

Sheva deal long way off: Kenyon

AFP, London

A deal to take Andriy Shevchenko from AC Milan to English champions Chelsea is still a long way off, the Londoners' chief executive Peter Kenyon said Sunday.

The Ukraine striker has been linked with the Blues ever since the acquisition of the club by Russian owner Roman Abramovich.

A move to Stamford Bridge appeared more likely after the striker announced in the week he wanted to leave Milan.

While admitting the clubs have spoken about the player, Kenyon insists there is a long way to go before any negotiations could be concluded.

"I think Shevchenko is the type of player we would like. We have shown our interest in him the last two seasons and had dialogue with Milan," said Kenyon.

"At the end of the day to improve what we have got, it has to be a great player and Shevchenko certainly comes into that class.

"You stand a chance but you don't put it any more than that. There is a long way to go in the summer.

"It has got to be 50-50 but I wouldn't say any more than that."

Galatasaray clinch Turkish title

AFP, Istanbul

Galatasaray claimed their 16th Turkish league title on Sunday when they beat Kayserispor 3-0 while city rivals Fenerbahce could only draw 1-1 with Denizlispor.

The two Istanbul giants had gone into the final round of matches locked on 80 points after 33 matches.

But it was Galatasaray, led by Belgian coach Eric Gerets, who held their nerve on the final day.

Fellow Istanbul side Besiktas finished in third place, a huge 27 points behind Fenerbahce.

Juve shares nosedive

REUTERS, Rome

Shares in Italian soccer champions Juventus dived on Monday as one of the club's key officials faced prosecutors in a match-fixing probe that has stunned the nation.

Juventus won the Italian league for the second season in a row on Sunday but Franco Carraro, the former head of the Football Federation who resigned last week amid the scandal, said the title may be only provisional due to the various legal probes under way.

Fears that Juventus, one of four top clubs whose officials are under investigation, may be stripped of the title and be demoted from Serie A devastated shares which were indicated down 26 percent after they were suspended for excessive losses.

If found guilty of involvement in match-fixing -- even attempting to influence results -- Juve could be stripped of their last two titles and demoted to Serie B.

Financial daily Il Sole 24 Ore has estimated the club could lose 120 million euros in television and sponsorship income if forced out of the top league.

Thousands greet Liverpool

AFP, Liverpool

Tens of thousands of jubilant fans jammed the streets of Liverpool for the second time in 12 months to welcome home their triumphant football team on Sunday.

Just a day after claiming the FA Cup after a thrilling final against West Ham in Cardiff, which Liverpool won on penalties after a 3-3 draw, the players took off for a 10-mile tour of the city in an open-topped bus.

Dressed all in matching club tracksuits, the Liverpool team set off in the bus flanked by mounted policemen while children ran alongside their heroes.

It was only a year ago that Liverpool brought home the European Cup, for the fifth time, after an equally thrilling final, also won on penalties after a 3-3 draw.

Although there were fewer supporters there to see the team than had been the case when an estimated 750,000 turned out when the Reds brought home the Champions League trophy last May, that did not seem to affect the atmosphere.

Children were lifted onto their parents' shoulders as the crowds grew thicker with others perched on top of bus shelters, lamp-posts and street signs.

Man of the match Steven Gerrard, who is due to fly out to England's World Cup training camp in Portugal on Monday and scored the crucial last minute equaliser on Saturday to send the game into extra-time, was one of the calmest figures on the top deck, preferring to stay seated unlike many of the other players.



Chelsea manager Jose Mourinho (R) speaks with newly-recruited German midfielder Michael Ballack at Stamford Bridge in London on Monday.

Ballack unveiled at Chelsea

Football

AFP, London

Chelsea boss Jose Mourinho has outlined plans to rebuild his side around Michael Ballack after the Germany captain signed a three-year deal to play for English champions.

Ballack, who has signed on a free transfer from Bayern Munich, was unveiled as a Chelsea player at a Stamford Bridge press conference on Monday.

He revealed that he had decided to come after consulting Germany teammates Jens Lehmann, the Arsenal goalkeeper, and Robert Huth, who is already at Chelsea.

"I am very happy to be here," he said. "They are very friendly people and London is a nice city.

"It is very special and I have good impressions.

"I asked some players about England - Robert Huth, Jens Lehmann - and they told me good things about this country and I am happy to be here."

Mourinho, who had confirmed

the 29-year-old's arrival on Sunday, said he believed Ballack would bring out the best in England star Frank Lampard, whose future had been called into question by Chelsea's signing of a similar, attacking midfielder.

