

MSC start the favourites

Sports Reporter

Federation Cup champions Dhaka Mohammedan Sporting Club take on the New Radiant Club, the first Division champions from the Maldives, in the first leg of their Asian Club Cup second round fixture at the Mirpur National Stadium this afternoon.

The match kicks off at 5.00 pm.

Foreign Minister A S M Mustafizur Rahman will be introduced to both the teams before kick off. State Minister for Youth and Sports Saadeque Hossain will also be present on the occasion as special guest.

Mohammedan Sporting, moved into the second round of the 11th Asian Club Cup following their 5-0 aggregate win over the Pakistani champions Pakistan Wapda, winning the first leg 5-0 in Dhaka last Oct 26 and drawing the return leg

goalless in Lahore on Nov 1. The Maldives champions came through 2-1 on aggregate against their first round opponents Kerala Police, the Indian Federation Cup champions. The scores of that fixture, with both legs being held in Male, read 0-0 and 2-1 in New Radiant Club's favour.

Mohammedans will travel to Male for the return leg clash on Nov 18.

The winners will move to the final round of the premier club tournament organised by the Asian Football Confederation (AFC). The dates and the venue for the final round are yet to be finalised.

A 26-member New Radiant Club squad led by Hasan Maneku arrived in Dhaka Saturday night via India.

Match commissioner Syed Shaheed Hakim of India is in the city to supervise the match.

Three Nepalese referees

are expected to arrive today to conduct the match.

Radio Bangladesh will broadcast running commentary.

Tickets of today's match will go on sale at the Mirpur Stadium counter this afternoon. The gallery tickets are priced at Taka 20 each. VIP Gate A and B will cost Taka 100 and C and D Taka 50.

Meanwhile, officials and players of Mohammedan Sporting appeared confident of reaching the final round by overcoming their Maldivian second round opponents.

A club official told this correspondent last night that the morale of his players was really high following their fine showing against the Pakistanis.

Mohammedans also reached the final stage of the 10th Asian Club Cup championship, held in Dhaka last July.

Iran's champion side Esteglal Club won that title.

Lalmatia crush Agrani Bank

Sports Reporter

Lalmatia Club moved into the Group B semifinals of the 13th Dama Summer cricket tournament beating Agrani Bank Club by a convincing margin of nine wickets at the Dhaka Stadium yesterday.

Lalmatia will next face Victoria Sporting Club on Nov 14.

Winning the toss Lalmatia put Agrani in to bat, a decision justified by the pathetic performance of the Agrani batsmen who were skittled out for a paltry 108 with seven balls remaining in their 45-over

quota.

Agrani Bank lost their first wicket without a run on the board and never recovered from that disastrous start, losing wickets cheaply at regular intervals. Extras were the highest contributor to the Agrani total.

Utam who claimed three wickets for 19 and Debabrata who took two for 15 bowled well for Lalmatia to restrict the bankers. Subrata, Dulal and left-arm spinner Atique also picked up a wicket each for Lalmatia.

Opener Didar, run out for 20, and Intoo who also made 20, were the top scorers for Agrani. Chapal was the only other bank batsman to reach the double figures with 15.

Lalmatia, thanks to an unbeaten 48 from opener Liton who featured in a big unfinished second wicket stand with Debabrata, 28 not out, coasted to 109 for the loss of just opener Babu's wicket in 30 overs. Babu made only four before being bowled by Pappu.

Liton hit the Agrani bowlers

for seven boundaries while Debabrata had one hit to the fence.

There were 22 extras in the Lalmatia total.

Pappu's lone success with the ball cost him 22 runs off his seven overs.

Goal glut in Div II hockey

Sports Reporter

Shishu Kishore Sangha went on a rampage in the Green Delta Second Division hockey league at the Hockey Stadium yesterday, swamping Muktiyoddha Krira Sangshad by ten goals to nil.

Kamrun scored three times, Babar, Tareque and Raju twice each and Sohel once for the winners.

