

Sport

Cricket wins

Sports Reporter

The en masse resignation by the country's cricket administrators Wednesday in protest against the National Sports Council's (NSC) decision to allocate the Dhaka Stadium for the holding of the Vita-Rich Bijoy Cup football tournament seems to have served its purpose.

In a press release issued yesterday, the NSC made a one-sentence statement that the remaining matches of the Bijoy Cup, a tourney organised by the Bangladesh Football Players' Welfare Association would be played at the nearby hockey stadium.

According to observers, the Handball league prize-giving Sports Reporter

The prize distribution ceremony of the Second Division handball league was held yesterday at the handball court, Outer Stadium. Chairman of the National Sports Council Major Gen Mahbubur Rahman gave away the trophies as chief guest.

An exhibition match arranged on the occasion between champions West Jatra-bari Kirta Chakra and runner-up Junior Moishundi United ended in an 11-all draw. Junior Moishundi were leading 8-4 at half-time.

Arunayatan Dal received the best behaved team award while their star player Altaf received the highest goalscorer's trophy.

NSC decision should pave the way for an early solution of the impasse created in the country's cricket arena following the drastic decision of the ad hoc committee of the Bangladesh Cricket Control Board (BCCB) and the League Committee members to resign. That collective action had resulted in the immediate suspension of the entire cricket calendar, including the Navana Premier Division League, the Milnars First Division, and the Rank-Xerox Second Division.

Unless new complications and controversies arise, the cricket programme should resume soon. The cricket officials had resigned on grounds that the Dhaka Stadium, originally designed as a cricket ground, should be left exclusively for cricket. They claimed, and not without a degree of justification, that allowing football seriously affects the ground's suitability for cricket by damaging the pitch and the outfield.

Cricket lovers viewed the NSC decision as a victory for their cause.

Lankans toil

CHRISTCHURCH, Feb 15: Canterbury were 237 for five wickets at the close on the first day of a four-day match against Sri Lanka today, reports, Reuter.

Score: Canterbury 237 for five (B. Hartland 57, J. Boyle 47, D. Boyle 36, K. Wijegunawardene two for 54, Asoka De Silva two for 60).



Changing of the batons during the 4x400m relay on the concluding day of the national athletics championships at Army Stadium Thursday.

Crowe doubtful starter



AUCKLAND, Feb 15: The fitness of one man could determine the outcome of the third and deciding one-day cricket match between England and New Zealand here Saturday, reports Reuter.

New Zealand captain and star batsman Martin Crowe declared himself a doubtful starter today because of tendonitis in his right shoulder.

"I'm struggling and I can't throw at the moment," he said. "I'm hopeful a good night's sleep will put it right."

He said the problem had been on-going for six months and he had seen a surgeon.

"Hopefully with a bit of treatment we'll see how it goes," he said.

Crowe may consider surgery as an option immediately after the third Test against Sri Lanka starting in Auckland on March 1.

Without him, New Zealand could find it difficult to beat the English, who will be fighting to recover lost pride after a painful batting collapse Wednesday resulted in the

home team squaring the three-match series 1-1.

England, bowed by their



MARTIN CROWE

poor performance in the Ashes tour of Australia and vilified in the English press, desperately need a convincing win.

"It is very important to win the series," said English captain Graham Gooch who called for concentration from his players.

"We wanted to win badly (on Wednesday) but it wasn't to be. So we'll have to get our minds right and give it our best go."

England will have to win before New Zealand's most partisan of crowds, a fully booked out Eden Park, who will take great delight from any repetition of the tourists' familiar batting collapse.

Crowe's instructions will be simple to his bowlers, the same as they were on Wednesday: "Keep it simple and bowl it like it had worked for you."

Squads

NEW ZEALAND: Martin Crowe (captain), John Wright, Richard Reid, Andrew Jones, Ken Rutherford, Mark Greatbatch, Chris Harris, Ian Smith, Richard Petrie, Gavin Larsen, Chris Cairns, Chris Pringle, Willie Watson.

