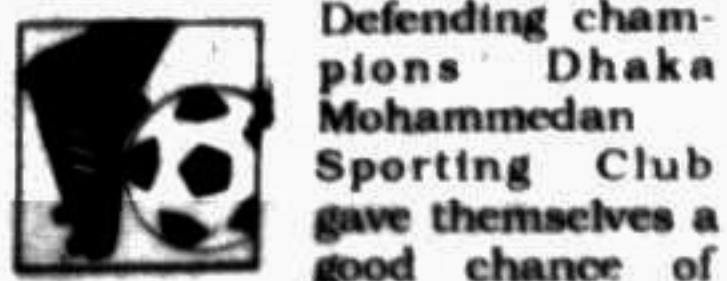


Mohammedans closer to title

Sports Reporter



Defending champions Dhaka Mohammedan Sporting Club gave themselves a good chance of extending their lead on the Federation Cup football title by at least another year when they edged out arch-rivals Abahani Krishna Chakra 5-4 in a sudden-death penalty shootout in a tension-packed semifinal at the Mirpur National Stadium yesterday afternoon.

The regulation 90 minutes, 30 minutes of extra time and the mandatory tie-breakers of five penalties each had failed to break the 1-1 stalemate. The champions led 1-0 at the breather through a fine piece of opportunism by their promising young striker Naqib in the very sixth minute of play while Abahani's Munna levelled the score in the 75th minute.

The win gave Mohammedan Sporting an 18-13 advantage over their traditional adversaries after their 46th head-to-head clash since Independence.

Mohammedans will meet the winners of today's second semifinal between Brothers Union and Fakirerpool YMC in the final on Sunday, Oct 20.

Last year's runners-up Abahani, who finished second behind Brothers Union in Group B of the robin league, a performance which pitted them against their old foes yesterday, have only themselves to blame for failing to score the winner despite putting up a much improved display in the second-half proceedings after having recovered from that early Naqib goal.

Golam Ghaus, the young striker signed up this year from Bangladesh PWD, not only missed the last scoring chance for Abahani a few minutes before the final whistle of the regulation time but also went on to complete Abahani's tragedy by shooting straight at the eager hands of Mohammedan skipper Sayeed Hassan Kanan in the sudden-death play-off that forced his team's exit from this year's meet. Indeed, he was the vil-

lain of the piece yesterday as far as the thousands of Abahani fans packing the Mirpur ground and across the country were concerned. The reigning champions Mohammedans put up a very impressive display, specially in the first half yesterday. They outplayed and outclassed Abahani in every department of the game and in fact Abahani were really lucky not to have trailed by a bigger margin than 0-1 at the lemon-break.

Mohammedans' total domination in the first-half and some breath-taking moments in the second half can be ascribed to basically one man—none other than their diminutive, fleet-footed medio, Syed Rumman-bin-Walid Shabbir, who was absolutely in an unstoppable mood. His untiring efforts for winning the ball in midfield, his dribbling, dodging and well-measured crosses and lobbs were indeed a treat to watch. It was a pity that when some of the Abahani players resorted to cynical, robust tacklings to stop this genius time and again, referee M R Mukul appeared to take rather lenient view.

For Mohammedans, Naqib up front shrugged off his earlier sluggishness to put up a much more lively performance. His teammates Roxy, Tito and Johnny controlled the midfield most of the time.

The defence, led by the confident Kaiser Hamid, young Jewel Rana, Montu and Barun Dewan looked more compact and composed in comparison to their opponents.

Skipper Kanan in goal, despite one fleeting moment, put up an impressive display and it was his smart goalkeeping in the penalty shootout that enabled his team to reach the final.

The reigning NBL league champions Abahani Krishna Chakra, on the other hand, disappointed the jam-packed stadium with their lack-lustre performance in the first half when, to be honest, they could have trailed by as many as three goals.

Skipper Mohsin in the goal had to work very hard throughout the 120 minutes of play. Abahani's most expensive player Monem Munna was once again completely off-form yesterday and managed to contribute, rather fortuitously, only late in the second half when he was drafted in the midfield. Rehan, taking advantage of some poor refereeing, turned out to be the best Abahani defender on the day. Substitute Ranjit also played quite well while their young defenders Masud Rana and Alamgir came back in the second half to put up satisfactory performances. Masud Rana and Alamgir also overlapped time and again to help their forwards.

