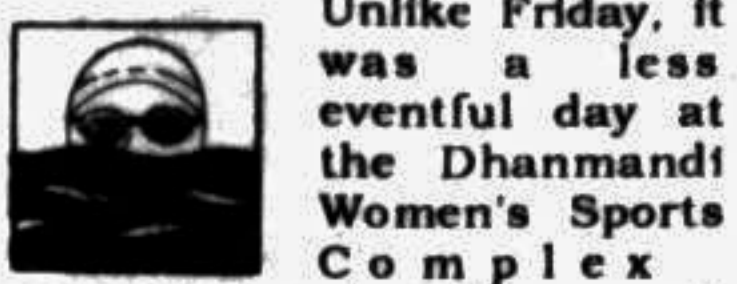


BTMC girls rule the pool

Sports Reporter



Unlike Friday, it was a less eventful day at the Dhanmandi Women's Sports Complex swimming pool on the second day of the national women's and age-group championships yesterday. In contrast to the seven national records set on the inaugural day there were only three new marks yesterday with BTMC maintaining their record-shattering form by creating two of them. This means their swimmers have rewritten five national records, a remarkable feat no doubt.

After 17 finals in the 13-team, four-day championships, BTMC led the medals table with seven golds, four silvers and four bronzes. They were closely followed by Bangladesh Ansars who have six golds, eight silvers and seven bronzes. Rajbart DSA were still in third place, adding another gold to the two they won on Friday for a tally of three golds, three silvers and three bronzes.

Bandarban added their name to the medal table yesterday and their golden girl Ting Ting Mya, who won the 100m free-style for girls in the 11-12 yrs age-group, placed the Hill District fourth in the standings.

Two other teams — Narayanjanj DSA and Munshiganj DSA — also entered the honours list, both bagging a silver and a bronze medal each. Pabna, who won a bronze Friday, had no luck yesterday.

Laila Noor Milu of BTMC, who won the gold by shattering the women's 200m freestyle record Friday with a time of 2 min 45.03 seconds, was again in splendid form yesterday. The lean, lithe girl from Faridpur who is employed by BTMC, clocked 5 min 54.59 secs to erase the existing mark in the 400m version of her favourite style. Her time clipped nearly 17 seconds off the old mark of 6:11.75 secs.

Sulekha Parveen of Bangladesh Ansars and her teammate Selina Akhter came in second and third for the silver and bronze respectively.

Mahmuda Sharif, who set a new 100m breaststroke mark

Friday, displayed fine versatility by adding the 100m backstroke gold yesterday. However, her time of 1:42.00 secs was well outside the existing mark.

Subnoor Lalana of BTMC timed 1:49.74 secs for the silver while Rokeya Begum won the first medal for Narayanjanj by taking the bronze.

Sulekha Parveen, the determined woman Ansar, redeemed herself for having failed in the 400m freestyle earlier in the day by clinching the 200m individual medley title with a time of 3 min 29.85 secs.

Noor-Afroz of BTMC and her teammate Subnoor Lalana came in second and third in the race.

BEST RACE
The best race of the day was seen in the 200m backstroke for girls between 15 and 17 years of age. All three medalists, led by Mahfuza Rahman of BTMC, broke the existing

record of 3:30.52 seconds. While Mahfuza's winning effort took 3 min 10.03 secs — the new record — Reshma Parveen who took silver and Putul Rani Ghosh of Rajbart also came home well inside the old mark.

MTA'S DOUBLE
Mita Rani Shome also became a double gold medalist winning the 100m freestyle for girls aged 13-14 yrs yesterday. The Rajbart girl had won the 100m butterfly gold Friday with a record timing of 1:39.05 secs. Mita's teammate Shima Rani Dutta, once again finished only second best, winning her second silver of the meet. Kalpana Akhter of BTMC took the bronze.

Ting Ting Mya of Bandarban DSA, the young tribal girl, won the 100m freestyle for the 11-12 yrs girls with a time of 1:27.78 secs.

Elofa Akhter of Ansars won the silver while the bronze went to Chand Sultana, her second bronze after the one in the 100m backstroke on Friday.

Competition resumes at 9:30 this morning.

MEDALS TABLE

	G	S	B	Total
BTMC	7	4	4	15
Ansars	6	8	7	21
Rajbart	3	3	3	9
Bandarban	1	0	0	1
Munshiganj	0	1	1	2
Narayanjanj	0	1	1	2
Pabna	0	0	1	1
	17	17	17	51

Krickstein in Queensland final

BRISBANE, Australia, Sept 28: Number three seed Aaron Krickstein of the United States beat second seeded Soviet Andrei Chesnokov 7-5, 6-5 in the semifinals of the 256,000 dollar Queensland men's tennis Open here today, reports AFP.

