

10th Asian Cup begins on Thursday

Middle Eastern countries fancied

HIROSHIMA, Japan, Oct 27: Led by defending champions Saudi Arabia, four middle eastern teams are favoured in the 10th Asian Cup football championships which begin here Thursday, reports AFP.

Saudi Arabia, the 1989 world under-17 champions, in their bid for the 1994 World Cup participation since they reshuffled their members before the 1990 Asian Games in Beijing.

Saudi Arabia downed China 1-0 in the previous Asian Cup in 1988, but lost to the same opponents 1-2 and tied Qatar 1-1 in the qualifying games for the 1990 World Cup.

Qatar, piloted by head coach Evaristo de Marceda, proved they were dangerous by advancing to the quarter-finals at the Barcelona Olympics, although it lost to eventual gold medalist Spain with a final score of 0-2 and semi-finalist Poland by the same scoreline.

China will be seeking to shrug off their disappointment after finishing on the bottom at the four-team Dynasty Cup in August on home ground, while Thailand, the winners over South Korea in a qualifying game of the Asian Cup in June, will try to show their pride as

the southeast Asian champions. In Group A competition, Iran is a top favourite with veteran Soroush Chayeghran, forward Farshad Pyus and Samad Marfavi leading the Beijing Asian Games gold medalists.

The United Arab Emirates, who successfully qualified for the Italy World Cup for the first time in 1990, include on their roster star striker Adnan Khamis al Talyani, captain Ibrahim Meer Abdul Rahman and his brother Eisa Meer Abdul Rahman.

But the most dangerous floaters could come up from the host Japanese squad, under the wing of Marius Johan Ooft of the Netherlands, whose final goal is to qualify for the 1994 World Cup.

Since Ooft joined the squad in the spring, it narrowly lost to the Argentine national team and Wales, both games by 0-1, but drew with Italian powerhouse Juventus twice in August and conquered China, North and South Korea on their way to the Dynasty Cup triumph.

The Japanese team's main target is to beat the United Arab Emirates, as the two were scheduled to face each other in the Group F first round qualifying competition for the next World Cup in the United States.

The Japanese downed them in their first encounter in 1981, but the United Arab Emirates have won the last two games, while drawing once in 1988.

SCHEDULE

- Oct 29: Saudi Arabia vs China, Qatar vs Thailand
Oct 30: North Korea vs Iran, Japan vs United Arab Emirates
Oct 31: China vs Thailand, Saudi Arabia vs Qatar
Nov 1: United Arab Emirates vs Iran, Japan vs North Korea
Nov 2: Saudi Arabia vs Thailand, China vs Qatar
Nov 3: United Arab Emirates vs North Korea, Japan vs Iran
Nov 6: Semifinals
Nov 8: Final and third-place playoff.

Pescara want a rematch

ROME, Oct 27: Italian club Pescara want a replay of Sunday's First Division match at Genoa after the referee allegedly cautioned a home player twice without sending him off, reports Reuter.

Newly-promoted Pescara, beaten 4-3 and now second last in the table, were on Monday set to demand a replay under and Italian Soccer Federation regulation stating that a club is entitled to a rematch if a referee commits a "technical error."

The problem began when referee Massimo Chiesa appeared to wave the yellow card at Genoa striker Igor Dobrovolsky for failing to retreat at a freekick in the first half, then cautioned him again for play-acting shortly after halftime. The Russian international was not sent off, but Genoa coach Bruno Giorgi immediately substituted him and his side went on to win with a late goal.

Pescara protested after the match but referee Chiesa sent them a message saying he had booked Genoa midfielder Roberto Onorati and not Dobrovolsky in the first half.

However, the small club from the Abruzzi region are not prepared to let the matter drop.

"If the referee does not admit his error, we will ask for an additional inquiry into the matter," Pescara general manager Pierpaolo Marino said on Monday.

"We maintain that it was a simple human error and that once Chiesa has seen the incidents again he will be able to admit he has made a mistake," he added.

