



PHOTO: AFP

Portuguese captain Luis Figo (L) is chased by French midfielders Claude Makelele (C) and Florent Malouda during the World Cup semifinal at Munich's Allianz Arena on Wednesday.

## Figo fails in final quest



AFP, Munich

Portuguese captain Luis Figo was desperate to crown his illustrious career with success at the World Cup, but France denied him an emotional last hurrah with victory in the semifinal on Wednesday.

Figo, who made his 126th appearance against France, was plucked from international retirement to lead his side in Germany, but will return to Inter Milan and the Serie A without getting his hands on the cherished trophy.

All he has to look forward to now is an anti-climatic third-placed play off against Germany on Saturday before heading off into the sunset.

Other than coach Luiz Felipe Scolari, few seriously expected Portugal to get as far as they did,

overcoming the likes of Holland and England en route, and it is credit to Figo for driving them to within reach of Sunday's final in Berlin.

He had been widely written off before the tournament despite a glittering club career with the likes of Sporting Lisbon, Barcelona, Real Madrid and now Inter, but proved the critics wrong.

Unlike his former Real teammate Zinedane Zidane, who has also seen a spectacular return to form and killed off Portugal with the decisive penalty on Wednesday, Figo has produced more steady, workmanlike performances.

But he nevertheless inspired his team which looked to him for their cue as they matched their best ever performance at a World Cup -- in 1966 they lost 2-1 to eventual champions England in the semi-finals.

While Figo, 33, no longer bursts past defenders, he has shown that his dribbling skills are still intact and his vision excellent, although he retains a dark side.

His near headbutt of Mark van Bommel in Portugal's card frenzied second round match with the Dutch showed even he can lose his cool in the heat of battle.

Figo announced he was taking an indefinite break from international football in August 2004, just one month after he led hosts Portugal to the final of Euro 2004, where they lost 1-0 to Greece.

But Portuguese football chiefs never awarded his number 7 jersey, hoping for his return, and in May 2005 he was enticed back to the national team in time for World Cup qualifiers against Slovakia and Estonia.

"You think about what you have done, about the country behind you, supporting you, suffering with you and that gives you the strength to continue to play," the rejuvenated star said coming into the tournament.

Figo was the first real Galactico, moving to Real in 2000 when then-president Florentino Perez paid a

world-record 56 million dollars to buy him out of his contract with arch-rivals Barcelona.

Zidane and Brazil's Ronaldo followed him to the club, with Figo playing an important part in Real's victories at the 2002 European Cup and the 2003 Spanish championship.

But he left when it became clear David Beckham was favoured on the right and recently blasted the club for letting commercial decisions take precedence over sporting ones.

Like many of Portugal's "golden generation" who won the world under-16 tournament in 1989 and the world under-19 title in 1991, Figo has won top club honours and also been named both European and World Footballer of the Year.

Success though at international level eluded him and the World Cup was his last chance to win a major title.

## Germany out to keep Klinsi



AFP, Berlin

Host nation Germany may not have achieved their goal of winning the World Cup but coach Juergen Klinsmann has helped the country regain respect among their peers by guiding his team to the semi-final with an adventurous brand of football.

Germany's World Cup dream came to an abrupt end on Tuesday when they lost 2-0 in extra-time to Italy in the semi-final.

Two late goals in extra-time left German fans heartbroken but while the disappointment is understandable they can still reflect on a good World Cup - particularly when they consider where German football was two years ago.

At Euro 2004 Germany exited the tournament without winning a single match and their fans dreaded an embarrassing World Cup on home soil.

Klinsmann, a World Cup winner

with West Germany in 1990, took over the reins in August 2004 after Rudi Voller resigned and his positive attitude was taken on board by the players.

Despite having no previous managerial experience Klinsmann said he wanted to create a team capable of winning a fourth World Cup crown with just two years to do it.

Five consecutive wins, including a penalty shootout victory over Argentina, saw the team surge into the last four, but Klinsmann and the team fell narrowly short against Italy.

Germany's high-tempo game could not get the better of Italy's technically superior side with Marcello Lippi's charges showing rhino-like skin to battle the home crowd and prevail.

"Our objective was to make it to the final but we narrowly missed it. However the team can still be proud of their achievements," Klinsmann said.

