

# MSC stumble again

Sports Reporter

Mohammedans local players cut a sorry figure to multiply the problems of last year's runners up as the black-and-whites were held to a one-all draw by Rahmatganj yesterday at the Mirpur Stadium in the First Division football league.

One can well imagine the height of frustration aroused by the poor football displayed by the Mohammedan players that occasioned such discriminatory accusation, but then it was for the sake of truth, to put the saddle on the right horse.

The foreign trio of Rahimov, Nabikov and Kuznetsov played their role well and would have definitely looked better with a little bit of help from the local 'stars'. But the stars resembling those which adorn the night sky looked faded in the afternoon glare of March.

Rahmatganj should be given due credit for forcing a second-half equaliser after trailing by a goal. They never gave up and always were on the look out for a counter attack.

Mohammedan dished out a listless performance for the most part of the first half and only a lovely combined effort by the Russian trio helped them to forge ahead three minutes before the breather.

Shabbir backpassed a ball from the left to Kuznetsov who pushed it to Nabikov who cleverly squeezed the ball inside the Rahmatganj box, alive with Rahmatganj players guarding a lonely Rahimov. The powerfully built Russian beautifully freed himself with the ball to advance a few steps to draw the help Rahmatganj custodian out and then place it with all the time and the cool in the world (1-0).

The Russian trio headed by the supple and dexterous Rahimov tried hard in the second half but mispasses and maladroitness of their teammates spoiled everything. Also, the Russians allowed their rhythm to be upset by unnecessary show of tempers as the Rahmatganj players, as a part of their game plan, kept on pestering them with crunching tackles and off the ball pushes and shoves.

Rahmatganj scored the equaliser 25 minutes into the second half when Kaisar half-heartedly cleared a minus by Sohail of Rahmatganj and the ball went to Ranjan who weaved between the non-plussed Mohammedan defence and custodian Kanan to find the net.

The goal did nothing to inject urgency in the black-and-white ranks, rather it totally disintegrated their football. Rahmatganj got a golden opportunity a few minutes later to take the lead when Ranjan again raced clear after Mohammedan Jewel badly messed up a back-pass, but the Rahmatganj forward blasted the ball over out of excitement.

Frustration crept in and angry supporters pelted stones at the Mohammedan bench as minutes ticked by but nothing happened for the respite of the infuriated supporters as their favourite side lost their third point in this year's league. Earlier they had lost to Wari Club. Mohammedans now have 17 points and Rahmatganj nine with each playing ten matches.

The other match of the day, between Wanderers Club and Adamjee Sports Club, ended in a goalless draw.

With the one point from yesterday's seemingly got-up match, Wanderers raise their points tally to six and Adamjee to seven from ten matches each.

### TODAY'S MATCHES

Arambagh vs Wari Club (1-30 pm)  
Brothers vs Victoria (3-30 pm)



Steffi Graf played two sets to win 6-0, 7-5 over American Mary Joe Fernandez in the semifinal of Virginia Slims of Florida on Mar 7. — AFP photo

# Graf meets Martinez in final

BOCA RATON, Fla. Mar 8: Rain delayed Steffi Graf's match against Mary Joe Fernandez for more than three hours, and she would have preferred to wait a little longer, reports AP.

Not that Graf struggled. The top-seed lost only three points in the first set Saturday night and won 6-0, 7-5, to advance to the finals in the Virginia Slims of Florida.

"I was really relaxed. I stayed at home for a while and watched TV," said Graf, who lives near the stadium court. She added, with mock anger, "I watched 'Beverly Hills Cop II,' and I had to miss the last 10 minutes."

Graf's opponent Sunday will be Conchita Martinez, who beat Amanda Cozter in the other semifinal, 4-6, 6-3, 6-0.

Because of a thunderstorm, the Graf-Fernandez semifinal started shortly after 10 pm (0300 GMT). Tournament officials: were on the verge of postponing the match until Sunday morning, which would have required the winner to play twice in one day.

