

## 'Schwarzer needs rest'

AFP, Sydney

Fulham manager Roy Hodgson has warned Australian fans not to expect national team goalkeeper Mark Schwarzer to play a full game in Wednesday's pre-season friendly with Gold Coast United.

Hodgson said Schwarzer was not expected to appear at all for the English Premier League club after playing in a World Cup qualifier for his country against Japan in Melbourne on June 17.

But Hodgson said Schwarzer insisted on playing despite the fact that this would break into his time off ahead of next month's EPL season kickoff.

"The problem for Mark is, and I hope people in Australia realise this, is that under normal circumstances he would not have taken part," Hodgson told reporters on Monday.

"If we'd gone away on a tour to anywhere else but Australia we would not have used Mark Schwarzer."

"He played his last game on June 17 and he's entitled to a month's rest."

"But I spoke to Mark before we agreed to this tour and he agreed to give up holiday really in order to play and be a part of it."

"We want to make certain he's fit for another good season and I presume you people would like to see him fit and healthy in 2010 when you're off to South Africa (World Cup)."

Hodgson has great admiration for Schwarzer, 36, who played in every minute of Fulham's Premier League campaign where their seventh-placed finish was the highest in their 130-year history as they qualified for the inaugural Europa League.

"He's a man who wants to give a lot back to the game," Hodgson said.

"He's not a taker, he's a giver, and I think the fact that he's prepared to play in these games shows how much he's prepared to give."

Hodgson said he was not anticipating an easy match against the Australian A-League newcomers on Wednesday.

"We expect a very tough game and I'm going to have to use quite a lot of players I think in order to get through it," he said.

"I don't think we'll have so many players after two or three training sessions capable of playing 90 minutes at the level we'll have to play at."

## Ribery denies wanting to quit Bayern

SOCCERNET

Franck Ribery has denied he wants to leave Bayern Munich for Real Madrid and insists he doesn't want a "controversy" with his club.

The midfielder was quoted last week as saying he'd made up his mind to leave Bayern with Real Madrid but he told Munich's Tz newspaper on Monday: "I have never said that I wanted to go."

"They were not my words, what I said was misinterpreted. I don't understand the whole discussion. I don't want a controversy with Bayern Munich. I would gladly clarify the situation."

"We have to wait and see if there is an offer coming and then sit down and talk. I do not want to say anything wrong right now."

Ribery was reported as telling a French newspaper last week: "I have decided that I want to leave. It will be Real Madrid or nothing. I will wait to see how things pan out but I would like to hold talks with the Bayern management soon."

Ribery also denied suggestions today he missed training sessions over the weekend so as not to jeopardise a move by picking up an injury.

"That is a lie," he said. "I have a heel problem and also a blister. I want to get back training as soon as possible."



Chelsea's new manager Carlo Ancelotti holds up a team shirt during his first media conference at the Chelsea football club ground in London on Monday.

## Carlo promises success

Football

AFP, London

New coach Carlo Ancelotti wants to deliver success early in his reign at Chelsea to ensure he is not left facing questions over his future by the end of the first season.

Chelsea owner Roman Abramovich has spent the past year hoping he would one day have the highly-respected Italian at the Stamford Bridge helm, but now that he has arrived Ancelotti realises there is little room for sentiment as he plots a route to help the London outfit take a hold on English and European football.

He is the fifth manager in two years at Chelsea, since Jose Mourinho left the club in 2007, yet Ancelotti is looking forward to his first job outside of his homeland of Italy.

"I don't want to do comparisons to other coaches," he said. "I have respect for them all and I want to do this my way. Only my way. Chelsea have been in five of the past six Champions League semifinals and are a great team. I don't know how long I will be here, hopefully a long time. I came from a team where I remained for eight years and I want to be here as long as possible."

"I will put all of my energy into it and I think I will have to win something quickly. Chelsea have the right qualities for me to do so. Chelsea have arrived close in recent seasons and we have to make a little step to win."

Previously Ancelotti has managed Reggiana,

Parma, Juventus and Milan, and must now quickly adapt to English football.

"Regaining the Premier League title, which Chelsea have not won since 2006, is high on his agenda, but Ancelotti also has expectations in the Champions League, which his new side have never won."

