

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



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

Major General Mahbur 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 combined 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 on round robin basis.

The top two teams of each group will qualify for the semifinals. 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, 4-15, 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 medalists at the Seoul Olympic Games, finished the tournament without a win.

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.

Bangladesh striker Sheikh Mohammad Aslam gave East Bengal the lead with a spectacular goal.

Kuljit Singh and Tushar Rakshit with one goal each were the other East Bengal scorers.

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 Manikdi, Cantonment.

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

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 Venamin Tayanovic (51.49) and Biondi (55.55).

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

her father's personal life that had affected her game.

It was her first Grand Slam victory since the Australian Open in January 1990 and followed a humbling 6-0, 6-2 defeat to Arantxa Sanchez-Vicario in the French Open semifinals. It also avenged five straight losses to Sabatini.

"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.

"It 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 its 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 Prpic (Yugoslavia) 1,183
19. Magnus Gustafsson (Sweden) 1,158
20. Brad Gilbert (US) 1,120

AFTER guiding players such as Monica Seles, Andre Agassi and Jim Courier to stardom, American tennis coach Nick Bollettieri has lined up a real tough task, according to the British press.

The Sunday Telegraph said Bollettieri will be special coach to the British pro players as Britain seeks its first Wimbledon men's champion since Fred Perry in 1936.

"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.

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 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.

The West Indies, set 115 to win the match after England were all out for 211 in their second innings, were 20 for the loss of opener Phil Simmons' wicket at the close. Desmond Haynes was batting on eight and Richie Richardson on ten.

Unless rain comes to England's rescue on the final day Tuesday, the tourists should erase the deficit they suffered by losing the first Test at Headingley.

England, who conceded a 97-run first innings lead, resumed at 56 for three yesterday and were at one stage reduced to 115 for eight before DeFreitas, not out 55, and David Lawrence, 34, along with debutant Richard Illingworth, 13, added 96 vital runs for the last two wickets to take the game into the fifth day.

Courtney Walsh finished with four for 63 while Curtley Ambrose, who bagged five for 74 in the first innings, took three for 61.

Simmons edged Lawrence to wicketkeeper Jack Russell

for one, which the team score then.

An earlier AFP report said: Rain raised England's hopes of saving the third Test Monday, but it did not arrive in time for Allan Lamb.

Lamb's 73-Test career may

well have ended the moment the South African-born 37-year-old offered no stroke to a Malcolm Marshall inswinger and was adjudged lbw for 29. His series scores of 110.1, 113 and 29 should now spell the end of a Test career which began on his qualification for England in 1982.

It would be ironic if his last appearance at this level was against the West Indies, as he has hit six of his 13 Test centuries off their fearsome attack.

However, his dismissal once again left England tottering at 67 for four, just 22 minutes into the fourth day.

Mark Ramprakash and Robin Smith then survived with a spirit for a further 5.0 minutes before play was interrupted after 15.2 overs had been bowled with England 96 for four, one run behind.

An early lunch was taken at 12.50 pm, but by then the drizzle which had forced off the players had become heavy rain and prospects for play in the afternoon did not look good.

Scoreboard

Scoreboard at lunch on the fourth day of the third Test between England and the West Indies here on Monday:

England: First innings 300 (G.A. Gooch 68, R.A. Smith 64 not out, C.E.L. Ambrose 5/74).

West Indies: First innings 397 (J.V.A. Richards 80, A.L. Logie 78, M.D. Marshall 67).

England: second innings
Gooch b Ambrose 13
Atherton b Marshall 4
Hick c Dujon b Ambrose 0
Lamb lbw b Marshall 29
Ramprakash not out 18
Smith not out 12
Extras 20
Total (4 wickets) 96
Fall of wickets: 1-4, 2-8, 3-25, 4-67

Fenech gets a rematch

SYDNEY, July 8: The World Boxing Council (WBC) has ordered a rematch of last month's drawn world title fight between Azumah Nelson of Ghana and Australia's Jeff Fenech. Fenech's boxing promoter Bill Morley said on Sunday, reports Reuters.

Hero's welcome awaits Stich

FRANKFURT, July 8: The town where Michael Stich pays his taxes is planning a big welcome for Germany's newest tennis star, who defeated countryman Boris Becker on Sunday to become the Wimbledon men's champion, reports AP.