In the other match of the day, Cantonians Sporting, thanks to be fine hattrick by their Bangladesh Krira Shikkhya Protisthan cadet Masud Rana, trounced Dikusha Sporting Club by five goals to one at he same venue.

Enam and Ershad scored the other two goals for Cantonians.

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Navratilova on verge of equalling Evert's feat

OAKLAND, California, Nov 10: Martina Navratilova beat Lori McNeil in the semifinals of the Virginia Slims of California on Saturday to set up a match against world number one Monica Seles with a chance at equalling Chris Evert's mark for most tournament titles.

The second-seeded Navratilova, winner of 156 tournaments, eliminated sixth-seeded McNeil 6-3, 6-2, while top seed Seles overpowered third seed Manuela Maleeva-Fragniere of Switzerland 6-2, 6-1.

Seles, winner of the Australian, French and US Opens, has reached the finals of all 13 tournaments she has played in 1991 and captured eight titles.

Navratilova, ranked fourth in the world, has contested three finals against Seles this year and won once.

"I know I'm going to break (Evert's) record, unless I have an accident or something, I plan to play at least two more years and somewhere, somehow I will win two more tournaments," said Navratilova.

"I would just be happy to beat Monica in a final because she is the number one player in the world."

Navratilova missed three

volleys and dropped her serve in the first game of the match, but Navratilova broke back in the next game and never lost serve again in the 46-minute match.

The combination of McNeil's flashy, somewhat reckless serve-and-volley game and Navratilova's athleticism provided the match with several exciting points, most of which Navratilova won.

Seles and Maleeva both played more aggressively than they usually do and each one served-and-volley frequently. The strength of Seles' first serve and the precision of her service returns made the difference in the 52-minute match.

Asked about meeting Navratilova in today's final, Seles said: "It's really an honour for me knowing that I am the favourite when Martina is going for it (Evert's record)."

"Martina has been such a great champion for so long that I'm sure she'll break the record, but may be it won't be against me."

AP from Oakland adds, Displaying contrasting styles, top-seeded and top-ranked Monica Seles and No 2 seed Martina Navratilova advanced into the Virginia Slims of California finals on Saturday, setting up a repeat of last year's title match.

Seles, who turns 18 next month, defeated No 3 seed Manuela Maleeva Fragniere of Switzerland 6-2, 6-1 in another awesome display of unrelenting baseline firepower that has no equal in women's tennis.

Last year, Seles beat a pained Navratilova in straight sets and shortly thereafter Navratilova underwent knee surgery. Seles went on to become No 1 in the world in March 1991, a spot she has surrendered only briefly since to Germany's Steffi Graf.

This year, Seles has lost only five matches, but one was against Navratilova earlier in the year. Seles has won their last two encounters.

Seles, a Yugoslav who lives in the United States, beat the 10th-ranked Maleeva Fragniere in 55 minutes. She broke the hard-serving native of Bulgaria at 1-all in the first set with deep corner to corner shots. Maleeva Fragniere was also broken in the seventh game.

In the second set Maleeva Fragniere's game crumbled even more. She had 28 unforced errors in the match to 14 for Seles and managed to get in only 48 percent of her first serves.

"I couldn't get into a good rhythm," Maleeva Fragniere said.

The victory over McNeil

was No 1,317 for Navratilova, who added to her own record after surpassing Chris Evert's previous standard of 1,309 a month ago in Milan.

Now Navratilova tries to equal Evert's record of 157 tournament titles.

"I know I'm going to break it, even I have to play the Virginia Slims of Oklahoma," Navratilova said. "But I fell the pressure more playing against people I should beat."

In her last three finals, she has lost twice to Seles, including once in the US Open, and once to 16-year-old Anke Huber of Germany.

But this time, it was McNeil who showed the effects of pressure.

With the players on serve in the first set, McNeil served two straight double faults at 3-4, allowing Navratilova to easily break and then serve out the set.

Navratilova maintained her attacking momentum and broke again in the first game of the second set. Another double-fault at a crucial time in the fifth game allowed Navratilova to break again. Navratilova, who put 78 percent of her first serves into play, went on to close out the match in 47 minutes.

