

ITF satellite circuit 2nd leg

Very little local flavour

Sports Reporter



The two wild cards apart, none of the other local players will be playing in the 32-player main draw of the second leg of the Gold Leaf ITF satellite circuit tennis championships which begins today at the Ramna Tennis Complex in the city.



Parag Natekar of India, who lost to Thomas Winkler of Germany 7-6, 6-2 yesterday in the qualifying rounds seen in action at the Ramna Tennis Complex. — Stat photo

Like the first leg of the four-leg tournament held from October 5 to 11 in Rajshahi, none of the local players could make the main draw from the qualifying round after six of the eight matches which were decided yesterday.

Two other ties, which fell through because of heavy showers in the afternoon, will be held this morning, just before the start of the main draw at 10 am.

Erik Brummer of the Netherlands, one of the eight players to make the main draw from the qualifying round in Rajshahi, will play Pawan Kapoor of India and Raffael Chajdas of Germany will take on compatriot Christoph Lagneau in the two remaining matches of the qualifying round.

The six who made the main draw yesterday are Thomas Walter and Thomas Winkler of Germany, Michael Gagliardi of the USA, Arno Otterman of the Netherlands, Dennis Van Uffelen of Belgium and Thomas Gyorgy, younger brother of Karoly Gyorgy of Hungary, one of the losing semifinalists in Rajshahi.

The two Bangladeshi wild carders Hira Lal and Syed Faisal Huq, along with the two Pakistanis — Humayun Parvez and Arif Iftikhar will be representing the two host nations, in addition to two other Pakistanis who were given direct entries in the main draw.

Nineteen players placed directly in the main draw are the top seed and defending champion Laurence Tieleman of Italy, second seed Zeeshan Ali of India, third seed and champion of the Rajshahi leg Sean Cole of Great Britain, fourth seeded Rasheed Malik of Pakistan, fifth seed Robert Kraus of Germany, sixth seed and runner-up in Rajshahi Jeroen Heinhuis of the Netherlands, seventh seed Soropio Palahang of the Philippines, eighth seed Gaurav Natekar of India and Sandeep Kirtane (IND), Daiji Morii (Jpn), Mohammed Khaled (Pak), Gokulji Okada (JPN), Matthias Muller (Ger), Paul Ricar (Ger), Jason Giavara (USA), Takeshi Murakami (Jpn), Bernd Haberleitner (Avt), Karoly Gyorgy (Hun) and Christopher Sieber of Switzerland.

The remaining one berth of the twenty direct entrants will

be filled in by one of the lucky-loser in the qualifying round to be decided this morning.

In yesterday's only encounter that produced a semblance of a contest Arno Otterman of the Netherlands beat Jeff Morneau of USA 4-6, 6-2, 6-3, a match which took nearly 100 minutes.

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Dutchman Jeroen Heinhuis, the sixth seed who finished runner-up in Rajshahi sounded guardedly optimistic while talking to The Daily Star yesterday.

"None can be sure of his performance on a given day," "On my day, I might beat one of the top-ranked players of the world only to lose to an unheralded player the following day," said Heinhuis philosophically.

However, he expressed his satisfaction over the arrangements in Dhaka.

"It's fine. The courts are wonderful," he admitted. Unseeded Karoly Gyorgy of Hungary, who came into the limelight by beating second-seeded Zeeshan Ali of India in the first round Rajshahi expressed mixed feelings.

"Arrangements here are good but there's too much noise on the street," he complained.

He was particularly critical about the ball used by the organisers in the meet.

When asked to comment on his performance in the tournament he said that he would try to live up to the expectations.

"The thing is I feel very tired" Gyorgy maintained.

Unseeded Otterman of the Netherlands, who has qualified for the main draw, preferred the slow courts of Rajshahi to the fast ones at Ramna.

He also seemed happy with the overall arrangements in Rajshahi.

Third seed Sean Cole of the UK, who won the title in Rajshahi very convincingly, will definitely leave no stone unturned to clinch the coveted championship in Dhaka.

