Football

AFP, Yokohama

Manchester United boss Alex Ferguson has backed FIFA's foreign players at clubs, saying it is crucial to help develop had local players. local talent.

homegrown players in a because it breaches the bloc's strict rules on free movement of workers.

plan was important in encouraging the development and protection of young talent.

"I think it should be a concern when local and national players are not given opportunities, so therefore eventually there have to be limitations on foreign players," he said after loyalty of the club," he said. meeting here with FIFA president Sepp Blatter.

"That way clubs' youth Neville and Paul Scholes for 19 systems are protected. Progress is progress and the future has to protect the game. national game.'

The United manager, in Japan for the Club World Cup, plan to limit the number of said fans in England could identify more with a side that

'Yes, there's no doubt proudofthat. FIFA's 6+5 proposals would about it. And even though we oblige teams to play at least six have players that are Welsh, Scottish and Irish, it is still the match, but it is opposed by the same culture and fans can European Commission identify with that," he told FIFA.com.

He added that what he tried loyalty.' to cultivate at Old Trafford was Ferguson though said the club loyalty, and that often came from bringing players through the youth system, pointing to veterans Ryan Giggs, Paul Scholes and Gary

> "We have been fortunate that the players we have understand the romance and

the club for 21 years, Gary tions fairer."

return years, and that demonstrates

"People look at the stats of those three players and will be amazed, but why? These players have supported the club with their loyalty but it's a two-way thing and we are

the part loyalty plays in the

"Wes Brown, Darren Fletcher and John O'Shea are also instrumental. We've brought young players in and they've stayed for the duration. As a club, we encourage

Blatter wants to introduce his system from 2010 with a minimum of four home players, going up to five in 2011 and the full six by 2012.

the 6+5 plan, mandated by the FIFA Congress this year, will "encourage the protection of minors, combat trafficking, help clubs consolidate their "Ryan Giggs has been with identity and make competi-

COPPA ITALIA

Vucinic fires Roma

during the meaningless tie at

the San Siro which was practi-

than the 1,600 travelling

as they fell 3-1 at Hamburg -

coached by former Spurs

German supporters.

Group E

AC Milan

Group F

Hamburg

Aston Villa

Group G

Valencia

Club Brugge

Rosenborg

CSKAMoscow

Lech Poznan

Feyenoord

Friday's draw.

Deportivo La Coruna

Group H

Nancy

Slavia Prague

Saint-Etienne

FC Copenhagen

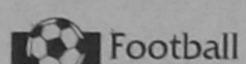
VfL Wolfsburg

Sporting Braga

SC Heerenveen

Portsmouth

cally empty with few fans other from Group F.



AFP, Rome

AFP, Paris

Montenegro striker Mirko Vucinic scored a late brace as holders AS Roma qualified for the Italian Cup quarterfinals with a 2-0 victory at home to Bologna.

Vucinic only came on as a substitute on 71 minutes but scored goals seven and four minutes from time to ensure the team that has held this trophy for the last two years will remain in the competition into the New Year.

Vucinic sprung into life nine minutes from time as he headed a cross from Brazilian Cincinho onto the bar and a minute later he was denied from six yards out by Bologna goalkeeper Roberto Colombo after a clever pass from French winger Jeremy Menez.

But one minute after that Vucinic ran onto another Menez pass and slotted the ball home

qualified by

the UEFA

Cup group

stages as the

2 0 0 4

Champions

semifinalists struck a late

winner through Rodolfo

Bodipo for a 1-0 victory at

Cesar Santin for a second-half

winner in their 1-0 win at FC

Bruges to also get their ticket

through while Lech Poznan got

the third and final berth of the

night following a win by the

same scoreline at Feyenoord

February's two-leg Round of 32

are on offer in Thursday's

fixtures before Friday's draw

which comprises the eight

third-placed teams in the

Champions League groups and

of an equaliser in a 2-2 draw at

home to VfL Wolfsburg meant

the Germans held on to top

spot in Group E, meaning they

play a third-placed team in the

AC Milan fans staged a

Round of 32.

