AFP, Madrid

The final of the 2010 Champions League will be played in Real Madrid's Santiago Bernabeu stadium, the club announced on

European football governing body UEFA selected the Spanish capital ahead of Munich, Berlin and Wembley during their executive committee meeting Friday at Vaduz, Liechtenstein.

It will be the fourth time that the Madrid stadium has hosted the final of Europe's premier football competition after 1957, 1969 and 1980.

The decision comes four months after UEFA conferred the 'Elite Stadium' status on the Santiago Bernabeu, an essential condition for hosting European finals.

The 2010 UEFA Cup final will take place in Hamburg.

record-breaking

Australia will send one of its stron-

gest ever Olympic swimming teams

to this year's Beijing Games with

seven individual long-course world

record holders named in a 42-strong

finalised its team after the national

trials which netted eight world

records, headed by the sport's current

fastest male and female swimmers,

metre freestyle world records during

the trials to underline Australia's

Sullivan and Trickett broke 50-

Eamon Sullivan and Libby Trickett.

The traditional swimming power

Olympic team

AFP, Sydney

squad here Saturday.

sprinting strength.

The German city beat Dublin, London and Gelsenkirchen, Germany for the right to host the final of Europe's second-tier comknows? petition.

Hamburg last hosted the event | want to be. I've taken advantage to makes me happy." Aussies will send

As for the future, the player who scored 1,000 goals is open to offers.

explained Romario.

"I'm going to wait until something terrific turns up. I wanted to do something for the 2014 World Cup. I would like to participate in a commission.

FACTFILE

Surname: De Souza Farias First name: Romario Nationality: Brazilian Date of birth: 29 January 1966 Place of birth: Rio de Janeiro Height: 1.68 m Weight: 66 kg Sport/Discipline: Football/striker

CLUBS

Australia's other current longcourse world record holders are Grant Hackett, Leisel Jones, Jessicah

Edington. Australian Olympic Committee chief John Coates believes the swim team is on track to improve on their record medal haul from

Schipper, Stephanie Rice and Sophie

Athens at Beijing. Pre-trials rankings had the Australian swim team bringing home 18 medals from Beijing, and Coates said those expectations were still just as high considering their phenomenal form four months out from the Games.

"We've shown the performances of our sports last year and it calculated around 45 (medals) and they were predicated with the case of swimming on 18," Coates said.

"Nothing here has concerned me about not getting those numbers." Australia with 15 medals, seven of

them gold, finished second to the United States (28/12) in Athens and were runners-up behind the USA at last year's world championships in Melbourne, 36 medals to 21.

Australian head coach Alan Thompson said he is expecting the upcoming trials for other nations, notably USA in late June, to seriously challenge some of the recent performances by his team but says the ultimatejudgmentwill be made in China.

"How good we are will be decided on the 18th of August (last day of swimming)," he said.

"As of now we have put a good

performance on the board." Hackett, bidding for a record three Olympic 1500m gold medals

in Beijing, will be joined by fellow triple Olympians Jones, Adam Pine and Ashley Callus. Twelve other swimmers are off to

their second Olympics and there are 26 Olympic rookies, with backstroker Emily Seebohm the youngest member of the team aged 15.

The team announcement came after the conclusion of what has been rated one of the fastest national Olympic trials staged in the country. There were eight world records, a

further 13 Commonwealth records and another four Australian records established during the eight days' competition. The Olympic team announce-

ment at the Sydney Olympic pool was made in front of a gathering of Olympic gold medallists including Dawn Fraser, Shane Gould, John Devitt, Murray Rose, John Konrads, Michelle Ford and Jon Seiben.

Bremen target Pizarro

AFP, Berlin

Bundesliga club Werder Bremen are interested in signing their former Peruvian international striker Claudio Pizarro from Chelsea.

"I consider Claudio an interesting player. A player who will soon be 30 years is not too old for us,' Werder sporting director Klaus Allofs told the daily Bild.

"From a financial point of view it doesn't seem feasible but I'm going to ask," he added.