Mamun Joardar, Rubel and Zakir in the midfield failed to make any impact on their rivals. Substitute Yousuf looked much better than his other colleagues.

Forwards Rumi, Aslam and Ghaus failed to rise to the occasion.

Mohammedans came into the match smoking, and in the very first minute of play Johnny's tap off a Shabbir cross was just cleared by Masud Rana from the Abahani goalmouth.

Abahani's defence crumbled under intense pressure in the 5th minute.

Shabbir sent a teasing cross from the left flank to teammate Naqib who brilliantly flicked the ball inside the goal with his right foot (1-0).

Abahani and goalkeeper Mohsin were partially to blame for allowing Naqib room to take the shot.

Mohammedans kept press-

ing hard and Naqib, off a Shabbir through pass, failed to beat an on-rushing Mohsin by shooting straight at the goal's hands in the 16th minute.

Reaz and Naqib wasted two more clear chances for Mohammedans in the first half.

Abahani's first noteworthy move came in the 42nd minute when a thunderous Ghaus shot was bravely saved by Kanan at the cost of a corner. 2 minutes later striker Aslam's side volley off Mamun Joardar's cross just went wide.

Abahani came back in the second half in a more positive mood. They pressed hard but most of their misplanned attacks fizzled out in front of the Mohammedan goalmouth.

Mohammedans' Reaz and Naqib then failed to push teammate Chandan's cross after the spawework was done by Shabbir.

Abahani got the cherished equaliser in the 75th minute of play when Alamgir's long throw-in from the right slipped and Kanan's grip and an opportunist Munna, who was lurking nearby in the hope of taking a header, completed the formality of pushing the ball inside the goal (1-1).

Ghaus spotted the last chance for Abahani when he failed to shoot with only Kanan at his mercy five minutes from time. The extra-30 minutes ended without any goal.

In the tie-breaker, Kaiser Hamid, Naqib, Johnny, Jewel and Tito scored for Mohammedans while Shabbir's shot hit the crosspiece.

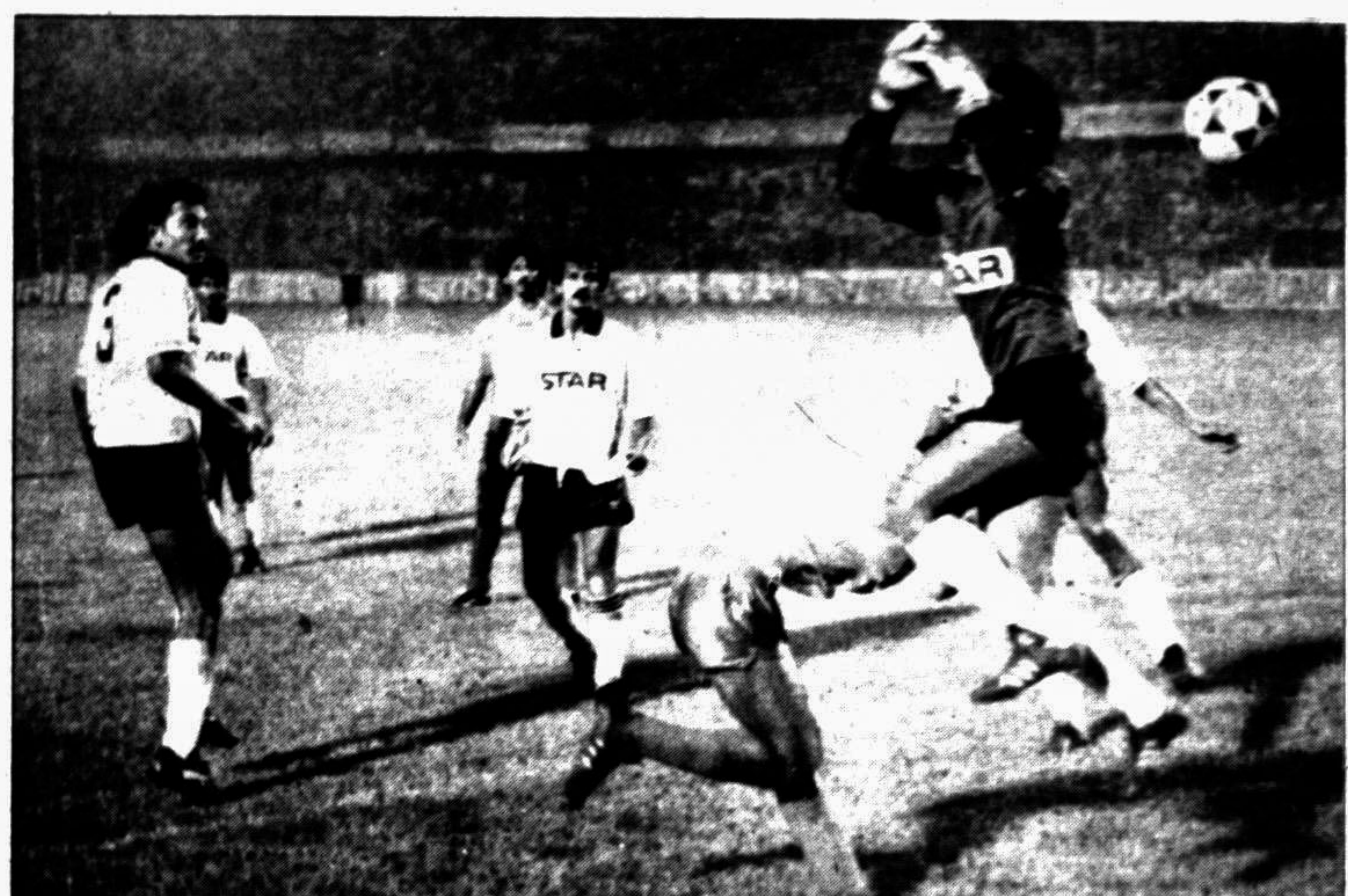
Aslam, Munna, Ranjit and Rumi netted for Abahani while Masud Rana and Ghaus's shots were saved by Kanan.