"This is a very young team and they showed amazing spirit and character. They made the whole country proud.

"We are optimistic and confident that these players will get better. We should not be afraid of what is coming up in the future. We have every reason to be optimistic."

With young talent such as Philipp Lahm, Bastian Schweinsteiger and Lukas Podolski - all in their early 20s - Germany now have something to build on.

The question is whether Klinsmann is going to continue developing this team as his contract has now expired and he has yet to decide whether he wants to stay in the role.

"I hope Juergen Klinsmann carries on. He has a young team which he has moulded in his image," said West Germany's 1974 World Cup winner Franz Beckenbauer.

"The young players trust him and it would be a pity if we lost that."

The German Football Federation are trying to persuade him to stay on for two more years until Euro 2008 in Austria and Switzerland.

Klinsmann has said he must discuss the situation with his American wife and family that are based in the United States.

He will have close to five weeks to make his decision with German

football chiefs setting mid-August as the deadline.

If the 41-year-old decides to return to managing his sports marketing firm in California, German football could find themselves in the tricky situation of trying to find a fourth coach in six hectic years.

Erich Ribbeck and Voller failed at Euro 2000 and Euro 2004 respectively and Germany will want to put that record straight at Euro 2008 with Klinsmann in charge.

Replacing him would be a major headache as not many wanted the job after Euro 2004 with former Bayern Munich coach Ottmar Hitzfeld and Greece manager Otto Rehhagel turning down the post before Klinsmann accepted.

There were highs and lows for the former Tottenham, Bayern Munich, Inter Milan and Monaco striker with the lows being the two defeats against Italy - a 4-1 thrashing in March and Tuesday's semi-final loss - with the five World Cup wins over Costa Rica, Poland, Ecuador and Argentina the highs.

Germany fans will hope there are many more to come under the Klinsmann era.

## Djorkaeff in trouble again

AFP, Berlin

French World Cup winning midfielder Youri Djorkaeff had a rude awakening last Saturday when he was arrested by German police over an outstanding fine for a traffic accident dating back five years according to Thursday's edition of Rheinpfalz.

The 38-year-old former France international - a member of the 1998 World Cup and Euro 2000 winning sides - had returned to Germany from the United States for France's World Cup quarterfinal with defending champions Brazil - which his former teammates won 1-0.

However, Djorkaeff, who had a spell with German outfit Kaiserslautern, was taken into custody by the German police and subsequently released on bail as he still owes a 77,000-euro fine for having damaged a car with his in September 2001 and fleeing the scene.

## Casualties of celebrations



AFP, Paris

Two French revellers died and a third was feared drowned after more than half a million football fans took to the streets early Thursday to celebrate their side's qualification for the World Cup final.

Across France the night's celebrations were mostly peaceful - if noisy - with firecrackers and fireworks competing with drums and car horns to fete France's 1-0 victory over Portugal, courtesy of a Zinedine Zidane penalty.

The situation turned unruly in the small hours in Paris, Lyon and Zidane's home city of Marseille, where police used teargas to disperse groups of youths, arresting 189 people in Paris alone.

Several people were seriously injured in brawls and traffic accidents as well as the two confirmed

dead.

In central Paris, an 18-year-old man was crushed to death as he tried to jump between the roofs of two metro trains at Opera station, police said.

A young man was also missing feared drowned in the southeastern city of Lyon after jumping off a bridge into the River Saone with a group of friends.

And in the northern town of Lens, a 20-year-old woman was killed in a car accident minutes after the French win, police said. She had been leaning out of the car window to celebrate, and was crushed when the driver veered off the road to avoid a pedestrian.

But for most French people it was a night of joyous celebration, with cries of "Zizou! Zizou!" -- as France captain Zinedine Zidane is known here -- ringing out late into the night.

Half a million people flooded the streets of the capital to celebrate, with many converging on the famous Champs-Elysees -- which was filled with a million revellers when France won the World Cup on

home soil in 1998.

The Champs-Elysees festivities turned nasty shortly before 2:00 am (midnight GMT) when small groups of youths threw bottles and other projectiles at police who responded with teargas and charged forward to make arrests.

One shop window was smashed along the avenue, but the overall damage was minor and calm returned within two hours.

There was more trouble at a sports stadium in the south of Paris, where an 18-year-old man was stabbed as he watched the match on a giant screen. He was hospitalised with serious injuries, and an inquiry has been opened.

