



Chelsea striker Nicolas Anelka (R) shoots the ball past Malaysian player Norhafiz Zamani Misbah to score the opening goal during their friendly match at the Shah Alam Stadium in Kuala Lumpur on Tuesday.

## Eto'o suffers head injury in training

AFP, Madrid

Barcelona's Cameroonian striker Samuel Eto'o on Tuesday suffered a blow to the head in training although tests showed he had not suffered serious injury, the club reported.

Eto'o has not suffered any "fracture or neurological injury," the club said after he collided with reserve player Victor Sanchez, who needed stitches.

Eto'o, told to rest for 48 hours, will still head off on Wednesday with the squad for a working pre-season break in Italy and then travel to the United States for a club tour.

The Cameroon star had been expected to leave the Catalan club this summer but chairman Joan Laporta has indicated he is set to stay.

Barca's Ivory Coast midfielder Yaya Toure said the players were hoping the forward would stay at the Nou Camp.

"It will be good news if he does," said Toure.

## Inter to move for Ferrari

INTERNET, undated

Inter are expected to make a move for ex-Roma defender Matteo Ferrari after last night's injury to Marco Materazzi.

Nerazzurri Coach Jose Mourinho has confessed that he is worried by the lack of defensive options after Azzurri ace Materazzi sustained a knee injury in the Trofeo TIM.

With Walter Samuel, Ivan Cordoba and Cristian Chivu also out of action, the loss of the Matrix for at least a month is a big worry.

According to Sportmediaset, Inter will turn to Ferrari who is a free agent after opting to leave Roma this summer.

The 29-year-old would be a capable back-up for the Beniamata and has made it clear that he would jump at the chance to ply his trade at San Siro.

Chelsea's Ricardo Carvalho had been a target, but he seems increasingly unlikely to leave Stamford Bridge.

## Petit set for Cologne

AFP, Berlin

Portugal midfielder Petit is set to sign for newly-promoted Bundesliga side Cologne from Portuguese giants Benfica for an undisclosed amount, according to a report here on Wednesday.

The 31-year-old defensive midfielder, who announced his retirement from international football after last month's Euro 2008, was set to have a medical examination in Cologne on Wednesday.

Having spent all of his career in Portugal, German tabloid Bild report Petit - whose full name is Armando Goncalves Teixeira - is expected to make 1.5 million euros (2.3 million US dollars) per season in Cologne.

"I always wanted to play in a different league, always try a new league out," he said.

"Benfica have given me so much and I am grateful, but I believe in the project in Cologne."

"This is the contract of my life." His contract with Benfica was set to run until 2010, but according to Bild it has been terminated and he will sign for Cologne on Wednesday, with no details given of how long the contract would be.

## Scolari happy with team

Football

AFP, Kuala Lumpur

New coach Luiz Felipe Scolari was upbeat after Chelsea completed the Asian leg of their pre-season tour, saying he had seen enough to convince him he has a side that can win the Premier League.

The Blues bagged 13 goals in their three-game swing through the region without conceding any, culminating with a 2-0 win over a Malaysian XI here on Tuesday with goals from Nicolas Anelka and Ashley Cole.

Most of the squad now have some match practice as they count down to their season opener against Portsmouth on August 17, and "Big Phil" likes what he has seen in the month he has been in charge.

"I have the players for exciting football and I have the players for us to be champions," said the Brazilian as the side left Wednesday for the Railways Cup, where they

will face Lokomotiv Moscow and either Sevilla or Milan.

The World Cup-winning coach said this week he had finalised 75 percent of his starting 11 and now he wants players who under-achieved last season to step up, not least France international Florent Malouda whom he claims was "wasted."

"I need to give more chances to Malouda because last season he didn't play in the same role as he had done at Lyon," he said.

"I want Malouda the same as he was in Lyon, flying down the wing and getting forward like he did with France with (Franck) Ribery, shooting and scoring goals. He was wasted last season."

With the pressure on to win silverware, Scolari has said he is targeting an unprecedented four trophies in his first season and he will use the Railways Cup in Russia, where the opposition will be stiffer, to work on his tactics.

"I'm seeing if we should play 4-2-2 or 4-3-3, or which position is

best for each player, or whether some players would do better in some games or others," he said.

"These are practice games (in Asia) but the players are trying their best for Chelsea and also for themselves. After that I'll decide."

Billionaire owner Roman Abramovich has reportedly demanded more attractive football from Chelsea, who earned a reputation for solid rather than entertaining play under Scolari's predecessors Jose Mourinho and Avram Grant.

In new signing Deco, Scolari appears to have someone who is capable of helping him do that.