Yellow cards — Montu, Tito of Mohammedan and Alamgir, Rehan, Munna and Masud Rana of Abahani.

TEAMS
Mohammedan S C: Kanan, Montu(Abul), Jewel, Kaiser, Barun (Chandan), Jony, Riaz, Tito, Rokshi, Sabir and Naqib.

Abahani K C: Mohsin, Alamgir, Rehan, Munna, Masud Rana, Rubel (Yousuf), Zakir (Ranjit), Ghaus, Rumi, Aslam and Mamun.

Referee: M R Mukul.



Mohammedan goalkeeper Kanan fails to grip a throw-in by Abahani defender Alamgir (not in pic) and Munna (ducking) dashes to push the ball into the net to bring Abahani's equaliser in yesterday's first semifinal of the Federation Cup tournament at the Mirpur Stadium. But Abahani lost the match 4-5 in the tie-break after the teams had remained locked 1-1.—Star photo by Shafuddin Ahmed Bitu

A Rahman Press Club chess champ

Sports Reporter

Abdur Rahman Khan of Bangladesh Times became unbeaten champion in the Press Club chess competition defeating Badrul Alam of the Daily Janata in the final round match held yesterday evening at the club premises.

Abdur Rahman Khan, a staff reporter of the Bangladesh Times, collected full five points from his five matches.

Three players earned four points each and Badrul Alam became the runner-up after the positions were decided through the tie-break. Ahmed Nur-e-Alam and Kazi Ramrak Hossain of Danik Bangla secured the third and fourth positions respectively.

The competition was held to mark the 37th founding anniversary of the National Press Club, on October 19.

Lerby's 'SOS' to Augenthaler

MUNICH, Germany, Oct 16: Bayern Munich's new soccer trainer Soren Lerby has asked German's World Cup libero Klaus Augenthaler to come out of retirement to help the Bavarians through their recent wretched spell, reports Reuter.

"It would be great if Klaus said 'yes', Lerby said on Tuesday. "We have our backs to the wall. In this situation Klaus would be very important with his experience. He has lived and felt everything in football".

Augenthaler, 34, retired at the end of the 1990-91 campaign after more than 15 seasons at Bayern. He quit international soccer after helping former West Germany to last year's World Cup triumph.

The experienced sweeper, who has been training with the club recently to keep fit, said he would give the offer serious consideration.

"If I notice that I can help the team and the young players get something from my presence, then I will try to take on the responsibility," Augenthaler said.

Lerby faces an uphill struggle at Bayern after taking charge last week. The 12-times champions are struggling in 13th place in the German First Division after four home defeats in 13 games.