Television film of the incident indicated Pescara had a good case but the Italian federation does not allow the use of video evidence in such instances.

A spokesman said the federation would wait until receiving the referee's report on Wednesday before taking any action.

He added he did not know of any precedent for a match being replayed under such circumstances.

Mexican wins Marine Corps Marathon

WASHINGTON, Oct 27: Rene Guerrero of Mexico took the lead with just over 7 miles (11 kilometers) left and coasted to a 77-second victory in the Marine Corps Marathon Sunday, reports AP.

Guerrero, a soldier in the Mexican army, fought off headwinds that gusted from 25 to 30 mph (40-48 kph) to finish in 2 hours, 24 minutes, 9 seconds.

Michael Whittlesey of the United States, was second in 2:25:26. Ricarego Galicia of Mexico finished third at 2:26:23, followed by Americans Chris Robison in 2:26:27, and Eric Shafer in 2:28:28.

Carlos Rivas of Mexico, the 1991 winner, placed ninth in 2:31:52. Judy Marcon won the women's division in 2:47:58 followed by American competitor Kelly Flagan in 2:50:25. Three minutes back in third place was another American, Denise Metzgar.

"It was a good course and the conditions were very good, except it was a little too windy," Guerrero said through an interpreter. "I worked very hard for the last year to improve myself."

Whittlesey led until the 19th mile (31st kilometer) when Guerrero passed him.

"When he blew past me, I knew that nobody was going to catch him," said Whittlesey.

Price right on schedule

SAN ANTONIO, Oct 27: PGA champion Nick Price is right on schedule going into this week's \$1.2 million Tour Championship, the season-ending event on the PGA Tour, reports AP.

But then, so is Steve Elkington, Price's good friend, sometimes-golfing partner and more recently playoff victim in the Texas Open.

"Over the 20 holes we played, Elk played better than I did. I was kind of scrambling and he was doing just about everything right," Price said after a two-hole sudden death playoff victory Sunday.

"The way he's playing, I'd say he'll probably win at the Tour Championship in (the) Pinehurst," Price said.

Elkington, who lost this one with a couple of playoff putting lapses agreed. "I'll be on a roll going into Pinehurst," said Elkington, an Australian who now lives in the United States.

And, of course, so is Price, the PGA champion and now a two-time winner this season and in position to challenge Fred Couples, Davis Love III and John Cook for season-long supremacy.

"Who can stop Milan now? The police?"

LONDON, Oct 27: AC Milan's record-breaking unbeaten run and perfect start to the Italian soccer league season has already left their strongest rivals talking in their wake, and in awe of their colossal achievement, reports Reuter.

Monday's headline simply read "Invincible" in the sports daily Gazzetta Dello Sport in tribute to Milan's 41st league game without defeat on Sunday, which broke Fiorentina's 40-game record set in 1955-56.

It also summed up the feeling in the rest of the league that the Italian champions, who went through the whole of last season without losing, are already hot favourites to defend their crown successfully.

Juventus, who were expected to provide Milan's closest competition for the title, lost for the first time, 3-1 at Internazionale on Sunday, but are already four points behind and have played a game more.

And Juventus striker Gianluca Vialli asked: "Who can stop Milan now? The police?" Juventus coach Giovanni Trapattoni said he considered defeat "compromised", but no "lost," his team's chances of winning the title.

In beating Parma 2-0 away on Sunday, Milan maintained their 100 per cent winning start and lead second-placed Torino by two points with a game in hand, with Fiorentina and Internazionale a point further back.

Italian Cup winners Parma

held the high-scoring Milanese goalless for over an hour before French striker Jean-Pierre Papin struck the opening goal in the 62nd minute.

"That's the way I am, it might seem that I'm asleep for the whole game, but if the right ball comes my way, I don't make a mistake," said Papin.

Italian international Stefano Eranto, whose cross set up Papin's goal after coming on as a first-half substitute for Dutchman Ruud Gullit who pulled a thigh muscle, scored the second in injury time.

