

Abahani annex league championship in style

A renegade wreaks havoc

Sports Reporter

A few years ago, precisely in the 1987 football season, Khurshid Alam Babul exacted a sweet revenge by scoring the last goal in his side Mohammedans' 3-2 victory against arch-rivals and former team Abahani Krira Chakra to throw cold water on the plans for championship celebration of the sky-blues. That happened five years ago, and the venue was Dhaka Stadium yesterday, at the Mirpur Stadium Mamun Joarder, the nippy stockily built winger of Abahani Krira Chakra who had joined Abahani from Mohammedans only this year came on as a substitute,

scored two goals which not only quashed Mohammedans' chances of regaining the title but made sure that the title remained Abahani's for the second season in a row.

Mohammedans, who had no other way but win yesterday's 'crunch match' to entertain any hope of regaining the title which they lost to Abahani in 1989 after completing a hat-trick of championship in the years 1986, '87 and '88, seemingly lacked the determination and the touch to push the championship issue to a play-off, a la 1987. With 33 points from 18 matches prior to yesterday's match, the black-and-whites trailed the sky-blues, who had dropped only one

point in their 18 matches to top the league table with 35 points.

With the deafening cacophony of crackers, the beating of drums and cymbals and the hoisting of colourful balloons setting the mood for the last league match, the actual contest got underway 17 minutes later than its scheduled start of 4 pm.

Both teams looked extremely uptight, and taut, not unexpectedly in such a vital match between the two top clubs of the country. If Abahani ran the risk of being caught in a dilemma of to attack or not to attack, the remarkably long time taken by the Mohammedan players to settle down was mind-boggling. The more than 50 thousand spectators who thronged the faraway arena were dished out absolutely non-descript brand of football which mocked the expectations of the general and more uninitiated section of the onlookers whose appetite had been further whetted by the presence of the half a dozen Russian footballers in the two teams.

The number was cut down to five in yesterday's clash of the titans as Alexei Arifiev of Abahani had to see his side's ultimate triumph from the sidelines, having received the marching order in the match against Brothers Union. In the end, when the jubilant Abahani fans invaded the pitch in the approaching twilight to celebrate the victory of their side with an indigenous version of the samba, the fact that Arifiev did not play was quietly forgotten.

The jubilant mood, however, was there prior to the start of the match as three former national footballers — Dewan Shafiqul Arefin Tutul, Khurshid Alam Babul and Abdus Salam Murshedi — choose yesterday's crowd-packed occasion to 'officially' call it a day. All three, out of competitive football for quite some time with Salam now doing managerial duties for Mohammedans, were given bouquets and a standing ovation by the crowd during their valdictory lap around the stadium.

The first sign of confusion was noticed in the Abahani defence in the 26th minute of the match when a free-kick from the left by Rumman bin-Wali Shabbir caught the Abahani stoppers unawares and only a last-minute rescue act at the cost of a corner by Masud Rana saved the sky blues from an early set-back.

Although repeated onslaughts by the Mohammedan forwards were the speculated order of the day, the Abahani midfielders led by Sergei Zhukov cut the lifeline between the Mohammedan offence and their mid-field, a fact that saw prolific goal-getter Abdou Rahimov of Mohammedans totally out of job. Zakir, Rumi in the mid-field and Masud Rana in defence did a splendid job to help Abahani establish a vice-like grip in the midfield.

Aslam, one of the few off-colour Abahani players yesterday, wasted a fine chance

when he blasted the ball over from an advantageous position after Zakir had done the spade-work.

Abahani's Rumi had the Mohammedan players and supporters chilled to death when his stinging left-footer that sliced through Kaisar and Shamim hit the inside of the far post and tantalisingly grazed past the goal-line on an its snailing out safety across the Mohammedan goal, much to the relief of the black and whites defenders. The outswing of the shot perhaps saved the broth on that occasion for Mohammedans.

Masud Rana teed a fine pass to Polynkov in the 44th minute of the first half but the Russian

striker failed to press home the advantage of a fine ball when he was tackled at the nick of time by Shamim, the Mohammedan right-back.

After a pedestrian first half of the match really came alive from the 14th minute of the second half when an aged Boris Kuznetsov, Mohammedan's Russian mid-fielder, suddenly accelerated down the middle to latch on to a defence-splitting through by team-mate Nabikov that found the net for Mohammedans, much to the horror of a desperately charging out Mohsin (1-0). Abahani stoppers Munna and Rehan were paralysed by their parallel position when Kuznetsov, perhaps taken lightly compared to the worry and care demanded by Rahimov, did the damage much to the delight of the Mohammedan supporters.

Rahimov, however, was not really policed by any particular Abahani defender which again spoke volumes of the efforts put in by the Abahani mid-fielders.

