

Ajax promoted

Sports Reporter

Ajax Sports Club gained promotion to the Milnars First Division cricket league when they became champions of Group 'B' beating City Club by two wickets in a round-robin league play-off match of the Rank-Xerox Second Division cricket league yesterday at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium.

Ajax Club will now play Eskaton Sabuj, champions of Group 'A' in the Rank-Xerox Second Division cricket league final after the Eid-ul-Fitr holidays. The exact date has not yet been finalised. Both the champion and runners-up teams are assured of promotion to the Milnars league.

City Club and Ajax Club finished with six points from four matches each, necessitating a play-off to decide the champions from Group 'B'.

Put into bat, City Club were skittled out for 124 runs in 37.3 overs. Gautam, 24, Zakir, 20, Nahid, 12, Bappi, 12 not out and Moni with 11 were the City Club batsmen to shine with the bat.

Liton, Lunik and Bobby captured two wickets each for 23, 28 and 34 runs respectively.

Ajax Club, in reply, struggled to score 125 for the loss of eight wickets in 38.3 overs. They were reeling at 80 runs for the loss of eight wickets but a superb 37-run match-

winning partnership between Shawkat 22 not out, and Liton, 17 not out, for the eighth wicket made sure Ajax stayed on the right track.

Topaz, 21, Bobby, 12, and Tutul with 10 were the other notable contributors for Ajax Club.

Bappi, Shipon, and Pappa claimed two wickets each for 13, 21 and 34 runs respectively for City Club.

Nat'l cricket

Sports Reporter

Mymensingh District Sports Association and Madaripur District Sports Association moved into the final round of the national cricket championship after winning their respective zonal final matches on Saturday played at different venues around the country.

Mymensingh DSA outplayed Satkhira by six wickets at the Jessore Stadium.

Satkhira DSA, betting first, were bundled out for a paltry 96 runs in 39.3 overs.

In reply, Mymensingh cruised to 102 for the loss of four wickets in 30.2 overs.

In the Zone 'B' match at Faridpur Stadium, Madaripur coasted to a comfortable 44-run victory over Patuakhali DSA.

Madaripur, electing to bat first, scored 141 all out in 34 overs and, in reply, Patuakhali managed 97 all out in 32 overs.

Edberg takes title

TOKYO, Apr 14: Stefan Edberg, applying pressure from the baseline as well as his favorite position at the net, overwhelmed Ivan Lendl 6-1, 7-5, 6-0 Sunday and won the Japan Open Tennis Championships, reports AP.

"I think it was my best match so far this year and one of the best in my career," said the 25-year-old Swede, who collected 1,37,000 Dollars for his fourth Japan Open title. He also won in 1987, 1989 and 1990.

"I made returns very well, some of them deep ones, and I kept pressure on him on every service game," Edberg said.

Lendl was hitting his passing shots either long or wide in the first set, before 8,200 spectators in cloudy, chilly weather.

Edberg started the second set with his third service break of the match, but Lendl broke right back with a service return winner, a cross-court shot and a volley.

Edberg also broke in the ninth and 11th games while Lendl broke in the 10th before ceding the set.

At 5-0, 40-0 in the final set, Lendl saved one match point with a service return winner but then netted his next return.

He (Edberg) served better

than me," Lendl said. Lendl also committed 42 unforced errors against Edberg's 22.

MSC leave for Riyadh Apr 22

A 24-member Dhaka Mohammedan Sporting Club team will leave Dhaka for Saudi Arabia April 22 to participate in the first Asia Cup Winner's Cup football championship, reports UNB.

