

Arsenal take Amsterdam Cup

Football

INTERNET, undated

Robin van Persie netted the goal which won Arsenal the Amsterdam Tournament - but was then carried off against Ajax.

A match which was a physical, and often bad-tempered affair, was settled by finish from the Dutchman with just three minutes left.

However, the former Feyenoord player then had to be helped from the field following a heavy challenge from Johnny Heitinga, but was able to soon rejoin his teammates as they celebrated a second pre-season tournament win.

Manager Arsene Wenger had made some 10 changes from the side which beat Lazio on Thursday, and will have been happy enough with a determined performance.

However, although there were plenty of plus points, Wenger will be hoping Van Persie - clearly the Gunners' main goal threat - does not spend any more time on the treatment table following the extra attention he is bound to receive from defenders next season.

Midfielder Cesc Fabregas was a late withdrawal because of a throat infection, so Brazil teenager Denilson came into the starting XI.

However, there was no place for summer signing Eduardo da Silva, as Alexander Hleb was handed an advanced role just behind Van Persie.

It looked a useful tactic as Arsenal enjoyed the best of the opening exchanges.

However, keeper Maarten Stekelenburg was in fine form, something producing a reflex save to deny Kolo Toure from point-blank range following a deep free-kick from the right.

The home side made a change in the 24th minute when defender Gregory van der Wiel was replaced by former Charlton winger Dennis Rommedahl.

The Dane almost had an instant impact when he cut inside from the left and flashed a rising drive just over the crossbar.

Van Persie was getting some rough treatment from the Ajax defence, and



PHOTO: AFP

New Arsenal recruit Bacary Sagna (L) tries to steal the ball from the surging Ajax winger Dennis Rommedahl during the Amsterdam Cup in Amsterdam on Saturday.

showed a lack of control when his late challenged earned a caution - and he then took a risk with a sarcastic hand-clap towards the referee, which went unpunished.

Van Persie - who missed the final four months of last season with a broken metatarsal - was in the thick of things as the half-hour mark approached, showing quick feet to nip into the right side of the area and cut the ball back across goal.

There was a warning for keeper Jens Lehmann, though, on 34 minutes when Hedwiges Maduro tried his luck from 25 yards and almost found the top corner.

The match certainly had an edge to it, with William Gallas the next man to be cautioned for a tackle from behind on Klaas Huntelaar.

Wesley Sneijder was on target with

the resulting free-kick, but Lehmann got down well to his right.

On the hour mark, tempers - which had been rising throughout the game - boiled over when Thomas Vermaelen appeared to catch Van Persie with a leading elbow as the pair jumped.

Following a brief display of chest-barging, calm was swiftly restored and the referee took no further action.

Eduardo replaced Rosicky, and Hleb moved out wide as Arsenal went with two up front.

Jurgen Collin was very fortunate to escape a red card when he needlessly slid in from behind on Clichy.

Van Persie carved out an opening with 16 minutes left when he picked up the ball on the edge of the area following a strong run from Eboue.

The Dutchman showed great close

control to sidestep his marker and drilled a low shot towards the left corner - only for Stekelenburg to make another brilliant save.

Huntelaar saw his close-range header skim the crossbar, but with just three minutes left, Van Persie won it for the Gunners.

A brilliant run from Clichy down the left - started in his own half - took the full-back to the edge of the Ajax area.

He slipped in Van Persie, who made no mistake to drill the ball past Stekelenburg at the near post.

The celebrations looked to have been marred, however, when Van Persie was stretched out down the tunnel, but the man-of-the-moment was quickly back on the pitch to rejoin the squad for the trophy presentation.

Eriksson targets Bresciano

AFP, Manchester

Manchester City boss Sven-Goran Eriksson could make Australian midfielder Mark Bresciano his ninth signing of the summer on Sunday.

Former England manager Eriksson refused to state whether the Palermo player was the man he was after, but the Swede appeared to give the game away when he was asked whether he was trying to sign an Italian.

"Maybe not an Italian, but possibly someone who has played in the Italian league," he said.

Bresciano's arrival would certainly bring some bite to the City midfield, a commodity which appeared to be lacking in Saturday's 1-0 home friendly defeat to Valencia.

In a contest of few chances, David Silva's 10th-minute effort proved decisive, with both Michael Johnson and Ronaldo Bianchi hitting the bar as Eriksson's team strove for an equaliser.

Hargreaves makes debut

INTERNET, undated

Owen Hargreaves finally made his Manchester United debut, in a comfortable 3-1 friendly win at League Two side Peterborough. The England international has been struggling to shake off an ankle injury since his £18million move from Bayern Munich, but played 45 minutes as a second-half substitute at London Road.