"It's not a matter of working on my serve," McNeil said. "It's just mental. It happens the same time each match."

"Those doubts shouldn't be

Lineker eager to break record

LONDON, Nov 10: Gary Lineker is more concerned about getting his name in the England record books than making guaranteed fortune playing football in Japan, reports AFP.

The Tottenham Hotspur striker is four goals short of Bobby Charlton's England record of 49. But he knows England manager Graham Taylor will be under pressure to end his 70-cap career if Lineker cannot lead England to victory against Poland this week in the European Championship qualifier.

The scoring record worries him a lot more than the speculation about his departure to Asia at the end of the season.

"Everyone's talking about my international future and that's on Wednesday. You can't judge anything until it's happened," said Lineker after joining the England squad on Saturday. "We've got to qualify and that's all that's on my mind."

Lineker joined Taylor in countering critics who are already piling on the pressure, saying: "If you go into a game thinking we won't get through and the majority of players start thinking that way, it can lead to a negative performance."

"Those doubts shouldn't be

at anybody's minds. I'm confident, we will qualify. We're good enough and we don't lose many games."

England had their European Championship group by one point, but must get at least a point from their game in Poland to qualify for the finals in Sweden next year.

On the Japanese front, Lineker refuses to rule out any thought of cashing in on his popularity when the Japanese professional championship starts. But he said: "Their league does not even start to the middle of 1993."

"You can never say what's going to happen tomorrow in this game. But you have to plan for your future in some degree and I've never ruled anything out — or anything in

at this stage."

Taylor has told his players what the side will be for the Poland game but will only make his selection public on Tuesday.

"The players know the team. I told them before training today," he said.

But Crystal Palace's Andy Gray and Aston Villa's Tony Daley look like making their debuts in Poznan and Gary Mabbutt is Des Walker's most probably central defensive partner.

Taylor will keep the Poles guessing but insisted it was right not to have his players working in the dark before they left today.

"I can't see any advantage in having them on Friday and then not letting them know

the team until Tuesday afternoon. Doing it this way means we can get out there and work on things with them. We can get down to business."

Arsenal full-back Lee Dixon, with a slight ankle injury after his cold, and midfielder David Platt, with a ricked neck are further reasons to delay confirmation of his line-up.

But Taylor is confident he has a team to get at least the draw England need to reach the finals.

"If that means people making their debut to get the balance and shape right, then so be it," he declared. "What I like about this squad is the freshness the new players have brought."

Seven make main draw in Rajshahi

RAJSHAHI, Nov 10: Seven players qualified for the main draw of the second leg of the ITF Bangladesh-Pakistan Satellite Tennis Circuit at the Rajshahi Tennis Complex here on the opening day today, reports BSS.

The main draw begins tomorrow. The qualifiers and players having direct entry will play in the main draw.

The seven qualifiers are — Jeroen Heinius (Hol), Mushaf Zia (Pak), Mahesh Bhupathi (India), Thomas Pablo (USA), Anando Vandendoren (Bel), John Nestel (USA), Evert-Jan Hulshof (Hol).

Heinius beat Ameen Newaz of Bangladesh 6-4, 6-2, Mushaf Zia defeated Sher Golam of Bangladesh 6-0, 6-0, Bhupathi

beat Mario Pastore of Italy 5-7, 7-6, 6-2, Pablo outplayed Saadeque Jamil of Bangladesh 6-3, 6-1, Vandendoren beat Shahid Mirza 6-3, 6-0 John Nestel trounced Mahfuzullah Sayeed of Bangladesh 6-2, 6-1 and Hulshof beat Mohammed Azeem also from Bangladesh 6-2, 6-2.

Another qualifying match between Mohammad Khalid of Pakistan and Samir Razzak of Bangladesh will be held tomorrow morning.

In all, 16 players took part in the qualifying round of the second leg. Of them two are from the Netherlands, three from Pakistan and one each from Italy, Belgium and India and six from hosts Bangladesh.



