

Wait ends for soccer fans

Sports Reporter



The First Division football league resumes today after nearly a month's lay-off.

The league committee had suspended the league programme from April 29 in order to allow players from different clubs to take part in two Asian youth football competitions — the under-16 in Rajshahi and Under-19 in Kannur, India.

Thirty matches of this year's 20-team league remain to be settled. League leaders and reigning champions Abahani Krira Chakra have so far collected 31 points from 16 matches, dropping their only point to Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation in a 1-1 draw.

Last year's runners-up Dhaka Mohammedan Sporting Club are trailing arch-rivals Abahani by two points. Their collection so far is 29 from 16 matches. Mohammedans lost to Wari Club by a solitary goal and then drew with Rahmatganj MFS to raise the number of the lost points to three. Unlike Brothers Union, and to some extent Abahani, Mohammedans showed clear signs of improvement as the league wore on.

Federation Cup champion Brothers Union cut a very sorry figure in this year's league, managing only 25 points from 16 matches. The spirit and cohesion which had helped the Gopibagh boys to topple Mohammedans and Abahani in the Federation Cup were totally missing, during the league. Club officials recruited three Iraqis in a desperate bid to inject new life in the team but that turned out to be ploughing in the sands and the exasperated team players and officials reverted to local combination prior to the abrupt closure of the league.

One hundred and sixty matches have so far been held with each team playing 16 matches apiece. The two newcomers Eskaton Sabuj Sangha



ASLAM ... top scorer

and Police — have collected 12 and 10 points respectively.

Eskaton started very promisingly, putting up a spirited show against Mohammedans in their first match which they narrowly lost 2-3. In Arman they have a very skillful play-maker but he did not get enough support from his teammates. Otherwise, Eskaton should have stayed higher in the points table.

Police, the other newcomers, will have to struggle to avoid relegation along with Bangladesh Jute Mills Corporation, who have confirmed their demotion. It is a sad predicament for the myrmidons of law who showed glimpses of promise in their first match against Abahani when they almost snatched a point from the champions in the league curtain-raiser which

the sky-blues won by a late, hard-earned goal.

BJMC, who ensured the services of BKSP players, paid through their noses for their indiscretion as the inexperienced BKSP players could reap only three points from 16 matches.

Meanwhile, the National Sports Council has turned down the plea of the league committee to stage the three crucial matches at the centre of the Dhaka Stadium. The three matches in question—Mohammedans vs Brothers, Abahani vs Brothers and the last and most important and often explosive encounter between Mohammedans and Abahani. The Dhaka Metropolitan Football Association or MDFA, the organisers, wanted to shift the pitch to the centre of the stadium to avoid possible interruption originating from crowd violence. NSC, perhaps unwilling to sacrifice the cricket pitches for football, advised DMFA to arrange the crunch matches at the Mirpur Stadium along with some other scheduled matches. Mohammedan Sporting Club, it was learnt gave a note of dissent expressing their unwillingness to play the important matches in the fear of adequate security.

Sheikh Mohammad Aslam of Abahani is the leading scorer with twelve goals while Mohammedan's Russian striker Abdou Rahimov follows him close to the heels with ten. Tutul of Wari scored the first hat-trick of the season followed by Rumman Bin-Wali Shabbir and Abdou Rahimov of Mohammedans both whom notched hat-tricks.

TODAY'S TIES

Today, Rahmatganj MFS meet Dhanmondi Club at the Mirpur Stadium at 4 pm while Victoria play Arambagh in the first of the two matches to be played at the Dhaka Stadium at 5. League leaders Abahani begin their quest to retain the title at seven against PWD Sports Club at the Dhaka Stadium.

