



Brazil goalscorers Robinho (L), Juan (C) and Julio Baptista celebrate Juan's goal with teammate Alex (2nd L) during their drubbing of Chile in the quarterfinal of the Copa America in Puerto La Cruz on Saturday.

BRAZIL-URUGUAY SEMIFINAL Samba back with a bang

INTERNET, undated



Brazil produced their best performance of the Copa America so far as Robinho provided the inspiration behind a 6-1 quarterfinal drubbing of Chile.

The 23-year-old scored his fifth and sixth goals of the tournament as Nelson Acosta's men were swept away by a first-half salvo.

"We never had the chance to carry it out as Brazil scored three in less than half an hour, and after that, we could not react," Acosta said. "With the introduction of Valdivia and Fernandez, we had slightly more opportunities, but it was too late."

"The team is improving every game and we expect to reach our peak in the final stages," Robinho said.

Brazil took the lead after 14 minutes, when Bayer Leverkusen defender Juan took advantage of a static Chilean defense to head home Maicon's corner.

Six minutes later, Maicon won the ball in the midfield and fed Vagner Love, who in turn found Julio Baptista, and the forward made no mistake from inside the box.

Robinho then made it 3-0 after some good individual work resulted in a measured finish from the edge of area.

Liverpool midfielder Mark Gonzalez hit the bar, but that was the closest an ineffective Chilean squad came to getting back into the game before halftime.

It was much the same after the break once Doni had kept out another Gonzalez effort.

Robinho grabbed his second of the game at 51 minutes as the Real Madrid forward applied the finish to Gilberto Silva's cross after the Chilean defense had once again gone missing.

It was 5-0 after 68 minutes when Chile goalkeeper Claudio Bravo parried Afonso's shot but was powerless to stop Josue from converting the rebound.

"When we tried to get back into the game, we left space and Brazil did not waste it," Chile defender Alvaro Ormeno said. "They never fail to take advantage of that kind of space. We were too generous."

Chile did bag a consolation goal eight minutes later, when striker Humberto Suazo cleverly lobbed the ball over. But Love completed the rout right at the death after good approach work from Elano.

"I've been trying to score since the first game against Mexico, and

"We were very threatening at the start but could not score goals," Tabarez said. "We spoke during the interval about how a better final ball would resolve this. I believe that, as the result shows, we won well. We beat none other than the hosts, and that's no mean feat."

The 'Celestes' dominated much of the first half and created several chances. Pablo Garcia was first to test goalkeeper Ronnie Vega with a long-range effort before Maximiliano Pereiradrew a good save from the Venezuelan stopper.

The hosts then threatened through Ricardo Paez, but the midfielder's attempt went straight into the hands of Fabian Carini before striker Juan Arangosent a header narrowly wide.

However, Forlan opened the scoring after 37 minutes, when he was picked out by Diego Garcia in the box and beat Vega with a powerful strike.

But Venezuela hit back almost immediately as, three minutes later, Mallorca star Arango found the back of the net with a superb free kick to send the sides in level at the break.

Carini was then forced to produce a good stop to deny Arango just 30 seconds after halftime as Venezuela started on the front foot

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Tevez to keep his promise

INTERNET, undated

Carlos Tevez won't go back on his promise to Sir Alex Ferguson that he will join Manchester United.

The Argentine striker's representatives will try to finalise his hugely-complicated move to Old Trafford within the next week after the deal reached an impasse on Friday night.

The player's agent, Kia Joorabchian, had hoped to announce that a deal was in place already but has been thwarted by the Premier League's insistence that the transfer is conducted through West Ham.

The Hammers for their part threw the proposed move into turmoil by insisting there is no agreement in place for him to join the champions.

But 23-year-old Tevez has given his word to Ferguson that he will join.

He told *The People*: "Through my backers, I have given my word to Mr Ferguson. They have told him I will be at Manchester United next season and once I make a promise I don't go back on it."

"There isn't a player who would turn down this opportunity and negotiations are too far advanced to go back now."

Tevez knows West Ham fans won't share his enthusiasm for the move, but says he hopes keeping them in the Premier League will temper their anger.

He added: "I hope the fans understand. I had two very good offers from foreign clubs in January but I refused because I had unfinished business."

"It would have been easy to move on, but I couldn't leave the club and the fans in that predicament."

"It will be an emotional and special day whenever I return to play them."

Venus aiming higher

INTERNET, undated



Venus Williams believes her fourth Wimbledon title could herald the start of a new period of dominance for herself and her sister Serena in women's tennis.

Both sisters endured injury-blighted years in 2006 but Serena returned to win the Australian Open in January, a triumph that her elder sister hailed as the inspiration for her own return to the top at the All England Club.

A straight sets victory over France's Marion Bartoli allowed Venus to add to her 2000, 2001 and 2005 titles on Saturday, taking her tally of Grand Slam titles to six, two behind Serena's haul of eight.

