



Italy defensive trio (From L-R) Fabio Cannavaro, Gennaro Gattuso and Marco Materazzi take part in a training session at the National Technical Center in Florence on Wednesday.

Klasnic set for second transplant

AFP, Berlin

Werder Bremen striker Ivan Klasnic spoke of his relief on Wednesday having been told he is set for a second kidney transplant after a new donor was discovered.

The 27-year-old was diagnosed with kidney failure during the Bundesliga's winter break and has not played a game for Bremen since last December.

But in January, the Croatian's body rejected a kidney from his mother leading to fears his career could be over.

But now a new kidney has been found with a transplant scheduled for after Easter which doctors believe should be accepted by Klasnic's body.

"I feel a huge weight has been lifted," he said.

"I hope it works out this time and things start looking up. I am hoping to be back to full form by next season."

With the 27-year-old out of contract by the end of the season, Bremen have offered him a year's extension and the holder of 29 Croatian caps will make a decision based on the operation's success.

"The club have been good to me and talked about my contract, but we will talk about it again in the next few weeks and see how things go after the operation," he said.

Boring Chelsea: Rosicky

INTERNET, undated

Arsenal midfielder Tomas Rosicky has criticised London rivals Chelsea for being boring.

The Czech Republic midfielder was asked about the form of German international Michael Ballack, but the former Borussia Dortmund star explained he could not comment as he doesn't watch the Blues due to their lack of entertainment.

"I don't know [regarding Ballack's form], I have not been watching Chelsea. They are boring," Rosicky told Idnes.

"Do you enjoy their football?"

Chelsea beat Arsenal in last months Carling Cup final and look sure to finish comfortably ahead of the Gunners in the Premiership, but Rosicky, who is set to face Ballack in Saturday's Euro 2008 qualifier, believes his side are the best team to beat him.

"Rio was as good as anyone at the

Ex-coach slams Totti

Football

AFP, Rome

Enzo Bearzot, who was Italy's coach in their triumphant 1982 World Cup campaign, has slammed Francesco Totti for snubbing the national team.

Totti has not played for Italy since last year's World Cup final victory over France and has not played a game for Bremen since last December.

But in January, the Croatian's body rejected a kidney from his mother leading to fears his career could be over.

"I feel a huge weight has been lifted," he said.

"I hope it works out this time and things start looking up. I am hoping to be back to full form by next season."

With the 27-year-old out of contract by the end of the season, Bremen have offered him a year's extension and the holder of 29 Croatian caps will make a decision based on the operation's success.

"The club have been good to me and talked about my contract, but we will talk about it again in the next few weeks and see how things go after the operation," he said.

Carra keeping perspective

Football

AFP, Tel Aviv

A defender who has proved he can keep Ronaldinho and Samuel Eto'o on a tight leash - as Jamie Carragher did in Liverpool's Champions League win over Barcelona - would expect to walk into any team in the world.

But the lynchpin of Liverpool's back four has no complaints about his current status as third or fourth fiddle in England's central defensive pecking order.

"It is just one of those things," he said. "I've got 30-odd caps and hopefully I can get a few more before my England career finishes."

"Playing for England, you are always going to have competition because we have got some of the best players in the world. It's just unfortunate that we are all centre-backs!"

Carragher's experience of the pressure involved in Champions League knockout clashes should stand him in good stead when England run out for a match they can ill afford to lose on Saturday.

"You can't really argue with that. For me, John Terry is the best centre-back in the world. Over the last three or four years, I wouldn't have anyone ahead of him."

"Rio was as good as anyone at the

Gazzetta dello Sport.

"If he can play for Roma, he can play for the national team.

"It's a shame because he should be happy and proud to play for Italy.

"He is the best player in the country and a symbol of our football.

"I could understand if he had said he'd had enough and wanted to retire from international football altogether.

"But there's still this uncertainty and it sets a bad precedent. Others might do the same in the future."

Current Italy coach Roberto Donadoni clearly seems unhappy with Totti's sabbatical, and on Tuesday insisted there was no guarantee the Roma striker would be considered for selection in September.

"When Totti makes himself available again and recovers from his physical problems, it will be up to me to decide whether he's in the squad," Donadoni said as he prepared the world champions for their crunch Euro 2008 qualifier against

Scotland next week.

"I'm getting tired of all these questions about Totti. At the moment I have other things on my mind.

Last week Totti, a born and bred Roman who has spent his entire career with his hometown club, said he would choose Roma over Italy every time.

