

## Pele back for Santos?

INTERNET, Undated

A whole generation of football fans have grown up rueing the fact that they were too young to see Pele play, but it appears as though the football legend will make a remarkable comeback to the professional game at the age of 71.

Santos will celebrate their centenary next year and they are now plotting to involve football's greatest ever striker as they take part in the December 8-18 competition for continental champions.

Club president Luis Alvaro de Oliveira Ribeiro says he has convinced coach Muricy Ramalho to allocate a place in the squad to Pele, and is now awaiting final confirmation from the man nicknamed 'O Rei' (The King) as to whether he will take part in the competition in Japan, which will feature Barcelona.

"Pele was positive and promised to 'train to get fit and participate in a few minutes', if possible," Ribeiro told Radio Globo.

"I have talked to Muricy. Now the only stumbling block is Pele. He will be registered with the No.10 shirt."

## Eriksson wants Beckham

AFP, Undated

Former England coach Sven-Goran Eriksson has offered David Beckham the chance to join him at Championship club Leicester City in a player-coach role.

Beckham's current contract with Los Angeles Galaxy expires later this year and he has yet to decide whether to continue his stay with the American outfit or accept one of several offers to return to Europe.

The 36-year-old former Manchester United and Real Madrid star is keen to play for Great Britain at the London Olympics next year and that could tempt him to return to England.

Tottenham and QPR are believed to be interested in Beckham, but Eriksson has always been close to the midfielder, who captained England during his tenure as manager, and he is trying to persuade him to join the ambitious English second tier club.

"I have already had that discussion with him. I spoke to him about Leicester," Eriksson told The Times.

"Beckham, he will never say no to me - he says, 'Sven, we'll see, we'll see'."



Germany players take part in a training session in Mainz on Tuesday. Germany take on Turkey in a Euro 2012 qualifier on Friday.

PHOTO: AFP

# Germany seek perfection

REUTERS, Berlin



Three-time European champions Germany are keen to notch their ninth win in as many Euro 2012 qualifiers when they take on Turkey on Friday as they seek to become the first German team to go through a qualifying campaign without dropping a point.

Despite already qualifying for next year's tournament as Group A winners with 24 points from eight games, Germany are not prepared to take their foot off the gas in their remaining two fixtures against Turkey and then Belgium on Oct. 11.

"We want to go through this campaign undefeated and will try to win the remaining two games," coach Joachim Loew told reporters. "We want to set an historic milestone with ten wins out of as many games."

Loew said he would not experiment with his team and his line-up would remain largely unchanged from the

previous qualifiers, also because there was still a lot at stake for both Belgium, in third place, and second-placed Turkey.

"Especially the game against Turkey (in Istanbul) will be marked by a lot of emotions. The fans will do everything to stand behind their team as an extra player," he said.

"I will most certainly not make seven or eight changes to positions as I did (in a friendly game) against Poland for example," Loew added.

With the only major absence being midfielder Toni Kroos, Loew's sole concern is likely to be who starts in attack.

Mario Gomez seems to have gained an edge over Miroslav following a top-scoring last season and spectacular start to the new campaign with Bayern Munich.

However, Klose has battled back in recent weeks, scoring regularly for new club Lazio and saying he was not afraid of the challenge his former Bayern team mate presented.

Klose, with 62 goals in 112 internationals, is chasing Gerd Mueller's all-

time German record of 68 international goals.

Turkey coach Guus Hiddink said his team had their fate in their own hands.

"We said we wanted to be in control. We can see this continuing as we reach the end of the qualifying stage. We are in control and we are continuing on our way," Hiddink told reporters on Monday.

Turkey are second on 14 points, two ahead of Belgium, who host bottom-placed Kazakhstan and any slip-up against Germany could prove costly.

The best second-placed team of all groups qualifies automatically while the remaining runners-up teams contest two-legged playoffs.

"We have to accept that this is going to be a very difficult match. I don't think that I'm a pessimist but we need to know that our job will be hard when playing teams like these. We need to face the realities," Hiddink said.

## Football's rich list

INTERNET, Undated

Manchester City's financial dominance shows no signs of abating after owner Sheikh Mansour was named top of this season's Football Rich List with a personal fortune of £20 billion.

Mansour, a member of Abu Dhabi's ruling Al-Nahyan family, has spent a reported £400 million on transfers since taking control of City in 2008 and has been rewarded by seeing the team qualify for this season's Champions League and win the 2011 FA Cup.

The 2011/12 rich list, compiled by FourFourTwo, reveals Arsenal share-

### RICHEST PLAYERS

1. David Beckham Los Angeles Galaxy £135 million
2. Michael Owen Manchester United £40 million
3. Rio Ferdinand Manchester United £36 million
4. Ryan Giggs Manchester United £30 million
5. Wayne Rooney Manchester United

holder Alisher Usmanov is now wealthier than QPR shareholder Lakshmi Mittal, and moves up to second. The Russian is now reported to be worth £12.4 billion, with Indian steel magnate Mittal slipping to third with a fortune of £11.8 billion.

Chelsea's Russian billionaire owner Roman Abramovich, who was the first of a new breed of rich foreign owners to make an impact on the Premier League when he bought the Blues in 2003, only sits fourth on the list, despite the fact his fortune grew by £2.9 billion over the year to reach £10.3 billion.

### RICHEST OWNERS

1. Sheikh Mansour Manchester City £20 billion
2. Alisher Usmanov Arsenal (29.28%) £12.4 billion
3. Laxmi Mittal QPR (33%) £11.8 billion
4. Roman Abramovich Chelsea £10.3 billion
5. The Liebherr family Southampton

Malcolm Glazer, the controversial owner of Manchester United, has reportedly increased his fortune by £110 million to remain ninth on the list.

Liverpool owner John W Henry, whose consortium completed their buy-out of the club just over a year ago, is the highest new entry on the list, with the American going in at 20th.

Former England captain David Beckham's wealth has grown by £35 million to give him a personal fortune of £135 million according to the FourFourTwo list, making him the wealthiest player on their list and 42nd overall.

Michael Owen and Rio Ferdinand remain second and third on the players' list, with Ferdinand's United team-mates Ryan Giggs and Wayne Rooney fourth and fifth respectively.

England boss Fabio Capello's reported fortune of £38 million puts him top of FourFourTwo's managers list.

## Rovers land in Pune

AFP, Pune

Blackburn Rovers will hope for some respite from their domestic woes when they become the first English Premier League side to play in India this week.

Rovers, owned by Indian poultry firm Venky's, will take on local side Pune FC in an exhibition match in the western city of Pune on Friday and lead a series of coaching sessions with local youngsters.

The match at the Balewadi Sports Complex was originally scheduled to be played in July, but was postponed following a bomb blast in Mumbai, 100 kilometres (60 miles) from Pune.

Rovers, who narrowly avoided relegation last year, are currently languishing second-last in the Premiership after losing five of their opening seven matches.

The 4-0 defeat at home to Manchester City on Saturday prompted angry Rovers fans to demand the dismissal of manager Steve Kean, who replaced Sam Allardyce soon after Venky's bought the club last year.

Rovers will be without at least nine regulars for the India trip, including Martin Olsson and Radosav Petrovic, who are on international duties this week for the Euro 2012 qualifiers and under-21 friendlies.



Blackburn Rovers players arrive in India for an exhibition match at the airport in Pune yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

### SPORTS POLL

#### WEEKLY QUESTION

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China Open

Round of 16

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BCB Red v BCB Green

Practice T20 Match

Time: 1:00pm