Police used tear gas to disperse the stadium crowd after several fights broke out, and several people were led away by stewards for letting off smoke cannisters.

## Italy to play in blue

INTERNET, undated

Italy will wear their familiar Azzurri shirt in the World Cup Final against France, FIFA has confirmed today.

Marcello Lippi's men have been selected as the home team and will therefore force their opponents, who also usually wear blue, to use a white strip for the fourth match running in Germany 2006.

Italy wore blue in the 1998 World Cup Finals penalty loss to France, while they reverted to white when Les Bleus triumphed in the Final of Euro 2000.

## Scolari silent on future

AFP, Lisbon

Portugal coach Luiz Felipe Scolari refused to discuss his future Wednesday after a 1-0 loss to France which dashed his side's hopes of appearing in a World Cup final for the first time.

"I haven't defined anything. I am under contract until July 31 and I will think about the matter," the 57-year-old Brazilian told the SIC television channel when asked if he would stay on for another two years as reported.

Earlier this week Portugal's sports media reported that the Portuguese Football Federation had already negotiated a new two-year contract with Scolari who took the helm of the Portuguese national team in January 2003 just six months after he leading Brazil to a record fifth world title.

Portugal had only ever been to three World Cups before this year's finals and failed to get past the first round in two of them. Their greatest previous triumph was making the semi-finals in 1966, where they lost to England 2-1.

## Ronaldo to have knee op

AFP, Rio de Janeiro

Real Madrid and Brazil striker Ronaldo is to have a knee operation over the close-season in order to get fit for the new campaign, Brazil team doctor Jose Luis Runcio said on Wednesday.

The 29-year-old has suffered bouts of pain in his knee over the past eight months owing to calcification of the tibia and surgical scarring on his left knee.

Runcio said that the striker, who scored three times at the World Cup to become the all-time tournament leading scorer despite Brazil's exit to France in the quarterfinals, had complained of pain at times during the event.

"He said now the event was over he would use the break to have surgery as he's had to put up with it for eight months," Runcio said.

"If it is what I think it is, it will involve swift surgery and he will be ready for the new season," said Runcio, who added Ronaldo would also consult Real's medical staff.

## Happy times for ticket touts

AFP, Berlin

Four days before the football World Cup final, tickets for the match in Berlin were selling on the black market for 10 times their original price.

"It is going for 1,500 euros (1,900 dollars) at the moment," a dealer who declined to give his name said in Munich where France and Portugal were playing each other on Tuesday night for a place in the final against Italy.

The young man, who says he started selling tickets even before the championship kicked off here on June 9, was offering last-minute tickets for the semifinal for 600 euros a pair.

A second trader confirmed that a ticket for the final would cost "at least 1,500 euros".

By Sunday though, they said, the price for tickets to Berlin's Olympic Stadium will have dropped dramatically to about 600 euros apiece.

Though FIFA has tried to avoid black-marketing by printing spectators' names on their tickets, the dealers said the system was far from foolproof because tens of thousands of people attended each match.

"It is not possible to check because of the sheer size of the crowds," the first dealer told AFP.

He said he has done a roaring trade during the tournament and that his best customers were Mexican fans followed by the English and Argentinians.

"One day I made 12,000 euros. That was with the Mexicans. They come from far but they are also the biggest spenders."

## Good WC for WAGs



AFP, Berlin

England may be out of the World Cup and coach Sven-Goran Eriksson out of a job, but at least his flamboyant girlfriend Nancy Dell'Orio did not return from Germany empty-handed.

The Italian played Mother Hen to the players' wives and girlfriends as they emptied the designer boutiques of the chic town of Baden-Baden where England were based.

The Garibaldi bar in the spa town has never seen anything like it - the other halves of players earning upwards of 100,000 pounds (144,000 euros) a week certainly know how to splash around the cash.

The champagne was flowing, and so were the photo opportunities for the former Posh Spice and wife of David, Victoria, who now seems content to just spend it like

Beckham, to paraphrase the film title.

But just as for their husbands and boyfriends, it all ended in tears for the England WAGs (Wives and Girlfriends) when their Portuguese counterparts jeered at them as they left the AufSchalke stadium following the quarterfinal defeat in a penalty shootout, according to an indignant report in Britain's Sun tabloid.