In the final on Sunday, Krickstein will meet the winner of tonight's clash between two unseeded players — Australia's Jason Stoltenberg and Gianluca Pozzi of Italy.

Stoltenberg, ranked 114th in the world, scored a major upset Friday when he knocked out defending champion and top seed Brad Gilbert of the United States in straight sets.

Stoltenberg, 21, described his win over the world's 21st-ranked players as the most satisfying in his career.

On Friday night, Chesnokov defeated the eighth seed, Richard Fromberg of Australia, 6-4, 6-4.

Krickstein, who has not won a singles title since Tokyo in 1989, is seeded 12th and Gilbert ninth in next week's indoor tennis championships in Sydney.

Record lifts by Bulgarian, Chinese

DONAUESCHINGEN, Germany, Sept 28: Bulgarian Ivan Ivanov and China's Zairong Zhang both broke world records as the World Weightlifting Championships opened in spectacular style on Friday, reports Reuter.

Defending champion Ivanov bettered his own world record for the jerk when he lifted 155.5 kgs — his previous mark was 155 kgs — on his way to the gold medal in the flyweight division.

Zhang set a world record in the snatch in the same division when he lifted 120.5 kgs, 0.5 kgs more than the previous world mark set by Bulgarian Sevdalin Marinov at the Seoul Olympics in 1988.

Ivanov's total for jerk and snatch of 272.5 equalled his own world record set in Athens in 1989.

Sevdalin Minchev of Bulgaria took the silver medal with 257.5 while Zhang was third on 255.0.

Mike Johnson eyes Olympic double

WASHINGTON, Sept 28: American runner Michael Johnson wants changes in the Barcelona Olympics programme and the US team selection process so he can attempt to win in the 200m gold and the 400 metres, reports AFP.

Johnson has called on The Athletics Congress (TAC) to persuade the International Amateur Athletics Federation to change the current timetable which allows only 30 minutes between the finals of the two events.

He has been the fastest man in the world over 200 metres for the past two years and over 400 metres this year.

Johnson's advisors said they have been told by Ollan Cassell, the TAC president, that changes in the Olympic programme could still be made.

If no change is made, the Texan runner will only tackle the 200 metres at the national selection meeting. He won the 200 metres title at the recent World Championships in Tokyo.



Rahima Akhter of BTMC won the girls under-10 50m freestyle gold medal in the national women's swimming championships at the Dhanmandi Women's Sports Complex yesterday. — Star photo by Enamul Haq

Stars' absence mars Africa Games



CAIRO, Sept 28: Sprinter Frankie Fredericks breathed some life into an All Africa Games athletics programme rendered almost meaningless by the absence of a host of world champions, reports Reuter.

Africa's fastest man won both the 100 and 200 metres after being persuaded to run for newly-independent Namibia by the country's President Sam Nujoma.

Other African countries had less success in talking their athletes into coming to this purely amateur event, part of an Olympic-style continental Games.

Kenyan steeplechaser Moses Kiptianui was the only one of Africa's seven gold

medallists from the recent World Athletics Championships in Tokyo to run in Cairo.

Even Kiptianui said he acted "like a soldier" after Kenyan team officials ordered him to participate despite a calf injury.

Fredericks expressed surprise at the number of stay-away stars.

"It look like the majority don't want to compete for their motherlands," said world 200 metres silver medalist.

"It's a great honour for me to be here."

Fredericks, gold in the 100 metres on Monday in international competition and the country's new-found freedom made him a case apart.

African world champions

such as Zambia's 400 metres hurdler Samuel Matele, clearly did not feel like performing in an almost deserted stadium at the end of an exhausting season on the Grand Prix circuit.

"Matele, like several Kenyan runners, feels there is no prestige in this event and is not going to run if there is no (appearance) money," Kenan athletics official Robert Ouk said.

Nigeria finished top in the athletics medal standings, edging out Kenya by one gold — a repeat of the outcome at the last All Africa Games in 1978.

Fatima Yusuf, 1990 world women's 400 metres junior champion, won over the distance here but was piped on the line in the 200 metres by compatriot Tina Iheagwam.

Mary Onyali won the 100

metres as Nigeria's women swept the board in the sprints.

