

Violence follows Chelsea game

AFP, Barcelona

Fourteen people were arrested following clashes overnight after Spanish outfit Barcelona dumped English champions Chelsea out of the Champions League, police confirmed Wednesday.

Six British fans were arrested for breaking the windows of a bar near the Nou Camp Stadium and fighting with the owner who estimated the damage to his premises in the region of 9,000 euros.

Eight other people whose nationalities were not revealed were arrested in central Barcelona and the popular Ramblas area where 1,500 Barcelona fans had gathered to celebrate their team advancing to the Champions League quarterfinals after drawing 1-1 with Chelsea.

Dutch ban Nazi helmets

AFP, The Hague

The Dutch Football Federation (KNVB) on Tuesday banned fans from wearing imitation, plastic Nazi helmets inside stadiums in an effort to cool volatile temperatures between Holland and German supporters in the run-up to the World Cup.

"In our eyes, this helmet is provocative and establishes an unnecessary link with the war," said KNVB spokesman Frank Huizinga.

The helmets will be banned from forthcoming friendlies against Mexico, Cameroon and Australia but any decision to ban them at the World Cup would have to be taken by local organisers.

The helmets are based on those worn by the Wehrmacht during World War II.

Warne bares

FROM PAGE 12

on March 16, said that despite all his losses he still had cricket.

"So, OK, where am I at? I've lost that love of my life. What else have I got in my life that I love? My cricket. So I'm not going to lose both. I've got to make this a winner."

Warne said he remained "pretty strong mentally", adding: "The one thing I'm proud of in my life is no matter what has happened, I've still been able to front up, play my cricket and still do a pretty good job."

The spin king, who has sometimes struggled with his weight, said that in preparation for the Test series he had cut out many of his favourite foods -- pizza, bread, chips and beer -- and had been exercising regularly.

Warne, the leading all-time wicket taker in Test cricket, turns 37 this year but said he had set no date for quitting Test cricket.

"I think I'll just wake and say, 'That's it'. I won't be one of those people that'll plan it. I'll just happen."



Brian Lara

(West Indies batting legend)

"To leave New Zealand, to leave (the third Test in) Napier as winners of this Test series would be the greatest because I'm definitely not going to be back in New Zealand as a cricketer."

Fleming wants to savour it First Test begins at Eden Park today



AFP, Auckland

New Zealand captain Stephen Fleming is backing his pace attack to set the West Indies batsmen back on their heels as the home side celebrate a special anniversary in the first cricket Test starting here Thursday.

Fifty years ago New Zealand achieved their first ever Test win, against the same opponents at the same Eden Park venue.

"The first Test win is very special. It's almost an announcement to the cricketing world and we're very proud of that date so it does



PHOTO: AFP

Juventus midfielder Emerson (3d from L) shoots past two Bremen defenders and goalkeeper Tim Wiese to score the winner during their Champions League match at the Delle Alpi Stadium in Turin on Tuesday.

Heartbreak for Bremen



AFP, Turin

An awful mistake by Werder Bremen keeper Tim Wiese in the 88th minute gifted Juventus a dramatic 2-1 victory here Tuesday and a place in the quarterfinals of the Champions League.

Bremen were hanging on for the 1-1 draw which would have been enough for them to reach the last eight of the competition.

But with the seconds ticking away, Wiese, who had been outstanding for the Germans with a series of superb saves, spilled a straightforward catch to give Emerson the easiest of tap-ins.

Wiese's howler left the aggregate score at 4-4 and Juve, the Italian league leaders, advanced on the away goals rule.

French midfielder Johan Micoud struck for Werder in the 13th minute with a delicate chip, before David Trezeguet levelled the score midway through the second half with a typically clinical finish.

Emerson, nicknamed 'Puma' because of his tireless running in midfield, admitted Juve defender Fabio Cannavaro had to take most of the credit for the winning goal as it was he who let the Brazil international know that the ball had come loose.

"Fabio shouted at me, 'Puma, Puma' and I saw the ball near me and smashed it in," he said.

Villareal end Rangers run



AFP, Villareal

Glasgow Rangers saw their Champions League dream come to a heartbreaking end on Tuesday when they were knocked out by Villarreal despite drawing their last 16, second leg tie 1-1.

The result meant that the Spaniards, who also put out Manchester United and Everton earlier in the tournament, go through to the quarterfinals in their debut season in the competition on away goals after the first leg ended 2-2 in Glasgow.

The night had started well for Rangers in the intimidating atmosphere of the El Madrigal with Peter Lovenkrands giving his team a 12th minute lead before Juan Roman Riquelme set up Rodolfo Arruabarrena to snatch the equaliser early in the second half.