FIRST DIVISION TABLE

Following is the points table prior to today's resumption of the First Division football league:

| | M | W | D | L | GF | GA | P |
|-----------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Abahani KC | 16 | 15 | 1 | 0 | 46 | 7 | 31 |
| Mohammedan SC | 16 | 14 | 1 | 1 | 40 | 5 | 29 |
| Brothers Union | 16 | 11 | 3 | 2 | 27 | 8 | 25 |
| Arambagh KS | 16 | 7 | 6 | 3 | 15 | 13 | 20 |
| Agrani Bank | 16 | 4 | 9 | 3 | 14 | 11 | 17 |
| PWD SC | 16 | 6 | 5 | 5 | 19 | 20 | 17 |
| Wari Club | 16 | 4 | 9 | 3 | 18 | 19 | 17 |
| Rahmatganj MFS | 16 | 7 | 2 | 7 | 18 | 12 | 16 |
| Victoria SC | 16 | 6 | 4 | 6 | 14 | 13 | 16 |
| Farashganj SC | 16 | 4 | 8 | 4 | 9 | 15 | 16 |
| Muktijoddha | 16 | 5 | 6 | 5 | 13 | 21 | 16 |
| Fakirerpool YMC | 16 | 5 | 4 | 7 | 13 | 18 | 14 |
| Adamjee SCC | 16 | 3 | 7 | 6 | 14 | 20 | 13 |
| Dhanmondi Club | 16 | 3 | 7 | 6 | 11 | 21 | 13 |
| Dhaka Wanderers | 16 | 2 | 8 | 6 | 11 | 16 | 12 |
| Eskaton SS | 16 | 1 | 10 | 5 | 13 | 19 | 12 |
| Sadharan Bima | 16 | 3 | 6 | 7 | 12 | 24 | 12 |
| BRTC SC | 16 | 1 | 9 | 6 | 10 | 21 | 11 |
| Police AC | 16 | 1 | 8 | 7 | 8 | 17 | 10 |
| BJMC SC | 16 | 0 | 3 | 13 | 3 | 28 | 3 |

TOP SCORERS

Top scorers: 12 goals—Aslam (Abahani); 10 goals—Rahimov (Mohammedans); 8 goals—Masud Rana (Muktijoddha); 7 goals—Shabbir (Mohammedans), Rumi, Mamun (Abahani) and Tutul (Wari); 6 goals—Gaus (Abahani) and Badal (Farashganj); 5 goals—Kaiser, Naqib (Mohammedans), Rupu (Brothers), Jewel, Munna (PWD), Bobby (Wari), Soheli (Arambagh), Bakhtiar (Agrani Bank); 4 goals—Zhukov (Abahani), Utam (Brothers), Shah Alam Babu, Mokbul (Rahmatganj), Badsha (Adamjee), Lablu (Sadharan Bima) and Mostakim (Wanderers).

Barcelona close in on Real

MADRID, May 25: Bulgarian striker Hristo Stoichkov scored two first-half goals Sunday to lead FC Barcelona to a 6-0 victory over Valladolid, moving the defending league champions within one point of league-leading Real Madrid with two games to play, reports AP.

The lopsided win improved the recently crowned European Cup champions to 21-9-6 and 51 points, just behind Real — the only two teams to have won the Spanish First Division in the last seven seasons.

Atletico de Madrid kept pace with 2-1 victory over Logrones on Sunday, which gave it 50 points.

Barcelona's goal spree came just four days after their 1-0 victory over Sampdoria of Italy that gave the Catalans their first-ever European Champions Cup title.

On Saturday, Real Madrid used an 87th-minute goal by

Emilio Butragueno to earn a 1-1 draw at Osasuna and Valencia solidified their hold on fourth place with a 3-1 victory at home over Sporting Gijon.

Olaya Eloy scored twice and Fernando Gomez Colomer added another for the winners. Joaquin Alonso Gonzalez scored on a penalty for Sporting Gijon.

In other games Sunday, it was Espanol 3, Mallorca 2; Real Sociedad 4, Burgo 0; Zaragoza 1, Albacete 0; Oviedo 2, La Coruna Deportivo 1; Cadiz 1, Athletic Bilbao 1-0; and Cadiz 4, Seville 1.

