

By MARLISE SIMONS
Milosevic trial's legacy

PAGE TWO



Which protects better,
dot-xxx or dot-kids?

PERSONAL TECH | 16



The new Abbey Theatre,
holding a mirror to Ireland

CULTURE & MORE | 9

Follow the money, and it leads to sports

A hot strategy for chasing customers

By Doreen Carvajal

PARIS: When fans receive their precious tickets through a complex lottery for this summer's World Cup soccer games, there is only one credit card that they can use to pay for them: MasterCard.

The exclusive arrangement — the result of MasterCard's pricey position as "Official Partner of the 2006 FIFA World Cup Germany™" — illustrates the power of sports sponsors today with control of brands on the field and rising influence over consumers far from the stadium.

MasterCard, which along with other World Cup partners paid a combined total of €640 million, or \$770 million, for entry into the elite club, is following a game plan to woo millions of new customers by linking credit cards to spinning soccer balls and the soccer great Pelé.

But the company believes that the exposure is "priceless," the theme of its ad campaign linking credit cards to passionate fans.

"Link your brand into the fabric of the game so that there's a residual good will," said John Stuart, senior vice president of global sponsorships for the company. "We have trouble because we're a piece of plastic. It's easier if you're an Adidas football shoe, so the piece of plastic has to work hard to integrate itself into the passion."

In a world of ad-avoiders and television skippers, people may avoid conventional commercials, but on match

day they cannot escape the looming brands of high-spending sponsors like MasterCard with banners on the game perimeter.

Companies are chasing customers aggressively, with total global spending on sponsorships expected to soar to almost \$34 billion this year, a figure that dwarfs the individual annual gross domestic product for many of the countries with World Cup teams in competition, from Togo to Costa Rica. International spending in 1987 was only \$5.6 billion, according to the World Sponsorship Monitor.

"People are realizing the value of sponsorships," said Nigel Currie, president of the European Sponsorship Association in London. "Ten years ago it was something that people did if they had some money at the end of the year. The main reason for the expansion today is, perhaps, the demise of advertising. It's much harder for companies to hit their audiences, and so they're turning to live and sporting events that attract huge audiences."

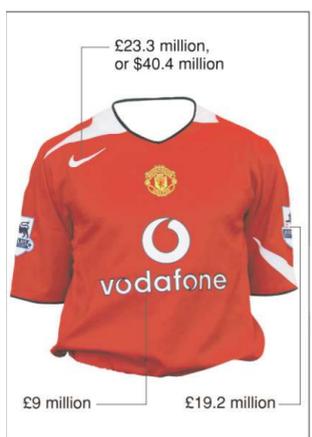
This year, Heineken, the fourth-largest brewer in the world, decided to retreat from traditional television advertising in Britain, reasoning that its cheeky TV spots were not always reaching its core market of young men. Instead, the company shifted its €6.5 million, or \$11.3 million, advertising budget to print and poster campaigns and the sponsorship of big televised events like the Champions League.

"We're looking at ways to reach young men, guys between 18 to 23," said Andrew Laft, a spokesman for Heineken in London. "These are guys who don't watch television in the traditional way. Technology is having an impact. They're often technologically literate and they may be skipping through the ads. But they do watch sports."

The sponsorship dollars and euros are gushing mostly to sports events, although some of it is reaching the arts, entertainment tours and associations. Of all sponsorship money, \$13.39 billion is expected to be spent in the United States, \$6.4 billion in Asia and \$9.6 billion in Europe, which benefits this year from hosting the Winter Olympics in Italy and the World Cup in Germany, according to the IEG, a Chicago-based industry trade group that tracks sponsorships.

New money is also flowing beyond big-ticket venues like the World Cup to categories of less glamorous and untraditional sporting events that can deliver fans with precise demographic backgrounds.

BRANDS, Continued on Page 14



Jersey revenue can be worth tens of millions of dollars for a soccer club. Page 14



President Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria and President Bush on Wednesday.



Charles Taylor, a former Liberian president, was arrested Wednesday.

Taylor faces trial after his capture

Charles Taylor is to face a 17-count indictment on war crimes at a UN-backed court for his role in the decade-long civil war in Sierra Leone.

After an escape attempt, the former Liberian president and warlord was arrested in Nigeria on Wednesday as he tried to cross into Cameroon. He was immediately deported to Liberia, and from there was taken to Sierra Leone.

