

Domenech all praise for Henry

AFP, Paris

France coach Raymond Domenech paid tribute to Thierry Henry on Thursday following the Barcelona forward's record-breaking feat the night before.

Henry grabbed a brace of goals in the 2-0 Euro 2008 qualifying victory over Lithuania in Nantes, taking his tally of international strikes to 43 and surpassing the record of 41 that he had shared with Michel Platini - now the UEFA president.

"For Titi (Henry), its numbers and decisive goals, that's the mark of the greats," said Domenech.

"Titi's smile after the first goal, the joy of the substitutes who jumped all over him, a moment of pleasure, of joy, a real atmosphere, something special happened," added the France coach waxing lyrical over his star striker.

"The record doesn't mean much to me but that places him in the history of French football, he's someone who beat Platini's record, it's not happened just like that, it's due to his consistency. He deserves his status as a star of world football."

"I've always admired those that score goals; it's difficult mentally, physically. I've a lot of admiration for those that last in this exercise (scoring goals) because we have lots of meteorites, but those that last..."

"Thierry was injured last season but there, at Barca, (Samuel) Eto'o was injured which forced him to speed up his return to matchfitness.

"It's a plus for everyone but he's possibly even better than ever."

Domenech also had a word of caution over the future regarding the emergence of Hatem Ben Arfa, the young Lyon playmaker who came on as a substitute and had a hand in Henry's opener against Lithuania.

Ben Arfa, who could have chosen to represent Tunisia, has been quoted in the press pleading for a starting role but Domenech said he expects a lot more from the youngster, claiming he is nothing more than a 'joker'.

"For the moment he is nothing more than a joker (a player to throw on to change the game)," said Domenech.

"But at 20 you can't be satisfied being a joker because all the great players at 20 are automatic first choices at the biggest clubs in the Champions League."

BUNDESLIGA FIXTURES

Saturday (all times 1330 GMT unless stated)
Nuremberg v Eintracht Frankfurt, Bayer Leverkusen v Borussia Dortmund, Hamburg SV v VfB Stuttgart, Hansa Rostock v Schalke 04, VfL Bochum v Bayern Munich, Werder Bremen v Hertha Berlin
Sunday
Hanover 96 v VfL Wolfsburg (1500), Karlsruhe SC v Arminia Bielefeld (1500)

Khulna's amazing

FROM PAGE 12
CHITTAGONG: Firstinnings 176 all out in 62.4 overs (Tamim 9, Salahuddin 11, Nafis 3, Afaf 61, Nazimuddin 47, Ehsanul 0, Dham 8, Sabbir 5, Ashiqur 1, Tareq 1, Sajju 0; Talha 3-57, Sajidul 4-42, Arif 1-30, Tarique 1-30).
BARISAL: Firstinnings 61-2 in 20.2 overs (Shahriar 37*, Rokibul 3*, Tarek 1-26, Ashiqur 1-26).
SYLHET: Firstinnings 141 all out in 77.3 overs (Imtiaz 35, Rahman 14, Mabud 9, Saleh 13, Kapali 5, Rahim 32, Rezaul 5, Tapash 6, Enamul 3, Nazmul 9*, Nabil 0; Shahjada 2-16, Delwar 2-31, Forhad 3-33, Shuvo 1-42, Rahman 1-12).

A bright start

FROM PAGE 12
took the pleasure of spending a Friday morning at the home of Bangladesh cricket.

It shows how our crowds are brought up to believe entirely on the shorter versions. But with television coverage through five BTV cameras and extensive marketing of the competition, it is expected that there will be more awareness, if not enthusiasm, for the longer version.

It was assumed that a local game had to be free but there was timidity on both sides as normally, certain sections of stadiums in Bangladesh are 'banned' for normal souls. But the heavy security's weary faces, as they saw pesky kids pouring into the western galleries, were quite comical. Normally, such exuberance is tampered.