Abahani took sometime to reorganise themselves after the goal but with Mamun Joarder coming in place of Polynkov the sky-blues underwent a transformation.

Mamun harried and harassed Johnny on the left with his sudden darting runs. With Rumi scything down the middle with superb footwork, the equaliser appeared to be just round the corner and it did come in the 69th minute. Rumi cut down the left to send a cross badly goaled by Mohammedan stoppers and the ball travelled to an unmarked Mamun Joarder who had all the time in the world to beat Kanan with a powerful left footed grounder (1-1).

The restoration of parity was the turnaround of the course of the match with Mohammedans apparently losing their bearings to a rejuvenated allegro Abahani who really ran all over their opponents.

Mamun sealed the fate of the match seven minutes from the time when he shook off Kaisar Hamid inside the box to beat Kanan with a fierce shot at the first post from close, the ball entering the top of the net off Kanan's outstretched palms (2-1).

Abahani kept up the pressure till the end and when referee Nasir Chowdhury blew the final whistle Abahani had retained the title which they won the last time the league was held, in 1989-90.

This was Abahani's eighth league title following their emulation of the feat earlier in 1974, '77, '81, '83, '84, '85, and in '89.

Mohammedans have also won the league title eight times, last winning it in 1988 before losing it to Abahani. This was the 34th league encounter between the two teams and the 47th overall, including the battles in various tournaments. The record, however, still favours Mohammedans who won 18 of their earlier confrontations while Abahani raised their tally to 14 wins while 15 games were drawn. This was Abahani's first victory against Mohammedans in the league since 1984 when they had defeated their rivals 3-2 in the first leg.

Munna, Rehan and Masud Rana of Abahani and Shabbir, Johnny and Rahimov of Mohammedans were shown the yellow cards.

TEAMS:

ABAHANI KC: Mohsin, Alamgir, Rehan (Nir), Munna, Masud Rana, Zakir, Zhukov, Shakil (Ghaus), Rumi, Polynkov (Mamun Joarder) and Aslam.

MOHAMMEDAN SC: Kanan, Shamim, Jewel, Katsir, Pappu (Rox), Titu, Kuznetsov (Mizan), Johnny, Nabikov, Shabbir and Rahimov.

Referee: Nasir Chowdhury.



Mohammedan Sporting's Johnny gives Abahani's Sergei Zhukov(R) very little space during yesterday's First Division football climax at the Mirpur Stadium. Abahani won 2-1 to retain the league title. —Star photo

FIRST DIVISION ROLL OF HONOUR

Following is the roll of honour of the First Division football league since independence:

Year	Champions	Runners-up
1973	BIDC	Abahani KC
1974	Abahani	Mohammedan SC
1975	Mohammedans	BJIC
1976	Mohammedans	Abahani
1977	Abahani	Rahmatganj MFS
1978	Mohammedans	Brothers Union
1979	BJIC	Abahani
1980	Mohammedans	BJIC
1981	Abahani	Mohammedans
1982	Mohammedans	Abahani
1983	Abahani	Mohammedans
1984	Abahani	Mohammedans
1985	Abahani	Brothers
1986	Mohammedans	Abahani
1987	Mohammedans	Abahani
1988	Mohammedans	Abahani
1989	Not held	
1990	Abahani	Mohammedans
1991	Not held	
1992	Abahani	Mohammedans

FINAL LEAGUE STANDINGS

Following is the points table of this year's First Division football league:

	M	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts
Abahani KC	19	18	1	0	53	9	37
Mohammedan SC	19	16	1	1	50	7	33
Brothers Union	19	12	3	4	31	15	27
Arambagh KS	19	7	8	4	18	17	22
Rahmatganj MFS	19	9	4	7	26	13	21
Victoria SC	19	7	6	6	16	14	20
Wari Club	19	4	12	3	18	19	20
Agrani Bank	19	4	12	3	15	12	20
Muktijoddha KC	19	6	8	5	20	24	20
PWD SC	19	7	5	7	23	25	19
Fakirerpool YMC	19	6	5	8	16	21	17
Farashganj SC	19	4	8	7	11	20	16
Dhanmudi Club 19	3	10	6	12	22	16	
D. Wanderers	19	3	9	7	14	17	15
BRTC SC	19	2	11	6	15	22	15
Eskaton Sabuj	19	1	12	6	16	25	15
Adamjee SSC	19	3	9	7	15	27	15
S. Bima KC	19	4	7	8	17	30	15
Police AC	19	3	8	8	13	25	14
BJMC	19	0	3	16	6	39	3

1992 LEAGUE AT A GLANCE

Number of teams : 20
Started : Jan 10, 1992 at Mirpur Stadium
First match : Abahani KC versus newcomers Police AC
Defending champions won by a solitary goal scored by Ghaus.

