

# Rajshahi readies for ITF meet

By Ahmed Ahsanuzzaman



The divisional town of Rajshahi is getting ready to host the first leg of the four-leg 1992 Bangladesh-Pakistan ITF Satellite circuit tennis championships, scheduled to start in the northern district headquarters on October 5. The meet will run until Oct 11 before moving to Dhaka for the second leg.

The third leg of the meet, introduced since last year, will be staged in Lahore, Pakistan while the fourth on the Masters leg, comprising the top finishers of the first three legs, will be held in Karachi.

One hundred and forty players from 19 countries including 43 seeded players have entered this year's competition for the men's singles and doubles titles. The participants include 27 Bangladeshis, most of whom will have to come through the qualifying competi-

tions immediately preceding the main competitions at each venue.

Laurence Tieleman of Italy, who won the first leg singles title in Dhaka last November, has been made the top seed while Indian Davis Cupper Zeeshan Ali is the second seed. These two and another 18 seeded players will play directly in the main draw of 32 players.

The International Tennis Federation will provide 25,000 US dollars in prize money for the four-leg championship designed to improve the standards of tennis in this part of the world. In addition, players will also earn ATP computer rating points or circuit points on the basis of their performances.

Zafar Imam, a deputy secretary general of the Bangladesh Olympic Association and Secretary of the Rajshahi Divisional Sports Association and

the man who can claim the major credit for bringing the circuit to Bangladesh by lobbying the ITF, told The Daily Star yesterday that brisk preparations were afoot to ready the Rajshahi Tennis Complex, the venue for the meet, in time. Besides the organisers, who have estimated a cost of Taka four lakh for the meet, are also trying to arrange adequate accommodation for the players and officials. ITF referees and other officials are also expected to converge on the sleepy town during the meet.

Zafar Imam also said that no sponsor has yet been found for the Rajshahi leg and he hoped the government would come out with a generous grant. Last year the meet in Bangladesh was sponsored by a multinational tobacco company.

The dates for the second leg, to be staged at the National Tennis Complex, Ramna in the city, are yet to be finalised.

