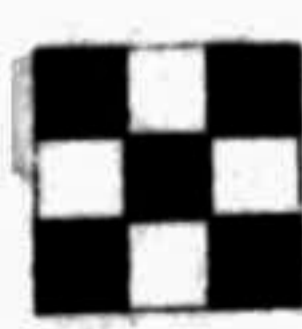


A race until the very end

Sports Reporter



Everyone will have to wait until tomorrow, Monday, to know the name of the new national chess champion.

The penultimate round of play of the 17th nationals at the NSC chess room yesterday left the issue tantalisingly poised, a solitary point separating the top two players in the table with the final round of the 15-round competition to go after today's day of rest.

The end of the 14th round last evening saw former national junior champion Riflat bin-Sattar of Biman still clinging on to a point's lead over the second-placed title-contender Ziaul Kader Tuhin of Dhaka Metropolis, a situation that has helped to sustain interest in this year's championship until the very end.

Riflat now has 11 points from his 14 games while Tuhin, who has managed to remain the only unbeaten player among the 16 taking part in the competition, has ten points in his collection.

But unlike Tuhin, Riflat enjoys the advantage of knowing that a drawn result against Anisur Rahman of Dhaka Metropolis Monday will suffice to hand him the championship. But should Riflat falter against Anis, and should Tuhin manage to beat Khandaker Kayes Hassan of Bangladesh Ansars then, according to the Buschowitz tie-breaking method, Tuhin would claim the title by virtue of the fact that he would have a better win-loss ratio than Riflat and also because he had beaten the Biman player in their clash in the 11th round last Wednesday.

That defeat rocked the hitherto confident Riflat, leading to a second successive loss at the hands of the unfancied Shabana Parveen Nipa the following day and then a draw against his Biman teammate Syed Tahmidur Rahman, the

Press Club chess begins tomorrow

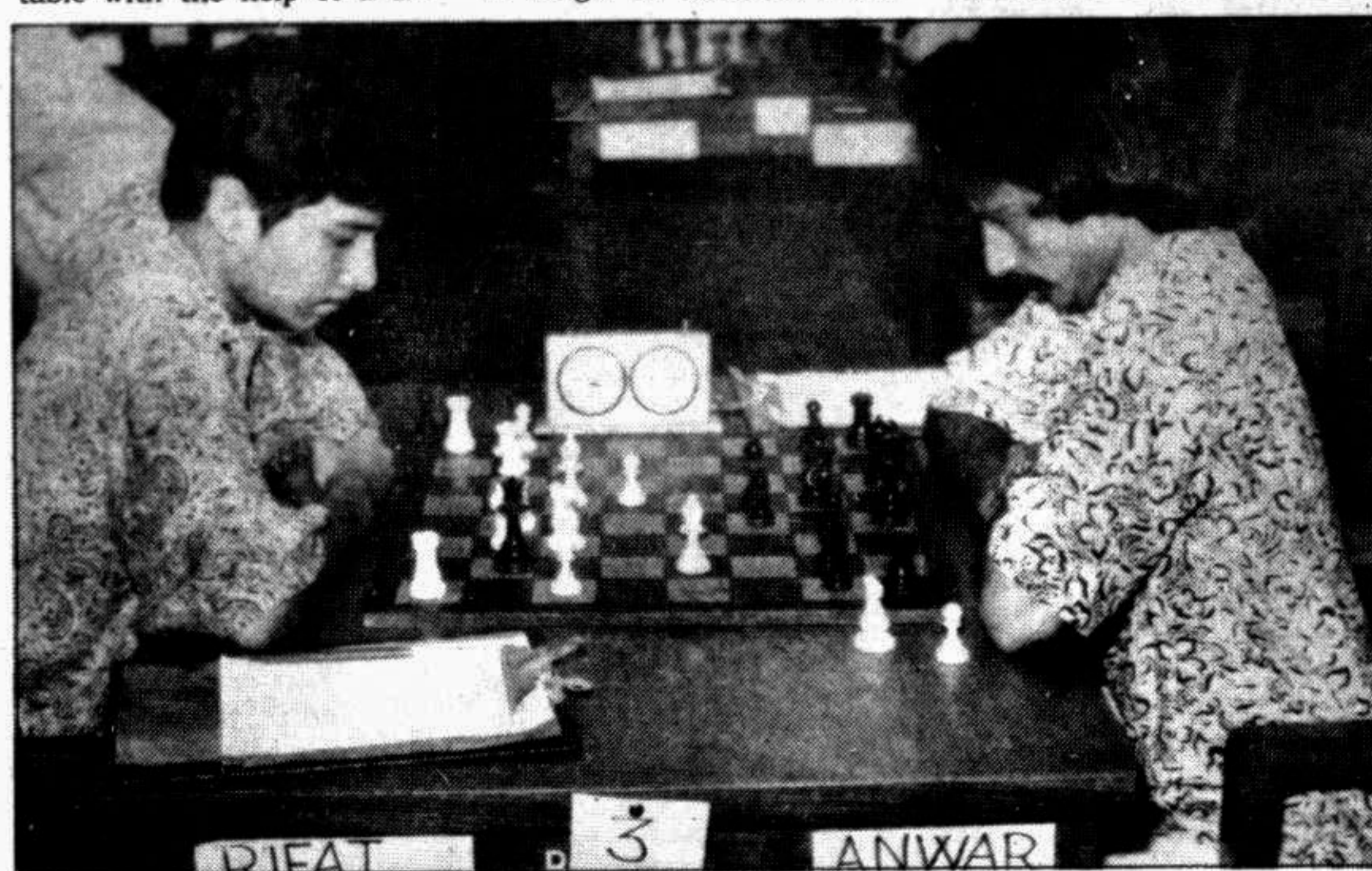
A chess competition marking the 37th founding anniversary of the Jatiya Press Club will begin at 4 pm tomorrow (October 14) at the Club premises, reports BSS.