India's Davis Cupper second seed Zeeshan Ali, who has played so many tournaments in Dhaka, will look forward to making amends for his shocking early exit in Rajshahi.

With a bit of luck, Zeeshan can thwart the challenges of any seeded players.

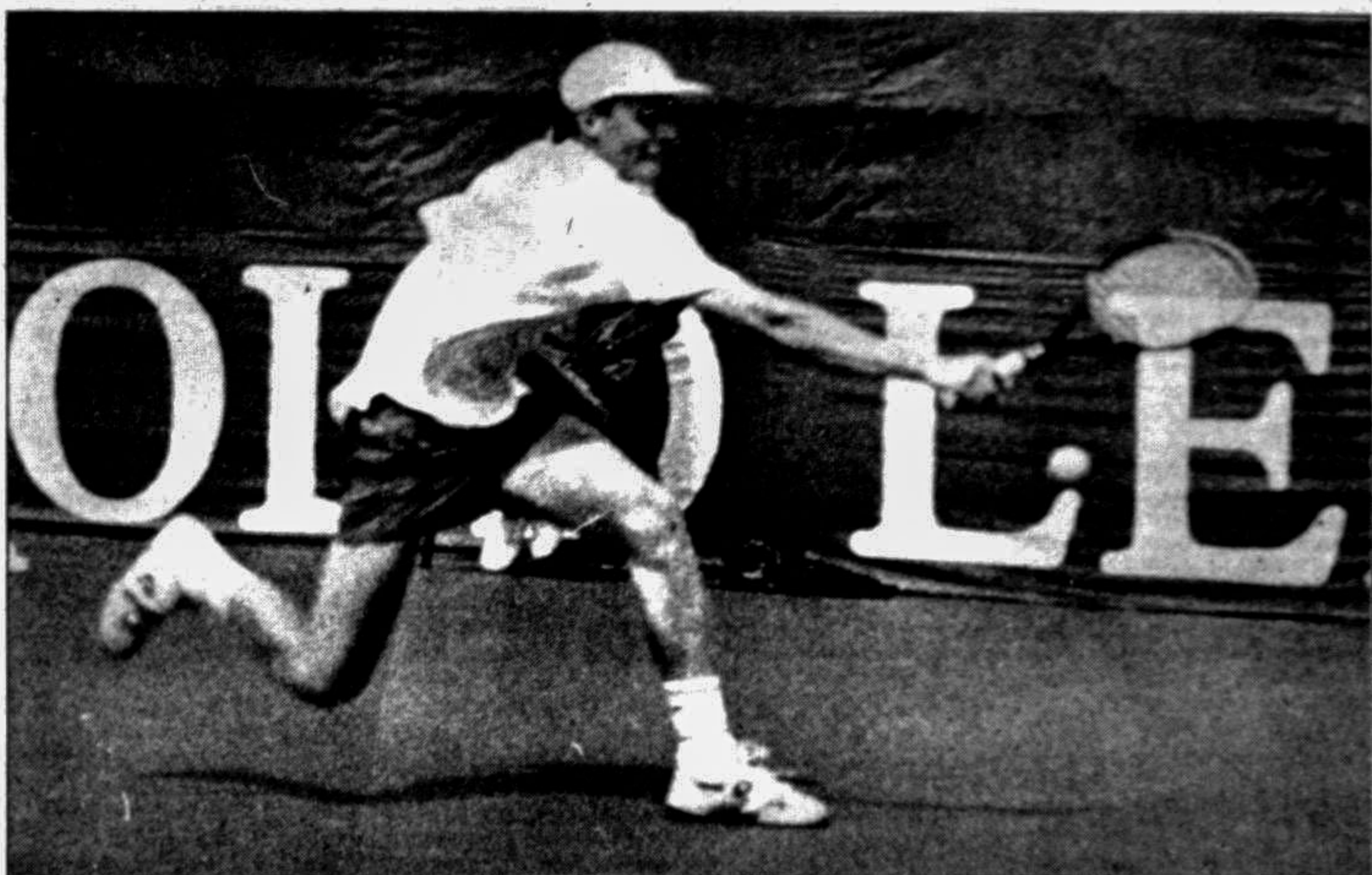
However, Cole and Zeeshan were not available for their comments yesterday.