"If the team has good teamwork then we can win," he explained. "There are great teams in England and it is difficult to win the championship but Chelsea can win the league and the Champions League."

"I would like to win the Champions League. It is a great competition and Chelsea have come very close. In 2008, I remember that. The Champions League is very difficult to win because of many factors but Chelsea have more possibilities than other teams."

During his first press conference at Stamford Bridge Ancelotti managed to get across his personality. He made several jokes and seems to be coming to terms with the language, although he has already admitted he is finding it difficult to grasp.

He admitted his players can expect their new boss to show his humorous side occasionally in training, but nothing will stand in the way of his task of claiming silverware.

"I'm happy and excited to start because I love my work," Ancelotti said. "I like to joke and show that I enjoy my job and I have spoken to Gianluca Vialli who spoke very well for this club. Roman wants to have a great team here and I think at the start of the season we will have a competitive side."

## Hero's welcome awaits C'Ron

AFP, Madrid

Cristiano Ronaldo was undergoing a medical test on Monday at Real Madrid before being introduced later in the day as the club's latest signing before thousands of fans, completing a deal that makes him the most expensive player in the world.

The 2008 FIFA world player of the year is expected to get a hero's welcome when he dons Real's jersey for the first time at a ceremony at Santiago Bernabeu Stadium which is scheduled to get underway at 9 pm (1900 GMT).

Real acquired the 24-year-old Portuguese striker from Manchester United last month on a six-year deal worth 94 million euros (131 million dollars) and Spanish media reports that he will be paid 13 million euros each season.

He will team up with Kaka, the 2007 world player of the year, who signed with Real from AC Milan for 65 million euros from AC Milan in early June.

Kaka was officially unveiled on June 30 at the Bernabeu stadium before 55,000 fans, according to club figures, and Real expects an even higher turnout for Ronaldo's unveiling.

In a statement posted on its website, Real said Ronaldo's unveiling "could very well make history".

The current record turnout for an unveiling of a player goes to Argentina's Diego Maradona who drew 75,000 people when he was presented at Naples in July 1984 after joining the Italian side from FC Barcelona.

Kaka was the first big name who construction magnate Florentino Perez signed since he returned in June for a second stint as president of Real.

Perez, who brought Luis Figo and Zinedine Zidane to Real during his first term as the club's president between 2000 and 2006, is seeking to rebuild a squad which trailed arch rival FC Barcelona last season by reviving his policy of signing football superstars.

## MU to sign Bordeaux starlet

SOCCERNET

Manchester United are leading the race to sign Gironde Bordeaux starlet Gabriel Obertan, according to the French Ligue 1 club.

The 20-year-old midfielder is regarded as one of France's brightest prospects and has been linked with a host of top clubs, including Inter Milan, AC Milan, Chelsea and Arsenal.

But Bordeaux president Jean-Louis Triaud claims that the Red Devils are closest to signing the France U21 international.

"There is a very strong likelihood that the deal will go ahead," Triaud told L'Equipe. "Manchester United want to sign him and, for our part, we would be delighted to see Gabriel playing for such a prestigious club."

"We will make the official announcement when the time is right."

The winger was loaned out to Lorient by Bordeaux boss Laurent Blanc for part of last season but has featured in les Girondins' first team since he was 17.

He was awarded the Most Valuable Player award at last month's Toulon International Youth Tournament.

## Blues want Terry for life

Football

AFP, London

Chelsea want inspirational captain John Terry to stay at the club "forever" according to new Blues manager Carlo Ancelotti.

England skipper Terry has been linked with a mega-money move to Chelsea's cash-rich Premier League rivals Manchester City.

But while City aspire to be one of England's leading clubs, Chelsea already are and Ancelotti, the former AC Milan boss, said he wanted centre-half Terry - who has spent all his senior career with the Blues - to stay in west London.

"John Terry is a symbol of this team," Ancelotti said at his first news conference as Chelsea manager here Monday.

"He will be captain next season: he said he wants to stay forever and we want to keep him forever," the Italian added.

"Now there is a question of Man City, but for Terry (there is) no price."

"Terry will be at Chelsea forever."

"He said he wants to stay, there is no problem for him for us, the story continues - Chelsea and Terry."

"I like to have a captain like Terry, he is very close to (Paolo) Maldini for professionalism, for quality and he will be the best

captain for Chelsea."

