



Top Stories

Hubble Space Telescope's main camera stops working

The Hubble Space Telescope's main camera has ceased to function. Engineers are still working to rectify the situation, but have not yet identified the source of the problem.

Death penalty abolished in Philippines

Gloria Arroyo, President of the Philippines, has signed legislation abolishing the death

Featured story

Film project aims to raise £1 million to make a Creative Commons-licenced film

Matt Hanson aims to raise £1 million to fund the production of a feature-length film which would be distributed freely via the internet under a Creative Commons licence, all funded through 50,000 people each donating £25 to the project, which he's called 'A Swarm of Angels'.

Wikipedia Current Events

- Arcelor declares its merger with Mittal Steel. The new company will be called Arcelor-Mittal.
- Palestinian militants including Hamas attack an Israeli army post near southern Gaza Strip border with casualties on both sides. One Israeli soldier kidnapped.
- Jose Ramos Horta resigns as both Foreign and Interim Defence

Wikipedia Current Events

Minister of East Timor amidst ongoing political turmoil.

•Italians vote in a referendum on whether to approve the modification of 53 articles in the constitution. Approval would give more power to the prime minister and to the regions, making Italy a federal state.

Portugal overcome Netherlands 1-0 on way to quarter-final

Portugal beat the Netherlands 1-0 in a hot-tempered round sixteen battle in Nuremburg, Sunday.

Russian referee Valentin Ivanov warmed up for an active evening of arm-raising with yellow cards in the second and seventh minutes. Mark Van Bommel and Khalid Boulahrouz had crashed two heavy fouls on Cristiano Ronaldo; the second left a stud mark on his right thigh.

At the end of 96 minutes the yellow card count was 16 and the sides had nine men each. The four players sent off set a new Fifa World Cup record. The 2006 tournament had already seen two games with three red cards.

Following the second Boulahrouz foul Ronaldo received treatment and would be substituted before half time.

However; Ronaldo was involved in a wonderful move that lead to Portugal's game-winner. On 22 minutes he fed Deco, Deco crossed

low to Pauleta; Pauleta laid it off, and Maniche side-stepped a defender to hammer past Edwin Van Der Sar from 12 yards.

Portugal also scored first blood when Ivanov's red card was brandish at Costinha for stopping a pass with his arm. All four red cards were shown for two cautionary acts.

Though Portugal looked dangerous on the break the game was dominated by the Netherlands who had over 60 per cent of ball possession.

In the second period there was less flow and more stoppages. The main incidents were violent and many times players surrounded the referee adding to the disruption.

On 59 minutes there was shoving after Portugal was awarded a freekick in shooting range of Edwin Van Der Sar's goal. In the scrum Luis Figo seemed to headbutt Van Bommel and was shown a yellow card.

Three minutes later Boularouz was sent off when he challenged for a ball with Figo and hit the Portugal captain with a flailing upper arm.

Deco was next to go with two cards in quick succession. Ricardo Calvalho made a brilliant lunge to block one of the Netherlands 20 shots at goal. The Portuguese broke but kicked the ball out so their defender could get treatment.

Netherlands bucked the informal tradition of giving the ball back and Deco's response seemed to be a lunge at John Heitinga. This incident kicked off another melee in which Wesley Sneijder was booked when he pushed a Portuguese to the floor.

Five minutes after his first caution Deco was sent to the touchline for time wasting.

Twice up by an extra man the Netherlands failed to beat Ricardo. They went close. Three minutes after half time an unmarked Phillip Cocu struck the crossbar from six yards. After Deco's dismissal Dirk Kuyt ran through the central-defense but was foiled by a brave challenge from the goalkeeper.

In the final of the six minutes of added time Portugal skillfully worked another counter attack and Giovanni Van Bronckhorst got tangled with Simao's legs. Ivanov produced his fourth red card.

The victory for Portugal put them on a head-to-head with England in the quarter-finals, but at a cost. Luiz Felipe Scolari's side would miss Deco and Costinha with suspensions for that match while Ronaldo would be an injury worry.

Australia defeats Ireland 37-15 in rugby

Australia defeated Ireland 37 points to 15 at Subiaco Oval in Perth, Australia on Saturday in a rugby union test match. The Wallabies had just come of a successful two test series win over England whilst the Irish had come from two competitive losses against the All Blacks in New Zealand. The win makes it three from three for new Australian coach John Connolly.