Once back on home soil, Cheryl Tweedy, the soon-to-be-wife of defender Ashley Cole and a pop star herself in the Girls Aloud group, hit out at her glamorous rivals.

"It's like a comedy - everyone's so flash. It's like, 'Who's got the best watch on, who's got the best bag, which wife is dressed the best, which wife's got the best hair?'" she told OK! magazine.

"I'm like, 'I've got my own career.'"

The partners of the Germany players showed rather more unity, sitting side by side at matches, creating a perfect pose for photographers.

They even abandoned their

fashion sense to wear white vests emblazoned with "Germany" (in English) for some matches.

The stylish French were out in force for their partners' resurgence as the 1998 winners charged into the semi-finals.

Madame Veronique Zidane eschews the spotlight, but was seen laughing and joking with Madame Claire Henry, a Briton, in the good seats in Frankfurt at the quarterfinal victory over Brazil.

Italy are never to be outdone in the style stakes - and that includes their partners.

Goalkeeper Gianluigi Buffon is married to Czech model Alena Seredova, who has faithfully worn an Italy jersey with her hubby's name on the back for matches, but has appeared regularly in the German press throughout the World Cup wearing considerably less.

Ilary Blasi, a model and the wife of midfield star Francesco Totti, said she wanted her husband back from national team duty so they can get on with extending their family.

She will have to wait a little longer - Italy are in the final on Sunday.

## Big Phil the winner!



AFP, Munich

Portugal may have lost Wednesday's World Cup semi-final 1-0 to France but they ran out the clear winners in the battle of the benches.

The respective coaches could not be more different.

While Luiz Felipe Scolari - who saw his record run of 12 successive wins in the World Cup finals come to an end - prowls up and down like a caged lion in Munich zoo his Gallic counterpart Raymond Domenech stands stock still, sphinx-like, reflective, thumb and finger joined as if he's contemplating a work of art back home in the Louvre.

Being Scolari - whose likeness to Hollywood great Gene Hackman is unreal - must be an exhausting business, just watching him leaves you short of breath.

The Brazilian, who could have auctioned his seat on e-bay such was the little use he made of it, would lose a fortune on the poker table, his feelings as transparent as

a sheet of cling film.

On the 28th minute Domenech was the target of his ire.

Big Phil, his moustache twitching in the warm night, pointed and shouted in his direction after the Frenchman made diving gestures following a fine piece of theatrics from Cristiano Ronaldo bang smack in front of the French dug out.

Nine minutes later the master motivator was barking at referee Jorge Larrionda for not awarding a foul in Portugal's favour.

His mood darkened when Zinedine Zidane slotted home the 33rd minute penalty, thrusting his hands angrily into his pockets as former France legend Michel Platini raised his aloft in the stands.

And Scolari's humour hardly improved when a member of the French bench executed the international 'up yours' sign at him when Portugal's claims for a penalty were denied three minutes later.

If he ever gets tired of the day job Scolari should consider the metier of traffic policeman such is the skill with which he directs his men left and right, front and back.

Little wonder that as well as Big Phil he's known as the Sergeant Major.

But the tough guy has a softer

side, as he was seen with tears in his eyes when Portugal qualified for the knock out stages, although he moved quickly to deny any Ronald-esque display of emotion.

"Maybe my eye colour changed, but that's it," insisted the man who once told a referee after a row over a decision: 'I'll wait for you outside'.

On 75 minutes Scolari did something completely out of character.

He sat down.

But it was only a temporary lapse and seconds later he was back up on his feet, his face dripping with frustration as a Figo header flies high after a messy clearance from Fabian Barthez.

As the clock ticked and Portugal's hopes of reaching their first ever World Cup final slipped away he turned on his bench who are up in arms over something, ordering them to sit down.

Sportingly he had greeted Domenech before kick-off but he wasn't feeling so charitable towards Larrionda, storming up to the Uruguayan after the final whistle and jabbing his finger at him.

## Capello aims at Real revival



REUTERS, Madrid

New coach Fabio Capello said he wanted to restore a lost spirit to Real Madrid after signing a three-year contract on Thursday.

"I'm really looking forward to working with this club," the 60-year-old Italian told reporters. "I'm convinced this is the most important club in the world."

