

Brandts presented as Iran's Rah Ahan coach

Tehran Times Sports Desk
TEHRAN — Ernie Brandts was presented as Rah Ahan football club coach on Wednesday.
 The former Nac Breda coach has joined the Iranian club on a one-year contract.

"I am here to be successful. I have no excuse not to win in Iran's football.
 I am so glad to join Rah Ahan and I hope to earn a prestigious position in Iran Professional League with the team in the up-



coming season," Brandts told reporters during his presentation at Rah Ahan club.
 The 53-year old denied the speculation that he has come to Iran to coach Iran's national team.

Nac Breda finished third in the 2007-08 season but the club's directors didn't extend Brandts' contract. He was replaced by Robert Maaskant at the beginning of the 2008-2009 season.
 The Dutch earned 28 caps and

scored five goals for the Netherlands national football team and played in the 1978 FIFA World Cup.
 Rah Ahan FC finished 11th last season in the Iran's Professional League (IPL).

Man City still keen to land Eto'o

Manchester City manager Mark Hughes still wants to sign Samuel Eto'o, despite Barcelona offering the £25m-rated Cameroon striker a new contract.

Barcelona had initially told the 28-year-old he did not figure in their plans for next season.

Hughes said: "There appears to be a situation between the player and his club that we cannot be part of."

"We have to sit back and see what develops. Patience is a word that has been mentioned - we may need some."

Eto'o, who has been at the Nou Camp since 2004, can leave on a free transfer next summer, and agent Josep Maria Mesalles said it is only fair that they let the player know where he figures in their future plans.

"The player wants to stay and complete the last year of his contract - if Barca don't want him they should say so, so we can pursue the player's future in a professional manner," he said.

"The club said coach Pep Guardiola did not want him. Guardiola has not told the player he is not required."

"If they have a serious offer from Manchester City, and if they want to continue with this negotiation we could be interested."

"We haven't spoken to City but if Barca have reached an agreement it shouldn't be that difficult to reach a deal."

The Spanish club's president Joan Laporta claimed City have made Eto'o a "stratospheric offer" to join them.

Reports have suggested the Eastlands club have told Eto'o he could earn wages of up to £250,000 per week, which would make him the highest-paid player in the world.

Eto'o cost Barcelona £16m when he signed from Mallorca in 2004 and has since scored more than 100 goals in his five seasons with the club.

He helped the Catalan side win a treble trophy haul of the Spanish league title, domestic cup and Champions League in the 2008-2009 campaign.

Eto'o scored the opening goal in the Champions League final in Rome as Barcelona beat Manchester United 2-0.

In doing so he became only the second player, after Raul, to score in two Champions League finals because Eto'o was also on target in Barcelona's 2-1 victory against Arsenal in 2006.

Already this summer City have signed striker Roque Santa Cruz from Blackburn for £18m and Aston Villa midfielder Gareth Barry for £12m.

Carlos Tevez has also been linked with a move to Eastlands following the end of his loan spell at Manchester United but Hughes refused to be drawn over the possibility of adding the Argentine to his squad.

"I am a huge admirer of Carlos," he said. "Everyone is aware of his situation and we are interested, as we are in all top quality players. We will have to see what happens but these are very early days."

(Source: BBC)

NEWS IN BRIEF



World title next for Booth



Frank Maloney is going all out to secure Jason Booth a crack at the world title. The man known as 2-Smooth made a consummate first defense of his British super-bantamweight title on Tuesday night, outclassing Rocky Dean over 12 one-sided rounds.

Booth has also won titles at flyweight (European and British), super-flyweight (IBO) and bantamweight (Commonwealth) in a 38-fight career (33-13KO-5-0) that has seen him overcome problems out of the ring.

But Maloney believes his best bet of conquering the world lies in the lower weight categories and has set himself a mission of delivering a world-title fight in the near future.

(Source: Skysports)

Woods backing groove changes



Tiger Woods has backed a decision by the PGA Tour to bring forward by a year new rules that limit grooves on irons.

The move was due to be made in 2011 but US PGA Tour commissioner Tim Finchem but the ruling will now take effect from next year. The changes are aimed at limiting the amount of spin players get from shots out of the rough, placing the emphasis more on accuracy. And Woods says the players have had plenty of time to get used to the new club faces.

"It's great," said the world number one. "We've had plenty of time to make our adjustments."

(Source: Skysports)

Vidic makes United pledge



Nemanja Vidic has revealed he has received offers from AC Milan, Real Madrid and Barcelona but will spurn their advances to stay at Manchester United.

The Serbian stopper has established himself as one of the continent's finest defenders since moving to Old Trafford and his domineering presence at the heart of United's backline has not gone unnoticed elsewhere.

A trio of Europe's top clubs are keen on the 27-year-old but although Vidic concedes his wife is unhappy in Manchester, he is adamant he will see out his contract that runs until 2012.

(Source: Skysports)

London's Olympic stadium may become "white elephant"



The showpiece stadium for London's 2012 Olympics risks becoming a "white elephant" if no tenant can be found for it after the Games, a committee said on Wednesday.

Games organizers are also falling short on delivering employment targets, tourism strategy and sports participation, it alleged. The promise of a legacy was a significant factor in London winning the bid to host the 2012 Games, the London Assembly's Economic Development, Culture, Sport and Tourism Committee noted in a report.

"Urban and social regeneration, and increased sports participation, were to be the hallmarks of these Games," said Dee Doocey, chair of the committee.

