

Navana Premier Division league starts today

Tough campaign ahead for BU

Sports Reporter

The Navana Premier Division cricket league, the top league competition of the country, starts today with two matches scheduled for the opening day.

Last year's champions Brothers Union start their campaign in defence of their title by taking on newly-promoted Bangladesh PWD at the Dhaka Stadium.

State Minister for Youth and Sports Sadeq Hossain Khoka will inaugurate that match at nine in morning.

In the other match of the day, last year's runners-up Bangladesh Biman will meet Wari Club, who finished second in last year's Milnars First Division league behind PWD, at the Dhanmandi Cricket Stadium.

Twelve teams will be taking part in this year's Premier Division instead of the ten in previous years. The Bangladesh Cricket Control Board (BCCB), organisers of both the leagues, having failed to resolve the dispute between Kalabagan Krira Chakra and Lalmita Club regarding demotion to the Milnars league after last year's Navana programme, agreed to let both these teams, as well as the other relegation candidates Rupali Bank, to stay on in the Premier Division, thereby increasing the field to a dozen teams.

The participating teams are

Brothers Union, Bangladesh Biman, Dhaka Mohammedan Sporting Club, Abahani Krira Chakra, Greater Mymensingh Cricket Club (GMCC), Surjo Tarun, Gulshan Youth, BPWD, Kalabagan KC, Wari Club, Lalmita Club and Rupali Bank.

The matches, to be played on a single league basis followed by a super league made up of the top six teams of the first league, will be of 45 overs-a side duration. Next season will see the three bottom clubs playing in the Milnars league.

Brothers Union, who had such an extravagant yet successful campaign last season, annexing the league championship following that controversial replayed final against Bangladesh Biman, facing a daunting campaign, having lost some of their prized stars this season to their rivals, especially Mohammedans and Abahani Krira Chakra.

Those who have left their Gopibagh camp for better prospects elsewhere include Farooque Ahmed, who will be captaining Abahani this year. Abahani have also lured left-arm paceman Golam Nowsheer Prince and opening batsman-cum-off-spinner Zahed Razaq Masoom, two players who have already helped the Dhanmandi side to achieve a degree of success by winning the 13th Damal Summer trophy last week beating arch-rivals Mohammedans in the final.

Another useful player, the

burly Akram Khan, an attacking batsman from Chittagong, has also left Brothers for Abahani.

On their part, Brothers have signed opening bat Nurul Abedin Nobel, the older brother of Mohammedans and Bangladesh skipper Minhazul Abedin Nannoo from Mohammedan. Nobel is their major signing this year while skipper Atahar Ali Khan, Sri Lankan paceman T. L. Fernando and West Bengal left-handed all-rounder Arup Bhattacharya will be the main men on whom their supporters will be banking for the coming league programme.

Biman, too, have lost several of the players who had served them so well last season. If Brothers have been depleted by Abahani in the main, it was Mohammedan Sporting who denuded Biman's resources this time round.

Mohammedans, who found it an unlucky 13th in the Damal tourney this year, have signed on Biman's opening batsman Jahangir Alam, the young Narayanjan player who had such a fantastic 1990-91 season notching up three centuries and a string of other significant scores. Aminul Islam Bulbul, another Biman hero last year, has crossed over to Mohammedans, as have left-arm paceman Jahangir Alam Talukdar Dulu. Besides, they have taken Golam Faruq Chowdhury Surjo, the all-rounder who had joined Brothers last year from Biman.

Mohammedans will be relying on Nanno, Bulbul, Jahangir and Rafiqul Alam who captained Abahani last year, to do the bulk of their batting. Sri Lankan Gamage will be the main strike bowler, while in the spinning department Mohammedans can rely on opener Azhar Hossain Shantoo, Nannoo himself, Bulbul, and the ever-green leggie Waheedul Ghani. Mohammad Ali is also a useful medium-pacer. Mohammedans still haven't used up their quota of two overseas players, leaving it open for the time being.

Abahani Krira Chakra, the 1989-90 champions who were so badly hurt by desertions last season, already have added another feather to their cap by lifting the Damal trophy. Their new signings look rather formidable on paper. The recruitment of Indian Test discard Raman Lamba and Sri Lankan Test discard Asoka De Silva have added meat to their title aspirations.

While little is known about the strengths of the two other teams to be seen in action today, at least PWD have made an effort to make their promotion worthwhile by signing up the veteran all-rounder Jahangir Shah Badsha from Brothers and Sri Lankan wicket-keeper-batsman Rumesch Kallurithana, who had played for Brothers a couple of seasons ago and who played for Mohammedans in the recent Damal tourney.



