



Top Stories

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Featured story

Film project aims to raise £1 million to make a creative commons-licenced film

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Wikipedia Current Events

• Director of the United States Missile Defense Agency, Air Force Lt. Gen. Henry A. Obering III, stated that he is "very confident" any North Korean missile headed towards the United States would be destroyed mid-flight by interceptor missiles if directed by the President. (Associated Press)

Wikipedia Current Events

•U.S. President George W. Bush has issued an executive order stating that he will limit taking of private property by the federal government and that it must "benefit... the general public...and not merely for the purpose of economic interest of private properties..."

•A criminal investigation is launched after the personal details of 28,000 United States Navy sailors and their families including Social Security numbers is found on a civilian web site.

•Saddam Hussein has ended a brief hunger strike, after missing one meal in his prison. He did this in protest of the killing of one of his lawyers.

•A United States warship is reported to have shot down a missile in the Pacific, in a test of their now operational sea-based missile defense system.

•Harriet, a Galapagos tortoise, has passed away at 175. Harriet was one of the oldest known living creatures in the world.

•Norman Mineta announces his resignation as United States Secretary of Transportation effective from July 17, 2006.

•The New York Times publishes a major story on secret CIA surveillance of international private banking for the last five years via the Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication (SWIFT) and rejects government requests to

Wikipedia Current Events

withdraw it.

•Prime Minister of Poland Kazimierz Marcinkiewicz announced a dismissal of Zyta Gilowska, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance. PM's advisor Pawel Wojciechowski was introduced as her successor. Kazimierz Marcinkiewicz declared that Gilowska's policy will be continued.

France qualify with 2-0 win over Togo in Group G

Patrick Viera and Thierry Henry scored second half goals to give France a 2-0 win over Togo in Group G, Friday.

A win that should have been a rout but for the number of almost unwatchable misses racked up by David Trezeguet and Frank Ribery. The lack of French execution in front of goal had fans in the crowd jeering when they were 2-0 up.

This was very unfair on the French team, and particularly the brilliance of Patrick Viera, who were totally dominant as an attacking side and were much the better team in all areas - only to be let down by nerves in front of goal.

Before the game France were third in Group G with two points from two matches to Korea Republic's and Switzerland's four. France had to win the game to get into the round of sixteen and the pressure seemed to be evident in the first half.

Out of seventeen French shots at goal nine found the area guarded by Kossi Agassa but the keeper did not have to produce a spectacular performance. Togo did not play as much as a team as the French a fact reflected in their attack which forced Fabien Barthez to make just two saves.

Patrick Viera, on his 30th birthday, got the necessary goal on 55 minutes. Ribery ran at the Togo defence and slipped a pass to Viera. Inside the area with his back to goal, the Juventus man turned his defender and hit the ball hard to Agassa's left.

Viera's presence was noted by the eight fouls he suffered in the game; his excellence by the fact he conceded no fouls. He also got an assist on the second goal when he flicked a header to Henry in the penalty area. A typically clinical finish, Henry's first touch put the ball in a position to shoot before his marker could react.

Raymond Domenech's side win earned a round of sixteen match against Group H winners Spain.

Switzerland shut door on Korea Republic 2-0 in Group G
Switzerland dashed the Fifa World Cup dreams of the Republic of Korea beating them 2-0 to top Group G, Friday.

Republic of Korea (ROK) could not break through the Swiss defence even after they lost center-back and goal scorer Philippe Senderos to a shoulder injury on 53 minutes.

Earlier the 21-year-old rose majestically and thundered in a header from Hakan Yakin's freekick. The centre-back put so much neck power into the contact

he headbutted Korea Republic defender Jin-Cheul Choi on the follow-through. Jin-Cheul and Senderos both needed medical treatment for cuts.

However; Senderos's imperial commitment to the Swiss would not last what seemed to be a shoulder injury just after half-time and he was substituted on 53 minutes. With the experienced Hakan Yakin on great form in midfield the side did fine without him.

