



Liverpool winger Harry Kewell (R) takes a tumble under the hefty challenge of Portsmouth midfielder Sulley Muntari during the Barclays Asia Trophy final in Hong Kong on Friday.

## Bayern sweat on Ribery

AFP, Munich

Bayern Munich face a race against time to have French midfielder Franck Ribery fit for Saturday's German League Cup final against Schalke 04, the German giants admitted on Thursday.

The 24-year-old midfielder picked up a knee injury in Wednesday's 2-0 win at VfB Stuttgart and Bayern boss Ottmar Hitzfeld is waiting to see if his new recruit can play on Saturday.

As well as Ribery, Bayern's 19-year-old striker Sandro Wagner, who also scored against Stuttgart, is struggling with a knee injury.

"They are both doubtful for Saturday," said Hitzfeld.

And while summer signing Miroslav Klose is struggling to shake off a leg injury in time for Saturday's game, Bayern are also waiting to see if their midfielder Mark Van Bommel will be cited for a foul in Wednesday's win.

Video tape of the Dutch

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## Heinze calls in lawyers

INTERNET, undated

Gabriel Heinze has employed Liverpool's legal team in a bid to force through his transfer to Anfield. Manchester United have so far blocked a move to their great rivals, despite Liverpool reportedly meeting the Argentinian's get-out clause.

Sir Alex Ferguson has made it very clear that he doesn't want Heinze to make the switch, but the defender is equally determined to force through the move.

Liverpool consulted their legal advisors last week in an attempt to seal the deal, and now the Guardian reports that Heinze appointed Richard Green, the Anfield club's lawyer, to work on the move.

The latest move appears to outline Heinze's absolute determination to move to Liverpool, and if it doesn't work then he is likely to find himself marginalised to say the least at Old Trafford.

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# Ferrari furious at McLaren escape

TIMES ONLINE



Ferrari reacted with fury last night after an emergency hearing into the Formula One spy row resulted in McLaren Mercedes escaping without punishment. The FIA, the governing body of motor sport, gave Lewis Hamilton's team a "let-off" over the possession of a huge dossier of secret technical information, a decision the Italian team were quick to condemn.

After hearing the announcement by the FIA's World Motor Sport Council (WMSC) in Paris, Ferrari said that it "legitimises dishonest behaviour in Formula One and sets a very serious precedent".

The angry reaction in Maranello came as Hamilton and Fernando Alonso, his teammate, were breathing a sigh of relief. The affair could have resulted in both drivers losing points or even being thrown out of the World Championship.

Barely had McLaren digested the good news than their deadly rivals in the paddock, who trail them in the drivers' and constructors' battles this season, launched a scathing attack

on an FIA process that Ferrari said they regarded as "incomprehensible". The Italian team were particularly incensed that McLaren got away virtually scot-free, even though the WMSC had found that the Anglo-German team had been in possession of Ferrari data through Mike Coughlan, their disgraced chief designer, who has admitted having a 780-page dossier of secrets.

Ferrari said that "violating the fundamental principle of sporting honesty" should have resulted, as a "logical and inevitable consequence", in the application of a sanction. The statement went on: "The decision of the World Council signifies that [the] violations do not carry any punishment." The Scuderia added that they regard what happened in Paris yesterday as "highly prejudicial to the credibility of the sport".

The sound and fury in Maranello came after the WMSC had convened to hear McLaren answer a charge of "fraudulent conduct" over the affair but decided against any immediate punishment because it found no evidence that Ferrari technical data had been used on this year's McLaren race cars.

"The World Motor Sport Council is

satisfied that Vodafone McLaren Mercedes was in possession of confidential Ferrari information however, there is insufficient evidence that this information was used in such a way as to interfere improperly with the World Championship," the WMSC said.

The council did impose a suspended sentence of sorts on McLaren when adding that, if evidence is found in the future that the Ferrari information had been used "to the detriment of the championship", the team would be summoned back to Paris to face the possibility of being thrown out of this year's championship, as well as being banned from next year's.

Ron Dennis, the McLaren team principal, who appeared in Paris alongside Ian Mills, QC, the team's lawyer, emerged from the session looking as though he had lost. "The process has been long and detailed and I'm not completely comfortable with the outcome," Dennis said.

Then, in what may have been a note of deep irony from the veteran team leader who has never admitted that McLaren, as a team, did anything wrong he said: "The punishment fits the crime."

While McLaren escaped immediate sanction and are free to concen-

trate on their World Championship campaign, the two individuals at the heart of the scandal were not so fortunate. Nigel Stepney, the former Ferrari mechanic who has denied allegations that he supplied Coughlan with the dossier, and Coughlan, have been "invited" by the WMSC to demonstrate why both should not be banned for a lengthy period from international motor sport.