Action from yesterday's Green Delta Second Division hockey super league match between Shishu Kishore Shingha and Cantonian Club held at the Dhaka Hockey Stadium.

Victory Day cycling

Sports Reporter

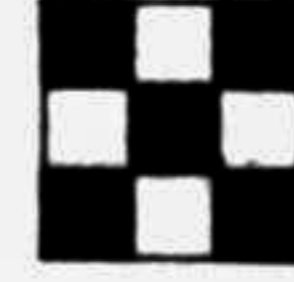
A 100-km open cycling competition will be held on December 16, the Victory Day.

The race, which will start at six thirty in the morning from Suhrawardy Uddyan, will terminate at the main road adjacent to the Cantonment Railway Station via Assad Gate-Mirpur, Beauty Cinema Hall-Amin Bazar-Savar-Cantonment-Nabinagar-BKSP-Shalipur Ansar Academy-Joydevpur-Tongi bridge-Zia International Airport.

The race will finish at the Zia International Airport.

Biman retain title

Sports Reporter



Defending champions Bangladesh Biman successfully defended their first division chess league title as they defeated last year's runners-up BTMC by 2.5-1.5 points in the 14th round match played at the NSC chess room yesterday.

Biman clinched the championship with a match to spare against Pony Electronics to be held today, the last day of the league.

National champion Rifat bin Sattar of Biman beat Mamun of BTMC. Three other players of

Biman—Zillur Rahman Champak, Syed Tahmidur Rahman and Tanima Parveen—drew with Akmal Hossain, Shabana Parveen Nipa and Palash of BTMC respectively.

Bangladesh Ansars followed Biman by collecting 37 and a half points beating Free Birds International by 3.5-0.5 points in their 14th round encounters yesterday.

In the other matches of the day, Mohakhali Prodig Sangha beat Genus Chess Club 3-1, Protibha Daba Gosht defeated Tilak Chess Club 2.5-1.5 and Parijat Chess Club beat Chalanika KC, also by 2.5-1.5

Pioneer league from Dec 15

Sports Reporter

The Pioneer football league '91 under the auspices of Dhaka Metropolitan Football Association is to begin from December 15.

Prime Minister Begum Khakda Zia will formally inaugurate the tournament at two pm at the Dhaka Stadium on December 15.

Ninety teams divided into five zones will take part in the tournament. Each zone will have 18 teams which will be further classified in two groups.

Only players under 19 are eligible to take part in the competition.

Baig warns his batsmen

PERTH, Australia, Dec 3: India will consider calling up replacement players if its established

batsmen continue to fail on the current cricket tour of Australia, team manager Abbas Ali Baig said Tuesday, reports AP.

India will play five World Series Cup limited-overs matches against Australia and the West Indies before the start of the second test against Australia at the Melbourne Cricket Ground on Dec. 26.

Australia defeated India by 10-wickets with a day and a half to spare in the first test, which concluded Monday in Brisbane.

While a request to replace players would need to go officially through the Indian Cricket Board, Baig said he was considering the possibility.

"Obviously, we hope that situation doesn't arise," he said Tuesday in Brisbane. "But if the performance continues to be this way and the batsmen continue to let us down we will

have to do some serious thinking and consider such a drastic step."

Punjab opener Navjot Sidhu is one player who could join the tourists.

He broke a thumb during the recent one-day series against South Africa, but is expected to be fully fit by next week.

"We will give it thought, but I think we will wait for the two one-day matches in Perth and review the situation then," Baig said.

The manager said some of the senior Indian players had been asked to put in additional effort.

"We reminded them that they are the ones with the responsibility and they must set an example," he said.

"It's surprising for senior players to (need to) be reminded."

India begins its World Series Cup campaign against the West Indies in Perth on Friday.

Experienced pace bowler Patrick Patterson said Tuesday that the new-look West Indies

team has plenty to prove.

Pace Bowlers Hameesh Ansh and Andy Cummins and spinner Robert Haynes have joined the squad in the past few months to replace veterans Courtney Walsh, Tony Gray and Winston Benjamin.

Patterson said the new trio still had to build their reputations, but believed their names would soon be feared by opposing batsmen.

"They have got all the potential to be as good as the players in the past," said Patterson.

"None of them has reached a top level yet because they had to replace guys who had a lot of international experience."

"But given the opportunity to adjust to different conditions they will compensate the loss of the more experienced players."