She said: "When it comes to

Wimbledon I have more but in the overall count I have a couple less. When I saw her win in Australia, I knew I could do it. We just love each other and inspire each other like that."

Having missed the second half of last year with a career-threatening wrist injury, Venus had had to endure being written off as a spent force at the age of 27.

But she insisted: "I never doubted myself that I could come back. There was a lot of work behind the scenes. I started in January, I finally got to play in February and step by step I was getting healthier and stronger, getting back to physically the way I was."

"I definitely think Serena and I can play more finals against each other, as long as we have a chance to prepare and stay fit."

"I feel fantastic after my sixth

slam and I want some more. It would have been wonderful if Serena (who lost to Justine Henin in the quarterfinals here) had also got to the final and I think it could happen again, for sure."

Bartoli joked that she had lost because she did not have former James Bond actor Pierce Brosnan cheering her on.

The 22-year-old, who had attributed her semifinal win over Henin to the presence in the crowd of one of her favourite movie stars, revealed that she had received a pre-match bouquet of flowers and a letter of encouragement from Brosnan.

But even that gesture could not give her the ammunition to match Williams's firepower.

"Venus just played some unbelievable tennis," Bartoli said. "She reached balls like I've never seen

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Liverpool in for Quaresma

INTERNET, undated

Liverpool are fighting with Atletico Madrid to try and secure the signing of FC Porto winger Richard Quaresma.

It is well known that the Reds are keen to add wingers to their squad before the start of the season but will have to battle with Atletico for Quaresma, with the Liga side having money to spend after selling Fernando Torres to Rafael Benitez's men for over 20 million dollars.

Porto have confirmed that they have received a bid from Liverpool, thought to be in the region of 14 million dollars, but they are looking for 20 million dollars for the 23-year-old.

"Liverpool made us an offer but it was not enough to even begin talks, so we told them to come back with a better offer if they want Quaresma," a Porto source told the

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Juve chasing Burdisso

INTERNET, undated

Internazionale defender Nicolas Burdisso is on Juventus' wish list as they bolster their defence ahead of a Serie A return.

The Argentinian has rejected a contract extension from the Serie A champions, despite insisting he is happy at the club.

Burdisso's agent Fernando Hidalgo said: "There has been contact with Juventus and their interest in him is real."

Burdisso is a professional and he would stay at Inter for his entire career if it was up to him.

But the present situation is that he has a contract which expires in 2009, but which is relatively low.

Inter have made us a first renewal offer but we have rejected it.

The 26-year-old has impressed at the Giuseppe Meazza since arriving from Boca Juniors, although he has handed a lengthy suspension for his part in Inter's infamous Champions League brawl with Valencia.

Real after Cesc

INTERNET, undated

Real Madrid have risked the wrath of Arsenal and UEFA by reiterating their determination to sign Cesc Fabregas.

"Of course we are interested in Cesc," Mijatovic told Marca. "We've been interested in him for over a year now and we are still interested."

"He is a great player and I expect all the big clubs will be interested."