Kenyan men and women dominated in middle and distance events despite the absence of Tokyo gold medalists Billy Konchellah, Yobes Ondieki and Moses Tanui.

Ethiopia took four golds with 19-year-old Fita Bayesa, second behind Ondieki in the 5,000 metres in Tokyo, winning here and forecasting Ethiopia was ready to challenge Kenya's supremacy over longer distances.

But the Games' standing among athletics was underlined by Ethiopian marathon gold medalist Tena Negere.

"I'm not so excited about winning here as I know I'm a second class man as far as Ethiopian marathon runners go," he said.

Ali's presence adds colour to Games



CAIRO, Sept 28: In a major publicity coup, clearly designed to repair the flagging reputation of the fifth All-Africa Games, the organisers have managed to lure former world heavyweight boxing champion Muhammad Ali to the Egyptian capital, reports AFP.

All accepted an invitation to attend the closing stages of the sporadically-held continental sports festival and flew discreetly into Cairo on Saturday morning.

According to Cairo daily Al-Gumhuriya on Saturday, Ali will not only be visiting the Games, but has also asked for a meeting with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak.

Essam Badawy of the Egyptian Sports Ministry confirmed that the legendary

boxer had arrived and was resting after his flight in a hotel somewhere in the city.

As far as the Games are concerned, it is just the shot in the arm they need after a week of only mediocre com-

petition.

The meeting has been something of an anti-climax since the departure of IOC President Juan Antonio Samaranch last weekend, even though Egypt tried hard to maintain the momentum set up by Samaranch's veiled hint that Cairo could be a contender for the 2004 Olympics.

Yet the events of the past week, and the shortcomings of the organisation in particular, have cast severe doubts on the nation's readiness to host so important an event.

And that despite some well-laid hyperbole in the Egyptian press, where it was claimed but remained unsubstantiated, that Samaranch had confided before his departure that the new sporting complex here provided better facilities than those in Barcelona.

The organisers' coup in at-

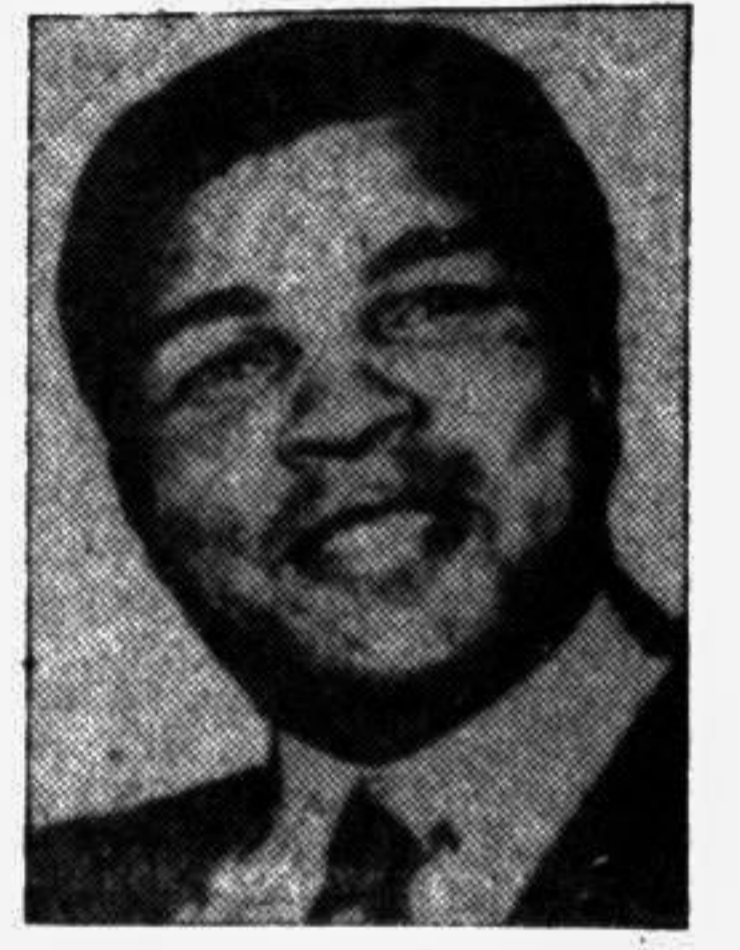
tracting Ali, here will probably count for more locally than abroad.

Yet it is hard to imagine that it will go unnoticed throughout Africa, adding much-needed prestige to the image of the games and of Egypt throughout the continent where Ali remains an enormous hero.