Base Zahurul Haque champs

CHITTAGONG, Oct 16: Base Zahurul Haque team retained the title of Bangladesh Air Force inter-base handball championship. They defeated BAF Base Bashur 19-3 in the final which concluded yesterday at BAF Base Zahurul Haque in Chittagong.

SA sports bodies may be barred from Barcelona

SYDNEY, Oct 16: South African sports bodies which are still racially divided might be barred from taking part in next year's Barcelona Olympics even if the Republic participates, the country's Olympic chief Sam Ramsamy said on Wednesday, reports Reuter.

"The Winter Olympics of 2002 will return to Europe and Piedmont is ready to host them," Daniele Cantore, the Alpine region's sport commissioner, told a news conference. He said Piedmont might also host water sports and other events of the 2000 Summer Olympics being pursued by Milan, capital city of neighbouring Lombardy.

"We're rotting for Milan to be chosen, then we'll be able to work together to offer athletic facilities worthy of the event," Cantore said.

Four more no-contests

Sports Reporter

BTMC, Armanitola Juniors, Azampur Young Stars and Swamibagh TTS won their respective matches on the second day of the AB Bank Metropolitan table tennis league at the National Coaching Centre yesterday afternoon.

In competition — or lack of it — reminiscent of the inaugural day's matches Tuesday, all four encounters yesterday turned out to be boring, one-sided affairs with the losers failing to put up a semblance of resistance. Considering the eight matches decided so far on the first two days of the 28-team league, it reflects poorly on the strengths or eligibility of all the participating teams at this level. One cannot but wonder about the justification of such a big league, by the number of participating teams, that is.

Bangladesh Textile Mills Corporation (BTMC) was a cakewalk against Swamibagh Boys Club 3-0 — the familiar scoreline on the day.

In the first singles, Akhlaq of BTMC defeated Anwar of Swamibagh Boys 21-9, 21-3. Akhlaq's teammate Kishu outplayed Bappa 21-9, 21-8 while Akhlaq and Anki paired well

to beat Bappa and Anis 21-8, 21-9.

Armanitola Juniors chalked up a 3-0 win against Combined Sporting Club with Mahub taking the first singles against Combined's Kamal 21-11, 21-11 while Shahid won the reverse singles beating Tushar 21-14, 21-13. Mahub and Shaon won the opening singles for Swamibagh TTS beating Riad 21-10, 21-7 while Ismail made it 2-0 by defeating Imran 15-21, 23-21 and 21-9, the only three-setter in the best-of-five sets contests.

Anglo-Japan TT clash from Oct 18

LONDON, Oct 16: Japan will face a full-strength England side in the table tennis internationals at Bletchley on Friday and Leeds on Saturday, reports AFP.

Carl Preen, the England number one, and Chinese-born former World Cup holder Chen Xinhua have been included in the men's team along with top defender Matthew Syed and Michael O'Driscoll.

In the women's matches England turn to the experience of Lisa Lomas, Alison Gordon and English Champion Andrea Holt.

Japan have chosen their number one player Hiroshi Shiutani and the twins Kojo Matsushita in the men's team. While the women's team will be led by English Open champion Mika Hoshino.

Tapash then outplayed Combined's Tushar and Babi 21-11, 21-14 in the doubles.

Young Stars of Azampur beat Kashatully with Ritu giving Young Stars the lead by taking the first singles against Kashatully's Nabil 21-15, 24-22 — a rare well-fought match of the day. Shaon put Young Stars 2-0 up by beating Abid 21-14, 21-13. Shaon and Sagar then clinched the issue beating Kashatully's Nabil and Saifu 21-18, 21-12.

Swamibagh TTS, the other Swamibagh side in action on the day, outclassed newcomers Kalpa Taru 3-0.

Joyal won the opening singles for Swamibagh TTS beating Riad 21-10, 21-7 while Ismail made it 2-0 by defeating Imran 15-21, 23-21 and 21-9, the only three-setter in the best-of-five sets contests.

Ismail then teamed up with Zerin to beat Riad and Tanna 21-7, 21-13 in the doubles.

TODAY'S MATCHES

- Young Pegasus vs Dhaka Medical College
- Bangladesh Ansars vs Dhaka Mariners
- Wari Club vs Cynthia Sporting
- Brothers Union vs Lalmatia Club

Swedes afraid of hooligans

STOCKHOLM, Oct 16: The organisers claim the 1992 European Championship finals will be a

cosy celebration of soccer but, after a hot summer of petrol bombs and home-grown hooliganism, may Swedes are far from convinced, reports Reuter.