"I spoke with Terry a month ago when I came to the club and he said welcome. And after he went on holiday."

"I will speak with him because he is the captain and I want a good relationship with the captain."

But asked if Chelsea, who have reportedly turned down an initial bid from City, would offer Terry a new, improved contract, Ancelotti added: "It's not my problem."

Ancelotti was less emphatic about whether Deco and Ricardo Carvalho would stay at Stamford Bridge after they were both linked with moves to Inter Milan.

"Carvalho and Deco are Chelsea players," he said.

"If in the future a player wants to go they have to speak with the club and we take the right decision for the player and for us."

Meanwhile Ancelotti said the English giants had signed Russian international winger Yuri Zhirkov from CSKA Moscow.

He confirmed the arrival of Zhirkov and former Manchester City forward Daniel Sturridge at Stamford Bridge by saying: "Zhirkov, Sturridge - these are Chelsea players."

Asked where he saw Zhirkov fitting into the team, Ancelotti said: "Zhirkov is naturally on the left."

"I think he can do all the work and can play in defence and in between."

## Inter's no to duo

Football

AFP, Rome

Inter Milan president Massimo Moratti told Monday's Corriere dello Sport that the Italian champions have no need to sign Chelsea's Portuguese pair Deco and Ricardo Carvalho.

The two played under Inter coach Jose Mourinho at Porto and were part of the team that won the Champions League in 2004.

After that, Mourinho moved to Chelsea and took centre-back Carvalho, along with right-back Paulo Ferreira, with him while Deco headed to Barcelona.

The Brazilian-born attacking midfielder then joined the Londoners a year ago but failed to make any impact at Stamford Bridge.

Inter and Chelsea were rumoured to be haggling over the price for the pair but now Moratti has decided he doesn't need them.

"First of all we have to look at and trim our squad and then I still think we're pretty com-

petitive, don't you," he said.

"There's no doubt that they are two great players but right now we've stopped on that front because looking at the squad I don't think there's any need to buy."

However, with Mourinho determined to launch an assault on Europe this season, reinforcements could still arrive, while bit part players such as Patrick Vieira, Mancini, Ricardo Quaresma, Nelson Rivas and Victor Obinna are likely to leave.

And Moratti himself admitted that Europe was the final frontier as far as his club is concerned having failed miserably in the Champions League in recent years.

"The Champions League is a dream, a huge objective, but to win it you also need luck. It's not for nothing that it's not easy to win," he added.

He also sprung a surprise by naming Juventus rather than city rivals AC Milan as their toughest domestic challengers next season.

"Juventus are in good shape and are dangerous. (New signing) Diego is very good."

## Mexes staying at Roma

AFP, Rome

France centre-back Philippe Mexes on Monday pledged his future to AS Roma.

