

Deutsch delight

Football

AFP, London

Germany got revenge on England and piled the pressure on their manager Steve McClaren with a 2-1 friendly win at Wembley here on Wednesday.

Germany, the last team to beat England at the old Wembley - 1-0 in October 2000 - became the first to beat them at the rebuilt stadium and avenged the 5-1 home thrashing of 2001.

But though England were not outplayed, the result means England have now won just two out of their last nine games - against minnows Estonia and Andorra - and do not bode well for their faltering qualifying campaign for the 2008 European Championships.

Chelsea midfielder Frank Lampard put England ahead in the ninth minute but a bad mistake by England goalkeeper Paul Robinson gifted Schalke striker Kevin Kuranyi an equaliser in the 26th minute.

Schalke left-back Christian Pander, making his Germany debut, scored the winner in the 40th minute, blasting past Robinson from distance after a skilful build-up.

Germany were hunting revenge after the last clash produced one of England's greatest away performances - a 5-1 romp in Munich.

And they completed a memorable double by being the first team to beat

them at the new Wembley in England's second game at the rebuilt national stadium, before 86,133 fans.

"Needless to say I'm absolutely delighted," said Germany coach Joachim Loew.

"There are very few places in the world where winning is such a nice experience. We had a very young team and they are dancing and singing in the locker room."

"After the equaliser I think all of my players suddenly realised: 'Hey, we can score goals here!'"

McClaren was upset about both Germany's goals - especially Kuranyi's gift.

"I haven't had a real good chance to study it and to look at it in detail," he said of Robinson's blunder.

"I'm disappointed to have conceded that goal. There may have been a mistake but there were two or three mistakes before that which we shouldn't have allowed, so I'm disappointed with the goals overall."

"With performances you have to reflect on them and then make decisions later on," he said on Robinson's future.

Both squads were depleted by injuries to key players.

England started the brighter and Lampard soon scored thanks to fine work from versatile Manchester City defender Micah Richards.

The 19-year-old, making his fifth international appearance, charged down the right wing, beating Pander and captain Bernd Schneider before

playing in Lampard.

The midfielder, who had burst forward, turned and shot past Arsenal goalkeeper Jens Lehmann, who was not helped by a slight deflection off Christoph Metzelder.

It was Lampard's first England goal for a year and six days.

Germany went in search of an equaliser and were gifted it by Robinson, who notoriously miskicked to let in Gary Neville's backpass in the 2-0 defeat in Croatia in October.

Instead of tipping Schneider's cross over the bar, he weakly palmed it straight to a stunned Kuranyi to tap in his 19th international goal.

It was a splendid move which brought Germany their second.

Pander played the ball to Thomas Hitzlsperger and got it back via Phillip Lahm, before blasting a rising shot across Robinson from 25 yards out.

England were rattled but nonetheless, Michael Owen twice went close before half-time.

McClaren replaced Robinson with Portsmouth's David James for the second half, which he insisted afterwards was a pre-planned change.

England went on the attack and substitute Kieron Dyer, playing as a forward, twice went close, poking a Beckham cross just wide in the 66th minute.

Shaun Wright-Phillips replaced Cole and his cross, straight after coming on in the 70th minute, was diverted just over by Lampard.



Striker Kevin Kuranyi (C) leads German celebrations after he scored the equaliser against England during their international friendly football match at Wembley Stadium in London on Wednesday.



Did U Know?

Basketball and rugby balls are made from synthetic material. Earlier, pigs' bladders were used as rugby balls.



Rahul Dravid
(India cricket captain)
"It's been a disappointing performance all round but there are six games to go and hopefully we'll bounce back."
After losing the first one-day international against England.

What to WATCH

ZEE Sports
Nehru Cup Football
Bangladesh v Kyrgyzstan
Live from 7:30 pm
ESPN
Sportscenter India
Sports News
Live at 6:00 pm
England v India
Second One-Day International
Live from 7:30 pm

Armenia hold Portugal

AFP, Paris
Portugal slipped up in their bid to close the gap on Euro 2008 qualifier Group A leaders Poland when Luiz Felipe Scolari's 2004 finalists were held to a 1-1 draw in Armenia on Wednesday.

Portugal found themselves trailing in the 11th minute after Robert Arzumanyan put Armenia ahead, but Manchester United's Cristiano Ronaldo saved the visitors' blushes with a 37th minute equaliser.

The draw left Portugal in third, four points behind Poland, with one game in hand.

