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England players try to put a good face on farcical Euro defeat

Once again England have managed to seize defeat from the jaws of victory and while the players make their excuses for the farcical defeat by France the nation is braced once again for disappointment.

Liverpool's Michael Owen, who had a lacklustre game in what, up until the end, was a solid England performance, says they will get over it and that team spirit has not been harmed. David Beckham accepted his share of the blame after missing a penalty.

Meanwhile Spain, whose disappointing record is on a par with England's but at least managed to beat Russia in the opening game, are expected to make some changes before their next match with Greece. Iñaki Sáez, the coach, has called on the nation to have faith in him.

Single-family houses gobble up Barcelona building land

After centuries of building flats the people of Barcelona have developed a taste for family homes and the trend is leading to a shortage of building land.

According to a report in *El Periódico*, of the nearly 69,000 homes built in Catalonia in 2003, almost a third were single-family residences. The Barcelona metropolitan area, including the Maresme, Baix Llobregat and Alt Penedès, will have exhausted land within 14 years.

Over the past decade, 10 per cent of the half a million homes built in Catalonia have been for single families and 17 per cent were duplexes. Surprisingly, the small units are being built in the most densely populated area, the city of Barcelona itself.

Poll confirms shift in Catalan politics

Humiliating defeat signals decline of Pujol era

As in Spain, the Socialist Party triumphed in Catalonia and returned a significant victory over the Popular Party and *Convergència i Unió* which under Jordi Pujol ruled Catalonia until last year.

PSC obtained 42 per cent of the vote while PP and CiU managed only 17 per cent each. *Esquerra Repub-*

licana consolidated the gains it made in last March's general election. Many will see in the result confirmation that the Pujol era is well and truly over as younger nationalists gravitate towards ERC while CiU, now led by Artur Mas, is unable to shake off the image of being yesterday's party.



Art from pre-Columbian Mexico at La Pedrera, by Fundació Caixa Catalunya

Exhibit at La Pedrera takes on the cosmos Mexican-style

Until the 10th of October, an art exhibit at La Pedrera explores the way pre-Columbian civilisations perceived the relationship between humans and the supernatural. In the *Fundació Caixa Catalunya* exhibition room, *El cos i el cosmos* offers visitors a glimpse at Mexican life between the years 1200 ad and 1521, with a collection of over 150 sculptures from that period. Divided in four parts, the exhibit deals with the main rituals and festivals that were

Sculptures helped humans communicate with the gods and balance the universe

performed in order to maintain cosmic order. According to pre-Columbian cultures, humanity was responsible for keeping the balance in a universe inhabited by supernatural beings. The sculptures, now seen as works of art, were meant to act as intermediaries in a complex relationship, and were used to help open communication with divine spirits. They reflect the conception of the *cos* (body) and the *cosmos*.

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War is a good way to make a killing

XAVIER DIEZ

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Garbo: a personal memoir of the spy who saved the day