Patterson said Australian cricket conditions were similar to those in the Caribbean, and would suit the West Indies style of play.

"I know one thing and that is the conditions here provide a fast bowler with a lot of fun," he said.

Murray calls for improvement

PERTH, Dec 3: The West Indies cricket team will need to improve dramatically if it hopes to win next

year's World Cup tournament, team manager Deryck Murray said Monday, reports AP.

Former West Indies wicket-keeper Murray said his team would use the upcoming World Series limited-overs matches against Australia and India to prepare for the World Cup.

The nine leading cricket nations in the world, including South Africa, will compete in the World Cup, scheduled in Australia and New Zealand in February and March.

"In every department of the (one-day) game, we have not maintained the standards for which we had become famous," Murray said.

"We have held our own in the Test arena and maintained our position there, but the one-day levels have definitely slipped and we have a lot of work to do."

The Caribbean cricketers won the World Cup in both 1975 and 1979 and were runners-up in 1983.

The West Indies lineup has undergone a rapid transformation in the past two seasons with veterans Viv Richards, Gordon Greenidge, Jeff Dujon and Courtney Walsh all absent. Richie Richardson is the new captain.

Murray said he was confident the rebuilding programme would be completed by February.

The West Indians began their Australian tour with a victory over a West Australian Invitation XI on Sunday.

"That match was a good baptism because the players have got to get used to the bouncy conditions of Australian wickets as soon as possible," Murray said.

"We wanted to give the newer players a look at the conditions early. That is what happened, so now they know what to expect and can start their hard work."

"It was also a good time to have the bowlers understand the regulations involving wides and no-balls and what they should be doing with the delivery of the ball."

The West Indies faces the West Australian state team in a day-night match in Perth on Wednesday before opening the triangular World Series tournament against India in Perth on Friday.

New volleyball tourney in 1993

TOKYO, Dec 3: The Intercontinental Cup volleyball tournament will be inaugurated from 1993 with six teams each in the men's and women's events, the International Volleyball Federation (FIVB) announced here Monday, reports AP.

Only continental champions will participate — the best four continental champions. Japan and one more team to be invited by Japan Volleyball Association will also play in a round robin system, both men and women in the same system."

"We have accepted to start every November a new competition in Japan," said FIVB president Ruben Acosta after the draw for the 1992 Barcelona Olympic Games was held at a hotel in Tokyo.

"Only continental champions will participate — the best four continental champions. Japan and one more team to be invited by Japan Volleyball Association will also play in a round robin system, both men and women in the same system."

He said the tournament, which carries total prize money of 1.5 million dollars.

Brilliant victories in Thailand and China have helped Kusuma overtake previous number one Ardy Wimanata.

would exclude one of the five champions from the five continents in accordance with the results of the Barcelona Olympic Games.

