

Sport

Army cagers sink Navy

Sports Reporter

The reigning national champions Bangladesh Navy suffered a jolt when their traditional rivals Bangladesh Army handed them a 60-76 defeat in the 'inaugural' match of the BGIC Cup 15th national basketball championship yesterday at the wooden-floor gymnasium.

State Minister for Youth and Sports, Sadeq Hossain Khoka formally inaugurated the eight-day meet. NSC Chairman

Major General Mahbub Rahman and the Chairman of BGIC were also present. A capacity crowd witnessed the match.

Bangladesh Navy surged into an early nine point lead within the first 5 minutes of play.

The Army cagers took time in settling down but just few seconds before the interval they managed to overtake Navy's total. After that Army did not look behind. Rahim with 16 points, Huda and Siddique with 12 each contributed well to help their team to a vital victory.

Army led 39-37 at the breather. Goswami with 19 and Islam with 18 points were the leading Navy scorers.

The biggest victory of the day was recorded by Bangladesh Air Force. They crushed Brahmanbaria DSA 118-19.

Walek top scored for Air Force with 29 points.

Ayub with 45 points, Aminur and Firoze with 34 points each enabled BDR to rout Bangladesh Ansars 145-61 in a Group B match.

It was a successful day for Rajshahi as both their district and University teams won their respective matches — against Bangladesh Police and Bakerganj, respectively.

A record number of 16 teams, including eight district teams, are taking part in four groups in round robin basis.

The top two teams of each group will qualify for the semi-finals. The final and the third-place play-off will be held on July 15.

Chinese spikers win Super Cup

HONG KONG, July 8: Asian champions China defeated the United States 3-1 to convincingly win volleyball's 100,000 US dollar women's Super Challenge Cup here on Sunday, reports AFP.

The Chinese scored a 15-10, 14-15, 15-11, 15-13 victory over the Americans to remain unbeaten in the four-team tournament. They had beaten the Soviet Union and Brazil by identical 3-1 scores earlier in the tournament.

Spurred on by a partisan crowd, the Chinese women walked away with the winner's purse of 50,000 US dollars.

Brazil, meanwhile, took second place and 25,000 US dollars in prize money after defeating world champions Soviet Union 3-1 on Sunday.

The South Americans recovered from a first set loss to score an emphatic 12-15, 15-8, 15-6, 15-9 victory.

The Soviets, gold medallists at the Seoul Olympic Games, finished the tournament with a win.

Action from the 15th national basketball championship which began at the wooden-floor gymnasium yesterday.

—Star photo

Graf aims at top spot

Slam title.

WIMBLEDON, England, July 8: Add Steffi Graf to the people looking for Monica Seles.

Seles is still nowhere to be found, but Graf is back on the scene and eager to regain the No. 1 world ranking, reports AP.

"That will be my goal," the German said after beating Gabriela Sabatini in Saturday's Wimbledon women's final to reassert her supremacy after 17 months without a Grand

Slam title.

Graf took over the No. 1 ranking in August 1987 and held it for a record of nearly 3 and 1/2 years before slipping to No. 2 behind Seles this spring.

Seles won the first two legs of the Grand Slam this year, the Australian Open and French Open, but pulled out of Wimbledon at the last minute with a still undisclosed injury.

By beating Sabatini 6-4, 3-6, 8-6, she showed she's finally overcome the injuries, illnesses and distractions over

"It gave me so much pleasure to see myself getting through it, winning a tough match, winning a close match again, not letting up," Graf said.

"I showed I had the guts, I worked through some tough months," I knew that one day it would turn around again.

People have been writing me off a little bit.

"I knew I could do it, I needed it, just the win again. I needed it for myself."

Becker No.1

MONACO, July 8: Beaten Wimbledon finalist Boris Becker took over the world number one slot from Stefan Edberg when the Association of Tennis Professionals (ATP) announced is men's singles rankings today.

Leading rankings:

1. Boris Becker (Germany) 3,658 points
2. Stefan Edberg (Sweden) 3,575
3. Ivan Lendl (Czechoslovakia) 2,283
4. Michael Stich (Germany) 2,258
5. Jim Courier (US) 2,197
6. Andre Agassi (US) 1,144
7. Guy Forget (France) 1,720
8. Sergi Bruguera (Spain) 1,623
9. Pete Sampras (US) 1,596
10. Michael Chang (US) 1,440
11. Emilio Sanchez (Spain) 1,386
12. Goran Ivanisevic (Yugoslavia) 1,349
13. David Wheaton (US) 1,343
14. Andrei Cherkasov (Soviet Union) 1,277
15. Jakob Hlasek (Switzerland) 1,270
16. Karel Novacek (Czechoslovakia) 1,257
17. John McEnroe (US) 1,236
18. Goran Pripic (Yugoslavia) 1,183
19. Magnus Gustafsson (Sweden) 1,158
20. Brad Gilbert (US) 1,120

TEFFI Graf and Michael Stich weren't the only Germans to win singles titles at Wimbledon.