(Source: Reuters)

Iranian girl wins gold in Asian Youth Games

Tehran Times Sports Desk

SINGAPORE — Iran's Nazanin Golahmadi claimed the gold medal in the shot put event of the 1st Asian Youth Games on Wednesday.

The 15-year-old shot putter defeated Fatima Omar Ba from Qatar in the girls' shot put finals earning the first gold medal for her country. Golahmadi's personal best is 9.70 meters but she threw a distance of 8.77 meters in this event. Omar Ba finished second throwing 8.21 meters.

"I didn't think I'd win the gold medal. I am so happy and I present my medal to my family and my coach. This medal gives me increased motivation to gain more success in the future," the Iranian gold medalist said.

Madanchi joins UAE Al-Ahli

Tehran Times Sports Desk



DUBAI — Mehrzad Madanchi joined the UAE's Al-Ahli on Wednesday on a one-year contract.

The 24-year old Iranian international passed his medical examination on Wednesday in the Dubai-based club.

Madanchi, who has played for the Emirati Al-Shaab and Al-Nasr clubs, has been preferred to Brazilian Cesario in the club.

It is said that Madanchi joined Al-Ahli for 1 million euro.

Madanchi will accompany Al-Ahli in the 6th edition of the FIFA Club World Cup which will be hosted by Abu Dhabi in December.

Iran advances to Futsal Grand Prix quarter-final

Tehran Times Sports Desk

RIO DE JANEIRO — Iran gained a tie against Costa Rica on Wednesday but clinched the top spot in Group B and qualified for the quarter-final round of the Brazil Futsal Grand Prix.

Iran who had already defeated Uruguay and Romania achieved a 1-1 draw against Costa Rica and moved on to the quarter-final round with seven points.

Iran is scheduled to play Ukraine on July 2 at the Goiania Arena. A total of sixteen teams are divided into four groups. The Brazil Futsal Grand Prix is an international competition of the same kind as the FIFA Futsal World Championship but with invited nations and held annually in Brazil. It was first held in 2005.

Iran drops down six places in FIFA ranking

Tehran Times Sports Desk

TEHRAN — Iran has been dropped six places in the FIFA World Ranking released on Wednesday.

Iran went down to 58th with 559 points. Australia, Japan and South Korea are the best Asian teams respectively in the ranking.

Brazil has toppled Spain in the top of the table following their Confederations Cup triumph in South Africa.

Iran fell in FIFA World Ranking after the team failed to advance to the 2010 FIFA World Cup.

FIFA top ten teams: 1-Brazil, 2-Spain, 3-Holland, 4-Italy, 5-Germany, 6-Russia, 7-England, 8-Argentina, 9-France, 10-Croatia.



Ohuruogu fit for busy fortnight

Olympic 400m champion Christine Ohuruogu is fit and ready to resume her build-up to defend her world title.

Ohuruogu, who pulled out of a race in Italy last week with a sore throat, runs in Norway on Friday and the UK trials in Birmingham next week.

At the Bislet Games in Oslo she will face Sanya Richards, her biggest rival for world gold in Berlin in August.

"I've got my voice back for a busy couple of weeks, with Norway and the UK trials," the Londoner told BBC Sport.

"I hear Sanya will be there in Oslo so it should be a good race."

"But I focus on myself purely because I don't really have any extra energy to focus on anyone else."

American Richards, who took Olympic bronze behind Ohuruogu in Beijing, won the opening event of the six Golden League meetings in Berlin a fortnight ago.

But Ohuruogu, 25, has her sights set clearly on arriving in her best shape at the World Championships.

I'm excited that people get to experience the biggest sporting spectacle ever and it's coming to my home town

"It's great to have the Golden League and I'm hoping to do as many as I can this year, but the trials and domestic races have to come first," she said.



"We don't want to do too much. The championships are what I work towards."

"It's important that I go out and run well. Obviously I want to do well but I don't hang medals around my neck before I get to championships."

Ohuruogu was speaking at an Aviva UKA Academy training session for local competition winners aged eight to 15 at her home track, the Lee Valley Athletics Centre.

"Just turning up and giving kids a five-minute talk is something I try to make time for," she continued.

"We athletes who are running now are not going to last forever. We need to encourage and support the youngsters coming up."

And Ohuruogu, who lives in Newham, is already excited about the prospect of the Olympics coming to London in 2012, even though she has not given much thought to taking part.

"Everywhere you go in East London you're constantly reminded of the Olympics."

"Even though they see the stadium I don't think people really know what's there but I do feel they're excited about it and just waiting to see what it will be like when it arrives."

"I'm not thinking so much about competing. I'm excited that people get to experience the biggest sporting spectacle ever and it's coming to my hometown."

(Source: BBC)

Madrid pays 35 million euro for Benzema

Real Madrid has reportedly signed Lyon striker Karim Benzema for euro35 million (euro50 million).

Spanish media said Madrid would confirm the France international's arrival later Wednesday. The Spanish club did not comment on the reports.

The 22-year-old Benzema's arrival would take Madrid's off-season spending to over a quarter of a billion Euros.

Madrid has already bought midfielder Kaka from AC Milan, winger Cristiano Ronaldo from Manchester United and defender Raul Albiol from Valencia. Madrid spent a record 80 million

pounds (euro94 million; \$131 million) on Ronaldo.

Florentino Perez has vowed to return success to Madrid after returning to the presidency in June after a season without silverware and several off-field controversies.

(Source: AP)