Mohammedan SC's first encounter : Against newcomers Eskaton Sabuj Sangha. Mohammedans won 3-2

Total number of games: 190
Matches decided: 119
Matches drawn: 71
Total goals: 405
Average goals per match: 2.13
Goals by Abahani: 53
Goals by Mohammedans: 50
Goals by Brothers: 31
Number of hat-tricks: Seven
Highest margin of victory: Mohammedans beat PWD 7-0
Number of hat-tricks: 19
Highest scorer: Abdou Rahimov of Mohammedans with 17 goals in ten matches
Sheikh Aslam of Abahani scored 12, as did Masudur Rahman Rana of Muktijoddha KC

Number of red cards: 4 (Muktijoddha vs Eskaton SS)
Maximum red cards in a single game: 4 (Muktijoddha vs Eskaton SS)
Referee: Md Nazir Hossain

More than one red card received by a player: Ahmed Ali of Brothers Union and Wakil of Eskaton Sabuj Sangha

Foreign player shown red card: Alexei Arifiev of Abahani, against Brothers Union

Teams without any red card: Mohammedan SC, Rahmatganj, PWD, Agrani Bank, Farashganj, Arambagh and Police AC

Last goal of the league : By Mamun Joarder (two goals) against Mohammedans in 2-1 win on 7-6-92.

ABAHANI-MSC HEAD-TO-HEAD

Following is a chronology of Abahani-Mohammedan football clashes in various meets since independence:

Total contests:	47
Won by Mohammedans:	18
Won by Abahani:	14
Drawn:	15
Goals by Mohammedans:	53
Goals by Abahani:	39

SENIOR DIVISION LEAGUE:

	P	W	D	L
Mohammedans	34	12	12	10
Abahani	34	10	12	12

INDEPENDENCE DAY CUP:

	P	W	D	L
Abahani	2	1	1	0
Mohammedans	2	0	1	1

AGA KHAN GOLD CUP:

	P	W	D	L
Abahani	2	1	0	1
Mohammedans	2	1	0	1

MA-O-MONI GOLD CUP:

	P	W	D	L
Mohammedans	1	1	0	0
Abahani	1	0	0	1

BTC CLUB CUP:

	P	W	D	L
Abahani	1	1	0	0
Mohammedans	1	0	0	1

FEDERATION CUP:

	P	W	D	L
Mohammedans	7	3	4	0
Abahani	7	0	4	3

** Matches decided by tie-breakers have been considered drawn.

LEADING SCORERS

Following is the list of the leading scorers of the 1992 First Division football league which concluded at the Mirpur Stadium yesterday:

Number of goals	Scorers
17	Abdou Rahimov of Mohammedans
12	Sheikh Md Aslam of Abahani and Masudur Rahman Rana of Muktijoddha Sangsad.
9	Rizvi Karim Rumi and Mamun Joarder of Abahani
8	Rumman bin-Wali Shabbir of Mohammedans
7	Golam Ghaus of Abahani and Mosharraf Hossain Tutul of Wari Club
6	Sergei Zhukov of Abahani, Jewel of PWD, Badal of Farashganj and Mustakim of Wanderers Club
5	Katsir Hamid and Naqib of Mohammedans, Rupu of Brothers, Munna of PWD, Tipu of BRTC, Sohail and Shah Alam of Rahmatganj, Bakhti of Agrani Bank and Rinku of Eskaton Sabuj Sangha.

HAT-TRICK HEROES

Following is the chart of footballers who scored hat-tricks in the 1992 First Division soccer league:

Abdou Rahimov Three hat-tricks — against PWD, of Mohammedans: Brothers and Police AC in a row.

Mosharraf Hossain Tutul of The first hat-trick of the league against Wari Club: BJMC.

Rumman bin-Wali Against BRTC.

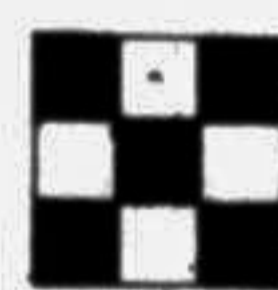
Shabbir of Mohammedans: Javed of Rahmatganj: Against Adamjee SC. Tipu of BRTC: Against BJMC.

US booters win title

CHICAGO, June 7: A determined US national soccer team completed their most impressive showing against European competition by drawing with Italy 1-1 on Saturday to win the US Cup '92 soccer tournament, reports Reuter.

US midfielder John Harkes scored midway through the first half to offset a second-minute goal by Roberto Baggio.

Aquino opens Olympiad



PHILIPPINES, June 7: President Corason Aquino opened the 30th Chess Olympiad on Sunday with teams from the United States, Western Europe and former Soviet republics hoping to end Russian domination of the game, reports AP.

Mrs Aquino and world champion Gary Kasparov made the symbolic, opening moves to begin the three-week, 92-nation competition, which gets underway on Monday to determine the world's team champion.

