

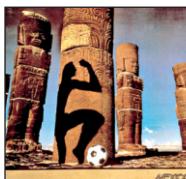


DOWN THE WORLD CUP LANE



Diego Maradona: The Greatest, part deux

AGENCIES, undated



Diego Maradona carried Argentina on his shoulders to victory in the 1986 World Cup, the crowning glory in the career of a man who, with the possible exception of Brazil's Pele, is considered the game's greatest ever talent.

Some things never lose currency in Argentina. Football is one of them. Another source of comfort for the masses, and one player in particular has provided more than his share of tender loving care is Diego Armando Maradona. And in a land that identifies itself by its football Maradona is nothing short of divine.

Maradona made the ball an early friend and it was his constant companion in the games of street football that taught him how to compete with older and bigger opponents. Despite this toughening process, however, Maradona's physique, or lack of it, almost cost him his career.

The Argentinos Juniors youth coach, Francis Comejo, had no doubts about his ability – yet could not believe that the little left-footer was old enough to play for his team. His date of birth duly established, Maradona became the star of the 'Cebollitas' helping them go 136 matches unbeaten. The senior squad beckoned, and on 20 October 1976 the 15-year-old debuted for Argentinos Juniors in the first division against Talleres de Cordoba.

Another 21 seasons, another

bowl: the final curtain fell on Diego's career after Boca Juniors' 2-1 defeat of River Plate on 29 October 1997. In the intervening years, Barcelona, Napoli, Seville and Newell's Old Boys

had all witnessed the Maradona phenomenon at first hand – a pocket battleship of a player blessed with supreme technique and a magical left foot.

It was the national team that saw the best of him, however.

SEE PAGE 18 COL 2



PHOTO: AFP

Argentina midfielder Diego Maradona (C) dribbles past three England defenders during their 1986 World Cup quarterfinal on June 22 in Mexico City. Maradona scored both goals, as Argentina won 2-1. Both goals earned iconic status in world football.

BITS AND BOBS

Zidane set for ton
AP, Clairfontaine

France captain Zinedine Zidane is set to make his 100th international appearance Saturday in an exhibition game against Mexico, likely his last game at Stade de France.

"If I do get swamped by emotion then so be it," Zidane said Friday. "I will try not to put pressure on myself. But if I do get emotional, then it's no drama. I've always had a good relationship with the fans at Stade de France."

Zidane, who has scored a total of 28 goals in 99 matches with France, said: "For me this match symbolises the start of a new adventure, the World Cup in Germany, where I will give all I have for a month and a half."

"This won't be a farewell match, and I don't want any special greetings. This is just the start of another spell, even if this is my last with France."

Midfielder Zidane will become the fourth player to play 100 times for Les Bleus, following Didier Deschamps, Lilian Thuram and Marcel Desailly -- teammates on France's 1998 World Cup championship team.

'Don't blame Brazil 'keeper'
REUTERS, Weggis

Brazil's World Cup goalkeeper Dida has preached forgiveness for Moacir Barbosa who was vilified after Brazil lost the 1950 final to Uruguay.

Barbosa was in goal when Brazil, hosting the 1950 World Cup and hot favourites to win, were beaten 2-1 in front of a shocked crowd of nearly 200,000 people at the Maracana stadium.

"Barbosa was crucified for that final and it's sad that we remember him just for that moment," Dida told reporters on Saturday.

"In fact, he made a lot of great saves and he did a lot to help the Brazilian team and he should also be remembered for that, not just for one game which marked his life for ever."

Barbosa, who died in 2000 at the age of 79, said he had been condemned to a life sentence for Brazil's most bitter defeat.

"Brazilian law doesn't permit a sentence of more than 30 years, but I've been in prison for 50 years now," he said shortly before his death.

Brazil and Uruguay were drawing 1-1 when Barbosa misread Chico Ghiggia's intentions and the Uruguayan scored between the goalkeeper's legs and the near post 11 minutes from time.

Dida, a reserve at the last two World Cups, has been named as first choice for the tournament in Germany and is set to play his first game in a final against Croatia on June 13.