Finland are placed second, three points adrift, after a 2-1 win over Kazakhstan in Helsinki.

In other Group A action struggling Belgium overcame Serbia 3-2 in Brussels, a result that left them in mid-table in fifth.

Nigel Worthington's first match in charge of Northern Ireland since taking over from Lawrie Sanchez resulted in a comfortable 3-1 win over minnows Lichtenstein at Windsor Park.

A brace from David Healy and another from Kyle Lafferty inspired the win with Lichtenstein's Mario Frick pulling one back a minute from time.

Northern Ireland moved to within two points of Group F leaders Sweden.

Wednesday's other Euro 2008 qualifier tie was a bottom of the table scrap in Group D with Cyprus emerging 1-0 winners over San Marino while Estonia defeated visiting Andorra 2-1.

DC Gold Cup from today

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khagrachhari

The second Deputy Commissioner Gold Cup football tournament jointly organised by District Administration and District Sports Association (DSA) will begin at 3 pm at the Khagrachhari Stadium here today.

Divisional Commissioner Hossain Jamil is expected to inaugurate the tournament.

A total of eight upazila teams - Khagrachhari sadar, Panchhari, Dighinala, Matiranga, Ramghor, Manikchhari, Mohalchhari and Laxmichhari - will contest in the event.



Brazil forward Ronaldinho (R) tries to get past Algeria defender Chadli Amri during their international friendly football match at the Mosson Stadium in Montpellier, southern France, on Wednesday.

Ronaldinho leads Brazil

Scary night for giants

Football

AP, Montpellier

Maicon and Ronaldinho scored second-half goals Wednesday to give Brazil a 2-0 win over Algeria in a friendly international.

However, world champions Italy were upset by Hungary 3-1, joining England, Argentina, the Netherlands and the United States on the losing side in exhibition games.

Maicon nodded in a corner kick from Ronaldinho in the 63rd minute, and the Barcelona playmaker doubled the lead in the 81st by lugging home a low shot from Diego that was deflected by goalkeeper Lounes Gaouaoui.

"It's a pleasure to come back in France, have a good game, and help the Selecao," Ronaldinho said.

Brazil dominated ball possession in the first half but failed to convert that into goals.

Maicon connected with Robinho in the sixth, but the Real Madrid forward's curling drive was punched away by Gaouaoui. The Algeria goalkeeper then denied Elano in the eighth, and blocked an angled shot from Julio Baptista in the 30th.

Mineiro slipped a through ball to Wagner Love in the 34th, but Gaouaoui rushed outside his area to stop the CSKA Moscow striker.

Algeria retaliated on counterattacks. Set up by Karim Ziani, Rafik Saifi broke the outside trap in the 23rd. But Saifi lost his one-on-one duel against goalkeeper Doni, who tackled the ball as the Lorient forward attempted to dribble past him.

"We played some nice football," Ziani said. "We don't have to be ashamed. ... We have to keep on improving so that we can become competitive in Africa."

Ronaldinho and Kaka came off the bench in the second half to boost

Brazil's offence. Ronaldinho had a curling freekick on target in the 47th, but Gaouaoui made the save. The Barcelona playmaker crossed the ball to Kaka in the 60th but the AC Milan midfielder's volley from the edge of the box was diverted by defender Ismael Bouzid.

Algeria had opportunities to score a consolation goal in the second half but lacked the finishing touch.

Karim Matmour stole the ball in midfield in the 57th to shoot from the edge of the box, but Doni made the save.

Nadir Belhadj's cross from the left flank in the 68th found Saifi in the area but his header went wide.

"We played against a great Brazilian team this evening," Saifi said. "The most important is to qualify for the African Cup tournament."

Algeria take on Gambia in an African Cup of Nations qualifier on September 9.

The Montpellier friendly was Brazil's first match after their victory in the Copa America last July in Venezuela.

Brazil will face the United States and Mexico on September 9 and 12 respectively before starting 2010 World Cup qualifying in October.

In Rome, second-half substitute Antonio Di Natale put the Azzurri ahead but Hungary took advantage of three defensive mistakes and rallied with goals from Roland Juhasz, Zoltan Gera and Robert Feczesin.

"We came up against a team that was fresher than us and more interested in taking control of the game," Italy coach Roberto Donadoni said. "We played well for stretches in the first half, then we lost our focus when it was 1-1."

Argentina lost 2-1 to Norway, the Netherlands lost 2-1 at Switzerland and the United States lost 1-0 at Sweden.