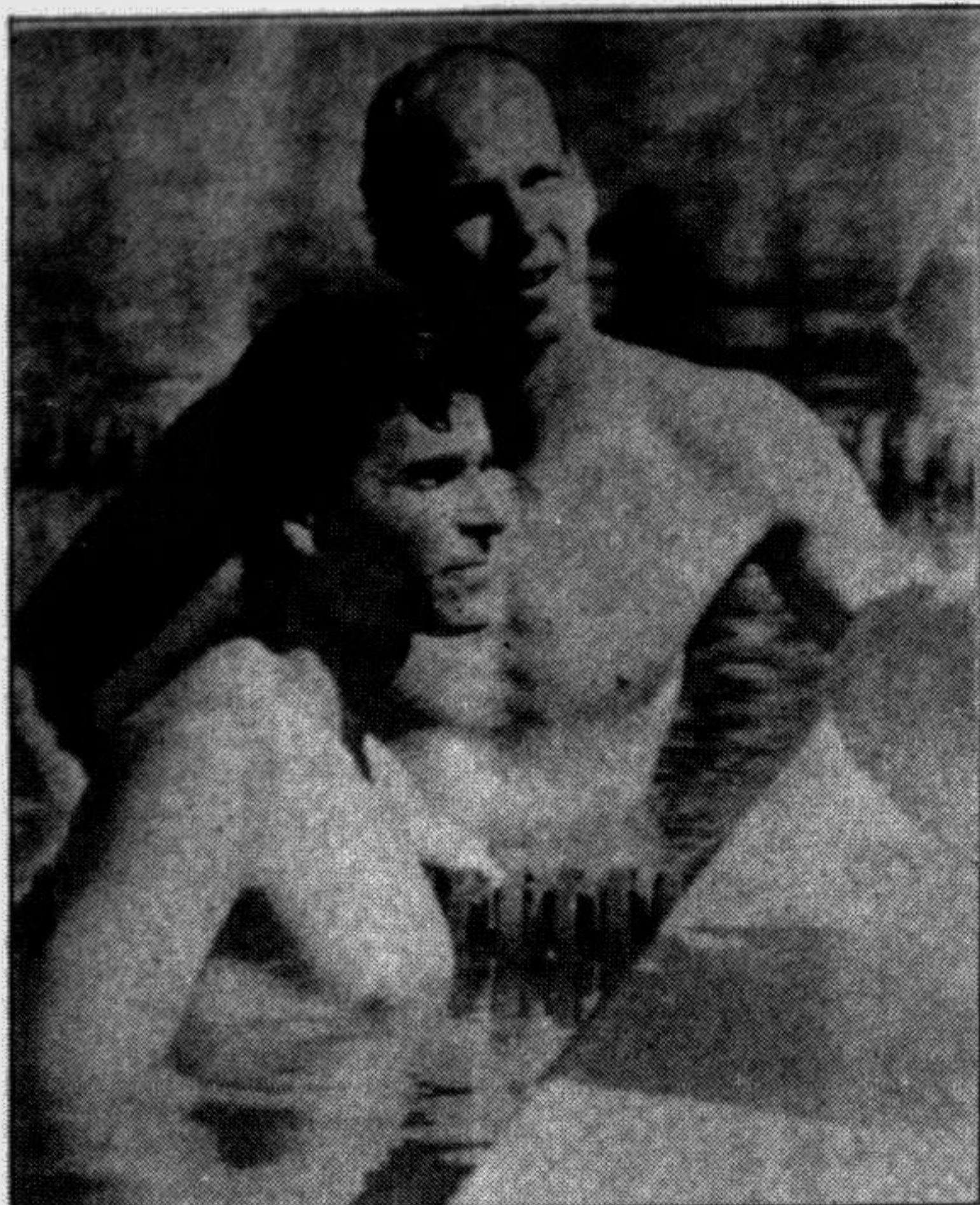
Both the first and return leg second round matches will be held in the Saudi capital Riyadh on April 24 and 28 respectively.

Mohammedan SC, the champions of the Ma-O-Moni and Independence Day football tournaments, will take on Saudi champions Al-Hela Club.

The local team, headed by club president Al-haj Abdul Momen, consists of seven officials and 17 players.

Other team members are: Deputy leader - Monirul Haq Chowdhury; Coach - M. Kalkobad; Officials - Arifur Rahman, Delwar Hossain, Munir Ahmed and Fazlur Rahman Babul.

The players are: Kanan, Tuhin, Abul, Kaiser, Salauddin, Johnny, Masud, Jewel Rana, Tito, Shabbir, Ayaz, Manik, Roxy, Naquib, Zakir, Mustakim and Mamun.



Seven Olympic gold medal winner Mark Spitz (front) and world record holder in the 50m butterfly Tom Jager stand together in the pool after a challenge race Jager won in Mission Viejo, California on April 13. —AFP photo

Spitz left at the blocks

MISSION VIEJO, California, Apr 14: Olympic swimming legend Mark Spitz's attempt to regain his old gold medal form got off to a losing start on Saturday when he was beaten soundly in the 50-metre butterfly by fellow-American Tom Jager, reports Reuter.