Pizarro, 29, joined Chelsea last summer after six seasons with Bayern Munich. He has made 21 appearances for the Premiership side, mostly as a substitute, scor-

ing four goals. According to Bild, Chelsea are ready to let him leave at the end of this season for three million euros (4.7 million dollars).

Madrid to host 2010 UCL final Romario retires finally Capello lacks int'l experience

Football

AFP, Rio De Janeiro

Former Brazilian international striker Romario announced Friday that he will retire this weekend when his contract with Vasco de Gama expires.

"I'm not playing any more. I no longer have the form. It's over for me," the 42-year-old told the daily

The 1994 World Cup winner said that from March 30 he "would be unemployed and looking for a job". The last match he played was on

November 4. But he did not rule out playing some farewell games.

"I always wanted to end as I began - without anyone noticing. I said that when it was least expected I would stop. But it could happen that I could still do one or two farewell games ... who

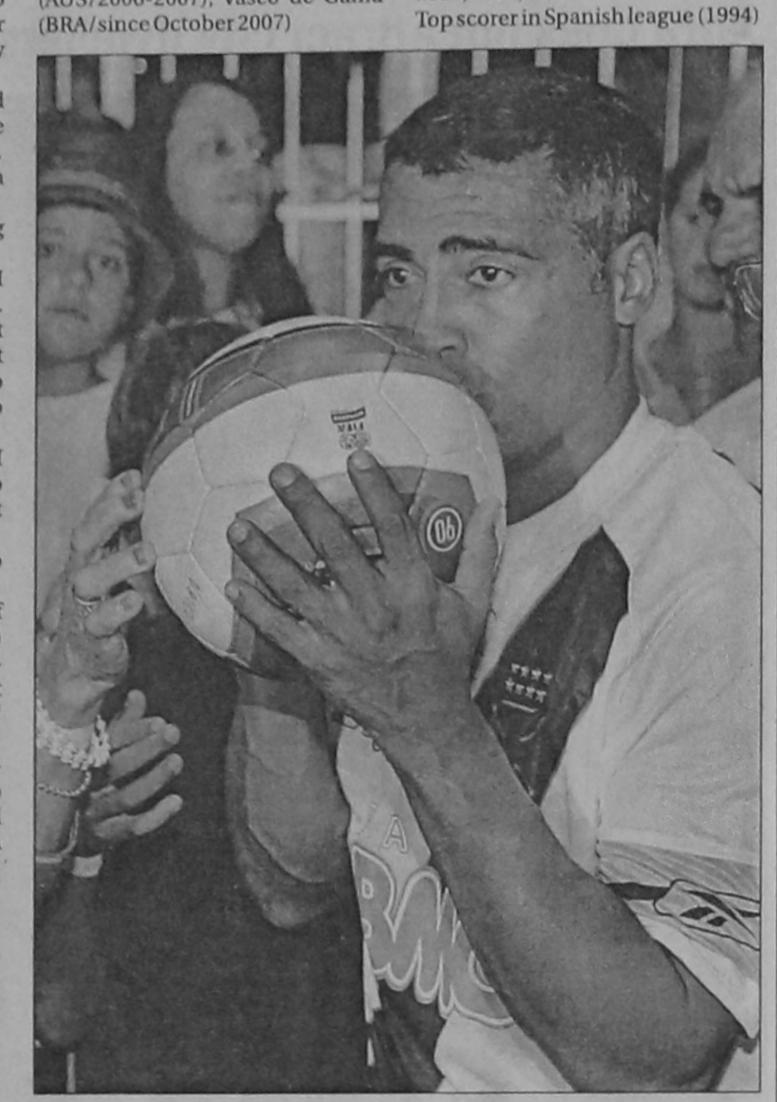
"I'm in this situation because I stay with my children. That's what

"There was the possibility of doing something with Fla(mengo) TV. Kleber Leite (Flamengo vicepresident) was meant to contact me but I've heard nothing yet,"

