket

AFP, Bangalore

Sri Lanka's cricket captain Marvan Atapattu said on Thursday he was confident his team can record its first Test victory in India despite the recent 6-1 one-day series drubbing.

The Sri Lankans, who returned home after the one-day series earlier

this month, are back in India for three Test matches on the second leg of the split tour.

SQUAD
Marvan Atapattu (captain), Chaminda Vaas (vice-captain), Mahela Jayawardene, Kumar Sangakkara, Tillakeratne Dilshan, Upul Tharanga, Tilan Samaraweera, Farveez Maharoof, Dilhara Fernando, Muttiah Muralitharan, Avishka Gunawardene, Lasith Malinga, Malinga Bandara, Sajeewa Weerakoon and Chamara Kapugedara.

Strauss to miss third Pak Test

AFP, Faisalabad

England opener Andrew Strauss will miss next week's third Test against Pakistan as he is flying back home to attend the birth of his first child, an official said Thursday.

"Strauss will miss the third Test as he was due to fly back home on Friday to be with his wife who is expecting their first child on Monday," England media manager Andrew Walpole said.

Strauss is likely to return for the five-match one-day series that follows the Tests.

Inzamam gets

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Following are the Pakistani batsmen to score a century in each innings:

Hanif Mohammad 111 & 104 v England at Dhaka in 1961-62

Javed Miandad 104 & 103 not out v New Zealand at Hyderabad in 1984-85

Wajahatullah Wasti 133 & 121 not out v Sri Lanka at Lahore in 1998-99

Yasir Hameed 170 & 105 v Bangladesh at Karachi in 2003-04

Inzamamul Haq 109 & 100 not out v England at Faisalabad in 2005

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS	39 Authoriza-	DOWN	25 Sax-
1 Scepter	tion	1 Ear-	playing
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