Jager, 26, the world record holder in the 50 metres freestyle, came in nearly two seconds and two body lengths ahead of the 41-year-old Spitz. Spitz's time of 26.70 seconds was well behind Jager's 24.92 seconds.

Jager led from the start and kept increasing his lead until the end of the race in an outdoor pool on a warm, sunny day.

"I just totally got left at the blocks. In the first two strokes I was at least a second behind," Spitz said.

"My race was all in the start," Jager said.

"Not only has time passed, but techniques have changed since Spitz swam at the Munich Olympic in 1972," Jager said.

"We take the start more seriously today than when Mark was swimming," Jager said.

Spitz, who won seven gold medals at Munich and is trying to gain a spot in the 100-metre butterfly on the 1992 US team, blamed a bad case of nerves for the slow race.

"I was very nervous," said Spitz. "That's the first time I've started in 18-1/2 years. I might have been able to run across the pool faster."

To qualify for the Olympic trials next year, Spitz will have to clock a time of 55.59 seconds in the 100-metre butterfly and will have to swim faster than 54 seconds to win an Olympic berth.

Spitz said he wasn't disappointed by the loss but had hoped to swim about a second faster.

"I don't think the loss is disappointing," Spitz said. "I thought I was going to be able to go in the low 25s."

Spitz said in training in the last week he had clocked times a second faster than Saturday's.

Spitz said he plans no major changes in his training after Saturday's loss, but hopes to recapture his old racing skills.

"I have to get race smart," Spitz said.

Jager won 20,000 dollars for Saturday's race, while Spitz took 10,000 dollars.

Saturday's loss will help him prepare for another 50-metre butterfly race later this month against American Matt Biondi who won seven medals — five gold, one silver and one bronze — at the 1988 Olympics. The race with Biondi carries a 50,000-dollar purse with the winner taking 35,000 dollars.

72 black belt holders get certificates

Sports Reporter

The prize-distribution ceremony of the Bangladesh Judo and Karate Federation was held yesterday at the National Sports Council conference room.

Seventy-two black-belt holding judokas and karatekas received certificates and prizes from State Minister for Youth and Sports Mirza Abbas.

The ceremony, held for the first time since 1975, was also attended by NSC Chairman Maj. Gen Mahbubur Rahman and chief of the judo federation Md. Strajuddin.

Bilquis Rani Padamsee, a karate black-belt holder, will represent Bangladesh at the second world women's karate championships scheduled to be held in Fukouka, Japan June 15-16.

29 athletes for SAF Games camp

Sports Reporter

Twenty-nine athletes and five coaches were named to join the SAF Games athletic training camp beginning from April 20, according to a Bangladesh Amateur Athletic Federation press release issued yesterday.

The selected athletes and coaches have been requested to report to the federation office by April 20.

The selected athletes are: Golam Ambia, Farid Khan, Qiyasuddin, Mujibur Rahman, Sulaiman Majumdar, Shah Alam Taluqdar, Mushtaq Ahmed, Mohammed Ali, Bonny Amin, Afzal Hossain, Nazrul Islam, Jahangir Alam, Monirul Haque, Mustafa Taluqdar, (Army); Shah Jalal, Mehdi Hasan, Mizar Hossain, Nilur Yasmin, Nasima Akhter, Jesmin, (BJMC); Wajir Rahman, Emdadul Haque Ranju, Piroza Khatoun, Nazma Haider Rafeza, Sumita Goswami, (BTMC); Samar Ranjan Kar Hablu, Azmal Hossain, Rokeya Begum, (Customs); Shefali Rani Dey (Ansars).

Simmons finally finds form



BRIDGETOWN, Apr 14: Opener Phil Simmons, after a season of wasted opportunities, finally found form just when he needed to most by hitting a century against Australia's touring cricketers on Saturday, reports Reuter.

The Trinidadian batsman scored 122 for the West Indies Board XI, who were 314 for six at the close of the opening day of their four-day match.

Simmons, supported by Clayton Lambert (72) and Brian Lara (56), reaffirmed the promise of his 71 in Australia's first tour match and made up for subsequently failing to pass 34 in seven innings against them.

It may also just be enough to keep him ahead of a number

of rivals chasing the last batting place for West Indies tour of England starting next month.

Simmons hit 18 fours — a high proportion in completing his hundred and 22 altogether and, despite a very slow start, reached three figures in 181 balls.

He still hit the ball in the air but, where edges and lofted drives flew to hand in earlier meetings, this time they eluded the Australian fieldsmen.

