

## A time to make friends

### Final Draw for the 2006 FIFA World Cup Germany™



PHOTO: AFP

FIFA president Sepp Blatter (4th L) speaks at a press briefing in Leipzig on Thursday on the eve of draw for the 2006 World Cup finals.

## Merkel's money on Germany

AFP, Berlin

German Chancellor Angela Merkel is putting her money on Germany exploiting its home advantage to win the 2006 World Cup.

"Of course we can become the world champions. I really think so because the home advantage can play a big role," Merkel told the Bild daily.

"I would not make myself out to be an expert. There are many people who know more about tactics and game plans than I do, but I am a big football fan," she added.

"I often went to matches in the former East Germany and also after 1990," the year of German reunification.

With less than 200 days to go before the World Cup kicks off, Merkel warned hooligans to stay away from the June 9 to July 9 event.

"Trouble-makers have no place at the World Cup," said the chancellor who became Germany's first female leader in November.

## Lee beamers

FROM PAGE 12 sent down more than one beam ball in a series, then the player should be suspended for a game.

Australian captain Ricky Ponting insisted Lee's latest controversial delivery was an attempted yorker that went astray and the bowler apologised to McCullum immediately.

## Div I cricket

FROM PAGE 12 At BKSP, Dhanmondi Sporting Club rode on an unbeaten 54 by Ashique to beat Dhaka Wanderers by three wickets.

Dhanmondi scored 189 for 7 in 49.3 overs in reply to Wanderers 184-9 in 50 overs.

## Kumble looks

FROM PAGE 12 Tendulkar would get his world record 35th Test hundred in the series than his milestone.

"I have no qualms about not being considered a high-profile player," he said. "The team definitely knows what I'm capable of."

"I've got the respect from the team and from the opposition," he said. "At the end of the day that is what matters."

## Inzy fears Eng

FROM PAGE 12 Two one-day internationals for damaging the pitch during the second Test at Faisalabad.

Inzamam said a decision on all-rounder Shoaib Malik will be made after he returns on Friday from Australia, where he has undergone new treatment on his bowling action after it was reported during the first Test against England.

England need to lift themselves from both the Test series defeat and from captain Michael Vaughan's absence with a knee injury.

Currently ranked six in the world, England also must beat Pakistan to get direct entry to the biennial Champions Trophy in India next year.

The tourists' build-up to the series has not been auspicious, losing a warm-up game against Pakistan 'A' by a single wicket on Wednesday.

Marcus Trescothick, who will lead the side in Vaughan's absence, said England can beat Pakistan if they play well.

"Pakistan are a good side and got a lot of experience. Obviously playing at home they are a great side over here," said the left-handed opener, who has previously led England in five one-dayers, winning three of them.

"It's going to be a tough challenge to beat them. We can beat them if we play well."

A sell-out crowd of 25,000 is expected to watch the first match, with proceeds from ticket sales going to victims of the South Asian earthquake.

## Flemo boost for Kiwis

### Third ODI today



AFP, Wellington

Stephen Fleming will return to the New Zealand side for the third one-day international against Australia in Christchurch on Saturday but for once he will not be calling the shots.

Daniel Vettori stood in as skipper for the first two matches while Fleming recovered from the removal of a benign tumour from his face, and will retain the captaincy for the last match of the series.

It will be the first time in his last 256 Tests and one-day internationals that Fleming will not be leading New Zealand, but he said retaining Vettori would be good for continuity and easing his own return into the side.

"He's done a great job in this series, as we knew he would do, and I think it makes sense for him to continue," Fleming said of Vettori.

James Marshall will make way for Fleming in the team, which will be trying to prevent Australia from making a clean sweep of the Chappell-Hadlee series. New Zealand's pace spearhead Shane Bond will be missing again as he recovers from a hamstring strain.

New Zealand suffered a huge 147-run loss in the first match but

showed a vast improvement to go down by two runs in a thrilling finish in the second in Wellington on Wednesday.

Vettori said New Zealand are hoping to strike back after their much stronger showing when they scored 320 in reply to Australia's 322-5.

"Especially from a batting point of view, the way we rebounded from Auckland and the way the guys played Brett Lee and the rest of the Australian bowling attack was hugely positive," he said.