AC Milan's late conceding

the 24 UEFA Cup qualifiers.

Another six places in

with Ivan Djurdjevic on target.

FC Copenhagen thanked

home to Nancy.

League

with his left foot.

Only three minutes later Bologna's hopes were dashed once and for all as Vucinic robbed Marcello Castellini on the halfway line and ran unopposed to the box before slipping home his second.

In the first period Vincenzo Montella came closest for the hosts as he curled a left foot shot just past the post as he made a rare start for Roma.

Menez also failed to get any power behind his shot to trouble Colombo after a mazy run. Up the other end Roma keeper Artur had to

make smart saves to deny Massimo Marazzina and former Inter Milan midfielder Cesar. In the second half Colombo saved well from

Julio Baptista but the introduction of Vucinic changed the game. In the other match of the day former

Manchester City forward Rolando Bianchi scored the only goal of the game as Torino earned a shock 1-0 win at Fiorentina.

handler Martin Jol - meaning

they only qualified in third spot

hard - no-one likes to lose,"

itywe've got at this club.

"(We take this result) very

"We're very disappointed,

Depothru' to next round

Aston Villa skipper Nigel Reo-Coker told Channel Five

Reo-Coker was far from happy television. "It's not the mental-

UEFA Cup standings after Wednesday's final round of Groups' E to H

matches (played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, goals against, points):

SPORT

AFP, Zagreb

Arsenal's Brazil-born forward Eduardo Da Silva said he is itching to return to international football, with his adopted country of Croatia, in a friendly against Romania in February 2009.

Eduardo recently returned to action with a Gunners reserve side following a 10-month injury layoff, and now he can't wait to get back among the squad he "missed most" while recovering from a career-threatening injury.

"I can't wait to play my first match in a Croatia shirt. I He has previously said that | think it could be in February when we play Romania, Eduardo is quoted as saying in Croatian sports paper Sportske Novosti Thursday.

> After the February 11 fixture, Eduardo will set his sights on the qualifiers for the 2010 World Cup in South Africa, which resume two months later with Croatia facing Andorra on April 1.

Eduardo added: "During my 10 months on the sidelines it was playing for Croatia I missed most."

Eduardo is considered Croatia's most prized goalscoring asset, however his football career almost ended in February 2008 when a tackle from Birmingham City's Martin Taylor left him with a compound fracture on his left fibula and a dislocated ankle.

The 25-year-old Brazilian, who began playing with Dinamo Zagreb's youth setup in 1999, took Croatian nationality in 2002.

After four matches Croatia sit second in World Cup qualifying Group Six on seven points, five points behind leaders England.

we're here to win games,

regardless of which team is out

there. We've set standards and

expect to maintain them. We let

ourselves down by conceding

not field his strongest line-up

contributing to the defeat with

two goals from Ivica Olic and

another from Mladen Petric,

though Nathan Delfouneso

Steve Sidwell was sent off for a

second bookable offence in the

scored twice in their 3-0 victory

at home to Dutchmen

Heerenveen though Pompey

had already been eliminated

Michael Laudrup is hoping for

another upset at White Hart

Lane on Thursday after wit-

nessing Jol's exit during his last

with Getafe last season and

beat Spurs on a bizarre night

when Jol's dismissal circulated

around the ground during the

match while the Dutchman

Laudrup needs to beat Harry

Redknapp's men to have any

chance of progressing in the

UEFA Cup, with the result of

Udinese's 'clash with NEC

Now with Spartak in Russia,

was still in the dug-out.

Denmark's Laudrup was

Spartak Moscow coach

from the competition.

visit to Tottenham.

Making things worse, Villa's

Portsmouth's Peter Crouch

pulled one back late on.

84th minute.

Manager Martin O'Neill did

very poor goals."