Vasco de Gama (BRA/1986-1988),

PSV Eindhoven (NED/1988-1993), FC Barcelona (ESP/1993-1995), Flamengo (BRA/1995-1996), Valencia (ESP/1996-1998), Flamengo (BRA/1998-2000), Vasco de Gama (BRA/2000-2002), Fluminense (BRA/2002-2003), Al Saad (QAT/2003), Fluminense (BRA/2003-2005), Vasco de Gama (BRA/2005-2006), Adelaide Force (AUS/2006-2007), Vasco de Gama TROPHIES

World Cup (1994) Confederations Cup (1997) Copa America (1989, 1997) Dutch league title (1989, 1991, 1992 Spanish league title (1994) Brazilian league title (2000) Dutch Cup (1989, 1990) Top scorer in Dutch league (1989 1990, 1991)



Brazilian legend Romario kisses the ball after scoring his "thousandth goal" while playing for Vasco da Gama in Rio de Janeiro on May 20, 2007.

Owen plays down Fabio row

Football

AFP, London

Michael Owen's preparations for a crucial Premier League game against Tottenham on Sunday have been overshadowed by a bitter row over comments made about England head coach Fabio Capello.

The striker, who scored in Newcastle's 2-0 win over Fulham last weekend, has defended himself amid accusations he made a scathing attack on Capello after England's defeatagainst France in Paris.

Owen immediately launched a defence of his comments and claimed his words were misconstrued and he was full of admiration for the Italian.

He said: "I was asked what I thought my role was in the team after two England games and my response was that you'll have to ask the manager. However in the papers that's been misconstrued and presented as an answer to the question 'what did you think your role was when you came on'.

"Headlines using words like 'clueless' are just words which I didn't use and mean nothing. I was answering a different ques-

Avram Grant

insists he is

determined to

Premier League

BARCLAYS & bring the

title back to Chelsea on his own

to convince Chelsea fans that he

is the right man for the manager's

job despite his side's surge into

The Israeli, whose team host

Middlesbrough on Sunday, was

criticised for his confused tactics

and passive demeanour when

Chelsea lost the League Cup final.

Then when the Blues suffered a

humiliating FA Cup defeat at

Barnsley, he seemed to have little

That impression was under-

lined last weekend when large

sections of the Stamford Bridge

crowd chanted "you don't know

what you're doing" after Grant

replaced Michael Ballack with

Juliano Belletti during the match

his seat as songs in praise of his

predecessor Jose Mourinho rang

out, but he was entitled to feel

vindicated by full-time. Belletti

played a role in both goals as

Chelsea roared back to win 2-1

and move above Arsenal into

future at the London club.

against Arsenal.

Grant has found it impossible

AFP, London

second place.

tion. I haven't been critical of the new management team. I've got lots of positive things to say about

"I've seen quotes attributed to me that relate to a question I was asked three months ago and they've been used to respond to something I was never asked. It looks like I've answered a question the night before when in fact it was

"Football is a team game and nobody knows that better than me. I'm a team player and I can only answer the questions as I see

"If I was asked the same question again - what is your role under the new manager in the future - I would say again that you're best asking him. Only he knows the formations and personnel he wants to use. All I can do is my best for Newcastle and, if I am selected, for England."

Owen returns to club duty on Sunday when Newcastle will look to take another step in securing their Premiership status.

Their manager, Kevin Keegan, was visibly overjoyed at recording his first win during his second tenure at St James' Park; however, an away match at White Hart Land could prove tricky.

Grant will do it his way

Boosted by that inspired

"People like to look at the

move, Grant could afford to take a

more assertive stance ahead of

negatives. But many, many sup-

porters of Chelsea support the

club and even support me," he

doesn't affect me. I have to do my

job. I do the tactical side, what I

have to do in the condition of the

players. I don't hear any other

noises. I think I need to do my job,

not pay attention to things from

win you the game. Even Claude

Makelele was playing well last

week but we needed to change

Chelsea are the closest chal-

lengers to Manchester United

and need to beat Middlesbrough

to keep up the pressure on Sir

behind United by the time they

kick off, so any hope of landing

keep winning until United visit

widely regarded as the end of the

Gunners' title challenge, but

Grant believes Arsene Wenger's

The victory over Arsenal was

the Bridge on April 26.

team are still in the race.