Fourth seed Rasheed Malik of Pakistan and the fifth seed Robert Kraus of Germany along with the seventh seed S Palahang of the Philippines are likely to offer good fights in the tournament.

Meanwhile, the qualifying matches of the doubles event are likely to begin today at one in the afternoon.

The doubles draw will be held at around 12 pm.

Sixteen pairs — 13 direct entrants, two pairs from the qualifying round and a wild card pair from Bangladesh — will play in the main draw, likely to begin from tomorrow, Thursday.



Arno Otterman of the Netherlands stretches to make a return in his match against American Jeff Morneau at the Ramna Tennis Complex yesterday. Otterman won the match 4-6, 6-2, 6-3. — Star photo

MSC-BU fund raising tie today

A charity football match between Mohammedan SC and Brothers Union will be held today at 5 pm at the Mirpur National Stadium, reports UNB.

The Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) has organised the match to raise fund for financing the ensuing Pakistan tour of Brothers Union.

Federation Cup champions Brothers Union will play the second leg match of the 12th Asian Cup Championship in Lahore either on October 17 or 18 against Wahab Club of Pakistan.

The first leg tie between them ended in a goalless draw in Dhaka last Saturday.

The rate of gallery tickets for the charity match has been fixed at Tk 10 and that for the VIP enclosure at Tk 20.

GMCC outplay Eskaton

Greater Mymensingh made short work of minnows Eskaton Sabuj Sangha in their opening match of the 14th Damal Summer cricket tournament at the Dhaka Stadium yesterday.

In the day's only cricketing engagement GMCC crushed Eskaton Sabuj Sangha by nine wickets.

Postponed a couple of days back because of unplayable ground conditions the re-arranged match turned out to be another low scoring contest as Eskaton Sabuj Sangha found the GMCC attack too varied for their comfort and were dismissed for just 85.

Put into bat, Eskaton lost skipper Irtaza for a blob, caught off Jahangir Talukdar Dulu, the left-arm new-ball operator of the national team.

Saiful, perhaps the quickest bowler in the country, gave hardly anything away and the presumed relief at the advent of a new bowler actually marked the externalization of an internal damage.

Kajal, the first-change bowler, stepped in to take three wickets that ruled out any possibility of an Eskaton resurrection.

Wicketkeeper Harris' valiant attempt to retrace the Eskaton base from the rubble and debris with a fighting knock of 22, ended when he perished to the offspin of Sanwar.

Harris apart, none of the Eskaton batsmen could reach double figures in an innings that lasted only 37.5 overs.

Kajal was the pick of the GMCC bowlers with figures of three for 10 from 8 overs. Sanjeeva Weerasinghe, the Sri Lankan all-rounder who played in a solitary Test,

bowled nearly seven overs of accurate leg-spin to capture two for 17.

Saiful, Dulu, Palabon and Sanwar picked up one wicket each.

Rownakul Islam Tutul, who left PWD to join GMCC only this year, laid the foundation for a cosy GMCC win with a dour 41, inclusive of two fours.

Selim was the only casualty, who was bowled by Zahid for seven.

Anisuzzaman Pika, who went in at one-drop, remained unbeaten on 30 as GMCC skinned a nine-wicket victory in a mere 24 overs.

Zahid was the lone Eskaton bowler with success with one for 26.

TODAY'S MATCHES

Surja Tarun vs Dhanmondhi (DCS)

Victoria vs S Bima (Dhaka Stadium)

Gavaskar gets his publishers into trouble

PERTH, Australia, Oct 13: A newspaper article by former Indian star batsman and captain Sunil Gavaskar is at the centre of a court case here in which two Australian Test umpires are suing a leading publishing company, reports AFP.