France won 1-0 at Slovakia, Spain won 3-2 at Greece and Ireland won 4-0 at Denmark.

Jaime Castrillon scored in the 53rd minute to give Colombia a 1-0 victory over Mexico at Commerce City and Costa Rica tied visiting Peru 1-1.

At Oslo, John Carew converted an early penalty kick and added another goal in the second half, giving him 19 goals in 64 games for Norway. Maxi Rodriguez got Argentina's consolation goal.

"Norway have a very strong team," Argentina coach Alfio Basile said. "They were simply fantastic in the air. But I'm not disappointed. It was a good test. I'm glad we were able to try many new players."

At Geneva, Tranquillo Barnetta scored from the spot for Switzerland, then beat goalkeeper Maarten Stekelenburg in the 51st. Within seconds of the restart, substitute Dirk Kuyt scored for the Dutch.

Ruud Van Nistelrooy played his first international match since falling out with Netherlands coach Marco van Basten at last year's World Cup.

Singapore edge Bangladesh 2-1

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh's second-string national football team went down to Singapore 2-1 in the Merdeka Cup yesterday.

Singapore, who led the first half 2-0 with goals in the 41 and 44 minutes at the Shah Alam Stadium in Kuala Lumpur, all but confirmed a semifinal berth with their second successive win following a 4-2 victory against Zimbabwe Select.

Bangladesh defended well before captain Hassan Al Mamun limped off the ground just before conceding the first goal and his replacement Arup Baidya set a consolation goal for substitute Jumratul Islam Mithu, who struck his first international goal in the 85th minute.

Bangladesh meet Zimbabwe Select in their last group match tomorrow.

The first-ever international match between the two sides will be telecast live by Zee Sports from 7.30pm Bangladesh time.

Under Indian coach Syed Nayeemuddin, Bangladesh have yet to win a single match in the five-nation tournament as they gave up a 1-0 lead in the dying moment to draw 1-1 with Cambodia on Tuesday.

Footballers set for last match in Nehru Cup

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh will end their campaign in the Nehru Cup today when they take on Kyrgyzstan at the Ambedkar Stadium in New Delhi.

The first-ever international match between the two sides will be telecast live by Zee Sports from 7.30pm Bangladesh time.

Under Indian coach Syed Nayeemuddin, Bangladesh have yet to win a single match in the five-nation tournament as they gave up a 1-0 lead in the dying moment to draw 1-1 with Cambodia on Tuesday.

No training for Tigers, NCA team depart

SPORTS REPORTER

The national cricket team's training for preparation of the Twenty20 World Championship yesterday was cancelled.

The cricketers came to know about the cancellation only in the morning when they were about to leave home during curfew. The Tigers were due to report at 7.45 am at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur. Situation permitting, the training will resume tomorrow.

Meanwhile, the National Cricket Academy (NCA) with special permission to travel during curfew left Dhaka in the afternoon for Australia.

The Academy will play five limited-overs matches, four four-day games and three three-dayers in Darwin during a three-week trip.

At Trnava, Slovakia, Thierry Henry scored on a quick free kick for his 40th international goal and moved within one of Michel Platini's French record.

Spain rallied at Thessaloniki, getting two second-half goals from David Silva. Carlos Marchena got Spain's other goal, while Fanis Gekas and Costas Katsouranis scored for Greece. Former captain Theo Zagorakis played his 120th and final game for Greece - a national record.

Ireland won at Denmark with two goals each from Robbie Keane and substitute Shane Long.

Base Zahurul champions

SPORTS REPORTER

Hosts BAF Base Zahurul Haque lifted the Bangladesh Air Force Inter-base football championship with a 1-0 win over Air Headquarters in yesterday's final in Chittagong.

Ashraf of BAF Base Matur Rahman was adjudged the player of the meet.

Assistant Chief of the Air Staff Air Vice Marshal Muhammad Enamul Bari distributed prizes after the final as chief guest.

Cook wants continuation Second India-England ODI today

Cricket

AFP, Southampton

Alastair Cook has warned England's 104-run thrashing of India in their one-day opener will count for little unless they back it up during the remaining six games of the series.

England's best limited-overs display since before the World Cup saw Cook and Ian Bell both score maiden centuries at this level.

Then James Anderson took his turn to shine under the Rose Bowl floodlights with a career-best return.