"Deco has his style and that style improves other players, so he can make everyone better," he said, after watching another excellent performance by a playmaker who has previously enjoyed glittering spells at Porto and Barcelona.

His other new signing, defender Jose Bosingwa, will miss the start of the Premier League season after being forced out of the Asian tour with a thigh injury.

## C'Ron baffles Van der Sar

AFP, Manchester



Edwin van der Sar cannot understand why Cristiano Ronaldo would want to play for any club other than Manchester United.

One of the long-running sagas of this pre-season has been the on-off tale of whether or not Portugal winger is leaving Old Trafford for Real Madrid.

It now looks as if one of the stars of United's English Premier League and European Cup-winning campaign of last term will be staying put.

And as far as experienced Dutch goalkeeper van der Sar is concerned, the forward, currently recovering in the United States from an ankle operation, is better

off sticking with Sir Alex Ferguson's squad than heading to Spain.

"There have been a lot of things said and it is a very personal situation but we have a great team here, we play in a great stadium, with great fans and we have an opportunity to win more," said the 37-year-old keeper.

"It is not that the team is going backwards."

"We have other trophies to play for, like the Super Cup and Intercontinental Cup. You don't get the chance to play in those competitions very often because you need to win the Champions League in order to qualify."

"In my opinion, being at Manchester United is a great way to play at the highest level and win trophies with a team that is very closely knitted together."

"Cristiano also has a contract

here. Sometimes things change but we have a good squad here without any question."

Van der Sar is facing a challenge to his place from up-and-coming English keeper Ben Foster who, after two seasons on loan with Watford, spent most of last term injured.

"Ben is a good goalkeeper, there is no question about that," said van der Sar. But the same can be said of himself and Tomasz Kuszczak.

"We are all working hard to reach the highest level we can but people tend to be focused on Ben because they relate it to the England situation."

"I don't really care who is behind me, I just want to keep the jersey. That means I have to perform and make sure I am fit and playing at the level everyone wants me to be at."

## VDV close to Real switch

Football

INTERNET, undated

Hamburg midfielder Rafael van der Vaart will complete his switch to Real Madrid next week after negotiations are concluded following the game between the two sides in London, according to Spanish daily Marca.

The Spanish giants are reported to have lodged a new bid of 10 million euros (£7.8 million) and expect that to be accepted, allowing talks to begin between the clubs and the player's representative.

With Cristiano Ronaldo's arrival from Manchester United looking increasingly unlikely, Madrid have turned their attentions to other players after Bernd Schuster pleaded with the club's hierarchy to add to his squad.

Van der Vaart has been on the club's wanted list for months, but with all the focus placed on signing just one player Los Merengues are now having to push on with Plan B.

The Netherlands international recently expressed an interest in joining the Spanish champions, paving the way for an approach.

"If I leave Hamburg it will only be for a big club like Real Madrid," said the 25-year-old.

Hamburg meet Real Madrid in the Emirates Cup at Arsenal's stadium on Saturday and then play Juventus on Sunday, giving Van der Vaart two chances to showcase his talent to Schuster.

Real president Ramon Calderon has backed down over his plans not to sign anyone should Ronaldo not be available and relented for the sake of the coach who asked for

new faces to freshen things up.

According to Marca, Hamburg have decided to sell and will use the money to find a replacement and,

after turning down just 6 million euros (£4.7 million) last week, are expected to accept the improved offer.



Bayern Munich midfielder Bastian Schweinsteiger carries a young fan on his shoulders during a football tournament with school children hosted by Adidas at the Saitama Stadium on Wednesday.

## Nike cancels Barton deal

AFP, Newcastle

Joey Barton, released from prison this week following his conviction for assault in May, has lost his 40,000 pound (62,000 dollar) a year boot sponsorship deal with Nike.

Newcastle and in particular manager Kevin Keegan have backed the player who has been told his place at St James's Park is safe for the season, but it was a different story with the sportswear giant.

A spokesman for Nike said: "We have provision in all our sponsorship contracts that take into account any actions by an athlete that bring the brand into disrepute. "While Joey is a talented footballer, we cannot condone or accept what he did."

"Back in May when he was found guilty, we immediately terminated his contract."

"We certainly have no plans to re-sign him now that he has been released."

Barton served 74 days of a six-month sentence after being jailed following an incident in Liverpool city centre last year.

The midfielder was also given a four-month prison sentence, suspended for two years, after admitting assault occasioning actual bodily harm on former Manchester City team-mate Ousmane Dabo during a training session in 2007.

Newcastle have said the 25-year-old will be given the chance to rebuild his football career at St James's Park.