"I was just hoping to get it on," Graf said. "I was hoping the rain would stop, and thank God it did."

Graf, who won the tournament in 1987 and 1989, clearly was ready to play. She needed just 17 minutes to take the first set, winning 24 of

the 27 points. Fernandez, the third seed, struggled to keep the ball in play.

"My timing was really off," Fernandez said. "Steffi is a quick starter all the time. It was tough to get back into it against her."

Fernandez was up a break with a 5-4 lead in the second set, but Graf rallied to close out the match in 64 minutes. She has not lost a set in her seven matches against Fernandez.

Sidelined several weeks earlier this year by the German measles, Graf will be playing in her first final this year.

Though Martinez pleaded innocent, a coaching violation marked the turning point in her victory. The Spaniard had just lost her serve at the start of second set when she received a warning from chair umpire Lynda Hinshaw for being coached.

Martinez's coach, Francisco Lopez, was sitting in the first row behind the baseline and shouting in Spanish.

"He was saying, 'Comon, Conchita,' she said. "We always speak before the match, not on the court."

Martinez won 12 of the final 14 games after the warning provided a spark.

"It upset me because he was just saying, 'Comon,' she said. "I should play more aggressive, and I started to after the warning."

Martinez, the fourth seed, advanced to her second final in eight days — Monica Seles beat her to win the championship at last week's Indian Wells Open. Martinez is seeking her first tournament title since winning the Clarins Open in Paris last September.

The unseeded Coetzer, who eliminated three-time tournament champion Gabriela Sabatini in Friday's semifinal, appeared on the way to another upset when she took a 4-0 lead in the first set. Most of her points came on errors by Martinez.

"It's impossible to play that bad all the match," Martinez said.

The Spaniard started to hit the ball harder and more consistently. Coetzer, content to hug the baseline, managed only 11 winners, none in the third set.

"I started to push myself to go for big shots too early in the rallies," Coetzer said.

Still, the 20-year-old could look back on a good week. She played in just one semifinal last year, and her ranking will rise from 61st to the high 30s next week.

The upset of Sabatini surprised even Coetzer's father, whom she phoned in South Africa after Friday's match.

"He said, 'We feel sorry for you. How bad was it?' I said, 'Well, I won.' And he was quiet," she said with a smile.

# Indians peaking, says Azhar

WELLINGTON, Mar 8: Indian cricket captain Moham-mad Azharuddin issued a warning Sunday to his team's World Cup rivals, reports AP.

Azharuddin said the Indians were peaking at the right time to mount a realistic challenge in the nine-nation tournament.

The 1983 Cup winners have five points from five matches and face the West Indies in a crucial match at the Basin Reserve on Tuesday.

India struggled in the World Series Cup triangular competition against Australia and the West Indies earlier in the season and made a slow start to the World Cup.

The Indians scored a 55-run victory over Zimbabwe in a rain-shortened match in Hamilton on Saturday to boost their morale.

"We've been playing well in the World Cup. We're starting to play to our potential," Azharuddin said.

Azharuddin said. "That wasn't the case in the World Series Cup and the tests."



AZHARUDDIN In Australia. Azharuddin said his players were responding to the occasion.

"I think we are playing well because it is the World Cup," he said.

"I suppose we are peaking at the right time."

Azharuddin said India needed to maintain its concentration to clinch a semifinal spot.

"We've got to win another two games at least," he said.

Azharuddin said he was not concerned what sort of pitch his team would confront at the Basin Oval.

"We've done well against the West Indies in Australia, so I don't think it will make too much difference," he said.

"We had no problems readjusting but it is more difficult to go onto faster wickets than get back to playing on the slower ones."

India's World Cup campaign is being sparked by teen-ager Sachin Tendulkar, who recorded his best one-day international score of 81 against Zimbabwe.

# Geng Huang shocks Powell

YOKOHAMA, Japan, Mar 8: Mike Powell, returning to the country where he shattered the world long jump record last year, suffered an upset defeat at the Yokohama International indoor athletics meeting on Saturday, reports Reuter.

