

'I'm no miracle man'

AFP, Lisbon

Portugal captain Cristiano Ronaldo warned on Friday that he was not a miracle worker and that it would take more than two or three good players to make his team one of the favourites for the World Cup.

"It's not enough to have just two or three players," he said. "For a team to win the World Cup you must not necessarily have 11 (good players) but seven or eight of a very good standard."

"That's how you win the World Cup," added Ronaldo after touching down by helicopter to join his team-mates at a training camp in the central Portuguese city of Covilha ahead of the June 11-July 11 World Cup finals in South Africa.

"I do not play alone and I do not perform miracles," warned the Real Madrid forward. "If I and the team perform well, I think we can go as far as is possible. The squad has a great team spirit."

Ronaldo added: "No, (Portugal) are not among the favourites. Other teams also want to win. Portugal has never won such a big tournament as this."

However, the former Manchester United star claimed that the current Portugal squad was "better" than the one that finished fourth at the 2006 World Cup in Germany.

"We might not have as much experience but individually we can be better," he said. "But the most important thing is the group's togetherness that the team works well. "I will try to do my best, as I

always do, be it for my club or country. I will be motivated." Portugal are up against Brazil, Ivory Coast and North Korea in Group G, kicking off against the west Africans on June 15 in Port Elizabeth.



Portugal star Cristiano Ronaldo eyes the ball during their morning training session at the Covilha Sports Complex on Saturday. PHOTO: AFP

Gallas back in training

AFP, Tignes

France received a timely pre-World Cup boost when centre-back William Gallas played a full part in training as he seeks to prove his fitness in time for the June 11-July 11 tournament.

The Arsenal defender, who has been sidelined by a calf injury since March 31, looked comfortable as he took part in all the ball exercises carried out by the team.

Defensive midfielder assana Diarra missed the training session with an intestinal problem exacerbated by the high altitude.

Nineteen players took part in training on Friday, with the three goalkeepers training separately and Chelsea's Florent Malouda back in London until Sunday in anticipation of the birth of his fourth child.

Centre-back Sebastien Squillaci returned to the team hotel after the warm-up to rest as he played for Sevilla in the Spanish King's Cup final on Wednesday.

West Ham after Henry

AFP, London

West Ham have launched an audacious bid to lure USA-bound Barcelona striker Thierry Henry to the club as they aim to rebound from an almost catastrophic season in the Premier League.

Barcelona announced earlier this week that France international Henry was set to leave the Spanish giants after talks were held between the club and Major League Soccer side New York Red Bulls.

But according to The Sun, debt-hit West Ham would dig deep to make Henry, who spent several years with Arsenal, the highest-paid player in their history.

Joint chairman David Sullivan said a two-year deal worth around 75,000 pounds a week, more than 7.5 million in total, was on the table.

Sullivan told The Sun: "We're trying to assemble a more prolific strike force at West Ham and I'd love to have Henry here."

"Our club is in debt but a striker of his quality and standing would make it a great deal. "Henry is still up there with the best."

"I've made an offer which would make him the highest-paid player in the club's history."

"And it's a serious offer because Henry could walk into almost any Premier League side."

West Ham finished fourth from bottom of the Premier League last season, five points above the relegation zone.

The club subsequently sacked their Italian manager, Gianfranco Zola, who according to recent reports is set to be replaced by Portsmouth manager Avram Grant.

Brazil get Kaka boost

AFP, Curitiba

Brazil midfield mastermind Kaka and striker Luis Fabiano should be fit for the World Cup which gets underway in three weeks' time.

Brazilian team medical chief Jose Luiz Runco said that the players' injuries are "improving well and in the time predicted".

"In Kaka's case, there is nothing which is worrying us." Real Madrid star Kaka has been carrying a left thigh injury for two months, a problem which has dogged his progress in Spain after arriving from AC Milan last summer for 65 million euros.

Fabiano has been suffering from a left leg injury and was out of action on a regular basis last season, playing just 23 league games for Sevilla.

Despite his poor appearance record, the 29-year-old Fabiano still scored 15 goals.

"They will train with the rest of the squad

next week... their injuries are progressing favourably," added Runco.

Meanwhile, Brazil's World Cup squad began training on Friday amid a crush of excited supporters and reporters.

