

Comilla reach nat'l youth finals

Sports Reporter
 Madaripur will play Narasingdi in the zonal final on December 13.
 Jessore DSA overcame Patuakhali 2-1 at Jhenidah in the second semifinal with goals from Shafiq and Hannan. Shamim was the lone scorer for Patuakhali.
 Jessore will meet the winners of the other semi-final between Jenidah and Bagerhat on December 14.
 Khulina blanked Magura 4-0 at Kushtia to win the right of meeting Kushtia in the zonal final on December 13.
 Biswajit scored twice while Jahangir (Sr) and Jahangir (Jr) scored one each for the winner.
 At Kurigram, Nilphamari DSA prevailed over hosts Kurigram 6-5 in the tie-

breaker.
 The match was deadlocked 1-1 in regulation time.
 Nilphamari will face Lalmonirhat in the final on December 13.
 Pabna beat Natore by a snap goal in the zonal semifinal at Gaibandha.
 Shalid scored the all-important goal in the 32nd minute of the second half.
 Pabna will play hosts Gaibandha in the zonal final on December 13.
 Dhaka DSA moved into the semifinals of the Netrakona Zone outplaying Jamalpur 3-0.
 Zahid, Abul and Shamsu netted for the victors.
 Dhaka will take on Kishoregonj in the zonal semifinal on December 13.

Comilla reached the final round of the eighth national youth football competition for the Suhrawardy Cup beating hosts Brahmanbaria one-nil in the zonal final yesterday.
 Montir Hossain scored the decisive goal in the 21st minute of a keenly-contested match.
 Five teams vied for a place in the final round in the Brahmanbaria zone.
 Five other teams moved into the zonal finals of the tournament at different venues across the country yesterday.
 At Narasingdi, Madaripur defeated Tangail 4-3 in tie-breaker after the match ended goalless in the stipulated time.