They could be eight points

Alex Ferguson's league leaders.

things to win the game."

You do what you think can

"If others think otherwise, it

second place.

Sunday's match.

outside.

Grant must have squirmed in the title will rest on their ability to

While Newcastle are in search of some vital points, Tottenham manager Juande Ramos cuts a contrasting figure to Keegan. The Spaniard is now riding out

the end of the season and was in relaxed mood on Friday afternoon when he defended his under-performing winger, Aaron Lennon.

The 20-year-old has been heavily criticised for his belowpar performances this season and his crossing in particular has been called into question.

However, Ramos insists he has no concerns over Lennon, who was omitted from the full England and Under-21s squads in midweek. He said: "Players have good

and bad times throughout the

season. They are not machines. If they are not at their best then we have to work on improving them. "Of course he works on his crossing but we will put on an extra session for him to improve.

Everyone has to polish things to make them better. whose performance is way below

Sometimes you have a player what it should be, but you have to stick with them and make them better.'

"Middlesbrough drew at

"You need to keep your players

"We were many points behind

Arsenal last time, so we need to

do our job. It won't be easy. But I

don't think Arsenal are out of the

focused all the time, especially

now when you're coming up to

the last games. We've done a good

Arsenal and now we're above

them. But they're still in the race.

That's my opinion. Not even one

John Terry and Frank Lampard

but his Middlesbrough counter-

part Gareth Southgate will have

little sympathy. He is without

suspended pair Mido and Fabio

Rochemback, while Robert Huth

and Luke Young face late fitness

striker Afonso Alves, the club's

record signing, can finally hit top

form. "When you bring a player in

for that sort of fee, it immediately

attracts a lot more attention," he

time - I said that from the day we

"I know it is going to take him

said

ation.

Southgate is hoping Brazil

Grant has injury doubts over

team will take all the points."

race," he said.

job up to now.

AFP, London

Former England boss Terry Venables believes that Fabio Capello is showing his international inexperience by his decision to rotate captains.

Steven Gerrard led the side for Capello's first match in charge of England against Switzerland in January with Rio Ferdinand taking over in France last Wednesday.

Capello is planning to give at least two more players the captaincy before settling on a permanent skipper for the World Cup qualifiers.

But Venables believes the system causes "aggravations where there should not be any".

Writing in the Sun, he said: "I worries me to see the England captaincy turned into some sort of audition. Why is Fabio Capello wasting precious time asking these questions when the World Cup qualifiers are getting closer by the

"Capello has never managed an international team before. But believe me, it is a whole new ball game. Decisions have to be made sharp and quick."

Venables has thrown his weight behind Chelsea skipper John Terry, who was captain under former boss Steve McClaren, for the role.

"I would give the skipper's job to John Terry, who is a natural leader," added Venables. "Rio Ferdinand has a nice way, Steven Gerrard leads by example, but JT has the edge - as long as he puts all his off field nonsense behind him."

Cahill breaks his foot

INTERNET, undated

Everton's Socceroos star Tim Cahill is unlikely to play in June's World Cup qualifiers after the Toffees confirmed he will miss the rest of the Premier League season with a broken foot.

Cahill, who missed Australia's 0-0 draw away to China in an Asian 2010 World Cup qualifier on Wednesday, was injured just 10 minutes into last weekend's league match at home to West Ham United, the club said on its website (www.evertonic.com).

"Tim Cahill has a broken foot. I think it's obvious that he will be out for the rest of the season," manager David Moyes told the website.

Cahill is thought to have aggravated a metatarsal fracture he suffered in March 2007

The 28-year-old, who has scored 10 goals in all competitions this season for Everton, could miss one or more of Australia's four World Cup qualifiers in June.