The announcement came as the Nigerian president, Olesegun Obasanjo, was in Washington to see President George W. Bush. Page 4

Iraq leader warns U.S. to stop interfering

Jaafari asserts right to be prime minister, which Bush opposes

By Edward Wong

BAGHDAD: In the face of growing pressure from the Bush administration for him to step down, Prime Minister Ibrahim al-Jaafari of Iraq on Wednesday vigorously asserted his right to stay in office and warned the Americans against undue interference in Iraq's political process.

Jaafari also defended his recent political alliance with the radical anti-American Shiite cleric Muktada al-Sadr, now the prime minister's most powerful backer, saying in an interview that Sadr and his thousands-strong militia were a fact of life in Iraq and needed to be accepted into mainstream politics.

Jaafari said he would work to fold the country's myriad militias into the official security forces and ensure that recruits and top security ministers abandon their ethnic or sectarian loyalties.

The existence of militias has emerged as the greatest source of contention between American officials and Shiite leaders like Jaafari, with the American ambassador arguing in the past week that militias are killing more people than the Sunni Arab-led insurgency. Dozens of bodies, garroted or killed with gunshots to the head, turn up almost daily in Baghdad, fueling sectarian tensions that are pushing Iraq closer to full-scale civil war.

The embattled Jaafari made his remarks in an hour-long interview with The New York Times at his home, a Saddam Hussein-era palace with an artificial lake at the heart of the fortified Green Zone. He spoke in a calm manner, relaxing in a black pinstripe suit in a ground floor office lined with books like the multivolume "The World of Civilizations."

"There was a stand from both the American government and President Bush to promote a democratic policy and protect its interests," he said. "But now there's concern among the Iraqi people that the democratic process is being threatened."

JAAFARI, Continued on Page 4

Israelis fail to find strong center

By Steven Erlanger

JERUSALEM: In an election that Israeli leaders hoped would produce "the big bang," creating a strong, stable centrist majority, Israeli voters delivered a small pop, unwilling to give too much power to an untested acting prime minister, Ehud Olmert.

Olmert should be able to govern the country, cobbling together a coalition that will support a further Israeli pullout from the West Bank.

But it will be an expensive coalition for Olmert and the new Kadima party, which will have to give up some important ministries. And it is likely to be expensive for the Israeli taxpayer, too, since Olmert's main prospective partners are all committed to big increases in social benefits.

There were surprises in this election, no big winners and one obvious loser: Benjamin Netanyahu, the former prime minister, who led his Likud party to a disastrous showing of 11 seats out of 120 available. Likud finished fifth, behind

'Big bang' election produces small pop

even the Israel Beiteinu party of his former aide, Avigdor Lieberman, who favors handing over Israel's Arab citizens to the Palestinian Authority in exchange for settlement land.

Netanyahu was punished in part for his economic policies as finance minister. His battles to cut the power of unions, slash social benefits and lower taxes were praised by economists and helped restore growth, but they were a target for rivals, especially for the new Labor Party leader, the Moroccan-born trade-union boss, Amir Peretz, who managed to keep Labor at 20 seats, close to Kadima's 28.

"Take yourself back two years," wrote Yair Lapid in the newspaper Yediot Aharonot. "The Likud has 40 seats, and the sense is that the right is going to govern here for another 40 years. Then take a look at yesterday."

Now, the right plus the religious

parties would be unable to muster a blocking majority of 61 seats in Parliament to any plan to withdraw from more territory, while Kadima plus the left and the Arab parties, which won 10 seats, do control more than 61 seats.

In a sense, it was a disorienting election, with Israelis turning away from the large, sophisticated parties that deal with every issue. Kadima, Labor and Likud together won only 59 seats — not even a majority in the Parliament.

"This was a missed opportunity for Israel to stabilize the political system, which is what Sharon wanted to do," said Yossi Klein Halevi, a senior fellow at the Shalem Center, a Jerusalem research institute.

