

Asian Cup Winners' Cup first round

Abahani meet E Bengal Nov 3

Sports Reporter



Reigning NBL Senior Division football league champions Abahani Krishna Chakra take on Calcutta Super Division champions East Bengal Club in the first leg match of the second Asian Cup Winners' Cup tournament at the Dhaka Stadium on Nov 3.

The Indian team, which achieved a fine treble last season by winning three prestigious trophies with the exception of the Calcutta senior league, is due in Dhaka on Nov 2.

The Bangladesh Football Federation last week received a list of a 22-man East Bengal squad, approved by the All India Football Federation. The names suggest there are three British born players in the side namely, S. Prindville, Neil Edmonds and Peter Maguire.

Other players are: Debashis Mukherjee, Sudip Chakrobarty, Bhuban Mukherjee, Krishendu Roy, Ilias Pasha, Swarup Das, Tarun Dey, Mastan Ahmed, Alok Mukherjee, Bikas Panji, Mohiul Islam, Prasanta Banerjee, Tushar Rakhit, Sankar Sadhu, Krishanu Dey,

Kuljit Singh, Darbar Singh, Ranjit Saha and Rupak Chowdhury.

East Bengal, who lost to Abahani by a solitary goal in the semifinals of the BTC Club Cup tournament organised by the BFF last June to raise funds for the relief of the victims of the April 29 cyclone that swept the southern coast of the country, went on the reclaim the Calcutta Super Division league title from their arch-rivals Mohun Bagan last August. For their successful league campaign East Bengal had relied on the borrowed services of several top Abahani stars like Sheikh Aslam, Abdul Monem Munna, Golam Ohaus and Rumi.

One of the upshots of these Abahani stars being hired by East Bengal was that Abdul Monem Munna, who earned raving mentions in the Calcutta media for his excellent performances there, was turned into an instant celebrity back home, a status that raised the price for his services in the Dhaka league for the coming season to around two million Taka — easily making him the most expensive footballer

of the South Asian sub-continent.

The English-sounding names in the East Bengal lineup suggest the Calcutta giants have embarked on an even more expensive venture in a bid to retain their hold on the Super Division title next season.

The return leg match of the home-and-away encounter will be held in Calcutta — probably at the massive Salt Lake Stadium — on November 10 instead of the earlier announced date of Nov 8.

The Cup Winners Cup is the second Asian club-level competition introduced by the Asian Football Confederation, in line with the European version, after the Asian Club Cup championship.

The AFC will nominate a day or two the panel of neutral referees and the name of the match commissioner.

MSC LEAVE TOMORROW

Dhaka Mohammedan Sporting Club, by virtue of their triumph in the 12th Federation Cup tournament last year, are representing

Bangladesh in the 11th Asian Club Cup championship this year. In their first round, first leg match they trounced Pakistani champions Pakistan Wapda 5-0 at the Dhaka Stadium last Oct 26.

Mohammedans leave for Lahore tomorrow, Oct 30 for the return leg fixture against the same opponents on Nov 1.

Tanvir Haider leads the 19-member team as manager. The other members are: Sayeed Hassan Kanan, Tuhi, Barun Bikash Dewan, Kaiser Hamid, Jewel Rana, Mahbubur Rahman Roxy, Rumman bin-Wali Shabbir, Imtiaz Sultan Johnny, Riaz, Saiful Islam Tito, Chandan, Imtiaz Naquib, Mizanur Rahman, Abul Hossain, Montu and Shamim; Nasser Hegazi (coach) and kolkobad (Asst coach).

Pakistan Wapda face an almost impossible task against the Dhaka side whom they have to beat by a 6-0 margin if they are to qualify for the next round against the champion side from the Maldives. The first leg match of that encounter is scheduled for Nov 15.



Boris Becker holds up his trophy after winning the ATP tournament in Stockholm, beating top seeded Swede World No 1 Stefan Edberg in the final Oct 27. — AFP photo

Becker lifts ATP title

STOCKHOLM, Oct 28: A resurging Boris Becker defeated Stefan Edberg in the Stockholm Open final on Sunday his first title since the Australian Open in January, reports Reuter.

In the first clash this year between the world's two leading players Becker was closer to peak form as he retained his title 3-6, 6-4, 1-6, 6-2, 6-2.

The German's victory also kept him second in the world rankings.

Defeat would have let in American Jim Courier, tour officials said.

US Open champion Edberg, winner of 21 matches and three tournaments in a row, seemed to be heading for another success after outclassing Becker in the third set.

