

BFF in a fix regarding selection of SAF squad

Asian Club Cup finals Dec 12-22

Sports Reporter

The final round of the 11th Asian Club Cup championship with the top eight club sides of the continent will be held from December 12 to 22 in Doha, Qatar.

A fax received by the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) from Peter Velappan, the Secretary of the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) yesterday confirmed the above dates.

According to the fax, seven of the eight finalists have already confirmed their berths while another will emerge following the delayed second round return-leg clash between the South China A team and the Yomiuri team from Japan.

The seven teams who have qualified are Bangladesh Federation Cup champions Dhaka Mohammedan Sporting Club, Pyongyang City Club of North Korea, Al-Hilal Club of Saudi Arabia, Esteghal Club of Iran, Port Authority of Thailand, and the Al Shabab

and Al Rayyan clubs from hosts Qatar and the United Arab Emirates respectively.

Esteghal Club of Iran won the 10th Asian Club Cup tournament held in Dhaka last July beating Liaoning Club — the 1989 champions — of China in the final.

In that tournament Dhaka Mohammedans played all three robin league matches of the final round but despite finishing unbeaten they failed to reach the semifinals. Mohammedans drew all their three matches, against Bangkok Bank Club of Thailand, April 25 Club of North Korea and Esteghal Club, the eventual champions.

This time round, Mohammedans beat Pakistan champions Wapda Club 5-0 on aggregate in the first round and the Maldives champions New Radiant FC, also 5-0 on aggregate in the home-away second round fixtures.

The dates for the final round have come as a bit of a shock for the BFF who would have liked the dates to have been a little later in view of the

forthcoming fifth South Asian Federation (SAF) Games in the Sri Lankan capital Colombo from Dec 22 to 30.

The BFF, which has been conducting a final residential camp for selecting the Bangladesh squad for the Games at the Bangladesh Krira Shikkhya Protisthan's Savar premises since Nov 14, now finds itself in a quandary regarding finalisation of the team. Mohammedan Sporting Club officials have made it quite clear that several of their stars who have been called to the BFF camp will not be spared in case the schedules for the SAF Games and the Asian Club Cup finals clash or are too close to each other. Now it remains to be seen how the BFF goes about picking its team for the SAF Games following the announcement of the Club Cup dates.

Bangladesh lost the last SAF Games gold medal to hosts Pakistan in the final in Islamabad in 1989, a performance that wasn't too easily accepted by the soccer-mad

public back home. Given the fact that a SAF Games gold medal means much more for the national prestige soccer lovers of the country would hope the BFF and Mohammedans find a formula whereby the star players of the club can still don national colours and fight for national honour in Colombo.

Indeed, it's a tricky choice for both the BFF and the champion club of the country.

For the record, seven Mohammedan players are included in the 29 booters attending the residential camp at Savar. They are goalkeeper Sayeed Hassan Kanan, stoppers Kaiser Hamid and Jewel Rana, midfielders Rumman Bin-Wali Shabbir, Mahbubur Rahman Rony and Saiful Bari Tito, and striker Imtiaz Ahmed Naquib. Two others — left-backs Barun Bikash Dewan and Imtiaz Sultan Johnny — have had to withdraw from the camp because of injuries.

Mohammedans would have to reach Qatar by Dec 10, according to the AFC fax.

Milan soar with Flying Dutchmen

ROME, Nov 25: AC Milan's Dutch stars Ruud Gullit and Marco Van Basten scored first-half goals to propel the first-place Red and Black past Cremonese 3-1 in the Italian soccer league on Sunday, reports AP.

With 19 points, Milan leads second-place Juventus of Turin by two points.

Juventus received goals from German stopper Jurgen Kohler and Italian striker Pierluigi Catraghi to down Ascoli 2-0.