Leading 2-0 at halftime on Stoichkov's goals, Barcelona got two goals in the second half from Miguel Angel Nadal and two more on penalty kicks by Dutchman Ronald Koeman.

Valladolid's fate was sealed in the 57th minute when Yugoslav keeper Mauro Ravnic was expelled with his side trailing 3-0.

Atletico Madrid went ahead 1-0 in the 33rd minute on a

goal by Carlos Aguilera, but Logrones rallied to tie the game a minute later on a goal by Jesus Garcia Pitarch. Atletico's winning goal came in the 82nd minute on a shot from Gabriel Moya.

Elsewhere, second-half goals from Russians Dimitri Kyznetsov and Igor Korneyev rallied Espanol from a 2-1 half-time deficit past Mallorca.

Francisco Higueras's goal in the 6th minute was all Zaragoza needed for their 1-0 win over Albacete.

Romanian Marius Lacatus' goal in the 18th minute pulled Oviedo into a 1-1 tie with La Coruna Deportivo, and teammate Ricardo Bango scored the winning goal in the 61st minute.

Brazilian superstar Mario Tilico scored a goal in the 48th minute to lift Cadiz to their 1-0 win over Athletic Bilbao.

Argentine forward Juan Pizzi scored two first-half goals in the seventh and 35th minute to help Cadiz swamp Seville 4-1.

Eire to subsidise Albanian booters

DUBLIN, May 25: Ireland will provide 25,000 pounds sterling (£45,000 US dollar) to meet the costs of impoverished Albania's soccer team to safeguard their World Cup qualifier on Tuesday, an Irish official said on Sunday, reports Reuter.

Albania say they have no hard currency to pay for either flights from Tirana or hotel accommodation for the European Group Three qualifier in Dublin.

The International Football Federation (FIFA) has promised to re-imburse the Irish but the money has had to be staked by the Football Association of Ireland (FAI) to make sure the game goes ahead.

"It was a case of no money, no match," an FAI official said.

"We could have protested or even declined but we have heard about all the problems in Albania and, with FIFA's promise of compensation, we are paying up."

Santostefano, a former University of Florida assistant coach who recruited Zubero seven years ago to swim at the school.

Zubero, 23, who grew up and was schooled in Florida, and represents Spain in competition, is the world record holder in the 200-metre backstroke (one minute, 56.57 seconds).

"It's not so much the pressure as it is everyone bothering me," Zubero said.

"I haven't changed anything," Zubero said. He plans on remaining in Florida to train until two days before the Summer Olympics begin July 25. "I just have more people paying attention to me."

"It's just not the Spanish press, it's everybody's press," Zubero said. "When you get me in a bad mood I feel like pulling my hair out. I know it comes with the territory. I've learned to handle it better. At the beginning of the year I was ready to kill some people."

Triple Olympic gold medalist and world record holder Janet Evans won her fourth event of the meet, capturing the 1500-metre freestyle in 16:14.27. She won by 53 seconds, her greatest margin of victory in the event ever. Evans also won the 200, 400 and 800-metres freestyle events.

Jon Olsen, 23, of the US Olympic team upset world record holder Matt Biondi in the 100-metre freestyle.

Olsen finished in 51.35, just touching out Biondi in 51.70, off his world record time of 48.42. Biondi also finished second in the 50 freestyle Saturday night.

"There's only one race that counts and that's the Olympic final," Biondi said.

BCCB sends out feelers about hosting Asia Cup

KARACHI, May 25: Bangladesh has made enquiries to host the Asia Cup cricket tournament in October after India decided to pull out of the fixture scheduled to be held in Karachi, cricket officials said Monday, reports AFP.

"We are certainly disappointed at India's decision which is an important development," said Shahid Rafi, secretary of the Board for Control of Cricket in Pakistan.

"Bangladesh has indicated that it may get India's participation in the tournament and we have advised them to approach the Asian Cricket Council, which has to review the development and take a decision," he said.