"Lampard wants top players to play with him and the team want good players to improve the team," Mourinho said. "I look forward to working with them and look forward to playing both together."

Ballack is expected to be the first of three big signings by Chelsea this summer with AC Milan's Ukrainian striker Andriy Shevchenko set to follow him in to Stamford Bridge shortly.

Inter Milan's Adriano and Corinthians star Carlos Tevez have also been heavily linked with Chelsea.

Mourinho confirmed: "He (Ballack) is the first of a few because we don't need a lot of players, just two or three very good players. We have now been champions for two consecutive years and we want to be more than that."

"We have already the team, now we need two or three world-class

players to join the special team we have to make it even better than that.

"Chelsea is very happy and we think English football should be very happy he plays for Chelsea and plays in the Premiership.

"We have a team of champions and to improve a team of champions we need champions. A champion is coming here to help follow our target for next year."

Ballack will reportedly become the highest-paid player in the Premiership on a deal said to be worth 130,000 pounds/week -- more than six million pounds a year.

The move to London will be Ballack's first footballing foray outside his native Germany, something he announced he wished to experience.

Born in the former East Germany, he began his professional career at division two side Chemnitz.

He then went on to play for Kaiserslautern and Bayer Leverkusen before moving to Bayern Munich in 2002.

Messi included in Barca squad

REUTERS, Madrid

Argentina forward Lionel Messi has been included in Barcelona's 22-man squad for the Champions League final against Arsenal in Paris despite not playing for more than two months.

The 18-year-old trained with the team on Monday but has not been given the all-clear to play by club medical staff.

It is expected that a decision about his inclusion in the team for the final will be made after Barcelona train at the Stade de France on Tuesday.

Messi tore a thigh muscle during the second leg of his side's Champions League knockout tie against Chelsea on March 7.

"The fact that Messi will be with us will make us stronger but we don't know if he will play in the final," Barca midfielder Deco told a news conference at the Nou Camp.

Moggi quizzed

AFP, Rome

Luciano Moggi, the man at the centre of a huge investigation into match fixing in Serie A, was quizzed by prosecutors here Monday.

Last week the entire Juventus board resigned following the publication of phone taps featuring Moggi, who quit as general director of Italian champions Juventus on Sunday.

In the conversations, Moggi, regarded as one of the most powerful figures in Italian football, tells the head of the referees' association which officials he wants assigned to Juventus matches.

A fearful Moggi resigned after Juventus claimed their 29th title with a 2-0 win away to Reggina on Sunday.

"Football is no longer my world," he said after announcing his departure.

"All I will be thinking about now is how to defend myself against all the wickedness that has been aimed at me. You've destroyed my soul."

Spurs agree record sponsorship deal

REUTERS, London

Tottenham Hotspur have agreed a 34 million pound (64.38 million dollars) shirt sponsorship deal with entertainment company Mansion, the Premier League club announced on Monday.

The four-year deal is a club record and one of the 10 largest shirt sponsorship agreements in the world.

Mansion, who run an international casino, sports exchange and sports book business, pulled out of a 70 million pound shirt deal with Manchester United in April, unhappy with the way negotiations were handled.

United subsequently signed a 56.5 million pound four-year deal with U.S. insurance company AIG.

"Tottenham has made progress on and off the pitch in recent years which has put the club in a good position to improve its commercial partnerships," Spurs chairman Daniel Levy said in a statement to the London stock exchange.

"We are excited about working with Mansion and keen to accelerate the international development of the club."

Tottenham finished fifth in this season's Premier League, their highest placing since 1990, and will play in next season's UEFA Cup competition.

Dhoni doesn't fear fiery WI pace attack

PTI, Kingston

Having blazed around against the likes of Andrew Flintoff, Mahendra Singh Dhoni says he is not alarmed by the West Indian fast bowlers eager to breathe fire at the Indian batsmen in the forthcoming series.

"As a cricketer you are always looking to improve but it does not mean there are any undue concerns about their fast bowlers and their pace," said Dhoni after the nets.

"I faced Andrew Flintoff at home and he was bowling genuinely quick with bounce. So there is no alarm as such about the West Indian fast bowlers."

The dashing Indian wicketkeeper-batsman, however, was quick to add that he was ready to adjust himself against the hosts attack, if required.

"If I have to do adjustments, I would do so at the necessary time," he said.

Dhoni revealed that he had come expecting slow pitches and his impression seemed to be right if the venue for the nets was any indication.