The Scottish side, bidding to win a European tie for only the second time on Spanish soil, were given a helping hand in their opener.

Thomas Buffel, recalled to the starting line-up by McLeish, played a harmless looking ball into the area.

Emerson scoffed at suggestions that Juve were fortunate.

"Werder were luckier than us as we had about 10 goalscoring chances, and their keeper performed miracles," he said.

"We showed once again what great character we have and that we never give up."

Juve coach Fabio Capello was able to recall strikers Zlatan Ibrahimovic and Trezeguet, both absent from Saturday's 1-0 league win at Sampdoria due to injury.

The return of the club's first-choice attacking partnership, with 32 goals between them in all competitions this season, forced Alessandro Del Piero, Juve's all-time top scorer, onto the substitutes' bench.

The crowd was swelled by an extra 6,000 with Juve granting free admission to volunteers at the Winter Olympics.

Another keen spectator was Italy coach Marcello Lippi, keeping a watchful eye on his World Cup hopefuls.

Juve set the early pace with Pavel Nedved's dangerous cross cut out by a Frank Fahrenhorst's outstretched boot and Cannavaro heading the resulting corner over the bar.

But the home side's early swagger quickly diminished.

Juve's defence tried to play the offside trap when Christian Schulz chipped into the penalty area, but Micoud timed his run to perfection and clipped the ball right-footed past

the advancing Gianluigi Buffon.

A mistake by Schulz almost brought Juve back on level terms in the 23rd minute when he almost headed into his own net when trying to cushion a header back to Wiese.

Fortunately for Schulz, the ball rolled wide and from the corner Wiese pulled off a miraculous reflex save to keep out Ibrahimovic's close-range volley.

Ivan Klasnic went close to extending Werder's lead two minutes before the break, but Buffon was equal to his rasping drive.

Wiese produced a jaw-dropping double save to deny Nedved and then Emerson as Juve ended the half with a flourish.

Capello brought on Alessandro Del Piero for Ibrahimovic and Adrian Mutu for Mauro Camoranesi and the switch added impetus to a previously sterile attack.

Juve kept plugging away and they equalised in the 65th minute.

A robust run by Nedved caught Werder napping and as the ball started to run a little too far ahead of the Czech midfielder, Trezeguet came steaming in to fire home.

Wiese palmed away a Mutu free-kick and an Emerson piledriver, but his luck cruelly deserted him two minutes from time with an error that is likely to haunt him for the rest of his career.

Sabatini gets IOC award

AFP, Geneva

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) on Wednesday awarded former Argentine tennis star Gabriela Sabatini its 2006 "women in sport" prize for her work to promote tennis in Argentina.

Since she retired in 1996, Sabatini has quietly financed a programme for young players, women's tennis tournaments and free tennis clinics for young children out of her own pocket, the IOC said.

Sabatini, who was ranked world number three, said she was "giving back to sport something of the many things that sport gave to me".

Coinciding with International Women's Day, regional awards were also presented to five other figures for their role in encouraging and strengthening the participation of women in sports.

They include gymnastics chief Albertine Barbosa Andrade, the only woman head of a sports federation in Senegal, Canadian 1984 Olympic 400 m relay silver medalist Charmaine Crooks, "Ping Pong Queen" Elisa Lee, now a leading sports official in South Korea, French volleyball official Dominique Petit and Fiji's badminton secretary Lorraine Mar.

The trophy has been awarded annually since 2000 by the IOC's women's commission and its chair, Anita DeFrantz.

Messi hit by hamstringing blow

INTERNET, undated

Barcelona star Lionel Messi has been ruled out for at least three weeks with a hamstringing injury.

The Argentine starlet picked up the complaint during Tuesday night's UEFA Champions League clash with Chelsea.

He was forced from the pitch after just 25 minutes, pulling up in apparent discomfort under no real pressure.

Initial tests have shown he has pulled his right hamstring and now faces the best part of a month on the sidelines.

The 18-year-old spoke of his frustration at the injury which robbed him of the chance of adding to his burgeoning reputation in the high-profile showdown with The Blues.

"It is bad luck because for me the match (against Chelsea) was very important for many reasons," he explained.

"But the important thing is our qualification and now I am just hoping to recover as quickly as possible."

All praises

FROM PAGE 12

against spin was exposed during his short stay.

But Bashar remained diplomatic on the issue, saying, "When we are decided on an eleven, we think it is the best one. We have to have confidence on every player. We can only analyse it after the match."