"My dream has always been to play at the World Cup and now I'm close to fulfilling that," he said.

"But I don't just want to play at the World Cup, I want to win it as well."

Hooligan summit busted-up

AFP, Brussels

Football hooligans from 10 Belgian clubs held an ill-fated "summit" this week in the eastern city of Hasselt to prepare for next month's World Cup, the Het Belang van Limburg newspaper reported Saturday.

Groups of hooligans from around the globe are reported to be preparing a "third world war" for football's showcase event, which Germany is hosting from June 9 to July 9.

SEE PAGE 18 COL 6

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SEE PAGE 18 COL 6

Asamoah calls to curb racism

AFP, Berlin

German international Gerald Asamoah, the first black player to represent the country, has said it is vital that the host nation do not allow racist neo-Nazis to spoil the World Cup, which begins in two weeks' time.

"Certain people have just been waiting for a big stage like the World Cup to bring this dreadful element in," Asamoah said in an interview with the Frankfurter Allgemeine.

"I have been personally affected and find it terrible. It is very sad what you see about it on television every day. We cannot let the Nazis get the better of us at this World Cup."

Asamoah, 27, was born in Ghana but chose to play for his adopted homeland Germany, making his international debut against Slovakia in May 2001.

The Schalke 04 forward became the first black player to represent Germany in the process and a racist neo-Nazi organisation produced a photograph of him with a banner reading: "No Gerald you are not Germany."

"That really hurt me," admitted Asamoah. "The fight against right wing radicals could be something for the future when I have ended my football career."

Asamoah, capped 38 times by Germany, has been included in Jurgen Klinsmann's World Cup squad and could start in the World Cup opener against Costa Rica on June 9 in Munich.

Ukraine players unfit: Blokhin

AFP, Kiev

Ukrainian national coach Oleg Blokhin told the press Saturday that only 16 players in his 23-man squad were in top form and ready to play at the forthcoming World Cup.

"Some of my players including Andrei Shevchenko and Sergei Rebrov are currently trying to overcome injuries," Blokhin told the press.

"We still have time to prepare for the tournament but so far the situation is not really optimistic. I hope that nobody else will suffer any injuries in Sunday's friendly with Costa Rica."

Blokhin also said that he still failed to finalise the name of a player to replace Dynamo Kiev full back Sergei Fedorov, who has an injured thigh and was taken out of the World Cup squad.

"Probably it will be somebody from our under-21 squad but I still cannot decide who," Ukraine's manager said. "Besides they may be exhausted following a very tough match with Italy."

However the coach said that the shortage of skilled players in top form should not decrease the level of competition in his team.

"I have warned my players that still nobody was guaranteed of a place in my team," Blokhin added. "I promise that in Germany only players who are 100 percent fit will play."

Loves Ronaldinho

REUTERS, Weggis

A Brazilian woman ran onto the pitch and hugged striker Ronaldinho as the world champions finished a training session, watched by around 5,000 fans, on Friday.

At least four other fans followed her onto the field, raising worries about security and underlining the concerns about the carnival-like atmosphere which has been created around the world champions in the small Swiss village.

Brazil's players had finished an attack-versus-defence practice and were doing stretching exercises on the ground when the incidents happened.

The blonde-haired woman jumped the fence around the field and appeared to land a kiss on the World Player of the Year Brazil striker Robinho jokingly threw a mattress over the pair.

Ronaldinho appeared to take it as a joke and even waved goodbye to the woman as she was led away.

A security official said that five people were arrested and taken away by police for questioning. He said that one appeared to be drunk and bit a policeman.

Brazil have been in Weggis since Monday to prepare for the World Cup finals where they face Croatia, Australia and Japan in their first-round group.

But instead of peace and quiet, their training sessions have been watched by around 5,000 people a day in a purpose built arena where the crowd is less than two metres from the pitch.

SEE PAGE 18 COL 5



ANOTHER MARRY ME CASE! Superstar Ronaldinho (L) is being hugged by Sheila Soares, a fan who invaded the pitch, after Brazil's afternoon training session in Weggis, Switzerland on Friday.