"Any win you can take against Australia is important. We've had a run of losses against them for a while now so the guys are still pretty motivated to get something out of the series," Vettori said.

Australia's super-sub on Wednesday Mick Lewis has been rewarded with a starting spot for his cool head on debut in bowling an immaculate last over in Wellington.

Cameron White, who was super-sub in the first match, also starts the match.

Mitchell Johnson, who arrived in New Zealand Friday to replace Brett Lee -- who has returned to Australia for nasal surgery to treat a sinus problem -- will make his international debut as super-sub. Spinning all-rounder Brad Hogg has been left out.

Lee would have been a controversial figure if he played in Christchurch, after bowling a high full toss at New Zealand batsman Brendon McCullum in the second-last over on Wednesday.

New Zealand coach John Bracewell earlier this year accused Lee of deliberately bowling beamer balls. When asked for his reaction Thursday, he referred reporters to his earlier comments.

But Australian skipper Ricky Ponting leapt to the defence of Lee, saying the chest-high full toss on Wednesday was an accident caused by the dewy conditions.

**TEAMS**  
**NEW ZEALAND (from):** Daniel Vettori (captain), Stephen Fleming, Nathan Astle, Lou Vincent, Hamish Marshall, Scott Styris, Craig McMillan, Chris Cairns, Jacob Oram, Brendon McCullum, Kyle Mills, Chris Martin.

**AUSTRALIA:** Ricky Ponting (captain), Adam Gilchrist, Simon Katich, Brad Hodge, Andrew Symonds, Michael Clarke, Michael Hussey, Cameron White, Stuart Clark, Nathan Bracken, Mick Lewis, Mitchell Johnson (super sub).

## 2006 WC to be the most profitable

AFP, Leipzig

The 2006 World Cup in Germany will generate around 1.7 billion euros (two billion dollars), FIFA General Secretary Urs Linsi announced here on Friday.

Football's world governing body will receive 1.2 billion euros from the sale of television rights for the finals which will take place from June 9 to July 9 in 12 German cities.

Another 500 million euros will come from the 15 sponsors who have paid for the exclusive right to associate their name with football's biggest event.

Linsi said FIFA expected to make a profit of around 110 million euros, which would make the 2006 finals the most profitable in history.

The 2010 World Cup in South Africa will bring in around 40 percent more, but FIFA will have to invest heavily to help the local organising committee build new stadiums and infrastructure.

FIFA has already approved an initial budget of 130 million euros for the first finals to be held in Africa.

## Bangladesh await

FROM PAGE 12 capability of playing better than the Bhutan-game. Nepal are an attacking side and they won't sit at the back like Bhutan. We were more aggressive against Bhutan but tomorrow, we have to be watchful.

We would have a tougher job in the midfield and I will need some more support," the Bangladesh captain said referring to Alfaz, who virtually played as the third striker.

"If he goes up too often, the pressure is more on me. We need more understanding in the middle," said Joy, marked as the most consistent player of the side by the coach.

"We will stick to our normal game and at the same time, try to destroy their plans. We did the same in Myanmar. They were a faster team than Nepal and we were chasing shadows in the first game. In the final against Myanmar, we applied this strategy and they could not dominate at all. I think the coach will pick the same strategy tomorrow," said team leader Ashrafuddin Ahmed Chunnun.

Probable Bangladesh lineup: (4-3-1-2): Aminul, Hassan Al Mamun, Sujan, Rajani, Titu, Arman, Joy, Alfaz, Kanchan and Farhad.

## American

FROM PAGE 12 country.

A witty Inoki however said that it was not boring at all for Ali.

"Ali had to lay on the hospital bed for a week after that bout," said Inoki while recalling his famous fight.

Inoki will also travel to Chittagong during his brief visit in Bangladesh. But his trip was soured a little following allegation of the Bangladesh Amateur Wrestling Federation that the organisers Japan-Bangladesh Group did not inform them regarding his visit.

"He (Inoki) is here to see the facilities especially the commercial aspects of wrestling programmes in Bangladesh that's why did not inform the wrestling federation," said Selim Pradhan, president of the Japan-Bangladesh Group.

He also said that they were yet to make a final decision over staging wrestling competition in February next year in Dhaka and Chittagong featuring players from USA, Japan, England, France and Australia.