The let-off for McLaren is all the more astonishing for the fact that the team admitted that Coughlan was in possession of the data for two months, amounting to a comprehensive picture of all Ferrari's activities. The rules that govern Formula One make it clear that the FIA can punish a team for the actions of any individual within it, even if the team as a whole are not aware what that individual had been doing.

In the run-up to the hearing, the seriousness of McLaren's position had been underlined by Max Mosley, the FIA president, who chaired yesterday's meeting and who admitted that the credibility of Formula One had been at stake over the issue.

## Simao signs for Atletico

AFP, Madrid

Benfica captain Simao Sabrosa, who had been targeted by Liverpool, was officially unveiled on Friday as a player of Spanish Primera Liga side Atletico Madrid for the next four seasons.

"I am going to work hard to help the club get where it should get, which is to top the league and win titles," the 27-year-old Portuguese international told reporters after he passed a medical examination.

"I am going to play as I did in Portugal so that Atletico is the best," he added.

Under the deal Benfica will get 20 million euros (27.3 million US dollars) for the attacking midfielder, a record transfer for the Portuguese club, and will have an option to take two Atletico players.

Liverpool made a move for Simao in August 2005 but the deal broke down just as the explosive winger was set to fly to Anfield for a medical after the English side refused to meet Benfica's asking price for the player.

Atletico had to fight off opposition

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## City rope in Petrov

AFP, Manchester

Manchester City manager Sven Goran Eriksson vowed to carry on spending after signing Bulgarian international winger Martin Petrov for 4.7 million pounds from Atletico Madrid.

The 28-year-old passed a medical on Thursday and will become Eriksson's fourth signing since he took charge at Eastlands once he is granted a work permit.

Eriksson is certain Petrov won't be the last new arrival. He has been given substantial transfer funds by City's new Thai owner Thaksin Shinawatra as he overhauls a squad that struggled in the Premiership last season.

The Swede has already brought in Rolando Bianchi, Geovanni and Gelson Fernandes and is lining up moves for Bayern Munich's Roque Santa Cruz and Racing Santander's Nikola Zigic.

Eriksson has no problem concentrating on non-English talent and said: "I don't think we are finished signing, there will be more new faces coming in different positions, whether they are English or not I can't say."

"I think that the new owner has shown that he means serious busi-

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## Partizan booted from UEFA Cup

AFP, Belgrade

UEFA decided on Thursday to ban Serbia's Partizan Belgrade from European competitions for a one-year period due to violence at last week's UEFA Cup qualifier in Bosnia, the club said in a statement.

"UEFA officials pointed out that, in the last five years, Partizan has been fined on 25 occasions out of 36 UEFA competitions matches, which made it crucial for Control and Disciplinary Body in reaching such a strong decision," the statement said.

Partizan Belgrade were also fined with 50,000 Swiss francs (30,200 euros, 41,500 dollars).

"This is the most severe blow in the 60-year long history of Partizan. The biggest loss. What could be worse?," the Serbian club Secretary General Zarko Zecevic said.

However, he added that "there's no fooling around with UEFA. Who does not play by the rules, should not compete. I hope that state prosecutors will do something" to punish hooligans for violence at football matches.

There was no immediate indication whether the club would

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# Samba behind it all

AFP, Jakarta



Brazilian coaches Jorvan Vieira and Helios dos Anjos have been through the grinder these past three weeks getting their Iraqi and Saudi Arabian

teams through to Sunday's Asian Cup final here.

While other higher-profile teams have crashed and burned on the Cup trail winding through Thailand, Vietnam, Malaysia and Indonesia, Iraq and the Saudis have come out on top to shoot for Asian football's premier title.

Vieira, an intense man often seen gesticulating wildly on the sidelines, is one game away from realising one of football's inspirational stories with his Iraq team poised for a breakthrough triumph amid all the turmoil back home.

Compatriot dos Anjos, who has never coached outside of South America before, has one of the most unenvied jobs in world football -- the coach of Saudi Arabia and with it their notoriously trigger-happy paymasters.

When dos Anjos was appointed last March his compatriot Marcos Paqueta was the 16th manager axed from the Saudi hot seat in the past 13 years.

Yet he could become a fabulously well-rewarded hero in the

kingdom if the Saudis can carry off Sunday's all-Arab final, at the expense of their Gulf rivals Iraq.

"This is good for Brazil. It's a very special moment to have two Brazilian coaches in one final in Asia," Vieira said Friday.

"Maybe it might also happen one day in the World Cup because there are so many Brazilian coaches training national teams, but this is the Asian Cup and to have two Brazilians coaching here is very important and a powerful statement for us."