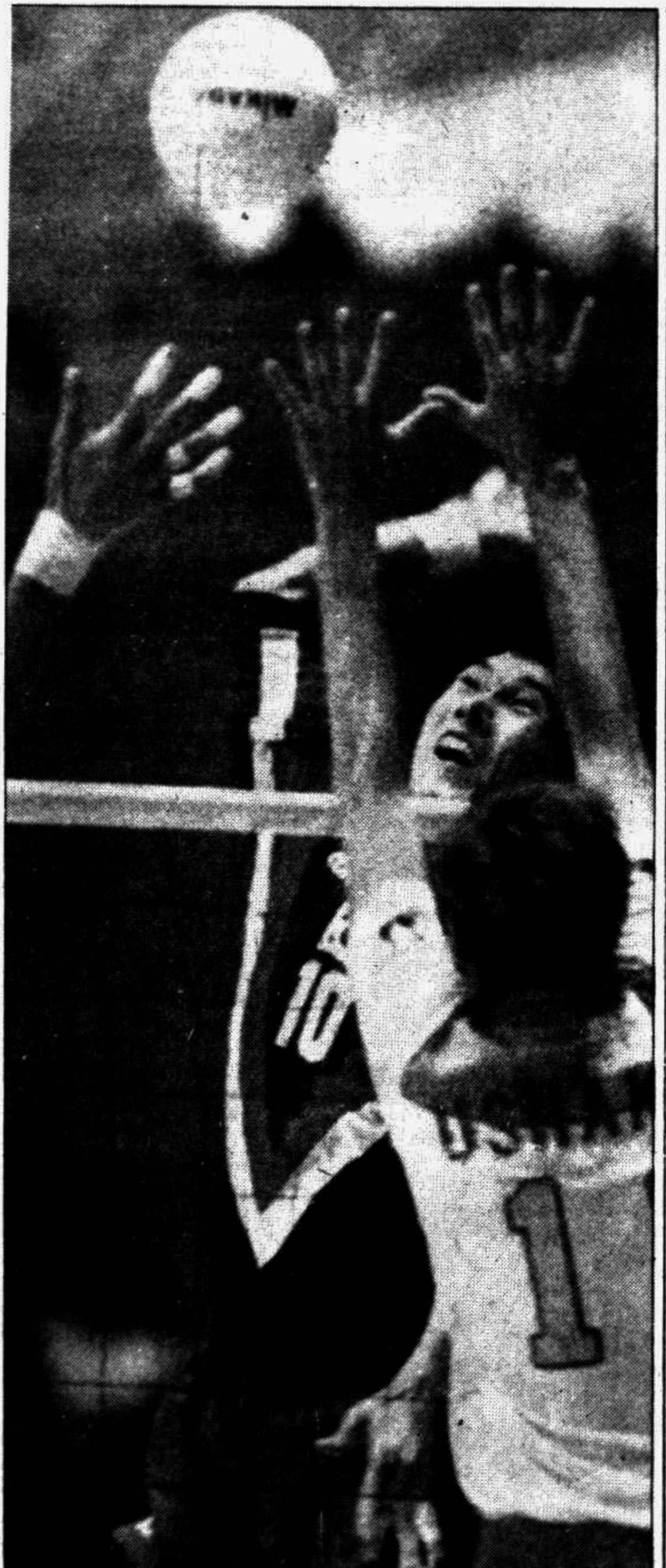
"The Olympic Games are the qualification tournament for the International Cup," he added.

The five also announced two weeks ago during the World Cup in Japan that it would start the World Grand Prix women's tournament from 1992.

WTA rankings

ST PETERSBURG, Florida, Dec 3: The top 20 women's singles players according to rankings issued by the Women's Tennis Association on Monday:

1. Monica Seles (Yugoslavia)
2. Steffi Graf (Germany)
3. Gabriela Sabatini (Argentina)
4. Martina Navratilova (US)
5. Arantxa Sanchez Vicario (Spain)
6. Jennifer Capriati (US)
7. Jana Novotna (Czechoslovakia)
8. Mary Joe Fernandez (US)
9. Conchita Martinez (Spain)
10. Manuela Maleeva-Fragniere (Switzerland)



Hua Jong-Hwa of South Korea jumps to spike the ball despite stretched arms of Soviet defender Konstantin Ushakov (II) during their final round match at the World Cup volleyball tournament in Tokyo on December 1. The Soviets defeated the Koreans in three straight sets, scoring 15-7, 16-14, 15-8 to win the title. — AFP photo

Under-16 soccer semis today

Dhaka and Chittagong divisions, the BFF Coaching Eleven and Bangladesh Krira Shikkhya Protisthan (BKSP) moved into the semifinals of the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) coaching football tournament yesterday, reports UNB.

In the first semis, Dhaka Division will take on BKSP at 2 pm while the BFF Coaching Eleven will meet Chittagong Division at 3.30 pm in the other semifinal to be held today at the Mirpur National Stadium.

Dhaka Division became Group A champions with full six points beating Khulna Division by 2-0 goals yesterday morning.

Sultan and Iqbal scored the goals for the winners in the first half.

Chittagong Division finished Group A runners-up and reached the semis after a goalless draw with Rajshahi Division in their group match also played yesterday morning at the same venue.

Haroon scored for Chittagong and Enam netted for Rajshahi Division. In the Group B match, the BFF Coaching Eleven emerged champions beating a National Sports Council (NSC) Eleven by two goals to nil in the afternoon.

Mintu and Arman scored for the BFF Eleven while Sajedul netted for the NSC team.

BKSP got a walkover against Dhaka Mahanagar in their last Group B match and qualified for the semis.

The final will be held tomorrow, Thursday, at the same venue.

Hockey results

Sports Reporter

Cantonian Sporting Club beat Shishu Kishore Sangha by two goals to nil in the Green Delta Second Division hockey super league match held at the Dhaka Hockey Stadium yesterday.

Enamul Haider Khan scored the first goal in the 20th minute from a penalty corner while Masud Rana doubled the margin in the 58th minute from a penalty stroke.

Cantonians earned six penalty corners while Shishu Kishore got four. The win takes Cantonian's points tally to 11 from seven games while Shishu Kishore have managed ten from seven outings.