Seventeen of the players converged on a training centre in the southern Brazilian city of Curitiba, out of sight of camera lenses.

The other six from the 23-strong squad were absent for various reasons.

Those not present included goalkeeper Julio Cesar, right-back Maicon and centre-back Lucio, who are all due to play for Inter Milan in the final of the Champion League against Bayern Munich in Madrid on Saturday.

Coach Dunga, who turned up late because of flight delays, and the Brazilian Football Confederation had banned media contact with the players to keep them concentrating on their game.

Brazil, five-time world champions, are among the favourites going into this year's tournament in South Africa, which starts on June 11.

The Selecao have been drawn in Group G with North Korea, Ivory Coast and Portugal.

Golden generation's last chance

AFP, London

England's golden generation was supposed to peak at the last World Cup.

Instead a squad that featured David Beckham, Rio Ferdinand, Steven Gerrard, Frank Lampard and Michael Owen collided with the same quarterfinal ceiling they had crashed into in Japan in 2002.

The sense of anti-climax was crushing, the hangover a

lingering one. The collapse in self-belief that followed Germany undoubtedly contributed to the failure to reach the finals of Euro 2008 but it also sowed the seeds of renewal by prompting the Football Association to send for Fabio Capello.

Eighteen months into the Italian's reign, Owen has been cast aside and injury means Beckham will be restricted to ambassadorial duties on behalf of England's bid to host the 2018 tournament.

Gerrard, Lampard and Ferdinand are all still there

and with Wayne Rooney having enjoyed his best club season yet, confidence is flowing once more, albeit not quite as freely as in the run-up to either 2002 or 2006.

Nine wins in ten matches and 34 goals in qualifying have encouraged the coach to declare that anything less than a run to the July 11 final will be a disappointment.

Septics, though, have plenty of evidence with which to make a case for England coming up short once again.

The qualifying success, while notable, was achieved primarily at the expense of a Croatia squad that was past its peak and, for Capello, there must be a worry that the same could be applied to some of his pivotal performers.

Only Italy will take an older squad to South Africa and friendly encounters have found Capello's England wanting against France -- possible quarter-final opponents -- Spain and Brazil.

Lampard has had another outstanding club season, helping Chelsea to a Premier League and FA Cup double by banging in 27 goals from midfield.

But he will celebrate his 32nd birthday on June 20 on the back of another 60-game campaign. Gerrard, who turns 32 three weeks before his team-mate, has had a poor year in a struggling Liverpool side, hobbled in part by the kind of niggling, recurring injuries that have also blighted Ferdinand's season.

Form has equally been an issue for John Terry since Capello stripped him of the national team's captaincy in the wake of revelations of an extra-marital affair with the mother of former team-mate Wayne Bridge's child.

That messy business resulted in Bridge opting out of national duty and, with Leighton Baines and Stephen Warnock now the back-up options at left-back, Capello will be anxious that Ashley Cole remains fit for the duration of his squad's sojourn in South Africa.

Messi scare for Argentina

AFP, Buenos Aires

Argentina superstar Lionel Messi handed coach Diego Maradona a World Cup scare on Friday when he injured his right knee in a training match.

Barcelona star Messi immediately left the practice session, but the seriousness of the injury was played down by officials.

"Messi is fine. It was only a knock and nothing else," said team official Nicolas Otamendi.

Argentina were training ahead of a World Cup friendly match against Canada taking place here on Monday before flying to South Africa for the finals next Friday.

Juan Sebastian Veron (Estudiantes) and Sergio Agüero (Atletico Madrid) both joined up with the squad on Friday.

But Walter Samuel and Diego Milito (Inter Milan) and Martin Demichelis (Bayern Munich) were missing as they are taking part in the Champions League final in Madrid on Saturday.

Arsenal snap up Chamakh

AFP, London

Arsenal have completed the long-awaited signing of Morocco international striker Marouane Chamakh on a free transfer from Bordeaux, the Premier League club announced on Friday.

The 26-year-old had been a long-term target for the north London side and becomes their first major signing of the summer transfer window.

Chamakh made 293 appearances and scored 79 goals during an eight-year stint with Bordeaux, winning the league and French League Cup in 2008-09.