ENGLAND: Graham Gooch (captain), Mike Atherton, David Gower, Allan Lamb, Robin Smith, Alec Stewart, Jack Russell, Phillip DeFreitas, Angus Fraser, Martin Bicknell, Phil Tufnell, Glandstone Small, Devon Malcolm, Wayne Larkins, John Morris, Eddie Hemmings.

Benjamin's reward

BRIDGETOWN, Feb 15: Antiguan fast bowler Kenneth Benjamin has been rewarded for his impressive season in the Red Stripe Cup regional competition with a place in the squad to face Australia in their tour opener, reports Reuter.

West Indies Cricket Board of Control (WICBC) named Benjamin to replace injured Test paceman Ezra Moseley in the President's XI to play the Australians in a four-day match in St Kitts starting on Saturday.

Moseley told the WICBC he suffered a side injury playing for Barbados in a recent Red Stripe game against Jamaica.

Benjamin played in four matches for Leeward Islands this season, taking 18 wickets, including seven for 51 in one innings against Jamaica.

President's XI (from): Richie Richardson (captain), Phil Simmons, Dawny Joseph, Carlisle Best, Keith Arthurton, Roland Holder, James Adams, David Williams, Robert Haynes, Anthony Gray, Patrick Patterson, Kenneth Benjamin.

Pioneer soccer

Sports Reporter

Gandaria Famous Sporting Club drubbed Banani Nabarun Sangha, 4-0, in the Group B match of the round robin league of the Pioneer football yesterday at the Outer Stadium.

Ishak, Babu, Razzaq and Selim banged one goal each for Gandaria.

Gandaria now have two points in their kitty from one match, while, Banani, Nabarun had to be satisfied with one point from two matches.

In another match, Bashabo Tarun scored an exciting 3-2 victory over Lalbagh K.C at the same venue.

TODAY'S MATCHES

Makim Bazar K.C vs Kawran Bazar P.S (2.15 pm)

MSPCC vs Gulbagh K.C (3.30 pm)

BSJA beat BTC in friendly cricket

Sports Reporter

The Bangladesh Sports Journalists' Association (BSJA) beat Bangladesh Tobacco Company by 78 runs in a friendly cricket match played at the latter's Mohakhali ground yesterday.

In reply to BSJA's 153 for eight wickets in the stipulated 30 overs, BTC managed only 85 for nine wickets in 29 overs with their skipper Abdullah failing to resume his innings after being hurt.

Batting first, Afzal Khan and Aminul Islam Mori gave BSJA a good start by putting on 21 runs for the opening stand. Later, a punishing innings of 61 by Mujtaba Danesh, who hit three towering sixes and half a dozen fours, gave solidity to the total. Ajoy Barua with 16, Syed Mamoon with 15 and Mori with 12 were the other prominent batsmen for the journalists.

BTC skipper Abdullah, who later suffered a bad blow to his left upper lip that needed medical attention and several stitches, was their most successful bowler with two wickets for 20. Azam, Shafiq, Kabir, and Mashtur picked up a wicket each.

Ex-BTC man Shafiq top scored for his former company with an unbeaten 20, followed by Mahmudur Rahman with 12. Shankar and Zillur with ten each.

Ajoy Barua, bowling the 29th and last over, picked up two wickets for just four runs. Danesh and Partha also got two wickets each for 18 and 19 runs respectively. Masud Rumi and Manzurul Haq got one apiece.

Lendl, Sampras struggle



PHILADELPHIA, Feb 15: Ivan Lendl and Pete Sampras struggled with formidable opponents in their third round matches on Thursday before reaching the quarterfinals at the one-million-dollar U.S. professional indoor men's tennis tournament, reports Reuter.

The top seeded Lendl took charge in the second set to beat 15th seeded Gary Muller 7-6 (7-5), 6-3, and the second seeded Sampras eliminated a spunky Malival Washington 6-3, 7-6 (7-5).

Sampras, the reigning Balkishen again made Indian hockey manager

NEW DELHI, Feb 15: Former Olympian Balkishen Singh has returned as coach of the Indian men's hockey team, its morale and form at an all-time low after a decade of disasters, reports AFP.