But Becker surged back, breaking Edberg's twice in the fourth and displaying better nerves in the decider, he broke the Swede to love in the final game and sealed victory with an elegant lob.

Becker was absent from the circuit for more than a month. Nursing a back injury after his early exit in the US Open in late August.

His only appearance between Flushing Meadow and Stockholm was in Tokyo earlier this month where he reached the quarter finals.

Becker said: "I hope all talk about my fitness is over now. I've played more hours than anybody else this week. I came back from one set down. I'm in pretty good shape."

Asked about his nagging back problems, the German replied: "I felt better before this tournament than I do now, but I could have continued to play a couple more hours."

"It feels good to win a tournament, to have beaten the number seven, three and one in the world in a row," he said, referring to earlier victories over Americans Pete Sampras and Jim Courier.

Becker, still far behind Edberg in the computer rankings, said it was no longer his main goal to be number one.

"It's important to play against the best and to improve my game," he said. "If I can't play enough tournaments, that's just too bad."

AP adds: Capitalizing on Edberg's sloppy serve in the final set, Becker won the meeting between the two top-ranked players 3-6, 6-4, 1-6, 6-2, 6-2 for his second straight title in one of the world's oldest indoor tournaments.

Becker, who trounced Edberg in last year's final, ended the Swede's 21-match winning streak, a personal record for Edberg and the longest on the ATP Tour this year.

Edberg, who had won consecutively his first US Open ti-

tle in September, the Australian Indoors and Seiko Super Tennis in Tokyo, served poorly late in the three-hour and 17-minute match, dropping five out of six games in the final two sets.

Despite the partisan crowd of 14,000 at the Globe Arena, Becker beat Edberg in a five-set match for the first time in three attempts, breaking the Swede at love in the final game and ending with a perfect lob.

Becker earned dls 137,450 for the victory, only his second tournament since the US Open because of a back injury and his second title at Stockholm.

Edberg took the first set, breaking Becker's serve in the fifth and ninth games. He faltered in the second though, dropping his serve at the start of the set after a rare volley miss at the net.

Becker held to tie the match, fighting off a break point at 3-2 after a straight backhand passer kissed the corner.

Edberg's service returns keyed a pair of breaks to lead 4-0 in the third set. Trailing 0-5, Becker faced set point and an end to his streak of 81 consecutive sets against Edberg that he had not lost a set at love to the Swede. He rallied and won the game with an ace.

Becker broke Edberg to lead 4-2 in the fourth set and added another break in the eighth game to sent the final into a fifth set.

Reuter adds: Boris Becker's main goal in tennis is no longer to be ranked number one in the world.

"This year much has changed. I reached my dream goal of being number one for a little while. Now I have a new mind towards tennis," the German world number two said after winning the

Stockholm Open tournament on Sunday.

Becker, overtaken in the rankings by longtime rival Stefan Edberg of Sweden on September 16, said his ambition now was to improve his game, win more Grand Slam tournaments and meet and beat the best players in the world.

"When you've reached your goal you've got to find new challenges," the 23-year-old German said.

He beat the US Open champion and world number one, winner of 21 matches and three tournaments in a row, in the Swede's home event despite having been away from the circuit for more than a month due to a back injury.

"To beat Stefan in Stockholm is very special to me," said Becker, who eliminated seventh-ranked Pete Sampras and world number three Jim Courier on his way to the final.

The German serve and volley specialist became Wimbledon's youngest ever men's champion in 1985 at 17. He retained the title the next year and clinched it for the third time in 1989 when he also won the US Open.

Becker set his sights on the number one spot last year. He played 20 tournaments, more than ever before, in the hunt for valuable points in the Association of Tennis Professionals, (ATP) computer rankings.

He reached the goal on January 28 after winning the Australian Open, but lost the top spot to Edberg on February 18. Becker climbed back to number one on July 8, only to fall behind Edberg again after the US Open.

The German said he aimed to enter no more than 14 or 15 tournaments each year.

India announces tennis team for SAF Games

NEW DELHI, Oct 28: The All India Tennis Association (AITA) today announced a 17-member team including three reserves, for the SAF Games to be held at Colombo, Sri Lanka from December 22 to 30, reports PTL.

Secretary of AITA R K Khanna said here today that the squad consists of eight men and seven women, with six in each category to represent the country at the games.

The men's team comprises Zeeshan Ali, Asif Ismail, Enrico Piperno, Rohit Rajpal, K G Ramesh, Sandeep Kirtane, Rohit Reddy, Guarav Natekar, of which six will travel to Colombo.