Thorny path for our booters

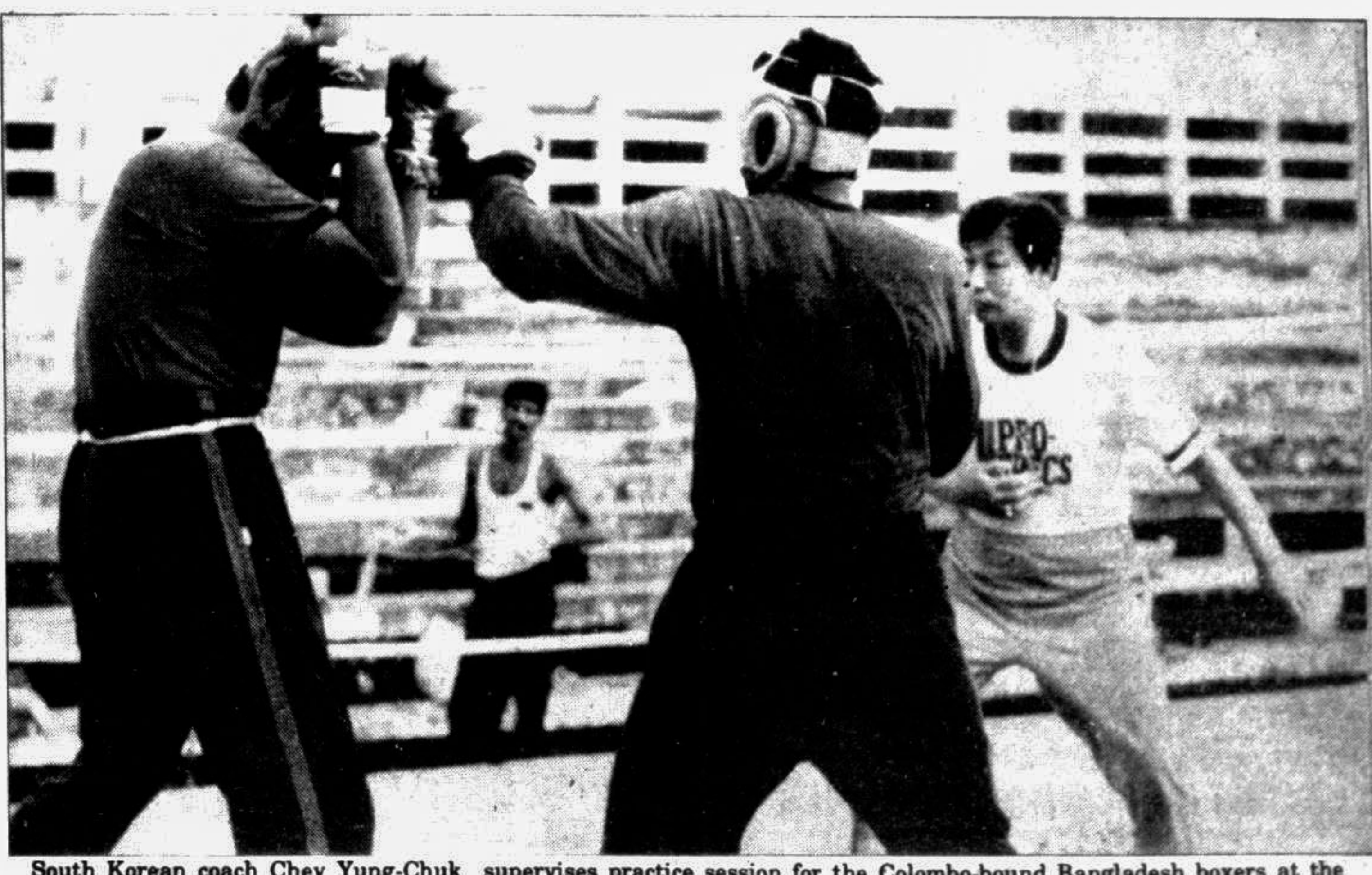
Sports Reporter
 Placed in a tight group with the United Arab Emirates, Japan, Thailand and Sri Lanka in the qualifying first round of the 1994 World Cup football championships, the Bangladesh national football team faces a really tough campaign ahead.
 The United Arab Emirates (UAE) who, along with South Korea represented Asia in the World Cup finals held in Italy last year, are one of the leading members of Group 'F' in which Bangladesh finds herself following last Sunday's draw in New York.
 Of course, the performances of both the UAE and the Koreans were poor in Italia-'90. The way the UAE played against the then West Germany, who went on to become the 1990 World Cup champions, was indeed pathetic. However, notwithstanding the disappointment of Italia-'90, the Emirates will go into the final round of the 1994 finals to be held in the United States. But the path will be an arduous one. First, they will have to be the Group 'F' champions and then will have to meet the other five group-champions in the second round of the qualifying phase. The top two teams from the second round will move into the finals. But with Japan in the same Group 'F', the Emirates will definitely have a difficult qualifying task.
 Japan, who beat Tottenham Hotspur of England by a massive four goals to nil in a re-

cent game, are planning serious professional football, in all likelihood either in late 1992 or early 1993. With international soccer stars like Brazilian Careca, Englishman Gary Lineker and other famous names in their league the Japanese will definitely be looking forward to playing in the US finals four years hence.
 Thailand and Sri Lanka, the other two group mates of Bangladesh, are quite familiar with our brand of football. Thankfully, the footballing potentials of these two countries are not that rich.
 Bangladesh met the former in the qualifying rounds of the 1986 and 1990 World Cups. Thailand beat Bangladesh by three goals to nil in the match played in Bangkok in 1985. But in the home leg, Bangladesh edged past Thailand 1-0 in Dhaka. Again, in the qualifying round of World Cup-'90, Bangladesh beat Thailand 3-1 in the home leg in Dhaka while the Thais outplayed Bangladesh by a solitary goal in the away leg in Bangkok.
 Bangladesh have not yet met Sri Lanka in the qualifying rounds of the World Cup but in club-level competitions over the years teams from the two SAARC countries have met one another. As far as club soccer is concerned, Bangladesh have tended to get the better of their Lankan opponents. Footballers from Sri Lanka have played for different Dhaka clubs including Abahani Krira Chakra and Mohammedan Sporting Club. This year, too, two Lankan