Singh, who played for India as a fullback in the 1956 and 1960 Olympic Games, was named Wednesday for the post he will hold until the Hiroshima Asian Games in 1994.

Singh, who coached the Indian sides for the 1968, 1980 and 1984 Olympics, said he was pleased to be back in the post. He said he was confident India would once again be a side of world beaters.

U.S. Open champion, is making his first appearance of the 1991 season in Philadelphia.

His first big break came here last year and he is now faced with attempting to defend a title for the first time.

Shin splints kept the 19-year-old from participating at the recent Australian Open.

The fifth ranked Sampras put on a spotty show against the talented Washington.

Sampras, surely one of America's new boy wonders, didn't look all that wonderful—his forehead was shaky and his approach shots were missing their mark.

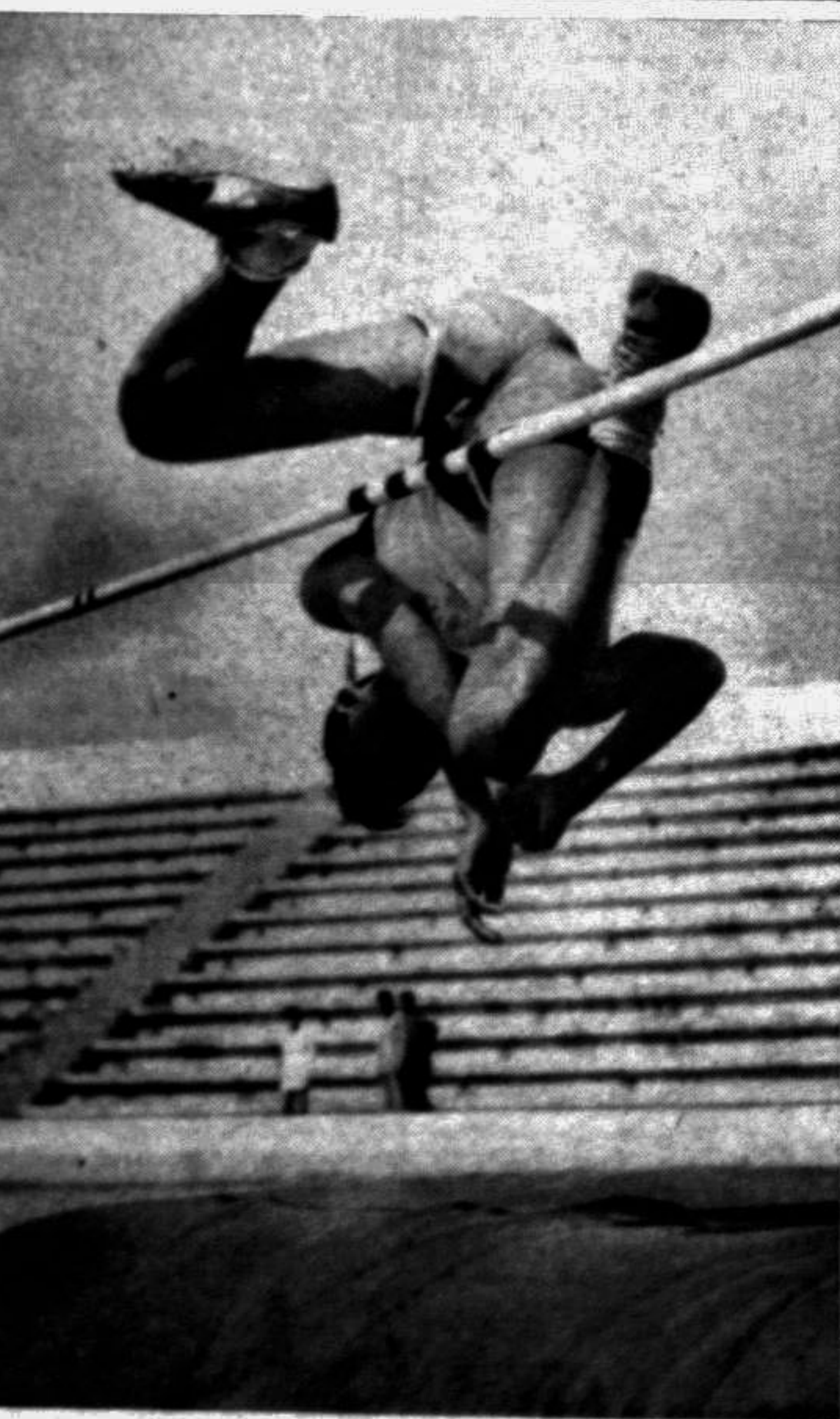
His serve was not bad, but he double faulted twice in the second set tie breaker.

