

Esteghlal send early warning

Sports Reporter

Iranian champions Esteghlal Club made an impressive start in the 10th Asian Club Cup football championship when they outplayed North Korean champions April 25 Club by the odd goal in three in the second match of the opening day yesterday evening at the Dhaka Stadium.

The winners led 2-0 at the breather. The taller, sturdier Iranians who are one of the joint favourites of lift the AFC Trophy along with defending champions Liaoning FC of China, played a confident, even relaxed game against their Korean opponents and dominated the proceedings for most of the match.

The white-jersted Iranians, some of them sporting a beard which has become so common in Iran since the Islamic revolution, were the more competent side compared to the blue-jersted Koreans who opted for a rather defensive strategy, especially in the first half.

The match, a sort of repeat of last year's Asian Games final in Beijing when Iran won the

award-winning knock of 88 in last Saturday's Benson and Hedges Cup final followed by a century for Worcestershire against Hampshire on Tuesday night persuaded the selectors to give him another chance.

As for Allan Lamb, with five failures behind him, only reputation and a magnificent record of success against the Windies over the years can save him. Both Hick and Mark Ramprakash have shown it takes time to adjust at the highest level while David Gower — now back to something like his best form — has class and experience to commend him.

As for the bowling attack, neither Devon Malcolm nor David Lawrence have threatened to win England a Test this summer.

One of them, probably Lawrence is likely to play at Edgbaston but the selectors just might consider Warwickshire's Gladstone Small on his home ground.

nowhere to slot the ball home (1-0). This was in the 34th minute.

Three minutes later, before the Koreans could recover from that first shock, Sadeq Varmazyar raced down the right and sent a crisp minus inside the box and Abdul Samad Marfavi made no mistake, slamming it into the net with all the defenders caught on the wrong foot (2-0).

The Koreans changed their tactics for the second session, putting more emphasis on attacks and this soon paid dividends when four minutes after the resumption the Iranians gave away a freekick after fouling a Korean forward just outside the penalty zone. Pak Myung-Hun, taking the freekick, stunned not only the Iranian defenders but the 15 thousand-odd crowd with a gem of a goal. Pak's curling, power-packed kick saw the ball sail clear over the Iranian wall and then dip into the top corner of the net, to the right of goalie Abedzadeh who was frozen on his feet (2-1).

For the remainder of the encounter, while the Koreans tried to draw level the Iranians also attempted a few break-away counter-attacks, none of

which bore fruit. In the end the Iranians managed to hold on to their slender one-goal lead.

Two Iranian players had to be carried off the pitch on stretchers after getting hurt in the course of play.

Sung Chol-U of April 25 received a yellow card caution from UAE referee Binhamid Saeed Salim for a cynical foul.

TEAMS

Esteghlal Club :- Ahmed Reza, Shahin Bayani, Reza Hassanzadeh, Amir Mussavivina, Sadeq Varmazyar, Mehdi Founizadegan, Majid Namjumulagh (Jafar Mukhtarifar), Shahrukh Bayani, Apdeshir Ghalehoni, Abus Sarkhab (Abdul Ali Changis) and Abdul Samad Marfavi.

April 25 Club :- Kim Chung, Li Ryong Chol, Chong Young Jun, Ryu Gnaha Chol, Sung Chol U, Kim Sang Gil, Kona Myona Chol, Pak Myona Hun, Kang Jong Chol, Choi Won Nam and Li Chang Gyu.

TODAY'S MATCH

PS Pelita Jaya of Indonesia will take on Al-Nasr Club of Oman in the today's only match, starting at 6.00 pm. Ticket for today's match will cost Taka ten each.



Mohammedan goalkeeper Kanon(R) looks back in despair as Apirak(third from right) rejoices after equalising for Bangkok Bank Sports Club in yesterday's opening match of the 10th Asian Club Cup football championship at Dhaka Stadium. The teams drew 1-1. Story on Page 1.