The scoring opened after 13

minutes of play, with Australia being awarded a penalty. Stirling Mortlock was successful with the shot at goal to take Australia to a three to nil lead. Ireland successfully held Australia for the following ten minutes, until Chris Latham dived over to score the first try of the match. Mortlock missed the conversion and Australia led eight points to nil. Ireland is awarded a penalty in the 29th minute which sees Ronan O'Gara successfully kick a goal for Ireland, getting its first points of the game bringing the score to eight to three, with Australia having a five point lead. Australia furthers its lead when Mortlock is successful with another penalty goal around five minutes before half time. The teams entered half time, with Australia in front, 11 points to three.

Ireland is quick to get back into the match, with a try to O'Gara in the 42nd minute. Although the conversion is missed, Ireland has moved closer to Australia, with the score narrowed to 11 points to eight. Ireland scores again in the 51st minute, with Neil Best scoring a try, and along with O'Gara's successful conversion, Ireland is now in front, 15 to 11, with just under 30 minutes remaining in the match. Australia is quick to respond, with Mark Gerrard scoring a try a few minutes later. Mortlock is successful with the conversion, and Australia takes back the lead, with the score now at 18 to 11. Prop Greg Holmes gathers a loose ball and runs over 50m to score for Australia. Mortlock converts and Australia leads 25 to 15 with around 20 minutes remaining. George Gregan scores a try for Australia in the 67th minute, with Mortlock missing the conversion, Australia now leads 30 to 15, making an Irish comeback unlikely, with just

over ten minutes left in the match. Cameron Shepherd scores the last try of the match, which is converted by Mortlock, making the final score 37 to 15.

Pelicans held on suspicion of being drunk

Four pelicans, from Los Angeles, California, are being tested at a Southern California wildlife centre under the suspicion that they may be drunk on sea algae. The concerns were raised after one of the pelicans ran head first into a vehicle.

Three of the pelicans were noticed wandering around the streets of Laguna Beach dazed, and the fourth suffered numerous internal injuries and cuts after its' encounter with the windshield of an oncoming vehicle.

The four seabirds are being tested for the presence of sea algae, which can produce domoic acid poisoning when eaten - causing the dazed, drunken effect in the birds. Assistant Wildlife Director Lisa Birkle has warned the public to stay on the lookout for any birds acting in a disorientated or "drunken" manner.

Domoic acid poisoning is also thought to be behind the cause of a 1961 seabird attack on people and cars in Capitola, California.

Fernando Alonso wins 2006 Canadian Grand Prix

Fernando Alonso for the first time in his career won the FIA Formula-1 Canadian Grand Prix on the Circuit Gilles Villeneuve on an island in the St. Lawrence River.

Alonso once again had a great race, driving in the lead for the most of the race. Michael Schumacher started fifth, but finished before Kimi Raikkonen,

who made a crucial mistake on the last lap. Alonso teammate Giancarlo Fisicella finished on the back of Raikkonen, because of a bad start from the second place and a "drive through pit-lane" penalty imposed by a false start.

Canadian fans absolutely upset when Jacque Villeneuve crashed on the dying laps of the race, causing a safety car to close the gap between Raikkonen and Schumacher.

Hubble Space Telescope's main camera stops working

The Hubble Space Telescope's (HST) main camera has ceased to function.

The telescope revolutionized astronomy with its stunning pictures of the universe. It has three separate electronic cameras and a collection of filters and light dispersers that are used to photograph distant celestial objects. The third-generation instrument installed by a space shuttle crew in 2002 went off line Monday. Engineers are still working to rectify the situation, but have not yet identified the source of the problem. The other two cameras are being used while repair efforts on the main camera continue.

"It's still off line today," said Max Mutchler, an instruments specialist at the Space Telescope Science Institute in Baltimore.

The cause of the main camera's malfunction may be a faulty transistor or a disruption to the camera's memory. "Both possibilities are things that can be resolved here on the ground," said Ed Campion, a NASA spokesman at the Goddard Space Flight Center outside Washington, D.C. He also told the Associated Press

Saturday that "he was hopeful the problem on the space-based telescope could be fixed from the ground."

A solution could come as early as June 30.

NASA scientists say the studies being carried out with the Hubble will not be harmed, just the order reshuffled.

Hubble, launched in April 1990, is beginning to show its age. It needs new batteries and gyroscopes if it is to keep working beyond next year.

Early last year it was announced that Hubble would be cut from NASA's 2006 fiscal year budget. However, there have been questions about the future of Hubble, with the famous space telescope in need of service and power if it is to continue to be active in 2007.