Fellow opener Lambert, from Guyana, produced a more polished innings as they put on 125 and captain Clyde Best, another contender, also looked good for 30. Lara underlined why he is already regarded as a definite tour choice.

It was a disheartening day

for Australia, especially left-

Best c Veletta b Hughes 30
Lara c Marsh b S.Waugh 56
Arthurton c Veletta b S. Waugh 11

Adams run out 4
Anthony not out 0
Williams not out 11
Extras (nb-8) 8
Total (six wickets) 314

Fall of wickets: 1-125, 2-184, 3-265, 4-287, 5-303, 6-303.

To bat: A. Cummins, Mosley, I. Allen

Bowling (to date):
O R R
Reid 15 2 73

E. Alderman 18 6 45
S. Waugh 21 4 76
Hughes 12 0 55
W P. Taylor 20 6 43
O M. Waugh 4 0 22

1 Australia: G. Marsh, M. S.Waugh
3 Taylor, D. Boon, D. Jones, M. Lambert C Hughes b
1 Waugh, S. Waugh, M. Veletta, P. Alderman

O Taylor, M. Hughes, T. Alderman, B. Reid

arm pace bowler Bruce Reid whose return to form is proving very delayed.

There was, however, one brilliant piece of Australian cricket. Merv Hughes, burly and not notably agile, dived full length to his right to pluck Lambert's off drive from the air like an international soccer goalkeeper.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard on the first day of the four-day cricket match between the West Indies Board XI and Australia on Saturday:

West Indies Board XI first

innings
Simmons c Boon b 122

Lambert C Hughes b 72

Sabatini overtakes Navratilova



AMELIA ISLAND, Florida, Apr 14: Gabriela Sabatini came dangerously close to missing an opportunity to become the number-three player in the world and to beat Steffi Graf again, but pulled out a 6-2, 2-6, 6-4 semifinal victory over Arantxa Sanchez Vicario at the 350,000-dollar Bausch and Lomb women's tennis championships on Saturday, reports Reuter.

The top-seeded Graf, the defending champion here, played exceptionally well to whip unseeded American Patty Fendick 6-0, 6-1 in a 56-minute drubbing.

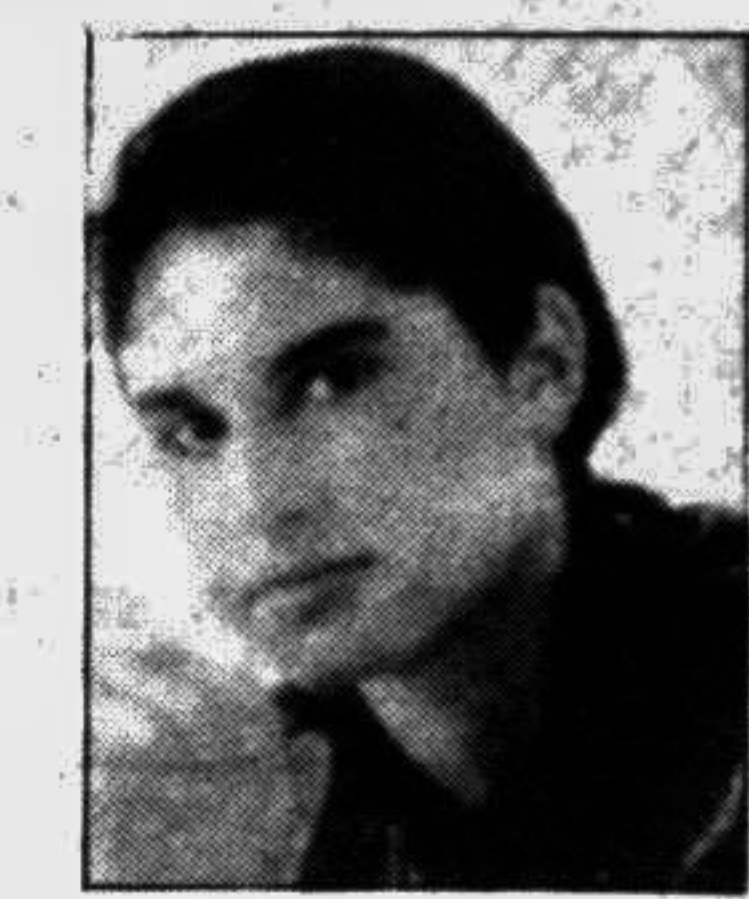
Reaching the final guarantees the second-seeded Sabatini the number-three ranking which Martina Navratilova has been occupying. This is the first time since 1977 that Navratilova had fallen out of the top three.