Powell, who bettered Bob Beamon's 23-year-old world record of 8.90 meters by five centimeters at last August's Tokyo World Championships, was beaten into second place by Chinese Geng Huang.

The 28-year-old American had been leading the competition with 8.05 meters until the final round when Geng, who did not even qualify for the Tokyo final, jumped 8.10. Powell managed only 8.03 in reply to finish second behind the Chinese.

"I'm not very happy," Powell said. "I was confident that I could make a big jump in the last one because prior to that I didn't really have much motivation to jump very well."

"He gave it to me so I guess it's good I can take that home and use the motivation during my training," Leroy Burrell, who lost his world record to fellow-American Andre Cason this year, won the men's 60 meters in 6.50 seconds, one-hundredth of a second ahead of Namibia's Frankie Fredericks.

Burrell, the world 100 meters silver medalist, was slow out of the blocks but overhauled the world 200 meters runner-up over the last few meters.

World outdoor champion Michael Johnson, unbeatable over 200 meters for the past two years, was never challenged in the one-lap race, clocking 20.50 to finish well ahead of fellow-American Kevin Little.

Three times world high hurdles champion Greg Foster of the United States won the 60 meters hurdles in 7.64 seconds ahead of compatriot Jack Pierce.

In the women's long jump Jackie Joyner-Kersey set a US indoor record of 7.04 meters.

Joyner-Kersey, who won the long jump and 60 meters hurdles at last weekend's US indoor championships, improved her own four-year mark by two centimeters.

She said later she would aim for 7,300 points when she defends her Olympic heptathlon record in Barcelona this year. Joyner-Kersey set the present world record mark of 7,291 at the 1988 Seoul Olympics.

Three times world high hurdles champion Greg Foster

## CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

**ACROSS**

1 Big bash  
5 A filmdom  
8 Scrooge  
12 Close  
13 Goose, to  
14 Shave  
15 Lapidary's assortment  
16 Suitable  
17 Actress  
18 Swenson  
20 Anticipate  
21 He deals with sheep  
22 Eye, originally  
23 The fairies' midwife  
24 Bulk  
27 Walk  
32 Acapulco gold  
33 Mauna —  
34 De-pressed  
35 — in Courage  
38 Merriment  
39 Sailor  
40 Listening device

**DOWN**

41 Like a duck's feet  
42 Impaired condition  
43 Elliptical  
44 Historic period  
45 Author  
46 Wiesel  
47 Obnoxious  
48 Have the sniffles  
49 Sell  
50 Blueprint additions  
51 100 cts.  
52 Conclusions  
53 Token of defiance  
54 Mallery  
55 Keaton's brother  
56 Goose-neck, e.g.  
57 Claim  
58 Diamond activity  
59 — on par  
60 "francais"  
61 Algebra, trig, etc.  
62 Helix  
63 Court activity  
64 Longing  
65 Bit of lachrymation  
66 Roman  
67 Ostrich's kin  
68 School dance  
69 Foul up  
70 Field activity  
71 Larry's pal  
72 Diamond activity  
73 Place-kicker's pride  
74 Lamb's dam  
75 Aesop's output  
76 Anger  
77 Mourn  
78 Lardner's "You Know Me, —"  
79 Loomed?  
80 Maleficent  
81 Inoperative  
82 Singer Campbell  
83 Rear  
84 Kennedy and Koppel  
85 South American resort

**Solution time: 23 mins.**

SAAR	WAG	ALIE
TIDE	HIE	TATS
LAMPOONS	OMAN	ORSON
TEMPLE	ROTS	ASP
SILT	OTIS	ORT
ANA	AMENT	SIR
PAM	NERO	STAY
PHI	ENNA	
PAROLE	ALLOT	OVER
LAYS	IDO	NOTA
ELSE	ASA	AMOR

**Yesterday's answer 9-5**

# Tanima, Nipa falter

Sports Reporter

The thirteenth national women's chess championship got off to a sensational start at the National Sports Council chess room with two startling upsets on the first day of competition yesterday.