Ex CIA aide: Tenet misled Powell on evidence for mobile labs

Former CIA Director George Tenet and Deputy Director, John E. McLaughlin lied to then Secretary of State Colin Powell about the depth of evidence regarding mobile chemical weapons labs, according to a story published today in the Washington Post.

In their briefings to Powell on Feb. 4, 2003, one day before the secretary's United Nations speech, Tenet and McLaughlin told Powell the evidence on the mobile labs was exceptionally strong, based on multiple sources whose stories were independently corroborated. According ex-CIA officer Tyler Drumheller, McLaughlin knew this was not true. A few days earlier, Tyler says, McLaughlin became alarmed at discovering there was

only one tangible source of information on the labs. Tenet's knowledge on lab intelligence is not well known, except that he strongly supported the veracity of reports on chemical weapons labs.

In a late-night check of the facts, the night before Powell's speech, Tenet called CIA officer Tyler Drumheller. When the subject of the mobile labs came up, Drumheller told Tenet about the unreliability of the information, but Tenet seemed distracted and tired and told him not to worry.

Tenet and McLaughlin both deny the account given by Drumheller. McLaughlin says he cannot remember anyone making the problem clear to him prior to the UN speech. Drumheller says he had spelled out the problem to McLaughlin, in an ad hoc meeting held in McLaughlin's office with one other person present. Tenet responded to questions on this story by providing the Washington Post with a statement he had given in response to the Silberman-Robb Commission, in which he said he didn't learn of the problems with Curveball until much later. He did not recall talking to Drumheller about Curveball, and said it was "simply wrong" for anyone to imply that he knew about the problems with Curveball's credibility.

So, either Drumheller is lying, or Tenet and McLaughlin looked Colin Powell in the eyes and told him they had more evidence than they really had on the chemical weapons labs.

England do enough against Ecuador; through to quarter-final

A David Beckham freekick was the difference as England went through to the quarter-finals of

the 2006 Fifa World Cup after a 1-0 win over Ecuador, Sunday.

For the neutral football fan the game was not especially attractive to look at. There were only 7 shots on target in the 90 minutes and neither team controlled the play well. The scrappy match was broken by up 37 fouls.

The game had temperatures at around 90 degrees Fahrenheit, which caused several English players, including Beckham, to suffer from heat exhaustion and dehydration. Beckham was sick on the pitch shortly after his goal and was substituted before the end.

Ecuador had the best of the first 45 minutes. The slow tempo of the game seemed to lead to simple errors of concentration from England and favoured Ecuador's passing play.

Ecuador had slightly more ball possession over the game and also the first chance. John Terry's back header to his keeper fell short but Ashley Cole slid in to deflect Carlos Tenorio's shot onto Paul Robinson's crossbar.

In the second half England put more pressure on Ecuador's goal. However; passes into lone striker Wayne Rooney â who played 90 minutes for the first time since he recovered from injury â were often off-target.

England's best chance to score from free play followed Wayne Rooney trickery on the left touchline. The striker evaded his marker but Frank Lampard spooned Rooney's cut back high over the bar.

Beckham's freekick was a trademark slow curling pass over 30 yards and the opposition wall

which nestled in the bottom right corner of Cristian Mora's net. The goal meant David Beckham had scored in 1998, 2002 and 2006 World Cups.

England would meet the winner of game 52, Portugal or the Netherlands, in the quarter-final in Gelsenkirchen on July 1.

Arcelor declares merger with Mittal Steel

Arcelor, Luxembourg's largest steel company, has reached in an agreement with Mittal Steel over a â27.5 billion merger. The new company will be called Arcelor Mittal. Mittal Steel will hold 45% stake in the new company. Arcelor would pay Severstal â130 million as a "fine" for the fall-out of their failed talks. Lakshmi Mittal (owner of Mittal Steel) and Joseph Kinsch (current Arcelor chairman) will be the co-chairmen of the new company.

U.S. president attends White House tee ball game

United State president George W. Bush kicked off the 2006 Tee Ball on South Lawn season Friday, June 23, 2006. This is the sixth year of the White House Tee Ball Initiative. In attendance at the game were General Peter Pace, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, who served as the Commissioner of the game, Tim Brant from ABC Sports and WJLA-TV acting as the Play-by-Play announcer, and seven-year old Zane Ellingwood, who founded "America's Littlest Heroes" last year in his hometown of Cumberland, Maryland. In his opening remarks, Bush welcomed parents and grandparents to a "historic ballpark." Pitcher Mike O'Connor from the Washington Nationals was at the game as well.