A statement released on Tuesday read: "Newcastle United officials can confirm they have met with Joey Barton today, following which it has been agreed by everyone involved that Joey will remain with the club."

"The club will not be making any further comment at this time."

## Carlo admits to losing cool

INTERNET, undated

Milan may have lifted the Trofeo TIM, but Coach Carlo Ancelotti could be in trouble for making an obscene gesture to the Juventus fans.

The Rossoneri came out on top in the triangular tournament in Turin with penalty shoot-out wins over Juve and Inter.

But that didn't stop Carlo losing his cool and responding to inflammatory chants from certain sections of the crowd by raising his middle finger.

"Yes I did raise my little finger and it was my response to the ignorant people," Ancelotti admitted.

"With hindsight I think that I would do the same thing. There's no need to look for video evidence because I'm not scared to admit what I did."

"It's the first time that I have reacted like that and perhaps the last but I couldn't accept those insults."

"Luckily it was a little isolated group who would have been better off at home. They also had abuse for Jose Mourinho, Gianluca Zambrotta, Marco Materazzi and Dejan Stankovic."

However, Ancelotti did take pleasure in the way his side played and concluded with praise for goalkeeper Christian Abbiati, who proved to be the hero for the Diavolo.

"I was happy with our performances this evening, even if we gave away goals a little too easily," Carletto said.

"Abbiati had a great evening and I am happy for him. It will be a good battle for the No 1 shirt."

## Okaka-Chuka staying at Roma

INTERNET, undated

Roma boss Luciano Spalletti has derailed Stefano Chuka Okaka's loan switch to Bologna.

The Under-19 international seemed all set for the Stadio Renato Dall'Ara yesterday and expressed his satisfaction at the chance to shine.

But now his agent has revealed that the move is off for the time being while the Giallorossi consider Okaka's future.

"Stefano will stay at Roma for 15 or so days," representative Domenico Scopelliti told Laromassiamoni.it.

"There are several injuries in Spalletti's squad and so Okaka could be useful."

"The Coach will let him know about his future within a fortnight. He clearly was very happy when it was suggested that he could stay."

"However, the move to Bologna isn't out of the question. The boss will keep an eye on him and if there is a chance for regular football with the Lupi, Stefano will be very happy."

Bologna are nervously waiting for news as they are in dire need of a striking addition after their promotion from Serie B.

## Modric looks ahead

Football

AFP, Chigwell

Croatia midfielder Luka Modric said his new club Tottenham Hotspur could look forward to a "great future" despite the departure of Robbie Keane and the possible exit of Dimitar Berbatov.

"This club really has a great future. We have a lot of positive things here. We have great ambitions regardless of Robbie Keane leaving," Modric told reporters at the Spurs training ground.

"Even if Berbatov leaves, I'm sure we will find another great player to take his place," he added referring to the Bulgaria striker who is wanted by Manchester United.

Keane and Berbatov each scored 23 goals last season in all competitions and helped Spurs win the League Cup.

Modric, 22, signed for Tottenham for 16.5 million pounds (\$32.82 million) from Dynamo Zagreb before this year's European Championship finals and much is expected of the jewel of Croatia's international side.

Spurs have been active in the transfer market this summer with Ireland captain Keane leaving to join Liverpool for 19.0 million pounds on Monday, a few days after the departure of former England goalkeeper Paul Robinson

to Blackburn Rovers.

The arrivals also include Brazilian goalkeeper Heurelho Gomes from PSV Eindhoven and highly rated 19-year-old Mexican teenager Giovanni dos Santos from Barcelona and both believe Spurs can mount a realistic challenge for honours this season.

Gomes told reporters: "You cannot look back in football, and I prefer to think about the players who are here, rather than the ones who have gone. My ambition this season is to win."

When asked what he would like to win, he replied: "Everything. The championship".

Giovanni, who moved from Mexico to Barcelona when he was 13, said he had no regrets about leaving the Nou Camp.

"I was not forced out, but it was very difficult for me to play regularly there and Tottenham is the best option for me."

He said Barcelona's France striker Thierry Henry, the scourge of Tottenham in his Arsenal days, also advised him to move to the blue half of north London.

"I took his advice and he said it would be a great move for me. It's a great club and is going places."

"I am also delighted to be playing for a coach like Juande Ramos. He won a trophy in his first season here, and we must aim at winning another one next season too."

## Milan lift Trofeo Tim

Football

INTERNET, undated

After a sublime game with plenty of action, it took a penalty shootout to settle the Trofeo Tim in the final game of the tournament which saw Milan take on bitter rivals Inter.

It was the Rossoneri who lifted the trophy after they beat Jose Mourinho's side 4-3 on penalties.