Australia, who lead Asian Group One with four points from two matches after a 3-0 win over Qatar in February, are at home to Iraq on June 1 and away to the Asian cham pions six days later. They visit Qatar on June 14 and host China on June

Everton are fifth in the Premier League standings, two points behind Liverpool, and vying with their city rivals for England's fourth Champions League berth. They meet in the Merseyside derby at Anfield on Monday.

Peru ban duo for 18 months

REUTERS, Lima

Peru have banned strikers Claudio Pizarro and Jefferson Farfan from international football for 18 months as punishment for indis-

Defender Santiago Acasiete and forward Andres Mendoza were also suspended for the same period by a disciplinary tribunal, the Peruvian Football Federation (FPF) said in a statement on Friday.

The quartet had been provisionally banned since December over alleged incidents at the team hotel in Lima after a World Cup qualifier against Brazil in November. The bans have been backdated

the four players will miss eight World Cup qualifiers. Peru have taken just two points from their first four qualifiers for

to November and effectively mean

the 2010 World Cup. The absence of PSV Eindhoven forward Farfan and Chelsea's Pizarro is likely to be a huge blow, although Pizarro has been frequently criticised for his perfor-

Peru drew 1-1 with Brazil but were hammered 5-1 by Ecuador three days later when Farfan was left out of the lineup. Peruvian football has been

mances for his country.

plagued by in-fighting among the directors for years and the country has not qualified for a World Cup since 1982.

signed him and nothing has The players are often accused of changed in that respect. I am indiscipline but, in turn, complain quite comfortable with that situof harassment by tabloid newspapers and television stations.

Jose denies Inter talks

Football

AFP, Lisbon

Former Chelsea manager Jose Mourinho vehemently denied on Saturday he had held talks with Serie A leaders Inter Milan about taking over next season from Roberto Mancini as had been widely reported.

The 45-year-old - known as 'The

true that I went to Milan, that I met with Massimo Moratti (the Inter president), who I do not have the pleasure of knowing personally," read the statement sent to the Portuguese national agency Lusa.

Inter Milan.

However, he announced he had changed his mind a day later.

the front page headlines plastered all over Saturday's Portuguese newspapers announcing his imminent departure for Inter after holding talks with Moratti in Milan on Friday - something which was confirmed to 'Diario de Noticias' by Mourinho's spokesman, Eladio

Mourinho, who lifted the Champions League with Porto before guiding Chelsea to two Premiership titles and an FA Cup, is the most sought after coach following his abrupt departure from Chelsea last September while Mancini has cast doubt on his own future of late.

The 43-year-old former Italy international, whose contract runs till 2012, announced on March 11 after the two-time defending Italian champions had been knocked out of the Champions League by Liverpool that he would be stepping down from the job he has held for four years.

Interpresently lead the title race

Bruckner faces 5-week lay-off AFP, Prague

Czech coach Karel Bruckner will be laid up for at least five weeks after undergoing a successful operation on his upper spine in hospital, the Czech and Moravian football federation (CMFS) announced on Friday. underwent a planned operation on

> his spinal column. The operation took place without complications," the CMFS said. The operation was aimed at removing a bone deformation between the fifth and sixth verte-

bra, the CTK agency said. Bruckner, 68, "will stay in hospi-

tal for a dozen days before recovering at home for another four weeks," the federation added.

"Karel Bruckner on Friday

by four points over AS Roma with

eight matches remaining.

