

Blatter criticises WC ticketing

AFP, Geneva

FIFA President Sepp Blatter on Sunday criticised ticketing arrangements for the forthcoming World Cup finals in Germany, saying the Germans still had to prove they could hold a successful competition.

"In Germany, they'll have to make an effort if they want to repeat what happened in South Korea in 2002 or France in 1998," the head of world football's governing body said in a newspaper interview.

"They'll first have to prove that the World Cup will be as good as the expectations," he told the Swiss newspaper NZZ am Sonntag.

Underlining qualms about a lottery-style draw for tickets buyers, Blatter said countless meetings with the German football federation on the issue were not getting anywhere.

"It would probably have been better if we had taken over the ticket sales ourselves. The Germans chose a system that I really don't understand," he added.

FIFA would handle ticketing arrangements for the 2010 World Cup in South Africa again, Blatter added.

The German organisers of the 2006 World Cup finals said after a third batch of sales last month that 84 percent of match tickets -- 2.6 million tickets -- had already been sold, with demand outstripping supply.

Black market tickets surfaced on online auction sites with prices for the knockout stages hiked up by thousands of euros.

FIFA is hoping to generate about 1.7 billion euros (two billion dollars) in revenue from the this summer's World Cup, mainly from television rights and sponsors, and its biggest ever profit from the event, about 110 million euros.

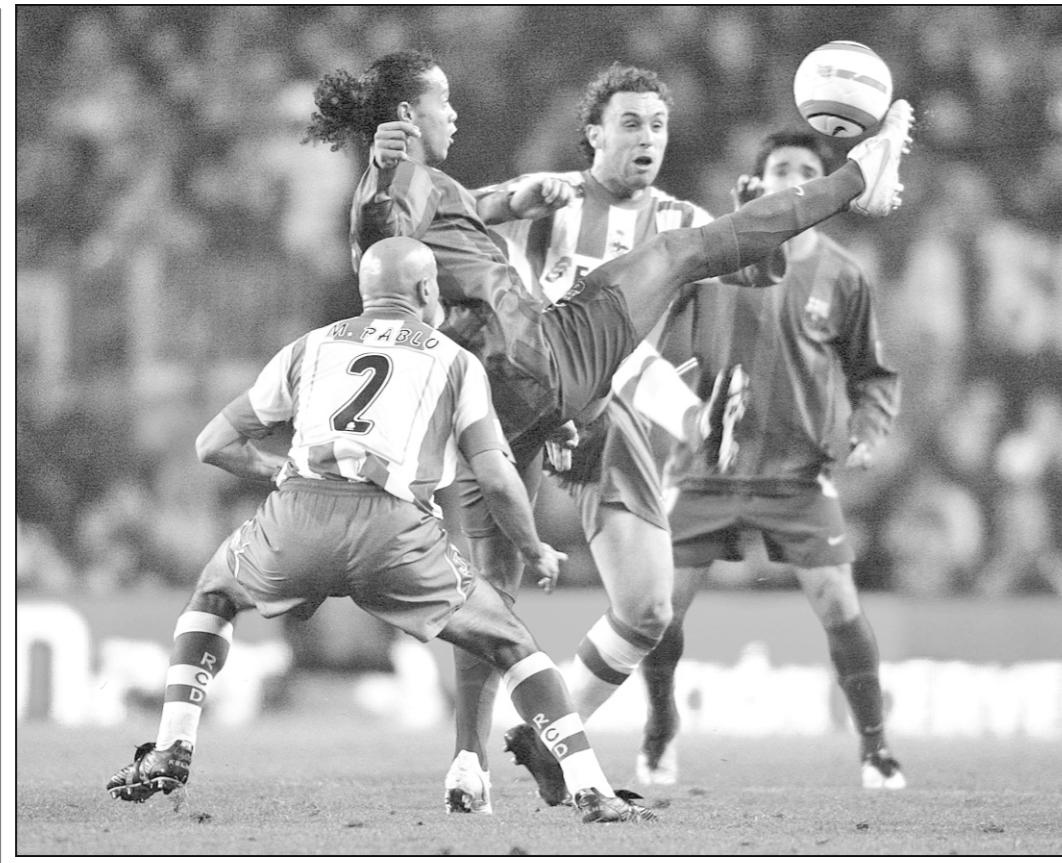


PHOTO: AFP

I CAN TAKE 'EM ALL: Barcelona's master tactician Ronaldinho (C) is under pressure from Deportivo La Coruna's Sergio (R) and Manuel Pablo (L) during their Primera Liga match at the Nou Camp on Saturday.

PRIMERA LIGA

Big guns fire



Football

AFP, Madrid

Real Madrid put a turbulent week behind them on Saturday with a 2-1 victory over city rivals Atletico Madrid but Barcelona moved on towards a title defence with Samuel Eto'o securing a 3-2 home win over Deportivo La Coruna.

The win left Frank Rijkaard's side on 61 points from 26 matches, ten ahead of Real, third behind Valencia, who can close the gap to the leaders to eight points if they win at bottom side Malaga on Sunday.

Eto'o was once on Real's books and the capital club could have done with his 19 league goals this term given the erratic form of Ronaldo, Rezaul 65, Yasin 2-93, Ilias 1-48, Sabir 7-81).

Result: Chittagong won by an innings and 69 runs.

KHULNA: 122 and 332 all out in 92.5 overs (Sadat 151, Shamsur 70, Salim 43, Shafiq 3-59, Musfiq 1-69, Alamgir 1-42, Farhad 3-26, Shuvo 2-89).

RAJSHAHI: 353 and 105-0 in 20.3 overs (Jahurul 51 n.o., Farhad 49 n.o.).

Result: Rajshahi won by ten wickets.

DHAKA: Firstinnings- 395.

BARISAL: Firstinnings- 305-6 in 92 overs (Imran 39, Hannan 36, Faruque 101, Nafid 57 batting, Humayun Kabir 50 batting, Munir 2-85, Sharif 1-73, Mehrab Jr 1-59, Rezaul 1-43, Opee 1-20).

Result: Rajshahi won by ten wickets.

DHAKA: Firstinnings- 395.

CHITTAGONG: 579.

SYLHET: 214 all out in 68 overs (Rahman 43, Imtiaz 42, Ijaz 90, Yasin 6-56, Ilias 3-56, Sabir 1-37) and 296 all out in 69.5 overs (Rahman 35, Imtiaz 46, Mabud 86, Rezaul 65, Yasin 2-93, Ilias 1-48, Sabir 7-81).

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