



Sparta Prague winger Jan Rezek (R) skips the challenge of Bayer Leverkusen defender Manuel Friedrich during their UEFA Cup match at the BayArena on Thursday.

## Spurs, Bolton through

AFP, Paris



Tottenham reached the UEFA Cup last 32 on Thursday while Bolton virtually ensured their place but both ties were overshadowed by controversy.

Spurs, the champions in 1984, drew 1-1 with Anderlecht in Brussels in Group G with Bulgarian striker Dimitar Berbatov scoring from the penalty spot just two minutes after the Belgian side had gone ahead through Bart Goor.

It was Berbatov's 10th goal in 12 games in the UEFA Cup for the London side as coach Juande Ramos, who took Sevilla to two wins in the tournament, stayed on course for a third triumph.

However, Anderlecht look set to face the wrath of UEFA after cigarette lighters and even an iron bar

rained down on the pitch in the closing stages with makeshift Spurs defender Didier Zokora being hit on the head.

"I played four years in Belgium so maybe they hate me," said Zokora, a former Genk midfielder.

Spurs assistant boss Gus Poyet admitted it was important to take something from the match.

On the missiles thrown onto the pitch, Poyet said: "I think it's not good for Anderlecht. It's nothing to do with Anderlecht, there are always a few people."

In Belgrade, Bolton rested star striker Nicolas Anelka, with one eye on Saturday's English Premiership relegation battle with Wigan, but it didn't prevent Gary Megson's side from registering a famous 1-0 win over Red Star.

The win put them on top of Group F and virtually assured a place in the last 32 with just one round of games to play.

Gavin McCann headed Bolton's winner on the stroke of half-time.

It was the former Aston Villa man's first goal for the club and it

came after Gary Speed had flicked on a corner from Andranik Teymourian.

The Premiership side had been outraged that hundreds of their fans had originally been prevented from making their way to the stadium.

Police held the supporters at the Hotel National in the Serbian capital amid security fears following trouble involving Red Star fans last weekend when a policeman was attacked with flares.

Bayer Leverkusen secured their place in the last 32 with a 1-0 win over Sparta Prague. Manuel Friedrich secured the win with a 71st-minute header.

The result also sent FC Zurich and Spartak Moscow through from Group E at the expense of Toulouse as well as the Czech champions.

Spartak Moscow moved to the top spot in the group with a 1-0 win over Zurich with Egor Titov scoring in the 57th minute.

Bordeaux beat Helsingborg 2-1 as the French side joined the Swedes in qualifying from Group H.

## Mourinho in England

THE GUARDIAN

Jose Mourinho flew into England yesterday, fuelling speculation that he is set for talks with the Football Association about the vacant England head coach's job.

The former Chelsea manager, who has prepared a blueprint detailing his plans for English football, arrived by private jet at Farnborough airport in Hampshire. The FA stressed that it had not held direct talks with any candidate about succeeding Steve McClaren but Mourinho is known to be on its shortlist.

The Portuguese would welcome discussions with the governing body to establish whether his plans, which include restarting the building of the National Football Centre at Burton, would be welcomed.

Other leading candidates to succeed McClaren include Fabio Capello, the former Real Madrid coach. Martin O'Neill is also highly regarded by the FA but he has said he wants to stay at Aston Villa and yesterday backed Mourinho. "I think Jose would be an excellent choice," he said.

The FA's chief executive, Brian Barwick, wants a "world-class" coach after McClaren's failure to qualify for Euro 2008. He has consulted leading figures such as Sir Alex Ferguson and Sir Bobby Robson as part of the recruitment process.

Romario takes charge at Vasco

AFP, Rio De Janeiro

Veteran Brazilian striker Romario, who failed a dope test after taking a substance to combat hair loss, was on Thursday named as the new coach of Rio club Vasco de Gama, local radio reported.

The 41-year-old, who was a

World Cup winner in 1994, tested positive for finasteride following a match between Vasco and Palmeiras on October 28.

But he has put that setback behind him to take charge of the club following the resignation of Valdir Espinosa.

not allow anything to jeopardise his long-term fitness, but he will not countenance missing the African Cup of Nations.

The Ivory Coast manager, Uli Stielike, describes him as "unquestionably the best penalty-box player in the world" and one of Stielike's assistants, Gérard Gilli, who also coaches the country's Under-23 team, enjoys a close relationship with Drogba. Gilli, who will take the Under-23s to the Beijing Olympics next summer, has said that the striker will be one of his three over-age players.

Drogba has been playing with knee pain for about a year, having regular treatment and scans. His insistence on battling on has led to a worsening of a problem originally diagnosed as tendinitis; it now involves damage to the meniscus in the joint. An operation would ease his suffering but not eradicate the pain.

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being declared unfit for the tournament in Ghana.

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