## Symonds back in Test fold



AFP, Sydney

One-day dasher Andrew Symonds retained a spot Friday in the Australian Test team to face South Africa this month but there was no room for former golden boy Michael Clarke.

Symonds' red-hot form in the short form of the game -- bludgeoning the third highest score in one-day history with 156 against New Zealand this week -- ensured he stayed in the Test squad, despite his meagre returns in the baggy green cap.

The 30-year-old all-rounder averages just 10.50 with the bat and 82 with the ball after four Tests and has admitted he is nervous about finding a balance between his swashbuckling one-day style and the Test arena's defensive needs.

A similar dilemma has faced

Michael Clarke, the 24-year-old who was tipped as a future captain a year ago but, after being dropped last month, was unable to force his way back into the Test against South Africa in Perth starting on December 16.

Clark replacing spin bowler Stuart MacGill on the pace-friendly WACA track.

After the first Test in Perth, the teams are due to meet in Melbourne on December 26 and Sydney on January 2.

The Australian team to play South Africa in the first Test at the WACA in Perth starting on Friday:

**SQUAD**  
Justin Langer, Matthew Hayden, Ricky Ponting (capt), Brad Hodge, Andrew Symonds, Michael Hussey, Adam Gilchrist, Shane Warne, Brett Lee, Nathan Bracken, Glenn McGrath, Stuart Clark. (12th man TBA).

## India in Dravid, Sehwag

FROM PAGE 12 against Sri Lanka and South Africa, before the ongoing Tests. Their previous Test series was in Zimbabwe in September.

Sri Lanka's coach Tom Moody was upbeat after a fine start in the three-match series.

"Our performance in Chennai proves that our boys are good. The loss in the one-dayers is behind us and Test cricket is a different ball game altogether," said the former Aussie Test cricketer.

"From what I hear, the pitch is expected to aid turn as the match progresses and in that case we can rely on (Muttiah) Muralitharan to deliver," added Moody, who was part of the World Cup-winning teams of 1987 and 1999.

Muralitharan is the second-highest wicket-taker in Tests behind Australian leg-spinner Shane Warne. The off-spinner has taken 570 wickets in 97 matches to Warne's 645 in 132.

Sri Lankan skipper Marvan Atapattu believed that seamers could play a role in the second match.

"This pitch is completely different to what we got in Chennai. There is some grass and the ball is likely to

move a lot early in the match," said Atapattu, who was happy with Chaminda Vaas's four-wicket haul in the first match.

"Chaminda is bowling very well and that is good news for us."

The third and final Test will be held in the western city of Ahmedabad from December 18.

**TEAMS**  
**INDIA (from):** Rahul Dravid (capt), Gautam Gambhir, Sachin Tendulkar, VVS Laxman, Yuvraj Singh, Sourav Ganguly, Mohammad Kaif, Mahendra Dhoni (wkt), Irfan Pathan, Ajit Agarkar, Harbhajan Singh, Murali Kartik, Anil Kumble, Rudra Pratap Singh.

**SRI LANKA (from):** Marvan Atapattu (capt), Avishka Guna-wardene, Mahela Jayawar-dene, Kumar Sangakkara (wkt), Thilan Samaraweera, Tillakaratne Dilshan, Chaminda Vaas, Malinga Bandara, Dilhara Fernando, Muttiah Muralitharan, Jehan Mubarak, Upul Tharanga, Farveez Maharof, Lasith Malinga, Sajeewa Weerakoon.

## PREMIERSHIP

# Fergie to face the music



REUTERS, London

The reaction of Manchester United's fans and players at Old Trafford on Sunday could hold the key to the future of manager Alex Ferguson after their humiliating exit from Europe in midweek.

A much-improved Everton side visit the Theatre of Dreams with the opportunity to twist the knife into the wounds inflicted by Benfica who eliminated United from the Champions League with a 2-1 victory in Lisbon on Wednesday.

Ferguson's team could start the match 13 points adrift of champions Chelsea, with the leaders hosting fading Wigan Athletic on Saturday, meaning a victory is even more important for United.

"It's a blow but as I said we just have to regroup," said a bewildered Ferguson after the Benfica beating. "Throughout it's history, this club has always risen from difficult situations and will do so again."