And once they were let in, they took full toll of the superb stadium. Some even climbed on top of the large scoreboard, next to the press box. Their adventure was cut short when they were calmly told to come down from that precarious state.

The day reflected what is expected of the season: good, hard cricket and with a schedule in mind. Had it been a club-based affair, this inaugural match would have been held some time in mid-January after all their demands had been met!

Drogba bares his soul

Football

THE GUARDIAN

For a man who has a reputation for diving, Didier Drogba is remarkably honest off the pitch. Not only does he openly admit to France Football, in an interview published today, that he wants to leave Chelsea, but he explains that he will not do so in the course of this season because "it would be a little cowardly to leave at a time when the boat is rocking".

He admits, however, that his initial intention after Jose Mourinho's departure was to leave the club as soon as possible and that he originally planned to refuse to play against Valencia last month so that he would be eligible to play in the Champions League for another team later in the season. After reflection, Drogba eventually declared himself available for that game and now says he is determined to stay at Chelsea until June.

"When you're disappointed you sometimes take stances that you haven't thought about properly," he explained. "That was my way of showing how angry I was. But I wouldn't have been able to look my teammates in the eye afterwards. I am someone who has always campaigned for solidarity, so I've decided to stay until next summer."

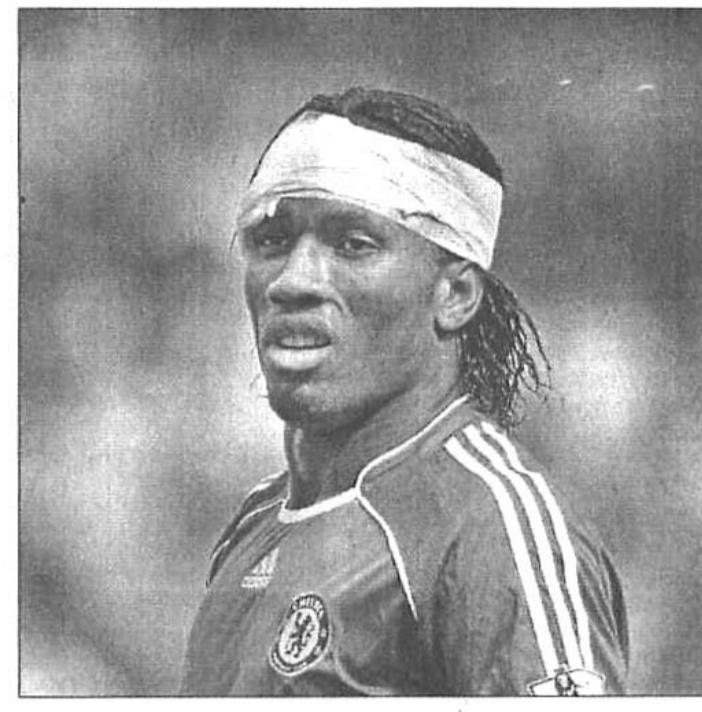
Chelsea have already pointed out that Drogba committed himself to the club until 2010 when he signed an improved contract last year, but the player said he hoped the club would realise it will be in everybody's interests to let him go next June. "Experience shows that there's no point holding on to a player against his wishes," he said. "I hope we'll be able to find a tidy way of leaving Chelsea."

Drogba also revealed that he has been taking Spanish and Italian lessons for "a little while" and would relish the opportunity to play for one of the giants of Serie A or La Liga. "I want to get back to playing with butterflies in my dressing room because now we know what happened and whose fault it is that Jose Mourinho is gone. In the days after his departure, I had trouble looking at certain people without feeling angry."

"All I know is that the decision has done a lot of damage to the team," he continued, seriously. "There are many casualties in the dressing room because now we know what happened and whose fault it is that Jose Mourinho is gone. In the days after his departure, I had trouble looking at certain people without feeling angry."

"When you stick with a manager through the summer, you have to at least give him until December unless some catastrophe takes place. But apparently president Abramovich has changed philosophy. We feel that the shared story was ended too quickly. We're left with a feeling of incompleteness, and impotence."