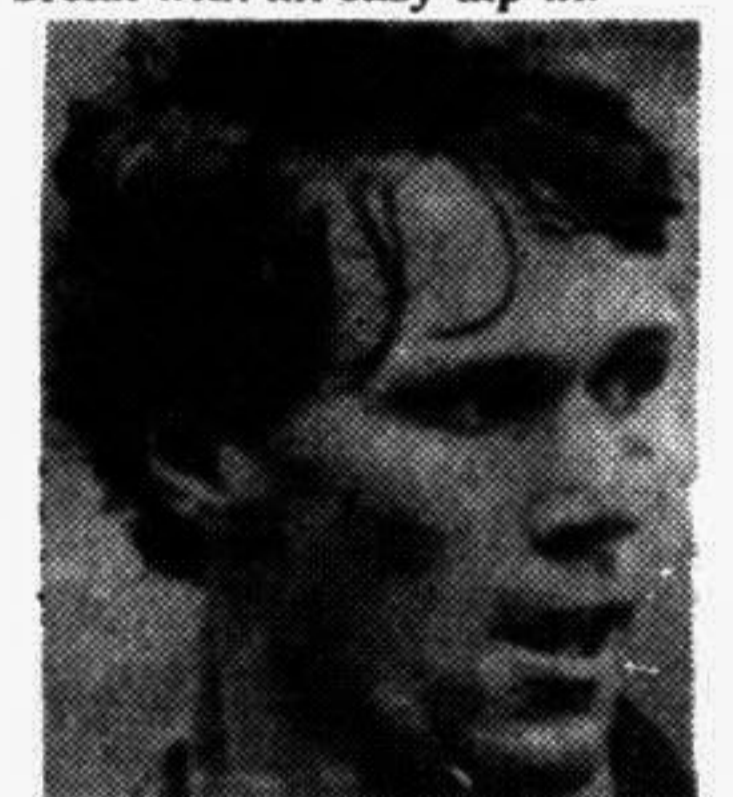
Napoli, which slipped past Bari 1-0, is in third place with 15 points.

In other Sunday action, Parma and Internazionale of Milan drew 1-1; AS Roma downed Sampdoria of Genoa 2-0; Atalanta Bergamo upset Foggia 3-2; Fiorentina and Lazio of Rome tied 1-1; Genoa and Cagliari drew 2-2 and Torino and Verona played to a scoreless tie.

At Milan, Van Basten outleapt the Cremonese defense on a cross from winger Roberto Bonadoni to head the ball into the net at 23 minutes. Gullit doubled the Milan

lead at 37 minutes, heading a lob over the fingertips of Cremonese goalkeeper Michelangelo Rampulla.

At 54 minutes, Marco Giambecchi brought Cremonese within one goal when he finished off a last-break with an easy tap-in.



VAN BASTEN

But at 76 minutes, substitute midfielder Diego Fuser tallied on a 20-meter (yard) drive. Fuser took Gullit's place at the beginning of the second half.

Van Basten's goal, his seventh of the year, ties him for the league scoring lead with Foggia's Francesco Baiano and Napoli's Gianfranco Zola.

German ladies in World Cup semis

HONG KONG, Nov 25: European champions Germany beat Denmark 2-1 in Zhongshan Sunday to reach the semifinals of the Women's Football World Cup, thanks to Heidi Mohr's goal in the last minute of extra time. Xinhua news agency said in a report monitored here, reports APF.

Scorers: Bettina Wiegmann, Germany (18th pen), Susan Jessen Mackensen, Denmark (25th pen), Heidi Mohr, Germany (120th).

New idea for old clubs

PARIS, Nov 25: Three of the old continent's richest clubs are planning their own tournament after failing to make any impression on this season's European Cup, reports AFP.

AC Milan president Silvio Berlusconi dreamed up the idea and has tempted Juventus and Paris St Germain to join in with the first date on December 28 at the San Siro Stadium.

"The tournament will take place in a single evening with 45 minute matches in which each team will play the other," said Paris deputy chairman Michel Densoit on Sunday.

"It will be held three times a year, in Milan, Turin and Paris," he added.