Trickett sets new 50m WR

Swimming

AFP, Sydney Australia's Libby Trickett became the world's fastest woman in the

Saturday. Trickett, formerly Lenton, powered home to nab the record in the one-lap skelter following teammate Eamon Sullivan's recordshattering feats in the men's equiv-

old mark held by Dutchwoman Marleen Veldhuis at the European championships in Eindhoven.

finish the trials on a high. "To be honest I really thought the 50 world record was going to be

23-year-old said. "It has always been a bit of a target and it has always seemed such a distant time that I never Olympic victories.

really thought I could get there." Trickett beat home rising young

sprint star Cate Campbell, 15, who was expected to be the one hunting down Veldhuis's record on Saturday rather than Trickett. In the men's, team captain

ture 1500m freestyle event winning the national title in a time of 14 minutes 48.65 seconds ahead of Craig Stevens (14:53.18). Hackett's quest for three Olympic 1500m titles in Beijing is

taking shape after posting his

fastest time in three years. It was Hackett's fastest time since winning the world title in 2005 and having shoulder surgery in 2006 which prevented him competing at the Melbourne

Commonwealth Games.

His time was faster than the

successive Olympic titles in the same event. "That's the first step out of the way with qualifying," he said. "Now I'm really looking forward to putt-

"It would be great to win a third

"I would love to win it for Australia because we've had such a It was one of the fastest national trials ever held in Australia with a

The South African newcomer to

the ATP circuit had already shown

AFP, Miami

South African qualifier Kevin pion Novak Djokovic packing on Friday, ending the third-seeded Serbian's bid for a second straight ATP Masters Series title.

Anderson, ranked 122nd in the world, defeated the world number three and reigning Australian Open champion 7-6 (7/1), 3-6, 6-4 in a second-round match at the 7.54 million-dollar Sony Ericsson Open, which features both the prestigious ATP Masters Series draw and aWTA

tournament. One of the 32 seeded players to enjoy a first-round bye, Djokovic was launching his title defense fresh from claiming the first Masters Series title of 2008 at

Indian Wells on Sunday. Anderson, 21, notched the biggest win of his career - his first

"I really don't know even what to say right now," Anderson said. "I really tried to give myself the best shot walking in today. I kept telling myself I can do this. I've just got to believe in myself, play

beaten him, it's a tremendous

matches he had ever played.

experience for me."

He reached the final of the ATP event in Las Vegas earlier this month, where he fell to American Sam Querrey. Prior to that run, Anderson had lost the only two ATP

he was on form this season.

Djokovic, 20, defeated Argentinian Guillermo Canas in the championship match here last year, becoming the youngest player in the 23-year history of the tournament to take the title. Surprised in the first set by

Anderson, Djokovic responded in the second, and broke early in the third to take a 2-0 lead. But in the following game, Djokovic appeared rattled by a time

violation warning while preparing

to serve at 40-all. He was broken, and broken again at love in his next service

Anderson made the most of his

advantage, finishing off the contest on his third match point. "It was our first meeting, and I never saw him playing before," Djokovic said. "He surprised me with the way he was serving. I wasn't moving on my returns good

enough, and obviously that "He was winning too easy in the

when I needed to use my chances in the third set, I made some unforced errors, which were really

crucial.

"I was maybe going for too much," Djokovic added. "Obviously, he's really tall, and with that height, you expect him not to move so well. But he has a good coordination. He has a good feel for the ball. He's a good player." In other second-round men's

round with a 7-5, 6-2 victory over German qualifier Benjamin Becker. Nadal, who fell to Djokovic in the semifinals at Indian Wells at the weekend, is seeking his first title of