Kasparov's Russian team, which inherited the seat vacated by the former Soviet Union, faces a strong challenge by teams from Britain, the United States and newly independent Ukraine.

Russia's chances of holding the championship have been weakened by the absence of former champion Anatoly Karpov and Artur Yusupov, who did not join the team in Manila.

The breakup of the Soviet Union is expected to refashion the world of international chess. Leading the Ukrainian team is the world's No 3 player, Vassily Ivanchuk.

Georgia has fielded the most experienced women's team, led by former world champion Maya Chiburdanidze and Nona Gaprindashvili, once stalwarts of the Soviet women's lineup.

Even the United States has profited for the Soviet Union's demise. The American team will be led by 18-year-old grandmaster Ota Kamsky, a Soviet defector who is ranked eighth in the world.

But other teams are expected to mount strong challenges.

The British team will be led by Nigel Short, 27, who beat Karpov, the number two player in world rankings, in the Candidates Match last April in Spain.

Another possible serious challenger is India, led by No 5 ranked Viswanathan Anand, who learned his chess fundamentals by joining local tournaments while his family was living in Manila.

Politics has trimmed down the number of serious challengers in the men's competition after the Philippine government banned the participation of Yugoslavia in the Olympiad in compliance with UN sanctions against the strife-torn country.

In the women's competition, a three-way fight looms among Hungary, China and Georgia.

Hungary, if the sisters Zausa and Sofia Polgar join it, would most likely be the top women's team to beat. Hungary is seeking to win its third straight women's crown.

China, an emerging chess powerhouse, will be led by women's world champion Xie Jun.

Chess players for Manila

Sports Reporter

The second batch of the Bangladesh chess team led by chess federation Secretary K M Shakoor left Dhaka yesterday for Manila to take part in the 30th world Olympiad that began yesterday.

The players in this batch are Niamul Haq Niru, Khadaker Kayes Hassan and Rukshana Gulshan Nikkon.

Seven other players left on June 4.

The squad is expected to return on June 27.

Merlene Ottey's fine start



SEVILLE, Spain, June 7: Jamaican sprinter Merlene Ottey made a fine start to the European Grand Prix campaign on Saturday when she clocked 22.19 seconds over 200 metres, second fastest in the world this year, at a cool and blustery athletics meeting in Seville, reports Reuter.

Galina Malchugina from the CIS provided the strongest opposition, finishing second in 22.34.

Off the track, Igor Astapkovich of the CIS recorded the longest hammer throw of the year, throwing a massive 84.62 metres with his fifth throw.

Bulgarian women's high jump world record holder Stefka Kostadinova easily saw off the opposition to jump her best this year with a leap of 2.03 metres.

Kostadinova's effort was one centimetre higher than her previous best set last week at Worrstadt, where her great rival for Olympic gold, Germany's Heike Henkel, jumped the year's best of 2.04.

The bar only just failed to stay in place on the Bulgarian's third jump at 2.06.

In the long jump, European champion Heike Dreschler could hardly contain her delight when she made a leap of 7.39 metres to the cheers of the thin crowd at the Cartuja Stadium, bettering by three centimetres her year-best

jump of 7.36. There was an African double in the 400 metres event, with Zambia's Samuel Matete clocking a slow 48.75 seconds ahead of Jamaican Graham Winthrop in the men's race, while Charity Opara of Nigeria came home in 50.36 outside the year's best time of 49.86 which she holds.

Fredericks, who trains in the United States, clocked 20.08 seconds in the 200 metres, keeping comfortably ahead of Nigeria's Davidson Ezinwa all the way to the line.

World 100 metres bronze medalist Dennis Mitchell and US teammate Calvin Smith, twice the world champion, failed to show in the race. Mitchell was just cheated of second place by Ezinwa, but Smith came in last.

The most exciting event of the night was also the last, when a blustery breeze which had sometimes taken the speed over the wind-assisted limit, died almost completely for the 5,000 metres.

The leading four runners took the bell together and Morocco's Khalid Skah, who had been out in front from the start, still looked fresh enough to stay in the lead.

But Germany's Dieter Baumann came back at the Moroccan as they came out of the final curve and managed to rob Africa of a final victory in a time of 13 minutes 09.03 seconds.

US Born world bronze



The 1992 First Division soccer league champions Abahani Krira Chakra snapped before the start of yesterday's match at the Mirpur Stadium. Person with raised hands is former star player Tutul who officially retired yesterday. —Star photo



SEIZING THE MOMENT: Former footballers (from left) Salam Murshedi, Shafiqul Arefin Tutul and Khurshid Alam Babul, though having hung up their boots some years ago, chose the big day yesterday to take their final bows before a packed Mirpur Stadium. —Star photo