Manchester United star Cristiano Ronaldo (R) heads in the second goal against Japan's Gamba Osaka during their Club World Cup semifinal in Yokohama on Thursday.

UEFA CUP RESULTS

AFP, Paris

Collated results in the UEFA Cup final round of group matches on Wednesday:

GroupE

AC Milan (ITA) 2 (Ambrosini 17 Pato 56) VfL Wolfsburg (GER) 2 (Zaccardo 56, Saglik 81) Portsmouth (ENG) 3 (Crouch 40, 42, Hreidarsson 90) Heerenveen

(NED) 0

Group F Hamburg SV (GER) 3 (Petric 18, Olic 30, 57) Aston Villa (ENG) 1 (Delfouneso 83)

Ajax (NED) 2 (Vertonghen 4, Luis Suarez 90+1-pen) Slavia Prague (CZE) 2 (Cerny 13, Jarolim 41) Group G

FC Bruges (BEL) 0 FC Copenhagen (DEN) 1 (Santin 58) St Etienne (FRA) 2 (Ilan 29, 44) Valencia (ESP) 2 (Morientes 33, Zigic 72)

Group H

Feyenoord (NED) 0 Lech Poznan (POL) 1 (Djurdjevic 26) Deportivo La Coruna (ESP) 1 (Bodipo 74) Nancy (FRA) 0

Real recall Parejo

AFP, London

Injury-hit Spanish giants Real Madrid on Wednesday recalled Spanish Under-21 midfielder Daniel Parejo from his loan spell at English Championship side Queens Park Rangers.

The 19-year-old - who is a goalscoring midfielder having scored 11 goals in 37 appearances for the Real Madrid reserves - has only completed five months of his year long loan but part of the deal was that Real could recall him at any time.

Parejo, who came through the Real Madrid youth system, played 18 games for QPR during an impressive spell there.

"We have a very good working relationship with (president Ramon) Calderon and (sporting director Predrag) Mijatovic at Real Madrid and we are very grateful to them for allowing us to take Daniel on loan in the first place," Rangers manager Paulo Sousa told the club's website.

"He is a player of great potential and I am sure that with a good professional attitude, he has the talent to achieve at the very highest level.

"I will continue to follow his progress at Madrid, and of course, we wish him all the best for his future career."

Real have struggled in the league as their injury toll has mounted losing players such as Ruud van Nistelrooy out for the season while others like Dutch compatriot Wesley Sneijder and Portuguese international Pepe have also been out injured.

Real are presently sixth in the league, 12 points off bitter rivals and leaders Barcelona.

CLUB WORLD CUP

MU overwhelm Gamba

Football

AFP, Yokohama

Manchester United overpowered Japan's Gamba Osaka 5-3 to book their place in the Club World Cup final on Thursday, with six goals in a breathless 17 minutes.

First-half headers from Nemanja Vidic and Cristiano Ronaldo, both from Ryan Giggs set the game on fire.

Gamba pulled one back through Masato Yamazaki in the 74th minute before Wayne Rooney pounced a minute

Darren Fletcher made it 4-1 on 78 minutes before Rooney bagged another seconds after the restart.

Adding to the drama, Gamba won a penalty when Gary Neville handled the ball and Yasuhito Endo converted the spot kick with five minutes left. Hideo Hashimoto then made it 5-3 in injury time.

United now have to overcome Ecuador's Liga de Quito on Sunday to claim one of the few pieces of silverware to

elude the club in its distinpaced ball over the defence guished history.

biggest games in their history and they could easily have but Edwin Van der Sar was off been overawed, but the J-League side started confidently with Tomokazu Myojin having

the first chance of the night. Michihiro Yasuda also went close early on, seeing his left foot strike sail over the bar on a chilly evening.

For Gamba, it was one of the

United started without on the bench after picking up a knock in training, giving a rare start for Carlos Tevez.

And it didn't take long for United to warm up with Ronaldo, again at the centre of reports that he is headed for Real Madrid at the end of the season, unleashing a left foot drive that Yosuke Fujigaya did well to gather.