Jamalpur soccer

JAMALPUR, Nov 25: Jamalpur Prattasha Club today moved into the Group-B final of the Shahid Smriti Gold Cup football tournament, organised by the Dewanganj Muktiyoddha Sangsad, reports UNB.

The Jamalpur Prattasha Club got walk over in today's encounter as the Nilfarnary District Eleven was absent.

While the Group-D final match between Shirajganj district teams and Kishoreganj District Eleven will be held at the Dewanganj High School ground on November 28.

Swimming mark

SODERTALJE, Sweden, Nov 25: Louise Karlsson of Sweden set a world short course swimming record in the women's 100 metres medley on Sunday, reports Reuter.

The 17-year-old Karlsson's time of one minute, 01.96 seconds was almost a second faster than the 1:02.75 set by German Marion Zoller in Sheffield, England, last March 30.

A cakewalk for Cal MSC

NEW DELHI, Nov 25: Mohammedan Sporting Club of Calcutta recorded a facile 3-0 victory over their feeble opponents Royal Nepal Airlines in a one-sided affair in Pool 'B' quarterfinal league match of the DCM football tournament here yesterday, reports PTI.

The winners led 1-0 at the breather.

Taufeeq Jamal put his team ahead in the 35th minute as he scored off a rebound with a rasping drive. Morshed shot from the left but the ball rebounded from a defender's leg. Taufeeq latched on to the ball immediately and neatly drove home.

The second goal for the winners came through Godfrey Periera, who trapped a pass from Mashtaque Ali from the

Mazda deny Robson rumour

TOKYO, Nov 25: Japanese car maker Mazda Motor Corp denied today British newspaper reports that it had approached England soccer star Bryan Robson about playing for the team it sponsors, reports Reuter.

"We are not aware of such reports and don't have such a plan to recruit Robson at this stage," said a spokesman at Mazda, based in Hiroshima in Western Japan.

Mazda sponsors a club that plays under the name Mazda and is one of 10 clubs that will play in Japan's new professional league starting in 1993.

"Currently, we don't have plans to recruit any new foreign players," the spokesman added.

A double by China

BARCELONA, Nov 25: China swept both titles in the World Team Cup table tennis on Sunday to restore reputations tarnished at the World Championships in May, reports Reuter.

Their men whitewashed holders and world champions Sweden 3-0 while their women beat South Korea 3-1.

Sweden were without world singles champion Jorgen Persson, who succumbed to a knee injury that has bothered him all week.

Jan-Ove Waldner played the opening singles for Sweden

and went down 21-23, 21-13, 21-17 to Ma Wenge, whom he had beaten several times in the past.

"When Waldner lost, I think their other players wondered how they were going to make up for it," Chinese coach Cai Zhnhua said.

It proved too much of a challenge. Peter Karlsson, playing in his first major team final, was beaten in three games by Wang Tao and Erik Lindh succumbed in two to Wang Hsiao.

China finished seventh in the team event at the world championships.

At Ascoli, Juventus took an early lead against lowly Ascoli on Kohler's first minute tally. The German stopper, considered by many to be the finest defender playing in Italy, found a gap in the Ascoli defense to head home a free kick by teammate Roberto Baggio.

At 60 minutes, Castraghi steered another Baggio cross past Ascoli goalkeeper Fabrizio Lorieri for the 2-0 victory.

At Naples, Napoli and Bari battled under pouring rain for more than 50 minutes before Zola momentarily lit up the match with a free kick score at 53 minutes.

Four of Zola's seven goals this year have come on free kicks. A benchmarker for Napoli the past two seasons, the 5-foot-6 (1.65 meter) playmaker made his debut with the Italian national team against Norway on Nov 13.

At Rome, forward Ruggiero Rizzitelli and midfielder Giuseppe Giannini scored to give Roma a 2-0 victory over Sampdoria. For the defending champions, it was the sixth loss of the 11-match-old season.

At Parma, Inter forward Davide Fontolan put the visitors ahead 1-0 when he scored on a loose ball in the Parma goalcrease after 18 minutes.