Swedish soccer officials were shocked when a delayed action smoke bomb hidden under the pitch detonated during a First Division game last July in Norrkoping — one of four venues for the eight-team finals to be played next June.

Twenty three people were arrested in post-match fighting between fans of IFK Norrkoping and AIK Stockholm.

The police have no illusions about the problems ahead.

"Our own fans will be just as big a problem at the finals as the notorious English and Dutch. Make no mistake about it," said national police chief Bjorn Eriksson recently.

His officers in riot gear have fought running battles against soccer hooligans hurling petrol bombs this summer, dispelling any fantasies foreigners may have that all Swedes are as calm and well-behaved as the country's tennis stars.

AIK fans, the self-styled "black army", are also blamed by police for frequent trouble at Stockholm's Rasunda Stadium another of the venues for the June 10-26 finals.

After a 4-1 defeat to local rivals Djurgarden on September 30, about 1,000 AIK fans attacked police with rocks and petrol bombs. Eighteen people were arrested that night.

Soccer hooliganism used to be known in Europe as "the English disease" and Eriksson said Swedish violence followed the pattern set in England in the 1970s and early 1980s.

He said a small clique of criminal provocateurs, often ultra right-wingers, had led young club supporters astray.

The reply, the black army have claimed that police are provoking the riots to practise for the Championships, a charge indignantly denied by Eriksson.

A total of 4,762 will be assigned the task of wedding out the hooligans from an expected 100,000 visitors. They want to avoid any repeat of the unruly behavior which broke out during last year's World Cup finals in Italy and during the last European finals, in Germany in 1988.

Games will be played in Stockholm, Gothenburg, Malmo and Norrkoping, spectator capacity will range from 22,000 to 40,000, a far cry from the huge crowds at recent top soccer events.

"The European finals will be a homely and genuine affair", said organisation chief Lars-Christer Olsson.

But the massive security may conflict with plans for a nostalgic evocation of the 1958 World Cup finals in Sweden, when a major sporting event could be inexpensive and intimate.

The fixed video cameras to secure evidence of trouble makers, spectators' body checks and cordoning off of areas outside stadiums with high fences may do little for homeliness.

The state shops which sell beer and spirits will be closed on match days but restaurants will be open as usual.

"Sweden is so expensive that we don't think hooligans can afford to get drunk in our restaurants," said Sune Sandstrom, the police chief responsible for security at the Championship.

A beer in a Swedish restaurant can cost up to 10 dollars.

There are also more controversial plans to stop foreign hooligans at the borders, to list Swedish troublemakers in central computer register and to make mass arrests if necessary.

"We were pushed only by the will to work for the national team's good," he said, adding he had no personal cause for complaint in his relationship with Vicini.

"I give to Vicini my heartfelt thanks for our times together, for the joys and (despite) a few bitter (times) which this squad has given us," he said.

Matarrese outlined his aspirations at the weekend. "Above all we need a new, more modern mentality, more in step with today's soccer", he told the Gazzetta Sportiva newspaper.

There are also more controversial plans to stop foreign hooligans at the borders, to list Swedish troublemakers in central computer register and to make mass arrests if necessary.

When a serial rapist spread panic in Stockholm recently, the city's police chief had to try and justify on television why only eight officers could be assigned to the case when hundreds of police were attending a training course for the finals.

For Eriksson, himself a soccer fan, it is a matter of national pride for the police to look good next summer.

"I think we'll do fine. But it would be helpful if we could get constant rain and cold weather," he said.

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Piedmont eyes Winter Olympics

TURIN, Italy, Oct 16: The northern Italian region of Piedmont staked its claim for the 2002 Winter Olympics on Tuesday and said it hoped to share nearby Milan's bid for the Summer Games two years before, reports Reuter.

"The Winter Olympics of 2002 will return to Europe and Piedmont is ready to host them," Daniele Cantore, the Alpine region's sport commissioner, told a news conference. He said Piedmont might also host water sports and other events of the 2000 Summer Olympics being pursued by Milan, capital city of neighbouring Lombardy.

"We're rotting for Milan to be chosen, then we'll be able to work together to offer athletic facilities worthy of the event," Cantore said.

Spurs' Cup Winners' Cup tie put back

LONDON, Oct 16: Tottenham's European Cup Winners' Cup second-round second-leg match away to Porto of Portugal has been put back 24 hours to November 7, the English soccer club said on Tuesday, reports Reuter.