The Canada-born midfielder is unlikely to play any part in today's Community Shield against Chelsea at Wembley. Instead he will step up his rehabilitation programme in one of the midweek pre-season friendlies against Glentoran and Dunfermline.

Adam Eckersley gave a youthful United side a half-time lead against the team managed by Alex Ferguson's son, Darren. Ferguson junior looked to have pulled off a masterstroke when Rene Howe, a half-time substitute, equalised with a fine shot four minutes after the restart. But the visitors were always the stronger and they made their fitness tell later in the second half with goals from Ritchie Jones in the 72nd minute and a third from Dong Fangzhuo 10 minutes later.

Villa down Inter

INTERNET, undated

Aston Villa warmed up for the new Barclays Premier League season with a convincing win over Italian champions Inter Milan at Villa Park.

Inter, who beat Manchester United 3-2 at Old Trafford earlier in the week, were a goal down in the 14th minute when Gareth Barry slotted home from Stilian Petrov's cross.

Sweden striker Zlatan Ibrahimovic dragged a shot wide two minutes before the break and three minutes into the second half Villa doubled their lead.

Barry's free-kick into the box was headed home by former AC Milan defender Martin Laursen. The third came midway through the second half when Gabriel Agbonlahor advanced into the box and was tripped by Walter Samuel, and Barry converted the penalty.

The win will give Villa great encouragement ahead of their Premier League opener against Liverpool next weekend.

Time rife for Magpies

AFP, Newcastle



No matter what has happened in the previous 12 months, optimism is never in short supply at Newcastle at this time of year.

The club may not have picked up a significant trophy since their Fairs Cup success in 1969, but Newcastle's readiness to invest in new summer signings has always made this a city of hope as a new season looms.

A club anxious to sell season tickets has traditionally encouraged such pre-season anticipation - even though more cynical supporters point to the fact that abject disappointment has always ensued.

This season, though, there has been a subtle change of emphasis, which has come as an unpleasant surprise for many fans who expected Newcastle to match the Premier League's biggest spenders.

Sam Allardice arrived as manager to replace Glenn Roeder and was swiftly followed by a new owner in Mike Ashley, who paid 133 million pounds to wrest control from the previous regime of Freddy Shepherd and Sir John Hall.

A billionaire owner and a manager keen to get his hands on the sort of financial muscle that was not available at his former club Bolton represented a dream scenario for those supporters.

However, the talk at St James' Park is not of the quick-fix that was forecast. Ashley's right-hand man Chris Mort - the new chairman - soon discovered the club's finances were far worse than they believed at the time of the takeover.

Ashley may be one of the United Kingdom's wealthiest men, but he clearly demands that Newcastle United will be run as a business.

That means Mort will have to reduce the club's 80 million pounds debt, while Allardice attempts to compete with the likes of Chelsea in the transfer market.

If the proverbial sleeping giant of

football is to be aroused, it will not a sudden awakening.

"It's not a short-term project for Mike Ashley or myself. I want to put that to bed straightaway," commented Mort.

"He has bought an entire asset here and the plan is to develop it over a lengthy period of time, not turn things round quickly and sell it on again.

"We are here for the long-term and we are looking at how to take the club forward over various timescales."

However, the importance of hitting the ground running in the new campaign has not been entirely lost on Mort, who has no previous experience of top-level football.

Allardice, no doubt, has given him a swift introduction to the realities of a world that is vastly different to the one he experienced as a leading lawyer in London.

Mort has responded by making money available for players, although it is not the bottomless pot of gold that many envisaged at the start of the new era and there is a suspicion that Allardice was disturbed that some of them arrived with only a week to prepare them for the new season.

Troubled England midfielder Joey Barton, veteran Cameroon international Geremi, Czech star David Rozehnal and Australian international striker Mark Viduka were shrewd signings by Allardice before the players reported for pre-season training.

Since then he has added Manchester United's Alan Smith and Brazilian international Claudyio Cacapa to give more depth to his squad. Smith, in particular, generated more of that traditional feelgood factor in Newcastle's famous Toon Army, but it should be tempered by Mort's cautious vision of the future.

He says: "Our ambitions are to take the club back into Europe, but this is just the first step forward."

"We are getting the foundations in place in the first team, but also across the whole of the club."

"We are not focusing too much on what happens in the first few weeks or months."

Some will regard that as a sensible approach, but it will be fascinating to discover if Newcastle's supporters are quite so sanguine about the opening weeks.

As Glenn Roeder and Freddy Shepherd discovered last season, their patience has been eroded by those years of under-achievement.

