

## Rooney not worried

REUTERS, Podgorica

Wayne Rooney was relaxed following the arrest of his father and will start for England in their crucial Euro 2012 qualifier against Montenegro on Friday, manager Fabio Capello said.

The Manchester United striker's dad and uncle were among nine men released on bail on Thursday after being arrested earlier in the day as part of an inquiry into an alleged betting scam. Rooney senior has denied all the allegations.

"I spoke with him (England striker Rooney) five minutes ago and I found him relaxed and calm so there will be no problem with the game tomorrow against Montenegro," Capello told reporters at a news conference on Thursday.

"He told me he has no problems and assured me this personal problem will find a solution within a short time.

"I will decide tomorrow morning about the forward that I will play with Rooney," added Capello whose team need at least a point from the Group G clash to ensure they finish top and qualify automatically for the finals in Poland and Ukraine.

Rooney has been in electric form since the start of the season scoring 11 goals in 10 games for club and country.

"Wayne is focused on the game," England captain John Terry said. "We all realise the importance of that. It's important for him to go and play his football. That's all that matters to us."

## Robben goes under knife

AFP, Undated

Dutch winger Arjen Robben has undergone successful surgery to remedy a troublesome groin problem, his club Bayern Munich confirmed on Friday.

Robben had been left "frustrated" after the injury flared up recently ruling him out of the Netherlands' forthcoming Euro 2012 qualifiers.

After a long consultation Thursday with Bayern medical staff the club and player decided it was time to undergo surgery.

Bayern said in a statement: "Inflammation of the pubic bone had evolved in recent days leading to complications around the groin area. A successful operation was carried out at the Munich clinic of Dr Hoffmann Tomas."

Bayern said Robben could return to training in around a fortnight.

Robben had said Thursday: "I'm worried. I don't know where I am with this injury and it's really frustrating."

"It's a complicated injury. No-one can tell me exactly what I need to do."

Robben has already missed several matches for Bayern this season due to a succession of injuries.



Japan striker Lee Tadanari (R) celebrates his all-important goal with teammate Yuichi Komano during their international friendly against Vietnam in Kobe yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

## Collina against technology

Football

INTERNET, Undated

Former referee Pierluigi Collina does not believe there is a need for goal-line technology in football and has backed the use of two additional assistants.

Collina, widely regarded as the game's best official until his retirement six years ago and now a member of the Uefa referees committee, claimed there had not been one incorrect goal-line decision in games using additional assistants since experiments involving them began two years ago.

The additional officials are the brainchild of Uefa president Michel Platini, who has been an opponent of technology even though the International Football Association Board are continuing with experiments aimed at its introduction.

Speaking at the Leaders in Football conference in London, Collina said: "The technological experiment didn't find the solution and the human found the solution.

"I think the goal line can be easily controlled by two additional assistant referees."

Additional assistants, who stand behind the goal-line, have been criticised in some quarters for failing to spot other incidents inside the penalty area.

Collina admitted mistakes had been made, but by referees who had actually ignored the advice of their assistants.

He said: "We had big mistakes last year, not because the assistant referee didn't help the referee.

"He gave the correct advice, but simply the referee thought he was right."

He added: "The number of pushing and pulling at set-pieces decreased during the last couple of seasons, probably because of the presence of the additional assistant referee.

"As well as you reducing speed when you see a policeman far away, you refrain from pushing and pulling when you know there is someone looking at the incident."

Football Association referees' committee chairman David Elleray, himself a former top official, backed the use of technology for goal-line incidents, but insisted it was unwelcome beyond that.

He said: "How would football have looked and reacted in Paris when Thierry Henry handled the ball and France scored to go to the World Cup and Ireland couldn't appeal against that because they had already used up their three appeals?"