Grand Master Niaz Murshed will inaugurate the competition to be sponsored by Bangladesh sports.

defending champion, Friday. Yesterday Riflat succeeded in maintain in his lead in the table with the help of a 26-

Anwar's queen in a game of the French defence variation and Anwar was left little choice but to resign in the 26th. Anwar

fence, needed all his skills and patience to subdue his Dhaka Metropolis teammate Shahinur Hossain. Shahinur,



Riflat bin-Sattar of Biman (L) remained in the lead of the 17th national championship by beating Sheikh Anwar Hossain of Dhaka DSA in yesterday's 14th and penultimate round at the NSE chess room. Riflat only needs a draw in his last game tomorrow to clinch the title.

—Star photo

move victory over Sheikh Anwar Hossain of Dhaka DSA. Playing with the white pieces, Riflat sacrificed a castle to take

now has 5.5 points to his credit. Tuhin, playing black in a game of the king's Indian de-

who once shared the second spot in the table, remains on 6.5 point.

Xie draws level

MANILA, Oct 12: Challenger Xie Jun of China on Saturday forced defending champion Maya Chiburdanidze of the Soviet Union to resign in the eighth game to even the match halfway through the 16-game women's World Chess Championship, reports AP.

With the win, Miss Xie tied Miss Chiburdanidze at 4 points. A victory is worth one point and a draw one-half point for each player.

Miss Chiburdanidze, 31, played the same first 13 moves that won her game 4 with a Ruy Lopez closed variation while playing the white pieces.

However, the 20-year-old challenger had apparently learned from her mistake and immediately neutralized Miss Chiburdanidze's plan to put a knight at F5 by forcing a series of exchanges.

Miss Chiburdanidze then shifted her attack to Xie's queenside and held a slight positional advantage going into the 22nd move.

But Filipino national master Buenaventura Villamayor, the tournament's official analyst, said the champion made a "weak" 24th move by placing her remaining knight on the f2 square, which allowed Miss Xie to launch a counterplay.

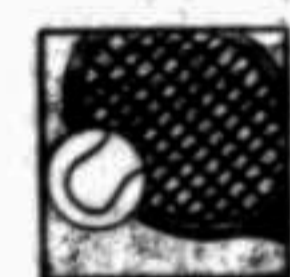
"We are happy about the result," said Chinese international master Ye Jiang Chuan, one of Miss Xie's seconds. "We hope we can do better on Monday." Game 9 is set for Monday, with Miss Xie playing the white pieces.

Both players have requested not to be interviewed until after the tournament.

Miss Xie and Miss Chiburdanidze have each won two games and drawn four matches.

The first player to score 8.5 points wins the championship. Miss Chiburdanidze, the women's world chess champion since 1978, retains the crown if both players have 8 points after 16 games.

Plan to hike prize money



PONTE VEDRA BEACH, Florida, Oct 12: The ATP Tour plans to greatly increase the prize money available in nine men's tennis tournaments in 1993 and to guarantee that more top-ranked players play in them, a spokesman said on Thursday, reports Reuter.