The 68th-ranked Muller represents one of Lendl's worst nightmares. Muller is a feisty left hander who never gives up. Lendl dreads playing lefties—John McEnroe and Jimmy Connors caused him plenty of grief in his early career.

"He hits such big serves and doesn't put that many balls in play," Lendl said. "I can't remember the last time I played a lefty."

The third-ranked Lendl, who plays the seventh seeded Michael Stich in the quarters, finally broke Muller in the eleventh game to serve for the set.

But Lendl played loose to double fault at 30-40 in the next game, to send the match into a tie breaker.



Sharafat Hossain of Bangladesh Custom cleared 1.90 metres to bag the men's high jump gold medal in the nationals on Feb 13.

—Star photo

A star-studded field



TOKYO, Feb 15: Australia's Stephen Moneghetti, 1990's top-rated marathon runner is slightly favoured to win the men's 12-kilometer (7.4 mile) Chiba international cross-country race to be run Sunday, reports AFP.

The Chiba race is the ninth leg of the newly-created International Amateur Athletics Federation (IAAF) cross challenge series.

The men's race is expected to be a four-way battle between Mexico's Arturo Barrios—1989's winner and holder of the 10,000-meter world record of 27 min 08.23 secs Morocco's Moulis Abraham Boutab, a Seoul Olympic 10,000-meter gold medalist and winner here last year, Kenyan Julius Kariuki, runner-up to Boutab last year, and Moneghetti.

Experts here picked Moneghetti, 28, who clocked 1990's best time of 2 h 08 min 26 secs when he won the Berlin marathon in October as a slight favourite.

In last year's race, Boutab and Kariuki, the Seoul Olympic 3,000-meter steeplechase champion overtook Barrios 200 meters from the finish in an exciting last-minute duel.

Boutab won in 34 min 04 secs and Kariuki was the runner-up one second behind.



ROSA MOTA

Barrios was third in 34.10. Moneghetti flew into Tokyo early Thursday and trained at the Nai stadium here later the same day before inspecting the Tokyo marathon course where the 1991 World Championship race will be staged on September 1.

"I know such big figures as Boutab or Kariuki are taking part in the Chiba race. But I'm (at my) best form ever and the result may be surprising," he said after his workout.

The race will be staged at Showanomori cross-country

course in Chiba prefecture, in Tokyo's eastern suburbs.

Experts said the women's 6,000 meter race will be fought between Portugal's Rosa Mota, the Seoul Olympic marathon gold medalist, and Australia's Carolyn Schuwalow, winner in Tokyo in 1989 and 1990.

They said the experience of Mota who won last year's Osaka women's international marathon, gave her a slight edge over the Australian defending champion.