Despite all that, Drogba maintains that he is determined to do his best for Chelsea until he leaves. "I think Henk ten Cate will do us good. We're not out of the title race and we're still on track in the Champions League. I believe we can succeed. We wouldn't be the first team to pull off a great season after encountering some problems along the way. We've all developed such a hunger for victory that I can't see us settling for second place. We've got what it takes to surprise some people. The trauma is behind us now."



DIDIER DROGBA

certainly have left last summer if he'd known that the manager would be gone within a month of the season's start. Asked if he thought the club waited until after the closure of the transfer window to shed Mourinho precisely because they wanted to prevent a player exodus, Drogba reportedly feigned shock before exclaiming: "That would be Machiavellian thinking!"

"All I know is that the decision has done a lot of damage to the team," he continued, seriously. "There are many casualties in the dressing room because now we know what happened and whose fault it is that Jose Mourinho is gone. In the days after his departure, I had trouble looking at certain people without feeling angry."

"When you stick with a manager through the summer, you have to at least give him until December unless some catastrophe takes place. But apparently president Abramovich has changed philosophy. We feel that the shared story was ended too quickly. We're left with a feeling of incompleteness, and impotence."

Despite all that, Drogba maintains that he is determined to do his best for Chelsea until he leaves. "I think Henk ten Cate will do us good. We're not out of the title race and we're still on track in the Champions League. I believe we can succeed. We wouldn't be the first team to pull off a great season after encountering some problems along the way. We've all developed such a hunger for victory that I can't see us settling for second place. We've got what it takes to surprise some people. The trauma is behind us now."

Through he admitted that this is not the first time he has considered leaving Stamford Bridge and that he has always had "a bizarre relationship" with Chelsea, he said that Mourinho's departure convinced him it was time to move on. Indeed, he revealed that he would almost

have left last summer if he'd known that the manager would be gone within a month of the season's start. Asked if he thought the club waited until after the closure of the transfer window to shed Mourinho precisely because they wanted to prevent a player exodus, Drogba reportedly feigned shock before exclaiming: "That would be Machiavellian thinking!"

"All I know is that the decision has done a lot of damage to the team," he continued, seriously. "There are many casualties in the dressing room because now we know what happened and whose fault it is that Jose Mourinho is gone. In the days after his departure, I had trouble looking at certain people without feeling angry."

"When you stick with a manager through the summer, you have to at least give him until December unless some catastrophe takes place. But apparently president Abramovich has changed philosophy. We feel that the shared story was ended too quickly. We're left with a feeling of incompleteness, and impotence."

Despite all that, Drogba maintains that he is determined to do his best for Chelsea until he leaves. "I think Henk ten Cate will do us good. We're not out of the title race and we're still on track in the Champions League. I believe we can succeed. We wouldn't be the first team to pull off a great season after encountering some problems along the way. We've all developed such a hunger for victory that I can't see us settling for second place. We've got what it takes to surprise some people. The trauma is behind us now."

Through he admitted that this is not the first time he has considered leaving Stamford Bridge and that he has always had "a bizarre relationship" with Chelsea, he said that Mourinho's departure convinced him it was time to move on. Indeed, he revealed that he would almost

have left last summer if he'd known that the manager would be gone within a month of the season's start. Asked if he thought the club waited until after the closure of the transfer window to shed Mourinho precisely because they wanted to prevent a player exodus, Drogba reportedly feigned shock before exclaiming: "That would be Machiavellian thinking!"

"All I know is that the decision has done a lot of damage to the team," he continued, seriously. "There are many casualties in the dressing room because now we know what happened and whose fault it is that Jose Mourinho is gone. In the days after his departure, I had trouble looking at certain people without feeling angry."

"When you stick with a manager through the summer, you have to at least give him until December unless some catastrophe takes place. But apparently president Abramovich has changed philosophy. We feel that the shared story was ended too quickly. We're left with a feeling of incompleteness, and impotence."