The nine tournaments will guarantee prize money, excluding appearance payments, of at least 1.4 million dollars, up from the current range of 750,000 to 1.2 million dollars and will have at least eight top-10 players competing, ATP tour spokesman Greg Sharkey said.

Currently only six top-10 players are guaranteed to play in 'single-week' championships series tournaments — ones held during weeks when there is no other tour event also scheduled.

The nine tournaments are in Indian Wells, California, Key Biscayne, Florida, Monte Carlo, Hamburg, Rome, Montreal, Cincinnati, Ohio, Stockholm, and Paris, Sharkey said.

"By having the nine championship series single-week tournaments it's going to guarantee stronger than ever tour-

naments with more top 10 players," Sharkey said.

He said the intention was not to split off a separate tour or preempt any rival "super" tour but to distinguish "perhaps a second tier behind the grand slams and have more people aware that when these nine events are taking place these are nine of the most prestigious events around the world."

Sharkey said the dates of the nine tournaments had not

been set but would be about the same as in current schedules. In the 1991 schedule, the Indian Wells event is played in early March and the Paris tournament in late October.

He said final details of the plan, decided by the six-member ATP tour board of directors at the time of the US Open, would be confirmed at the ATP tour world championship tournament in Frankfurt in November.

Minnesota Twins win



MINNEAPOLIS, Oct 12: The Minnesota Twins scored five runs in the first three innings and held on to beat the Toronto Blue Jays 5-4 in the opening game of the American league championship, reports agencies.

The Twins, who lost two of three games to the Blue Jays over the weekend, shelved Toronto starter Tom Candiotti, whose specialty is the elusive knuckleball but who used the pitch sparingly.

"We were looking for his curve ball, and he was throwing it,"

said Dan Gladden, who had two singles and scored a run. "And every time he threw one, it seemed like we were getting a base hit."

The Twins, who in the past were known for the long ball, produced all five of their runs by keeping the ball in the park, as well as with some aggressive base running.

Minnesota stole four bases in the first three innings.

Shane Mack's run-scoring double in the third inning chased Candiotti from the mound, but David Wells and Mike Timlin combined to hold the Twins scoreless the rest of the way.

TOMORROW'S MATCHES

Riflat bin-Sattar vs Anisur Rahman.

Syed Tahmidur Rahman vs Rezaul, Jamilur Rahman vs Mainuddin Mamoon.

Younus Hassan vs Sheikh Anwar Hossain.

Rani Hamid vs Shamsul Kabir Chowdhury.

Ziaul Kader Tuhin vs Khandaker Kayes Hassan.

Shabana Parveen Nipa vs Shahinur Hossain.

Shahabuddin Ahmed Qureshi vs Sheikh Shahadat Hossain Ratna.

Mt Tukuche scaled

KATHMANDU, Nepal, Oct 12: Two Japanese mountaineers have scaled Mount Tukuche, the Tourism Ministry said Wednesday, reports AP.

Ichita Ono, 45, an engineer, and Yukito Ueno, a company executive, ascended the 6,920-meter (22,700-foot) peak last Friday.

Soviets top seeds in Auckland



AUCKLAND, Oct 12: The Soviet Union men's hockey team are top seeds in the first qualifying tournament for next year's Barcelona Olympics, but each of the 12 teams can stake a claim to one of the four spots available, reports Reuter.

The 16-day tournament has both a men's and women's section and marks the first time that the sport's governing body has not directly appointed teams to the Olympics.

For the men, Britain, Spain, Germany, Australia, the Netherlands, Egypt, Pakistan and Argentina have already qualified for the Olympics.

The women's section which started today, already has

Jagbir injury — a blow to India

AUCKLAND, Oct 12: The Indian hockey team with an injured Jagbir Singh arrived here today, after a 10-day warmup tour of Australia, to participate in the Olympic hockey qualifying tournament, reports PTI.

Jagbir Singh twisted his ankle while playing against Red Backs, an Australian club side, at Melbourne two days ago.

However, chief coach Balkishen Singh and the team doctor are confident that Jagbir Singh would be fit before the second match against Belgium on October 15.

"He will be fit to play against Switzerland too, but we do not want to take a chance. All will now depend on how Jagbir feels tomorrow when the team starts its first practice session on the newly laid hockey complex," Balkishen Singh said.

He said the team was in five shape and raring to go. India plays its first match against Switzerland on October 14.