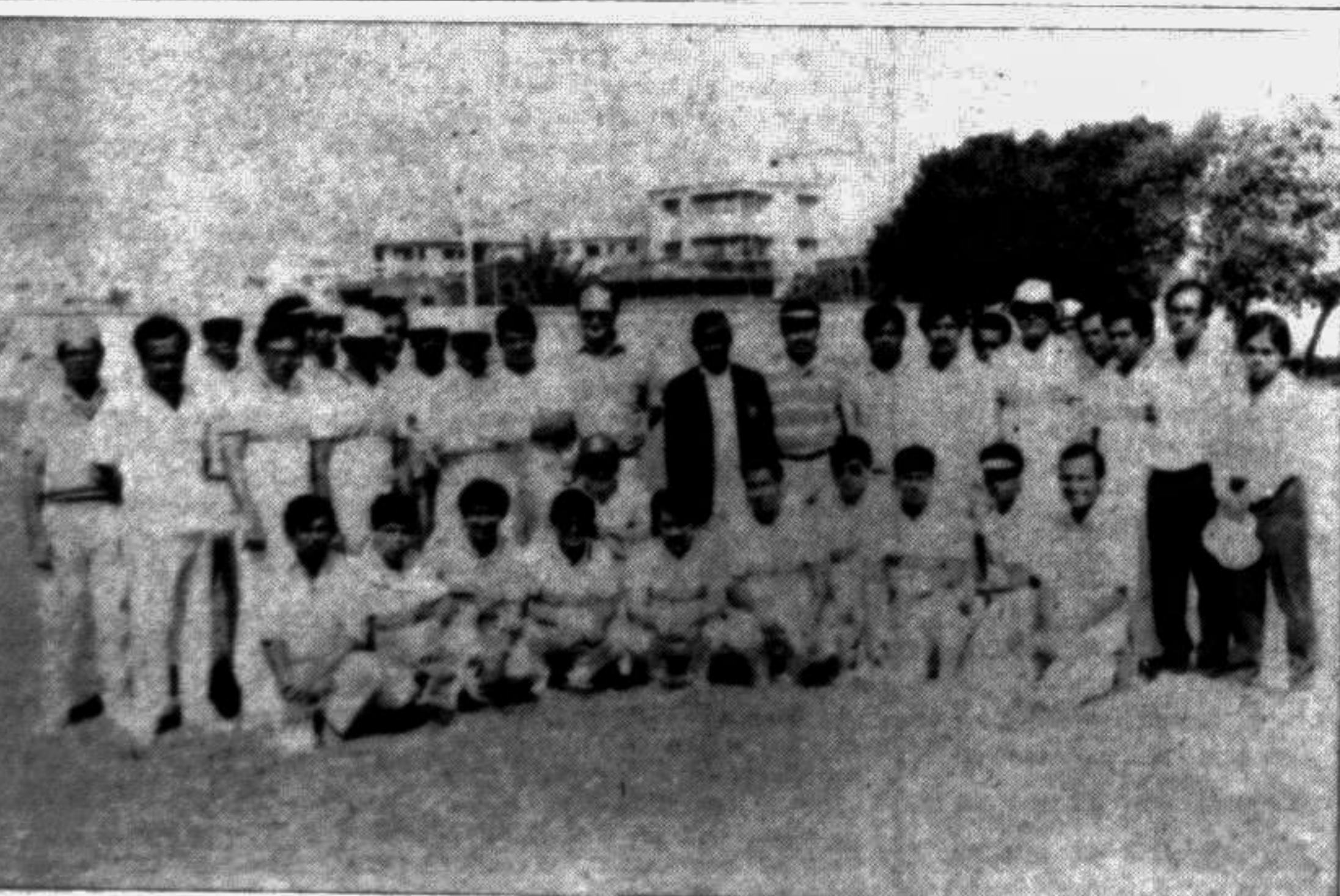
China's Zhong Huandi, 10,000-and 3,000-meter gold medalist at the Beijing Asian Games, is expected to pose a threat to Mota and Schuwalow.

The winner of the men's and women's races will be awarded 25 points each, runners-up 22 points and third finishers 19. The points will count toward the overall series total. The overall series winner will receive 10,000 dollars.

The 10th and final leg of the IAAF cross challenge series will be held at San Vittoria, Italy, on March 3.

The Chiba race is the only IAAF cross challenge event to be held outside Europe.

A total 23 foreign runners from 13 countries are invited to the men's race and 18 women from six countries to the women's race.



The Bangladesh Sports Journalists Association and the Bangladesh Tobacco Company teams pictured before the start of yesterday's friendly cricket match at the BTC ground, Mohakhali.

—Star photo

Vega on course

Sports Reporter

Title aspirants Vega Sports Club kept their championship hopes alive with a flattering 115-42 win over the lowly placed Panthers Club in the Partex First Division basketball league match yesterday at the wooden floor basketball gymnasium.