## De Gea clears the air

Football

INTERNET, Undated

Manchester United goalkeeper David de Gea claims stolen doughnut was just a misunderstanding

The Spaniard was caught scoffing the snack without paying for it, but says he had simply forgotten his wallet and denies that he was dropped for Norwich game as a punishment

Manchester United's David de Gea has cleared the air after it was reported that he had been caught in a local supermarket stealing a doughnut.

The goalkeeper, who arrived at Old Trafford this summer for 17.8 million pounds, claims he intended to pay for the item but had forgotten his wallet, while staff at the Tesco

store said the former Atletico Madrid man had eaten the doughnut in the aisle.

"Nothing really happened," De Gea is quoted by The Sun as saying. "Me, my cousin and a friend from Spain went to the shop, we were hungry and took the doughnuts.

"We were going to buy more things. I realized I didn't have my wallet so I went out to the car to get it. Nothing more. They thought that I was leaving without paying so I tried to explain to them but my English is still not very good and we were there for a while.

"In the end a Spanish girl arrived and we understood each other and in the end they ended up apologizing to us. They made a big thing out of nothing but I took the whole thing as something funny."

Some of De Gea's teammates gave him doughnuts as a joke.

"I took it in good humour and thought the whole thing was funny," he said.

## 'We all work for money'

Football

INTERNET, Undated

The African striker feels everyone is motivated by financial gain and criticizes those who disagree, while revealing Luis Aragones is the best coach he has ever worked under.

Anzhi Makhachkala striker Samuel Eto'o admits his move to Russia was influenced by the money, but insists that anyone would have made the same decision.

The Cameroon international became the world's highest-paid footballer in August, penning a three-year deal worth 10 million euros per year, and the lucrative nature of the contract is something Eto'o is not ashamed of.

"I have received an important offer and accepted it. We all work for the money, and anyone who says otherwise is a hypocrite," the 30-year-old told AS.

Eto'o was then quizzed on who he felt was the best coach he has ever played under, and he plumped for his two-time mentor during the 2000-01 and 2003-04 campaigns at Mallorca.

"For me the best coach of all time is Luis Aragones, while Jose Mourinho is the best at the moment. I learned a lot from Aragones, both as a player and as a person," he concluded.

Roberto Carlos' tenure as Anzhi coach started in disappointing fashion, as Eto'o was unable to prevent his side from going down 1-0 at home to Lokomotiv Moscow on October 2.

## Rio's Eng future in the balance?

INTERNET, Undated



Given his popularity among his fellow professionals, it's no surprise that England players were out in their droves to back Rio Ferdinand to make an international return in the near future.

Having returned to fitness with starts against Stoke City and Basel and then a 14 minute cameo against Norwich City, Ferdinand would lend some much needed experience to Fabio Capello's England as they travel to Montenegro for their tricky Euro 2012 qualifier.

Other experienced heads, Ashley Cole, John Terry and Gareth Barry all make the trip, as does the recently returned Wayne Rooney, but not Ferdinand.

There's an argument that suggests that given his injury history, which saw his England appearances limited to two in 2010, should rule him out this game as he aims to get back to match fitness with his club.

Having played for United against Stoke, Basel and Norwich however, Capello would be within his rights to pick the player despite his managers' pessimism, it's not stopped him before.

Capello has been known to waver from his policy of picking only in form players, and given the importance of the match, would have been forgiven for leaving out any of the England's young proteges, such as Phil Jones, for some tried and tested experience.

However, the Italian has opted to leave out Ferdinand, seemingly fit and ready for selection, and instead plump for players

who will surely make up England's future, but who are not blessed with international nous.

Does this mean Ferdinand's international ship has sailed? Is the heartbreak of missing out on last year's World Cup, and the 2004 European Championships back to haunt him?

The latest selection, for the last competitive game until England play in Euro 2012, could turn out to be a big indicator for who Capello takes to Poland and Ukraine next summer.

With Chris Smalling having already made his debut in the win over Bulgaria and Jones seemingly destined to start against Montenegro on Friday evening, where does this leave Ferdinand?