Meanwhile, the Olympic qualifying tournament featuring 84 matches go off to a start here with six games decided today in the women's section.

Five women's and four men's teams will qualify for the Barcelona Olympic Games next year.

Spain, Australia and the Netherlands and will be joined by five teams from the Auckland tournament.

The Soviet Union men's team, who have ranked among the top six teams for several years, were sixth at last year's World Cup in Lahore and fourth at this year's European Cup in Paris.

"They are a strong defensive side, they've got really good basics and a very low error rate, nothing flash at all... but they get a result," said hockey writer Richard Calkin.

The Soviet Union came last in last week's European Champion's Trophy but all their six opponents had already qualified.

"They were only two goals behind the best teams in the world," said New Zealand coach Kevin Towns.

New Zealand, gold medalists at the 1976 Olympics, meet the Soviet Union first and are ranked fourth in their six-team pool behind Canada and Ireland.

But the Kiwis are confident their home side advantage can win them a ticket to the Olympics.

Two teams from each men's pool will go to Barcelona. Canada, defeated after missing out on automatic entry upon losing 0-3 to Argentina at the Pan-American Games in Cuba, will be looking to set the record straight.

A relatively young Ireland side, which finished seventh in the European Cup this year, boast a strong defence but they have had little international experience since.

Lowly-rated Japan and Italy round out the pool.

In the second pool India, who have fallen on lean times in the past decade, are expected to make the finals with Malaysia, leaving France, Belgium, the United States and Switzerland to slug it out for the second spot.

France are on of the improving European sides while the Americans have struggled to come to grips with international hockey.

Britain's recent form gives them an edge over favourites South Korea in the women's section, but both teams are likely to end up in Barcelona.

Britain are top seeds in a pool which includes China, Argentina, the United States, Ireland and Italy. The Koreans top the second pool, which includes Germany, New Zealand, Canada, France and Japan.

Germany are regarded as a tough proposition following their second place at last month's Champions Trophy behind current Olympic champions Australia.

Canada are rebuilding after the retirement of several key players who helped make them a leading team for years.

They finished 10th at last year's World Cup.

NZ women win

AUCKLAND, New Zealand, Oct 12: A stacked Japanese defence and an unimpressive New Zealand attack produced a 1-0 win for the home team on the opening day of the women's Olympic hockey qualifying tournament here today, reports AFP.

New Zealand's goal followed a penalty corner in the fourth minute the initial shot was blocked by the Japanese keeper and in the ensuing melee the ball was retrieved to allow New Zealand defender Trudy Kilokolly a shot at goal.

But New Zealand did not come close to scoring again. Making a hash of one penalty corner after another and in the 54th minute almost conceded a goal to Japan.

The Japanese played a mainly defensive game, rarely venturing into the New Zealand goal circle.

New Zealand captain Mary Clinton said her team had been "A bit disappointed" not to have won with greater authority.

She said Japanese tactics has made it difficult to play an attacking game.

"They usually play a little more constructively than that. Today they just stacked their defence which made it very, very hard to score goals."

Britons off to flying start



AUCKLAND, New Zealand, Oct 12: Britain made a flying start in their bid to qualify for next year's

Olympic women's hockey tournament in Barcelona with a 5-0 victory over Italy today, reports Reuter.

Susan Fraser scored from a penalty corner after just six minutes before Kathryn Johnson added the first of her two goals.

The Italians fought back at the start of the second half but Britain, favourites in Pool B, sealed victory with three late goals.

South Korea, their closest rivals in the two-week qualifying tournament, squeezed past France 1-0 in Pool A.

French goalkeeper Macfee Loyot won the player of the day award for keeping her team in the game.

Korean captain Gye Sook-Jim was the only player to find the net, in the 35th minute.

Spain, Australia and the Netherlands have already booked places in the women's event in Barcelona, and 12 countries are battling it out here for the remaining five berths.

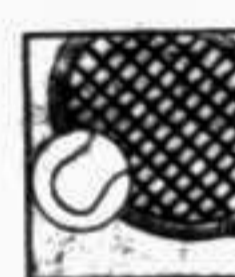
Germany tipped as potential medalists after their second

place at last month's Champions Trophy, strolled to a comfortable 4-0 Pool A victory over the United States. Franziska Hentschel scored all the goals.

In other match of the day, Canada won a close battle with China 2-1. After a scoreless first half, Sharon Creelman hammered a penalty corner to put Canada 1-0 up after 49 minutes.