Add in that Monty Panesar, much maligned for his fielding, was involved in the run out of Sourav Ganguly while under-pressure wicket-keeper Matt Prior took a superb legside catch and it was easy to see why India captain Rahul Dravid thought England had played the "perfect" game.

Earlier this year England won four successive matches to take the triangular series in Australia only to lose their next, more important one-day fixture - a World Cup opener against New Zealand in St Lucia.

And last month they surrendered a 1-0 lead at home to the West Indies in a one-day series they eventually

lost 2-1. Cook, who laid the platform for Tuesday's thumping win with a patient 102, said: "The ability to tough out a result when you're up against it is a skill that good teams have, it is what Australia have done for so long and it really only comes with the experience of winning matches."

"That is the next challenge for us," said the 22-year-old opening batsman.

"We're really excited about what we did on Tuesday but it will mean very little if it stands out on its own for the rest of the summer," the Essex left-hander added.

Cook, speaking ahead of Friday's second match against India, a day-night match in Bristol, said consistency was the key to England improving their low standing in one-day cricket.

"There is no point putting in one performance like that with two hundreds and then forgetting about it."

Cook's place in the one-day lineup was under scrutiny after five previous appearances hadn't even yielded so much as a fifty. Bell too was under pressure before scoring a hundred in what was his 48th one-day international.

But with all-rounders Andrew Flintoff and Ravi Bopara returning

from injuries that saw them miss the West Indies series, a batsman had to be omitted. Fortunately, for Cook and Bell, it was Owais Shah - England's top-scorer against the West Indies - who was dropped.

"I'd played a few games and got a couple of forties but I hadn't really made a score so to get to three figures, especially at the start of your career, is always nice," said a relieved Cook.

TEAMS
ENGLAND (from): Paul Collingwood (captain), Ian Bell, Stuart Broad, Andrew Flintoff, Monty Panesar, Matt Prior, Ryan Sidebottom, James Anderson, Ravi Bopara, Alastair Cook, Dimitri Mascarenhas, Kevin Pietersen, Owais Shah, Chris Tremlett.

INDIA (from): Rahul Dravid (captain), Ajit Agarkar, Sourav Ganguly, Zaheer Khan, Piyush Chawla, Rohit Sharma, Sachin Tendulkar, Yuvraj Singh, Mahendra Singh Dhoni, Gautam Gambhir, Dinesh Karthik, Munaf Patel, Ramesh Powar, Rudra Pratap Singh, Robin Uthappa.

Lawson eyes No. 1 spot

Cricket

AFP, Lahore

Pakistan's new coach Geoff Lawson wants his side to become the best team in the world despite their ignominious exit from cricket's World Cup earlier this year.

The debacle - which saw minnows Ireland send them packing

from the competition's first round in March -- got worse when coach Bob Woolmer was found dead in the team hotel in Jamaica the next day.

The disastrous sequence of events led veteran captain Inzamamul Haq to step down and quit one-day cricket.

Now Lawson believes things can be turned around.

"The main achievement for me is to bring consistency to the players' form and performance and we will work in all areas to be world's best side," the 49-year-old Australian said.

"I am here after leaving my country and home to take up a tough assignment, and I am glad to see that the players have a desire to learn, which is enough for my confidence," Lawson told reporters after landing in Pakistan on Monday.

But not long after he touched down he discovered that four prominent cricketers -- Mohammad Yousuf, Inzamam, Abdul Razzaq and Imran Farhat -- had put their national careers at risk by joining a rebel Indian league.

Lawson is hopeful that Yousuf will change his mind.

"Yousuf is not only worth it for his runs but also for his influence on younger players, so I hope he changes his mind," he said of the senior batsman, who set a new world record for most runs in a calendar year with 1788 in 2006.

If Yousuf and the others stick to their guns, then Lawson will have a side considerably short on experience with important series ahead against South Africa, India and Australia.

The coach disagrees that one squad member with a lot of experience, maverick paceman Shoaib Akhtar, will be tough to coach.

"As a fast bowler myself, I feel I can deal with such kind of a temperament which is normal in fast bowlers," Lawson said of Akhtar who, along with new-ball partner Mohammad Asif, was involved in a doping scandal last year.

The new coach has made light of suggestions that coaching Pakistan is a difficult proposition, saying a young Shoaib Malik as the new captain is an exciting prospect.



New Pakistan cricket coach Geoff Lawson shows fast bowler Mohammad Asif how to hold the ball during a training camp at the Gaddafi Cricket Stadium in Lahore yesterday.