



Stuttgart midfielder Christian Gentner (R) is in pursuit of the ball alongside Hertha Berlin hardman Andreas Schmidt during their Bundesliga encounter at Stuttgart on Friday.

## Zidane, Ronaldo headline Match Against Poverty

AFP, Marseille

Football legends Zinedine Zidane and Ronaldo will each captain a team in the fourth edition of the Match Against Poverty to be held at the Stade Velodrome on March 19 .

Former France captain Zidane and AC Milan striker Ronaldo, who are both Goodwill Ambassadors for the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), have been the driving forces behind this initiative since 2003.

A statement issued by Marseille Town Hall promised that several "star footballers" would play alongside the pair, without giving details.

The match will be the first played in Europe by Zidane since his international retirement after the 2006 World Cup final.

"I have retired from professional football, but I am determined to continue playing in my capacity as UNDP Goodwill Ambassador for such a good cause, and to contribute to this annual gathering with my friend Ronaldo," said Zidane.

Proceeds from the first three matches benefited anti-poverty projects ranging from support to female entrepreneurs to the construction of sports centres for street children in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

## Banned for butting ref

AFP, Paris

The captain of a French amateur football team has been banned for six years for head-butting a referee during a local league game.

"The player is banned for six years. He can neither play nor officiate," said Remi Semenia, the president of the championship in Dinan.

The 28-year-old player's club, Auceleuc, was also sanctioned.

It was docked five points and ordered to pay a 500-euro fine.

The incident took place in January when the referee was attacked after showing the player a red card.

### CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

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8	Pub	39	Comic-		melody		Minutes"				melody		Minutes"						
	refresh-		strip	3	Emcee	26	Raw rock			3	Emcee	26	Raw rock						
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	agent?		combo		need		participant				need		participant						
13	Dos	43	Toppled	6	Ninny	29	Entrance			6	Ninny	29	Entrance						
	Passos	46	Seedy	7	Wild party	31	Eggs			7	Wild party	31	Eggs						
	trilogy		bars	8	Cremona	32	What			8	Cremona	32	What						
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	in the		bones		potatoes		do				bones		potatoes						
	mud		51	Believer		5	Poolroom				Believer		5	Poolroom					
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17	Largest		of		van-	ania					of		van-	ania					
	the seven		54	Hit ABC		port					the seven		54	Hit ABC					
18	Pianist-		series		11	Burn					series		11	Burn					
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19	Tea Party		56	Differently		money					Tea Party		56	Differently					
	figure		57	Apportion		20	Mideast				figure		57	Apportion					
21	One-on-		58	Coop		gulf					One-on-		58	Coop					
	one			occupant		22	Birthing				one			occupant					
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24	Conk out										Conk out								
25	Cheat on										Cheat on								
	a										a								
28	Faction										Faction								
30	Thanks-										Thanks-								
	giving										giving								
	abbr.										abbr.								
33	Mono-										Mono-								
	kin's										kin's								
	lack										lack								
34	Argonauts										Argonauts								
	skipper										skipper								
35	Cain's										Cain's								
	mother										mother								

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V U L C U X N M S L L , H Y ' L G D L Y

X H W S X A U X U V W - Y H S S I S O Y .

Yesterday's Cryptquip: AS THE CLOCKMAKER TRAINED HIS YOUNG APPRENTICE, HE GAVE HIM MUCH TIMELY ADVICE.

Today's Cryptquip Clue: H equals I

## Alves fires Osaka

AFP, Tokyo

Last year's top goalscorer Magno Alves hit a hat-trick to fire Gamba Osaka to a 4-0 victory over J-League champions Urawa Red Diamonds to win the Super Cup for the first time on Saturday.

It was sweet revenge for Osaka, who lost to Urawa in the Emperor's Cup final. They also lost their J-League title to Urawa in the final game of last season.

"It was really good that we defeated Urawa at last," said a relieved Osaka coach Akira Nishino after the official season opener.

"We couldn't beat them last season, so we just tried to prepare for the match and do what we could do at this moment. I was very surprised that my players did much better than I had expected."

Nishino said his team had lost 1-0 to Urawa in the Emperor's Cup final last month because they missed so many chances.

Osaka also lost to Urawa in last year's Super Cup – a match between the league champions and the cup

## Fergie feared for his son

INTERNET, undated

Sir Alex Ferguson has revealed his son Mark was caught up in the security drama in France on Tuesday night.

UEFA have launched an investigation into the incidents involving Manchester United fans at the Stade Felix-Bollaert after riot police fired tear gas into a section of the ground where supporters were getting crushed.

Although it seemed a totally inappropriate reaction to what could have developed into a life-threatening situation, the police have defended their actions.

Lille have also blamed United for the high number of forged tickets they felt caused the security problem in the first place.

Thankfully, no-one was seriously injured during the disturbance but Ferguson admitted his concerns as the drama began to unfold.

He said: "There is always that worry for the safety of people.

"My own son was in the crowd and so was Gary Neville's father.

"I don't know if UEFA will take action. It is in their hands.

"But I feel we have dealt with the situation in the right way by getting reports from our own supporters and we are confident about our position.

"Obviously, there have been a lot of precedents in terms of crowd problems in previous years but I am sure their supporters will be looked after better when they come to Old Trafford than ours were over there."

## Cech allowed to use headguard

AFP, Prague

Czech federation officials confirmed Friday that international goalkeeper Petr Cech has been authorised by UEFA to wear a headguard in the European Championship qualifiers.

"UEFA just insisted that the headguard did not pose a danger to the other players and that all logos were hidden," said federation general secretary Petr Fousek.