Reigning champion Tanima Parveen made a stuttering start to the defence of the title she won last year by allowing the less fancied Jahan Ara Haq to hold her to a draw. The sharing of the point may prove rather costly for the young girl from Chittagang as the ten-player, nine-round Swiss league meet progresses and builds towards a climax.

However, Tanima had reasons to feel pleased with the plight of her close rival in last year's meet Shabana Parveen Nipa who lost her opening match to another unheralded player Rozana Sultana Nikkon.

Former national champion Rani Hamid, who has won the title eight times, got off to a fine start by beating Zakia Sultana to earn full points.

Another title-aspirant Afroza Khanam Bablee also earned full points by beating Hamida Rahman while Afana Parveen Nira, Shabana's sister, beat Masuda Begum.

The championship, organised by the Bangladesh Chess Federation, was formally inaugurated Saturday by the federation's general secretary K M Shakhor with the drawing of the numbers.

The tournament is expected to run until March 18.

# Chesnokov stuns Stich on way to final

INDIAN WELLS, Calif. Mar 8: Unseeded Andre Chesnokov of Russia continued his march through the Champions Cup on Saturday, stunning No 3 seeded Michael Stich to gain a spot in the final against Jim Courier in the third round, rallied to beat Stich 1-6, 7-5 (7-4), 6-3. Chang, the No 12 seed, made quick work of Spain's Francisco Clavet in Saturday's other semifinal, winning 6-0, 6-1.

"This week is quite surprising," said Chesnokov, who hasn't played in a final since last July. "I beat three players in the top 10. It doesn't matter if I win or lose tomorrow, I will remember this week all my life."

After an easy victory in the first set, things started to go wrong for Stich, who hadn't lost a set all week.

He began making errors but still fought off break points in the third and ninth games. Up 6-5 with Chesnokov serving, Stich had a match point but proceeded to lose four consecutive points on errors. He made a total of 35 in the second set.

Chesnokov won the last four points of the tiebreaker to even the match.

The Russian, ranked 36th in the world, took a 3-0 lead in the final set and Stich was unable to break back.

The world's fifth-ranked player and reigning Wimbledon champ, Stich piled up 67 unforced errors in the match compared to 25 for Chesnokov, who committed only four in the third set.

"My legs started to get heavy in the beginning of the second set," Stich said. "I had my chances. The first set was very good tennis, then I got tired."

Chesnokov wasn't feeling great, either. He said he woke up with a headache and dizziness and had to see a doctor.

"I didn't want to give up," he said. "I'm in the semifinal and I wanted to play. The crowd helped me a lot. I was feeling better in the middle of the second set. Now I'm OK."

Chesnokov lost a set for the first time this week following

his upsets of 15th-seeded Wayne Ferreira of South Africa, Courier, the No 1 player in the world and the defending champion, and seventh seed Emilio Sanchez.

His opponent in the final got his easiest win of the week after starting the tournament with three three-set matches.

Chang totally dominated Clavet, covering the court masterfully. The American continued to experiment with occasional trips to the net to complement his baseline play.

Clavet offered no resistance in the first set but opened the second by holding serve. Chang came back and won the next six games.

The winner of the \$1.75 million tournament takes home \$137,000, and the runner-up gets \$72,380.

Chang and Chesnokov have met three times before, with Chang winning all three. Their most recent meeting was last year in Tokyo.

# The world still misses Bobby Fischer

LINARES, Spain, Mar 8: No one really knows why Bobby Fischer quit chess.

Twenty years on, today's grandmas-terns still speculate whether one of the greatest players of all time, who turns 49 on Monday, will ever return, reports Reuter.

World champion Gary Kasparov has his doubts: "I consider him one of the greatest players in the history of chess," he told Reuters during the Linares international tournament, "but I don't believe he would come back to play again."