"Is that true?" asked Sabatini, when told she will move up a notch in Monday's rankings. "That's very good and I'm happy about it. It's good to go up step-by-step."

Sabatini held the No. 3 ranking before, starting in February 1989, but surrendered it a year ago today to Sanchez Vicario, when the Spaniard beat her here in last year's final.

The Argentine, who wilted in the sweltering heat, almost didn't survive the dogged onslaught of the third-seeded Sanchez Vicario. It's been a long time since Sabatini looked perplexed, but her narrow escape sets up another Graf-Sabatini special.

Graf and Sabatini have played 28 times and the German leads their career series 20-8. But Sabatini has won their last four meetings and their match at the 1990 US Open final.



GABRIELA SABATINI

Despite the seedings, Sabatini came to this event the favourite over the second-ranked German. Nevertheless, her two-hour, 15-minute marathon with Sanchez Vicario places her in a precarious position for Sunday.

"For me, she's always been the biggest opponent," said

Sabatini, of Graf. "I'm looking forward to playing her, it's good motivation. Mental advantage has a lot to do with it, the reason why I'm winning."

Graf is also looking forward to today's final.

"Because she's won the last few matches she's put a lot of pressure on her," said Graf. "They expect her to win."

The Sabatini-Sanchez Vicario match held great intrigue and some excellent tennis. Of the 26 games, 16 were service breaks as each player tested the other.

Heat and humidity caused a little drama too. Sanchez Vicario attempted to inconspicuously change her shirt on-court, while Sabatini headed off-court to change her top. The Argentinian also asked for the trainer, requesting advice on how to deal with the heat.

Papin's hattrick for Marseille



PARIS, Apr 14: Jean-Pierre Papin notched a hattrick — his first league goals in two months — to inspire French First Division soccer leaders Marseille to a 6-2 win over struggling Nancy on Saturday, reports Reuter.

Despite scoring for France against Spain and Albania and for Marseille in the European Cup against AC Milan and Spartak Moscow, Papin had been out of luck in the league.

But that all changed with a three goal haul at the Stade Velodrome which hoisted the tally of the league's leading marksman to 22 and helped maintain Marseille's three point lead at the top of the table.

Papin, France's top scorer for the past three years, netted with a fine header in the third minute and a brilliant shot in the 21st, both from crosses by

England's Chris Waddle, and completed his hattrick with a solo raid nine minutes after the interval.

Waddle scored with a superb free-kick four minutes before halftime and Laurent Fournier and Bastle Boll struck in the dying minutes to complete the rout.

David Zitelli and Segundo Simon salvaged some pride for last-but-one club Nancy on counter-attacks in the 65th and 83rd minutes.

There was more good news for Marseille's Belgian coach Raymond Goethals as Yugoslav Dragan Stokjovic, out of action for months with a knee injury, played as a substitute after the interval.

Marseille, who have a game in hand over the other leading clubs, remained three points clear of second placed Monaco, who recorded a 2-0 home win over St Etienne with

goals from Liekebia's George Weah and Argentina's Ramon Diaz.

Marseille, with 47 points from 32 matches and six games to go, look set to win the title for the third consecutive season.

Auxerre, beaten 1-0 at Lille on Friday, are third, six points behind the leaders.

Meanwhile, an AFP report from Marseille says Olympique Marseille have increased their capital to 51 million francs (10 million dollars) in what was seen as a move to keep leading scorer Jean-Pierre Papin.

It was believed they might have to sell Papin to balance their books at the end of the season.

Millionaire businessman Bernard Tapie, who owns 49 per cent of the stock, said he would put the club on the Paris Stock Exchange in 1994.

Tapie said if the local council could not build a new sta-

dium he would seek private funding. He wants a 70,000-seater stadium costing around 700 million francs (140 million dollars).

Indian hockey tour cancelled

NEW DELHI, Apr 14: An Indian hockey tour of England has been called off because the hosts were unable to arrange test matches, Indian Hockey Federation (IHF) secretary Gursewak Singh said today, reports Reuter.

The English leg of a four nation European tour in May and June was cancelled because the British Hockey Association wanted the Indians to play club sides instead of tests, Singh said.

The British Hockey Association has expressed its inability to arrange tests as they would be hosting a tournament at that time," he said.

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