players are assisting PWD Club. In international matches, such as the SAF Games, Bangladesh have tended to dominate the Sri Lankans.
 Bangladesh fans will naturally expect better performances from their players this time around.
BANGLADESH'S RECORD
 Following are the results of the Bangladesh football team in the qualifying rounds of the 1990 and 1986 World Cup football championships:
World Cup-'90:
 Group 5 of Asia:
 Participants: Bangladesh, Iran, People's Republic of China and Thailand.
 Results:
 Thailand vs Bangladesh 1-0
 P.P China vs Bangladesh 2-0
 Iran vs Bangladesh 1-0
 Bangladesh vs Iran 1-2
 Bangladesh vs P. R. China 0-2
 Bangladesh vs Thailand 0-2
World Cup-'86:
 Group 3 B of Asia:
 Participants: Bangladesh, Indonesia, Thailand and India.
 Results:
 Indonesia vs Bangladesh 2-0
 Thailand vs Bangladesh 3-0
 India vs Bangladesh 2-1
 Bangladesh vs India 1-2
 Bangladesh vs Indonesia 2-1
 Bangladesh vs Thailand 2-1

N'ganj soccer league final tomorrow

Our Correspondent
NARAYANGANJ, Dec 11: The final match of the local Muldhara First Division football league, between BSEC (Dockyard) and Shuktara Jubo Sangha, will be played on Friday, Dec 13 at the Osmani Stadium here.
 The match will kick off at 2:30 pm.
 State Minister for Youth and Sports Sadeque Hossain will witness the match and give away the trophies as chief guest.
 Twelve teams, divided into two groups, took part in this year's league organised by the Narayanganj District Sports Association after a break of three years. BSEC (Dockyard) had won the league championship when it was last held in 1988, beating Mohsin Club in the final.
 This year, BSEC (Dockyard) beat Nitaiganj Krira Chakra in the first semifinal earlier this month while Shuktara Jubo Sangha got the better of last year's runners-up 4-2 in the tie-breaker in the second semifinal.
 Muldhara, a Bengali fortnightly newsmagazine published from Dhaka sponsored this year's league.



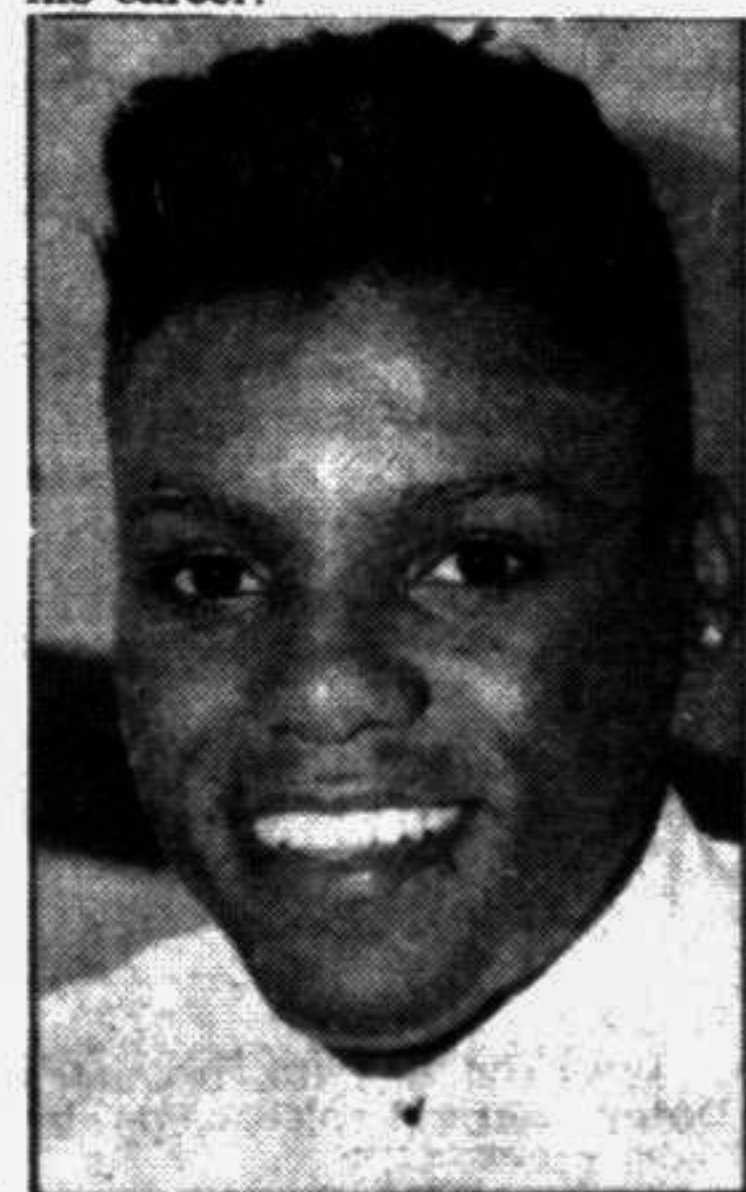
South Korean coach Chey Yung-Chuk supervises practice session for the Colombo-bound Bangladesh boxers at the Mohammad Ali boxing stadium. —Star photo