# SAARC swim meet in Nov

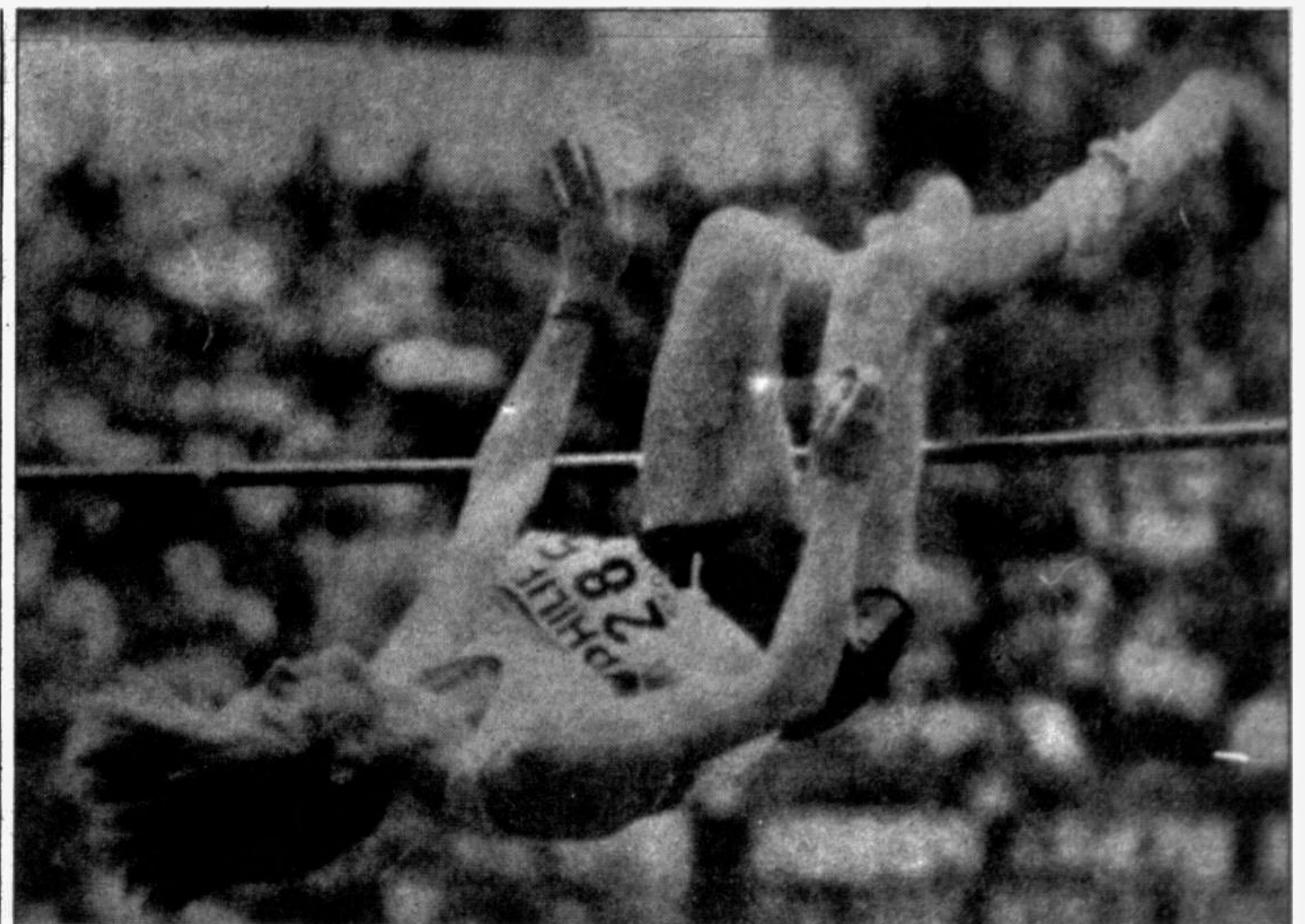
Sports Reporter

The proposed first South Asian swimming championships will be held in Calcutta, India from November 5 to 8, a responsible official of the Bangladesh Swimming Federation told The Daily Star yesterday.

Bangladesh, who received the invitation a couple of days ago, is likely to take part along with the other six members of the South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation (SAARC).

The FINA-approved 19 standard events including 16 swimming events are likely to be staged during the four-day meet.

A final decision on the particular swimming events will be taken at a meeting of the representatives of the participating nations early next month in Calcutta, said the official who requested anonymity.



British high jumper Stephen Smith jumps 2.37m in the men's final at the fourth IAAF World Junior Athletics Championships in Seoul on Sunday. Smith took the gold. —AFP photo

# Fischer halfway through to \$ 3.35m



SVETI STEFAN, Yugoslavia, Sept 21: Bobby Fischer is halfway to victory in his \$5 million rematch with Boris Spassky as the games shift from this Montenegrin island to Belgrade, reports AP.

In defeating Spassky on Sunday, Fischer's aggressive gamesmanship prompted experts to say he exhibited his strongest play since winning the opening game on Sept 2.

Fischer now holds a 5-2 lead over Spassky, a Russian-born French citizen.

Match rules called for a move to the Yugoslav capital of Belgrade after someone attained five victories. A date for the 12th game was to be announced Monday, with play expected to resume in Belgrade in a week to 10 days.

The first player to take 10 games wins. The winner of the match gets the dirr 3.35 million top prize; the loser gets dirr 1.65 million.

Fischer, 49, returned to chess after a 20-year absence since beating Spassky to take the world title in 1972.

Fischer went Sunday with his usual opening, the Ruy Lopez, which he used in previous games when playing white.

Spassky, who had complained of fatigue Saturday,

opted for the more adventurous Sicilian Defence and then shunned the Open Variation for a less-familiar line.