While Graf won her third women's championship, and Stich beat countryman Boris Becker for his first men's title, 18-year-old Barbara Rittner won the junior women's crown by beating Soviet Elena Makarova 6-7 (6-8), 6-2, 6-3 in the final.

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"I am hoping that my discussions with officials in England will be confirmed in the next day or so," Bollettieri was quoted as saying.

"It will be a great honor and very exciting to work with the British players."

GERMAN stars Boris Becker and Michael Stich battled out their Wimbledon final in front of an array of royalty.

Sitting in the Royal Box on Centre Court were Princess Diana, who is a regular tennis player, the Duchess of Kent, whose husband is president of the All England Tennis and Croquet Club, Princess Alexandra and Princess Michael.

Exiled King Constantine of Greece and Queen Anne-Marie also were in the Royal Box.

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Booters back

Sports Reporter

The Bangladesh under-23 football team returned home last night after taking part in the second-leg pre-Olympic qualifying tournament held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, last week.

Bangladesh won two of their four second-leg matches. They beat the Philippines 3-0 and hosts Malaysia 1-0. Bangladesh lost to Thailand 0-4 and to South Korea 0-1 to finish fourth in the five-team Asian Group D.

Aslam scores in E Bengal win

Sports Reporter

Title-aspirants East Bengal recorded their seventh straight victory when they outplayed George Telegraph 3-0 in the Calcutta Super Division football league match yesterday, according to AIR monitored in Dhaka.

Army led 39-37 at the breather. Goswami with 19 and Islam with 18 points were the leading Navy scorers.

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Nat'l women's chess begins

Sports Reporter

The twelfth national women's chess championship organised by the Bangladesh Chess Federation began yesterday at the National Sports Council chess room.

Thirteen first round matches were held on the inaugural day.

Twenty-six participants are taking part in a seven round Swiss league with the championship extended to eight days.

Munir champion

Sports Reporter

Syed Muniruzzaman emerged unbeaten champion in the Zia memorial chess competition which concluded yesterday at the Moonlight Gymnasium at Manikganj.

Muniruzzaman defeated Golam Mohiuddin in the crucial match yesterday to take his points tally to 13 from 13 matches. Golam Mohiuddin had to settle for the runners-up position with twelve points.

Biondi beaten

Sports Reporter

SANTA CLARA, Calif. July 8: Alexander Popov beat Matt Biondi in the 100-meter freestyle at the Santa Clara International swim meet on Sunday, the Soviet's second straight victory over the five-time US Olympic gold medalist, reports AP.

Popov won in 50.44 seconds, a meet record, ahead of teammate Veniamin Yanayev (51.49) and Biondi (55.55).

Popov, 20, has a 49.27 performance in the 100 freestyle.

WIMBLEDON

July 8: From club soccer player to Wimbledon champion. Not even Michael Stich could believe it, says AP.

"It's always a dream of every tennis player to win Wimbledon once, but it doesn't matter how hard you believe in it," Stich said. "When I started the year, I never even thought about winning Wimbledon."

And yet, the dream came true on Saturday as the 22-year-old German defeated countrymen Boris Becker 6-4, 7-6, 6-4 in his first Grand Slam final.

Not only did he beat the three-time champion in straight sets, but he did it on the Center Court which Becker calls home.

There was no letdown after Stich's victory over defending champion Stefan Edberg in the semifinals. If anything, his game picked up.

"I got the feeling that I could touch every ball I wanted to," he said.

"I had nothing to lose," Stich said. "Nobody expected me to beat Edberg in the semifinals. Nobody expected me to beat Boris in the finals."

He was the big favorite, so I could just go out there and try to play my game and know I have a chance to beat him."

Stich was watching on television when Becker won his first Wimbledon title as a 17-year-old in 1985. Back then, Stich was splitting his time as a junior tennis player and defender on a club soccer team in Elmshorn, Germany.

"For sure, I got a lot off him (Becker) just watching and the way he played tennis, but he was not like a player I really tried to copy. I just tried to play my tennis."

As a junior, Stich didn't impress others, or even himself,

Windies poised to draw level

Sports Reporter

The West Indies were poised to draw level in their five-match cricket series against England, needing another 95 runs to win the third cricket Test at Trent Bridge with nine second innings wickets in hand when rain and bad light stopped play 15 minutes early on the fourth day yesterday, according to BBC commentary monitored in Dhaka.

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