Peter McConnell, 48, and Terry Prue, 44, both from Western Australian have taken action against Nationwide News Ltd, the publishers, over the article in the Sydney Daily Telegraph Mirror, part of the Rupert Murdoch empire, on January 4 during the drawn third Test in Sydney between Australian and India.

In the case before the Supreme Court in Perth which opened Monday and is expected to last up to 10 days, they say their reputations were damaged because the article labelled them "Aussie cheats".

They say the article alleges they made biased decisions in favour of Australian batsmen during the five-Test series against India.

Nationwide News is defending the claim, denying the article was defamatory and claiming it was fair comment on a matter of public interest.

India, who lost the series 0-4, played some of their best cricket during the Sydney match which they were unlucky to lose after establishing a 170 run first innings lead and reducing Australia to a second innings 8-173.

McConnell is Australia's most experienced current umpire. He has stood in 22 Tests, 62 one-day internation-

als (including six World Cup matches early this year) and was invited to officiate in the Nehru Cup in India in 1989.

Prue has officiated in five Tests and 14 one-day internationals.

The costly court action is being heard before Judge Neville Owe Owne and a civil jury of three men and three women. The jury has been told the newspaper's back page carried headlines saying "Aussie cheats" and "Test legend hits out at our umpires".

Gavaskar, who scored 10,122 runs in Test cricket — more than any other batsman in the game's history — made the attack in a syndicated column published in the Times of India and carried, in part, in the Sydney paper.

"Hope readers back home are getting an idea of what the Indian team is up against. Not 11 but 13 players," he wrote.

McConnell and Prue were not named in the article, but were two of only four umpires who officiated in the series.

It is claimed the article implies McConnell and Prue cheated as cricket umpires, were guilty of dishonourable conduct, were biased in favour of Australian players and against Indian players, were

not fit to carry out their duties and were guilty of dishonest conduct.

Terry Tobin, the lawyers representing McConnell and Prue, has told the jury the impact of the article was devastating on men of good reputation and standing in the community.

He submitted an ordinary reasonable person reading the newspaper would understand

the article to suggest that McConnell and Prue were cheats as umpires and would think less of them.

"The ordinary reader is going to carry away from it (the article) two or three simple messages," Tobin said.

"The first message is that this article is an attack on Australian Test umpires. The second is that in their decisions they give before not out when, in fact, they are out. The third message is — as the headline tells you — they are cheats."

"These men value their reputations as sportsmen," he said. "They love cricket. They respect it."

He asked the jury to consider the worst that could be said about his clients.

"They will tell you the worst thing you can say is not that you are incompetent, you got it wrong or you are half blind," he said. "You will tell you that, as umpires, the worst charge labelled against them is that they are cheats."

McConnell, giving evidence today, told the court he felt "quite sick" when he saw the headline at breakfast on the third day of the Test.

"I was shattered, disappointed and hurt," he said.

Winners win

Dhaka Winners Club, last year's runners-up pulled off an exciting 71-67 victory against Gregs Club in the Partex First Division super league at the wooden floor gymnasium yesterday.

The victors trailed the first half 29-36.

Winners staged a superb comeback to erase the deficit and force ahead of their opponents. Asif Hossain of Winners explored the winning track for his side scoring 26, the highest personal score in yesterday's encounter.

Tanu with 18 was the other notable scorer for Winners who were endowed with the second slot last year following a court ruling against Vega, the genuine claimants of the runners-up position.

Shahed Ali of Gregs Club was the top scorer for the losers, Gregs Club with 22. Khaled his teammate followed him with 18.

Becker safely through to 2nd round

TOKYO, Oct 13: Two-time champion Boris Becker cleared the first hurdle in his bid to regain the singles title when he beat Goran Prpic in the second round of the million dollar Seiko Super men's tennis tournament here Tuesday, reports AFP.