Fischer surprised some expert observers with a gambit of a pawn in his seventh move, opening up the centre and lines on his queenside. He won back the pawn gambit on move 16, exposing Spassky's king to a blistering attack.

Spassky struggled to hold an end game before resigning after Fischer's 41st move.

Game 10 on Saturday ended in a draw after 68 moves. That game had been scheduled for Thursday, but Spassky, 55, received a postponement after complaining of kidney problems.

Spassky led the match 2-1 before losing three consecutive games amid blunders that experts speculated were health-related.

The prize money has been put up by Yugoslav businessman Jeddimir Vasiljevic, and the match is taking place in defiance of UN sanctions against Yugoslavia for provoking civil war in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Earlier AP said: Bobby Fischer, attacking aggressively with the white pieces, appeared on the verge of a psychologically important fifth win over Boris Spassky on Sunday in game 11 of their dirr 5 million chess rematch.

Spassky responded with strong early play of his own. But he was largely ineffective against Fischer's relentless attack and was struggling to hold an apparently hopeless

endgame by move 30, expert observers said.

A win by Fischer, who leads 4-2, would mark the symbolic halfway point in the match. The first player to win 10 games is the victor.

Fischer went with his favoured opening, which has led into the Ruy Lopez in previous games when he played white.

But Spassky, who complained of being tired after a 7 1/2-hour marathon game on Saturday, opted for the more adventurous Sicilian Defence and then shunned the Open Variation for a less familiar line.

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Yasser Seirwan, an American Grandmaster, said Spassky was "getting killed."

Match rules call for a change of venue from this Montenegrin island resort to Belgrade, Yugoslavia's capital, when one player wins five games. Otherwise, the next game is scheduled for Wednesday in Sveti Stefan.

The first player to win 10 games takes the dirr 3.35 million top prize, and the loser gets dirr 1.65 million. Draws do not count, and each game must be finished without adjournment.

Game 10 on Saturday ended in a draw after 68 moves, the longest contest the series so

far. That game had been scheduled for Thursday, but Spassky, 55, received a postponement after complaining of kidney problems.

He had lost the previous three games in a series of blunders that experts at the match speculated were health-related. Spassky appeared relaxed and fit on Saturday, although he said he was "really tired," at the end of the game.

There was speculation that Fischer had tried to extend play in what seemed a certain draw to wear Spassky down before Sunday's game. But Fischer said afterward that he was not convinced that a draw was inevitable.

Because draws do not count in the match, players might feel compelled to try longer than usual for a win. In most international chess competitions, each player is awarded 1/2 point in a draw.

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Fischer, 49, is returning to chess after a 20-year absence since beating Spassky to take the world title in 1972.

Fischer insists he now is playing for the World Championship again, but the match is not recognized by the International Chess Federation, which stripped the American of the title in 1975 after he refused to defend it.

# Pakistan, hosts in Asian junior hockey final

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 21: Pakistan and Malaysia set the stage Monday to meet in the final of the Junior Asia Cup by beating South Korea and India in the semi-finals, reports AFP.

Pakistan outplayed South Korea 2-1 while hosts Malaysia edged India 1-0 to battle it out for the top spot in Tuesday's final of the marathon 12-day meet.

The champion and first two runner-ups of the tournament qualify for the Junior World Cup in Terrassa, Spain, next year.

India play South Korea Wednesday to decide who gets the last berth at Terrassa.

Pakistan's goals Monday came from Mohammed Khalid in the 18th minute and Danish Kaleem in the 61st minute.

Malaysia netted their solitary goal through Chairul Anwar Abdul Aziz in the 21st minute.

Xinhua adds: China and Bangladesh will meet for fifth place after winning their respective consolation matches at the second Junior Asia Cup hockey championship here on Sunday.

China defeated Japan 3-2 while Bangladesh trounced Oman 3-1.

Oman will play Japan for seventh place on Tuesday.