GAZZA LOSES TEMPER In Rome, Lazio's English midfielder Paul Gascoigne spoiled a good performance in a 3-0 win against Atalanta when instigating a pitch brawl by reacting angrily to a foul on him by Brazilian Alcmear.

Although Gascoigne moved away immediately after swinging his elbow at Alcmear, his gesture set off a scuffle which saw both Alcmear and the Lazio defender Luca Luzzardi sent off.

After the game, Gascoigne again lost his temper, this time with an English journalist who suggested that he had been lucky not to have been sent off.

Dutch league leaders PSV Eindhoven, champions for the last two seasons, set their own landmark when they recorded their 50th successive unbeaten home league match on Saturday with a 3-0 win against FC Groningen.

Bayern Munich coach Erich Ribbeck no longer considered his side could be viewed as

favourites for the title after losing their first game of the season, 3-1 at home to Werder Bremen.

"It is regrettable that we suffered our first loss at home all places," said Ribbeck.

"We wanted to stay in the lead through our strength at home. Now we are no longer the clear favourites (for the championship)."

Defending champions Marseille, four points behind Nantes, snatch a 1-0 over St Etienne thanks to a 20th minute goal by Croat Alen Boksic — their first in four games.

Deportivo Coruna, another team surprising the pundits, failed to score for the first time this season when held 0-0 at Real Burgos, but the Spanish league leader showed their mettle in a difficult match.

Coach Arsenio Iglesias was satisfied with the result: "It was very difficult to play on a pitch in such (wet) conditions, but we won a point and that's what counts," he said.

Champions Barcelona moved into third place, two points behind and were at their imperious best in a 3-0 defeat of Valencia at Camp Nou. "There was one ball and it was ours," said Dutch coach Johan Cruyff.

Real Madrid moved second, ahead of Barcelona on goal difference, with their third consecutive win, 2-0 against Athletic Bilbao, and are looking stronger every week.

"We are still not playing the way I think we will be playing in another month," said striker Emilio Butragueno, who scored on his return from injury.

der and said youth was probably the explanation of their success.

"We're healthy and there are more of us on the hot spots. It's as simple as that. We are running so fast all over the place that the only difficult thing we have to do is to put the ball in the goal," he said.

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AOC chief against limited numbers of athletes in Games

MANAMA, Oct 27: The president of the Asian Olympic Committee vowed here on Tuesday to fight moves to limit the number of athletes participating in future Games by setting minimum qualification standards, reports AFP.

Sheikh Ahmad Fahd Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah said the proposals, mooted by European countries to curb the ballooning number of athletes attending the Olympics, ran contrary to the founding principles of the Games.

He said: "The Asian Olympic Committee rejects this new and serious direction which could make the Olympic Games the private property of big countries, those which hold the records and win the medals."

"This idea, contrary to the principles of the Olympics, threaten the disappearance of the Games, which is a festival for the world's youth."

Sheikh Ahmad, who is also president of Kuwait's Olympic Committee, promised to battle on behalf of third world countries at the week-long meeting of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and national committees, which opens on November 2 in Acapulco, Mexico.

Sheikh Ahmad said he also wanted national committees to have a say in the choice of host cities, a decision which at the moment rests solely with the IOC.

Solna's first in 55 years

MALMO, Sweden, Oct 27: AIK Solna of Stockholm beat Malmo 3-2 in the final round of a six-team championship series on Sunday to win the Swedish soccer title and a place in next year's European Cup. It was AIK Solna's first national title since 1937, reports Reuter.

Norrkoping beat Treleborg 3-2 and Oster drew with Gothenburg 1-1 to finish second and third to earn places in the UEFA Cup.

Istanbul promises a touch of novelty to the Games

ISTANBUL, Oct 27: Istanbul bidding for the Olympics in the year 2000, aims to be the first city to stage the Games on two continents, reports Reuter.

Divided by the Bosphorus, it straddles Europe and Asia.

