

## Sheffield United claim tribunal success on Tevez saga

LONDON (AFP) — English Championship side Sheffield United said Tuesday a Football Association (FA) appointed arbitration hearing had ruled in their favor of their compensation claim against West Ham over the Carlos Tevez transfer saga.

United were relegated at the end of the 2006-07 season, Tevez making a massive contribution as West Ham clawed their way to safety.

The Argentine striker scored the winner as the Hammers won at Manchester United on the final day of the season to complete their revival at the Blades' expense.

The Premier League fined the Hammers a record 5.5 million pounds (nine million dollars) for fielding Tevez and compatriot Javier Mascherano despite their being ineligible to play under third-party ownership rules following complex transfers to West Ham.

They were found to have been partially-owned by businessman Kia Joorabchian's Media Sports Investment (MSI) company.

Tevez last year joined Manchester United and Liverpool snapped up Mascherano.

Sheffield United first appealed to the league to be reinstated in the English Premiership but that failed so they instead moved to exact a financial settlement.

In a statement on their official website, www.sufc.co.uk, they said they had been successful.

Media reports said the club want some 30 million pounds for their demotion with chairman Kevin McCabe having previously stated that relegation cost United at least 50 million pounds in lost revenues.

McCabe said: "I can confirm that both clubs have been notified of the ruling. The arbitration panel has awarded in our favor."

"The matter is still legally in process so I do not wish to comment any further until we have completed that process."

A West Ham spokesperson told BBC Radio following the news of the tribunal ruling: "We need to digest the full findings of the arbitration panel and will consult our lawyers on the next steps we might take before making any further comment."

Former Blades boss Neil Warnock, who left Bramall Lane after the club were relegated, said: "It's a matter for justice and I think everyone in the country knows this is the right verdict."

Warnock, now manager of United's second-tier rivals Crystal Palace, commenting on the human as well as financial cost of relegation, also told Sky Sports News: "It was scandalous. It changed one or two lives and it shouldn't have happened. This verdict puts your faith back into the justice system."

An FA statement insisted there was no further right of appeal against this ruling and stressed the governing body had played no part in the verdict.

"The dispute has been heard by a private independent arbitration tribunal set up under the FA's rules."

"The arbitration tribunal is comprised of one member nominated by each club, plus an independent member agreed upon by the two parties."

"All aspects of the arbitration, including publicity, are then a matter for the arbitration tribunal and the two parties concerned."

"For clarity, The FA did not sit in judgment on this case, did not have any influence on the decision and did not appoint any of the tribunal members."

# Iran's women footballers ascend in FIFA ranking



**TEHRAN** — Iran's women football has ascended one place in the new FIFA world ranking released on Tuesday.

## Rezazadeh visits IWF Secretariat in Hungary



**TEHRAN (IRNA)** — Head Coach of Iran's National Weightlifting Team Hossein Rezazadeh visited the International Weightlifting Federation (IWF) Secretariat in Budapest, Hungary.

Visiting Hungary from Sunday to attend the advanced coaching classes of weightlifting, Iranian Rezazadeh who is former Olympic and world champion met with IWF staff in Budapest.

The coach of Iran's national weightlifting team was warmly welcomed by IWF staff and a number of Hungarian TV members.

In his meeting with the Hungarian sports and media officials, Rezazadeh outlined his plans for his new duty as a coach.

Iran ascended to 48th with 1468 points. USA stood in top of the table with 2211 points, followed by Germany with 2152 and Brazil with 2131 points.

Iran is tenth among the Asian teams. North Korea is the best team with 2026 points and Japan and China have come second and third with 1985 and 1915 points.

## Saipa in must-win game

**TEHRAN** — Saipa is fully ready to take part in the must-win game against Kuruvchi (Bunyodkor) of Uzbekistan in the second leg of the Asian Champions League quarter-final on Wednesday.

The 2007 Iran Pro League champions were held to a 2-2 draw last week in Tehran's Azadi Stadium. Saipa will play Kuruvchi in Tashkent's MHSK Stadium.

Saipa coach Pierre Littbarski is in a confident mood ahead of the second leg despite the Uzbek side holding a slight edge in the tie.

"We know much more about Kuruvchi than before including their strengths and weaknesses," said the German at the news conference.

"I think that for the second leg, our physical condition will be far greater than theirs. Kuruvchi are a good team but Saipa are stronger and we still have an excellent chance of reaching the semi-finals."

Not surprisingly, Littbarski has singled out former World Player of the Year Rivaldo for special attention after the Brazilian netted his third goal in two games for the Uzbek side in last week's draw in Iran, according to AFC.

"Rivaldo is their most effective player and we've made special plans for him," he explained.

"We gave him too much time and space (in the first half of the first leg) but closed him down



better in the second half," he said, adding, "We'll mark him from the first minute to increase our chances of winning."

## Ronaldo back on the ball

**RIO (AFP)** — Former AC Milan and Real Madrid star Ronaldo, one of Brazil's most decorated footballers, was Tuesday back in full training seven months on from a knee injury which led him to leave Italy.

Ronaldo is currently without a club but has in recent days been working on his fitness with Brazilian side Flamengo -- though last week the 32-year-old three-time World Footballer of the Year -- he celebrated his birthday on Monday -- said he would fancy a stint with French side Paris St Germain.

