

# Navy cagers sail into semis

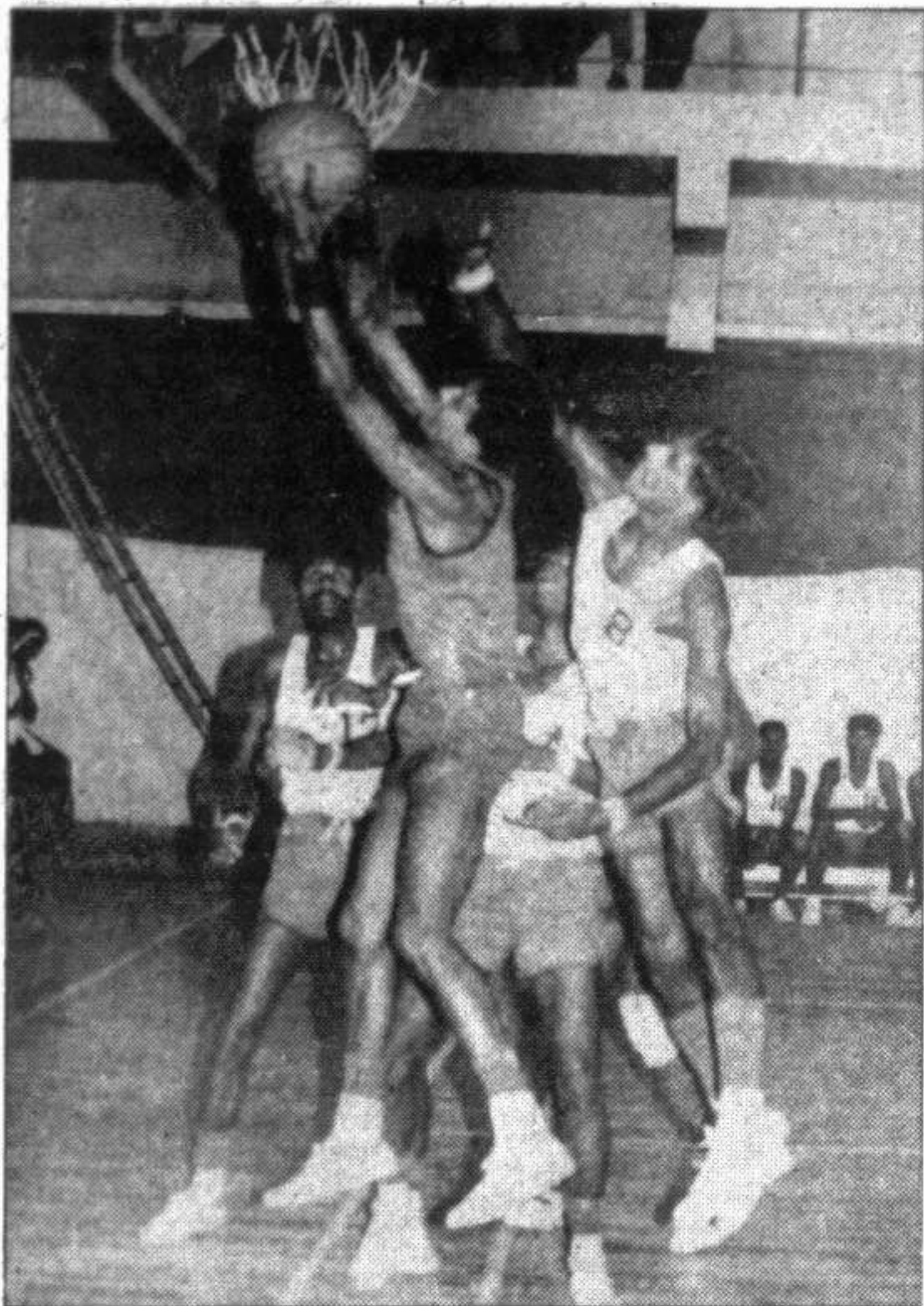
Sports Reporter

Bangladesh Navy A became the first team to qualify for the semifinals of the 1992 Victory Day basketball tournament...

The four group champions will play in the semifinals. All necessary arrangements have been made to make this year's national championship a success.

Dhaka University, who have not been practising much may find it difficult to make this year's final.

The tournament will begin on December 19 at 8:30 am



Action from the Victory Day basketball championship match between Bangladesh Rifles and Bangladesh Army Reds at the Outer Stadium wooden-floor gym yesterday.

Defending national volleyball champions Navy led the first session 37-22.

P K Goswami with 35 points did most of the scoring for the sailors while Huda chipped in with eight points.