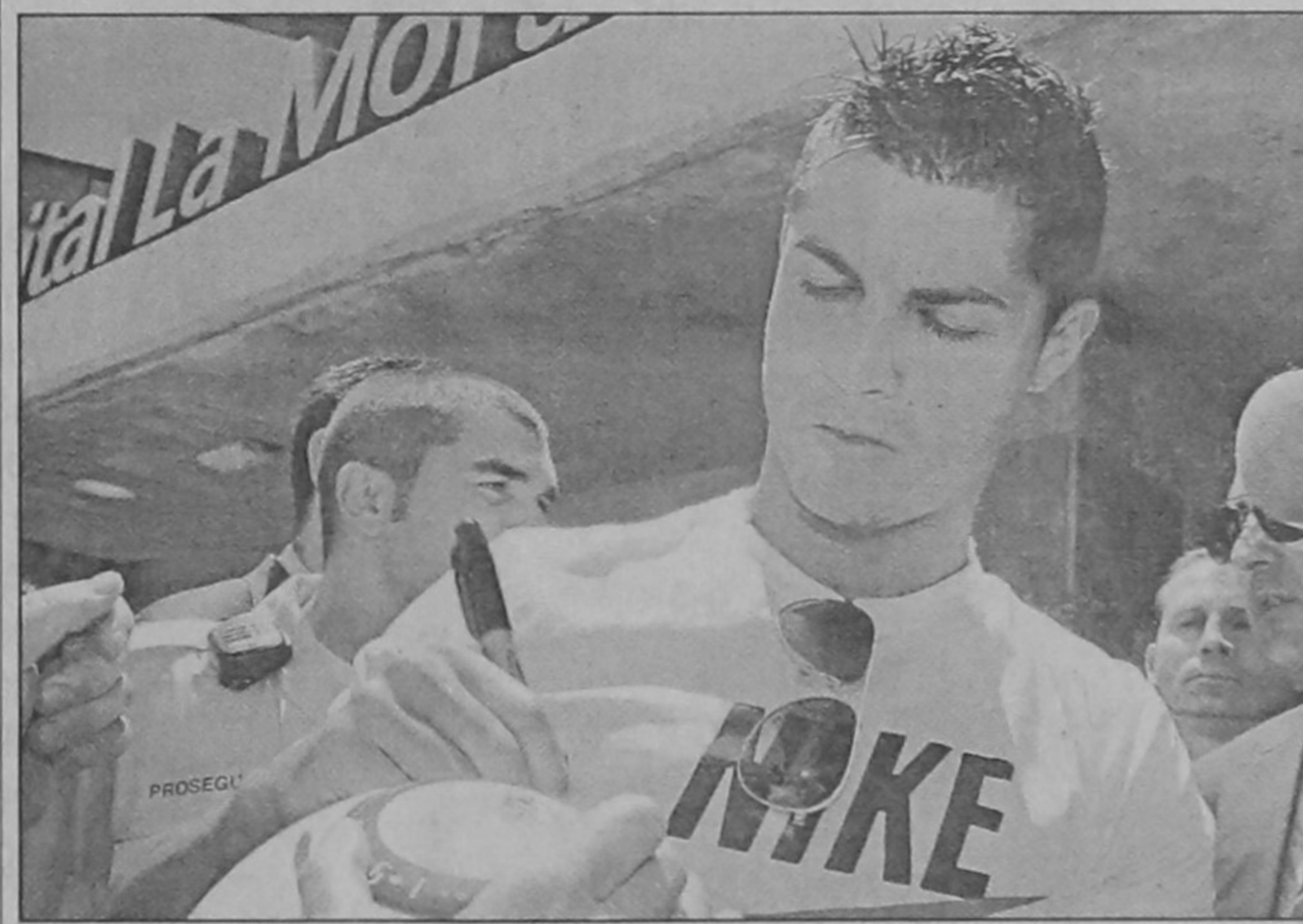
The former Auxerre star had been the subject of speculation linking him with a move to AC Milan last season but now he says he cannot quit Roma following last season's disappointing fourth placed finish that saw them miss out on the Champions League.

"I feel good here, just as someone would who is in a team that has won 10 titles and 10 cups," he said from Roma's training base in Bolzano.

"It's not usual to have a dressing room like ours and I feel great here. On top of that, after a disappointing season like the one we had last year, I couldn't leave because I want redemption."

Mexes joined Roma in 2004 and has won two Italian Cups with the capital-based team, having already won a French Cup with Auxerre in 2003.

He has played 13 times for France and was part of the squad that won the Confederations Cup in 2003.



Real Madrid's new player Portuguese star Cristiano Ronaldo signs an autograph upon his arrival at La Moraleja Hospital in Madrid on Monday.

## 'Milan still the best'

Football

AFP, Rome

AC Milan president and Italy Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi told Monday's Gazzetta dello Sport that his club are still the best in the country despite selling Brazilian superstar Kaka to Real Madrid.

Milan have not won the Serie A title since 2004 and last season finished 10 points behind champions and arch city rivals Inter Milan, although that was a marked improvement on their previous two campaigns where they finished 21 and 36 points behind.

Now they have sold their best player to Real and lost experienced coach Carlo Ancelotti to Chelsea, from where the Italian has been launching a raid on his former club, trying to lure midfielder playmaker Andrea Pirlo and teenage Brazilian forward Pato.

Inter meanwhile have won four titles on the trot and have added South Americans Diego Milito and Thiago Motta to their roster while so far fending off interest in their talisman Zlatan Ibrahimovic.

And having resumed training on Monday with no marquee signing to lift the spirits, doom has set in amongst Milan fans.

But Berlusconi still thinks his team are top of the tree.

"We have decided to look forward, aiming at renewing our resources. But our squad is still formidable and we expect a good season," he told the newspaper.