SA to return against England

LONDON, Dec 11: South Africa are set to make their international comeback against England at Wembley in April if FIFA, football's governing body, approves the match next week, reports AFP.
 Jon Smith, an adviser to the England squad, and Wembley director Jarvis Astaire, have worked for months to bring South Africa to England.
 FIFA gave tentative agreement at their New York meeting last week when they learnt the South African's five governing bodies had agreed to united and would be accepted as members of the African Confederation in Senegal in January.
 "I have been assured the match can go ahead at Wembley under special licence," Smith said.
 South Africa, expelled from world soccer 16 years ago, will be re-admitted to FIFA next July but Wembley should be their first game outside Africa since the 1950s.

Lewis eyes more world records

NEW ORLEANS, Dec 11: Carl Lewis, world record-holder in the 100-meter dash, has two more goals — to run the fastest time ever in the 100 and break the 30-foot (9-meter) barrier in the long jump, reports AP.
 At the World Championships in August at Tokyo, Lewis won the 100 meters in a world-record 9.86 seconds and anchored the US 400-meter relay team to a world-record clocking of 37.50.
 Ben Johnson ran the 100 in 9.83 at Rome at the 1987 World Championships, but that record was wiped from the books after Johnson tested positive for illegal drugs at the 1988 Olympics.
 "We feel that we can run faster than the drug time of 9.83 in the 100," Lewis said.
 Lewis won the Jesse Owens Award for the nation's top athlete in track and field Friday, edging Mike Powell, who beat Lewis to set the world mark in the long jump.
 Powell soared 29 feet, 4 1/2 inches (8.96 meters), breaking the 23-year old record set by Bob Beamon and ending Lewis' 10-year, 65-meet string of victories in the event. Lewis also beat Beamon's mark with a wind-aided 29-2 3/4 (8.92 meters) on his third jump.
 "As for the long jump, the (barrier) is gone," Lewis said. "The next barrier is 9 meters or 30 feet."
 Beamon said Lewis is capable of jumping over 30 feet, but he would have to concentrate on jumping, rather than diverting part of his focus to sprinting.
 "It's difficult to guess how far he is capable of jumping," Beamon said. "When I look at tapes of his jumps, there is very little explosion. In terms of ability, he is capable of jumping over 30 feet, provided he puts more time in the long jump. He would need to maintain the momentum he had earlier in his career."



CARL LEWIS
 In voting for the Jesse Owens Award, Lewis got 2,410 votes to Powell's 2,343, the closest margin of victory in the 11-year history of the award.