2002 W Cup to be held in Asia

MANILA, Nov 25: An Asian country will host the World Cup finals in 2002, International Football Federation (FIFA) president Joao Havelange said today, reports Reuter.

"The World Cup will be held in Asia in 2002," Havelange told a news conference at the end of a three-day visit to Manila for the opening of the 16th South East Asian Games on Sunday.

Five countries — Japan, South Korea, China, Malaysia and Saudi Arabia — had expressed interest in hosting the competition, he said.

But Havelange set tough conditions for would-be hosts, saying they must have 12 stadiums that can seat an average of 40,000 people and a venue that can seat 80,000 for the opening and closing ceremonies.

"There should also be no immigration and foreign currency restrictions in the country concerned," Havelange said.

FIFA would stage the World Youth Soccer Championship in Japan in 1993 and Malaysia in 1997 to boost development of the sport in Asia, he said.

Costa Ricans hold US booters 1-1

IRVING, Texas, Nov 25: Dominic Kinnear scored his first international goal in the sixth minute Sunday, but Costa Rica came back to tie the United States 1-1 in the final game of the year for the Americans, reports AP.

Mauricio Montero tied the game for Costa Rica 14 minutes into the second half in Texas Stadium.

US forward Bruce Murray was ejected in the 33rd minute along with Vladimir Quesada of Costa Rica following a fight.

The United States (9-5-4) had beaten Costa Rica 3-2 on July 3 in the first round of the first CONCACAF Gold Cup, the first championship of soccer's North and Central American and Caribbean region.

The Americans are 8-2-3 since Bora Milutinovic took over as coach.

In Sunday's game, the United States recalled only one of its foreign based players, defender John Doyle of Sweden's Ogyte IS club.

Among the missing were Tab Ramos and Peter Vermees of Figueras in Spain, John Harkes of Sheffield Wednesday in England, Paul Caligiuri of SC Friedurg in Germany and Frank Klopas of AEK Athens in Greece.



Aston Villa's Kevin Richardson clears the ball from the head of Leeds' diving Lee Chapman during the First Division match in Birmingham on Nov 24. Leeds United won 4-1, taking the lead in the league's point table. —AFP photo

Seles caps a sensational year by denying Navratilova her record

NEW YORK, Nov 25: World number one and defending champion Monica Seles overcame a vintage performance by Martina Navratilova on Sunday to win the season-ending Virginia Slims Championships 6-4, 3-6, 7-5, 6-0, reports Reuter.

After three thrilling sets, Seles steamrolled the fourth-seeded former number one to claim her 10th title of the year

She just played better, so well done," said the 35-year-old Navratilova, who picked up 120,000 dollars for her considerable efforts.

"I don't have any right to be out here at my age, but I'm still having a blast and I'm thrilled to be able to still compete with the top players in the world."

The first three sets were a true pleasure," she said to a thundering ovation from the crowd of more than 18,000 at Madison Square Garden.

The contest provided a classic match-up of the ageing, dominant player of the last decade against a sensational player half her age and the apparent player of the 1990s — a serve-and-volleyer against a baseline basher.

Seles, who won this event last year in a five-set epic against Gabriela Sabatini, whom she destroyed in this year's semifinals, said: "It wasn't easy but it was pretty easy to finish it off."

"Luckily this year it didn't go to a fifth set because I don't think I could have taken it, I'm so tired."

Navratilova, who used to overpower her opponents eight or 10 years ago, had to rely on her wits and fitness against the Yugoslav's raw power.

Time and again the crafty veteran played the angles or set up soft touch volleys to keep the pressure on Seles.

But Navratilova, the only player to take a set this week from the top-ranked teen, would have to have played flawlessly to prevail as Seles took advantage of nearly every opening by the fourth seed.

"She didn't give me too many second serves today, but whenever I needed my serve it was there," said Seles, winner of every major tournament but Wimbledon this year.

A couple of key points made the difference in the first set as both players served ex-

tremely well with Navratilova ending her first four service games with aces.