The players in order of preference with replacements in case one or more are not available, Mr Khanna said.

The women squad consists of Aradhana Reddy, Natasha Joshi, K Janaki, Sohini Kumari, K V Nirupama, Arati Ponnappa, Stand-by — Sahibha Chaddha.

Mr P D Koche of Madhya Pradesh and Mr G S Ahuja of Punjab are the two officials to accompany the team, he said.

CSKA recapture title after 20yrs

MOSCOW, Oct 28: Army side CSKA captured their first Soviet Soccer Championship since 1971 on Sunday, reports Reuter.

They won 1-0 at Dynamo Moscow while nearest rivals Spartak Moscow crashed 2-1 at home to Torpedo Moscow.

CSKA defender Dmitri Galaymin beat three defenders in the penalty area before tucking home a 49th minute goal.

But the club's success was tempered by the death of first-choice goalkeeper Mikhail Yerebin in a car crash in June, just hours after the side's Cup win over Torpedo Moscow.

Spartak, neck-and-neck with CSKA for most of the season, missed a penalty and are four points behind with one game left.

Europeans lead women's world pentathlon meet

SYDNEY, Australia, Oct 28: Europeans dominated the fencing competition Monday, opening day of the women's world modern pentathlon championships, reports AP.

France's Sophie Moressee Pichot led the five-sport competition after winning 42 of her 52 fencing bouts for 1,126 points. Germany's Gabi Gtiner was second with 40 victories wins for 1,084 points while Kerstin Danielsson of Sweden was third with 1,063.

The 29-year-old Pichot's outstanding form was no surprise. She finished fourth in last year's world fencing championships in France.

The championships continue Tuesday with the pistol shooting and swimming competitions.

The swimming even is a 200-meter race. A two-kilometer cross-country race will be run on Wednesday and on Thursday, the equestrian show jumping portion will involve a 600-meter course with 15 obstacles, including a double and triple jump.

Early defeat for Leconte

PARIS, Oct 28: Australian Wally Masur pulled off the first shock of the two million dollar Paris Open tennis tournament before it had even started by beating home favourite Henri Leconte in the qualifying contest on Sunday, reports AFP.

Needing two tie breaks, the Australian Davis Cup player beat Leconte 7-6 (7/4), 7-6 (7/4).

Leconte refused a direct place in the tournament because he wanted to play as many matches as possible before this year's Davis Cup final between France and the United States.

Wari make super league

Sports Reporter

Wari Club reached the super league of the AB Bank table tennis league beating Brothers Union in straight sets 3-0 in their Group D robin league encounter at the National Coaching Centre yesterday.

Wari join seven others — the top two teams from the four preliminary robin league — in the super league which begins early next month after the completion of the prelims October 31.

All eight teams who made the super league have won five straight victories in their respective seven-team clusters.

Defending champions Armanitola Juba Sangha and Village Defence Party (VDP) are the super league qualifiers from Group A. Bangladesh Binman and Azimpur Young Star from Group B, Bangladesh Textile Mills Corporation (BTMC) and Armanitola Juniors from Group C and Bangladesh Ansars and Wari Club from Group D.

Yesterday, Wari Club brooked no nonsense against Brothers Union with Soheli taking the opening singles 21-10, 21-8 from Mamun of

Brothers Union. Shamim gave Wari a 2-0 lead by winning his second singles tie against Biru of Brothers 21-16, 21-18 while Soheli and Mustafa faced little difficulty in booking Wari's super league berth when they beat Biru and Raymon 21-10, 21-9.

It was the third loss for Brothers in five outings.

Lalmatia posted their third victory in their maiden league campaign when they beat Cynthia Sporting Club in a thrilling 3-2 sets in a rare match that went the full five sets.

Cynthia took the lead through Rana in the Opening singles which Lalmatia's Rabbi put 17-21, 14-21. Musabbir put Lalmatia level by beating Cynthia's Shakil 16-21, 21-19, 21-15.

Cynthia once again took the lead when Rana and Palash beat Musabbir and Amin 21-18, 21-17 in the doubles. Yet again, Lalmatia evened the set score through Rabbi who beat Shakil 25-23, 17-21 and 21-15.

In the tense fifth and deciding set, Amin rallied well for Lalmatia to beat Palash 21-19, 22-20 in a close match to deny

Cynthia their first win in the league. They have lost all five Group D engagements to date.

NMS, enjoying a rewarding first run in the top league, posted their third win in five matches when they beat Dhaka Mariners Youngs Club in straight sets 3-0 in another Group D encounter.