The Rossoneri started the game brightly with Kaka going close early on following his super run on goal before Julio Cesar was forced to smother the danger.

Inter then responded with Luis Figo playing a brilliant one-two with Jimenez before Abbiati pushed the drive out for a corner

but the Nerazzurri failed to capitalise.

The game began to pick up pace midway through with both teams searching for a winner and it was new signing Sulley Muntari's turn to test the Milan defence.

The Ghanaian unleashed a superb drive from distance which saw Abbiati make an equally impressive save to prevent Inter from going a goal to the good.

Kaka once again went on one of his trademark runs which left Esteban Cambiasso for dead. However it was another brilliant save from Cesar which denied him.

Neither side were then able to take the lead and the game was decided via a penalty shoot-out.

Kaka stepped up first to send Toldo, who replaced Cesar, the wrong way before Adriano levelled

## Quaresma is just ordinary: Sacchi

INTERNET, undated

Veteran former Azzurri tactician Arrigo Sacchi has warned Inter not to make a move for Ricardo Quaresma.

Since a summer swoop for Chelsea midfielder Frank Lampard became impossible, the Italian champions have turned their attentions to Quaresma.

The Porto forward is reportedly close to completing a move to San Siro to work alongside compatriot Jose Mourinho.

"Quaresma is not a champion," Sacchi said in La Gazzetta dello Sport.

"When he has a good day he will cause problems for other players, but often he doesn't make the difference."

"When he was young he seemed like a champion, but now he is an ordinary player."

Sacchi concluded with criticism for Inter's summer transfer policy in general.

"Inter's transfers hardly seem to have generated enthusiasm," he sniped.

"Amantino Mancini and Sulley Muntari don't seem to excite people. The Nerazzurri are still favourites for the Scudetto but I don't think they have improved on last season."



Juventus defender Zdenek Grygera (R) tackles Milan star Kaka during their Tim Cup tie in Turin on Tuesday. The match ended in a 2-2 draw.

## Spurs ever closer to Bentley

THE INDEPENDENT



Tottenham are on the verge of signing David Bentley from Blackburn and

will confirm the transfer providing the England winger passes a medical today.

The 23-year-old could be unveiled before travelling to Holland this weekend to be part of Tottenham's pre-season preparations, after talks with Blackburn advanced in the last 48 hours.

Rovers chairman John Williams had rejected bids earlier in the summer from Spurs and Aston Villa, but an improved offer was lodged, closer to the £18m Bentley was valued at.

Arsenal, Bentley's former club, are expected to receive a percentage of the deal as part of the terms of his transfer to Ewood Park.

Tottenham head coach Juande Ramos will still be in the market for a striker to replace Robbie Keane following his move to Liverpool, while Dimitar Berbatov has also been tipped to leave.

Russia forward Roman Pavlyuchenko has been monitored and Spurs have been invited to bid for his international team-mate Andrei Arshavin.

Luka Modric, the £16.5m sum-

mer signing from Dinamo Zagreb, believes the club can still aim for the Champions League places without their main strikers of the last two seasons.

The midfielder said: "I agree that the team needs great players but I'm also certain that if Berbatov leaves that they will bring in other phenomenal players. This club needs great names and this club will have great names."

"The manager has not told me anything but that is what I suppose."

He added: "As regards the club, the ambition has to be getting in this group of four - Liverpool, Chelsea, Manchester United and Arsenal - and of course to get in the Champions League."

Giovanni dos Santos could provide Ramos an option as a second striker, although he was bought from Barcelona as a midfielder.

"Juande didn't promise me to play as the number 10 although it's the position I would like to play in," said the Mexican youngster.

"But I am comfortable in any position in midfield and in attack. As long as I am in the team I don't mind where I play."

Dos Santos, 19, endured a frustrating end to his spell at the Nou Camp but wants to help Tottenham earn silverware in back-to-back seasons after their Carling Cup win

in February.

He added: "What we want is what Tottenham deserves. To climb up places in the table and win a trophy - as Juande has already achieved here."

"We will fight in every competition giving our maximum and believing in our team."

## Fulham sign Stoor

AFP, London

Fulham signed Sweden defender Fredrik Stoor from Norwegian side Rosenborg on Wednesday, the English Premier League club announced.

The 24-year-old right back has joined the London side on a four-year deal and Fulham manager Roy Hodgson told the Cottagers' official website: "I am delighted that Fredrik has joined us officially today (Wednesday)."

"He is a player I have followed for some time through my contacts with the Swedish national team. I watched him closely with his club side and we did a lot of research on him."

"Of course I had the opportunity to see him at close hand in the three matches that Sweden played in Euro 2008 and we decided that this was the player for us at right back."