Chelsea book final berth

LONDON, Dec 11: Chelsea sent holders Crystal Palace tumbling out of the Zenith Data Systems Cup at Selhurst Park on Tuesday night, but the wintery conditions didn't stop a small fire in the main stand.
 The freezing southern area semifinal was delayed for seven minutes as stadium officials out the flames before fire crews arrived.
 Police are treating the fire, which broke out in the roof of the members stand, as arson.
 The incident did nothing to affect Chelsea's concentration as they booked their place in the final with a 1-0 win.
 Kerry Dixon rose in the 33rd minute to glance home a perfect header from Denis Wises free kick. Living up to what was otherwise a patchy game.
 Marco Gabbidini, the 1.8 million pound signing who has scored just once in his last 11 games for Palace. Had another fruitless night — his dismal luck epitomised by his getting in the way of Andy Gray's goal-bound 74th minute shot and deflecting it wide.
 Meanwhile, Roy Keane netted twice as Nottingham Forest set up the prospect of a Northern section final against neighbours Notts County with a well deserved 2-0 win at Tranmere.
 Forest went ahead on 34 minutes when Scot Gemmill set up Gary Charles, whose shot was part saved by Eric Nixon before Keane netted the rebound.
 The Tranmere defence was carved open again in the 53rd minute by Gemmill, who set Ed Sheringham free on the right to put over a cross for Keane to convert.
BSJA meeting
 The annual general meeting of the Bangladesh Sports Journalists Association (BSJA) will be held at the association office here today at 12 noon, reports BSS.
 All members of the association have been requested to attend the meeting.
Chehnum Sports Reporter
 The Chehnum of Mrs. Sabera Haq, wife of Syed Ashraf Haq, a former secretary of the Bangladesh Cricket Control Board, will be held tomorrow, Friday at 14 Tazturi Bazar after Asr prayers.
 Sabera Haq was killed in a tragic road accident in Sharjah on 24 October last.

Mutombo — NBA star in the making

DENVER, Dec 11: Although Dikembe Mutombo insists it is "still too early to judge me as a player," the ratings are in, and they're glowing, reports AP.
 The Denver Nuggets' rookie center has proved to be an intimidating defender and shot-blocker and a fierce rebounder—which most scouts expected him to be. But he also has been a surprisingly effective scorer — which few predicted.
 The 7-foot-2 (2.18-meter) Mutombo, supposedly too "raw" to make an immediate impact in the National Basketball Association, leads the Nuggets in scoring (19.2 per game), rebounding (13.9) and blocked shots (2.78). League-wide, the so-called "project" ranks third in rebounding behind only Atlanta's Kevin Willis and Detroit's Kevin Rodman, and he stands eighth in blocked shots.
 The scary thing is, everyone who has seen him play believes he's far from being the player he'll eventually become.
 "He's going to be great," said the New York Knicks' Patrick Ewing.
 "He's going to be a stud," said the Philadelphia 76ers' Charles Barkley.
 After being outplayed by Mutombo Monday night, Boston Celtics center Robert

Parish said, "Once he gets some different shots and once he learns to mix it up he's going to be a force."
 To be sure, Mutombo is not polished. He still lacks a reliable shot, although he has begun to develop a hook shot and a turnaround jumper of modest dependability. He's still learning—sometimes painfully—the moves and tendencies of opponents.
 And he's still prone to the maddening mistakes that plague all rookies. Friday night against the Los Angeles Clippers, he dribbled into a double-team and turned the ball over on the Nuggets' final possession of a 102-100 loss.
 As his coach, Paul Westhead, notes, "Every possession is an experience for Dikembe. It's an endless learning process."
 But Westhead has never met anyone quicker — or more eager — to learn.
 Westhead has found it difficult to calibrate Mutombo's improvement "because it's so daily." He cites Mutombo's "resiliency," saying the rookie "will not crack" when obstacles are thrown his way.
 "He'll improvise, he'll do clever little things on his own when something comes up he hasn't seen before," Westhead says.