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at stumps on the opening day of the second Test between Bangladesh and Sri Lanka at the Shaheed Chandu Stadium in Bogra on Wednesday:

BANGLADESH: First innings				
Omar lbw b Muralidaran	35			
Iqbal lbw b Muralidaran	26			
Bashar c Tharanga b Muralidaran	69			
Nafees c Sangakkara b Malinga	9			
Ashraf ul b Bandara	24			
Rahim lbw b Muralidaran	2			
Mashud c Sangakkara b Malinga	12			
Rafique c Muralidaran b Fernando	32			
Shahadat c Muralidaran b Fernando	6			
Enamul not out	3			
Rasel c Bandara b Muralidaran	0			
Extras: (b-3, lb-5, nb-8)	16			
Total: (All out in 76.5 overs)	234			
Fall of wkts: 1-52, 2-85, 3-106, 4-157, 5-172, 6-186, 7-208, 8-231, 9-233.				

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Malinga	20	1	73	2
Maharroof	4	0	22	0
Fernando	9	4	24	2
Muralidaran	30.5	8	79	5
Bandara	13	1	28	1

SRI LANKA: First innings				
Vandort lbw b Rasel	0			
Tharanga not out	12			
Bandara c Iqbal b Shahadat	2			
Samaraweera not out	7			
Extras: (b-4)	4			
Total: (For two wkts in 11 overs) 25				
Fall of wkts: 1-4, 2-13				

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Rasel	5	4	2	1
Shahadat	5	1	19	1
Rafique	1	1	0	0

Toss: Bangladesh
Umpires: Asad Rauf (PAK) and Krishna Hariharan (IND)

Dravid seeks

FROM PAGE 12

which have a bit of bounce on them," he added.

Despite a strong first Test, England stand-in captain Andrew Flintoff warned his young side against complacency in the three-match series.

"The conditions here (in Mohali) seem to suggest that it has got a little bit more bounce and pace," he said.

"So possibly we have got a decent chance here.

(But) we can't think we are better than what we are and we can't get above our station."

England may opt to hand 20-year-old seamer Liam Plunkett his second Test cap in place of left-arm spinner Ian Blackwell, who failed to impress on debut in Nagpur.

Number three batsman Ian Bell could also lose his place in the line-up to uncapped Owais Shah, after making just nine and one in the first Test.

SQUADS

INDIA (from): Rahul Dravid (captain), Virender Sehwag, Wasim Jaffer, Sachin Tendulkar, VVS Laxman, Yuvraj Singh, Mohammad Kaif, Mahendra Dhoni, Irfan Pathan, Sri Sreesanth, Anil Kumble, Harbhajan Singh, Rudra Pratap Singh, Piyyush Chawla and Munaf Patel.

ENGLAND (from): Andrew Flintoff (captain), Alastair Cook, Andrew Strauss, Ian Bell, Paul Collingwood, Kevin Pietersen, Geraint Jones, Ian Blackwell, Shaun Udal, Matthew Hoggard, Stephen Harmison, Monty Panesar, Liam Plunkett, Matthew Prior, Owais Shah and James Anderson.

Umpires: Darrell Hair and Simon Taufel.

Brothers go

FROM PAGE 12

centre of the box and the latter obliged with a bullet header to settle the issue.

Al Aheed of Lebanon were pitted against India's Mahindra United in the other Group A match in Beirut on Wednesday.

Brothers will host Mahindra in the second round match in Dhaka on March 21.

You can't buy beautiful football

AFP, Barcelona

The Barcelona fan with the banner at El Prat airport on Wednesday didn't need to deploy any of the venom which some of his more enthusiastic counterparts reserved for Chelsea boss Jose Mourinho.

"Hey Mou, we're going to teach you that you can't buy beautiful football with money," read the placard emblazoned across every front page of a somewhat virilic Catalan press.

The statement ultimately proved the sagest comment surrounding the Champions League tie that had produced waves of expectation across the continent long before either leg was played.

Chelsea's battalions, marshalled by the ever-open chequebook of Russian benefactor Roman Abramovich and worth some 339 million euros (403m dollars), came up short against rivals put together at a rather less astronomical 106 million.

Yet the real difference was not the ledger itself but the talent of one man who the Catalan club say even a Russian oligarch's money just can't buy -- Ronaldinho.

The Brazilian wizard with the toothy grin pairof a further slice of the 30

million euros Barca paid Paris Saint Germain for him in 2003.

Ronaldinho's feet did all the talking as he secured a 1-1 draw in their last 16 second-leg match for a 3-2 victory on aggregate.

Barcelona coach Frank Rijkaard said afterwards he had been confident his talisman world player of the year would come up with something -- adding he would not have his head turned by Chelsea's petrodollars.

"I was not surprised that he made the difference. It was a special occasion, given the amount of tension in the game," said the Dutchman.

