

Indian coach calls it 'indiscipline'

TERRASSA, Spain, July 31: India's hockey coach blasted his team's performance and gave up any hopes of a medal at the Barcelona Games after the eight-time Olympic champions lost to Britain on Thursday, reports Reuter.

"We're capable of playing much better hockey," coach Balkishen Singh said after the ailing hockey power lost 3-1 to reigning champions Britain. "I'd call it indiscipline. There was no mental concentration at all for playing a big tournament."

Balkishen, a member of India's 1956 Olympic-winning side, told reporters he had given up hope of India winning a medal or even qualifying for the semifinals after losing to both Britain and favourites Germany.



BALKISHEN SINGH

India have won only one of their pool games, scraping past outsiders Argentina 1-0. "I have failed... I could not lift the team," he added. "It's a very big disappointment to me."

India had looked strong on a tour of Europe earlier this year, leading many to speculate a revival was underway. "We'd been out of top hockey for some time. But we did build up some confidence this year," Balkishen said. India had beaten Britain 3-1 in two previous friendly games.

India won every game they played at the Olympics from 1928 until losing the 1960 final to arch rivals Pakistan.

But they have not won a major international tournament since a hollow success in the boycotted Moscow Olympics in 1980. More aggressive European and Australian styles have displaced the artistic Indian stickwork.

India played with little coordination and were especially let down by their penalty corner drills against Britain on Thursday. India had seven penalty corner opportunities and did not score — Britain had one and converted it.

Asked if he would resign, Balkishen said: "I don't know. I've not decided... I'm still thinking about how we played today."

India have two pool games remaining in Group A, against Australia and Egypt, and still have a mathematical chance of being one of the two sides to advance to the semifinals.

Dutch girls shock Chinese spikers

BARCELONA, July 31: The Netherlands rallied from two games down to upset China Friday in women's volleyball and bring one of the pre-Olympic favourites to the brink of elimination, reports AP.

The 6-15, 15-17, 15-13, 16-14, 15-6 Dutch victory dropped China to 0-2 in the tournament and it still has to play Brazil.

The Netherlands is now 1-1.

"We dealt well with their attack, so we could overcome their 2-0 lead," said Dutch coach Peter Murphy. "I have to congratulate my players for keeping up and for recovering in the third set. We defended very well."

"I thought we may be in with a chance in this match, but I didn't expect this result," said Dutch player Helen Crijns. "I thought China was a lot better, a lot faster. I don't know what's wrong with them."

One reason could be the absence of Chinese star Li Yueming, who is recovering from a back injury and sat out the game.

In another Pool B game, Cuba beat Brazil 15-11, 3-15, 15-13, 15-9 to improve its record to 2-0 and make sure of advancing. Brazil is now 1-1.

Ryan's golden ride

BARCELONA, July 31: Australian outsider Matt Ryan won the individual gold at the three-day equestrian event at the Olympic Games on Thursday and led his country to the team title as well, reports Reuter.

Ryan, overcoming the showjumping weaknesses that have been such a disaster for him, knocked down just one fence.

It was a richly deserved triumph. He had ridden a brave and aggressive cross-country course on Wednesday to build up a solid lead.

German Herbert Blocker took the individual silver after collecting just 1.5 time faults in the showjumping.



The Daily Star OLYMPIC SPECIAL



Germans should coast to semis

TERRASSA, Spain, July 31: Germany look set to coast into the semi-finals of the men's hockey at the Barcelona Olympics. But the other unbeaten favourites, Pakistan, Australia and the Netherlands, face a much harder task, reports Reuter.

After three of five pool matches for each of the 12 teams, aggressive athleticism has largely dominated artistic Asian stickwork. India, eight times Olympic champions, are already out of contention for a medal.

Germany, helped by powerhouse penalty corner striker Carsten Fischer, face outsiders Egypt and Argentina in their final games and should have no problem clinching one of the two semi-final places from Group A.

The other undefeated teams — all of them the main pre-Olympic favourites — have much tougher games left.

Reigning Olympic champions Britain and hosts Spain are both capable of causing an upset and reaching the medal round.

Australia took comfort from a 1-1 draw with Germany on Thursday night, when goalkeeper Damon Diletti made several sprawling saves from Fischer's shots, which can travel at more than 200 kph (125 mph).

"We come away knowing that we can take a point off the team who are favourites and that we can play even better," said Frank Murray, coach of Australia, who were fourth in the last Games.