One reason for the 25-year-old Mutombo's rapid progress is his limited background in the sport.
 "He has no bad habits, so he doesn't have to unlearn anything," Westhead says. "He never played on the playground as a 14-year-old and never took those crazy, wild shots. Pretty much all he knows is what he was taught in college by (Georgetown coach) John Thompson — he was well-taught there — and what we've tried to teach him."
 Growing up in Zaire, Mutombo never touched a basketball until he was 18. Most of what he knows he learned from Thomson in three seasons; he sat out his freshman year at Georgetown to learn English, one of five languages he speaks.
 Although he enjoyed some success on the court in college, it took a conversation with former Celtic great Bill Russell and workouts with Ewing this summer to persuade Mutombo that he had an NBA future.
 "I'm still making mistakes every night," he says. "There's so much to learn. But I know one day I'll be better."
 How much better?
 Listen to Westhead: The basketball world said before the draft that maybe he'd be a

future bill Russell. When we worked him out late in the summer and saw that he was much more advanced on offense, we thought he might be a future Kareem Abdul-Jabbar. This may sound greedy, but maybe he's both."
 Mutombo has already earned some honours. He required only 15 games to earn both NBA Rookie-of-the-month and the NBA Player-of-the-Month honours for November.
 Westhead notes that Mutombo has become a marked man, too, a rookie who has sneaked up on the competition.
 In the Nuggets' second exhibition game, he scored 20 points and pulled down 16 rebounds. In the fifth exhibition game, he had 38 points and 18 rebounds. He quickly got everyone's attention, and has kept it.
 "Not only is he playing 40 minutes a game, but he never gets an easy play," Westhead said. "He's treated like The Men by our opponents."
 "It's not like we're an experienced team where the opposing defence might sag on our shooter, leaving Dikembe to get an easy basket. He's the hub — the guy we've built our offence and defence around — and everybody knows it."

Zaragoza's title

LOS ANGELES, Dec 11: Mexico's Daniel Zaragoza easily held on to his World Boxing Council (WBC) super bantamweight title on Monday with a unanimous 12-round decision over former champion American Pat Banke, reports Reuter.
 The two-time super bantamweight champion Zaragoza used lightning quick punches and a three-inch (7.5 cm) reach advantage to keep the shorter, but harder-hitting Banke at bay throughout the fight — the third time the two 122 Pound (55.33 kg) boxers have met.
 "I won the fight because I was working the distance" Zaragoza said afterwards.
 Zaragoza, 31, defending his title for the second time since winning it back in June, punished Banke throughout the fight with rights to the side of the head — often hitting the American at will.
 "I knew I was winning the fight," Zaragoza said. "I was in control."
 "The Mexican southpaw said he fought most of the bout with a bruised left hand after he hit Banke on the chin in third round."
 Banke tried to close with the champion throughout the fight but was unable to get by Zaragoza's jab.
 "He caught me coming in all the time," said Banke, 27 who held the title for little more than six months last year after stopping Zaragoza in a nine-round brawl in April 1990.
 Except for a stunning right to Zaragoza's chin in the seventh round, Banke was unable to hurt the champion. The three judges scored the fight 116-112, 116-112 and 117-

113 for Zaragoza.
 The two boxers first met in 1989 when Zaragoza won a split points decision over Banke.
 The win lifts Zaragoza's record to 44 wins, five losses and one draw, while Banke falls to 21-6.
WBA strips McCallum
PANAMA CITY, Dec 11: The World Boxing Association vacated the middleweight title held by Mike McCallum of Jamaica because the fighter had violated association rules, the organisation said Tuesday, reports AP.
 The WBA called on the two top challengers, Irishman Steve Collins and American Reggie Johnson to fight for the title. The two have 30 days to arrange a bout.
 "We felt obligated to take this measure because of McCallum's violations of organisation rules," Elias Cordova, president of the WBA's World Championship Committee, told a news conference.
 Cordova said McCallum had been told he must fight Collins this month for the title before he fought any other match. However, Cordova said McCallum has agreed to fight American James Toney, the IBF middleweight champion on Dec 13, which Cordova called "a clear violation of the rules."
 He said McCallum was told Monday of the decision and had no immediate reply.
 McCallum won his title in May of 1989, defeating Herol Graham of Great Britain. He was junior middleweight titleholder from 1989-1989.
 His only title defense was in April of this year when he took a decision from Sumbu Kalambay, formerly of Zaire, who now lives in Italy.