If the Manchester United man isn't a starter, then is there any worth in bringing him to the championships at all? If Capello puts his trust in youth, then Ferdinand could be surplus to requirements.

Having never featured in a European Championships, with his ban for missing a drugs test overlapping the tournament in 2004, and England failing to qualify in 2008, Ferdinand may see next summer as a last hurrah for his country.

Such are his injury problems, his disgruntlement that came with being stripped of the England captaincy a year after being handed the armband following John Terry's indiscretions and the talent waiting in the wings, Ferdinand may see it as perfect timing to retire from international football.

The question is, if Jones and Smalling are ahead of him in the pecking order for his country where does that leave his career with United?

## Pep thinks of leaving

AP, Barcelona

Barcelona coach Pep Guardiola says thinking about leaving his job every day keeps him motivated.

"Not a day goes by without thinking 'I'm off,'" said Guardiola in a promotional interview released Friday.

Guardiola has won two Champions Leagues and three Spanish titles in 3 1/2 years in charge at the Catalan club.

He told film director Fernando Trueba he had wanted to become a coach since he was 25.

Despite the success, rumours in Spanish media have suggested Guardiola might step down at the end of the season.

## 'Football is joy again'

AFP, Undated

Real Madrid's Brazilian international Kaka, who seems to have put an injury plagued two years behind him, said Thursday that playing football is once again a joy for him.

Kaka joined Real from AC Milan at the end of the 2008-09 season for around 65 million euros but a series of injuries stopped him from displaying the form that helped him win the World Player of the Year award in 2007.

The 29-year-old appears to be back on track this season, scoring the second goal in Real's 3-0 Champions League win over Ajax last month and set-up French international Karim Benzema for the third.

"I am enjoying football again. During all this time that I was sidelined, injured, when things were not working out, the passion for the game did not go away but it fell asleep a bit," he said during an interview with Real's TV station.

"Everything on the pitch seemed difficult for me and so football no longer was a pleasure. That is not the case now. Now it is a pleasure again, feeling the ball, the pitch."

Kaka said he thought of leaving Real last year to move to another country with a less competitive league but decided to stay after repeatedly being told by coach Jose Mourinho that the team counted on him.

"He always helped me, always," said Kaka.

## 'Suarez best signing'

INTERNET, Undated



Liverpool legend Alan Hansen believes Luis Suarez is the signing of the year and has the potential to become an international superstar with the Reds.

The Uruguayan has made a remarkable impact since his move from Ajax in January, having scored nine goals since his Anfield arrival.

Away from his goals, his all-round pitch presence has transformed the atmosphere around the club, and Hansen has been particularly impressed by the forward.

"Luis Suarez was outstanding against Everton and for me, he has to be the best signing any club has made in the last 12 months," he said.

"No matter who the opposition is, he always has an influence on the game. He's a brilliant player and I've lost count of the number of times I've heard supporters from other clubs saying 'I wish we'd signed him.'"

"Liverpool are so lucky to have him because

in my opinion he's going to become - if he isn't already - an international superstar."

Suarez is part of a four-pronged Liverpool front line which includes Andy Carroll, Dirk Kuyt and Craig Bellamy, a quartet that represents one of the strongest attacks in the Barclays Premier League according to Hansen.

"With Andy Carroll scoring, Dirk Kuyt playing well and Craig Bellamy doing what he does best when he came on, we have plenty of options because each player has totally different attributes," he added.

"Liverpool definitely can't be accused of being predictable in terms of what team might be selected. We've got height, pace and trickery. As a defender that makes you nervous.

"Options is what we have been missing for a long, long time. Now, Liverpool has a squad rather than a team.

"Steven Gerrard and Bellamy had a real impact when Kenny made the double substitution and that's what big time football is all about - replacing quality with quality."



### SPORTS POLL

#### WEEKLY QUESTION

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