"I have come over expecting wickets to be slow yet providing grip to the spinners. This one in the middle certainly confirms the impression," he said about the strip at Chadwin Park where the team practised Sunday morning.



Spanish teenage sensation Rafael Nadal bites the Rome Masters trophy after defeating Roger Federer of Switzerland in the final on Sunday.

Who will scale the Eiffel?

UEFA CHAMPS LEAGUE

AFP, Paris

Paris will welcome the return of its two most famous footballing musketeers when Ronaldinho and Thierry Henry show down in a mouthwatering Champions League duel here Wednesday.

The head-to-head contest between Barcelona's world footballer of the year Ronaldinho and Arsenal's inspirational captain Henry could well prove decisive when the Spanish and English giants collide at the Stade de France.

But while Paris is, in theory, neutral territory for the two teams, both Ronaldinho and Henry have a deep emotional attachment to the 'City of Light'.

Henry's ties to Paris stretch back to his birth in the Parisian suburb of Les Ulis 28 years ago.

It was there that he began playing in local junior leagues, standing out even at an early age with his phenomenal speed and eye for goal.

Claude Chezelle, Henry's first coach, says the talent of Arsenal's record goalscorer was immediately apparent. "When I watch him on TV it's just like seeing the grown-up version of the boy," he said.

Henry's father Antoine, who had settled in France from Guadeloupe, who was the driving force of his son's early career.

Legend has it that Henry senior once started a fist-fight after running on to the pitch to remonstrate with a referee after deciding that his son wasn't being offered enough protection.

"To say that my dad pushed me is an understatement," Henry told an English newspaper. "I was never naturally drawn to football."

Henry's break came when he was spotted by a scout for Monaco as a 13-year-old. The club sent him to the French football academy at Clairefontaine to hone his talent and he made his debut for Monaco aged

17.

Ronaldinho's links to the French capital, meanwhile, are more recent, forged over a two-year stint with Paris St Germain from 2001 to 2003.

"Going back to Paris is like going home," said the Brazilian. "It's not my country but as soon as I step off the plane I know where I am, and where I'm going," he told French daily L'Equipe in an interview.

"I speak the language and I know



THIERRY HENRY

the people. In fact, when I go back to Paris it's like going back to Brazil."

Ronaldinho's two years in Paris were marked by frequent rows with PSG's then coach Luis Fernandez, who took a dim view of the Brazilian playmaker's enthusiastic embrace of the French capital's nightlife.

Fernandez often left Ronald-dinho languishing on the bench, and though there were flashes of the brilliance that later earned him World and European Footballer of the Year awards, PSG fans never saw the best of him.

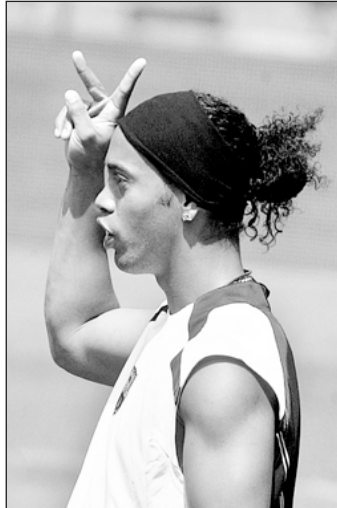
The 26-year-old insists however that he has not altered his approach since his arrival at the Nou Camp, where he has thrived under the Barcelona regime of Frank Rijkaard.

"The difference is that in

Barcelona, I'm playing," said Ronaldinho. "When I was in Paris I wasn't playing. And when I'm playing, I'm happy."

While Ronaldinho and Henry will be the best of enemies on Wednesday, they are also becoming friends off the pitch.

As speculation rages that Henry may leave Arsenal to form a dream attacking partnership with Ronaldinho at Barcelona, the Brazilian World Cup winner has



RONALDINHO

revealed that he is in regular contact with the Frenchman.

The two stars have met at several world player of the year events and through sponsorship commitments.

"I speak with Henry on the phone quite often, but I haven't spoken to him this week," said Ronaldinho. "This week we have swapped a few text messages. He is a fantastic player, one of the best in the world."

"But this is not a contest between Ronaldinho and Henry, it is a game between Barca and Arsenal and we all have to be prepared."

Del Piero hails hard-workers

Football

INTERNET, undated

Juventus captain Alessandro Del Piero has praised his teammates for "earning this Scudetto with hard graft on the pitch."

"This is a special day for so many reasons. We are extremely happy with this Scudetto and the whole season, as my teammates and I sweated our hearts out on the field in every game, whether it was a win or a defeat," said the Bianconeri legend.