Tuesday saw the "Phenomenon" participate in training with the Flamengo youth team having Friday indulged in some light training sessions.

"All this time I've been doing physiotherapy and getting back to training with the ball is very important, another stimulus. It's marvellous," Ronaldo told reporters.



"We know we couldn't touch him as Ronaldo is just coming back and nobody wants to prejudice the return of an idol," youth team midfielder Leo said.

Ronaldo, who has suffered a chapter of knee problems in his career but returned to lift the World Cup in 2002, seriously injured his left knee playing for Milan against Livorno last season.

Media reports have linked him with English Premiership moneybags Manchester City, where compatriot Robinho is playing, but the club have denied any approach.

In May, Ronaldo, the all-time top World Cup scorer, said he was "incredibly ashamed" over a much-publicised encounter with a trio of transvestites who allegedly tried to bribe him out of 30,000 dollars for keeping mum about the incident.

## India to tour Pakistan next year despite bombings

**KARACHI (AFP)** — India will play a Test and a one-day international in Rawalpindi on their tour of Pakistan early next year despite the latest bombing in adjoining Islamabad, officials said Tuesday.

The blast on Saturday evening devastated the five-star Marriott hotel and killed at least 60 people, including at least four foreigners.

"India will play a Test and a one-day international in Rawalpindi because the itinerary was approved by India before the Islamabad blast," Pakistan Cricket Board chief operating officer Shafiqat Naghmi told AFP.

"We hope normalcy returns by the time India tours us."

The Champions Trophy, the second biggest tournament after the World Cup, was due to be

held earlier this month but was cancelled due to security concerns in Pakistan.

The Indian team stayed in the Marriott on their last two visits in 2004 and 2006. They also played a Test and a one-day in Rawalpindi in 2004 and a one-day in 2006.

Naghmi said Rawalpindi is one of the most important venues in Pakistan.

"We have recently renovated the stadium in Rawalpindi and hope when India tours us all will be well," said Naghmi.

The Indian team will arrive in Karachi on January 4 to play three Tests, five one-day internationals and a Twenty20 on their 47-day tour.

The tour begins with a three-day side match at Hyderabad starting January 6, while Karachi will host the first Test from January 13 to 17.

## Home-grown stars crash out of China tennis Open

**BEIJING (AFP)** — Olympic semi-finalist Li Na crashed out of the China Open on Tuesday, joined as a first-round loser by Peng Shuai on a disastrous day for the host nation.

Li, China's highest-ranked player, who also reached the fourth round of the U.S. Open, slipped to a 6-1, 7-6 (7-4) defeat against Italy's Francesca Schiavone in just under two hours.

Peng lost 5-7, 4-6 to Russian qualifier Alla Kudryavtseva, who made headlines by beating Maria Sharapova in the second round of Wimbledon this year.

The 29th-ranked Li admitted she had failed to take her chances during the match, for example when serving for the second set at 5-3.

"Today, I think I was in a hurry and I made many faults," she said.

"I'm a little bit afraid of anticipating upcoming matches," she added, referring to her first round defeats both here and at last week's Pan Pacific Open in Tokyo.

Peng's result in the 2006 China Open, when she reached the semi-final, was the best performance here by a local female player.

"I was really happy to reach the final in Guangzhou (over the weekend), but I felt a bit tired from the past two tournaments," she said.

The 41st-ranked player, who lost Sunday's final in southern China to Vera Zvonareva, admitted she had her chances against the Russian here but had failed to take them.

Also in the first round, Japan's Ai Sugiyama beat China's Yan Zi 6-3, 6-4.

China's Zheng Jie, ranked just one place behind Li, will be looking to restore some pride to Chinese tennis when she plays Poland's Agnieszka Radwanska later Tuesday.

Zheng reached the Wimbledon semi-finals this summer and lost in the semi-finals of the Guangzhou Open on Saturday.

Serbian Jelena Jankovic and Ana Ivanovic are seeded one and two in the 600,000-dollar China Open, with both chasing the women's number one spot currently held by Serena Williams.

Meanwhile, in the men's 524,000-dollar tournament, Spain's Tommy Robredo, seeded six, beat compatriot Guillermo Garcia-Lopez 6-4, 7-5 in the first round and another Spaniard, Juan Carlos Ferrero, sealed a 6-4, 6-3 win over Russia's Alexandre Kudryavtsev.

Defending champion and Olympic silver medallist Fernando Gonzalez will face a tough battle to retain his title, with top seed David Ferrer and former world number one Andy Roddick in the hunt.

## Australia bank on former India coach to win series

**JAIPUR, India (AFP)** — Ricky Ponting's Australia are looking for inside knowledge from former India coach Greg Chappell to help the tourists win the upcoming four-Test series on Indian soil.

Chappell, an ex-Australian captain and batting legend, coached India from 2005-2007 before taking over as head of Cricket Australia's Centre of Excellence in Brisbane this year.

He returns to India as assistant coach of the 15-man Australian squad with the primary aim of guiding the young squad on what is widely regarded as one of the toughest cricketing tours.

Australian pace bowler Brett Lee said he was delighted that the tourists can use Chappell's knowledge of Indian conditions for the series starting in Bangalore on October 9.