After hitting a post with a shot Alexander Frei scored the second for Switzerland on 77 minutes. Frei received a deflected pass onside and rounded Woon Jae Lee to side foot home.

The goal caused some controversy because the referee allowed it though his linesman had flagged for offside. Korean Republic players knew the second goal would make it almost impossible to win the game against the Swiss defence with only 13 minutes left.

Indeed, Koebi Kuhn's Switzerland team were to complete a three match shut out. Six foot six Pascal Zuberbuehler in the Swiss net had eight saves in the game bringing his total to 21 saves in three World Cup matches.

The 2002 World Cup semi-finalists had most ball possession and looked dangerous when the creative Chun Soo Lee was in possession but lacked strength in the penalty box and a decisive finisher to beat Zuberbuehler.

Though under quiet a bit of pressure in the second half the Switzerland team were never ruffled and conceded only eight fouls in the match to Korea Republic's 20 fouls.

The result meant Republic of Korea who had four points would finish third in Group G behind France on five points, after the French beat Togo, Friday.

Switzerland would face Ukraine in the round of sixteen, the winner of that match playing the victor of Italy versus Australia in the quarter finals.

Sealand wrecked by fire

The Principality of Sealand is currently being checked, after a fire caused havoc to the ex-World War II tower. Fire-fighters from the Thames coastguard poured water on to the structure, and rescued a security guard who has been taken to Ipswich hospital. It is believed that the fire was started by a fault in a generator.

Sealand, formerly Rough Towers, is a self declared principality comprising of an old army fort. It was built to deter, and report back on, any German attempts to lay mines using aircraft in the channel of the Thames. It currently being used to hold servers for the computer industry, by the offshore company HavenCo.

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'.

No stranger to filmmaking, Matt has produced numerous digital short films, a series of books on digital filmmaking and set up the digital film festival onedotzero,

now in its tenth year. He wants to finally make a feature length film though, and decided that it was better to turn to the Internet for help and funding rather than plod through the usual 'development hell'.

"I wanted to put into practice what I've been preaching as a film futurist for ten years, and the technology and Internet infrastructure has just really caught up with that vision now for me to put it into practice."

The process is inspired by the 'web 2.0' movement, using social and collaborative communities on the Internet. Matt doesn't see the funding as coming from donations, but as people paying a subscription to become part of a 'Swarm'. "Rather than the 'many producer' model, this is more of an 'smart consumer' model ... members can help implement and bring their expertise into play, and so become more actively involved in the production."

The project hopes to use professional actors and crew, but use qualified members from the swarm as much as possible. The cast and the crew, including any volunteers that get chosen, would be paid for their work on the film, with Matt suggesting that this is "a great way for people to get into the industry".

Those members not directly involved in making the film can still participate in the process by discussing ideas on a messageboard, and having a vote on certain crucial decisions like on which script gets chosen for production. Asked how he would balance his own creative direction with input from members, Matt said "my vision will lead the project forward and define the

parameters, but the Swarm can influence that, and indeed offer improvements or insights I might not think of alone".

"Remember filmmaking is always a team effort - whether you are Martin Scorsese, Stanley Kubrick or Jean Luc Godard, you promote people within the project that will complement and bring something extra to the vision of the film. Give it more life. With the Swarm we are making that process more democratic, and giving a wider range of people an opportunity to shine and have creative input."

Members are promised a collector's edition DVD of the end product and exclusive merchandise, but the main distribution of the film will be via the Internet, using 'BitTorrents' and peer-to-peer networks. "Unlike many other filmmakers, I'm not wedded to cinema projection as the 'be all and end all' - I'm much more excited about people viewing remixed versions on their video ipods," explains Matt.