"Between Roma and my country I choose Roma, of that there is no doubt," he told television channel TG1.

"The most important thing for me is wearing the Roma shirt."

Roma are through to the quarterfinals of the Champions League, where they will meet English Premiership leaders Manchester United. They currently lie second in Serie A and are through to the Italian Cup final.

Italy are third in their Euro 2008 qualifying group on seven points, two behind Scotland and France, after four matches.

Scotland next week.

"We all know how big the game is," Carragher said. "When the draw was made, Israel away was always going to be a tough game and we'd have liked to have got a few more points on the board before we went there. So that's what probably makes it a bit bigger game than it was at the start of the group."

"They are going to put us under pressure and maybe there will be a hostile crowd. But that is something the players who have played in Europe are used to."

"The atmosphere shouldn't faze you. In fact it works the other way - it gives you a buzz and a boost."

"It's great to play in these places and that's what the game is about. The atmosphere adds a bit of pressure but as England players, and myself, you prefer to play in those types of atmosphere."

"For instance at Liverpool we went to Barcelona, went a goal down, and people were saying 'Liverpool's season could be over.'

"But it's those type of games (that) you are in the game for. Barcelona have some of the best players in the world - but we beat them. We prepared very well, and I'm sure we will do the same with England."

World Cup, a 30-million-pound defender, so I am in no position to complain about that, either. You are talking about world class players. Hopefully I can learn off them. You are always trying to improve."

It has been the 29-year-old's misfortune to have been born in an era when England are rich in top quality centre-backs - with Jonathan Woodgate also available, not to mention Sol Campbell, Wes Brown and Michael Dawson.

"It is just one of those things," he said. "I've got 30-odd caps and hopefully I can get a few more before my England career finishes."

"Playing for England, you are always going to have competition because we have got some of the best players in the world. It's just unfortunate that we are all centre-backs!"

Carragher's experience of the pressure involved in Champions League knockout clashes should stand him in good stead when England run out for a match they can ill afford to lose on Saturday.

"You can't really argue with that. For me, John Terry is the best centre-back in the world. Over the last three or four years, I wouldn't have anyone ahead of him."

"Rio was as good as anyone at the

Sheva savours stunning strike

INTERNET, undated

Chelsea's Ukrainian striker Andriy Shevchenko rates the outstanding goal he scored against Spurs in Monday's FA Cup Quarter-Final replay as one of the best of his career.

It was the opening goal in Chelsea's victory over their North London rivals, and another shortly afterwards by Shaun Wright-Phillips eased the Blues through to the last four of the only domestic trophy Chelsea have not won since Jose Mourinho became their manager.

Shevchenko became a Chelsea player in the summer after having amassed 267 goals for his previous clubs, Dynamo Kiev and AC Milan.

But he regards the 13th goal of his Chelsea career as among the best of the lot.

Shevchenko said: "I think it is one of the best I have scored in my career. I feel very much better now. It was a very good game and in the second half, the team played very well."

"For my career, it is important to win trophies like this. The Cup in England is very important and different from Italy."

"I played in the old Wembley. It was a special stadium with a great atmosphere. I played two times, one with Dynamo Kiev against Arsenal and the other with the national team. "To be in the final in the new stadium would be a special moment."

"For my career, it is important to win trophies like this. The Cup in England is very important and different from Italy."

"I played in the old Wembley. It was a special stadium with a great atmosphere. I played two times, one with Dynamo Kiev against Arsenal and the other with the national team. "To be in the final in the new stadium would be a special moment."

"For my career, it is important to win trophies like this. The Cup in England is very important and different from Italy."

"I played in the old Wembley. It was a special stadium with a great atmosphere. I played two times, one with Dynamo Kiev against Arsenal and the other with the national team. "To be in the final in the new stadium would be a special moment."

"For my career, it is important to win trophies like this. The Cup in England is very important and different from Italy."

"I played in the old Wembley. It was a special stadium with a great atmosphere. I played two times, one with Dynamo Kiev against Arsenal and the other with the national team. "To be in the final in the new stadium would be a special moment."

"For my career, it is important to win trophies like this. The Cup in England is very important and different from Italy."

"I played in the old Wembley. It was a special stadium with a great atmosphere. I played two times, one with Dynamo Kiev against Arsenal and the other with the national team. "To be in the final in the new stadium would be a special moment."

"For my career, it is important to win trophies like this. The Cup in England is very important and different from Italy."