Cech has already played several games for his club side Chelsea in the English Premiership while wearing the headguard, which is made by New Zealand company Canterbury.

He spent three months on the sidelines after fracturing his skull in a collision during a match against Reading in October.

The Czech Republic's European qualifier match will be on March 24 against group D leaders Germany.

## Agostino signs for Adelaide

AFP, Sydney

Former international striker Paul Agostino has returned home from Germany to sign a two-year deal with Australian A-League team Adelaide United, the club said Saturday.

Adelaide-born Agostino, 31, returns to Australia after spending the past 15 years playing in Europe, mainly with TSV 1860 Munich in Germany.

Agostino, who has UEFA Cup and UEFA Champions League playing experience, made 20 appearances for Australia since making his debut against Chile in 1996. He has scored nine goals for his country.

Adelaide United interim coach Aurelio Vidmar, who took over from John Kosmina this week, believes Agostino's inclusion will significantly bolster United's firepower for the next A-League season, starting in August.

## Heat on Jose

Football

AFP, London

Jose Mourinho has grown used to commanding the spotlight since arriving in England, but the Chelsea manager is in danger of being consigned to the shadows by a group of precocious teenagers.

If Arsenal's collection of youth academy graduates and reserves can spring a surprise by beating Chelsea in the League Cup final on Sunday, it would rank as one of lowest points of Mourinho's hitherto trophy-laden career.

Losing to Arsene Wenger, hardly one of Mourinho's favourites managerial colleagues, for the first time would be bad enough, but to do it in a final against under-strength London rivals would really rub salt into the wounds.

And the Chelsea manager can ill-afford any set-backs at a time when he is trying to prove to the club's owner Roman Abramovich just how indispensable he is.

Mourinho's dispute with Abramovich over transfer policy has left the Portuguese coach's future in doubt.

Abramovich was reported to have begun sounding out potential replacements for Mourinho after their row became public knowledge, but it would be hard for the Russian to sack a manager who has just enjoyed a third successful season.

Mourinho knows delivering the

fourth major trophy to Abramovich would strengthen his case for total control of football matters, which he is believed to be insisting on before agreeing to stay.

Publicly Mourinho, who welcomes back Ashley Cole from injury, is insistent his future lies with Chelsea. "There are only two ways for me to leave Chelsea," he said. "One way is in June 2010. I finish my contract then, and if the club does not give me a new one, it is the end of my contract and I am out.

"The second way is for Chelsea to sack me, because there is not a third way - the way the manager decides to leave and walks away. No chance. I would never do this to Chelsea supporters."

Wenger has no such worries. The French coach is guaranteed a job at Arsenal until he decides he has had enough, so he can concentrate on developing a team to challenge Chelsea and United.

The success of his youngsters, who recorded impressive wins against Everton, Liverpool and Tottenham on route to the final, shows he is heading in the right direction.

Wenger's decision to stick with Theo Walcott, Jeremie Aliadiere, Denilson and company at Cardiff's Millennium Stadium means the likes of Thierry Henry, William Gallas and Freddie Ljungberg will miss out.

He has no qualms about his choice and said: "There was not the slightest temptation. I have full

confidence in these players and I like to do what I say.

"People say never judge a manager or a team on a cup run because it depends who you play but in this cup competition we have played Everton, Liverpool and Tottenham so it would be a great reward for us to win it."

Wenger, who will be making his first appearance in a League Cup final, has failed to finish on the winning side against Mourinho in six attempts.

There would be no better time to break that duck than on Sunday but, despite the animosity between the two managers, Wenger insists he is not motivated by rivalry.

Mourinho was perceived to have taken a sly dig at Wenger this week when he said a manager could not be regarded as great until he has won the Champions League.

Wenger, who has injury doubts over Justin Hoyte and Gael Clichy, has yet to win Europe's elite club competition, while Mourinho lifted the trophy with Porto in 2004.

Mourinho's jibe left Wenger unfazed and he said: "Plenty of managers have won the Champions League who will not be considered as great managers.

"It will not change my life if I don't win the Champions League."

In fact, just now it's safe to assume that nothing would make Wenger happier than watching his team lift the rather more modest League Cup.

## Walcott dreaming big

Football

AFP, London

Teenager Theo Walcott believes he and his fellow young Arsenal starlets are about to make their push for a permanent place in Arsene Wenger's first team.

The 17-year-old Walcott, along with the likes of Denilson and Abou Diaby, have all played major roles in getting Arsenal to Sunday's League Cup final against Chelsea in Cardiff.

They have claimed some impressive scalps along the way with wins over Everton, Liverpool and Tottenham.

"I expect a lot of players to break through soon. Next season's going to be our season," warned Walcott who has played alongside experienced figures like Gilberto, Kolo Toure and six-goal Julio Baptista on the way to the final.

"It's a good chance to show the young talent in the club but they're not old lads, they're all nice, and young," added Walcott who has enjoyed a meteoric rise to fame.

He was transferred to Arsenal from Southampton and was controversially included in England's World Cup squad by Sven-Goran Eriksson.

He never set foot on the pitch in Germany.

At the Emirates Stadium, he has been drawing comparisons with Thierry Henry's start to his Arsenal career.

Henry has not talked directly to his protegee about his own slow start at the club before exploding into form and establishing himself as one of the Premiership's top strikers.

"He hasn't mentioned it, but I read it in his book," said Walcott.

"Basically, the best advice he's given me is to play my normal game and don't worry about anything else. I don't really worry - I've not got anything to worry about.

"It's just brilliant to watch him in training and learn from him and all the other players."