The 'remixing' of the film will be possible thanks to it being distributed under a Creative Commons licence. Matt suggests that the 'younger generation' is more used to being involved with and interacting with entertainment, and points to remixes of the Star Wars films (eg 'The Phantom Edit') as an example of these 'mashups'. "At the end of the project I would love to have an event that showcased five wildly different versions of the film, different visions from people other than my definitive initial edit," he suggests. The licence will be for non-commercial use only, however, and so commercial TV stations would still have to pay in order to screen the film.

The project is partly inspired by the success of 'The Million Dollar Homepage', in which British student Alex Tew aimed to raise a million dollars to fund his university education, simply by selling advertising space on a single web page. The publicity surrounding the idea, coupled with the 'viral' effect of Internet users passing the page on, meant that he eventually managed to make himself the million dollars.

The success of these projects partly seems to depend on them being interesting and original enough to attract enough attention, and it's often difficult to see how they could be repeated. Copy-cat versions of the million dollar homepage have so far failed to hugely take off. When put with this idea, Matt commented "I already expect people to copy the model we are inventing with A Swarm of Angels - it's a perfect way to create cult media, where the director gets more creative control and organically funds a project, and the fans of the project get more involvement within it. If the market gets too crowded with these projects though, then they'll have to be packaged differently to stand out. But that's what traditional film and media projects need to do anyway."

Over 600 members have signed up to the 'swarm' so far, which Matt comments is already an early success, but 50,000 members in total will be needed in order to fully fund the £1 million budget. Matt suggests that getting to the next stage, of reaching 1,000 members, followed by the phase of getting 5,000 members, will be the hardest part, as after that the film will be more 'tangible'. He fully expects to raise the full budget, but comments that if the

fundraising stalls, "options will be presented by advisors and The Swarm, and based on some kind of consensus we'll come up with the best option for moving forward."

Traditionally, independent films are funded either through persuading wealthy individuals to invest, who sometimes are sometimes given 'Executive Producer' credits, or through organisations like the UK Film Council, who award funds from the National Lottery. A tax credit for producers making small films in the UK was announced by the government in 2005, in a bid to give a boost to the UK independent film industry.

Matt says that the film will be "a thriller with soft science fiction elements", which he says will suit his target audience. "But it will have an indie edginess to it, and be far more visually inventive than you would get with a 'normal' British independent feature."

Contributors to the project include artists 'The Kleptones', who will help with the soundtrack, comic book writer Warren Ellis and documentary filmmaker Grant Gee.

The Swarm of Angels project is online at aswarmofangels.com and costs £25 as an individual to become a member.

Spain edge out Saudi Arabia 1-0 in Group H

Spain beat Saudi Arabia by the slim margin of a single goal in Kaiserslautern, Friday.

Except for an unlikely scoreline, the result of the game would not change the position of the top two teams in Group H and Spain started the game resting most of its first choice team.

The Spanish dominated the game but did not take its chances to make a hefty scoreline against the team that was 29 places below them in the Fifa rankings.

On 88 minutes Saudi Arabia nearly made Luis Aragones's side pay when Mohammed Noor ran to the Spanish goaline and cut a ball back for Saad Al Harthi who, with a good view on net, hit his shot high over the bar.

Saudi Arabia had 41 per cent of ball possession and otherwise were confined to hitting the red shirts on the break. They were caught offside five times.

Jose Antonio Reyes and Joaquin were brightest attacking players for Spain and had a number of chances to score but either their finishing was off or Mabrouk Zaid saved well. The Saudi Arabian keeper had an outstanding game saving 12 shots.

The Spanish passing game lacked a bit of speed and the only goal came from a well executed set-piece after half an hour's play. Reyes, on the left touchline whipped in a vicious cross and Spanish defender Juanito rose 12 yards from goal and headed down powerfully inside the near post.

Though the result was not comfortable and could have ended in a draw had Al Harthi not spurned his glorious chance Spain won their last Group H match with what were essentially reserve players. Luis Aragones would enter the round of sixteen game against France, runners-up in Group G, with a first team of well rested-players.