IAAF readmits South Africa

JOHANNESBURG : July 19: South Africa was readmitted to the world athletics governing body on Thursday, but the country's Olympic chief cast doubt on South Africa's participation at next month's World Championships, reports AFP.

Ramsamy said the decision was premature and added, "Athletics is not unfied yet."

"Although very interesting, the situation is still pretty confusing and I'm sure we haven't heard the last word on going to Tokyo," said Javelin thrower Tom Petranoff.

Too much for Gascoigne

LONDON, July 19: England's injured football super-star Paul Gascoigne claims he will only be happy when he quits football and says the game is "running" his life, reports AFP.

The Tottenham player was quick to point out what the pressures had done to Ireland's George Best whose serious drink problems surfaced again recently when he upset BBC viewers while appearing on an evening chat-show.

"Look at George Best. The trouble is they are trying to get me to be like him. And I'm not. I'm just me."

"I've had money — but when have I been able to enjoy spending it? When I go out I get paranoid, people are always pestering me."

athletes themselves to look for a solution and I am sure we will come to a collective agreement", Ramsamy added.

Steve Rautenbach, a national selector and Chairman of the South African Coaches Association said the final decision on participation lay with the SAAA.

"If they decide it's right to send a team to Tokyo that's fine with me, but we've got to be very careful about rocking the unity boat," Rautenbach said.

Petrano and Rautenbach expressed concern that some South African athletes would not be ready for the Tokyo Championships, especially because the South African season ended in April this year.

Several athletes have qualified for the World Championships on their performance in the 1990/91 season, Rautenbach said: "If only the World Championships were six months away, we'd have so much more time to prepare."

8 more hockey players will change colours

Sports Reporter
Eight more players sought transfer on the fifth day of the hockey players' transfers for the Delta Life First Division league yesterday at the Hockey Federation office at Dhaka Stadium.

So far a total of 58 players have decided to change their colours while 139 others have collected tokens till yesterday. The last date of this year's hockey transfers is July 22.

24 share lead

Sports Reporter
Twenty-four players are jointly leading the points' table with each full two points after the completion of the second round matches of the 12th national junior chess championship yesterday at National Sports Councils chess room.

Fide master Ziaur Rahman, Fide master Rifhat bin-Sattar, Khondokar Kayes Hasan, Jahangir, Ruhul Kabir, Tanima Parveen and Farhadur Rahman among the leaders who won their respective matches yesterday.

Burrell has a sore back

HOUSTON, July 19: Leroy Burrell, the world record-holder in the 100 meters, is suffering a sore back and a hamstring injury in his left leg, his coach says, reports AP.

University of Houston track coach Tom Tellez told the Houston Post that Burrell left the European circuit and returned to Houston on Thursday to begin treatment. He went through some stretching exercises and light jogging Thursday and is day-to-day on his training status.

"Burrell's leg is very tight and his back is bothering him a bit," Tellez said Thursday. "He just needs some rest and therapy, and hopefully he'll be all right."

Burrell first began complaining about his back and leg after a July 12 meet in London, where he competed in the 200.

England may recall Botham

LONDON, July 19: Ian Botham's vast experience and will to win could clinch him a Test return for England against the West Indies in next week's fourth cricket Test at Edgbaston, reports AFP.

The 35-year-old all-rounder's name is certain to be discussed at length when England's selectors run through their options.

And, with the series now balanced on a knife-edged following an emphatic West Indian win in Nottingham, Botham's influence and larger-than-life personality could be crucial at Edgbaston.

He has boosted England once there already this season — contributing significantly to an opening Texaco Trophy victory by claiming four wickets before tearing a hamstring while batting.

That injury ended Botham's hopes of starting a Test series

Graeme Hick — 55 runs in his first five innings for England — is another who looked down and out after Trent Bridge. But a gold



Foreign Minister Mustafizur Rahman being introduced with the participating players just before the kick-off of the 10th Asian Club Cup yesterday. State Minister for Youth and Sports Sadeq Hossain is also seen.