"We are delighted that Marouane Chamakh has joined us," Arsenal coach Arsene Wenger told the club's website.

"He is a player we have admired for some time now and I know he will provide our squad with great quality."

"Chamakh is a striker of real quality and has all the attributes suited to come to England and do very well. He is also a fighter, not only a good football player. "He is very good in the air and also a good team player. He is a great addition to our squad."

Chamakh has been handed the number 29 shirt and will provide competition for Robin van Persie, Nicklas Bendtner, Eduardo and Carlos Vela in the Arsenal attack.

Chamakh will join up with his new team-mates for pre-season training in July.

Pienaar joins SA camp

AFP, Johannesburg

South Africa coach Carlos Alberto Parreira trained all 30 players in his preliminary World Cup squad for the first time on Friday after Everton midfielder Steven Pienaar arrived.

Pienaar was allowed to join his Bafana Bafana (The Boys) team-mates late after a gruelling season with English Premier League club Everton, who voted him their Playered of the Year.

The slightly built wide midfielder is the only South African playing regularly in a top European league and the hosts' chances of avoiding a first-round exit rest heavily on his guile.

Mexico and former World Cup winners France and Uruguay complete Group A at what will be the first World Cup to be staged by Africa.

Orlando Pirates midfielder Andile Jali, a long-shot for a place in the final 23-man squad, will visit an American medical centre next week for assessment of a mild cardiovascular condition discovered during routine tests.

South Africa began their countdown to the June 11-July 11 tournament last Sunday with a 4-0 thumping of Thailand and next week host Bulgaria in Soweto and Colombia at Soccer City, venue for the opening match and final.

Portugal target last 4

AFP, Paris

Portugal will arrive at the World Cup with the weighty expectations of demanding coach Carlos Queiroz on their shoulders.

The former Manchester United assistant coach has tipped his side to be among the final four at the June 11-July 11 finals in South Africa.

"Portugal is one of the favourites in the race for one of these places," insisted Queiroz.

"World Cup history has shown us that there are always three big favourites in the semifinals. Portugal and some 15 other teams will be soliciting the outsider's place."

According to the Mozambican-born Queiroz, the favourites - whom he termed as "dinosaurs" - were Brazil, Italy, England, Germany, Spain and Argentina.

"In every match we have a good chance of winning. We know it and more importantly our rivals know it as well." Queiroz said of his side who are ranked third in the FIFA world standings for the first time in their history.

Portugal were semifinalists in the 2006 and 1966 World Cup tournaments and this time have been drawn in Group G, dubbed the "group of death", alongside Brazil, Ivory Coast and North Korea.

They kick off against the Ivory Coast on June 15 in Port Elizabeth, play North Korea in Cape

Town six days later, and wrap up their pool games against Brazil in Durban on June 25.

"It's a fantastic group for world football," said Queiroz. "And we've got North Korea too, a team that triggers good memories of the 1966 World Cup (when Portugal came back from three goals down to beat Korea DPR 5-3 in the quarterfinals).

"Deep down, I hope that we're already qualified by the time we face Brazil in our third match, but counting on that would be to show a lack of respect for our other two opponents."

Queiroz included Real Madrid's Pepe, who is still getting over knee surgery from December, in his provisional 24-strong squad, which will have to be trimmed to 23 before June 1.

"Unknowns can emerge from the time the players get together and we want to be sure that when the time comes to take decisions everyone will be ready," said Queiroz.

The Euro 2004 finalists certainly did not enjoy a smooth qualification for the World Cup. Portugal recorded only one win from their first five group matches, moving quickly from being group favourites to standing on the cusp of elimination.

The second half of qualification brought a spectacular transformation, however, and they scored eight goals without reply in their last four group qualifiers to earn a play-off spot.

Despite the absence of captain Cristiano Ronaldo for the two-legged play-off against Bosnia-Herzegovina, they won home and away to clinch a comfortable 2-0 aggregate victory.