Ukraine advance after win against Tunisia in Group H

Ukraine beat Tunisia by an Andriy

Shevchenko penalty in Berlin to advance to the round of sixteen, Friday.

Roger Lemerre, coach of Tunisia, might consider his team were unlucky as the match seemed to turn on officiating decisions that favoured the Ukrainians.

Ukraine went into the last Group H game needing a draw to go through to the round of sixteen while Tunisia needed a win. It was a competitive match without much flair or accurate passing.

A total of just nine shots and six corner kicks and the 42 fouls amassed suggested that the game was mostly played in the centre third of the pitch.

The first of three things to go wrong from the Tunisia perspective was the sending off of arguably their best player Zied Jaziri. He got his second yellow card a minute before half-time for a mistimed challenge which followed a yellow card for foul simulation earlier in the game.

The second crucial moment, when the score was still 0-0, appeared to follow from an Andriy Rusol foul a few yards away from his penalty area on 64 minutes. The caution Rusol received meant he would miss Ukraine's next Fifa World Cup match.

Anis Ayari took the freekick and got it up over the wall; it was close enough to going in that it landed on the netting on top of the goal. Unfortunatly for Tunisia television replay showed a Ukrainian player in the wall, inside the penalty area, stuck his arm up and the ball had clipped his arm on the way through.

This was the fifth time in three

days at the World Cup players in defensive positions had put their hand up in their own penalty area to stop balls; it also happened in Portugal versus Mexico; Serbia and Montenegro versus Ivory Coast; and Croatia versus Australia. In this match no penalty was awarded for the handball.

Four minutes later Andriy Shevchenko made it 1-0 for Ukraine from the penalty spot. There was some question about whether the award was just. Although Shevchenko had done well to nip past the Tunisian keeper, and had two defenders in close vicinity, he had appeared to trip himself when he tapped his own left ankle with his right foot.

For neutral fans in the Olympiastadion a bright spot in a scrappy match came on on 89 minutes when Ali Boumnijel made a brilliant save from Andriy Voronin. Voronin was one-on-one with the Tunisian and the save seemed to block an almost certain second goal for Ukraine.

By that time the game was done and dusted and Ukraine were through to the round of sixteen of the Fifa World Cup for the first time in its history.

Cadbury's recall over 1 million chocolate bars over salmonella fears

The British confectionist Cadbury's has recalled over one million chocolate bars from retailers over fears that they may be affected by salmonella. The company is stressing that it is only a precautionary measure, and that customers should not be concerned if they have eaten one of the bars.

The bars affected are the Dairy Milk Turkish 250g, Dairy Milk

Caramel, Dairy Milk Mint bars, Dairy Milk 8 chunk, Dairy Milk 1kg bar, Dairy Milk Buttons Easter Egg 105g and 10p Freddo bar. Uneaten products can be returned to 'Cadbury Recall, Freepost MID20061, Birmingham B30 2QZ', and then a full refund will be given. Customers can also call 0800 818181 if they are concerned.

Cadbury has said that it expects to have fresh stocks of the products back on the market in the near future.

The decision was made in consultation with the Food Standards Agency.

Pluto's moons named

The two recently discovered moons of the planet Pluto were officially named Hydra and Nix by the International Astronomical Union, the internationally recognized authority for assigning designations to celestial bodies.

The moons were discovered in May last year by the Pluto Companion Search Team, a team of scientists from the Southwest Research Institute (SwRI), the Johns Hopkins University's Applied Physics Laboratory (APL), the Space Telescope Science Institute and Lowell Observatory, using images taken from the Hubble space telescope. The moons were designated as S/2005 P1 (Hydra) and P2 (Nix) upon discovery.

Their discovery comes 27 years after the discovery of Pluto's largest moon Charon. The two moons are roughly 5000 times fainter than Pluto and two to three times farther from Pluto, compared to Charon. The two bodies are roughly 50 km in diameter.