The celebrations for the 29th title have been overshadowed by an investigation into alleged match-fixing and collusion with referees, which has seen the entire Juventus Board of Directors including director-general Luciano Moggi resign.

"It's inevitable that we cannot ignore what is happening. We're close to the people who've worked with us for many years and hope the matter can reach a positive resolution, but I don't want to get into this debate."

Juventus were top of the table from start to finish and notched up a record-breaking 91 points, so Del Piero insists they have reason to be proud.

"At the end of the day, the most wonderful thing about this sport is being there on the field and this season we proved our worth where it counts in the cleanest possible way. We feel very proud of this Scudetto."

Nonetheless, there is talk of a worst case scenario in which

Juventus would be relegated if the investigation reaches a conclusion that there were irregularities. Would Del Piero stay in Turin even if it meant playing Serie B football?

"My bond with Juventus is very strong and I have a love for this club that goes beyond many other considerations. It's no coincidence I stayed this year even after some difficult moments."

Those disappointments were

caused by Coach Fabio Capello, who granted the captain just 17 Serie A starts and 16 substitute appearances, even though he managed to score 12 goals.

"Capello has won two Scudetto titles with us. Our relationship has been exaggerated in the Press, as the row we supposedly had this week didn't happen."

Petrova pockets German Open

Tennis

AP, Berlin

Second-seeded Nadia Petrova won her third straight clay-court title Sunday, beating third-seeded Justine Henin-Hardenne 4-6, 6-4, 7-5 in the German Open final.

The Russian, who ran her clay-court winning streak to 15 matches, fought back and leg injuries in a key late-appearing nearly three hours in a match-up for the French Open, which starts May 28.

Henin-Hardenne missed a backhand down the line on match point and Petrova ran to hug her coach.

"I was questioning myself if I could finish the match. I'm amazed I

won the way I did," Petrova said. "It's a great feeling. Hopefully, I can get to the top -- that is a big dream of mine."

Petrova, who had won only one event before this year, also took clay-court titles at Charleston, S.C., and at Amelia Island, Fla., last month.

Last year, Henin-Hardenne defeated Petrova in the final to capture her third German Open title. Sunday's loss was the Belgian's first defeat at the event since losing to Jennifer Capriati in 2001. Her German Open record is 24-2.

Henin-Hardenne, a two-time French Open champion, lost on European clay for the first time since 2004.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS	35 Martini ingredient	DOWN	23 Dregs
1 Insecticide letters	36 Bowling alley	1 Defeat decisively	24 Sea eagle
4 Generous slice	37 GI ID	2 Gourmandize	25 Trade-agreement
8 Plumbum	39 Four qts.	3 One of Taylor's husbands	26 Coaster
12 Carnival site	40 Blond shade	4 Threaded	27 Biz symbol
13 Forum garb	41 Like most training	5 Get stuck	28 Eager, plus
14 Harvard's rival	45 Insensate	7 Tigris city	29 Wrestler's coup
15 Likely loser	48 Guard of a sort	8 Dishonest	32 Main road
17 "— have to do"	50 Bedouin	9 Take the cake?	33 Cardiff populace
18 Wingless blood-sucker	51 Saxophone range	10 The whole shooting match	35 Petrol
19 Coop dweller	52 Journal	11 Costa-Sol link	36 Ill will
21 Indivisible	53 Compassion	16 Black board?	38 Housecat
22 Fairway bend	54 1776, e.g.	7 Goller Ernie	39 Must, jocularly
26 Word on the street?	55 Goller Ernie	20 Many millennia	42 Between jobs
29 Zero-star review	Solution time: 25 mins.		

CAGE APSE PEP
ALEX ENER
POLYDANTINE
OSSI EY ELLER
SO PARES
NAPT MOB STEP
IDO ALL CRAG
MOLL PLY CRAIG
GIMLOUSY TO
RAW POLL WATE
ITTO EVIL ACNE
BEG RADDS CYAN

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12										
15										
18										
26	27	28								
31										
34										
37										
45	46	47								
50										
53										

CRYPTOQUIP

N D T F M Q I T N E G M E F N B

G T V I N J M A M Q M D R B B K D

G Q K D T E N H N M V . N ' W F T B B N I

T F O K V V A K Q V V G R P P B M .

Yesterday's Cryptquip: WHY DO YOU THINK SOME HAPPY TONSILS GOT ALL SPRUCED UP? THE DOCTOR WAS TAKING THEM OUT.

Today's Cryptquip Clue: D equals F

The Cryptquip is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.