The Daily Star
RANGS TOSHIBA
World cup QUIZ 2010
TOSHIBA
The Real Definition of Image and Sound
REGZA
LCD TV
...THIS CAN BE YOURS

ROUND 1, DRAW IN BARISAL

Competition Information Prizes and Rules

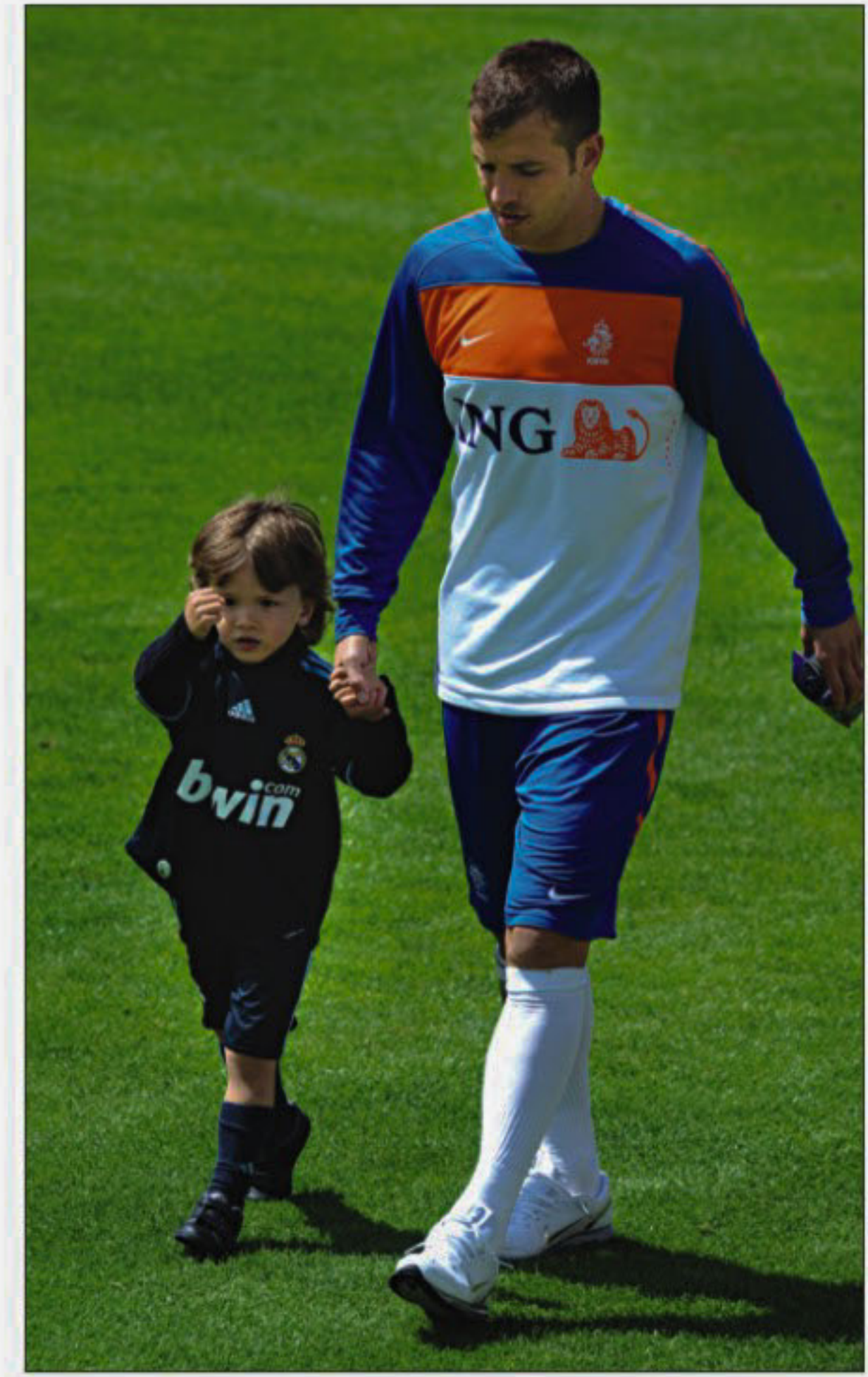
INFORMATION	RULES
<p>A. The Daily Star Rangs-Toshiba World Cup Quiz 2010 is a series of competitions on World Cup Soccer to be held in South Africa from June 11 to July 11.</p> <p>B. There will be SIX rounds of competition.</p> <p>C. Each round will have a separate draw with attractive prizes from the house of RANGS TOSHIBA as per announcement.</p> <p>D. For each round, a set of questions including a photographic quiz will be published in The Daily Star.</p> <p>E. Names and addresses of all prize winners will be published in The Daily Star.</p> <p>F. Winners will have to collect their prizes from The Daily Star office after satisfactory authentication of their identity.</p> <p>G. Any taxes or levies, as per law, for all the above prizes will have to be borne by the prize winners.</p>	<p>1. Residents of Bangladesh are eligible to participate in The Daily Star Rangs Toshiba World Cup Quiz 2010. Employees of The Daily Star and Rangs Toshiba and their immediate family members shall not be eligible to participate.</p> <p>2. All entries must be submitted in the original form printed in The Daily Star. Photocopies or reproductions in any form will not be accepted.</p> <p>3. Forms will have to be cut along the dotted lines.</p> <p>4. Participants are to put a tick (✓) mark in the box alongside their answer to each question.</p> <p>5. A person may send numerous entries for each round. Entry forms should be completed with a ballpoint pen.</p> <p>6. Name, address, father's name and particulars of participants must be clearly written. Each entry form must also bear the signature of the participant and date.</p> <p>7. Incomplete forms will not be accepted.</p> <p>8. Entries must reach the office of The Daily Star on or before the closing date marked on the entry form. Late entries will not be accepted.</p> <p>9. Envelopes of entries must be clearly marked "Star World Cup Quiz 1".</p> <p>10. Entries must be hand delivered or posted to The Daily Star, 19, Karwan Bazar, Dhaka-1215.</p> <p>11. Entries will be placed in a sealed box for the draw to be held on a notified date in public in presence of invited guests and Quiz participants, if any.</p> <p>12. Winners will be decided on the basis of correct entries drawn out from the box.</p> <p>13. Entering this Quiz competition shall be construed as the respective agreement by each participant to abide by all rules, instructions and guidelines as may be issued by The Daily Star.</p> <p>14. Any decision of The Daily Star in the conduct of the Quiz competitions including the answers selected as correct shall be deemed final and binding on all participants and shall not be called in question and/or challenged in any manner whatsoever.</p> <p>15. The Daily Star management, in their absolute discretion, reserves the right to amend, modify or substitute any of the above rules and/or change or reschedule any and all dates of the Quiz competitions under any circumstances.</p>