"Well, it's still a long way to go. I just won the first match and it's too early to talk about the whole tournament," said Becker, the champion here in 1986 and 1988, after a straightforward 6-4, 7-5 win over the Croatian.

The third seeded German who took his first victory in seven months when he on the Basle tournament nine days ago, played his signature serve-and-volley game, hitting 13 aces and 18 service winners and never giving a single break opportunity to the 64th ranked Croatian.

Britain wonder what and why

LONDON, Oct 13: Britain have set up an inquiry into why they produced their worst Olympic performance for 20 years at the Barcelona Games, reports AFP.

Former Commonwealth diving gold medalist Sir Peter Healy will chair a working party to find out why British swimmers won only Nick Orlingham's bronze in the 200 metres breaststroke.

Amateur Swimming Association staff, British Olympic competitors and management will all be consulted.

Sir Peter, a Commonwealth gold medalist at three successive Games from 1950 to 1958, said: "The automatic reaction after Barcelona was that the British performance was disappointing."

"Our function will be to establish whether that was justified and to look at ways in which performances could be better next time."

"He (Prpic) is a sort of player who plays usually better on clay and also on hard court. The way he played today, I thought, he did a good job to stay so close with me," said Becker.

In the third round Thursday, Becker will take on 14th-seeded Henrik Holm of Sweden, who downed Bryan Shelton of the United States 6-4, 2-6, 6-4.



BORIS BECKER

Sixth-seeded Wayne Ferreira of South Africa also joined Becker, beating Claudio Mezzadri of Switzerland 6-4, 3-6, 6-3, but 12th-seeded Paul Haarhuis of the Netherlands fell victim to Chris Pridham of Canada 4-6, 4-6.

The two winners will face each other Thursday.

Earlier in the day, Americans Patrick McEnroe, Jonathan Stark, Jim Grabb and Richey Reneberg coasted to the first-round wins on the artificial indoor courts at the Tokyo metropolitan gymnasium.

Former world number one Ivan Lendl will take on Todd Martin in an all-American match later, while defending champion Stefan Edberg, Michael Chang and Goran Ivanisevic had a rest day.

Bird becomes the first sponsored Test umpire

LONDON, Oct 13: Dickie Bird will become the first sponsored independent umpire to officiate in a Test match when Zimbabwe meet India in Harare on Sunday, reports Reuter.

Englishman Bird, one of the most respected umpires in world cricket, will be sponsored by Britain's National Grid Electricity Company in a pilot scheme for the sport.

The International Cricket Council (ICC) has been seeking to establish a panel of neutral umpires for almost two years but had previously lacked the money to pay for the idea.

The British company will sponsor independent umpires and referees for seven forthcoming Tests.

The company will pay for the umpires' travel and match fees and in return will be allowed their logo on the breast pockets of the officials' traditional white coats.

Div II soccer

Dhaka WASA scored an emphatic three-nil victory over Jurain Janata Club in the Sonali Bank Second Division football league at Hockey Stadium yesterday.

Shanu, Javed and Baten were the scorers for the winners who now have eight points from six matches.

The loss considerably dented Jurain's hopes of promotion to First Division as they now remain on seven points from six matches.

Bangladesh Boys are leading the points table with nine points from six matches.

Dhaka WASA have collected eight points from six outings. City Club and East End Club have six points from five matches each.

Muslim Institute have five points while Shantinagar Club and Prantik Krira Chakra have three and two points respectively.

The top two finishers of the Second Division will earn promotion to the prestigious First Division league next year.

Sixteen teams in two groups took part in the first round which concluded last month.

Shantinagar Club shared points with Prantik KC in a one-all draw in the other match of the league.

Jahangir Alam put Shantinagar ahead.

Anisul Karim scored the equaliser for Prantik.



Action from yesterday's Sonali Bank Second Division super league match between Dhaka WASA and Jurain Janata Club at the Hockey Stadium. WASA won 3-1. — Star photo