

Kaiser awarded

AP, Berlin

FIFA World Cup Organising Committee President Franz Beckenbauer has been presented a Lifetime Achievement Award by German charitable organisation Sporthilfe.

The award comes in recognition of his contribution to the sport, and includes a Golden Sports Pyramid and a cash award of 25000 Euro.

Beckenbaur had been voted the Second Best European Player by the UEFA Jubilee Poll in 2004.

He is one of the only two men to have won the World Cup for his country as player and as coach.

BKSP ride on Asif

SPORTS REPORTER

Asif Ahmed slammed another ton as BKSP dismantled Scholars School and College by 287 runs in the Standard Chartered National Schools Cricket tournament at the Dhammondi Cricket ground yesterday.

Asif struck fifteen fours in his 139-ball knock of 125. He also smashed a quickfire knock in a first round match.

Put into bat, BKSP piled 356 for 5



ASIF AHMED...125

in 50 overs. Shoikot smashed two sixes and nine boundaries in a scintillating 67. Momin also struck a half-century coming late in the order. The two shared a swashbuckling 120-run fifth wicket stand in the final 10 overs.

Scholars were bowled out for just 69 runs in 35 overs. Anjum Ahmed took 4 for 8. Forkan also captured two wickets.

Away at the Circuit House ground in Mymensingh, Manikganj Government High School defeated Faridpur High School to emerge as Dhaka divisional champions.

Junior tennis team off to Malaysia

SPORTS REPORTER

A 5-member Bangladesh tennis team left Dhaka last night to play in the ITF Junior Davis Cup Asia/Oceania qualifiers in Kuching, Malaysia.

A total of 21 teams will participate in the 9-day competition starting from tomorrow. This is the first time Bangladesh are competing in the junior qualifiers.

The team: Ahmed Ziaur Rahman (non-playing captain), Ranjan Ram, Tajmul Islam, Bashir Gazi, Delwar Hossain.

Chelsea keep

FROM PAGE 12

United midfielder John O'Shea directed a header just over the bar in first-half stoppage time as the visitors began to feel the clock ticking on their dream of spoiling Chelsea's day.

Chelsea had two good chances to extend their lead soon after the break. Drogba could not control a long ball into the box and then Cole sent a curling shot just wide.

But the England playmaker did not have to wait much longer to get on the scoresheet.

He brilliantly outfoxed the United defence, turning Rio Ferdinand, holding off Nemanja Vidic and outpacing Mikael Silvestre as he ran on to sidefoot past Van der Sar at the near post. This time Mourinho leapt to his feet to celebrate.

Ferguson sent on van Nistelrooy for Ronaldo with half an hour to go and Mourinho responded by introducing Damien Carroll for Robben.

Then Carvalho started and finished a move to make it 3-0 and completely extinguish United's challenge.

He won the ball from van Nistelrooy in defence and Cole surged forward. Carvalho continued his run and Cole played him in inside the box where the Portuguese took one touch and blasted it past van der Sar.

Rooney was stretched off in the 82nd minute after being challenged by Carvalho in the Chelsea penalty area. He was left holding his right foot and was down for some minutes before being taken off.

Not that many Chelsea fans cared -- the party was already in full swing as the Blues completed a second successful title campaign under the management of the inimitable Mourinho and the financial benevolence of moneybags Russian owner Roman Abramovich.