Navy will play the Group B champions in the semifinals on December 15.

Bangladesh Army 'Reds' trounced Bangladesh Rifles by 109 points to 67 earlier in the afternoon at the same venue.

Army led 48-39 at half-time.

Rahim with 27 points and Iqbal with 18 were the leading scorers for the soldiers while Aminul and Feroz caged 21 and 17 points respectively for Bangladesh Rifles.

Bangladesh Army 'Reds' will play Bangladesh Air Force in the Group C final today at 3:30 pm.

## NAT'L BASKETBALL

Meanwhile, the 16th national basketball championship or the BGIC Cup '92 under the aegis of the Bangladesh Amateur Basketball Federation will begin from December 19.

This year's national championship, included as one of 21 sports in the forthcoming fifth Bangladesh Games, will feature 14 teams in four groups. They are reigning champions Bangladesh Navy, Bakerganj, Sylhet and Rajshahi in Group A; last national runners-up Dhaka University, Bangladesh Police, Brahmanbaria and Narayanganj in Group B; Bangladesh Army, who finished third in the 15th national, Khulna and Bangladesh Air Force are in Group C while Bangladesh Rifles, Chandpur and Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology are in Group D.

# Army, BAF, Navy, BDR spikers in semifinals

Sports Reporter

Defending champions Bangladesh Army will play Bangladesh Air Force while last national runners-up Bangladesh Navy will take on Bangladesh Rifles in the semifinals of the BGIC 16th national volleyball championship...

Army, Navy, Air Force and Rifles emerged as their respective group champions by winning their matches yesterday at the same venue.

Army outplayed Tangail 15-5, 15-3, 15-1; Air Force eliminated Police 15-2, 15-2, 15-6; Navy drubbed Rajshahi University 15-3, 15-5, 15-7 and Rifles outclassed Rangpur 15-7, 15-1 and 15-2 in the men's fixtures yesterday.

In the women's event, although defending champions Bangladesh Jute Mills Corporation (BJMC) have already secured a berth in the semifinals, the other three teams will be known after two matches to be held today starting at eight in the morning.

In yesterday's two matches, last year's runners-up Rangpur beat Dinajpur 15-5, 10-15, 15-12, 15-7 while Dinajpur later went on to beat Rajbari 9-15, 9-15, 15-10, 15-13, 15-13.

Narayanganj will play Bangladesh Ansars and Khulna will clash with Rajbari in the two women's group matches this morning.

The women's semifinals will be held today at 5:30 pm at the Outer Stadium volleyball court.

## N'ganj chess ends

Sports Reporter

Md Sharif Hossain Mitton of Moshgul Mahfil Club and Subrata Chandra Shaha of Dhaka Mohakhali Pradip Sangha with 13 points each emerged as joint champions in the Mazum invitational chess competition which concluded recently at the Baburial Mashgul Mahfil Club in Narayanganj, says press release.

# Nat'l meet from today

Sports Reporter



The twelve-day seventeenth national badminton championships begin today at the wooden-floor gymnasium.

feated Ayesha Khatun Noori in one of the two semi-finals. Momo had a similar effortless passage in the other semifinal against Naznin Nahar Liza.

The boys' doubles event has also reached the quarter-final stage.

Yesterday Ramzan and Sarkar Sarwar Jahan dumped



Fazlul Huq, the chairman of the tournament committee for the 17th national badminton championships which begin today is seen addressing a press conference at the NSC yesterday.

One hundred and eighteen players including 13 women shuttlers will be taking part in this competition featuring 22 teams.

Addressing a press conference called at the conference room of the National Coaching Centre yesterday, Shah Farid, president of the Bangladesh Badminton Federation (BBF), said that Taka one lakh sixty thousand has been earmarked for the championships.

Sarwar of Bangladesh Biman and the Ansars trio of Harun, Rana and Suman are the favourites in the men's singles category while Elina, Juhi, Momo and Mukta are being tipped as the favourites for the women's singles crown.

Meanwhile, Sharmin Ahmed Momo and Konika Rani Adhikary have advanced to the girls' final of the under-16 Agrani Bank Victory Day badminton championship.

Yesterday, at the wooden-floor gymnasium, Konika de-

in progress when reports last came in. Sharmin Momo and Naznin Nahar Liza were battling against Konika and Noori.

In the pre-quarter final of the boys' singles, Sarwar Jahan, Zia Hossain, Tarq Chowdhury, Sarkar Sarwar Jahan, Mokhesur Rahman, Zakaria, Nurul Alam and Morsheed Lincoln won their respective matches to advance to the quarter-finals.