SOCCER SCENARIO

New security for Euro Cup

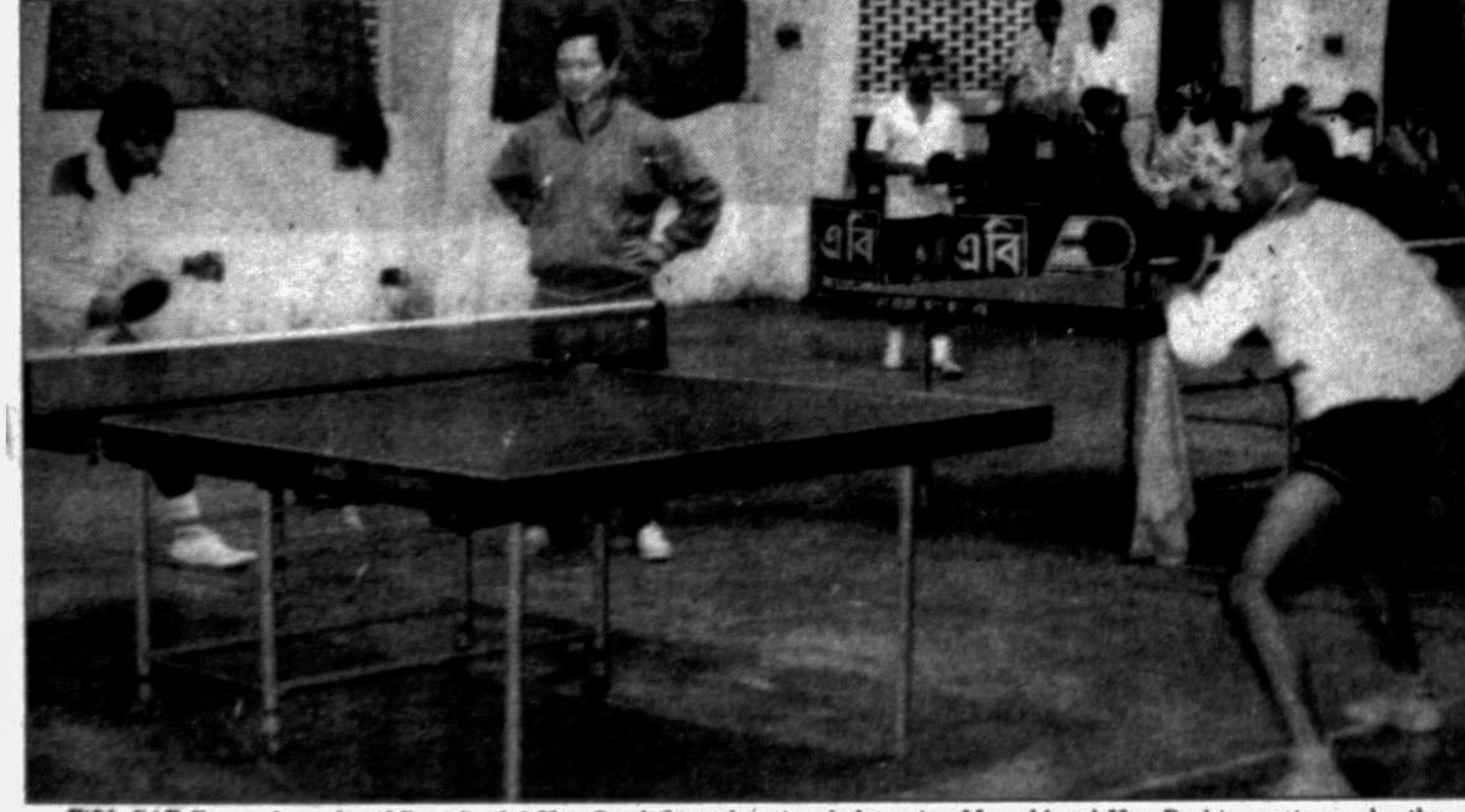
BUDAPEST, Dec 11: Hungarian police backed by dogs and water cannon will be out in force on Thursday during Red Star Belgrade's European Cup tie in Budapest, reports Reuter.
 Police spokesman Andras Babos said 10,000 Yugoslav fans were expected in Budapest for the champions' semifinal round tie at the Hoved Stadium against Anderlecht of Belgium.
 The match is being played in nearby Hungary rather than Serbia because of the war in Yugoslavia.
 Babos said 1,000 Belgians were expected and rival fans would be segregated, several hundred police some on horseback will control all road and rail approaches to the ground.
 Mihaly Kozma, the stadium director, said 400 police would be inside the ground with dogs and water cannon.
Italian clubs vie for Thomas
LONDON, Dec 11: Michael Thomas, Arsenal's unsettled utility player, has turned his back on a 1.5 million-pound transfer to English First Division rivals Liverpool, reports AFP.
 The 24-year-old England international, who has started only nine games this season, appears to have set his heart on a move to the European mainland when his contract expires in the summer.
 Italian champions Sampdoria have already put an inquiry as have English clubs Manchester City and Aston Villa.
 City, however, have turned their attention to want-away Liverpool midfielder man Steve McMahoon, while Villa are reported to be chasing Celtic's Polish international Dariusz Dzekanowski.
 Elsewhere, Lee Nogan, Oxford United's Welsh under-21 international striker, became the first of the crisis club's players to move when he joined Second Division rivals Watford for 2.75 million pounds.
 Nogan will cost Watford a further 25,000 pounds when he has made 20 first team appearances.
 Oxford, without a principal backer following the collapse of the late Robert Maxwell's publishing empire, have debts of around two million pounds and on Monday put their entire professional staff up for sale.