Tuhin of NMS defeated Benazir of Mariners 23-21 and 21-15. Mahub doubled NMS's lead by rallying well after conceding the first set to win 16-21, 21-19 and 22-20 against Mariners' Rana. Tuhin and Sweet proved a far superior pairing than Mariners' Rana and Masud, winning the doubles 21-15 and 12.

It was the fifth consecutive defeat for Dhaka Mariners in as many outings.

In the other match of the day, another league debutant Dhaka Medical College recorded their second victory in Group C by beating winess Combined Sporting Club, also in straight sets.

Zahid of DMC overcame Kamal of Combined Sporting 12-21, 21-10 and 21-11 while Fida of DMC also came back to beat Combined's Reno 17-21, 21-18, 21-10. The doubles match was another good contest with Zahid and Tapan having to struggle a bit before overpowering Combined's Reno and Tushar 21-12, 17-21 and 21-12.

TODAY'S MATCHES
Ajax Sporting Club vs Bangladesh Bank Club
Pashchim Jatrabari vs Renaissance Club
Armanitola JS vs VDP
Pallima Sangshad vs Kalpa Taru

Paris open vital for Davis Cup aspirants

PARIS, Oct 28: The sixth edition of the Paris Open tennis tournament that groups the world's best players will also be a decisive competition for players seeking a spot on the US and French Davis Cup teams, reports AP.

Tom Gorman, the captain of the American team, will announce his players a day after Sunday's final. Aside from Andre Agassi, all the top US players are present for the dls 2 million event in the French capital.

Pete Sampras, Jim Courier, John McEnroe, Brad Gilbert, Michael Change and Derrick

Rostagno are not only hoping to go as far as possible in the draw of 48 players but also to have a chance to figure in the US team that faces France next Nov 29 to Dec 1 in Lyon.

Meanwhile, France's captain Yannick Noah faces one of his own hopefuls, Fabrice Santoro, in a first-round match. Noah remains discreet and has chosen to wait the very last moment before announcing the names of the French players to play alongside Guy Forget.

The Paris tournament has attracted 16 of the top 20 players in the world in the 48-player field. Ivan Lendl, a late forfait, and Agassi, who plays rarely in Europe, were the only top 10 players who missed the call.

Stefan Edberg and Boris Becker, the top two players in the world, lead the way.

Edberg was upset by Becker in the Stockholm Open final Sunday after winning 21 straight matches starting with the US Open.

French Open champion Courier is third-seeded and Wimbledon winner Michael Stich is No. 4.

All of the top 16 players get byes into the second round.

Among the most interesting matchups in the first round is Jimmy Connors against Ronald Agenor of Haiti.

Connors beat Agenor in a come-from-behind victory in the second round at the French Open in May.

The 39-year-old Connors used the French Open as a springboard to gain endurance which showed in the US Open when he went to the semifinals.

If Connors get by Agenor, he will face Courier next. The No. 3 seed won the French Open.

China cracks down on prostitution

BEIJING, Oct 28: Authorities are cracking down on prostitution in southern China before the women's World Soccer Championships are held there next month, officials media said Monday, reports AP.

The tournament will be held Nov 16-30 in Canton and four nearby cities. China is intent on making a good impression as host of the international competition in an effort to bolster its bid for the Summer Olympics in 2000.

The official China Daily newspaper said 1,774 prostitutes have been arrested in the crackdown in the southern province of Guangdong.

It said police have closed 472 hotels, recreation centers, barber shops, beauty shops and bars that were centers for prostitution.

The Communist government nearly succeeded in eliminating prostitution after taking power in 1949, but the practice has returned in recent years with increased exposure to the outside world and greater social mobility.

Earlier this year, China passed a tough law that increased penalties for prostitutes and their customers to six months — to two-year terms in what the officials media called a "re-education center for prostitutes."

Prostitution has made its strongest comeback in Canton and other cities in southern China that are influenced by neighbouring Hong Kong.



Capt Shuja (extreme right), a former Bangladesh Chess Federation official, seen in action during yesterday's play in the Second Division league at the NSC chess room. — Star photo



From right: Habibur Rahman and Dr Rashiduddin Ahmed beat Emdadul Haque and Masudur Rahman in yesterday's semifinal of the Nasiruddin Memorial veterans' doubles tennis tournament at the Officers' Club, Bailey Road, yesterday. Habib and Rashid moved into the final winning 6-3, 6-1. — Star photo