"I played in the old Wembley. It was a special stadium with a great atmosphere. I played two times, one with Dynamo Kiev against Arsenal and the other with the national team. "To be in the final in the new stadium would be a special moment."

"For my career, it is important to win trophies like this. The Cup in England is very important and different from Italy."

"I played in the old Wembley. It was a special stadium with a great atmosphere. I played two times, one with Dynamo Kiev against Arsenal and the other with the national team. "To be in the final in the new stadium would be a special moment."

"For my career, it is important to win trophies like this. The Cup in England is very important and different from Italy."

"I played in the old Wembley. It was a special stadium with a great atmosphere. I played two times, one with Dynamo Kiev against Arsenal and the other with the national team. "To be in the final in the new stadium would be a special moment."

"For my career, it is important to win trophies like this. The Cup in England is very important and different from Italy."

"I played in the old Wembley. It was a special stadium with a great atmosphere. I played two times, one with Dynamo Kiev against Arsenal and the other with the national team. "To be in the final in the new stadium would be a special moment."

"For my career, it is important to win trophies like this. The Cup in England is very important and different from Italy."

"I played in the old Wembley. It was a special stadium with a great atmosphere. I played two times, one with Dynamo Kiev against Arsenal and the other with the national team. "To be in the final in the new stadium would be a special moment."

"For my career, it is important to win trophies like this. The Cup in England is very important and different from Italy."

"I played in the old Wembley. It was a special stadium with a great atmosphere. I played two times, one with Dynamo Kiev against Arsenal and the other with the national team. "To be in the final in the new stadium would be a special moment."

"For my career, it is important to win trophies like this. The Cup in England is very important and different from Italy."

"I played in the old Wembley. It was a special stadium with a great atmosphere. I played two times, one with Dynamo Kiev against Arsenal and the other with the national team. "To be in the final in the new stadium would be a special moment."

"For my career, it is important to win trophies like this. The Cup in England is very important and different from Italy."

"I played in the old Wembley. It was a special stadium with a great atmosphere. I played two times, one with Dynamo Kiev against Arsenal and the other with the national team. "To be in the final in the new stadium would be a special moment."

"For my career, it is important to win trophies like this. The Cup in England is very important and different from Italy."

"I played in the old Wembley. It was a special stadium with a great atmosphere. I played two times, one with Dynamo Kiev against Arsenal and the other with the national team. "To be in the final in the new stadium would be a special moment."

"For my career, it is important to win trophies like this. The Cup in England is very important and different from Italy."

"I played in the old Wembley. It was a special stadium with a great atmosphere. I played two times, one with Dynamo Kiev against Arsenal and the other with the national team. "To be in the final in the new stadium would be a special moment."

"For my career, it is important to win trophies like this. The Cup in England is very important and different from Italy."

"I played in the old Wembley. It was a special stadium with a great atmosphere. I played two times, one with Dynamo Kiev against Arsenal and the other with the national team. "To be in the final in the new stadium would be a special moment."

"For my career, it is important to win trophies like this. The Cup in England is very important and different from Italy."

"I played in the old Wembley. It was a special stadium with a great atmosphere. I played two times, one with Dynamo Kiev against Arsenal and the other with the national team. "To be in the final in the new stadium would be a special moment."

"For my career, it is important to win trophies like this. The Cup in England is very important and different from Italy."

"I played in the old Wembley. It was a special stadium with a great atmosphere. I played two times, one with Dynamo Kiev against Arsenal and the other with the national team. "To be in the final in the new stadium would be a special moment."

"For my career, it is important to win trophies like this. The Cup in England is very important and different from Italy."

"I played in the old Wembley. It was a special stadium with a great atmosphere. I played two times, one with Dynamo Kiev against Arsenal and the other with the national team. "To be in the final in the new stadium would be a special moment."

"For my career, it is important to win trophies like this. The Cup in England is very important and different from Italy."

"I played in the old Wembley. It was a special stadium with a great atmosphere. I played two times, one with Dynamo Kiev against Arsenal and the other with the national team. "To be in the final in the new stadium would be a special moment."

"For my career, it is important to win trophies like this. The Cup in England is very important and different from Italy."

"I played in the old Wembley. It was a special stadium with a great atmosphere. I played two times, one with Dynamo Kiev against Arsenal and the other with the national team. "To be in the final in the new stadium would be a special moment."

"For my career, it is important to win trophies like this. The Cup in England is very important and different from Italy."

"