Australia still have to play India on Saturday and Britain on Monday. Germany, runners-up in both Seoul and Los Angeles, have already beaten both.

Friday was a rest day in the hockey.

With India showing no sign of recapturing the form which made them the world's most

successful hockey nation for decades, Murray said his biggest worry was Britain.

In Group B, three-times Olympic champions Pakistan and world champions the Netherlands have both won three games each, but play each other on Saturday.

Pakistan also still have to face hosts Spain, who gave the Netherlands a fright earlier in the week when the Dutch just squeezed by 3-2.

"We were better than the Dutch in every aspect of our game," Coach Santi Cortes said angrily after the match in Terrassa, a town near Barcelona. "The referee took their side."

Dutch penalty corner specialist Floris-Jan Bovelanders is top scorer in the men's competition with an amazing eight goals from three games — Fischer has just three.

In the 1988 Olympics, Bovelanders was top scorer of the tournament, with nine.

Sweden, Ghana reach quarters

BARCELONA, July 31: Sweden came from behind to secure a hard-earned 1-1 draw with unbeaten South Korea and squeeze into the last eight of the Olympic soccer competition on Thursday, reports Reuter.

The vastly more-experienced Swedes, who needed a point to edge out the Asians, will meet outsiders Australia who hammered Denmark 3-0 to clinch a quarter-final berth and end the Danes' dreams of an Olympic-European championship soccer double.

The Danes, whose senior team won the European crown last month, looked tired and could not cope with Australia's pace attacks.

Under-17 world champions Ghana needed an 87th-minute goal from striker Kwame Ayew to snatch a 1-1 draw with Mexico and earn the right to play South American Paraguay in the last eight in Zaragoza on Sunday.

Paraguay, who had drawn their two previous matches 0-0, beat Morocco 3-1 to leave the Africans at the bottom of Group C.

Francisco Arce put Paraguay ahead with a fluke goal in the 44th minute, his long-range shot squirming through the legs of goalkeeper Mustapha Achab.

Mauro Caballero scored the second in the 59th minute with Carlos Gamarra making it three after the referee awarded Paraguay an indirect free-kick inside the penalty area.

Noureddine Naybet netted a consolation goal for Morocco in the 89th minute.

The Swedes, who included three of their European Championship semifinal side, looked like going the same way as their Scandinavian neighbours when they went behind to a first half goal from Seo Jung-Won.

But led by Parma's Tomas Brodin, they worked tirelessly and deserved Jonny Roedlund's 52nd-minute equaliser to win Group C and secure a quarterfinal in Barcelona's Now Camp on Sunday.

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Aussie goalie denies Germans

TERRASSA, July 31: Australia held favourites Germany to a 1-1 draw in the men's Olympic hockey tournament on Thursday, reports Reuter.

Their hero was goalkeeper Damon Diletti who stopped several cannonball shots.

Germany, winners of the Champions Trophy in the last two years, now share the top of Group A with Australia after three games. Pakistan and the Netherlands head Group B.

"I'm very happy with my team's performance," German coach Paul Lissek said. "We made a big step towards the semi-finals."

Australia, fourth in the last two Olympics, scored the first goal of the tournament against Germany when Stephen Davies smashed in a loose ball from the edge of the area in the 23rd minute.

Diletti foiled six penalty corner attempts from Germany's powerhouse defender Carsten Fischer — who eventually blasted in Germany's only set-piece goal in the 53rd minute.

In Group B, three-times Olympic champions Pakistan and world champions the Netherlands maintained unblemished records — but both

got nasty scares from outsiders on the way.

The CIS shocked Pakistan in the second minute by scoring from a penalty corner. But the veteran CIS team, some of whom won bronze medals in the 1980 Moscow Games, quickly tired and Pakistan thrashed them 6-2.

The Netherlands went two goals down against New Zealand before recovering and eventually squeezing past 4-3.

Dutch penalty corner specialist Floris-Jan Bovelanders scored one to bring his personal tally to eight in three games — one short of his total in Seoul, when he was top scorer.

While Germany and Australia are level on five points in Group A, Germany have an easier path to the semifinals, having already beaten India and Seoul gold medalists Britain — the two teams Australia still have to play.

"I don't think that a draw today is much different from a loss. It will come down to having to beat Britain in the last match," said Australian coach Frank Murray, who praised Diletti for stopping several German scoring chances.

Lissek said Fischer, a doctor who was briefly sent off during the match for a deliberate foul, usually scored from

almost half his penalty corner strikes.