A 26-member New Radiant Club football team, the champions from the Maldives, arrived in Dhaka Saturday night for their Asian Cup second round first-leg match against Dhaka Mohammedan Sporting Club at the Mirpur Stadium this afternoon.



Bangladesh Biman emerged champions in the AB Bank metropolis table tennis league yesterday at the National Coaching Centre. From left: Kochi, Rochi and Saadi. —Star photo

Biman paddlers lift title

Sports Reporter

Not unexpectedly, star-studded Bangladesh Biman clinched the AB Bank metropolis table tennis league title by winning their last super league match at the National Coaching Centre yesterday evening.

And quite befittingly, the new champions — their fourth league championship — celebrated their triumph in this year's campaign by defeating last year's champions Armanitola Juba Sangha by three sets to one in their final eight-team super league outing. The win gave Biman a six wins to one loss record in the seven-match super league. Earlier they had topped Group B winning all six of their preliminary robin league matches.

Bangladesh Textile Mills Corporation (BTMC) also finished equal to Biman with a dozen points but Biman took

the honours by virtue of having beaten the textile men by 3-1 sets in their super league encounter last week.

Bangladesh Ansars finished in third place with ten points from their seven super league engagements. They won five and lost two.

In the other match of day yesterday, Village Defence Party (VDP) whose girls Saturday lifted the seven-team women's league title, beat Azampur Young Star by 3-2 sets in a thrilling five-setter. It was VDP's third win against four defeats to place them fifth in the super league table.

Azampur Young Star with a two win five loss record finished in seventh place while Armanitola Juniors ended bottom of the table in eighth with just one win to their credit. Wari Club finished fourth, having won three and lost four.

For 1990 champions Armanitola Juba Sangha it was

a humiliating sixth-place finish with just two wins against their names.

Saidul Haq Saadi of Biman, who has been playing the doubles more than the singles in the earlier part of this year's league, gave Biman a flying start by taking the opening singles 21-14, 21-12 from Armanitola's Maruf. But Badal put the defending champions level when he shocked Biman's national number two Nasimul Hassan Kochi 21-13, 21-17 to send alarm bells ringing through the Biman camp.

However, Saadi continued his fine form and in partnership with Musaddequeul Haq Rochi — the national champion — again put Biman ahead with a 21-13, 21-17 win in the doubles.

Kochi then got over his earlier setback to win his reverse singles against Maruf 21-9, 21-9 to give the airlines team their fourth championship since the metropolis league began in 1975-76. On six occasions they finished runners-up.

Twenty-eight teams, including nine newcomers, split into four groups took part in this year's competition which began October 15. The top two teams from each preliminary group made it to the super league.

State Minister for Youth and Sports Saadeque Hossain Khoka gave away the trophies at the concluding ceremony held later in the evening. Officials of the Bangladesh Table Tennis Federation, organisers of the meet, as well top executives of the sponsoring company Arab Bangladesh Bank Limited were also present.

ROLL OF HONOUR

Year	Champion	Runners-up
1975-76	Abahari KC	Farshanj SC
1976-77	Dhanmandi Club	Abahari KC
1977-78	League not held	
1978-79	Abahari KC	Dhanmandi Club
1979-80	BIGGS	Mohammedan SC
1980-81	B. Biman	Mohammedan SC
1981-82	Mohammedan SC	B. Biman
1982-83	Armanitola JS	B. Biman
1983-84	B. Biman	Armanitola JS
1984-85	B. Biman	Mohammedan SC
1985-86	B. Biman	B. Biman
1986-87	Brothers Union	B. Biman
1987-88	B. Ansars	B. Biman
1988-89	B. Ansars	B. Biman
1989-90	League not held	
1990-91	Armanitola JS	B. Biman
	B. Biman	BTMC

Dittmar upsets Jahangir

KIEL, Germany, Nov 10: World number two Jahangir Khan tumbled out of the Kiel Open squash tournament on Saturday, beaten 15-12, 15-8, 16-17, 15-12 in the semifinals by Australian Chris Dittmar, reports Reuter.