Through he admitted that this is not the first time he has considered leaving Stamford Bridge and that he has always had "a bizarre relationship" with Chelsea, he said that Mourinho's departure convinced him it was time to move on. Indeed, he revealed that he would almost

have left last summer if he'd known that the manager would be gone within a month of the season's start. Asked if he thought the club waited until after the closure of the transfer window to shed Mourinho precisely because they wanted to prevent a player exodus, Drogba reportedly feigned shock before exclaiming: "That would be Machiavellian thinking!"

"All I know is that the decision has done a lot of damage to the team," he continued, seriously. "There are many casualties in the dressing room because now we know what happened and whose fault it is that Jose Mourinho is gone. In the days after his departure, I had trouble looking at certain people without feeling angry."

"When you stick with a manager through the summer, you have to at least give him until December unless some catastrophe takes place. But apparently president Abramovich has changed philosophy. We feel that the shared story was ended too quickly. We're left with a feeling of incompleteness, and impotence."

Through he admitted that this is not the first time he has considered leaving Stamford Bridge and that he has always had "a bizarre relationship" with Chelsea, he said that Mourinho's departure convinced him it was time to move on. Indeed, he revealed that he would almost

have left last summer if he'd known that the manager would be gone within a month of the season's start. Asked if he thought the club waited until after the closure of the transfer window to shed Mourinho precisely because they wanted to prevent a player exodus, Drogba reportedly feigned shock before exclaiming: "That would be Machiavellian thinking!"

"All I know is that the decision has done a lot of damage to the team," he continued, seriously. "There are many casualties in the dressing room because now we know what happened and whose fault it is that Jose Mourinho is gone. In the days after his departure, I had trouble looking at certain people without feeling angry."

"When you stick with a manager through the summer, you have to at least give him until December unless some catastrophe takes place. But apparently president Abramovich has changed philosophy. We feel that the shared story was ended too quickly. We're left with a feeling of incompleteness, and impotence."

Through he admitted that this is not the first time he has considered leaving Stamford Bridge and that he has always had "a bizarre relationship" with Chelsea, he said that Mourinho's departure convinced him it was time to move on. Indeed, he revealed that he would almost

have left last summer if he'd known that the manager would be gone within a month of the season's start. Asked if he thought the club waited until after the closure of the transfer window to shed Mourinho precisely because they wanted to prevent a player exodus, Drogba reportedly feigned shock before exclaiming: "That would be Machiavellian thinking!"

"All I know is that the decision has done a lot of damage to the team," he continued, seriously. "There are many casualties in the dressing room because now we know what happened and whose fault it is that Jose Mourinho is gone. In the days after his departure, I had trouble looking at certain people without feeling angry."

"When you stick with a manager through the summer, you have to at least give him until December unless some catastrophe takes place. But apparently president Abramovich has changed philosophy. We feel that the shared story was ended too quickly. We're left with a feeling of incompleteness, and impotence."

Through he admitted that this is not the first time he has considered leaving Stamford Bridge and that he has always had "a bizarre relationship" with Chelsea, he said that Mourinho's departure convinced him it was time to move on. Indeed, he revealed that he would almost

have left last summer if he'd known that the manager would be gone within a month of the season's start. Asked if he thought the club waited until after the closure of the transfer window to shed Mourinho precisely because they wanted to prevent a player exodus, Drogba reportedly feigned shock before exclaiming: "That would be Machiavellian thinking!"

"All I know is that the decision has done a lot of damage to the team," he continued, seriously. "There are many casualties in the dressing room because now we know what happened and whose fault it is that Jose Mourinho is gone. In the days after his departure, I had trouble looking at certain people without feeling angry."

"When you stick with a manager through the summer, you have to at least give him until December unless some catastrophe takes place. But apparently president Abramovich has changed philosophy. We feel that the shared story was ended too quickly. We're left with a feeling of incompleteness, and impotence."