China's Yang Huijing levelled the scores four minutes later. But in the 68th minute, Milena Gaiga gave Canada the lead and the match with a well-struck field goal.

Edberg faces Rostagno in final



TOKYO, Oct 12: World number one Stefan Edberg defeated Goran Ivanisevic of Yugoslavia here

Saturday to reach the final of the one-million-dollar Seiko Super men's tennis tournament, reports AFP.

The 25-year-old Swede, fresh from his victories in the US Open and the Australian indoor championship, came from behind to beat the hard-hitting Yugoslav 4-6, 7-6(7/2), 7-5.

But former world number one and defending champion Ivan Lendl of Czechoslovakia fell to Derrick Rostagno of the United States 6-7 (4/7), 2-6.

"I didn't play badly, but he played better on big points, especially in the second set," said the 31-year-old Czechoslovak. "He deserved to win."

The two players kept their serves in the first set but in the tie break the American piled the pressure on, taking a 6-4 lead and then watching as Lendl hit as easy return into the net to surrender the set.

In the second set, Lendl lost the fifth game to go 2-3 down and was never able to take another game off Rostagno, ranked 22 in the world.

"He hit three aces in a nice game to go 4-2 and then he shot some incredible returns of my first serve in the following game. Once you are 5-2 down and double break, it's really difficult to come back," said Lendl.

"I went into the day looking to be attacking. I think it was the key today," said Rostagno, who pulled an earlier upset by

over. I feel I'm playing good tennis. Hopefully I will play one more good match tomorrow," added Rostagno, after reaching the final for the first time here.

Edberg, who narrowly beat the same opponent in Sydney a week ago, lost his opening service game on his way to losing the set, but managed to even the score by winning the second set tie-breaker 7-2.

"Actually, I got two points on his serve (to lead 3-0) and then I knew I really had a good chance to get back in the match," said Edberg.

The first break opportunity in the decider came to Edberg, who unleashed lightning returns to lead 40-15 in the 11th game and then forced Ivanisevic into a forehand volley error to take a 6-5 lead.

"I told myself to make him play," said the Swede. "What I tried to do was to get the ball back in court and I connected four times in one game and that truly decided the match. I was lucky enough to break him in the crucial game at 5-5."

Ivanisevic appeared dispirited in the following game, committing a series of errors and finally bowing out when he hit a backhand service return into the net.

"I didn't have any chance to

break his serve, because I was returning very badly," said Ivanisevic.

It was Edberg's fifth win against one loss to the Yugoslav in major tournaments.

Ivanisevic also missed out on the doubles final when he and Gary Muller went down to the top-seeded American Pair of Scott Davis and David Pate



STEFAN EDBERG eliminating Germany's world number two Boris Becker in the quarter-finals Friday.

"The tournament is not



DERRICK ROSTAGNO

7-6 (7/4), 6-7 (7/9), 3-6.

On Sunday, the Americans will take on their compatriots Jim Grabb and Richey Reneberg, who outclassed second-seeded Canadians Grant Connell and Glenn Michibata 6-4, 6-3.

Bata handball results

Sports Reporter

Shaheed Nabi High School and Rajarbagh Police Line High School recorded emphatic wins in their respective matches of the fourth Bata schools handball tournament yesterday at the Outer Stadium handball court.

Shaheed Nabi School crushed Bhasantek High School by 28-8 goals after leading 13-6 at half-time.

Arif topscored with 15 goals for Shaheed Nabi while Sulaiman with four goals was the highest goal getter for Bhasantek.

In the other match, Rajarbagh Police Line School thrashed Cosmic International School by 26-1 with the winners leading 12-1 at the breather.

BAF handball

CHITTAGONG, Oct 12: The annual inter-base handball championship of Bangladesh Air Force began at BAF Base Zahurul Haque here today, reports BSS.

Air Officer Commanding of the local air base Commodore Jamaluddin Ahmed inaugurated the four-day championship as chief guest.

The host team BAF Base Zahurul Haque defeated BAF Base Pahar Kanchanpur team 19-6 in the opening match.



Action from yesterday's fourth Bata schools handball tournament match at the Outer Stadium between Cosmic International School and Rajarbagh Police Lines School. The latter won 26-1.

—Star photo



Brothers Union skipper Manik (R) rejoices after seeing his teammate Pijush (not in pic) send the ball into an empty Abahani goal to give his team a 2-1 win in the Group B championship-deciding match of the eleventh Federation Cup soccer tournament at the Dhaka Stadium yesterday evening.

—Star photo