Puyol in his elements

INTERNET, undated

They love Carles Puyol at the Nou Camp.

The Barcelona captain always gets the loudest cheer when the players run out. He is totally committed, battles for the team, and is Catalan. The perfect Barca mix and a key component of Luis Aragones' Spain side in this summer's World Cup.

With his unruly long hair flowing, Puyol has become a symbol of his club and a regular starter for Spain. His spirited leadership from the back is the perfect complement to Barca's more creative players like Ronaldinho, Samuel Eto'o and Deco.

Puyol became captain of Barca at the beginning of last season taking over from the great Luis Enrique who had retired from the game.

"At the moment it is an easy job because the team is playing well but it is a great responsibility because whenever anything happens you have to be there," said Puyol.

"At the start I asked for advice from Luis Enrique and now although I speak to him because we are

friends, I take the initiative.

"The players look to me and Xavi because we have been the longest at the club. We have a strong team with a good spirit and the results are excellent at the moment so everything is going well."

Having first come into the first team as a full-back, Puyol now commands the defence from the centre along with either another emerging local talent Oleguer or the Mexican Rafael Marquez.

Puyol joined Barca in the 1995-

96 season as a 17-year-old but did not make his debut in the first team until four years later when he was given the green light against Valladolid by Dutch coach Louis van Gaal. Since then he has made steady progress and won over the hearts of the Catalan fans.

During the dark days of Van Gaal's reign when the 'cules' resented the coach's aloof style and the incorporation of so many Dutch players into the team, Puyol represented the home grown talent. The Catalan spirit.

In 2001 he took the step up from the Spain Under-21 side to the full national team, playing his first game, ironically against Holland. From there he played in the qualifying campaign for the 2002 World Cup and then in Japan and Korea he secured a regular place in the team.

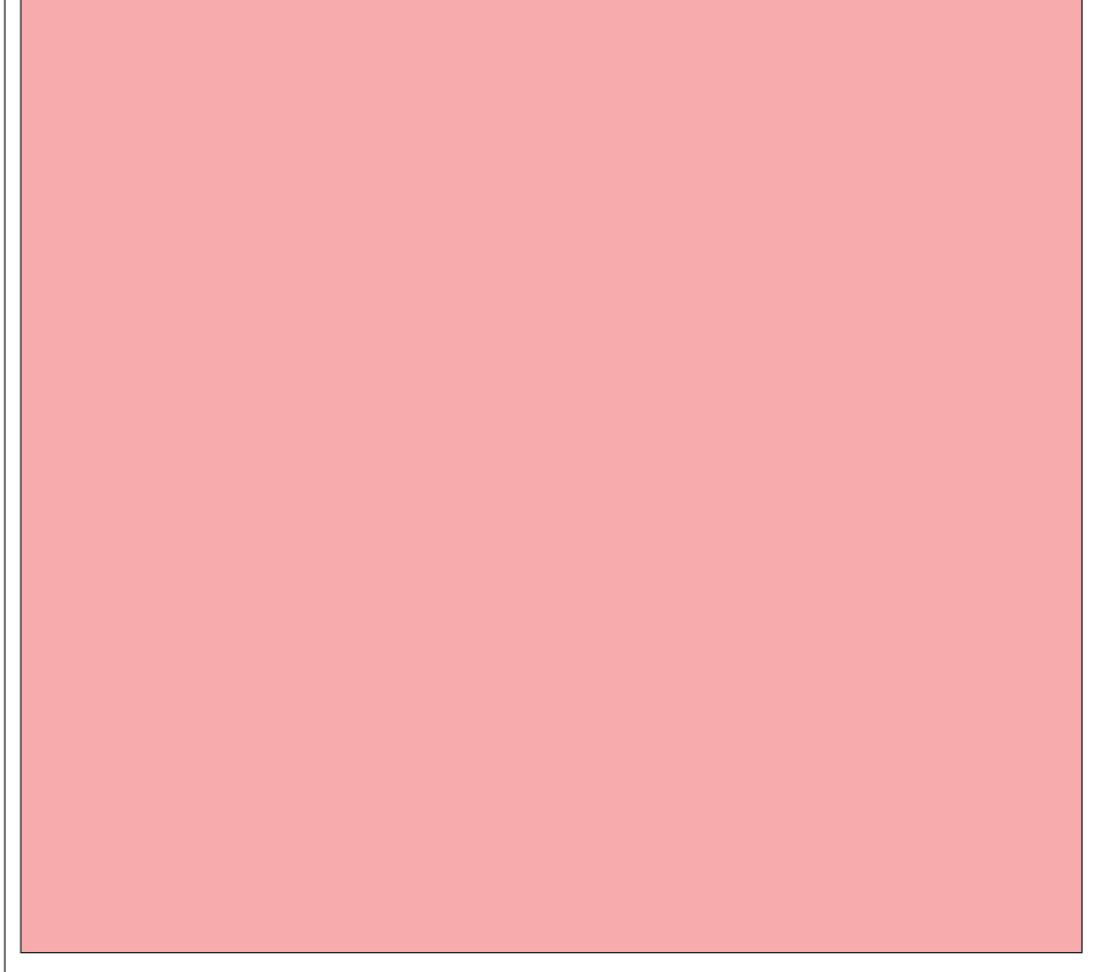
Puyol cemented his image as a combative player when he ran out in the colours of the club's American football team -- the Dragons -- as part of a publicity stunt.