Earlier on Thursday, Britain beat one-time hockey superpower India to revive hopes of a medal after losing to Germany earlier this week.

Indian coach Balkishen Singh denounced his players for "indiscipline" and said he had abandoned hope of a medal.

ARGENTINES WIN

A late goal gave Argentina a 1-0 victory over Egypt on Thursday, their first win.

The victory brought Argentina to 1-2, while Egypt dropped to 0-3 in tournament play.

Fernando Ferrara scored a field goal in the 54th minute, and teammate Daniel Rutz tried Argentina's fifth and final field shot a minute later, forcing an Egyptian save.

Egypt's Magdy Abdula was given a red card with three minutes left in the match.

Argentina meet Britain (2-1) and Egypt play Germany (2-0) in their next games, on Saturday.

The Netherlands face off with Pakistan, the only other 3-0 team left in the tournament, and New Zealand meet Malaysia — both 0-3 — in the next round of games on Saturday.

Lineker in Nagoya

NAGOYA, Japan, July 31: Gary Lineker, former England soccer captain and future Japanese idol, arrived in Nagoya on Thursday for a brief visit to meet his new Nagoya teammates and discuss treatment for his sick baby son, reports Reuter.

Lineker, 31, makes his debut for the Grampus Eight club on Saturday in a friendly match against Brazilian club Corinthians.

Then, he told reporters, he returns to England to start intensive Japanese lessons with a private teacher.

England's second-highest goalscorer after Bobby Charlton

of something new," he said, adding that he hoped his presence here would contribute to Japan achieving its goal of hosting the 2002 World Cup.

The city of Kobe, western Japan, this week formally submitted its candidacy to stage soccer's greatest festival.

The former England striker said he had seen his new teammates play. "They are quick and have a good technique," he said, and this showed there was strength in Japanese football.

"Countries previously not famous for football are getting better," he added. "The stan-

Archery record

BARCELONA, July 31: South Korea's Cho Youn-Jeong set a women's world archery record today with 338 points in the individual 70 metres qualification round, reports Reuter.

The previous record of 336 points was set in 1989 by compatriot Kim Soo-Nyung who qualified in third place today with 330 points.

Rebollo complains against COOB

BARCELONA, July 31: Antonio Rebollo, the disabled archer whose blazing arrow lit the Olympic flame, said he had been shabbily treated by Games organisers who cast him aside after the opening ceremony, reports Reuter.

In an interview with Spanish daily Diario 16, Rebollo said the organising committee (COOB) had been "pretty inconsiderate".

"I know some people at the top of COOB were against using me. They only decided on me because I could guarantee I wouldn't miss," said Rebollo, a polio victim and medal winner in two Paralympic Games.

"I gave up the chance to take part in the Games to be in the opening ceremony," he said.

"They didn't give me an official accreditation... They didn't even give me tickets to go and see any of the events, not even the archery," he complained.

"They paid my expenses and gave me a good allowance but nothing for the days I lost from work."

Rebollo, a cabinet-maker from Madrid, said he was only given two hours' notice he had been chosen as archer and knew he would get the blame if anything went wrong.

COOB spokesman Pedro Palacios said he was surprised at the complaints.

He showed reporters a letter COOB chief executive Josep Miquel Abad sent to Rebollo last Sunday, the day after the ceremony, thanking him for his "historic favour".

"That straight aim could only have been the work of a great sportsman," the letter read.

A body blow to British image

BARCELONA, July 31: Feuds, Conspiracies, Royal Scandals. Now drugs. It's been one blow after another to Britain's image in the Olympic movement, reports AP.

The events have shaken the status of a nation which claims to have invented many of the Olympic sports, a country associated with the lofty but antiquated sporting ideals of "Chariots of Fire".

"I would say our status looks confused at the moment," said John Rodda, a veteran Olympic commentator for the Guardian newspaper. "We're trying to uphold standards which some people think are no longer valid."

Britain suffered the indignity Thursday of having three of its Olympic athletes — sprinter Jason Livingston and weightlifters Andrew Saxton and Andrew Davies — called home after test results there came up positive for performance-enhancing drugs.

"We should apologise to our Spanish hosts for bringing the problem to their doorstep," British Olympic Association spokeswoman Caroline Searle said. "If we could have avoided it, we would have."

Arthur McAllister, head of the British delegation, admitted: "We're all angry." But British officials hope there's a positive side to the drug cases.