"We have to win trophies and to do that we have to work hard, be humble and rediscover the spirit of Real Madrid. I think we have lost that spirit in recent years."

Club president Ramon Calderon said the nine-times European champions had signed the former Juventus coach because of the way he revived Real during his first spell a decade ago.

"Contracting Fabio Capello was an obsession of mine because he is a born winner," said Calderon.

"The 1996-97 season when he took over a team in crisis is fixed in my memory. He took over a team that came sixth in the league and led it to the championship."

"He also laid the foundations for the team that won the European Cup in 1998."

Calderon said he would not involve himself in Capello's work with the players.

"Capello and (sporting director Predrag) Mijatovic will work together without any interference from me or the rest of the board," he said.

"He is here to restore the self-esteem of the players, to instil order and discipline and give them necessary affection too. It is a difficult task but he is a master of this art."

Capello said one of his first tasks would be to demand more commitment from a squad of players that includes high-profile figures such as Ronaldo, David Beckham, Robinho and Raul.

"We in football are extremely lucky to work just two hours a day and my view is that you have to give 100 percent during that time," he said.

"We need athletes in the team. The fans can't stand players who don't run on the pitch. They must understand that you can't win games just because you wear the white shirt of Real Madrid."

Calderon became Real's president this week following a controver-

sial victory in an election marred by bitter personal disputes and confusion over the validity of the postal vote.

He has said he will try to sign several players to strengthen the squad and has targeted AC Milan midfielder Kaka, Chelsea winger Arjen Robben and Arsenal's Cesc Fabregas.

A host of other names, in particular players from Capello's former club Juventus, have also been linked to the club. Italian champions Juve face relegation next week when a sports tribunal decides punishments at a match-fixing trial.

"We are working to put together a great squad full of quality players that will win trophies," said Capello.

"Given what is happening in Italy at the moment I think everybody will be on the look-out for Juventus and Milan players."

"A lot of clubs are hoping that they will be relegated. You only have to look at Sunday's World Cup final, there will be eight Juve players out there."

## CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

**ACROSS**

37 Wire measure  
1 Chantilly, for one  
5 Number cruncher (Abbr.)  
8 Gambling game  
12 Computer symbol  
13 Uncooked  
14 Etcher's medium  
15 Voluntary  
17 Data  
18 Kennedy or Koppel  
19 Height of fashion?  
20 Take the helm  
21 Tease  
22 Scrooge's cry  
23 Kind of button  
26 Zilch  
31 On  
31 Gender  
32 Notion  
33 "Shake-speare in Love" star  
35 Polish silver?  
36 Wit-nessed

**DOWN**

2 Farm fraction  
3 Dorm denizen  
4 Away from shop  
5 Wept  
6 Dale provider  
7 Puncturing tool  
8 "This Kiss" singer  
9 Complex-ion  
10 Abounding  
11 Smell  
16 Tad  
20 Perched  
21 Didn't move  
22 Carton  
23 Knox  
24 LAX info  
25 Fa's neighbor  
26 Fresh  
27 Altar  
28 Affirmative  
29 Seine  
29 Festive  
31 Scatter seed  
34 Shaft of light  
35 Galvanizing material  
37 Possibly will  
38 Advantage  
39 Vegan's no-no  
40 Entreaty  
41 Tower city  
42 Picasso contemporary  
43 "M\*A\*S\*H" star  
44 Future prune  
46 Sack  
47 "Ben-"

**Solution time: 21 mins.**

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P	O	U	N	D	S	I	G	N	
C	O	W	S	O	G	G	E	R	
V	A	T	I	C	A	N	W	H	I
E	R	I	K	I	N	G	U	R	
B	A	S	I	S	Q	U	E	S	
B	A	S	I	S	Q	U	E	S	
U	N	I	T	G	L	A	S	S	
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**CRYPTOQUIP**  
C B N L P O N U I M L I B P V Y I  
C Y V B Y L N P I E U N P S B . Y  
I Q O O M I N E M Q S M Q R J  
S P R V B P V P B P L J E S P O .  
Yesterday's Cryptquip: I DEvised A CONTEST TO SEE WHO CAN GIVE THE BEST SALES PITCH. IT WAS A SPIELING BEE.  
Today's Cryptquip Clue: V equals T

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.