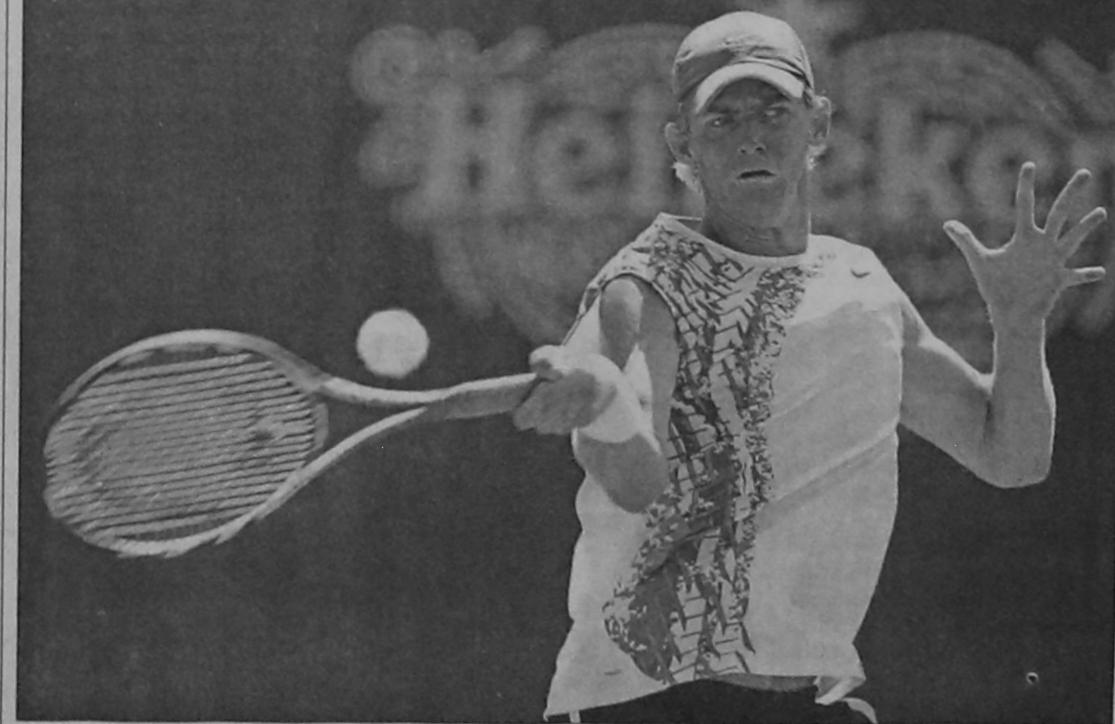
matches on Friday, second-seeded

Rafael Nadal eased into the third

Two top-eight seeds fell, as Russian Dmitry Tursunov outlasted number eight Richard Gasquet of France 6-3, 6-7 (2/7), 7-6 (7/5) and Belgian Xavier Malisse made short work of seventhseeded David Nalbandian of

Argentina 6-1, 6-4. In women's play, top-seeded Belgian Justine Henin and defending champion Serena Williams moved smoothly into the third

round. Henin, runner-up to Williams here last year, defeated Germany's Angelique Kerber 6-4, 6-2, while Williams, the eighth seed, beat



South African Kevin Anderson makes a forehand return against Serbian Novak Djokovic during the Sony Ericsson Open at Florida on Friday.

Parames.

Special One' - issued a statement rubbishing the rumours and contradicting his own spokesman who had confirmed that he had held a meeting in Milan with Inter president Massimo Moratti. "I say categorically that it is not

"It is false to say that I am on the point of signing a contract with

Mourinho was responding to

pool with a world record in the 50-Grant Hackett claimed his signametres freestyle on the final night of the national Olympic trials here

alent event this week. Trickett clocked 23.97 seconds to carve 0.12secs off the five-day-

It was more than half a second off Trickett's best time in the 50m to

championship just last week. out of my reach for a lot longer," the

effort of Russian Yury Prilukov (14:50.40) in winning the European However, Hackett was still 14 seconds off his world record time

swum at the 2001 world champion-

ships in Japan and his time was

slower than both his previous

tonight, to be honest," Hackett "I did not feel great in the warmup. But I held the pace up well

"There was not too much plan

solid time. Hackett won gold in the distance event at the Sydney 2000 and Athens 2004 Games and if he is successful in China he would become the first man to win three

ing my head down and doing some

great representation in this event." total of eight world records, a further 13 Commonwealth records and another four Australian records established over the eight

Anderson stuns Djokovic



Anderson sent defending cham-

over a top-10 player.

"But even still, just knowing resulted in easy service games. what he's done and what a great player he is, and to have actually

first set his service games, and I wasn't aggressive enough. Then

Romanian Edina Gallovits 6-1, 6-2.

considering how I felt and it is a