So far, Shoeb of PWD with 11 goals is the top-scorer in the league.

V-DAY HOCKEY

The Victory Day hockey tournament begins from December 16.

Sixteen teams from the First Division league and the national champions and runners-up and the Second Division champions and runners-up will take part in the tournament.

IOC may rid itself of Helmick

LAUSANNE, Dec 3: Iowa lawyer Robert Helmick could be ousted from the International Olympic Committee (IOC) this week following allegations of unethical conduct, reports Reuter.

There is growing pressure for Helmick to resign from the IOC following disclosures that he was paid some 270,000 dollars in legal and consulting fees by organisations linked to the Olympic movement.

If he does not resign, he could become the first IOC member to be sacked from the Executive Board of the Olympic governing body.

Helmick, who resigned as head of the US Olympic Committee (USOC) in September, is scheduled to attend a four-day executive board meeting in Lausanne starting on Wednesday.

A number of Executive Board members are believed to be convinced that the IOC must take firm action over Helmick to avoid being tainted by the scandal.

With a packed agenda, the Executive Board is expected to give priority on Wednesday to the case of Helmick, who was found in a recent report to have committed "persistent" violations of Olympic standards of conduct.

That report, commissioned by the USOC and written by a former US Deputy Attorney General, said Helmick had persistently violated a USOC statement of principles, although it found no evidence of direct misuse of influence.

Before taking any action on Helmick, the Executive Board will hear the findings of its own three-man commission set up in September to investigate a potential conflict of interests resulting from his business dealings.

The commission consists of IOC vice president Kerba Mbye, a former judge at the International Court of Justice, and two Swiss lawyers, Marc Holders, chairman of the IOC finance commission, and Francois Carrard, the IOC director general.

1996 Atlanta Olympics, who themselves have been subject to allegations of impropriety.

The German news magazine Der Spiegel claimed in a recent report that Atlanta obtained the Games by bribing IOC members to support the US city in last year's ballot in Tokyo. Atlanta has strenuously denied the allegations and threatened legal action.

An additional cloud is Der Spiegel's claim that Australian Olympic officials had threatened to release evidence of the bribery if the IOC did not support Sydney's bid for the 2000 Olympics.

This allegation, also vigorously denied, is being investigated by lawyers on behalf of the Australian Olympic Committee.

Wednesday's agenda will also include a report on progress being made in South Africa towards achieving unity among the various national sports federations.

South Africa has already accepted an invitation to take part in the Barcelona Olympics.

However, its failure so far to gain readmission to the International Amateur Athletic Federation is likely to be discussed by the Executive Board, and Sam Ramsamy, president of the South African National Olympic Committee (NOCSA).

But one issue unlikely to be resolved is a request by the breakaway Yugoslav republic of Croatia to be allowed to compete independently in

WBA bout

PESARO, Italy, Dec 3: Zairean-born Italian Sumbu Kalambay and Irishman Steve Collins will fight for the vacant WBA middleweight title in February, Kalambay's managers reported Tuesday, reports AP.

Ireland is the most likely site for the fight, Collins was originally scheduled to fight the 36-year-old Kalambay for the European middleweight crown.

Barcelona. IOC president Juan Antonio Samaranch has already expressed his support for the idea, but some of his Executive Board are expected to take a more cautious line.

As well as maintaining the present freeze on new members until 1993, they will argue that Croatia should not be given Olympic recognition until it has obtained international political recognition.

N'ganj soccer

Our Correspondent

NARAYANGANJ, Dec 3: Shuktara Jubo Shanga surprisingly outplayed DSS (Dockyard) Club by 2-1 in the Muldhara First Division football league match held at the local Osmani Stadium today.

Shuktara led the first half 2-0.

Shuktara striker Tapan opened the scoring when he netted the first goal in the 10th minute of the first half. Rabi doubled the margin in the 18th minute.

Shubhankar of DSS Club netted Dockyard's lone goal in the 23rd minute of the second half.

Despite the loss, the defending champions DSS (Dockyard) emerged as Group A champions with ten points, while Shuktara JS with seven points also confirmed their semifinal berth.

The Dockyard team will meet Group B runners-up Nitaganj Krira Chakra while Group B champions Mohsin Club will take on Group A runners-up Shuktara Jubo Shanga in the semifinals.

Sonakanda White Club of Group A and Sher-e-Bangla Club of Group B will fight each other in the relegation play-off match, to decide who will go down. The losers' place will be filled by the champions of the second division next year.