The 22-year-old Stich, whose main home is in Elmshorn, about 25 kilometers (15 miles) northwest of Hamburg, also has a residence in Munich, where he trains with a local club.

But his family, father Detlev, mother Gertrude and brothers Thorsten, 29, and Andreas, 24, live in Elmshorn, and that's where the new Wimbledon champ goes to relax.

Even before their new favourite son defeated Becker, who will be officially declared the world's No. 1 player on Monday, Elmshorn Mayor Bernd Schwachwalde announced Stich will get a big welcome when he returns.

"We will give Michael Stich a big welcome, even if he should lose. I admire his evenness of temper, his calmness, his northern temperament," Schwachwalde said in an interview with the Sunday edition of the Frankfurter Allgemeine newspaper.

Schwachwalde left no doubt that he favours Stich, even though Becker has been Germany's reigning tennis hero since he first won Wimbledon in 1985.

"We Elmshorner become upset when he (Stich) is described as being from Munich. There he trains once in a while, but this is his main home. Luckily, he also pays his taxes here," Schwachwalde said.

The remark was an obvious jab at Becker, who for years has claimed tax haven Monte Carlo as his official residence.

While Stich has grown in leaps and bounds this year in improving his game, and is taller (1.92 meters - 6-foot-4) than his father and brothers, he'll keep one title he has had all his life. At home they still call him "der Kleine," the little one, as the baby of the family.

Fitzgerald's fine double

WIMBLEDON, July 8: Second seeds John Fitzgerald and Elizabeth Smylie avenged their runner-up finish last year by winning the Wimbledon mixed doubles title Sunday with a 7-6 (7-4) 6-2 over top seeds Jim Pugh and Natalia Zvereva, reports AP.

Fitzgerald and Smylie have one other mixed doubles Grand Slam title together, the 1983 US Open, and Sunday's victory was Fitzgerald second title in two days at Wimbledon.

He and Swedish Anders Jarryd picked up the men's doubles trophy Saturday with a victory over Javier Frana of Argentina and Mexico's Leonardo Lavalle.

Graf aims at top spot

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

her father's personal life that had affected her game.

It was her first Grand Slam victory since the Australian Open in January 1990 and followed a humbling 6-0, 6-2 defeat to Arantxa Sanchez-Vicario in the French Open semifinals. It also avenged five straight losses to Sabatini.

"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.

"It 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."

Stich: Soccer player turned Wimbledon champion

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 this year, I never even thought about winning Wimbledon."

And yet, the dream came true on Saturday as the 22-year-old German defeated countryman 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 favourite, so I could just go out there and try to play my game and knowing 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,

as a potential world champion. "I was a really bad guy on the court," he said. "I really behaved really bad. And so everybody said, 'OK, that guy's never going to win anything.' And I didn't believe it myself."

But Stich went on to win the German national juniors title in 1986, and turned pro two years later after finishing high school.

He shot up quickly in the rankings, going from No. 750 to No. 100 in two years. He also was named to the German Davis Cup team, where he felt Becker's influence.

"I mean he was the best player of the world and that just gives you a lot of confidence and motivation to do the same," Stich said. "I never expected to do the same like him, because I still think I can never reach him, what he did in tennis, but it's just may be motivation to try to a couple of the things he did."

Now that he's won Wimbledon, Stich's life may never be the same. Take it from Becker:

"He's not going to realise it now, but may be in a couple of years time he'll realize the fact how much his life has changed, and will change. But it's up to him now how he can cope with it. Now he's a star, but not everything that shines is gold. So some people can't handle it, some people can't. It's a fine line."

"He was flying around a little bit in the locker room. That is a normal reaction and he deserves that. But in a couple of weeks, when he's starting to land again, he should realize that it is only a tennis match."

Stich said he realizes he has entered a new realm. "I think I'm prepared," he said. "I don't know exactly what is coming up for me right now after this Wimbledon title, but I just have to try to face that. For sure, it's going to change my life."

"I hope I'm not going to be a different person to my friends and to my family. I just hope I can stay like I am right now."



A delighted Michael Stich holds aloft the Wimbledon men's singles trophy after beating Becker in Sunday's final. —AFP photo