Turkish National Olympic Committee president Sinan Erdem said some events would be held on the European side and others on the Asian.

"If Istanbul is selected for the Games will be held for the first time on two continents," Erdem said. "All events will be held within a 40 kilometre radius."

Erdem said the Turkish government had set aside a budget of 12 million dollars for promotion. The US advertising company Young and Rubicomb has been hired as communications consultants to promote the bid.

Seven other cities are bidding for the 2000 Summer Olympics — Beijing, Berlin, Brasilia, Manchester, Milan, Sydney and Tashkent. A decision on the host city will be made at an IOC session in Monaco next September.

Founded in the seventh century BC, Istanbul has served as capital of three world empires: the Roman, the Byzantine and the Ottoman, with a population of over eight million, it is modern Turkey's largest city and a regional hub for trade, industry and culture.

"If the promotion of Istanbul and Turkey is done effectively Istanbul will be selected as the venue for the Games," Erdem said. The Olympic Village, housing more than 15,000 athletes, would be situated in Halkali,

on the European side of the city near the Sea of Marmara.

Tevfik Bilgin, coordination and planning manager of Young and Rubicomb's Istanbul office said. "The Village would be 12 kms from Istanbul Ataturk International Airport and on the Olympic Stadium and associated sports complexes.

It would be easily reachable from the city centre by car, bus and a light rapid metro system expected to be completed this decade.

Several new five-star hotels have been completed and others are planned, Bilgin said. The city would easily meet Olympic accommodation and telecommunication requirements, he added.

Bilgin said the Olympics would help Istanbul's urban renewal and improve the city's environment. "We want to hold green Olympic Games," he said.

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Mansell blasts his team and rival

ADELAIDE, Oct 27: World champion Nigel Mansell attacked his Williams-Renault team and rival Formula One driver Alain Prost after arriving Monday to prepare for his last Grand Prix before switching to IndyCar racing, reports AP.

Mansell, who will race IndyCars for the Newman-Haas team next year, told reporters he was disillusioned but not bitter about circumstances surrounding his departure from the Formula One scene.

He said he was disappointed by the deal offered to him by the Williams-Renault team for next season and said he had no option but to leave the series he has dominated this year.

"It was a total disgrace, there was nothing even to think about whether I was going to stay there with what was offered to me," Mansell said. "My first choice was to defend the world championship

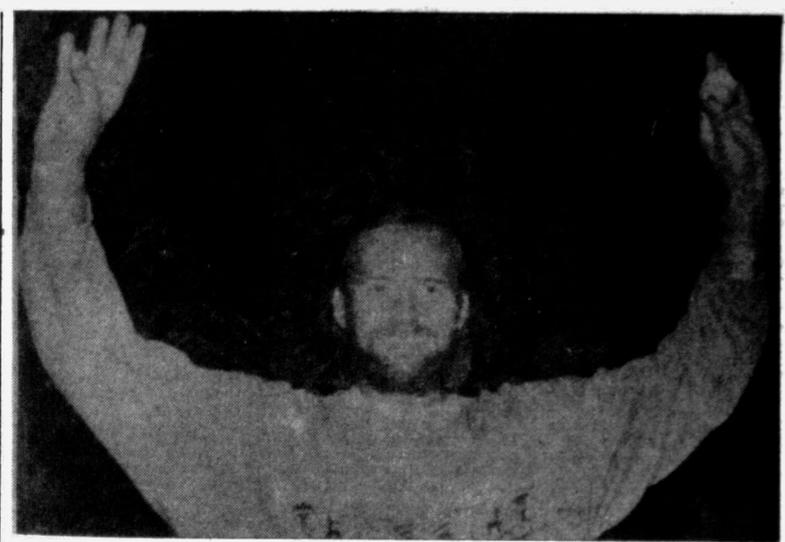
in the manner in which I won it, but I wasn't being afforded a sensible chance to defend it in the same way."

Mansell said Williams was the reason behind his decision.