The top-seeded Pakistani, who retired with an injured ankle during the Canadian Open final against world number four Dittmar two weeks earlier, looked somewhat tentative throughout the 72-minute match.

Dittmar, by contrast, was in sparkling form and stunned the capacity crowd by taking the first eight points of the match in one hand.

A tenacious fightback saw Jahangir recover to 12-12 but his efforts were negated when

he produced three successive errors to gift the opening game to the Australian.

Jahangir looked thoroughly demoralized when he fell 4-12 behind in the second game, but claimed four points in a short display of resistance before Dittmar clinched his two-game lead.

The Pakistani seemed destined to suffer a straight games defeat when he trailed 11-13 in the third, but hit back to steal that game after saving a match ball.

Jahangir looked in contention at 8-9 in the fourth game, but Dittmar then eased away set up an all-Australian final today against Chris Robertson, the world number five.

Robertson had earlier avenged a shock defeat at the US Open three weeks previously beating England's Peter

Marshall 15-6, 15-8, 4-15, 15-12 in the other semifinal contest.

Robertson started at a furious pace, winning the opening six points of the match in one hand on his way to taking the first game in just 13 minutes.

He then produced another impressive scoring burst, claiming eight of the last 10 points in the second game after Marshall had stayed with him to 6-7.

Soccer trials

The football trials under the auspices of the Rampura Natun Kuri Sangshad for the formation of a team for the Pioneer football league will be held on Nov 14 and 15 at the Banani Chairman Bari playground, reports BSS.

Intending players have been requested to contact Natun Kuri's coach Khokan along with proper gear.

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Gordon repays his price

LONDON, Nov 10: Dale Gordon quickly repaid part of his 1.2 million pound sterling (2.1 million dollar) transfer fee when he scored twice in Glasgow Rangers' 5-0 thrashing of Dunfermline in his Scottish Premier Division debut on Saturday, reports Reuter.

The former Norwich mid-

fielder also laid on two other goals, setting up the first with a perfect cross to Richard Gough after only five minutes.

Almost on the half-hour he slotted home his first from a difficult angle and soon after the interval he made a fine run down the right before crossing for Mark Hateley to ram the ball into the net.

Ally McCoist put Rangers 4-0 ahead after 61 minutes before Gordon scored his second after cleverly finding empty space and shooting home from a Hateley cross.

It kept Rangers well in the hunt for the league title but they remain one point behind leaders Hearts who squeezed out a 2-1 home win over St Johnstone, thanks to a last-minute goal by former Manchester United defender Graeme Hogg.

With a draw looking certain, Derek Ferguson took the home team's ninth corner of the second half, Ian Baird flicked it on and Hogg popped up to head the ball home for his first goal for Hearts.

With no matches in the English First Division because of the national side's European qualifier against Poland next Wednesday, focus turned on the Second Division where Cambridge United went to the top for the first time in their history.

Striker Steve Claridge

struck seven minutes from the end to give Cambridge a 2-1 away win at Ipswich and moved into the top slot at the expense of Swindon who went down 3-2 at Southend.

Middlesbrough, leaders earlier in the season, moved back into second place with a hard-fought 1-1 draw at Brighton.

Zhao in China open final

BELJING, Nov 10: Men's top seed Zhao Jianhua of China fought his way into the finals of the China Open badminton tournament late on Saturday, coming from behind to beat Malaysia's Rashid Sidek 7-15, 15-9, 17-15, reports Reuter.

The 80-minute semifinal saw Zhao down 12-14 in the third set before he piled on the power to win the match.

Today, Zhao will face Indonesia's Allan Budi Kusuma, who secured his spot in the finals by beating Wu Wenkat of China 15-12, 15-3.

The women's top seed, Indonesia K. Sarwendah, continued her smooth climb to the top by beating Bang Soo-Hyun of South Korea 11-6, 7-11, 12-11 in the semifinals.

She will take on second-seed Huang Hua of China in today's finals. Huang beat Lin Ying of China 11-4, 11-1 in the semifinals.

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