With 68,000 fans packed into the Yokohama International Stadium, the atmosphere was electric with as many cheering for United as the local hopes.

It was fast and furious and United had a let off in the 13th minute when danger man

Endo floated a beautifully

which Ryuji Bando controlled brilliantly. He let rip with his left foot

his line in a flash to save a certain goal with his legs. At the other end, Ronaldo,

in lime green boots, collected the ball on the right, twisted and turned his way past two defenders only to blast his shot just past the left-hand post.

The Portuguese star was on corners, set them on their way Dimitar Berbatov who was sick form, roaming from left to but it was the second-half that with a virus while Rooney was right, and he broke into the box in the 27th minute only to see his powerful drive rebound off Gamba captain Satoshi Yamaguchi.

They got the breakthrough from the resulting corner, with Vidic rising above Yamaguchi to head home Giggs' cross.

The goal dented Gamba's confidence and they struggled to get back in the game, with a hammer blow coming right on half time when Ronaldo climbed to meet a Giggs corner and make it 2-0.

United were enjoying themselves and the chances came thick and fast in the second half, before the astonishing 17-minute rollercoaster turned the game into a classic.

Not Bayern, says Salgado

SOCCERNET



Germany's Bayern Munich have been singled out by Real Madrid defender Michel Salgado as the side he most hopes to avoid in Friday's draw for the last 16 of the Champions League.

Madrid have been dumped out of the competition at the first knockout stage in each of the last four years, a run which included elimination at the hands of Bayern in that round on the away goals rule in 2007 following a 4-4 aggregate tie.

The Spanish champions, who finished second in Group H in the competition's first round, could also come up against the likes of holders Manchester United, 2005 winners Liverpool and Roma in the draw, but it is Bayern who Salgado fears most. "The team I don't want is Bayern Munich," said Salgado, who

has won two Champions League titles with Madrid since joining the Bernebeu club in 1999. "They are the worst team you can get in a two-legged tie. I've

played against them five times and when you face them in a knockout tie they are very difficult. You can never assume you have eliminated them until it's over," added the 33-year-old fullback to Spanish radio station Onda Cero.

The 16 teams in the draw, which will take place at UEFA headquarters in Nyon, Switzerland, will not be able to play a club from their own country or a team they faced in their first round group. The other stipulation states that groups winners can only

play a group runner-up and the runners-up must play the first-This means that United, currently contesting the FIFA Club World Cup in Japan, could face Inter Milan, Sporting Lisbon,

Atletico Madrid, Real Madrid or Lyon in the knockout round. First round group winners: Roma (A), Panathinaikos (B), Barcelona (C), Liverpool (D) Manchester United (E), Bayern Munich (F), Porto (G) and

Juventus (H). First round group runners-up: Chelsea (A), Inter Milan (B), Sporting Lisbon (C), Atletico Madrid

(D), Villarreal (E), Lyon (F), Arsenal (G) and Real Madrid (H).

UCL remains lucrative

AFP, London

The winners of this season's Champions League can expect to make 110.35 million euros according to a new study. Research commissioned

by MasterCard, the official sponsor of European club football's leading tournament, said getting to the knockout stages alone would earn teams an average of 38.45 million euros each despite worldwide financial problems caused by the global credit crunch.

"In uncertain economic times, sport's universal appeal remains strong, making it one of the most lucrative industries to be involved in," said Professor Simon Chadwick of Coventry University, central England, who conducted the research.

"The competition continues to be an important source of revenue and commercial activity for clubs, especially for those that qualify for the knockout phase of the competition.

"Moreover, revenues earned from UEFA Champions League football will be especially important to clubs at the moment, given difficult operating conditions across the world."



Note: five group stage matchdays to be played October 19 to December 18

First three in each group qualified for last 32 stage, where they will be joined

by eight teams who finished third in Champions League group stages for