Sarkar Sarwar Jahan beat Ashkar Ali 15-3, 15-2. Sarkar Jahan edged past Abu Bakr Amin 18-17, 17-16. Zia Hossain outplayed Ripon 15-2, 15-3. Tarq Chowdhury defeated Shahed Hossain 15-5, 15-3. Mokhesur Rahman dumped Alamgir Kabir 15-6, 15-3. Zakaria got past Mazharul Islam 15-6, 15-8.

Morsheed Lincoln swept aside Zahed Hossain 15-6, 15-1. Nurul Alam forced his way with a 2-1 victory against Zahid Ramzan. Alam won 15-11, 2-15 and

Ibrahim and Sohag 15-0, 15-1.

In another pre-quarter-final engagement of the day Akram Hossain and Noman saw off Morsheed Alam and Taslimuzzaman 15-7, 15-11.

Mokhesur Rahman and Zia Hossain beat Shah Mustafa and Shahed Hossain 15-3 and 15-5. While Anup Saha teamed up with Avijit to make short work of Asaduzzaman and Shah Alam 15-6 and 15-4.

Mahbubul Alam and Bazlur Rahman drilled past Raihan and Shamtul Arefin 15-8, 15-5. Zahidul Haq and Abu Sayeed fought off Dolon and Zahid Hazari in a keenly-contested encounter 12-15, 15-6 and 15-6. Abdul Hannan and Riaz Ilazari gunned up the works of Riatal and Nirob Chowdhury 15-6 and 15-3. Sarkar Jahan paired with Nurul Huq to post a 15-4, 15-5 win against Morsheed Lincoln and Mazharul Islam.

Competition continues today.

# Sampras breaks Leconte spell

MUNICH, Dec 12: Henri Leconte has a way of coming back to haunt Pete Sampras. Sampras broke the spell Friday, beating the Frenchman 7-6, 6-4 to reach the semifinals of the Grand Slam Cup, reports AP.

Sampras could become the first player to win the biggest prize money in tennis twice. He won the inaugural Grand Slam Cup in 1990.

The richest tournament in the world dishes out \$12 million to the winner, and another \$4 million in prizes. Reaching the semifinals was worth \$450,000.

"It has been a very solid year for me," said Sampras, winner of five titles this year. "Hopefully I will end it very well, winning this tournament."

In the last four Saturday, Sampras played Michael Stich, who ousted Richard Krajicek 7-6, 7-5.

In the other semifinal, Goran Ivanisevic played Michael Chang, last year's runner-up.

## Dittmar, Martin in HK Open final

HONG KONG, Dec 12: Old Australian rivals Chris Dittmar and Rodney Martin scored contrasting semifinal victories in the Hong Kong Open squash championship on Saturday, reports Reuter.

Top-seed Dittmar had little trouble disposing of Rodney's brother Brett 15-9, 15-12, 15-12 to stop Sunday's title clash from being a Martin family affair.

Rodney, the second seed, found the going tougher against compatriot Tristan Nanca-row, the beaten finalist last year, before edging through 15-8, 15-14, 17-15.

## Dobrovolski gets Stojkovic's place in Marseille

PARIS, Dec 12: French champions Marseille, forced to choose between two east European players on their books, gave the nod to Moldovan Igor Dobrovolski and let Yugoslav Dragan Stojkovic free yesterday, reports Reuter.

Marseille's embarrassment at having too many foreigners came about when the International Football Federation (FIFA) ruled that midfielder Stojkovic was a Marseille player. The club this week signed Dobrovolski, also a midfielder, on loan from Italian side Genoa.

Under French league rules, only two non-European Community Croat striker Alen Boskic, they suddenly found themselves with three.

The league insisted at a meeting in Paris on Friday that Marseille choose between Dobrovolski and Stojkovic.

The decision to select Dobrovolski means the Yugoslav can go to another French club without a fee.

Stojkovic joined Marseille from Red Star Belgrade in 1990 but left after an injury-plagued season to join Verona in Italy on loan.

The midfielder returned to Marseille recently. Club president Bernard Tapie said Stojkovic need a knee operation but that he could stay and trail with the French team until the end of the season and decide on his future next summer.

# Love him, hate him...don't you ignore him!

PARIS, Dec 12: You could love him or hate him, admire or deride him, but you could never ignore him - John McEnroe, writes AFP.

Fittingly for a man of so many contradictions he brought the curtain down on his legendary 15-year career at the Grand Slam Cup in Munich this week.