City Council scuppers Leicester plan

LEICESTER, England, Dec 11: Second Division Leicester City's plans for a 7.5 million pounds all-seater stadium at Filbert Street were scuppered on Tuesday, when the city council said that a new 74-feet high main stand would block sunlight to nearby houses for six months of the year, reports AFP.

Goalkeeper sent off in UEFA Cup match

LOMOUC, Czechoslovakia, Dec 11: Goalkeeper Richard Gols was sent off as Hamburg creased out of the UEFA Cup against Czechoslovakia's Sigma Olomouc on Tuesday, reports Reuter.
 Gols was shown the Red Card in the 38th minute for bringing down Olomouc striker Roman Kerbr, who had opened the scoring in the 13th minute to put his team 3-1 ahead on aggregate and well on course for a place in the quarter-finals.
 Nils Bahr took Gols' place in goal but was almost beaten a minute later as a shot rocketed against his crossbar then Hamburg's Harald Spoerl gave his team new hope by levelling the second leg score with a 60th-minute goal.
 Three minutes later Barb saved a penalty from Pavel Hapal, who had been brought down in the area, but on a snow-covered pitch and in icy conditions, Hapal put Olomouc ahead again almost immediately, in the 65th minute.
 Radek Letal and Roman Hanus, with goals in the 70th and 76th minutes respectively, wrapped up a comfortable 4-1 win for Olomouc which gave the Czechoslovakia a 6-2 aggregate victory.



Fifth SAF Games-bound paddlers Seidul Haq Saadi(L) and national champion Musaddequl Haq Rochi practise under the watchful eyes of Chinese coach Ma Hua Jin at the NSC gymnasium. —Star photo