Through he admitted that this is not the first time he has considered leaving Stamford Bridge and that he has always had "a bizarre relationship" with Chelsea, he said that Mourinho's departure convinced him it was time to move on. Indeed, he revealed that he would almost

have left last summer if he'd known that the manager would be gone within a month of the season's start. Asked if he thought the club waited until after the closure of the transfer window to shed Mourinho precisely because they wanted to prevent a player exodus, Drogba reportedly feigned shock before exclaiming: "That would be Machiavellian thinking!"

"All I know is that the decision has done a lot of damage to the team," he continued, seriously. "There are many casualties in the dressing room because now we know what happened and whose fault it is that Jose Mourinho is gone. In the days after his departure, I had trouble looking at certain people without feeling angry."

"When you stick with a manager through the summer, you have to at least give him until December unless some catastrophe takes place. But apparently president Abramovich has changed philosophy. We feel that the shared story was ended too quickly. We're left with a feeling of incompleteness, and impotence."

Through he admitted that this is not the first time he has considered leaving Stamford Bridge and that he has always had "a bizarre relationship" with Chelsea, he said that Mourinho's departure convinced him it was time to move on. Indeed, he revealed that he would almost

have left last summer if he'd known that the manager would be gone within a month of the season's start. Asked if he thought the club waited until after the closure of the transfer window to shed Mourinho precisely because they wanted to prevent a player exodus, Drogba reportedly feigned shock before exclaiming: "That would be Machiavellian thinking!"

"All I know is that the decision has done a lot of damage to the team," he continued, seriously. "There are many casualties in the dressing room because now we know what happened and whose fault it is that Jose Mourinho is gone. In the days after his departure, I had trouble looking at certain people without feeling angry."

"When you stick with a manager through the summer, you have to at least give him until December unless some catastrophe takes place. But apparently president Abramovich has changed philosophy. We feel that the shared story was ended too quickly. We're left with a feeling of incompleteness, and impotence."

Through he admitted that this is not the first time he has considered leaving Stamford Bridge and that he has always had "a bizarre relationship" with Chelsea, he said that Mourinho's departure convinced him it was time to move on. Indeed, he revealed that he would almost

have left last summer if he'd known that the manager would be gone within a month of the season's start. Asked if he thought the club waited until after the closure of the transfer window to shed Mourinho precisely because they wanted to prevent a player exodus, Drogba reportedly feigned shock before exclaiming: "That would be Machiavellian thinking!"

"All I know is that the decision has done a lot of damage to the team," he continued, seriously. "There are many casualties in the dressing room because now we know what happened and whose fault it is that Jose Mourinho is gone. In the days after his departure, I had trouble looking at certain people without feeling angry."

"When you stick with a manager through the summer, you have to at least give him until December unless some catastrophe takes place. But apparently president Abramovich has changed philosophy. We feel that the shared story was ended too quickly. We're left with a feeling of incompleteness, and impotence."

Through he admitted that this is not the first time he has considered leaving Stamford Bridge and that he has always had "a bizarre relationship" with Chelsea, he said that Mourinho's departure convinced him it was time to move on. Indeed, he revealed that he would almost

have left last summer if he'd known that the manager would be gone within a month of the season's start. Asked if he thought the club waited until after the closure of the transfer window to shed Mourinho precisely because they wanted to prevent a player exodus, Drogba reportedly feigned shock before exclaiming: "That would be Machiavellian thinking!"

"All I know is that the decision has done a lot of damage to the team," he continued, seriously. "There are many casualties in the dressing room because now we know what happened and whose fault it is that Jose Mourinho is gone. In the days after his departure, I had trouble looking at certain people without feeling angry."

"When you stick with a manager through the summer, you have to at least give him until December unless some catastrophe takes place. But apparently president Abramovich has changed philosophy. We feel that the shared story was ended too quickly. We're left with a feeling of incompleteness, and impotence."

Through he admitted that this is not the first time he has considered leaving Stamford Bridge and that he has always had "a