Seles reached the first break point in the ninth game of the two-hour eight-minute match.

Navratilova appeared to have averted disaster when what seemed like a sure forehand put-away. But Seles not only retrieved it, but whipped a backhand crosscourt winner for the break and served out the set.

The second set was just as

Seles then seemed to put a little something extra on her passing shots and Navratilova repeatedly found herself lunging for volley attempts to no avail.

"I'd get up 30-love or 40-15 and still lose the game because she hit four winners," Navratilova said.

"You can't relax for one second with her. She is very, very mentally tough."

Seles broke at love in the eighth game with a forehand pass that ticked off Navratilova's racket and found herself serving for the set at 5-3.

Navratilova broke right back, however, and when she held for 5-5 with an overhead smash the crowd again roared.

But Seles immediately seized back the momentum. She held for 6-5 and avoided a tiebreak by breaking Navratilova for the third time in the set.

Navratilova quickly fell behind 0-40 and saved two break points with an ace and a sharply-angled forehand volley.

But Seles drilled a forehand service return down the line to take the set 7-5 and then rolled through the third set without losing a game.

"I had a little let-down in the beginning of the fourth set and she jumped all over me," Navratilova said. "I hit good serves exactly where I wanted and she just nailed it."

Seles, who wore an intense game face and rarely displayed emotion, rolled to a 3-0 lead in the pivotal third set.

By contrast, Navratilova appeared to be thoroughly enjoying herself and often broke into a broad grin — even after blowing the occasional volley.

Undaunted by the deficit, Navratilova, who won the 16-player season final four successive times in the mid-1980s, reeled off the next three games to level it 3-3.

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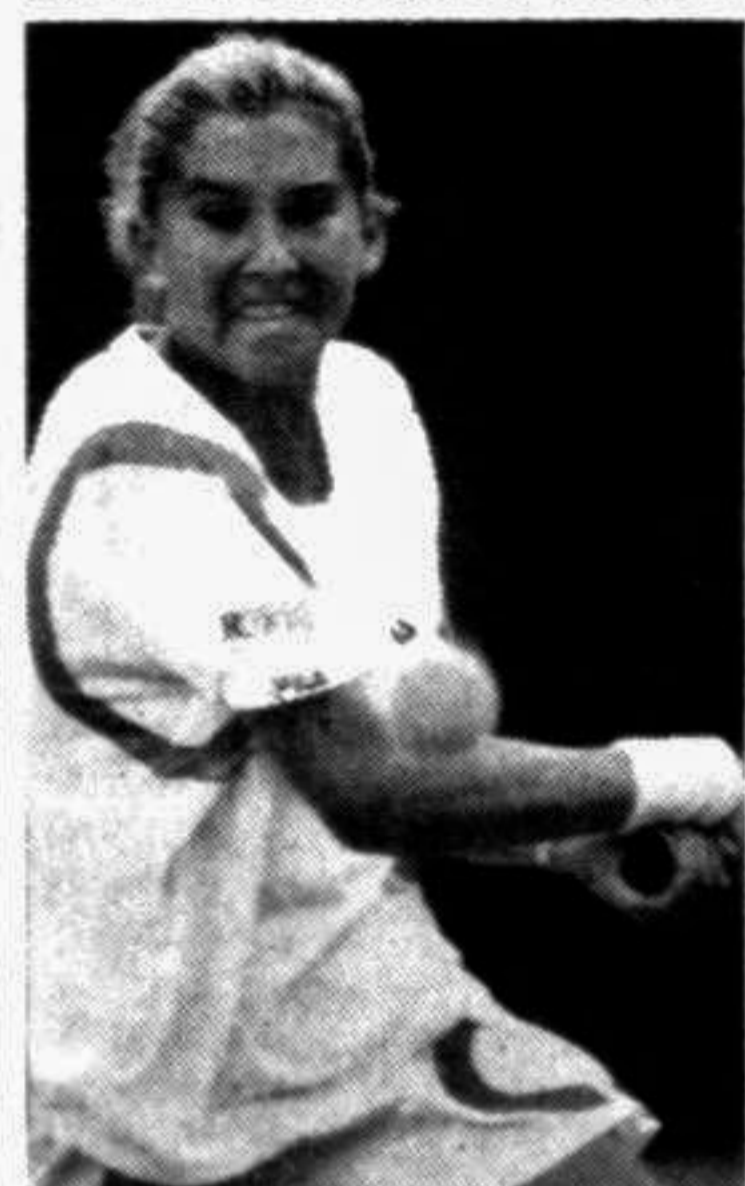
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Navratilova scored her first break of the match in the next game to lead 5-3 and levelled