Whether they will do so with the 63-year-old in his 20th year at the club still in charge is not clear, although initial indications from the Glazer family that owns the club suggest a panic decision is not imminent. United have, after all, won their last four Premier League

games. Everton, who earlier this season looked like they might never score again, will arrive in Manchester reinvigorated having won four of their last five games to move clear of the relegation zone.

Unsurprisingly, Paul Jewell's promoted Wigan side have struggled to maintain their early season form and head to Stamford Bridge on the back of three consecutive league defeats.

Chelsea drew 0-0 at their London home against holders Liverpool in the Champions League on Tuesday. The main talking point was a high challenge by Chelsea's Michael Essien that went unpunished on the night and the Ghana midfielder will be under extra scrutiny on Saturday. Essien was charged with "gross unsporting conduct" by UEFA on Thursday.

Liverpool are the country's form team at the moment, having won their last six league games before Saturday's meeting with Middlesbrough at Anfield. Rafael Benitez's side have not conceded a goal for nine matches in all competitions.

Like everyone else, Arsene Wenger's Arsenal have lost touch with Chelsea and they head into the weekend 14 points adrift.

Even if Arsenal won their remaining 24 league games, starting with Saturday's trip to stumbling Newcastle United, they would finish

on 98 points, only three more than Chelsea's final tally last season.

Wenger's job is safe because of Arsenal's qualification for the knock-out phase of the Champions League but time is against Sunderland manager Mick McCarthy.

Bottom with only five points from 16 games, the former Ireland manager takes his team to Charlton on Saturday desperate to end a run of nine defeats in a row.

On Monday the south-coast hazy-go-round rolls into London when struggling Portsmouth visit buoyant Tottenham Hotspur.

Portsmouth's 'new' manager Harry Redknapp will find out if the club's fans have forgiven him for leaving a year ago to join their bitter local rivals Southampton before controversially returning this week.

## FIXTURES

(1500 GMT unless stated)

**Saturday**  
Liverpool v Middlesbrough (1245 GMT), Birmingham v Fulham, Blackburn v West Ham, Bolton v Aston Villa, Charlton v Sunderland, Chelsea v Wigan Athletic, West Brom v Manchester City, Newcastle v Arsenal (1715)  
**Sunday**  
Manchester Utd v Everton (1600 GMT)  
**Monday**  
Tottenham v Portsmouth (2000 GMT)

## PRIMERA LIGA

# Coaches in the spotlight



REUTERS, Madrid

Caretaker coach Juan Ramon Lopez Caro faces his first Primera Liga test when Real Madrid visit Malaga on Sunday.

Lopez Caro was snatched from the relative obscurity of Real's youth team to replace Wanderlei Luxemburgo when the Brazilian was sacked last Sunday and lost his first game at the helm on Tuesday.

Real, who had already qualified for the knockout phase of the Champions League, were beaten 2-1 by Olympiakos Piraeus but had rested several top players ahead of Sunday's game.

Defender Ivan Helguera believes Lopez Caro is the right man to re-ignite Real's season.

"I think he is the perfect choice," Helguera told sports daily Marca on Thursday.

"We need to start playing good football again. This is the most important thing independent of the results."

"Even if we lose we need to recover our morale and show we are as good as we say we are."

Real, fourth in the table six points

behind leaders Barcelona, have an injury doubt over Brazil striker Ronaldo.

England captain David Beckham is suspended following his red card last weekend.

While Real's problems have dominated the headlines recently, there are a number of other top-flight coaches also feeling the heat.

Real Zaragoza's Victor Munoz, who was given the board's backing to continue little more than a week ago, will hope to build on his side's first away win of the season last Sunday.

The 2-1 victory at Cadiz eased the pressure on Munoz but it will be no easy game at home to third-placed Celta Vigo, whose coach Fernando Vazquez is also under fire.

Vazquez, who has led the promoted club into the Champions League places, has been criticised by fans for his team selections.

Atletico Madrid president Enrique Cerezo has given coach Carlos Bianchi his support ahead of their home match with second-from-bottom Alaves. Atletico, in 11th place, have not won in five outings.