Vega led 58-18 at the breather.

Zaheer, one of the most prolific shooters of the Partex league, kept up his momentum with a superb shooting performance when he basketed 59 points for Vega Sports. This is the highest individual score, so far, of the current league.

Baby followed Zaheer with

Surja Sen hall clinch DU volleyball title

Sports Reporter

Surja Sen Hall clinched the Dhaka University inter-hall volleyball championship title after a thrilling two sets victory over Mohsin hall yesterday at the Jogannath hall ground.

Surja Sen took the first set 15-12. Mohsin hall put up a brave fight to go down 14-16 in the deciding set.

Rezaul Islam Dolon was adjudged the player of the final while Mohsin Hall's skipper Fazle Rabbi was declared, best player of the tournament.

Sergeant Zahurul Haque received the most disciplined team award.

28 points. Lito 13 and Asif with nine points were the notable Panthers' scorers.

Eagles Club registered an exciting 61-55 points victory over bottom placed Hornets Sports Club after bighting neck to neck (29-29) at half time.

Rathan 16 and Zaman with 14 were the leading Eagles' scorers while Julian 17 and Mithun with 12 points each were the successful Hornets' scorers.

LEAGUE STANDINGS

	M	W	L	P
Angels:	11	11	0	22
Vega Spts	11	10	1	20
Winners	10	7	3	14
Wanderers	9	6	3	12
Gregs	11	6	4	12
Five Stars	10	6	4	12
Josephites	7	4	3	8
Dhumketu	9	4	5	8
Azad Boys	10	4	6	8
Eagles	8	3	5	6
Panthers	11	1	10	2
Back Strokes	10	1	9	2
Hornets	9	0	9	0

TODAY'S MATCHES

Josephites Vs Dhumketu (3:00 pm)

Wanderers Vs Azad Boys (4:30 pm)

Exhibition soccer

An exhibition football match between the visiting UK Shapla Youth Force and Srimamsey football Club will be played at the Srimamsey ground at Sylhet on February 17 at 3 pm a press release said Friday reports BSS.

Diego denies charges



NAPLES, Feb 15: Football star Diego Maradona hit back on Thursday at allegations that he is involved with a sex and drugs ring, reports AFP.

Naples prosecutor Vittorio Sbordone said in a statement on Wednesday that "telephone calls intercepted as part of inquiries to find those behind drugs trafficking" had implicated the Napoli and Argentinian captain.

Maradona, referring to his frequent threats to quit the game, said "when I announced that I will give up football, I knew that I would be in for trouble, that's why I took care to reassure my wife, my parents and all my family."

"In the three months left this season, other stories are going start going around and I'm prepared for everything," he told an Italian daily.

"I've spoken to my lawyers... and they've promised me every help," he said, adding that "All the money which we are going to win from trials will go to the poor children of the city."

Referring to press coverage of the allegations, he said "Nobody has asked me any questions whatsoever and I am going to be pitiless—just as people have been with me."

"I'm very disappointed, and if I could, I'd go right now to Cuba or Jamaica with my family."

Despite the allegations against him, Maradona said he

would continue to play out the season. "I feel better physically and I fully intend to keep my promise to stay with my teammates—as I believe that I can still bring something to the team."

The Argentinian, who looked rejuvenated last weekend as he scored twice in Napoli's 4-2 drubbing of Parma, should lead Napoli again on Sunday against Pisa.

The prosecutor's statement on Wednesday claimed that Maradona had asked for "the goods", which were not clearly specified, and women, from persons known to the police.