"It's no secret that Renault's ambition is to get a French world champion in a French-engineered car," he said. "If we had equal status and opportunity to get the job done then I'd be there — it's not my doing and I will not accept criticism that it was."

Mansell was equally outspoken about Prost, who he claimed made public press statements denying he had made a deal with Williams only a matter of weeks before it was announced he would drive for the team next year.

"Unfortunately and regretfully, Mr. Prost says a lot publicly. Mr. Prost is not true," he said. "Prost doesn't worry me at all in the car, but what he's able to do out of the car is shocking," he said. Mansell said he was anxious to win his final Formula One race and to notch his first victory in the Australian Grand Prix in Adelaide on Nov. 8.



Leader of a nine-member international Mount Everest expedition Michel Vincent, 43, of France celebrates after successfully scaling 8,848 metres (29,028 feet) summit in Kathmandu on Monday. — AFP photo

WBC warns Bowe over possible title defence

Latest twist in heavyweight title saga

LONDON, Oct 27: The World Boxing Council warned Tuesday it may refuse to recognize Riddick Bowe as world heavyweight champion if he takes the title from Evander Holyfield Nov. 13, reports AP.

WBC president Jose Sulaiman said the Holyfield-Bowe victory would have 30 days to negotiate a title defence against the winner of Saturday's eliminator between Lennox Lewis of Britain and Canada's Razor Ruddock.

If Bowe won and then failed to meet the Council's conditions, the WBC would install the Lewis-Riddick victor as its world champion.

"The WBC will recognize the winner of the Oct 31 fight as the WBC champion of the world if the winner on Nov 13 doesn't fight him," Sulaiman told a news conference Tuesday.

Sulaiman said both Holyfield and Bowe had agreed in writing to defend the crown against the Lewis-Ruddock winner, but that Bowe was having second thoughts.

"We required Bowe to accept that he fight the winner," Sulaiman said. "If that had not happened we would not have sanctioned his fight."

Ruddock promoter Murad Mohammed accused Bowe of lacking motivation.

"Riddock Bowe has been walking around saying he's not going to meet the winner of the Lewis-Ruddock fight," Mohammed said. "But he's signed a bit of paper saying he'd fight the winner. This is an official eliminator."

It's the latest twist in a heavyweight title saga that has five men vying for one title. Holyfield and Bowe, both of the United States, fight for the world title at The Mirage, Las Vegas Nov. 13.

Lewis, a Briton who won an Olympic gold medal for Canada at the 1988 Games, meets Ruddock on Saturday at Earl's Court in London in a WBC-sanctioned title eliminator.

"We'd prefer to fight Lewis, it would be a more stylish fight, a cleaner fight," Duva said. "Riddick is a better fighter, a tough puncher, but Lewis will box his ears off."

100 million in television receipts, while a Lewis-Holyfield bout would pull in half that.

"There's only four commodities in boxing now and one of them (Tyson) is locked up," Mohammed said. "There's George Foreman, who's still known, Evander Holyfield and Razor Ruddock. Lewis doesn't have the name yet."

Holyfield promoter Lou Duva wants Commonwealth champion Lewis to win Saturday.

"We'd prefer to fight Lewis, it would be a more stylish fight, a cleaner fight," Duva said. "Riddick is a better fighter, a tough puncher, but Lewis will box his ears off."

Tanzania split points with Madagascar

ZANZIBAR, Tanzania, Oct 27: Tanzania were held to a goalless draw by Madagascar in their World Cup African zone qualifying match here Sunday, reports AFP.

The outcome was a big disappointment for Tanzanian fans who had counted on a win to rekindle hopes of qualifying after going down 2-0 to Zambia two weeks ago.

Tanzania will now have to work extra hard if they are to beat the Madagascans at home. The Madagascans showed remarkable prowess and speed, and after their 3-0 wip over Namibia have proved themselves a strong side in Group H.

The Madagascar forward-line spearheaded by Clement, Eric and Alison kept Tanzanian goalkeeper Mohamed Mwamja busy.