The match has been switched to avoid a clash with Boavista, based in the same Portuguese city, who are at home to Italian side Torino in the UEFA Cup on November 6.

Vicini quits: Sacchi likely to step in

ROME, Oct 16: Azeglio Vicini, on Tuesday bowed to pressure to resign as coach of the Italian national soccer team, Italian Football Federation president Antonio Matarrese said, reports Reuter.

Matarrese, who had made no secret of his wish to dismiss Vicini, told reporters he had reached agreement with the coach at a brief meeting in Rome.

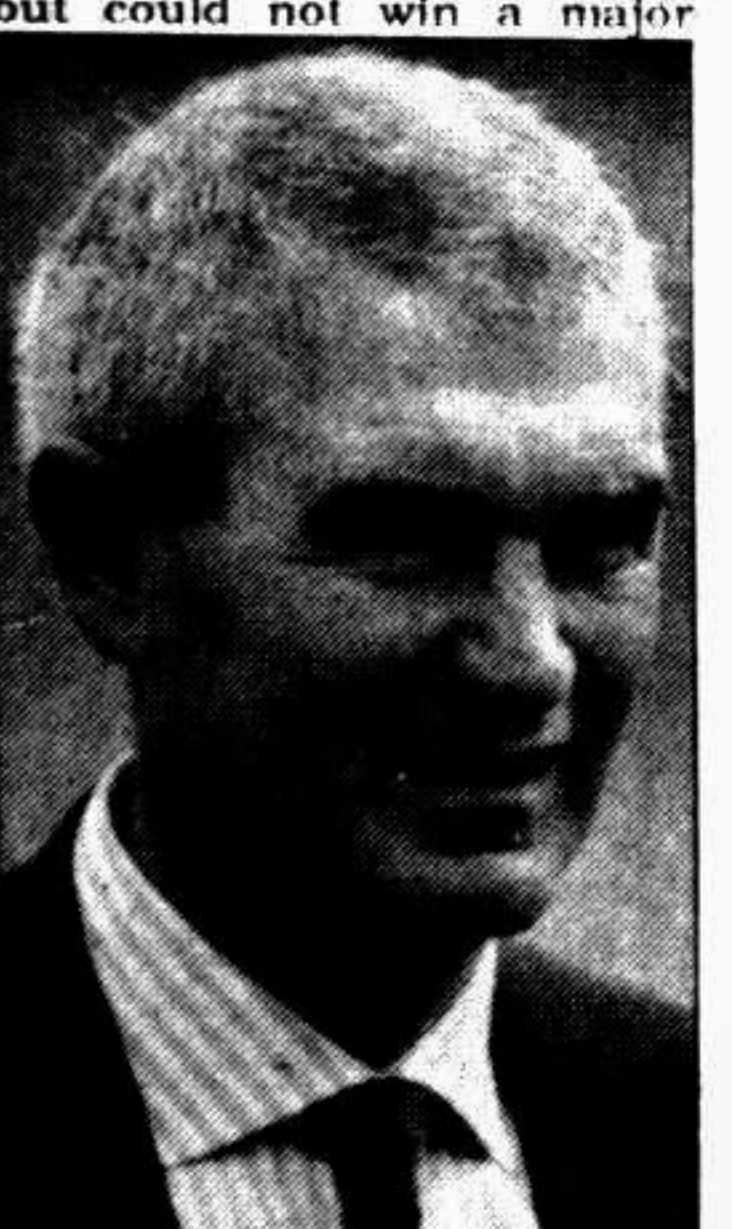
Vicini failed to lead Italy to victory in the World Cup on home soil last year and his doom was sealed by a goalless draw against the team would not next year's European Championship finals in Sweden.

"Vicini's relationship with the training of the national team has been resolved," Matarrese said.

The 58-year-old trainer had rejected repeated demands to quit the job he had held since August 1986. His contract was due to run till June 1992.

Matarrese said Vicini's successor, widely expected to be former AC Milan trainer Arrigo Sacchi, would be named when the league management meets on Friday.

Vicini lived under intense pressure in the job he inherited from Enzo Bearzot, who



ARRIGO SAATCHI

championship. The 1988 European Championship and 1990 World Cup campaigns both founded in the semifinals.

Matarrese said he felt no happiness at having to end Vicini's reign.