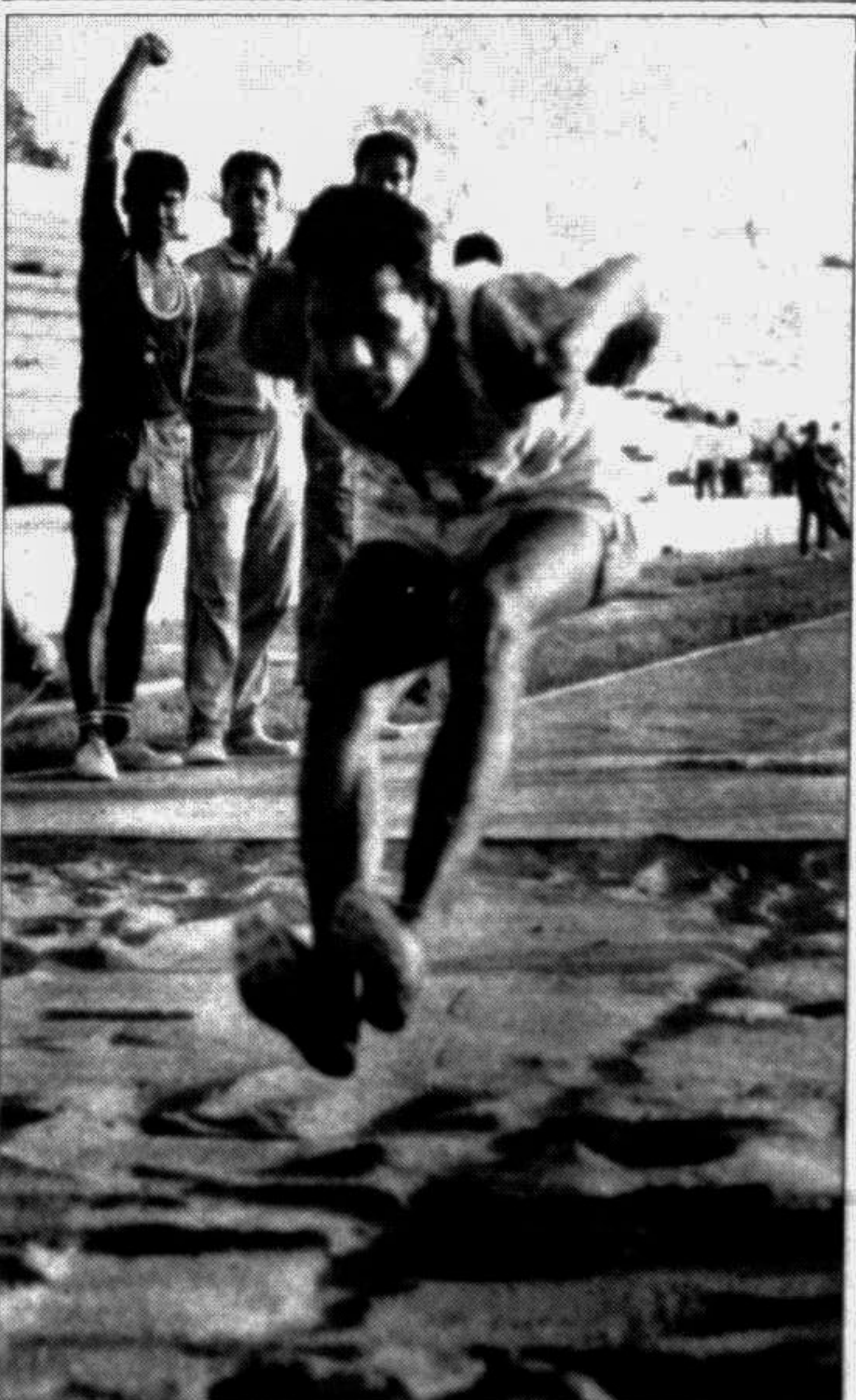
Police are working on the assumption that "the goods" was a code name for drugs.

A police inquiry is underway and is being handled by the drug squad and several magistrates specialising in narcotics. One press report has said the Naples mafia, the Camorra, could be the suppliers.

Detectives are attempting to verify the information in police possession before a decision is made about charging the football star.

Norway pulls out of Winter Universiade

SAPPORO (Japan), Feb 15: Norway has become the second country to withdraw from the Winter University Games, reducing the number of participating countries to 33, organisers said Friday, reports AP.



Emdadul Haq Ranju of Bangladesh Textile Mills Corporation won the men's long jump gold medal in the 19th national athletics championships at the Army Stadium on Thursday with a leap of 7.32 metres.

—Star photo