The Board for Control of Cricket in India, after a working committee meeting on May 19, decided it would not participate in the Asia Cup in Karachi in October.

The decision was in reprisal for Pakistan's absence from last year's Asia Cup in India.

Rafi said Pakistan's absence then was due to compulsions created by non-cricketing affairs.

Admitting that without India, it would be a lackluster tournament, Rafi said the Pakistani Board would review the situation after its president returns from England.

On whether the Asia Cup may be postponed altogether this year, Rafi said: "I hope we do not reach that stage, but it is certainly a setback at a time when the two boards are looking forward to resume cricketing ties."

Premier kabaddi

Sports Reporter

VDP (Ansars-B) team and Rifles Greens (B) team won their respective matches in the Premier Kabaddi league yesterday at the Kabaddi Court. In the first match Ansars B defeated Fire Service 25-10 including two 'lonas'. The winners led the first half 11-0.

Rifles (Greens) outlasted Bangladesh Police 'B' 36-9 in the second match of the day to earn two points. The winners who earned two 'lonas' led the first half 12-4.

TODAY'S MATCHES

Bangladesh Ansars 'A' vs Bangladesh Police 'A'
Bangladesh Rifles (A) vs Fire Service (A)

Shooters leave for Europe today

A seven-member Bangladesh shooting team leaves for Munich today, to take part in two UIT World Cup Championships being held in Germany and Italy, reports UNB.



Action from the national handball championship which began at the Outer Stadium handball court yesterday.

Tense days for Krabbe

BONN, May 25: Athletics chiefs will almost certainly postpone a ruling on the Katrin Krabbe doping case this week, leaving the German sprinter a nervous wait to see if she can run at the Barcelona Olympics, reports Reuter.

International Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF) German official August Kirsch said the IAAF would not make any

Krabbe and her two fellow ex-East Germans were originally banned by the IAAF in February for manipulating urine samples after they supplied identical samples during random tests in training at the start of the year.

But the legal commission, a DLV arbitration panel, decided to lift the ban because it said there were too many holes in the evidence against the athletes.

Kirsch, who has recently and talks with IAAF leading officials, said the IAAF arbitration panel would not be able to meet until mid-June, just over a month before the start of the Games of July 25.

Earlier this month the IAAF panel in London confirmed a two-year ban on American world 400 metres record holder Harry "Butch" Reynolds who tested positive for steroids.

Kirsch, who is attending the meeting in Canada, said: "We have to deal with it in the same way as the Reynolds case with a hearing in London."

"This is the first with manipulation of samples. We could not have dealt with the matter without the parties involved, DLV and Krabbe and her advisers."

"Krabbe is still free to run nationally and internationally until the final decision is made."

The three-day IAAF Toronto council meeting starts on Friday.

Krabbe has already said she has found it hard to concentrate fully on her training because of the affair.

The blonde sprinter, who stands to lose millions in advertising contracts if the original ban is upheld, has not run since it was lifted at the start on April.

Even if the panel manages

to make a date for its hearing earlier in June the 22-year-old German still faces an uncertain summer training for the Games without knowing whether she can even be selected.

"We have to get the panel into action quickly because many countries will be meeting then to pick their teams for the Olympics," Kirsch said.

The German Olympic trials are scheduled to start on June 19 in Munich.

Nat'l handball begins

Sports Reporter

Four matches were played on the opening day of the eighth national handball championships, at the handball court yesterday.

In the first match Bangladesh Rifles outplayed Jessore DSA 33-5. The winners led the first half 15-2. Jahangir seven and Matungu Pru with six goals were the leading scorers for the victors. Mintu scored twice for Jessore DSA.

In day's second match Dhaka DSA defeated Kushtia DSA 34-14. The winners who led the first half 19-6 were helped to a great extent by Selim and Rashed who scored eight and seven goals respectively.

Khokan scored six goals while Colonel netted five goals for the losers.