PRIZES UP FOR GRABS (ROUNDS 1-5)				
Prize	Item	Winner		
1st	One 8 CFT Toshiba Refrigerator	YOU		
2nd	One Toshiba 24" LCD TV	YOU		
3rd	One Toshiba 21" Colour TV	YOU		
4th	One Toshin 21" Colour TV	YOU		
5th	One Toshin Microwave Oven (23L)	and YOU		

PRIZES FOR BUMPER ROUND				
Prize	Item	Winner		
1st	One Toshiba 32" LCD TV	YOU		
2nd	One 15CFT Toshiba Refrigerator	YOU		
3rd	One Toshin Heat & Cool AC (1Ton)	YOU		
4th	One Toshin 24" LCD TV	YOU		
5th	One 21" Toshin Colour TV	and YOU		

Prizes for the audience (For First Five Rounds)	Prizes for the audience (For Bumper Round)
1st. 20L Toshin Microwave Oven	1st. Toshiba Washing Machine
2nd. 14" Toshin Colour TV	2nd. 21" Toshin Colour TV
3rd. 3 Toshiba DVD Players	3rd. 20L Toshin Microwave Oven
	4th. Two Toshiba DVD Players

QUIZ SCHEDULE					
Round & Draw	Starts	Ends	Answers reach by 12pm	Lucky Draw for prizes	
1. Barisal	May 19	May 27	May 29	June 2	
2. Chittagong	May 28	June 05	June 07	June 11	
3. Rajshai	June 06	June 14	June 15	June 16	
4. Khulna	June 15	June 23	June 25	June 27	
5. Sylhet	June 24	July 02	July 04	July 06	
Bumper Round	July 03	July 11	July 13	July 16	



Netherlands midfielder Rafael van der Vaart (R) walks with his son Damian at the end of their practice session in Seefeld on Saturday. PHOTO: AFP