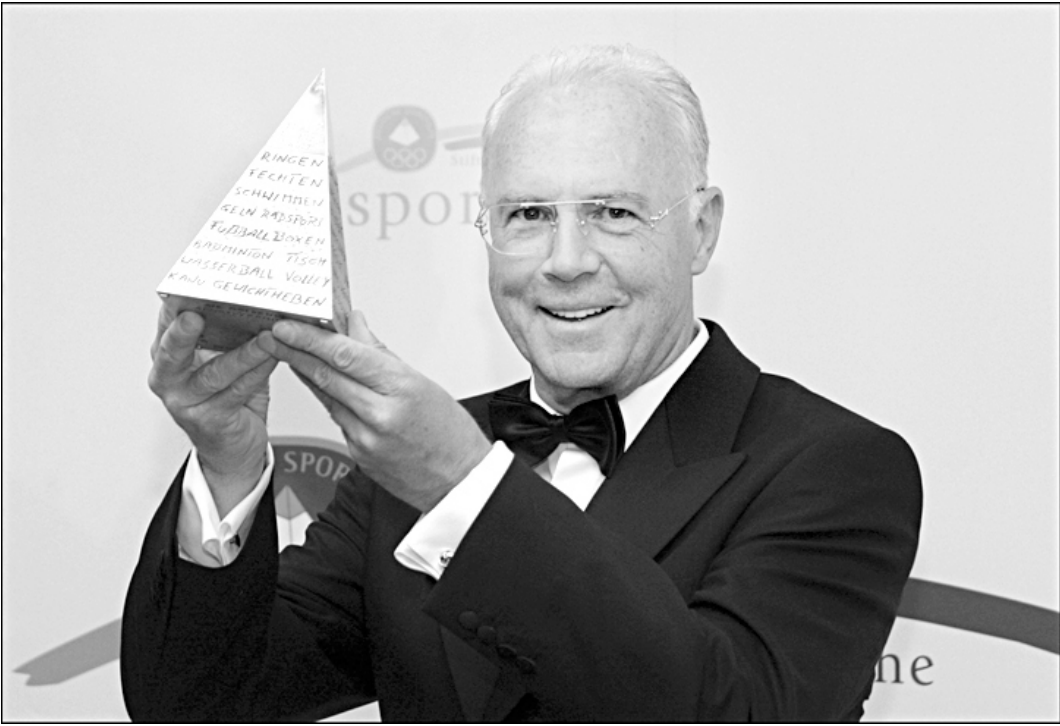


PHOTO: AFP

German soccer legend Franz Beckenbauer poses with a pyramid he was awarded by the "Deutsche Sporthilfe" (German sports supporting association) for his lifetime achievement on Friday in Berlin.

Scolari pulls out of England running

Football

AFP, Germany

Luiz Felipe Scolari on Friday sensationally pulled out of the race to become the new coach of England.

The Portuguese national coach, who led Brazil to the 2002 World Cup title, had been widely tipped to succeed Sven-Goran Eriksson as England coach after the finals in June and July this summer.

But the Brazilian called a news conference here, where he is inspecting his team's base for the World Cup, to announce he had withdrawn from the race because of the ongoing pressure associated with the high-profile job.

"There are 20 reporters camped outside my house and if that is part of another culture it is not part of mine," Scolari said.

"The English FA will choose a name but my name is not one of them because I am closing this matter here. I want to draw a line under this matter.

"My life and privacy have been disrupted. This is not part of my life and never will be.

"I will not be the next England coach. I was one of numerous candidates. I will be the Portugal coach until the end of the World Cup.

"I feel I am still important in Portugal and for the project we started in 2003.

"I am happy the English federation remembered my name and I expect them to name the new coach in the days to come. It was an interesting offer with several interesting options and I really thought about it for a long time."

The 57-year-old Scolari had met with England FA chief executive Brian Barwick in Lisbon on Wednesday to discuss the job but he had become instantly disenchanted with the intense attention the position attracts.

The FA said that the hunt for a successor will go on.

"Luis Felipe Scolari this afternoon made The FA aware of his intention to release a statement regarding the England head coach position," said a statement.

"It is no secret that Mr Scolari is one of the candidates that The FA has spoken to as part of the recruitment process.

"We will now reflect on his announcement before making any further comment as we move forward with the process."

England assistant coach and

Middlesbrough boss Steve McClaren, Sam Allardyce of Bolton, Charlton's Alan Curbishley and Northern Ireland-born former Celtic manager Martin O'Neill are on the shortlist for the post.