In the first of the two afternoon engagements Bangladesh Ansars swamped Natore DSA 43-3. Jewel and Akram scored 17 and 11 goals for the winners who led the first half 20-2.

In the last match of the day Pabna DSA beat Narail DSA 23-6 in another one sided match. Helal handed in 12 goals for the winners who led the first half 7-2.

Joyner-Kersey, Aouita impress at NY GP

Lewis' leap year's longest legal jump

NEW YORK, May 25: Six-time Olympic champion Carl Lewis caught a relatively calm moment on a windy day and sailed a world-leading 8.56 metres (28 feet, one inch) in the long jump at the New York Grand Prix athletics meeting on Sunday, reports Reuter.

Lewis also had a wind-aided jump of 8.72 metres (28 feet, 7-1/2 inches) to win the competition and said he felt he could have jumped farther except for a long delay while officials attended to fellow American Llewellyn Starks, who broke his right leg on his third jump and had to be removed on a stretcher.

"I just couldn't get into it after that," said Lewis, who took only one more leap.

His performance paled in comparison to world record holder Mike Powell's wind-aided leap of 8.90 metres (29 feet, 2-1/2 inches) two weeks ago, but Lewis said he was not concerned.

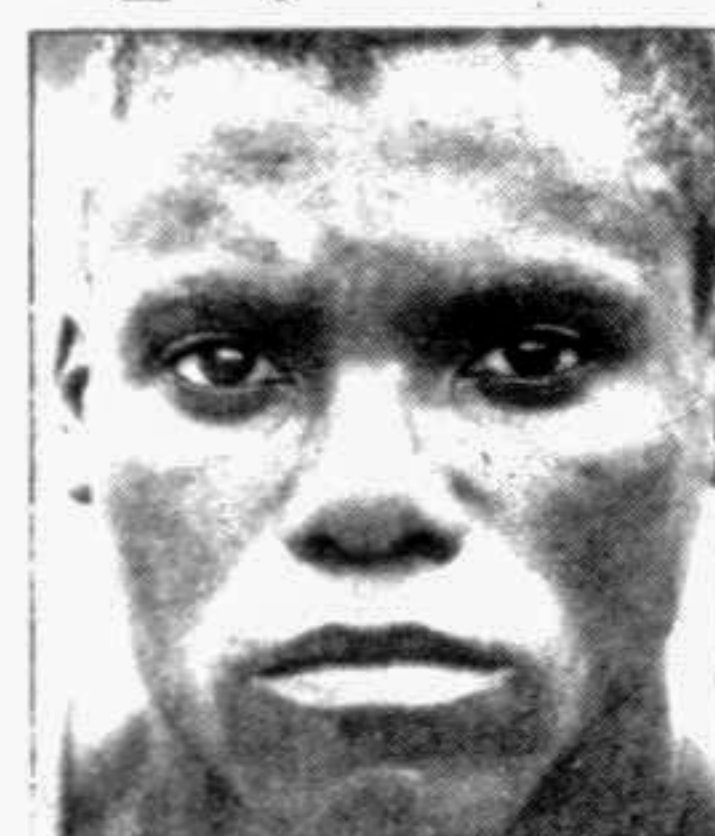
"My thoughts were that Mike would jump 29 feet again," said Lewis, who lost to Powell's world-record jump at the 1991 World Championship and will not face his longtime rival until next month's US Olympic trials.

"My focus is to jump farther than I have ever jumped," Lewis said.

World heptathlon record holder Jackie Joyner-Kersey won two events within minutes, leaping 7.17 metres (23 feet, 6-1/4 inches) in the long jump and running the 100-metre hurdles in 13.16 seconds — both in a wind of 1.4 metres per second.

Afterward Joyner-Kersey, the 1988 Olympic champion in the heptathlon and long jump, said she might try to make the US Olympic team in the hurdles as well next month.

Olympic 400-metres champion Steve Lewis and sprinters Mike Marsh and Gwen Torrence also ran impressively



CARL LEWIS



SAID AOUITA

Starks suffers broken leg

NEW YORK, May 25: Star-studded but wind-plagued New York Games were marred here Sunday by a broken right leg suffered by world-class long jumper Llewellyn Starks, report agencies.