# Seles may meet Sabatini in final



TOKYO, Sept 21: World number one Monica Seles is on course for a possible final encounter with Gabriela Sabatini when she defends her title at the 350,000 dollar Nichirei women's tennis tournament here this week, reports AFP.

The American-based Yugoslav, who grabbed three Grand Slam titles — all but Wimbledon — for a second year in a row, spearheads the 28 world leading players vying for the top prize money of 70,000 dollars and 200 points.

The runnerup will collect 31,500 dollars and 140 points counting toward the WTA computer rankings.

The top four seeds — Seles, second seed Sabatini of Argentina, third seed Mary Joe Fernandez of the United States and fourth seed Katerina Maleeva of Bulgaria — will receive first-round byes before appearing on the hard courts at the Ariake Coliseum.

The 18-year-old Seles, who trounced Fernandez 6-1, 6-1 in the final last year, takes on either Wang Shi-Ting of Taiwan or Debbie Graham of the United States in the second-round.

She is in the same quarter with eight-seeded Naoko Sawamatsu, Japan's number two, and in the same half with fifth-seeded Amanda Coetzer of South Africa and Fernandez, the singles bronze medalist at the Barcelona Games.

Sabatini, who downed Seles in the Italian Open final in May, narrowly lost to her after taking the lead in the final set in the French Open semifinals in June.

The Argentine's second-round opponent will be the winner between Donna Faber of the United States and Rika Hiraki of Japan.

In the bottom half with Sabatini are Japanese top player Kimiko Date, who upset the Argentine in last year's Los Angeles tournament, hard-hitting Amy Frazier of the United States, and Maleeva.

Date, national champion for the second year in a row, clinched her first career title when she won the Japan Open in April on the same Centre Court at the Ariake Coliseum.

# Kuzmin humbles Thipsay to take the lead

DOHA, Sept 21: Top seed Alexi Kuzmin of Russia outwitted Indian International master Pravin Thipsay to emerge the sole leader with three points after the 3rd round of the 4th Doha International chess festival here Sunday, reports PTI.

In their Top Board encounter, Kuzmin adopted the Saemisch variation against Thipsay's King's Indian Defence to obtain a strong bind. The Russian IM tied down Thipsay's pieces when the latter missed an opportunity to create counterplay, and converted the advantage into victory.

In another match, IM Sharad Tilak was held to a draw by young talent Abdul Ghalour.

Grandmaster Vastukov displayed his splendid form to crush the Pakistan star Mahmood Lodhi. Vastukov played the Ruy Lopez opening and obtained a slightly advantageous position.

In the subsequent maneuvering, Vastukov outplayed his opponent and won material in the middle game. He gave Lodhi no chances thereafter and registered a smooth victory.

Row marks start of World Squash

JOHANNESBURG, Sept 21: The World Open squash championship started with an argument between Welshman Adrian Davies and the referee in the first match on Monday, reports Reuter.

Former champion Ross Norman of New Zealand, Davies' opponent, watched from the sidelines as Davies and the English referee Mike Picken argued over the fourth game.

Davies, ranked 24th in the world and 16 places below Norman walked off court thinking he had won the fourth game 15-14 to square the match. But Picken called him back.

The unseeded Welshman claimed he had indicated a sudden-death finish to the game at 14-14 but Picken insisted he had not.

The row continued for several minutes and even involved the audience, who supported the player. But a reluctant Davies eventually went back on court and smashed the two further points to win the game — to the referee's satisfaction.

DU calls up 30 booters

Sports Reporter

Thirty players have been initially selected for the Dhaka University soccer squad for the forthcoming inter-varsities championship and the Sher-e-Bangla Cup national football competitions.

The booters have been asked to attend practice sessions which commence on September 23 at 4 pm at the Dhaka University gymnasium ground.

The players are: Karan, Tota, Vijay, Kaiser Hamid, Jewel Rana, Kakon, Peter, Pappu (1), Faisal, Ata, Johnny, Tito, Roxy, Rupu, Reaz, Nurul Islam, Raquib, Bakhtiar, Pappu (2), Shabbir, Amin, Naqib, Tutul, Litu, Mintu, Munna, Javed, Jahangir, Zakir and Qau.