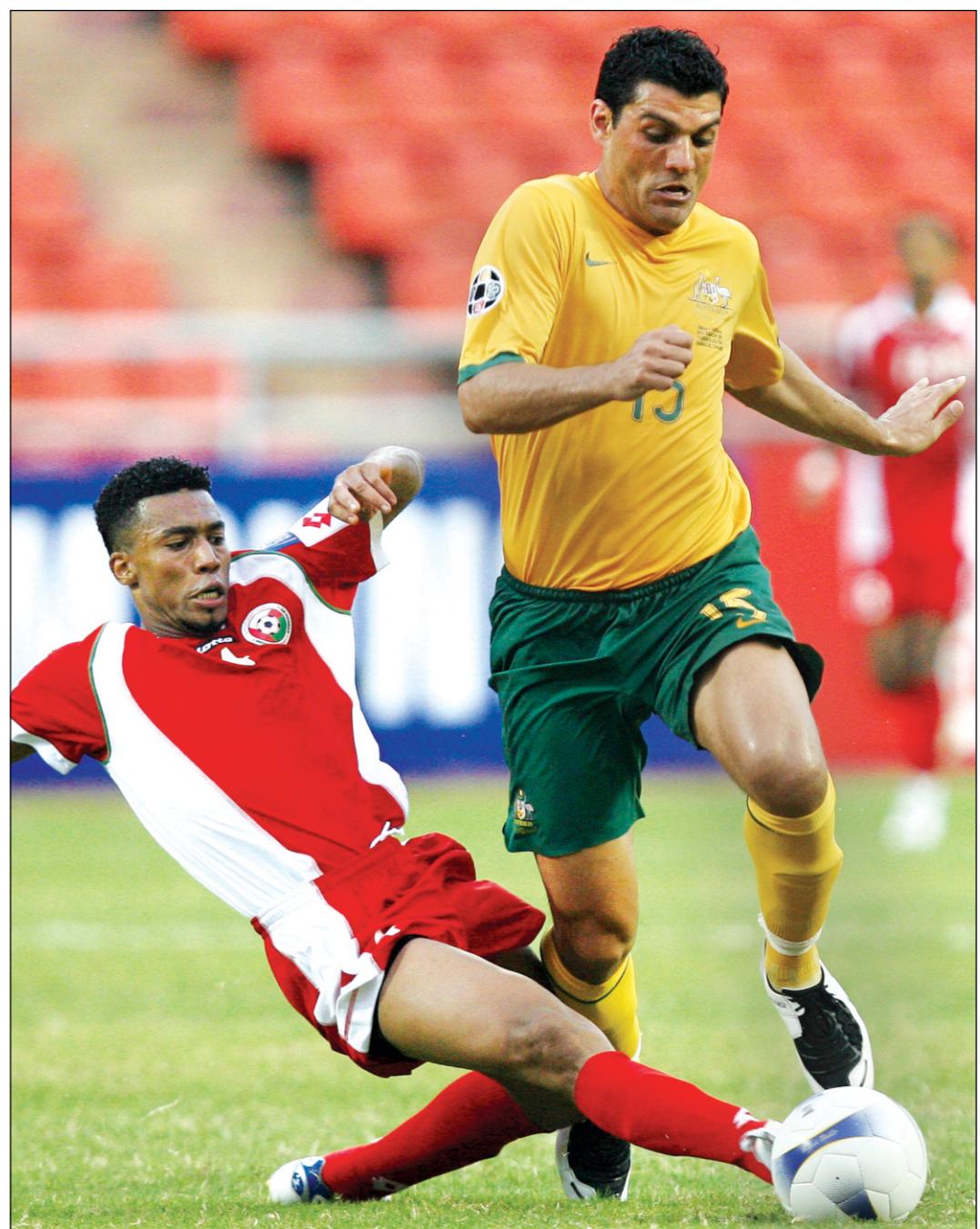
The Spanish champions have already been accused of illegal 'tapping-up' after going public with their desire to buy Fabregas, Chelsea's Arjen Robben and Milan star Kaka.

Regulations stipulate that clubs cannot approach contracted players - either in person or through the media - without first making contact with their club.

Milan have said that Kaka was not for sale under any circumstances, although Calderon has said he hoped the player would push for a move away from the Serie A side.

Robben remains a Chelsea player, but Real have said they hope to sign the Dutchman for next season.

"But I'm still confident everything



Australia forward John Aloisi (R) rides the challenge of Oman defender Said Sulaiwim during their Asian Cup group match in Bangkok on Sunday.

Cahill saves Socceroos

AFP, Bangkok

will be fine."

With Thailand and Iraq also drawing 1-1 in their opening game on Saturday, the group remains wide open.

The Gulf state, ranked 74 and playing against the Australians for the first time, frustrated their 48th-ranked opponents and stoically protected a 32nd-minute lead with a packed defence and questionable injury-feigning tactics.

Up to Cahill's strike it looked grim for the Australians.

Playing in the Bangkok heat and in front of a meagre crowd in the 60,000-capacity Rajamangala Stadium, the Aussies, who reached the second round of last year's World Cup, threw everything at Oman in the second half before Cahill's last-gasp equaliser.

The Omanis rocked the Socceroos with a shock lead through Badar Mubarak and the task became harder for Australia as a tropical downpour drenched the stadium in the closing 15 minutes.

Oman struck their telling blow when Mubarak finished off great work on the left by Imad Ali who found Mubarak in space with the Socceroos defence pulled out of shape.

Mubarak smashed home past Schwarzer's right hand and the Oman team celebrated by grouping in front of a contingent of Australian

fans and orchestrating Muslim prayers to boos.

Oman's tactics became obvious after the goal with players going to ground for treatment after contesting the ball and forcing referee Eddy Maillet to constantly stop the game to seek treatment.

"Of course I am disappointed because I thought Oman was the best team and we should have won," said their Argentine coach Gabriel Calderon.

"It was a very technical match, Australia are very tough."

He likened the match to a cup final, and said their remaining two games in the group would be treated in the same way.

"For Oman, we are playing three finals. Today was number one and Thailand and Iraq will be two and three," he said.

While the Australians brought on second-half substitutes John Aloisi, Cahill and Brett Holman in a bid to turn the match around, they needed two great saves from Schwarzer to keep them in the match.

Liverpool star Harry Kewell laboured in the humid conditions with his touch letting him down while skipper Mark Viduka was rarely a scoring threat.



Ferrari's Finnish driver Kimi Raikkonen races through the Silverstone racetrack during the British Grand Prix yesterday. Raikkonen won the race ahead of McLaren duo Fernando Alonso and Lewis Hamilton.