Five Argentine booters banned

SANTIAGO, July 19: All five of the players sent off during Argentina's brawling 3-2 victory over Brazil in the Copa America on Wednesday night have been suspended, reports AFP.

Argentina's Carlos Enrique picked up the severest punishment — a three-match ban — for a vicious foul on Brazilian defender Mario, who was banned for one match for retaliating.

Mario, along with teammate Mazinho, also suspended for one game, will miss Friday's match with Colombia but will be available for Brazil's last tie of the tournament with Chile on Sunday.

Brazil's Careca 11 was banned for two matches, and like Enrique will now miss the rest of the Copa.

Argentina's Caniggia was banned for one match and therefore misses Friday's clash with Chile — but should be playing in Sunday's tie with Colombia.

Lancashire, who lost their title as one-day kings with defeats in both knockout competitions last week, endured more misery as they went

down by an innings and 34 runs to Nottinghamshire at Trent Bridge.

Spinners Eddie Hemmings and Andy Afford did the damage.

Pak juniors leave for Sri Lanka

KARACHI, July 19: A Pakistan junior cricket team left here Thursday on a month-long tour of Sri Lanka where it will play three unofficial Tests and three one-day matches, reports AFP.

The 14-member team is led by wicket keeper-batsman Moïn Khan.

Team manager Ghaffar Ali Khan said his team would play "aggressive but positive" cricket, adding, "We are going with a will to win."

The team: Moïn Khan, Ghulam Ali, Inzamamul Haq, Tanveer Mehdî, Muhammed Zahid, Nadeem Afzal, Zahid Fozal, Aamir Hanif, Amir Sohail, Aman Ullah, Ather Latif, Aatur Rehman, Iqbal Sikander and Saeed Anwar.

Suspensions, injuries hit Argentina

SANTIAGO, July 19: Argentina have emerged as a strong favourites to win the South American soccer championship but it probably will have to do it without star forward Claudio Caniggia, reports AP.

The Diego Maradona-less Argentinians moved into a commanding position in the final round of the America Cup with a 3-2 victory over the defending champions Brazilians on Thursday night.

But that opening final-round victory was costly, as Caniggia was ejected in the first half of the match, requiring him to sit out Brazil's next game against Chile on Friday and possibly Sunday's match against Colombia.

Caniggia against Chile, but the situation is complicated by the loss of substitute forward Claudio Garcia, who flew home Wednesday with a broken jaw.

Sources close to Bastie said he probably will use Ramon Medina Bello or Antonio Mohamed to fill in for the World Cup star.

A victory over Chile on Friday would greatly tighten Argentina's grip on the title in the 10-nation biennial championship.

Argentina leads the four-team round-robin final with two points. Chile and

Wednesday's second game, have one point each. Brazil has none. The final round concludes Sunday.

The situation appears even more difficult for Brazilian coach Paulo Falcao, who will have to find substitutes for his three ejected players. Star sweeper Ricardo Rocha and left winger Joao Paulo are nursing injuries and also may be sidelined.

"We can say Joao Paulo is probably out, but Ricardo should recover," Falcao said. "But I'm still hopeful, and we will fight through the end."

Brazil plays Colombia on Friday.

Another concern for Bastie is the injuries to key midfielders Leonardo Rodriguez and Diego Simeone.

"Someone should be fine to play against Chile, but Rodriguez' situation is more complicated. He has a badly swollen right ankle," Bastie said.

The situation looks better at the Chilean and Colombian camps, although Chilean coach Arturo Salah said forward Ivan Zamorano is nursing a cold and had a fever Thursday morning.

"But it doesn't look serious, he should be well by tomorrow," Salah said.

Zamorano and Argentina's Gabriel Battistuta are the tournament's top scorers with five goals each.

Colombian head coach Luis Garcia will get a boost against Brazil with the return of forward Anthony de Avila, who had to sit out Wednesday's game because of an ejection against Brazil in the first round.

MAHWAH, N.J., July 19: Monica Seles held a news conference under a blue-and-white tent Thursday. It was an appropriate setting for an event that resembled a circus, reports AP.