Scolari took the helm of the Portuguese squad in January 2003, shortly after steering his native Brazil to the 2002 World Cup title.

Under his guidance Portugal made it to the final of Euro 2004, its best performance in an international tournament, and were undefeated in their 2006 World Cup qualifying matches.

In Lisbon, the Portuguese Football Association congratulated Scolari on his decision.

"A big thank-you to Mr Scolari for the attitude he has adopted," said Gilberto Madail, the president of the Portuguese FA.

"It is an honourable decision and

he has respected the gentlemen's agreement that we had."

Madail also said that there were plans to extend Scolari's deal with Portugal after the World Cup.

British media reported that Scolari had been offered a contract up to seven years worth around three million pounds (4.3 million euros/5.4 million dollars) a year by the English FA.

The news of Scolari's approach has led to a storm of criticism in England aimed at the FA for once again turning to a foreign coach while in Portugal it has raised concerns that the national team will be distracted during the World Cup in Germany.

England and Portugal could cross paths in the later stages of the football finals which get underway on June 9.

2011 WC Asia's rightful claim

Cricket

AFP, New Delhi

South Asia is confident of securing the rights to host cricket's World Cup in 2011, saying every third edition of the mega event should be held in the cricket-mad region.

"Our claim is a rightful one," said the sport's Indian chief Sharad Pawar ahead of Sunday's meeting of the International Cricket Council's (ICC) Executive Board in Dubai to discuss the likely hosts.

India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh have put up a joint bid for the 2011 event against another combined bid by Australia and New Zealand.

"The South Asian region has four of the 10 Test-playing nations and a large part of the money earned from cricket comes from here, so there is good reason that every third World Cup be held here," said Pawar.

The bids for 2011 closed in February, but the ICC granted South Asia special permission to submit theirs by April 21 after the region's cricket chiefs requested more time to study the regulations.

The ICC received the South

Asian bid on April 20 at its Dubai offices and Pawar said the extra time granted to South Asia should not come in the way of a favourable response from the Executive Board.

Seven votes are needed among the 13 countries in the ICC's Executive Board to secure the rights and South Asia is already assured of four votes by virtue of the joint bid.

India and Pakistan have twice hosted the four-yearly World Cup: in 1987 by themselves and in 1996 with Sri Lanka. Australia and New Zealand jointly organised the 1992 World Cup and say they have the right by rotation to host the event in 2011.

The joint bid for the 2011 event proposes India hosting 22 matches, Pakistan 14, Sri Lanka nine and Bangladesh six, assuming there will be 51 games at the tournament.

The ICC has ruled that the bid, which will lose the right for the 2011 World Cup, will host the next tournament in 2015.

The International Cricket Council (ICC) will meet here on Sunday to consider the hosting of the World Cup in 2011 and 2015.

BITS AND BOBS

Australia kick-off their World Cup campaign against Japan on June 12, still seven weeks away.

Boakye set to miss out

INTERNET, undated

Aminia Bielefeld striker Isaac Boakye will miss the rest of the season with a knee injury which is also threatening to jeopardise his World Cup chances.

The 24-year-old Ghana international, who has been suffering from a nagging right knee problem for several months, tore his meniscus while playing in a friendly for his national team against Stuttgart on Wednesday.

He is set to undergo surgery in a bid to recover in time for the start of the World Cup, but is definitely out of Aminia's final three Bundesliga games this season against Schalke, Duisburg and Cologne.

Fines for pitch invasions

AFP, Rostock

Fans who invade the pitch during World Cup matches in Germany could face heavy fines following a ruling by the Rostock court of appeal on Friday.

The court upheld a claim from Hansa Rostock, of the German second division, for 20,000 euros against three supporters who invaded their pitch during a first division match in 2003.

Rostock were initially fined by the German football authorities but claimed that the supporters should pay the fine as it was their actions that caused it.

"These people caused the damages and as a consequence, they must pay," said the tribunal.