"There are two ways people will look at it," Searle said. "One is they will look at it as we've brought an embarrassment to the Games. I think, on the other hand, a lot of people also know that we're at the forefront of very tough drug-testing procedures and, therefore, maybe they will applaud us for our success in catching people."

Whichever the case, Britain currently finds itself in a delicate position with the Olympic establishment, in which it once held a prominent role.

A key factor has been "The Lords of the Rings," a book by two British journalists which harshly attacks the International Olympic Committee and its president, Juan Antonio Samaranch.

The book backfired in its attempt to bring Samaranch down. Instead, he said it inspired him to seek a fourth term next year.

The book was a misguided and badly misjudged attempt to point out some of the wrongs in the Olympic movement and international sport today from a British point of view," Rodda said. "This book damaged any cogent case which British sports officials might have put forward."

Samaranch has suggested the authors were manipulated by British sports officials, possibly even Princess Anne, who is president of the BOA and a member of the IOC.

The British conspiracy theory was repeated again Thursday by Primo Nebiolo, the Italian head of the International Amateur Athletic Federation and another target of the book.

"This book is an episode of the sadness of some British circles, fortunately not many, upset for having lost some managerial place in favour of others," he said.

Princess Anne, an IOC member since 1988, has been critical of some of Samaranch's decisions and some of the IOC's process is short-circuited by the execu-

tive board, she said last week in the Times of London. "The democratic process is not seen to function."

Anne's apparent feud with Samaranch was exacerbated when she missed the opening ceremony in Barcelona last

of the main duties of a member is A) to be at the Games and B) to be at all the high points, including the opening ceremony."

Britain's relationship with the IOC is made more difficult by the frequent attacks in the



Dick Palmer (R) the head of the British Olympic delegation, and press officer Caroline Searle during a press conference July 30 announcing the suspension of three British athletes who tested positive for anabolic steroids.

British press on the international body.

"Our perception as a national Olympic committee is different than the perception that is currently being portrayed in the media," Searle said. "There can be a negativity about the British press which doesn't assist us in our positive attitude toward the Olympic Games."

"In missing the opening ceremony for the reason she gave is a snub to the Olympic movement," Rodda said. "One

Abahani win big

Sports Reporter Abahani Krira Chakra won their first match of the Motmuddowia Gold Cup knock-out cricket tournament against the Maldives by a huge margin of 172 runs in Hyderabad, India yesterday, according to results available at the BCCB.

A superb 113 by Akram Khan, Abahani's burly batsman from Chittagong, was the highlight of Abahani's huge total of 271 for four from 50 overs.

Khalid Mahmood Sujani joined Akram in the leather hunt at the expense of the hapless Maldives bowlers. Sujani remained unbeaten on a sparkling 71 when overs ran out. Habibul Bashar Sumon, drafted in from Brothers Union, made 28. Faruq with 18 and Zahid Razzak Masum with 11 were the other Abahani batsmen to reach double figures.

Maldives, never expected to stand up to the vastly superior Abahani attack, folded at 99, in their stipulated quota of 50 overs.

Abahani off-spinner Shahidul Islam Effice snuffed out any pretension of the islanders to put up a fight with figures of three for 15. Gulshan Youth skipper Rupan took three for 27 with his spinners. Skipper Golam Nawsher Prince made early inroads with figures of two for 14.

Abahani play their next match on August 2 against MIF XI.

Part-timers beat Pakistanis

MARLOW, England, July 31: Former Lancashire batsman Ian Cockbain cracked a match-winning 87 off 61 balls as Minor Counties clinched a famous last-ball victory over Pakistan on Thursday, reports Reuter.

Cockbain despatched the last two balls from occasional spin bowler Aamir Sohail, Pakistan's opening bat in the Test series against England, to the cover boundary for a dramatic one-wicket victory in the two-day match.

It was the Minor Counties' first win over a touring side since they beat New Zealand at Torquay in 1978.

It was also Pakistan's second successive defeat on the tour and third altogether, after England won the fourth Test last weekend to square the series 1-1 with one Test remaining.

Minor Counties — left 46 overs to score 250 in their second innings, were given a solid start when Creme Calway (57) and Paul Burn (28) put together an opening stand of 88.

Wrist spinner Mushtaq Ahmed, who finished with six for 43, made heavy inroads into the middle order batting and with five overs remaining and on 196 for seven, Minor Counties still required 54 more runs.

But then the 34-year-old Cockbain opened up to steer them home in a thrilling finish. Cockbain hit four sixes and nine fours.

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