SA rugby remains racist: ANC

JOHANNESBURG, Oct 27: The African National Congress on Monday withdrew its support for South Africa's participation in world rugby after an allied black group alleged racism in the sport, reports AP.

The National and Olympic Sports Congress, which has close ties to the ANC, said after a meeting Sunday it had concluded rugby officials were not doing enough to open the white-dominated sports to blacks.

"We're going to stop all rugby tours," the president of the group, Muleki George, told a news conference. The congress also withdrew its support for South Africa to be the site of the 1995 Rugby World Cup.

The ANC's spokesman on sports, Steve Tshwete, said the group supported the congress' move.

"We can't see ourselves taking a contrary position," he said. "They are close to the situation, and they are expressing the gut feeling of black rugby enthusiasts."

South Africa's all-white rugby team currently is in France, its first overseas trip since world sanctions were imposed in 1981 to protest apartheid. The country was readmitted to world rugby this year.

The new protests raised the possibility of demonstrations by anti-apartheid groups as the team continues its European tour. Anti-apartheid groups in England have threatened to stage protests when the team arrives Nov 1. There was no indication the tour would be called off, however.

George accused South African rugby officials of continuing to use symbols of apartheid at international matches, citing the use of the old Springbok name to describe the team.

Tshwete accused the rugby union of not keeping a promise to set up rugby development programs in black townships. He said past ANC efforts to prevent a confrontation with the rugby union were ignored.

Danie Craven, president of the South African Rugby Football Union, denied racism existed and said the organization was doing "more than enough" to open the sport to all races.

To complicate matters, England's Frank Bruno won an official IBF eliminator last week but doesn't have a guaranteed shot at the crown.

"I want it all but I want it simple," Ruddock said. "My aim is to beat Lewis, take the world title from Holyfield, make a voluntary defense against Frank Bruno in London and then wait for (former champion) Mike Tyson to come out of jail so I can prove I'm really the best around."

Ruddock promoter Mohammed said a Ruddock-Holyfield bout would be worth \$10 million.

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South Africa's return to world rugby got off to a shaky start in August when the national anthem was played at the first post-sanctions, international home game. Rugby officials had earlier told the ANC the anthem, considered by many blacks a symbol of apartheid, would not be played.

The ANC threatened to withdraw support for future rugby tours but changed its mind on condition the anthem was not played at future games. It also demanded a minute of silence at home games to remember victims of political violence.

Sumo star to tie the knot

TOKYO, Oct 27: In what amounts to an Oriental version of Joe DiMaggio falling for Marilyn Monroe, Japan's best loved sports hero confirmed Tuesday plans to wed the nation's premier sex symbol, reports AP.

The news of the romance between Takahanada, a sumo wrestling boy wonder, and Rie Miyazawa, a wildly popular television actress whose collection of nude photos scandalised the nation, sent much of the nation into giddy excitement.

Even Prime Minister Kichii Miyazawa, no relation to the actress, got caught up in the excitement, reportedly promising to send the couple a congratulatory telegram.

"This is remarkable. I am very surprised," Miyazawa was quoted as saying by Kyodo News Service. The match was confirmed by Takahanada, who at 20 has become the nation's top male idol with a combination of boy-

ish good looks and devastating skill that has put him among the top handful in Japan's national sport.

Takahanada's father, Fujishima, a former sumo champion turned coach, said he expected the two to wed after Miyazawa turns 20 next April.

"What I felt most of all is that she is living her heart out in the entertainment world — that's what attracted me," Takahanada told reporters outside of his training stable in Fukuoka, 900 kilometres (560 miles) south of Tokyo.

Whether it was the fairy tale story of the couple's secret love or simply the unmatched fame of the duo, Japan's mass media were in a frenzy to spread the news.

Speaking of Takahanada last month, a glowing-faced Miyazawa said, "When I look at the sumo ring I get that pitter-patter in my heart — it's, like, so great. And Taka-zeki (Takahanada) has just turned 20 — great, just great."



TAKAHANADA