Allardice, who speaks of a five-year plan for Newcastle, and Mort are taking the long-term view, yet the demands of those fans will bring short-term pressure.

Time is most definitely not on Allardice's side, which will ensure, as usual, that life at St James' Park will not be dull.

Persie hits out at Ljungberg

INTERNET, undated

Arsenal forward Robin van Persie has described former teammate Freddie Ljungberg's recent criticism of the Gunners as 'a bit weak'.

Ljungberg accused Arsenal of lacking ambition in the wake of his move to West Ham, citing the departure of Thierry Henry. And Dutchman Van Persie admits his comments were not well received in the Emirates Stadium dressing room.

"If you play nine years at a club like Arsenal you can say some nice words," he told the News of the World.

"If you're coming up with excuses about Thierry's departure and about promises from the club it's a bit weak."

"I was disappointed and I know a few others were as well. He had a fantastic period, he was once the best player in England, so come on and say some nice things for this club, which is fantastic."

No regrets for Beckham

Football

AFP, Toronto

England midfielder David Beckham admitted playing injured in his final games for Real Madrid aggravated the ankle injury now delaying his Major League Soccer career, but he said he had no regrets.

Beckham is expected to miss the Los Angeles Galaxy's MLS game against Toronto FC Sunday, and if he does it will be the fourth match he has watched from the sideline since his token debut as a 78th minute substitute in a friendly against Chelsea on July 21.

Beckham damaged ankle ligaments playing for Real Madrid four days after spraining the same left ankle in England's match against Estonia on June 6. He said he aggravated the injury further on June 17, when Real Madrid beat Real Mallorca to clinch the Spanish League title.

But he said he couldn't regret his role in Real Madrid's run to the championship.

"I sprained it playing for England, played again four days after for Real Madrid with the sprain and pulled the

ligaments," Beckham said here Saturday.

"Then I played the last game of the season for Real Madrid with three injections to numb my ankle so you can imagine what my ankle looked like after the game."

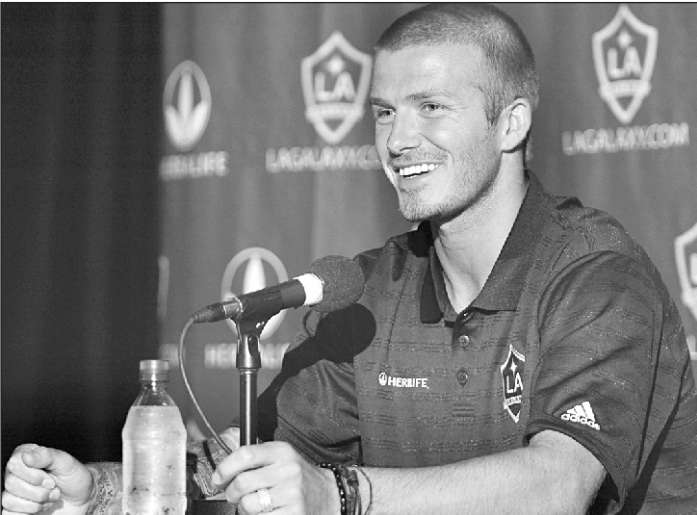


PHOTO: AFP

England star David Beckham smiles during a press conference at the Air Canada Center in Toronto on Saturday.

"I ripped the ligaments in that last game so it was a bit of a mess."

"Then I went on holiday to recuperate and then when I arrived in LA, it was the first time I really had treatment apart from about a week of fitness work that I was doing in the south of France," he

added.

Beckham said the decision to have injections went against the grain, but with a title on the line he felt it was worth it.

"I personally have never agreed with any injections and anything that could be unnatural. I like to feel naturally fit going into games. But I think because we were going for the league title, and we needed to win the last two games, I would have done anything to play in that game."

"It wasn't healthy, it wasn't, maybe, the right thing to do long term, but I did it and at the end of the day I'm glad I did it," Beckham said. "I played in a game for 65 minutes and we ended up winning the league."

Beckham, 32, only started running on Saturday as the rest of the Galaxy trained in Toronto having flown in from Los Angeles.

"Today, running like I did was a huge step for me because I haven't really been able to move on it at all," he said. "The problem is it being my left ankle. The way I strike the ball puts a lot of stress on my left ankle. Maybe if it was the right one it would be a lot easier but being the left one there's still a lot of stress."