The decision was hailed by the German Football Association (DFB) which handed out the initial fine, and the World Cup organising committee.

"If we are to be sanctioned by FIFA due to pitch invasions by supporters, the Rostock judgement can be invoked so the supporters pay the fines."

During the 2005 Confederations Cup, also in Germany, several matches were interrupted by pitch invasions.

Kahn to quit in 2008

REUTERS, Berlin

Bayern Munich captain Oliver Kahn plans to play for his club for two years after the World Cup and then quit, he said in a newspaper interview on Saturday.

"After the World Cup I will play for two more years at Bayern Munich, and then this phase of life is over for me," he told the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung (FAZ), adding:

"I will not end this phase of life with a retirement but with my head held high, accepting the situation as it is."

Kahn, 36, was stunned earlier this month when Arsenal's Jens Lehmann was named as Germany's first choice goalkeeper for the World Cup. He accepted the role of understudy to Lehmann for the June 9-July 9 tournament, which Germany is hosting.

"If I am needed at the World Cup, I am there," Kahn told the FAZ. His contract with Bayern runs until June 30, 2008.

Riquelme sad, but staying

INTERNET, undated

Villarreal's Juan Roman Riquelme is still suffering after his UEFA Champions League penalty miss, but says he is going nowhere.

The Argentine, who missed a crucial last minute penalty in the Champions League semifinal with Arsenal, insists he will stay despite much transfer speculation.

His Primera Liga side defied the odds to get to the final stages of the competition, and Riquelme is proud to be at the club.

"I always feel bad when we don't win," he commented.

"I am responsible for taking penalties and sometimes you score, others you don't."

"But I am proud of my team and what we have achieved because we have had a marvellous Champions League campaign."

"We deserve credit for what we have done. Everyone in the Champions League wants to reach the final and we were so close, without having a side as strong as others."

Maldini under the knife

AFP, Milan

Italian legend Paolo Maldini has had an operation on his knee, according to his club AC Milan on Saturday.

The 38-year-old had been suffering from recurring pain in his knee for several weeks, something which contributed to his exclusion from the starting line-up in Milan's Champions League semifinal against Barcelona.

Maldini, who is in his 21st year as a Milan player having spent his whole career at the club, went to a clinic in Antwerp, Belgium, for the operation.

Bierhoff extends Germany contract

AFP, Berlin

Ex-Germany international Oliver Bierhoff has extended his contract as general manager of the national team until 2010, the German Football Federation (DFB) announced Saturday.

The 37-year-old, who retired in 2003, is responsible for the DFB's relationships with German club sides and has been defending under-fire boss Jurgen Klinsmann to the media.

Klinsmann was a teammate of the former Hamburg, Udinese, Monaco and AC Milan player at the 1996 European Championship in England where Bierhoff scored the winning goal in the final against the Czech Republic.

Gilchrist goes to the top

CRICINFO, undated

In what is turning into a battle of the wicketkeepers, Adam Gilchrist has edged ahead of Mahendra Dhoni to recapture the top batsman's spot in the ICC one-day rankings.

Gilchrist leapfrogged his captain, Ricky Ponting, as well as Dhoni thanks to his performances in the recently concluded three-match series in Bangladesh.

The Australian vice-captain now holds a slender advantage of just three rating points over Dhoni, who himself assumed the top position from Ponting for the first time less than two weeks ago.

Shaun Pollock retained his spot at the top of the ODI bowler's list with Irfan Pathan close on his heels in second.

Australia's 3-0 success in the series means it held its 13 point lead over South Africa at the top of the ODI table, with India a further three points back in third spot. There will also be a basement battle unfolding in the Caribbean as West Indies and Zimbabwe begin their seven-match one-day series on April 29. The two sides are currently in eighth and ninth places respectively in the table.

Clash of tacticians



SPORTSILLUSTRATED

AC Milan vice president Adriano Galliani said that Barcelona-Milan was the real final of the 2005-06 Champions League, featuring the two sides that played the best football in the tournament, as well as the two clubs who are first and second in UEFA's own rankings.