The names are derived from Greek mythology, where Hydra is a monster with the body of a serpent and nine heads and Nix is the goddess of darkness and night. Nix is also the mother of Charon, an allusion to the giant impact which is believed to have created the three satellites of Pluto, with Charon borne of the material from which Nix formed. Pluto himself is the god of the underworld.

KLM flight makes emergency landing on Eindhoven Airport

Authorities were on high alert as a KLM Cityhopper flight from London made an emergency landing at Eindhoven Airport. The plane was forced to land with broken landing gear. During the landing, two tires broke and the plane was violently shaking. Four crew and 50 passengers were on board at the time.

During the emergency, the airport was immediatly closed and emergency crews arrived within minutes at the scene. Twenty fire units were sent to the plane.

The Ministry of Defense said no one was injured in the incident and an investigation is under way.

FOX to produce new 'Futurama' episodes

20th Century Fox will produce at least 13 new episodes of the animated series Futurama, scheduled to air on Comedy Central in 2008. Futurama, an animation from The Simpsons creator Matt Groening, was canceled by FOX in 2003.

Comedy Central has recently acquired the rights to the back catalogue of 72 Futurama episodes and any eventual new episodes.

"We are thrilled that Matt Groening

and 20th Century Fox Television have decided to produce new episodes of 'Futurama' and that Comedy Central will be the first to air them," announces Comedy Central senior vice president for programming David Bernath.

Voice actors Billy West (Fry, Professor Farnsworth), Katey Sagal (Leela) and John DiMaggio (Bender) are all contracted to return.

Australian Internet filters "belated": Opposition

Speaking in the Australian House of Representatives on Thursday, opposition leader Kim Beazley (Brand, Labor) asked Australian Prime Minister John Howard (Bennelong, Liberal) why the government had not adopted Labor's policy on Internet filtering.

Mr Beazley said that the government's Protecting Families Online initiatives were a belated response to Labor's policy of "clean-feed" filtering - where pornographic and other inappropriate material is filtered at the Internet Service Provider level. He asked why the government would not "swallow its pride" and introduce the policy proposed by Labor.

In response, the Prime Minister said that the package announced by his government on Wednesday achieves the goals of protecting children without "imposing the unreasonable restrictions and cost burdens of the Labor Party's policy".

In April, the Internet Industry Association - the apex body representing Internet related businesses in Australia dismissed the idea of ISP-level filtering, calling it "inappropriate and heavy handed". The association said

despite network level filtering working in schools and large corporations, it would more than likely impact network performance on large service provider networks.

The IIA said that providing users with filtering software and supervision of children's online activities by parents are the most appropriate means by which to protect children using the Internet.

Today in History

1128 - Alfonso I of Portugal fought the Battle of Sao Mamede, the first step toward Portuguese independence.

1314 - Scotland regained independence as forces led by Robert the Bruce defeated Edward II of England in the Battle of Bannockburn.

1440 - Eton College in Berkshire, England, was founded by King Henry VI to provide free education to poor students who would then go on to King's College, Cambridge.

1535 - The Anabaptist state of Munster was conquered and subsequently disbanded.

1597 - The first Dutch voyage to the East Indies reached Bantam on Java.

1947 - First known sighting of UFOs: Kenneth Arnold saw nine luminous disks in the form of saucers flying above the U.S. state of Washington.

June 24 is Battle of Carabobo Day in Venezuela (1821), Fete nationale du Quebec (Saint-Jean-Baptiste Day) in Quebec, Canada

Quote of the Day

"We thought: we're poor, we have nothing, but when we started losing one after the other so each day became remembrance day, we started composing poems about God's great generosity and â our

former riches."
~ Anna Akhmatova

Word of the Day chrestomathy; n

1. A collection of written passages, used to learn an unfamiliar language.

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