Alaves's outspoken president Dmitry Piterman and coach Chuchi Cos were barracked by fans after

their 3-0 home defeat by Real Mallorca last Sunday.

Espanyol's Miguel Angel Lotina was last month given the go-ahead to continue with the Barcelona-based side but their 3-1 defeat by Valencia prompted an angry response from home fans last weekend.

Lotina's side travel to face Real Betis whose coach Llorenç Serra Ferrer, while not in immediate danger, has his work cut out to drag his team off the foot of the table.

Leaders Barcelona will chase an 11th consecutive win in all competitions at home to Sevilla on Sunday while second-placed Osasuna host Real Mallorca the same day.

## FIXTURES

(1600 GMT unless stated)

**Saturday (1600 GMT)**  
Valencia v Athletic Bilbao (1900 GMT), Real Sociedad v Villarreal (2100 GMT)  
**Sunday**  
Atletico Madrid v Alaves, Deportivo Coruna v Cadiz, Getafe v Racing Santander, Osasuna v Real Mallorca, Real Betis v Espanyol, Real Zaragoza v Celta Vigo, Malaga v Real Madrid (1800 GMT) Barcelona v Sevilla (2000 GMT)

## SERIE A

# Juve look to cash in on Milan derby



REUTERS, Rome

AC Milan and Inter Milan will stake rival claims to be the main challengers to runaway Serie A leaders Juventus when they clash in Sunday's derby fixture.

Juventus top the table with 39 points from 14 matches, eight ahead of second-placed AC Milan

and 10 more than Inter in third.

The leaders host relegation batters Cagliari which means the Milan clubs know anything less than victory at the weekend will almost certainly result in them falling even further off the pace.

AC Milan go into the match as favourites. In the past two years, Carlo Ancelotti's side have enjoyed supremacy over Inter.

Last season they were simply in a different class, racking up three wins and a draw in four meetings against Inter, including back-to-back victories in the semifinals of the Champions League.

Inter, however, may feel the time has come to break the sequence.

AC Milan have shown a rare vulnerability lately, losing 2-1 to Chievo Verona last weekend and edging a nervy 3-2 victory over German side Schalke 04 in midweek to snatch a place in the knockout stages of the Champions League.

Any suggestion they might be ready to give up bragging rights was denied by Brazilian playmaker Kaka, who said AC Milan were as confident as ever.

"I don't know what frame of mind they (Inter) will bring into this match but we are in a wonderful mood after our Champions League win," the 23-year-old was quoted as saying in La Gazzetta dello Sport on Thursday.

Since joining AC Milan at the start of the 2003-04 season, Kaka has developed into one of the club's most influential players as well as saving several of his best performances for the derby fixture.

He scored his first Serie A goal in a 3-1 win over Inter in October 2003 and has since struck twice more against their arch rivals.

"It will be the usual derby. There will be a lot of feeling on both sides, a big desire to win," said Kaka.

"Only one thing is certain, after the three goals I've always scored against them, all I can think about is getting a fourth on Sunday."

AC Milan's main concerns are in defence. Captain Paolo Maldini is expected to start despite suffering a thigh strain against Schalke while Alessandro Nesta is still recovering from a mild bout of flu.

Inter coach Roberto Mancini faces the difficult choice of who to play alongside Adriano in attack.

The Brazilian's favoured partner, Alvaro Recoba, picked up an injury during last week's 1-0 win over Ascoli while Obafemi Martins is struggling for form.

If neither make the starting 11, Adriano could play alone up front with Luis Figo, Juan Sebastian Veron and Dejan Stankovic in support.

Juventus are not the only team who would benefit from a Milan derby draw.

Fiorentina could pull level on points with AC Milan if they beat Treviso on Saturday.

## FIXTURES

(All 1400 GMT kick-off unless stated)

**Saturday**  
Siena v Empoli (1700), Fiorentina v Treviso (1930)  
**Sunday**  
Ascoli v Reggina, Inter Milan v AC Milan (1930), Juventus v Cagliari, Livorno v Lazio, Messina v Chievo, Parma v Sampdoria, Roma v Palermo, Udinese v Lecce



Maldives booters celebrate after scoring against Sri Lanka in their SAFF Championship tie at the People's Sports Complex Stadium in Karachi on Friday.

PHOTO: AFP