Graham prefers graft to skill

LONDON, Sept 21: George Graham said he would sacrifice skill for graft to keep his job as manager of English pre-season Premier League favourites Arsenal, reports Reuter.

"I have to be a realist. I have to ask the question 'Do I want to get beaten week in, week out playing attractive football,'" Graham said in an interview in the London newspaper Daily Sport on Monday.

"I had to sacrifice two skillful players to get a result and it came off."

Graham took off England's Paul Merson and Anders Limpar of Sweden when his side were 1-0 down at Sheffield United on Saturday. Arsenal, champions under Graham in 1989 and 1991, equalised through Ian Wright six minutes from time.

"It saddens me but now I'll be tempted to do it in the future," the former Arsenal and Scotland midfielder star added.

"We have got to get a couple of victories and we must do that by rolling up our sleeves."

Arsenal have won only three matches out of nine and their 11 points put them 14th in the 22-team league. 11 points adrift of leaders Norwich City.

# Ataur hattrick powers Shantinagar

Sports Reporter

who have managed six points from as many outings.

Bangladesh Boys Club who along with East End Club and Jurain Janata Club have already made the super league, have seven points — from six matches.

BO Press, yet another side demoted from the top league, have collected six points from six matches and are the other prospective team for the super league from Group B.

In yesterday's only match, Shantinagar Club trounced lowly Chalantika Krira Chakra by six goals to three thanks to a brilliant hattrick by Kazi Ataur Rahman of Shantinagar.

Shantinagar led 4-2 at the breather.

Shantinagar shot into the lead when Shahadat Hossain Tipu scored from close in the sixth minute (1-0).

Zubair drew level for Chalantika in the 10th minute (1-1).

Taking the cue from Tipu, Ataur scored his first goal of the match in the 12th minute to put Shantinagar once again ahead (2-1).

Ataur made it 3-1 in the 17th minute. He completed his hattrick in the 22nd minute

Shantinagar Club confirmed their berth in the eight-team super league of the Sonali Bank Second Division football league from Group A with an emphatic 6-3 victory over fellow-former First Divisions Chalantika Krira Chakra in their last group fixture at the Dhaka Stadium yesterday.

Shantinagar, who have collected nine points from seven matches, now top the Group A points table.

Prantik Krira Chakra, who have eight points from six matches, have also made the super league from this group.

City Club with seven points from six matches and Muslim Institute and Lalbagh Sporting Club with six points from five matches each are in the race for the other two super league berths from this cluster.

Jurain Janata Club, who had finished their eight-team group league on Saturday last with nine points are currently leading the Group B table.

East End Club, another ex-First Division side, have collected eight points from six outings and have a game in hand against Dhaka WASA.

Mokhles reduced the margin for Chalantika in the 23rd minute (4-2).

Straj scored the fifth goal for Shantinagar ten minutes into the second half (5-2).

Abul Hossain Pappu netted the sixth goal for the winners in the 15th minute (6-2).

A couple of minutes after this goal Solaiman of Chalantika scored the last goal of the match (6-3).

Chalantika, who completed their group engagements yesterday, have managed only two points and will play in the Third Division next year.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION

Meanwhile, the disciplinary committee of the Second Division league has taken punitive measures against some players and officials of East Bengal Club who physically assaulted referee Rafiqul Islam on September 18 after losing to Abhijatrik Malibagh-1-2.