According to Badawy, Ali will attend the boxing finals on Monday night and Tuesday evening's closing ceremony.

But what he will make of the boxing competition is anyone's guess.

The most complimentary assessment of the quality of the boxing came from a top Nigerian official who said this week that it was "little better than street-fighting". Hardly the sort of fare to set before a champion of Muhammad Ali's stature.



MD ALI

Berger in driving seat



BERCELONA, Spain, Sept 28: Gerhard Berger gained his first pole position in more than a year as he retained

the top spot in qualifying Saturday for the Spanish Grand Prix, reports AP.

The Austrian, in a McLaren-Honda, did not improve his Friday time of 1 minute, 18.751 seconds but it was enough to hold off the rest of the field.

Britain's Nigel Mansell, his left ankle a bit sore after a soccer accident, held onto second with a time of 1:18.970, also won Friday.

The second session was in-

terrupted when Ayrton Senna's car blew an engine and left a trail of oil across a portion of the track. After a 23-minute delay, the cars were a bit cautious over the 4.747-kilometre (2.95-mile) circuit in the Catalan hills outside Barcelona.

Senna, hoping to clinch his third world driving title, jumped into a spare car to get used to it in case it is needed for Sunday's race of 65 laps.

Senna will start in the second row behind his McLaren-Honda teammate Berger. Mansell is on the outside of the first row, alongside Berger.

It is Berger's seventh pole position of his career and first since the Mexican Grand Prix in June 1990.

Senna improved a bit to 1:19.064 in his McLaren-Honda but still held third with Riccardo Patrese, Mansell's Williams-Renault teammate, stayed fourth at 1:19.643.

Mansell injured his ankle in a soccer game Friday evening between the drivers and the press. He was given a hard shot by Italian driver Fabrizio Barbazza in the 2-2 draw.

The Briton said his only difficulty was in getting off the line or out of the pits since he doesn't have to use the foot while on the track.

Mansell needs to be in top shape to have a chance to catch Senna in the season's standings.

Joneses to lead Berlin pack

BERLIN, Sept 28: More than 20,000 runners from 58 countries are set to take part in Sunday's 18th Berlin marathon — and probably all of them will be trying to keep up with the Joneses, reports AFP.

Britain's Steve and American Kim Jones are favourites for the men's and women's titles.

Steve won the London marathon in 1985 and the New York race in 1988. But the 36-year old will have to watch out for Tanzania's Alfredo Shabanga, second here last year, Japan's Toru Momura and South African Mark Plaatjes.

Nine of those of competing have beaten the 2 hr 20 min mark.



Start of the women's 200m breaststroke at the Women's Complex pool yesterday. — Star photo

Morales comes out of coma

LOS ANGELES, Sept 28: Boxer Fernie Morales, who came out of a four-day coma this week after losing a title fight and requiring emergency brain surgery, tested positive for alcohol in his urine after the bout, the California State Athletic Commission said on Friday, reports Reuter.

"He tested positive after the fight," said Dale Ashley, assistant chief inspector for the commission.

"The first test showed a 0.06 (alcohol) level and the backup a 0.05," said Ashley, adding that the urine samples were taken right after the bout. In California an alcohol level of 0.08 is the legal standard for drunk driving.

Ashley said the commission does not require a blood test, which might have shown a higher level. But he said the doctor at the fight had examined Morales before the bout, and the bantamweight boxer

showed no obvious signs of intoxication.

"He wasn't staggering or showing any signs of inebriation," Ashley said, adding that the positive alcohol test was a rarity. "It's the first one I've ever had in 15 years in a title fight," he said.

A hospital spokesman said

Watson may be improving

LONDON, Sept 28: Doctors treating British boxer Michael Watson believe there are some signs of improvement, a hospital spokesman said on Friday, reports Reuter.

Watson, 26, is still in a critical condition with a brain injury after his defeat on Saturday in a World Boxing Organisation super-middleweight fight against compatriot Chris Eubank.

A hospital spokesman said: "Michael continues on a life support machine under a general anaesthetic and whilst he remains in a critical condition the team feels that there may be some signs of improve-

ment." The next 24 hours will prove crucial in assessing the boxer's progress. Doctors will make the decision whether his sedation should be slowly reduced.

Meanwhile, the British Boxing Board of Control has rejected two opponents challenging for middleweight Herol Graham's Britain title — one following a brain scan.

Board secretary John Morris said: "The raised queries and we never take chances when that happens. The injury to Michael Watson had no bearing."