While it may be harsh on Arsenal and Villarreal, he may have a point, particularly after seeing the Villarreal-Arsenal clash at the Madrigal. But then, Champions League has never been about establishing the "best" team in Europe: It's a knock-out competition, with all that entails. And to those who love an attacking, entertaining style, the fact that Barcelona will be in Paris is a real treat.

It's also a testament to the outstanding work of Barca boss Frank Rijkaard. In a world where many believe the only formula for success in knock-out competitions is the defend-and-counter approach, Barcelona (and Carlo Ancelotti's Milan) stands out. Against the Rossoneri, Rijkaard's decision to play Andres Iniesta and Deco in the three-man midfield, with only Edmilson (who was outstanding) as the holding midfielder, was not just courageous, it was effective as well.

Never mind the fact that referee

Markus Merk disallowed Andriy Shevchenko's goal. It should have stood -- it was a refereeing error (one of the few by Merk, who is currently the world's No. 1), and we'll never know what might have happened in extra time. From Barcelona's perspective, it was perhaps divine retribution: Last year Pierluigi Collina, also hailed as the world's best, also made a crucial mistake in allowing Chelsea's fourth goal, which knocked Barca out of the competition in the second round.

From Milan's perspective, it no doubt hurts, but running Barcelona - this outstanding Barcelona -- so close over 180 minutes is a mark of pride. As is the club's record in Champions League over the past five years: one quarterfinal, two semifinals, a losing final and the '02-'03 crown.

As for Arsenal, the final berth -- like the clashes with Real Madrid and Juventus in the earlier rounds -- was conquered with stiff defending and counterattacking, two qualities that have traditionally been alien to Arsene Wenger's Gunners.

The thing about such tactics is that when you play well and are in good form physically, it can work well and be entertaining to watch (as the utter domination of Juve and, to a lesser degree, Real showed). But if you don't, it is dire to the point of being painful to watch.

The game at the Madrigal was one such example. Villarreal, not a team blessed with outstanding

talent (apart from Juan Roman Riquelme) nevertheless beavered away, creating half a dozen clear-cut chances and missing a penalty, saved by Jens Lehmann (who, by the way, is the redemption story of the year -- 12 months ago he was unwanted and unloved by all, now he's in the final and is Germany's No. 1).

The purist in me is hurt that Arsenal, which for nearly a decade under Wenger had played a brilliant, creative and, at times, breathtaking game, should resort to the negative tactics associated with the worst excesses of the Italian foul-heavy "catenaccio" style of the 1960s and '70s. Then again, the pragmatist in me is willing to let Wenger off the hook. This is a young team, a side in transition, hit by a rash of injuries. Wenger obviously felt this was the only way to halt Arsenal's perennial underachievement in Europe. He tried pretty football for many years and, no doubt, he will do so again. For now, he's entitled to his shot, even if it means raising the spectre of George Graham's Arsenal.

But, Arsene, please ... it's just for this year, right?

Kiwis strongly placed

Cricket

AFP, Cape Town

Tail-ender James Franklin completed a maiden Test century and new cap Jeetan Patel took two wickets as New Zealand kept the pressure on South Africa on the third day of the first Test at Newlands on Saturday.

South Africa were 136 for two at tea in reply to New Zealand's first innings total of 593, still needing another 258 to avoid the follow-on.

New Zealand batted on for an hour before declaring, with Franklin unbeaten on 122.

Patel captured the wicket of South African captain Graeme Smith with his third ball in Test cricket.

Franklin reached the landmark with an off-drive for four off Dale Steyn.

With his hundred completed, the left-handed Franklin hammered two more boundaries in the same Steyn over and lofted Makhaya Ntini,

South Africa's leading bowler, over wide mid-on for six.

Franklin, who had previously made two first-class centuries, including a double hundred, faced 268 balls in his six-hour innings, hitting 14 fours and a six.