Vieira said the five-time World Cup champions represented a gold mine of football talent.

"Nobody expected that we would win the recent Copa America but we did it with a new generation, new players and new coach," he said.

Dos Anjos said of the Asian Cup final no-one predicted: "It has been a victory for Arabian football, especially for Iraq, because everyone knows what is happening there."

"These victories will bring happiness to the people of Iraq and of Saudi Arabia."

Yet in the macabre modern-day reality of Iraq, a cherished victory for their team will inevitably ignite more carnage on the convulsing streets.

When news reached Baghdad that Iraq had beaten South Korea on penalties in last Wednesday's semifinal in Kuala Lumpur, two car

bombs ripped through the crowds celebrating the victory, killing at least 51 people and wounding more than 126.

There are fears more bloodshed will follow as die-hard fans run the risk to celebrate a potent symbol of Iraqi unity.

Vieira, who has coached Arab clubs and international teams for more than 20 years and his family live in Morocco, has unified Sunni, Shiite and Kurdish players to become the pride of all Iraq.

"It's true that for me it's the most difficult job in my 13 years as a coach, for many reasons both on and off the field," he said.

"But it's a good experience. Life is a learning process and every day we learn something and when you stop learning, you stop teaching."

While the weight of national expectation is on Vieira and his players, dos Anjos has endured persistent criticism from Riyadh that his team have ridden their luck through the tournament rather than stamping their mark on it.

"I haven't coached Flamengo or Brazil so I'm not famous in Saudi Arabia so it's normal to have criticism but now they are starting to get to know me," he said.

"I just have to win games. I don't pay any attention to the criticism. You can ask my translator, I have never asked him to read an article in the Saudi press to me."



PHOTO: AFP

Saudi Arabia coach Dos Anjos (2nd R) barks orders to his charges during a training session at Jakarta on Friday.

# Henry scores on debut

INTERNET, undated

Thierry Henry hit a late winner on his debut for Barcelona as the Blaugrana beat Dundee United in a pre-season friendly at Tannadice.

In the final minute of an entertaining encounter United defender Darren Dods pulled down Giovanni dos Santos, allowing the former Arsenal player - on as a second-half substitute - the opportunity to score from the spot.

United's debutant keeper Grzegorz Szamotulski saved the first effort but Henry followed up to knock the ball into the net.

"We have seen that he is an intelligent player and we have seen some good passes," Rijkaard said after the match.

"We have to take into account he has not played for a long time and it was his decision to go and play. He played well."

It could have been different if Barry Robson's 82nd-minute header had not been chalked off for a push on Barca defender Eric Abidal and if Lee Wilkie's last-minute header had not been

headed off the line by Juliano Belletti, but in the end the classier side won through.

United gave a debut to 'keeper Szamotulski, the former Sturm Graz player who signed yesterday, and he was kept busy in a relatively entertaining first half.

The visitors quickly took control of the game and in the 14th minute Santiago Ezquerro casually swept a Xavi cross over the bar from eight yards out when more focus might have brought the opener.

Three minutes later, Dundee United midfielder Morgaro Gomis fouled Ronaldinho 25 yards from goal and the Brazilian flashed his right-footed free-kick off the outside of the post.

Despite playing in second gear at times, Barca continued to dictate the tempo and in the 28th minute Ezquerro drew a good save from Szamotulski with a drive from distance.

Samuel Eto'o made a hash of a great chance set up by Andres Iniesta before driving straight at Szamotulski from close range after taking a clever Ronaldinho pass.

In between those two chances Xavi volleyed Ronaldinho's cross past the post from the edge of the

box and Ezquerro fired wide with only the United keeper to beat.

Barca made seven changes at the break and just 25 seconds in to his debut, Henry, on for Eto'o, whipped a shot inches past the post from the edge of the box.

United's overly-enthusiastic defender Lee Wilkie was then booked for a foul from behind on Henry to the jeers of the Tannadice crowd.

The Catalan giants appeared to be trying to walk the ball into the net and in another attack that left United threadbare at the back, Henry curled his right-footed shot from just inside the box high and wide.

In the 80th minute Barcelona substitute Bojan Krkic went through on goal but hesitated with only Szamotulski to beat, allowing the Tannadice 'keeper to save at his feet.

In the 82nd minute United skipper Robson headed Steven Robb's cross in off the post but the cheers soon died down when the goal was chalked off for a push on Eric Abidal.

Then came the drama of Henry's debut goal and Wilkie's near-miss.



PHOTO: INTERNET

New Barcelona forward Thierry Henry dispatches a penalty to score during their friendly match against Dundee United at Dundee on Thursday.