"We needed a strong center party and we haven't quite gotten one. The vote reinforces the sense that Olmert doesn't have the mandate Kadima

ISRAEL, Continued on Page 8

Contact with Israel cut as Hamas takes over cabinet. Page 8

Uniformed gunmen kill 8 in raid at Baghdad electric shop. Page 4



Umit Bektas/Reuters

Gazing at the pageant of a solar eclipse
Children in Ankara donning protective glasses Wednesday in anticipation of a total solar eclipse, a rare event that offers one of the most scientifically valuable sights in nature: a peek at the Sun's corona. Page 4

In this issue No. 38,276

Books	9	Opinion	6
Business	11	Sports	22
Crossword	10	Health & Science	10
Culture	9	Technology	16

Marketplace by Bloomberg 17-20

Newsstand prices

France € 2.00

Algeria.....Din 126	Ivory Coast.....CFA 1.840
Andorra.....€ 2.00	Reunion.....€ 3.50
Cameroon.....CFA 1.840	Antilles.....€ 2.30
Gabon.....CFA 1.840	Senegal.....CFA 1.840
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CURRENCIES | New York

Wednesday 3 P.M. Previous

€1 =	\$1.2024	\$1.2009
£1 =	\$1.7343	\$1.7436
¥1 =	¥117.84	¥117.97
₱1 =	₱131.05	₱130.95

Full currency rates | Page 18

OIL | New York

Wednesday 3 P.M.

Light sweet crude	\$66.50	↑ \$0.43
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STOCK INDEXES

Wednesday

The Dow 3 P.M.	11,228.18	↑ 0.66%
FTSE 100 close	5,959.20	↑ 0.40%
Nikkei 225 close	16,938.41	↑ 1.49%

Champions League soccer

- Quarterfinals, first leg matches
- Inter Milan 2, Villarreal 1
 - Olympique Lyon 0, AC Milan 0

In Business

- European Union antitrust officials have given Microsoft a stern warning about Windows Vista. Page 11
- The Beatles' record company, Apple Corps, wants Apple Computer to stop using its familiar logo. Page 11

Afghan convert in Italy

Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi said Wednesday that Abdul Rahman, an Afghan man facing the death penalty for converting from Islam to Christianity, had arrived in Italy. Rahman's departure occurred despite intense criticism by Afghans. Page 4

UN council acts on Iran

The five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council agreed Wednesday on a statement that would call on Iran to suspend parts of its nuclear program that could be used for weapons. But it is nonbinding and threatens no punitive action. Page 4

Italy (sh!) has a problem

Plight of young workers stirs little concern

By Elisabetta Povoledo

MILAN: Since he graduated with an architecture degree in 2000, Antonio Incorvaia has held a dizzying number of jobs: graphic designer, television writer, Web editor and journalist for trade and pop culture magazines. At 31, he describes himself as a "serial trainee."

Like many people of his generation, Incorvaia has had to struggle between the job-for-life mentality of postwar Italy and the realities of a labor market that no longer offers such guarantees.

Many of his overqualified 30-something friends, he said, are in the same boat, flitting from one short-term contract to another without ever being offered full-time employment. Adding insult to injury, he added, "Prospective employers ask you why you've changed jobs so often."

French blame the media

While the French complain about media coverage — especially in the English-language press — of the protests over the new jobs plan, President Chirac said he would address the nation. Page 3

Last December, Incorvaia and a friend, Alessandro Rimassa, made their frustrations public and wrote a novel, "The €1,000 Generation," which is available, partly free, on the Internet at www.generazione1000.com. The semi-autobiographical book about a group of young Italians living hand-to-mouth on a fluctuating income struck a chord: 24,000 downloads later, Incorvaia has a publishing contract and has sold the film rights. The idea, Incorvaia said in an interview, was "to highlight a situation that isn't talked about — it involves millions of people, but no one takes notice."

In Italy's heated electoral campaign, politicians have not taken much notice either. With Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi and his main challenger, Romano Prodi, lobbying insults and defending their records, the uncertainty of the labor market for Italians entering the work force has not been a key issue.

Despite the impact of job uncertainty on the lives of young Italians, and notwithstanding protests in France over labor reforms affecting youth, politicians in Italy have focused more on the country's aging electorate. They are promising higher pensions and better

ITALY, Continued on Page 8

ADVERTISEMENT

The world is watching the Gray Whales of Sakhalin.

Alexander Rutenko is also listening.

The feeding grounds of the endangered Western Gray Whales are close to Sakhalin II, one of the world's largest energy construction projects. So Dr. Alexander Rutenko is monitoring underwater noise as part of a team of scientific experts working with Sakhalin Energy — a Shell-led joint venture — to minimize the project's impact on the whales. Find out more at shell.com/alexander