Last season was Puyol's most successful as a player when he led

SEE PAGE 18 COL 2



CARLES PUYOL



Information

- Residents of Bangladesh are eligible to participate in the Rangs Toshiba World Cup Quiz 2006. Employees of Rangs Toshiba and their immediate family members shall not be eligible to participate.
- All entries must be submitted in the original form printed from June 9 to July 9.
- There will be FIVE rounds of competition.
- Each round will have a separate draw with attractive prizes from the house of Rangs Toshiba as per announcement.
- Participants of all the FIVE rounds will automatically qualify for the Bumper Draw which will have even bigger prizes.
- For each round, a set of questions including a photographic quiz will be published in The Daily Star.
- Names and addresses of all prize winners will be published in The Daily Star.
- Winners will have to collect their prizes from The Daily Star office after satisfactory authentication of their identity.
- Any taxes or levies, as per law, for all the above prizes will have to be borne by the prize winners.
- Incomplete forms will not be accepted.
- Participants are to put a tick () mark in the box alongside their answer to each question.
- Aperson may send numerous entries for each round.
- Entry forms should be completed with a ballpoint pen.
- Name, address, father's name and particulars of participants must be clearly written. Each entry form must also bear the signature of the participant and date.
- Incomplete forms will not be accepted.
- Entries must reach the office of The Daily Star on or before the closing date marked on the entry form. Late entries will not be accepted.
- Envelopes of entries must be clearly marked "Star World Cup Quiz 2."
- Entries may be hand delivered or posted to The Daily Star, 19, Karwan Bazar, Dhaka-1215.
- Entries will be placed in a sealed box for the draw to be held on a notified date in public in presence of invited guests and Quiz participants, if any.
- Winners will be decided on the basis of correct entries drawn out from the box.
- Entering this Quiz competition shall be construed as the respective agreement by each participant to abide by all rules, instructions and guidelines as may be issued by The Daily Star.
- Any decision of The Daily Star in the conduct of the Quiz competition/s including the answers selected as correct shall be deemed final and binding on all participants and shall not be called in question and/or challenged in any manner whatsoever.
- The Daily Star management, in their absolute discretion, reserves the right to amend, modify or substitute any and all dates of the Quiz competitions under any circumstances.

PRIZES UP FOR GRABS

Prize	Item	Model	Winner
1st	One 21" Toshiba Bomba Flat TV	21C28DE	YOU
2nd	One Toshiba Refrigerator	GRM-19BPT	YOU
3rd	One Toshiba Washing Machine	VH-7200	YOU
4th	Ten Canon Cameras	BF-800	YOU
5th	Twenty Toshin Irons	and YU	

QUIZ SCHEDULE

Round	Starts	Answers must reach by 8pm	Lucky Draw for prizes

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