South Africa's bowlers largely looked powerless to stop the runs on an easy-paced pitch, although Patel on six edged Ntini dangerously close to Dippenaar at first slip. Dippenaar made the match's most significant error Friday when he dropped Fleming on 136, with the New Zealand captain going on to score a ground record 262.

Fleming quickly introduced his spinners into the attack after Smith and Dippenaar made a confident start to the South African innings, with left-arm Daniel Vettori bowling the tenth over and Patel joining him three overs later.

Smith pushed forward at Patel's third ball and the ball looped off the toe of his bat for Patel to take a return catch. Smith stood his ground but television umpire Marais Erasmus confirmed the ball went to

Patel on the full.

Dippenaar and Hashim Amla put on 72 for the second wicket before Dippenaar tried to cut an off-break from Patel and was bowled off a bottom edge.

Amla, playing in his fourth Test and his first of the season, was unbeaten on 42, his highest Test score.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at tea on the third day of the second Test between South Africa and New Zealand at Newlands on Saturday:

NEW ZEALAND: First innings (overnight 535-8)				
Pappas b Nel		22		
Fulton c Boucher b Steyn		36		
Fleming b Prince		262		
Styris c Dippenaar b Ntini		11		
Astle lbw b Ntini		50		
Oram run out (Prince)		13		
McCullum lbw b Ntini		5		
Vettori c Nel b Ntini		11		
Franklin not out		122		
Patel not out		27		
Extras: (b-3, lb-15, nb-15, w-1)	34			
Total: (For 8 wickets dec in 165 overs)	593			
Fall of wickets: 1-50, 2-62, 3-82, 4-188, 5-237, 6-259, 7-279, 8-535.				
Did not bat: C Martin.				

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Ntini	43	5	162	4
Steyn	31	4	114	1
Nel	27	3	98	1
Kallis	15	4	45	0
Boje	29	4	89	0
Smith	17	2	61	0
Amla	1	0	4	0
Prince	2	0	2	1

SOUTH AFRICA: First innings				
Smith c and b Patel		25		
Dippenaar b Patel		47		
Amla not out		42		
Kallis not out		14		
Extras: (b-8)	8			
Total: (For 2 wickets in 53 overs)	136			
Fall of wickets: 1-36, 2-108.				
To bat: A Prince, A de Villiers, M Boucher, N Boje, A Nel, D Steyn, M Ntini.				

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Martin	6	2	19	0
Franklin	10	2	22	0
Vettori	17	1	38	0
Patel	17	4	41	2
Styris	3	0	8	0



PHOTO: AFP

James Franklin of New Zealand (R) hugs teammate Jeetan Patel after completing his maiden hundred on the third day of the second Test against South Africa at Newlands on Saturday.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS		DOWN	
1 Tailor's target	44 Pot's slander victim	3 Put off paper	27 Tarzan's son
4 Greek cheese	46 Route	4 Looseleaf paper	29 Vacationer's correspondence
8 Head light?	50 Bracketed word	5 Flightless bird	30 Maleficence
12 Big bother	51 Hydrox rival	6 Small bits	31 Moss or Winslet
13 Mosque figure	52 Proof of mailing	7 Tweak the Constitution	33 Peep's place
14 Surround-ed by	56 Authentic MP's	8 Peaceful quarry	35 Erstwhile acorn
15 Closing piece of music	58 Marseilles monarch	9 Beyond control	38 Wild a needle
17 Crazy	59 Snatch	10 Grown-up nuts	40 Mortar's partner
18 Up to 60 Pivot	60 Pivot	11 Stench	43 Half a 1960s quartet
19 Suppressed laugh	61 Hide-away	16 Gratuitly	45 Allen or Robbins
21 Burst	DOWN	20 Annoy	46 Harbor city
24 Arid	1 50 Cent piece	21 Cheat at hide-and-seek	
25 Swelled head	2 Altar affirmative	22 Fairy-tale villain	
26 Plagiarize		23 Pooch	