ON AIR

PICK OF THE DAY



Bishwa Joyi Bangali Rabindranath
On ETV at 10:30pm
Special Programme on
Tagore Death Anniversary



Choley Chholochholo Nodidhara
On Banglavisian at 8:15pm
Special Programme on
Tagore Death Anniversary

03:50 Rabindranath Bhalobasha Mondobasha
04:50 Apnar Jigyasha Gaaner Mala
06:45 Tomar Premey Dhonyo
08:15 Drama Serial: Chokkor
08:50 Drama: Onila
11:30 Ei Shomoy
ETV
08:00 Ekusher Shokal

01:30 Dristi
02:00 Dhoro Nirbhoye Gaan
03:30 Holomoti
04:00 Pathhey Pantorey
04:30 Shukhi Manush Project
05:30 Gaanola
07:30 Pramanya
08:00 Drama Serial: Hitlu
09:30 Ekusher Shomoy
10:00 Drama Serial: Bodhon

10:30 Bishyoyoyi Bangali Rabindranath
11:45 Reporter's File
12:00 Ekusher Raat
Rtv
01:30 Ei Din
09:00 Rtv Exclusive
09:05 Tarzan
10:00 Ei Desh
11:30 Drama Serial: Dohon
12:00 Wide Angle
12:35 Drama Serial: Raat
Jaga Pakhi

01:00 Prio Mukh
01:30 Ei Din
02:30 Musical Programme
Dance Drama: Chitrangoda
03:45 Musical Programme
Sports Carnival
04:20 Protidin
05:10 Recitation Programme
06:00 Drama Serial: Dohon
06:35 Drama: Shomapati
08:00 Drama Serial: Raat
09:20 Jaga Pakhi

11:00 Heart Beat
Channel 1
08:40 Shuprobath Bangladesh
09:30 Chokh Mele Dekhi
10:30 Drama: Odhopoton
12:05 Telefilm
02:00 Musical Programme
03:30 Drama: Coffee House
04:30 Drama
05:15 Special Programme
06:00 Saaj Bela
06:45 Iltashar Path Dhorey
07:00 Sraboner Koto Kotha
08:15 Drama Serial: Coffee House
09:00 Shantiniketoner Duar
11:00 Robitkhakurer Chilthi

Banglavisian
08:35 Shubho Shokal
09:05 Agamir Kontho
10:10 Article Thirty-Nine
11:10 Sports Vision
11:40 Musical Programme
01:00 Chitro Kolay
02:40 Rabidranath
03:15 Ki Gaba Ami Ki Shonabo
04:15 Amar Mukti Alloy Alloy
05:00 Bhanushingher
05:40 Citycell Diner Sheshey
06:35 Chitrangoda
08:15 Special Programme: Choley Chholo Chholo
08:55 Mukhtir Upay
11:30 Chiro Priyo

Rabindranath
STAR TROOP
11:00 Troop
12:30 Bhabhi
02:30 Karam Apnaa Apnaa
03:30 Saarrthi
04:30 Aek Chhabhi Hai Padoss Mein
07:00 Kahaani Ghar Ghar Kii
08:00 Antakshari - The Gr8 Kids Spl
09:00 Kasautii Zindagii Kay Meri Awaz Ko Mil Gayi
09:30 Roshni
10:00 Kasturi
10:30 Kahaani Ghar Ghar Kii
11:00 Kyunki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi
11:30 Kayamath
STAR MOVIES
12:00 Fortress 2: Re-Entry
01:30 Ed Wood
03:45 Doctor Dolittle 3
05:30 Dunston Checks In
07:00 Sahara
09:05 Full Monty, The
10:45 Today You Die
12:15 Dunston Checks In
HISTORY CHANNEL
11:00 The Bed of Nails
11:45 The Whiskey Priest
03:30 Sadat
04:30 Becoming a Nation
05:30 Ivanhoe
08:30 St. Peter
11:30 Biography of Millenium
NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC
11:15 Global Pendant

FM radio
Radio Foorti
07:00am Hello Dhaka (Apu)
11:00am Amar 98.4 (Nusrat)
03:00pm Dhaka Calling (Sakib)
07:00pm Seven Eleven (Sadia)
11:00pm Late Night Show (Shuvo)
11:30 Shaving
12:30 Packaging
01:30 Hammer This!
02:30 Peevee, Zeke, Ozzy
04:30 Mad Labs
05:00 Swimming With Sea Snakes
05:30 Backyard Science
06:00 Hither and Slither
06:30 Search For Noah
07:30 Predators at War
08:30 Air Crash Investigations
10:30 Is It Real?
DISCOVERY CHANNEL
01:00 Runway Moms
01:30 Raw Nature
02:30 Discovery Showcase
04:30 Africa Week
05:30 Wild Safari
06:30 Extreme Machines
07:30 Wild Discovery
08:30 Colours of India
09:30 Future Weapons
10:30 Man Made Marvels