



Media Coverage

MIDWEEK NATION. WEDNESDAY, JULY 20, 2011 51A

SPORT 9



Rock star welcome for women's champs

TOKYO – Japan gave its women's football team the rock star treatment yesterday on their return from an astonishing World Cup triumph in Germany.

Unused to the fanfare the players filed quietly through the airport arrivals lobby in Tokyo, squinting as hundreds of excited fans snapped away with cameras.

"It hadn't sunk in that we'd won the World Cup until we landed at Narita airport," said captain Homare Sawa, the tournament's MVP and leading scorer.

"I'd never seen so many people come to greet us. It was amazing," added the talismanic leader of Japan's Nadeshiko – named after a type of frilly pink carnation, symbolising grace and stoicism.

Japan's heroes then faced a media crush of around 300 reporters, the World Cup, Sawa's MVP and Golden Ball and the Fair Play trophy gleaming in front of them.

Winners of Asia's first world football title at any level, the occasion got to many of the players who had shocked the United States with a penalty shoot-out victory in Sunday's final.

Even Sawa, the scorer of 80 goals in 173 internationals, fluffed her lines, sitting down before being told and jumping to her feet, covering her mouth with her hands in embarrassment.

"I heard a rumour there would be a lot of people but this is like an event for the men's team," said coach Norio Sasaki.

"It's a new piece of history for the Nadeshiko."

Showing few signs of fatigue after their dream run in Germany and long flight home, Sasaki and his players paid their respects to the victims of the deadly tsunami in March.

"Hopefully we were able to give an emotional boost to the victims of disaster," he said. "But it doesn't stop here for us and we must qualify for next year's London Olympics first."

(Reuters)

A solid foundation

Campers learning from Arsenal coaches

MORE THAN 120 children and 42 local coaches have already begun to reap the benefits of The Brewster Trust's Inaugural Football Holiday Camp which is taking place daily at the UWI artificial turf football field at Paradise Park, The Lazaretto.

The first week of the programme was dedicated to the football coaches. Specific emphasis was on kick-up skills, turns, passing, games like "football cricket", as well as safety and organisation. Elements of team building and social life off the pitch were also included.

Twenty of the coaches have been invited to take part in the camp to show what they have learnt and the most outstanding coach will be awarded participation at the next Arsenal Gap Year programme in London for one month, including accommodation and travel costs.

The camp, which caters to boys, girls and children with disabilities, is an initiative of The Brewster Trust, a partner of English Premier League club Arsenal and the Gap Year Programmes 2010 to 2013.

"The development of sports-based social inclusion initiatives has been last, but not least, the driver to step in and support the [Gap Year] programme," said Nathaniel P. Brewster, vice-president and co-founder of the trust.

"One approach of our charity is to have qualified and experienced people who are dedicated to football and are willing to share their know-how."

Several Arsenal coaches are in Barbados: John Olaleye, Arsenal's Gap Year coordinator; Steve Eadon; Adam Tarrant and Ognjen Soskic.

The camp caters to three age groups: 7 to 10; 11 to 14 (now in progress), and 15 to 18 (from July 25 to 29). The training sessions are age-group and performance-related, providing access to the sport from the beginner level.

Coaching elements include basic passing techniques, dribbling and turning at speed, slalom, turns, control and heading sessions including aerial control, with a daily competition based on the session.

In addition, focus will also be on using various parts of the body like feet, knees or chest, basic techniques of shooting with the strong and the weak feet, and mini matches at the end of the week. This will be followed by presentations to all players as well as Player Of The Week and Fair Play awards.

The Brewster Trust's camp partners are Arsenal FC, the University of the West Indies, the Barbados Football Association and Barbados Bottling Company. (PR/SAT)

Barça not giving up on Fabregas

BARCELONA – Barcelona are ready to fight to bring Arsenal captain Cesc Fabregas back to the club right up until the transfer deadline on August 31, coach Pep Guardiola said yesterday.

Barça are in talks with Arsenal to buy the 24-year-old Spain midfielder, a long-term target for the Spanish and European champions, Guardiola, flanked by sporting director Andoni Zubizarreta, told a news conference.

"This year Arsenal has agreed to negotiate and we are working on it," Guardiola said.

"Barcelona have made an offer, Arsenal another and we have time until August 31 and we'll try to reach an agreement," added the 40-year-old.

"There is a sum of money in the strong box set aside for this signing but if it doesn't work out it will be kept in the box for something else. We will fight to the end to try to get Cesc because we believe he will improve the team and the squad."

(Reuters)

ALL EARS: more than 120 aspiring football stars received coaching tips during the Brewster Trust's holiday camp. (CP)

THE BREWSTER TRUST {registered charity N° 825}

GH House ☘ 4th Floor ☘ Trents ☘ St James ☘ BB24016 ☘ Barbados ☘ West Indies
phone: +1 246 419-4300 ☘ fax: +1 246 419-4302 ☘ email: info@football.bb ☘ www.football.bb