

City agree Tevez sale

Football

AFP, London

Manchester City have agreed a deal to sell their Argentinian star Carlos Tevez to Brazilian side Corinthians, the English Premier League club's manager Roberto Mancini said Monday.

"At the moment we have an agreement with Corinthians, but Carlos now is still a City player," Mancini told Sky TV.

According to reports the deal will be closed when personal terms between the 27-year-old Tevez and his new club are agreed.

The Brazilian side had offered 40 million euros (\$63.57 million) for the striker but City had been holding out for more for their captain and Corinthians have reportedly made an improved offer.

The striker wants to leave Manchester as his daughters live in South America with their mother. The Argentina forward, formerly with West Ham and Manchester United, led City to FA Cup glory and Champions League qualification last season.

Tevez, who missed the crucial penalty kick as Argentina went of the Copa America quarter-final 5-4 on penalties against Uruguay on Saturday, arrived in English football at West Ham from Corinthians in August 2006.

Selling Tevez to Corinthians would enable City to offload him to a club with whom they are not in direct competition, either domestically or in Europe, while also boosting the player's family arrangements with his estranged partner living in Buenos Aires. Tevez said Monday that "I would have no problem to go back to Corinthians", where he won the 2005 league title and became a great crowd favourite.

City defender Joleon Lescott admitted he would be disappointed to see his team-mate depart but understood his wishes.

The England international told Sky Sports News: "We'll be disappointed if Carlos leaves but it was down to the club and Carlos what was best for each other and they have come to an agreement so I wish both parties all the best."



Paraguay players are ecstatic after Brazil missed their fourth penalty in the Copa America quarterfinal shoot-out at the Ciudad de La Plata Stadium in La Plata on Sunday.

PHOTO: AFP

'Loss not a failure'

AFP, Santa Fe



Argentina coach Sergio Batista denied that Saturday's Copa America quarterfinal exit to neighbours

Uruguay represented a "failure."

"This is not a failure," insisted Batista after Carlos Tevez's missed penalty sealed a shootout defeat following a 1-1 draw after extra-time in Santa Fe.

"I would not call it failure - that is a very strong word. We work to win and I think we really played very well" Batista opined.

But the side failed to take advantage of having an extra man for most of the second half after Uruguay scorer Diego Perez was red-carded late in the first half.

In that second period, "the intensity dropped off we rather lost our way," Batista acknowledged.

"Today, we did not play badly, we made chances... but we will keep on plugging away to raise our game," said Batista, who took over from Diego Maradona following last summer's World Cup thumping by Germany.

Asked if he might think about stepping down, Batista - a Maradona teammate in the successful 1986 World Cup campaign - said he wasn't thinking along those lines.

"That is not something going through my head," he said. "Going out hurts, but you have to continue on."

"My work started five, six months ago. We

wanted to win the Copa America, but our objective is the World Cup," he insisted.

That is also Brazil's refrain as Argentina's eternal rivals host the 2014 tournament.

But the auriverde remain in the Copa for now as they head into a Sunday quarterfinal against Paraguay.

Batista insisted that Lionel Messi deserved praise despite not finding the net in the tournament on the back of 53 goals for Barcelona last term.

"He played exceptionally for 30 minutes. He had a very good game," Batista said.

Argentina defender Pablo Zabaleta insisted, nonetheless, that the albiceleste should have seen off their rivals from across the River Plate.

"It is a bad feeling as we know we should have won it. We had chances and for much of the game we had a man extra," he conceded.

Uruguay's Liverpool striker Luis Suarez insisted that penalties are essentially a lottery.

"When it comes down to a shootout it's really down to luck, and when it came to the penalties luck was on our side," Suarez said.

"We left everything out on the pitch as Uruguay always do. We knew it would be a tough Copa but confidence is on the rise," he told reporters.

"We were a man down for almost the whole of the second half so it was a huge effort" to come through.

"The idea of beating Argentina was extra motivation," he concluded.

Argentina, Brazil out

AFP, La Plata



Paraguay dumped holders Brazil out of the Copa America on Sunday, winning a quarterfinal penalty shootout 2-0 after a poor match ended goalless after extra-time.

A day after hosts Argentina slid out, also on penalties, to Uruguay, the shocks kept coming as Venezuela reached the semifinals for the first time with a gutsy 2-1 win over fancied Chile.

Oswaldo Vizcarrondo gave Venezuela a 34th-minute lead only for Humberto Suazo to level midway through the second half.

But just as extra-time seemed to be on the way once again Gabriel Cichero struck from close range to spark scenes of joy among the travelling Venezuelan fans and leave the Chileans, four-times finalists, stunned.

The giant-killers will now go up against the Paraguayans, whose last title came in 1979, in a Wednesday semi at Mendoza after Uruguay first take on Peru at La Plata.

Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez, preparing for chemotherapy on Cuba, was quick to send his customary congratulatory tweets to the team.

"Let's pay supreme tribute to our boys from the Glorious Vinotinto (the team nickname)," Chavez tweeted.

The Venezuelans will have to make do without Tomas Rincon, red-carded in injury-time for some shirt-pulling.

Chile also finished a man short after having Gary Medel sent off eight minutes from the end.

But the real shock of the day was Brazil - not so much for their exit but the apparent paucity of their ambition.

They had chances - Ganso and Pato brought good saves from Justo Villar in the Paraguayan goal and Fred, who rescued a dramatic draw between the two nations a week earlier in the group stage, had a header cleared off the line.

But much of their play was laboured, while their penalty-taking was woeful.

Marcelo Estigarribia and Christian Riveros converted for the Para-

guayans while Elano, Thiago Silva, Andre Santos and Fred missed for the eight-times continental champions.

"When you lose you know you made some mistakes," said Brazil coach Mano Menezes, who partly blamed the poor state of the penalty spot for the dreadful finale.

"But this happens in football and we have to live with it. The

SEMIFINALS

Tuesday, July 19

At La Plata, 0045 GMT

Peru v Uruguay

Wednesday, July 20

At Mendoza, 0045 GMT

Venezuela v Paraguay

object has always been to get a strong team together for the World Cup in 2014."

The five-times world champions host that and will want to provide much better fare for their fans than they did here.

Brazil forward Robinho tried to put a positive gloss on the defeat.

"I think we played a good Copa overall. But now we must keep our heads up and go on to lift the World

Cup in our homeland," said the Milan striker.

In an ugly incident, Lucas Leiva of Brazil and Paraguay's Antolin Alcaraz were sent off for a tussle which sparked an injury-time free-for-all.

Robinho joined Ganso and strike pair Pato and Neymar, the four comprising Menezes' "magic quartet".

But they could provide the necessary spark against tough opponents who gave no quarter.

Paraguay boss Gerardo Martino rejiggered his side as top striker Roque Santa Cruz missed out through injury.

If they rode their luck at times, they ultimately won through sheer dogged rearguard resistance.

With five minutes remaining Brazil should have stolen it but Fred, who poached a last-gasp leveller against the same rivals a week earlier, saw his header cleared off the line.

"We showed a lot of heart," said Paraguay coach Gerardo Martino, though he admitted: "Brazil should probably have won it over the 90 minutes."

Disgruntled fans yearn for Diego

AFP, Buenos Aires

Disgruntled hosts of Argentina on Sunday vented their fury at their Copa America quarterfinal exit to Uruguay, with some calling for former coach Diego Maradona to return.

Maradona was given the boot after the World Cup last summer but Sergio Batista is under pressure after barely half a year in the job after Lionel Messi and company failed to weave their magic on home soil to extend a trophy drought standing at 18 years.



NEO Sports

Copa America

FIRST SEMIFINAL

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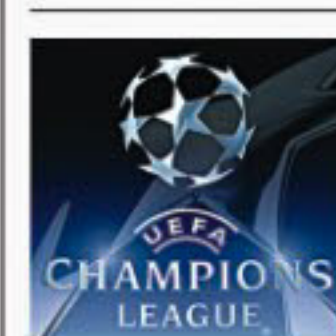


Uruguay goalkeeper Fernando Muslera dives to stop the penalty kick by Argentine forward Carlos Tevez (not in picture), during their Copa America quarterfinal shoot-out, at the Cementerio de Elefantes Stadium in Santa Fe on Saturday.

PHOTO: AFP

Villas-Boas vows glory

AFP, Kuala Lumpur



New Chelsea manager Andre Villas-Boas on Monday

vowed to lead the club to an elusive Champions League title at the first attempt, dismissing suggestions his squad of super stars are past their prime.

"In the next year for sure the trophy will arrive in this club," the former Porto coach declared confidently, in shades of his compatriot Jose Mourinho, the self-proclaimed "special one" who failed to deliver club football's top prize for Chelsea's ambitious owner Roman Abramovich.

"Chelsea have been in a couple of semifinals and also one final in recent times. I don't see why we can't go on to win it," the Portuguese told reporters as the London team arrived in Kuala Lumpur to kick off their 15-day Asia tour.

The trip will be Villas-Boas' first chance to see his players in competitive action on foreign soil and he said he will make a decision based on that whether to dip into the transfer market.

"We need to get the most information as possible (during the tour). By the time we go to the market, we will know the kind of players we want. Hopefully we can do the deal that we want," he said.

"I will use all 26 of my players in the tour and we will make a decision once the tour is over."

SPORTS POLL

WEEKLY QUESTION

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has impressed you

the most?

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