MONICA SELES

after reaching the final of all 16 tournaments she played.

Seles, who finished the year with an impressive 74-6 record, picked up 250,000 dollars for her hard-fought victory.

Adding in 550,000 dollars in year-end bonus money, the 17-year-old Yugoslav earned a record 2,457,758 dollars in 1991. Navratilova set the old mark of 2,173,556 dollars in 1984.

Navratilova, who won this tournament five times — the last time in 1986 — will have to wait until next year to claim a record-breaking 158th career title. "I played my best tennis."

Jarryd, Fitzgerald champs

JOHANNESBURG, Nov 25: Anders Jarryd of Sweden and Australian John Fitzgerald beat old rivals Robert Seguso and Ken Flach here Sunday to take the world doubles title, reports AFP.

Jarryd and Fitzgerald reversed a two-match losing streak against the US Davis Cup combination to win the ATP doubles final 6-4, 6-4, 2-6, 6-4.

"It's a nice feeling," Fitzgerald said after winning his first world doubles title.

Jarryd has won the event twice before with fellow Swede Stefan Edberg.

Jarryd and Fitzgerald looked in control for most of the match returning their opponents' strong serves with confidence.

Flach dropped his serve in the seventh game of the first set, allowing Jarryd and Fitzgerald to take a set off the number three seeds for the first time during this tournament.

Seguso and Flach dropped serve in the second set, and despite breaking Jarryd in the