All Blacks hold off Argentina in rugby

The All Blacks came from behind at half-time to defeat Argentina in a rugby union test match at Velez Sarsfield Stadium in Buenos Aires. The All Blacks had just completed a two to nil test series win over Ireland, and Argentina had were also coming off a two test series win, over Wales. 15 of New Zealand's 25 points came from Daniel Carter.

Argentina moved to an early lead with Federico Todeschini kicking a penalty goal after five minutes of play. The scores were leveled by Daniel Carter in the 9th minte with a penalty goal for New Zealand. Full-back Leon McDonald scored the first try of the match to put the All Blacks in front. A succesful penalty goal by Todeschini in the 18th minute narrowed the All Blacks' lead. Argentina moved in front with a try to Martin Durand in the 20th minute, with Todeschini adding the conversion. Argentina's lead was extended with another successful penalty goal by Todeschini in the 29th minute. The All Blacks were able to fight back in the remaining ten minutes of the first half, with a try to Carter in the 30th minute, which he also converted. Argentina entered half-time, leading 16 to 15.

The All Blacks picked up where they left off in the latter stages of the first half, with a try to Scott Hamilton eight minutes into the second half, which was converted by Carter. Todeschini was successful with penalty goal in the 52nd minute, as was Carter for the All Blacks five minutes later. Two yellow cards were given out during the last fifteen minutes of the game with Jose Nunez Piossek of Argentina getting the first, and All Blacks' tryscorer McDonald

getting one a few minutes later. The score remained 25 to 19 through to the end of the match to see the All Blacks hold onto the win.

France defeat South Africa 36 - 26 in rugby

France defeated South Africa in Cape Town, South Africa on Saturday in a rugby union test match. France outscored South Africa, with four tries to South Africa's one, with a lot of South Africa's points coming from penalty goals. The French win put an end to an undefeated-at-home streak that the Springboks had been building, which was at 13 games before the loss to France. The win over South Africa is a good sign for France, who are also the current Six Nations champions, and the host of next years 2006 Rugby World Cup.

France opened the scoring after four minutes when winger Cedric Heymans gathered a kick to run in the first try of the match. Dimitri Yachvili was unsuccessful with the conversion, so the score was five points to nil. A few minutes later, the Springboks are awarded a penalty, and Percy Montgomery successfully kicks a penalty goal to take the score to five to three. France are awarded a penalty at around the 10 minute mark, and Yachvili successfully kicks a penalty goal to extend the French lead to eight points to three. France post more points with a drop goal from Florian Fritz, furthering their lead over the Springboks to 11 points to three. South Africa catch up in the subsequent five minutes, with Montgomery kicking another two penalty goals. In the 28th minute, South Africa takes the lead with another successful penalty goal by Montgomery. Subsequent penalty goals are missed by both nations

before they go into half-time.

South Africa score their first try of the match through Brent Russell. Montgomery is unsuccessful with the conversion attempt, with the ball hitting the upright. France hit back two minutes later with a try of their own through Vincent Clerc and Yachvili is successful with the conversion. Five minutes later, France are able to take the lead again, with Damien Traille scoring under the posts, and Yachvili subsequently adding the conversion. With around 15 minutes remaining in the match, Traille kicks France's second drop-goal to extend their lead to 28 to 23. A penalty goal is kicked by Montgomery for South Africa, narrowing the score to 28 to 26, however, Clerc scores his second try of the match for France in the last ten minutes to secure the win. The final score of the game is 36 to 26.

Today in History

1409 - Western Schism: The Catholic church is led into a double schism as Petros Philargos is crowned Pope Alexander V after the Council of Pisa, joining Pope Gregory XII in Rome and Avignon Pope Benedict XIII in Avignon.

1940 - Under the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, the Soviet Union gave Romania an ultimatum requiring it to cede territory.

1945 - The United Nations Charter was signed in San Francisco, California.

1959 - The Saint Lawrence Seaway, a system of canals connecting the Great Lakes to the Atlantic Ocean, was officially opened.

1963 - John F. Kennedy uttered "Ich bin ein Berliner."
June 26 is Flag Day in Romania

Quote of the Day

"For the future, let all people live

in harmony ... Men should be taught and won over by reason, not by blows, insults, and corporal punishments."
~ Julian

Word of the Day

jocular; ad

- Humorous, amusing or joking.

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