"Ronaldinho is very happy at Barcelona. He has so many friends and people who love him and so I don't think money is the most important thing for him."

Chelsea skipper John Terry admitted he and his fellow defenders had flourished when Ronaldinho turned the heat on to full power.

"Ronaldinho is unstoppable -- he's very good technically but also physically," said the England stopper.

With Barca now looking ever more likely to step up to pocket only a second European title after their Wembley win in 1992 -- they lost finals in 1961, 1986 in the Terry Venables era, and

1994 -- they now feel they need fear nobody in the quarterfinal draw.

"Now the moment of truth is approaching," said Ronaldinho, modestly meaning he preferred to dwell on new challenges rather than his own magical moment.

"The best thing is we won and there was no spirit of gaining revenge out there" for last year's loss to the same opponents.

On his goal he said: "I like to help the team at moments when they need me."

Chelsea chief executive Peter Kenyon said before the encounter that the English champions expected to be winning the Champions League -- more than once -- over the coming five years as they battle to break even.

Still nearly men in the European arena, the Londoners, who have turned defence into an art form, still require the rarest attacking talent capable of breaking that chain.

But Ronaldinho's heart belongs to Barca.

Waqar feels honoured



AFP, Lahore

Pakistan have appointed former paceman Waqar Younis as their bowling coach after losing a home one-day series against arch-rivals India, officials said Wednesday.

Waqar, who formed a lethal new-ball pairing with Wasim Akram in the 1990s, has signed a one-year contract after he finally settled terms with the Pakistan Cricket Board.

"We have appointed Waqar as bowling coach for a period of one year and hope that he helps the bowlers to lift their performances," board chairman Shaharyar Khan told reporters.

Pakistan suffered a 4-1 defeat in the one-day series against India last month despite winning the Test series, a loss which raised questions over their bowling and fielding.

Waqar, who took 373 wickets in 87 Tests for Pakistan during an illustrious career which ended in March 2004, said he would do his best to lift the bowlers' performances.

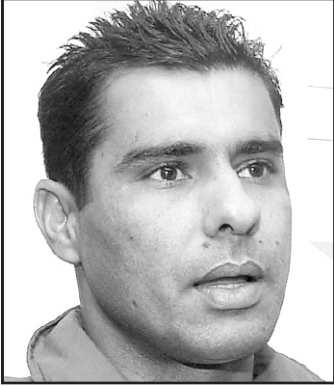
"It's a great honour to be bowling coach of your country's team and I see it as a great responsibility," Waqar told AFP.

"It's also a great honour to work with a reputed coach like Bob

Woolmer and I will do my best to transfer my knowledge of the game to youngsters."

Waqar said his first task would be to improve fitness.

"What I have noticed is that our bowlers lacked fitness which reduced their effectiveness in recent series, so I will sit down with the physiotherapist and trainer to



WAQAR YOUNIS

solve this problem."

Pace spearhead Shoaib Akhtar is recuperating after having surgery on both his knees in Australia while another quick, Umer Gul, is recovering from a back injury sustained during the India series.

Zim to play 7 ODIs in WI



AFP, St John's

Zimbabwe will play seven one-day internationals against the West Indies as their tour schedule is extended to make up for their loss of Test status.

West Indies Cricket Board (WICB) chief executive Roger Brathwaite, Zimbabwe Cricket (ZC) and the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), whose team is also touring the Caribbean this year, met in Dubai to hammer out a schedule.

The talks followed the withdrawal by Zimbabwe from Test cricket for one year and the BCCI request to play only a three Test series.

"In adjusting the itinerary for the Zimbabwe tour we have attempted to ensure that international cricket is played in Guyana, as they would have been without cricket with the cancellation of the Test scheduled for Guyana," Brathwaite said.

"The WICB is pleased that the BCCI has agreed to maintain the four Test schedule and we in turn

Monty at 'home'

FROM PAGE 12

bowling captain Rahul Dravid and Mohammad Kaif.

Tendulkar, trapped leg before for 16, presented his autographed bat to Panesar as a souvenir.

"I was nervous in that first match - it's Test cricket and I have always dreamed of playing for England," Panesar said.

"But the rest of the players were incredibly supportive and this tour has been a fantastic experience so far and really exciting."

"The crowds too are very passionate about the game here, they see cricket as a religion. It's a bit strange when they start calling my name but it's a nice experience."

Andrew Flintoff praised the bowler for easing his burden as captain -- the all-rounder is leading the side in the absence of injured captain Michael Vaughan and deputy Marcus Trescothick.

"When you get Monty coming on, he knows exactly how he wants to bowl and what fields he wants to bowl to, so a lot of it was taken out of my hands," he said.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

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