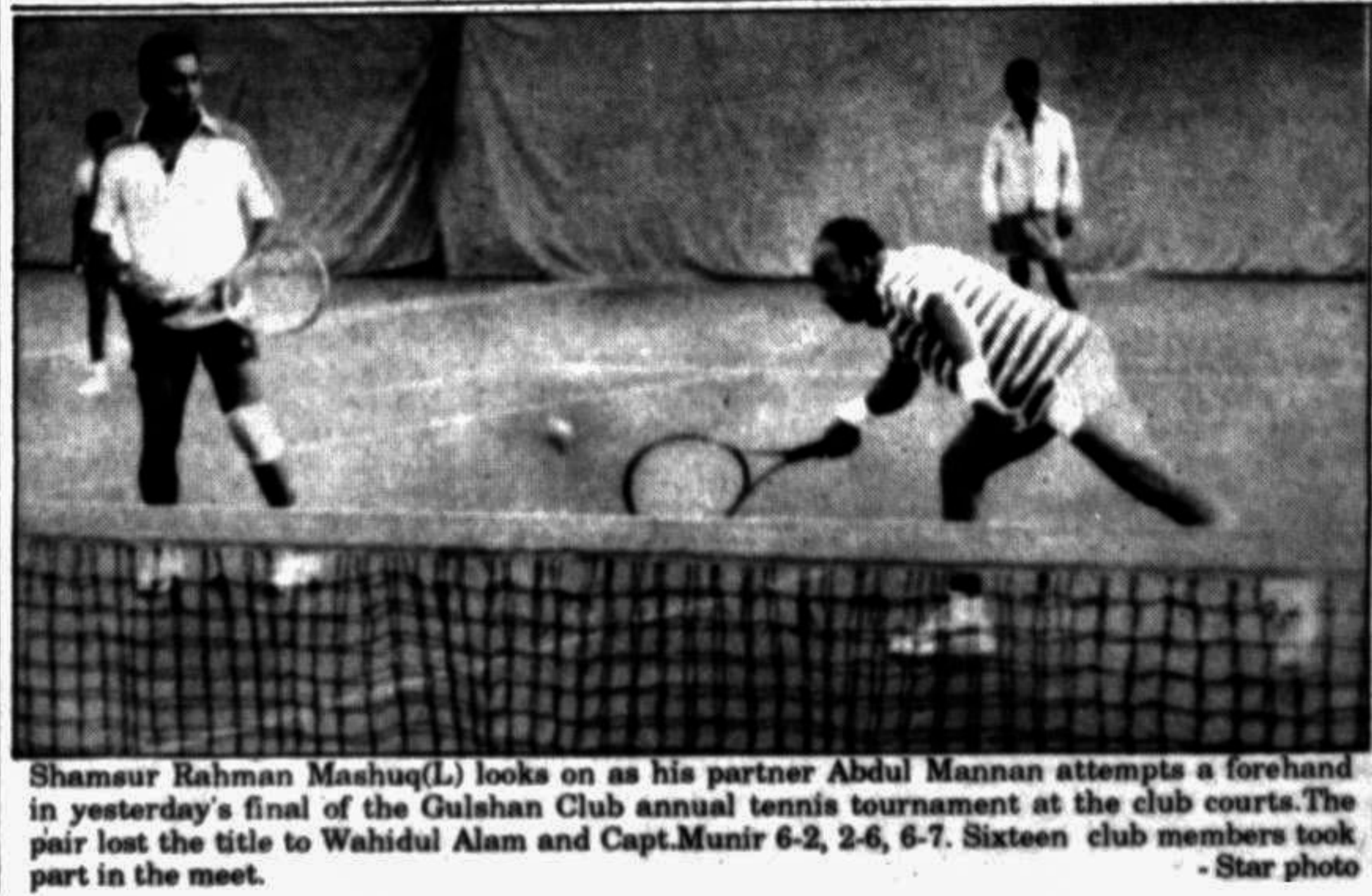
fourth game they lost the set.

The situation briefly reversed in the third set when Flach and Seguso broke Jarryd twice, but the top seeds broke Flach again in the fourth set to seal the match.

Fitzgerald and Jarryd took home 325,000 dollars for their four days' work.

Jarryd said it was a tough final but after he and Fitzgerald had gone two sets up "It was a long way for them to come back."

The US combination faces France in Davis Cup final in Lyon, which starts on



Shamsur Rahman Mashuq(L) looks on as his partner Abdul Mannan attempts a forehand in yesterday's final of the Gulshan Club annual tennis tournament at the club courts. The pair lost the title to Wahidul Alam and Capt. Munir 6-2, 2-6, 6-7. Sixteen club members took part in the meet. —Star photo

the match with some brilliant serving in the next game.

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November 29.

The doubles final, which was disrupted on Wednesday by supporters of Black groups opposed to South Africa's re-entry into international sports, was again the target of protests Sunday.

Thirty-six demonstrators were arrested and charged with disturbing the peace after they chanted and shouted outside the Ellis Park Stadium where the final was played, police spokeswoman Capt Ida Van Zweel said.

Those arrested would be held until today unless they paid a 50 rand (18 dollars) fine, Van Zweel said.

Both the hardline Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) and the Azanian People's Organisation (AZAPO) have pledged to prevent the South African Open from going ahead today.

An earlier report said, Jarryd, of Sweden, and Fitzgerald, of Australia, took the first two sets 6-4, 6-4, then dropped the third set 2-6 before regaining their momentum for a 6-4 win in the fourth.

"They've proven why they're No 1 in the world this year," Flach said afterward. He and Seguso were seeded third in the dir's 1-million tournament, which featured the world's eight top-ranked doubles teams.

The No-2 seed, Americans David Pate and Scott Davis, lost all three of their round-robin matches.

The winners received dits 325,000 .