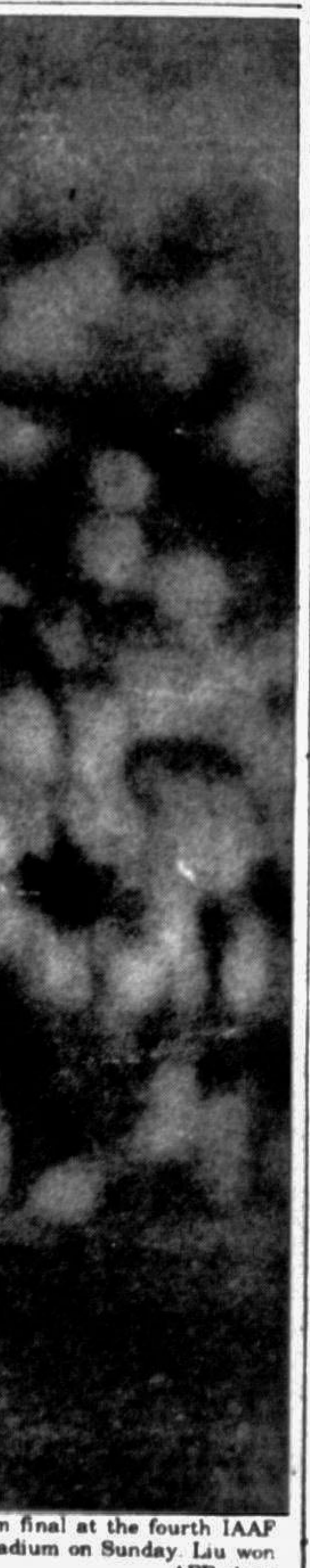
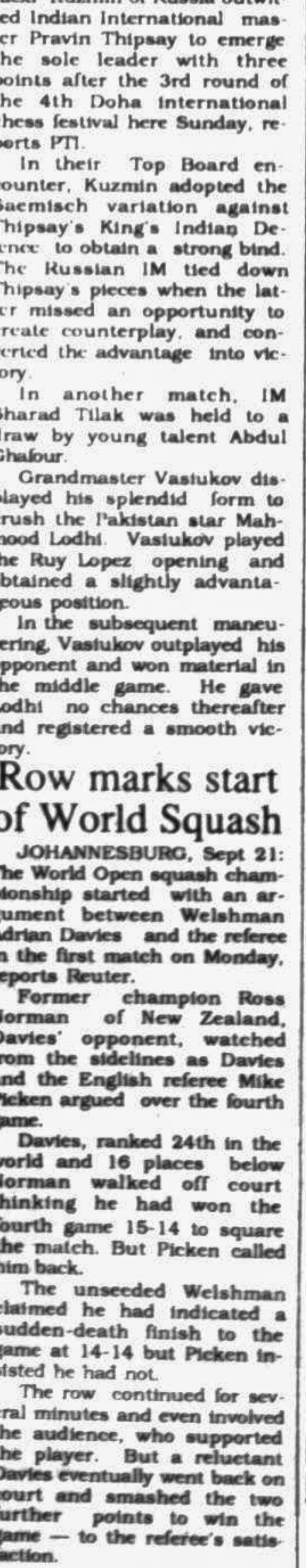
Defender Mehdi Hasan and forward Md Shahjahan Straj, who have been suspended for a year, will not be able to play next season.

Four other players — Mahmud, Imam Hossain, Towhidur Rahman and Suman Kumar Karmaker — have been suspended for six matches each.

East Bengal has also been fined two thousand taka for the misbehaviour of two officials Kajal and Abdur Razaque Babu.

The disciplinary committee has also strongly censured Sawgatul Islam Sobel and Sujit Kumar Sarker Dalim of East Bengal Club.

Two matches of the Second Division league will be held today. Abhijatrik Malibagh will play BG Press at 2:45 pm while Bangladesh Boys Club will take on East Bengal Club at 4:15 pm.



China's Liu Dong touches the finish line in the women's 1500m final at the fourth IAAF World Junior Athletics Championships at the Seoul Olympic Stadium on Sunday. Liu won the gold. —AFP photo

Action from yesterday's Sonali Bank Second Division football league match between Shantinagar and Chalantika KC at the Dhaka Stadium. Shantinagar booked their super league berth by routing Chalantika 6-3. —Star photo