"The fans are calm, this will not be a team that lies down."

"We have great players such as Pato, Ronaldinho and Pirlo and many promising youngsters."

"No-one in Italy, from a technical point of view, has a better squad than us, not even Inter. Not only have Milan lost Kaka and Ancelotti

but defensive lynchpin and Milan legend Paolo Maldini has retired and former England captain David Beckham has returned to Los Angeles following his loan spell from the LA Galaxy.

Alessandro Nesta is expected to be fit again after missing the whole of last season but he is injury prone and now 33.

Gennaro Gattuso will also be back in the side having missed the second half of last season with a cruciate knee ligament injury.

Milan's only significant addition has been Brazilian centre-back Thiago Silva, who joined in January but was ineligible to play so has been largely inactive for six months.

Goalkeeper Christian Abbiati will miss the start of the season and Milan's already aging squad will be another year older this time around.

The club have also been frustrated in their attempts to bring in new players, particularly forwards with prime target VfL Wolfsburg's Edin Dzeko signing a new contract with the German champions.

It has left Milan looking towards Real's Klaas Jan Huntelaar, a player no longer wanted by the Spaniards, and Seville's Brazilian forward Luis Fabiano.

But both deals are rumoured to be stalling because Milan won't stump up enough cash, when English clubs pocketing will.

And that despite pocketing 67 million euros for the sale of Kaka.

Fans are growing increasingly disillusioned with the Italian giants being priced out of the market but Berlusconi remains defiant.

"The problem is not the players. If a door opens in the market someone might arrive but otherwise we're fine as we are. We don't have to buy at all costs," he said.

"True Milan fans have good sense and know that they have to stay loyal because we have given them some fabulous seasons."

"I doubt any Milan fans will suddenly start supporting Inter."

## Egypt revive hopes

AFP, Johannesburg



Egypt revived hopes of appearing at the World Cup for the first time in 20 years with a 3-0 triumph over Rwanda in Cairo Sunday.

It was a must-win game for the 'Pharaohs' and midfielders Mohamed Aboutrika (twice) and Hosny Abd Rabou scored in the second half for a team that troubled Brazil and beat world champions Italy last month at the Confederations Cup.

Victory lifted reigning African champions Egypt from last place on the Group C table to second, level on four points with Zambia and three adrift of Algeria at the halfway stage of the final qualifying phase.

Rwanda have only one point in the race to finish first and qualify for the 2010 World Cup in South Africa, the first time the world football showpiece will be staged in Africa.

The matches double as eliminators for the 2010 African Nations Cup in Angola with the top three teams on the final standings securing places at a championship staged every two years.

Although Egypt have lifted the Nations Cup trophy a record six times, the 'Pharaohs' have managed just two World Cup appearances and the last was at the 1990 finals in Italy where they went out after the first round.

A home draw with Zambia and away loss to

Algeria placed unexpected pressure on an Egyptian team lacking skipper Ahmed Hassan, fellow midfielder Ahmed Fathi and striker Amr Zaki through injury and suspension.

Hassan rallied his team-mates ahead of the crucial game by insisting all was not lost in the chase to overtake resurgent Algeria and they were quickly into their stride without being able to sting the 'Wasps' defence.

Defender Wael Gomaa, Abd Rabou and Germany-based striker Mohamed Zidan squandered chances to break the deadlock before the central Africans settled, using the offside trap effectively.

Rwanda, whose only previous clash with Egypt ended in a 5-1 loss five years ago, created a clear-cut chance only for a Harouna Niyonzima chip to finish just off target with veteran goalkeeper Essam al-Hadary beaten.

Unmarked Zidan allowed another chance to slip before Rwandan goalkeeper Jean-Claude Ndori is finally beaten 20 minutes into the second half when Aboutrika headed an Abd Rabou cross into the net.

Abd Rabou got the second by sending Ndori the wrong way from a 76th-minute penalty awarded for a foul on substitute striker Ahmed Raouf and Aboutrika tapped home the third three minutes into stoppage time.

Egypt visit Rwanda and Zambia in September and October before completing their mini-league schedule at home to twice World Cup qualifiers Algeria during November.



Egypt midfielder Mohammed Aboutrika (C) celebrates one of his two goals with teammates during their World Cup qualifier against Rwanda in Cairo on Sunday.