Starks, a 25-year-old American and the world's fourth-ranked long jumper, was injured on his takeoff during his third attempt.

The frightening incident was watched by Dr Ricardo Ortega of Spain, who was assigned to the long jump area in order to escort one participant to the drug-testing area after the competition.

"He heard a snapping sound when he took off," Dr Andres Rodriguez, medical director of the New York Road Runners Club, said of Ortega's description of the injury. "The first thing that came to his (Ortega's) mind was that he had broken the board."

"But then he saw the guy couldn't complete the jump, and he landed in severe pain."

Rodriguez said Ortega told him "the bone was protruding through the leg" and "there was blood in the sand."

Rodriguez said that Starks sustained a compound fracture of the tibia and a fracture of the fibula, "but we won't know the full extent of the injury until they look at the films (the X-rays)."

"It's a very unusual stress fracture, because it is difficult to break the tibia," Rodriguez said. "The tibia is a very big bone, a very strong bone."

Starks, ranked only behind world record-holder Mike Powell, two-time Olympic gold medalist Lewis, and a third American, Larry Myricks, in the world, unquestionably will miss next month's Olympic trials at New Orleans.

Whether he will ever be able to compete again was questionable, Rodriguez said.

The orthopedist said Starks was taken to Allen Pavillion, a hospital affiliated with Columbia University, where he was being attended by Dr Stephen McIlveen, an orthopedic surgeon.

Rodriguez said that Starks probably would require on operation and possibly two.

Zubero is aware of the spotlight



MARTIN ZUBERO ... Spain's best medal hope

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla., May 25: World record holder Martín Zubero of Spain is beginning to feel the spotlight that goes with being an Olympic gold medal hopeful and a national hero, reports Reuter.

Zubero's performance at the Alamo Challenge swimming competition is not likely to dim the light.

On Sunday night, Zubero won the 200-metre backstroke in two minutes, 00.10 seconds, off his world record time of 1:56.57. He also won the 200-metre individual medley

and the 100-metre backstroke earlier in the week.

He also was second in the 100-metre butterfly and 400-metre individual medley. He won Sunday's event by a full body-length.

"He has the potential to become Spain's all-time greatest athlete," said Vince

into the wind, and world 1,500-metre record holder Said Aouita of Morocco continued his comeback with a final-stride victory in the mile.

Steve Lewis took the men's 400 in 44.85 seconds, Marsh won the men's 200 in 20.10 seconds and Torrence finished the women's 200 in 22.56 seconds despite a headwind of 1.3 metres per second in her race.

Aouita's winning mile time, three minutes, 58.20 seconds, was slow by his standards, but how he won was impressive.

With 100 metres to go he looked like a beaten man, but at the last moment he was able to pass American John Traumann for the victory.

Still, Aouita was not sure he was regain enough of his speed of previous years to test the world's best at 1,500 metres in Barcelona.

"I must try another mile or 1,500 and come close to a world record to make me decide I have enough speed for the 1,500," Aouita said.

Otherwise he will try the 5,000 at the Olympics.

Tony Dees topped a world-class high hurdles field in 13.50 seconds with Roger Kingdom, the world record holder who is recovering from surgery, second in his first major race of the season.

Former world record holder Leroy Burrell won the 100 metres in 10.36 seconds, also into a wind, and Kevin Young won the 400 hurdles in 48.71 seconds.

Soccer result

PORT-AU-PRINCE, May 25: Bermuda beat Haiti on the away goals rule in their football World Cup on Concacaf Zone preliminary round tie despite losing 2-1 here on Sunday in the second leg, reports AFP.

Haiti, who lost the first leg 1-0, needed a two goal winning margin to reach the next round. Bermuda will play Antigua next in their campaign to reach the full north and central American qualifying group for the World Cup finals.