



Sporting Lisbon's (L-R) Marco Caniera, Joao Moutinho, Ricardo Pereira and Custodio jubilate over their Portuguese Cup triumph at Estadio Nacional in Oeiras on Sunday. Sporting beat Belenenses 1-0 to win the Cup.

## I'm staying: Crouch

AFP, London

Liverpool manager Rafael Benitez has assured towering striker Peter Crouch that he has a future at the club according to the player.

The Spaniard is set to enter the transfer market in a big way this summer following the defeat to AC Milan in last week's Champions League final meaning that several players will be shown the door.

But Crouch, who has been linked with a possible move to Newcastle, insists he is not one of those about to depart Anfield.

"He's (Benitez) told me I'm part of his plans and that's good enough for me," Crouch told SkySports News.

"At a club like Liverpool there's going to be competition for places, especially as the manager likes to chop and change."

Last season Crouch battled for a starting place up front with Dirk Kuyt, Craig Bellamy and Robbie Fowler.

Fowler has not been offered a new deal and Bellamy has been strongly linked with a move away from Anfield.

But Benitez is bound to bring in replacements so it seems likely that Crouch will face a renewed threat to his place next season.

## Roman drops bombshell

INTERNET, undated

Roman Abramovich has reportedly told Chelsea he will no longer spend his billions on the club.

The Russian owner has, according to The Sun, decided that he no longer wants to be a key decision maker and believes the club should operate as a proper business -- meaning they will have to generate their own transfer budget like most other clubs.

That throws into doubt the future of stars Frank Lampard and John Terry who are both negotiating new deals.

Abramovich, who revealed his plans at a meeting last Monday, has imposed a wage cap and with both England internationals unwilling to settle for less than they feel they are worth, Chelsea may decide to cash in this summer as both players have two years left on their current contracts.

The club are hoping to bring in three new players in the summer, but won't splash the cash on transfer fees as they have in the past.

Steve Sidwell has already joined on a free transfer from Reading with Claudio Pizarro of Bayern Munich set to do likewise, while Brazilian defender Alex will join from PSV in July for a fee of one dollar.

**Gourcuff wants Milan stay**

INTERNET, undated

Yoann Gourcuff has declared that he wants to remain with newly crowned European Champions Milan.

The France Under-21 international has barely featured in the Rossoneri first-team since joining from Rennes last summer, and Serie A runners-up Roma have been linked with a move for the son of Lorient coach Christian Gourcuff.

"If the situation doesn't move too much, I will still play for Milan next season," Gourcuff told Radio Monte Carlo.

"I feel great here."

The 20-year-old burst onto the Milan scene with a goal on his Champions League debut in the 3-0 Group stage win over AEK, but has only started nine Serie A matches this season, scoring once.

## Lyon set to appoint Perrin

Football

AFP, Paris

French champions Lyon are set to name former Portsmouth coach Alain Perrin as their new manager replacing Gerard Houllier, L'Equipe sports daily reported on Monday.

The paper said that Lyon chairman Jean-Michel Aulas would meet with 50-year-old Perrin on Monday and that an announcement was expected.

"There is nothing to stop me from thinking that Mr. Aulas does not have two or three meetings of the same nature during the day," he told L'Equipe.

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The Lyon job became available on Friday when former Liverpool

coach Houllier resigned saying that his decision to leave has "nothing to do with people or my health."

"I'm in top form and Lyon has even rejuvenated me. I just need to take stock and I will not be going to other clubs," explained Houllier.

Houllier led Lyon to a record-breaking sixth straight league title this season, but success in the Champions League remained out of reach as they crashed out in the last 16 to AS Roma.

Perrin was coach at Marseille from 2002 to 2004 before heading to Portsmouth where he lasted only eight months before being sacked over poor results.

He returned to France with unashamed Sochaux at the start of this season and enjoyed success earlier this month as the side from eastern France won the French Cup defeating Marseille in the final.

If the L'Equipe report is correct, Perrin would become the eighth Lyon coach under current manager Jean-Michel Aulas in a bid to win the club's seventh consecutive French title next season.

He says he is now ready to face a new challenge.

"Before going to Marseille, I didn't know if I was up to being in charge of such a high pressure club. Today, I feel I am ready for the challenge."

Perrin's current boss and chairman of Sochaux, Jean-Claude Plessis will not stop him joining Lyon, despite the fact that he still has a year left on his contract.

"Whenever a coach leaves here they end up in Marseille, Paris or Lyon. Surely that will give someone else a desire to work here," said Plessis referring to past coaches Jean Fernandez and Guy Lacombe.

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From 65 caps for his country Inamoto has scored four goals, including two in the 2002 World Cup in which co-host Japan reached the second round. But he played only a peripheral role at last summer's finals in Germany.

The former Gamba Osaka player quit Japan in 2001 to join Arsenal, but never played in the league in his solitary season in North London before leaving for Fulham.

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