Seles opens up

Meeting the press for the first time since pulling out of Wimbledon last month, Seles got the kind of superstar attention usually reserved for one of her idols — Madonna.



MONICA SELES

Speaking in front of 200 reporters, dozens of photographers, 16 microphones and one barking dog, the world's top-ranked woman tennis player defended her decision to drop out of sight and avoid the press after withdrawing from Wimbledon just three days before the tournament started on June 24.

"I don't think I made a mistake," she said. "I felt a lot of pressure, a lot of pressure inside myself. ... I was confused. I just wasn't ready to talk."

Sitting in sweltering heat under an open tent in the Pathmark Tennis Classic, Seles frequently wiped her sweaty brow with a paper towel. Seles, wearing black jeans and a flowered tank top, also felt the heat of probing questions from a press corps eager to get a full explanation for her bizarre behaviour in recent weeks.

Why, for instance, did she originally have her agent issue a vague press release saying she withdrew from Wimbledon because of a "minor accident?"

And why did the 17-year-old then go into seclusion, apparently hiding out in Florida, wearing wigs as a disguise and refusing to answer phone calls from anyone, including the head of the Women's Tennis Association?

And why did it take her almost a month to finally issue a statement explaining that she didn't play at Wimbledon because of shin splints and a stress fracture in her left leg? Pressed to answer these and other querulous questions during the 30-minute news conference, Seles sounded like a confused teenager who couldn't quite figure out what all the fuss was about.

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She said the main reason she avoided the press and WTA officials after Wimbledon was because she was as puzzled as everyone else about her injury. Seles claimed she saw six doctors in three countries before finally getting a correct diagnosis from Dr Richard Steadman, an orthopaedic

specialist in Vail, Colo. "I kept getting all these different answers," Seles said, whose rambling responses were interrupted several times by the barking of her dog, a Yorkshire Terrier named Astro.

"One doctor said I needed surgery, another said it was just shin splints and another said it was OK for me to play. I didn't know what to think."

While Monica was mum, the press had a field day speculating about her whereabouts, motives and physical problems. One British tabloid hinted she was pregnant, while others alleged that she skipped Wimbledon to protect a big bonus from her racket sponsor that might have been in jeopardy had she lost her No. 1 ranking in England.

Seles wouldn't reveal where she hid out after Wimbledon, dismissed the pregnancy rumour as "way out of line" and refuted the bonus allegation.

"I would have gotten the bonus no matter what I did at Wimbledon," she said. "In fact, I would have gotten a lot more money for winning Wimbledon. But I've never played tennis for money and I never will."

Still, Seles won't turn down the six-figure fee she's getting for appearing in the Pathmark exhibition, in which she was scheduled to play Andrea Leand on Thursday night. It would be Seles' first match since beating Arantxa Sanchez Vicario in the French Open fi-

nal on June 8. Seles is also scheduled to play for Yugoslavia in the Federation Cup next week at Nottingham, England. But she said that will depend on how she feels after playing in Mahwah.

"I want to test my leg before making a decision," Seles said. Seles said she is undergoing therapy three times a day and that she will wear special orthopaedic insoles in her sneakers.

"I don't know whether it helps my leg, but it sure helps me mentally," she said of the therapy. "My leg feels great. ... But I'm going to take it slow. I don't want to push myself before I'm ready."

Many followers of the tennis tour feel Seles was victimized by bad advice from her family and business representatives. But her brother-manager, Zoltan, and her agent, Bob Kain of International Management Group, said Seles was the one who wanted to remain silent during the controversy.

"We're not the boss. She's the boss," Kain said. "We advised her, but she made the final decision."

Although the news conference was dominated by serious questions, there were a few light moments. Tournament director Hohn Korff gave Seles a large cake with her first name and No. 1 spelled out in icing. Korff also handed Seles a blue T-shirt that read: "Rome, Paris, Wimbledon, Mahwah." Wimbledon was crossed out with a black line.

After hesitating for a moment, Seles held up the shirt for photographers and smiled.