Former world champion Anatoly Karpov added his tribute to the reclusive American and would still like to play him.

"I wanted to play against him in 1975, but all my meetings with Fischer were in vain, he didn't want to play that match. I think he was afraid to lose," Kasparov said referring to Fischer's failure to defend his world title.

"I reckon Fischer thinks chess takes too much nerve and that's why he doesn't want to play," he added.

Fischer wrested the World Championship from Russian Boris Spassky in Reykjavik in 1972, ending a Soviet monopoly of world chess which had endured since 1948.

He has not played a tournament or exhibition game since and lost the world title by Default.

"Fischer still considers himself the champion of the world," said Dutch grandmaster Jan Timman.

"Several years ago, I had talks with him about playing a friendly match and he sent me a letter informing me that I had to address him as the world champion."

Luis Rentero, organiser of the Linares tournament, is reported to have offered Fischer two million dollars to meet Spassky or any other grandmaster.

Fischer wanted four then five million and the organisers said his representative was in



BOBBY FISCHER

# Watson ends title drought

HONG KONG, Mar 8: American Tom Watson won his first tournament in five years Sunday, beating Northern Ireland's Ronan Rafferty by three strokes in the \$250,000 Hutchison Telecom Hong Kong Golf Open, reports AP.

Watson, who started the final round seven strokes ahead of Rafferty, slipped to a 3-over-par 74 for a four-day total of 10-under-par 274.

Rafferty shot a 70 and finished at 277.

The 42-year-old Watson began the day with a bogey, and also bogeyed the sixth, 11th and 14th holes, but birdied the ninth on the 6,732-yard, par-71 Royal Hong Kong Golf Club Championship Course.

"It feels great to have won and I hope this feeling will go on," Watson said.

The American, a five-time winner of the British Open, collected \$141,650 for his victory.

Rafferty birdied the second, eighth, and ninth holes but bogeyed the fifth hole going out. On the back nine, a bogey on the 18th was his only deviation from par.

Third was defending champion Bernhard Langer of Germany, who was a stroke behind Rafferty after shooting a 69 in the final round.

The Hong Kong Open is the third leg of the nine-event Asian circuit.

# Ajax march on

Sports Reporter

Former champions Ajax Sports Club posted their eleventh consecutive victory in the Green Delta First Division hockey league, getting the better of lowly Bachelors Sporting Club three-nil at the Hockey Stadium yesterday.

Ajax, one of the four unbeaten sides in the league (the other three being reigning champions Abahani Krira Chakra, their arch-rivals Mohammedan Sporting Club and Dhaka Mariner Youngs Club) now have 23 points.

**TODAY'S MATCHES**  
Azad SC vs Usha KC (1.45 pm)  
Wanderers vs Ansars (3.15 pm)

# Skiing results

OHIMACHI, Japan, Mar 8: Didier Meda of France won the men's aerial event Sunday and Elle Simchen of Germany took the women's in the FIS World Cup Freestyle skiing series, reports AP.

American Trace Worthington became the men's combined champion after picking up 9.26 points in the ballet, 8.77 in moguls and 10.0 in aerials for a total of 28,030. Swiss skier Maja Schmid was the women's combined champion with 28,770.

In the aerials, Meda collected 214,523 points to 207,207 for Nicolas Fontaine of Canada in competition at the Madarapu Kogen Ski Resort in central Japan.



Mark Rushmore blasts a hit past Pakistan's wicket-keeper Moin Khan during yesterday's World Cup match in Brisbane. — AFP photo

## 9-5 CRYPTOQUIP

M J V R P J V L K Z K X H Y P Q A H Y Z  
A Q R Z B V K L X Y N A M H J P Q X X  
C R P C Q X Y X  
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: WHEN A CAMEL CARAVAN TRAVELS DURING A SANDSTORM, DOES IT GO AGAINST THE GRAINS?

Today's Cryptoquip clue: J equals C

The Cryptoquip is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.