And no sooner had the cheers died away after losing to Croatia's Goran Ivanisevic than he admitted he was having second thoughts about retiring.

Consistency has never been one of McEnroe's strengths. Sometimes he has even failed to survive the same press conference without contradicting himself.

McEnroe had once described the multi-million dollar tournament in Munich as "obscene" and vowed he would never take part in an event which threatened the newly-reorganised ATP Tour.

But the three-times Wimbledon and four-times United States Open champion shrugged off his U-turn without a blush.

"Initially I stayed away, as did several others, because of the ATP," he said. "But what have we got in return? Nothing. Absolutely nothing. We got snowballed and stabbed in the back. The players' tour is a joke. It never happened. That's why I'd rather play and take the money."

McEnroe's sudden changes of mood, notorious clashes with officialdom and magical touch-tennis had always guaranteed box-office success.

When his game was firing on all cylinders he left the fans mesmerised. His uncanny timing and featherlight but deadly-accurate volleying destroyed opponent after opponent. Everything he did on court seemed effortless and, like all great champions, he seemed to have twice as much time as anybody else to make his strokes.

It speaks volumes of his entertainment value that in Munich, at 33 years of age and without a singles title of any significance for eight years, McEnroe could still emerge as the main attraction. His programmed last stand came one week after inspiring his country's 30th Davis Cup triumph. He came back with Pete Sampras after trailing by two sets to love to beat Swiss opponents Marc Rosset and Jakob Hlasek in a dramatic five-set showdown in Texas. The victory gave the United States a crucial 2-1 lead.

But what should have been a perfect career climax was marred by a major domestic crisis.

McEnroe's marriage to actress Tatum O'Neal was re-

portedly on the rocks but he refused to comment on either his private life or be pinned down about his exact future plans.

Apart from making it clear that he wanted Tom Gorman's job as captain of the United States Davis Cup team, he had remained vague about his future.

"I don't like the idea of going around tournaments one

When he was beaten by Ricardo Ycaza of Ecuador in the final of the WCT's World Junior Championships, he burst into tears and was immediately written off as being "too emotional" to succeed at the highest level.

But at the 1977 Wimbledon the 18-year-old New Yorker sent shock waves through the tennis world by becoming the first qualifier to reach the sin-

gle semifinals. And once there he even had the audacity to take a set off Jimmy Connors. From that moment the successes flowed and the tantrums took over.

He began the Stella Artois event with a simmering row and refused to start playing when umpire Dick Lamb turned down his request for "ten more warm-up serves."

His opponent that day was Vijay Amritraj. The Indian, one of the game's gentlemen, was horrified and some years later he confided: "If I have to be like McEnroe to be the world number one then I don't want to be the world number one."

Few will forget the perfection and heady excitement when he beat Borg 18-16 in a fourth set tie-break in the classic 1980 Wimbledon final.

And he will always be haunted by his defeat to Ivan Lendl in the 1984 French Open final. For two-and-a-half sets he treated the Paris crowds to a sublime brand of tennis never seen on the famous Roland Garros red clay courts. Then suddenly his world came in.

"That loss hurt me more than all the rest," he confided recently. "I still think about it. It was my own dumb fault. I had it won."

The Wimbledon everybody remembers for his "pits of the earth" outburst came in 1981 when he ended Bjorn Borg's five-year reign.

Quite how he escaped disqualification on his way to the title remains a mystery. He was at war with officials, spectators, fellow-players and the press from the start.

Apart from smashing rackets and slamming balls out of court, he described the media as "trash", one umpire was "an incompetent fool" and another was "a disgrace to mankind."

His victory, the first of his

three successes at the world's most famous tournament, was further soured when he took his feud with organisers one step further and failed to show up at the traditional champions' dinner.

As the fines and suspensions continued to mount up, the "Superbrat" image stuck. Despite regular and often vehement promises to mend his ways, McEnroe remained dogged by controversy.

As late as 1990 he earned the crowning insult when he was disqualified from the Australian Open in the fourth round - and the following year he had to pay over 10,000 pounds in fines after abusing photographers at the French Open and then letting rip with a tirade of four letter words at a line judge at Wimbledon.

McEnroe's best year was 1984. He won 82 of 85 matches and produced a ruthless victory over Jimmy Connors in the Wimbledon final which was described by many as the finest exhibition of grass court tennis they had ever seen on the Centre Court.

But pressure of staying at the top took its toll. By the end of 1985 McEnroe had become a twitching, deeply unhappy player.

He took six months off at the start of the 1986 season and never again recaptured his world dominance.

When he launched his comeback he discovered that the new racket technology had tipped the scales in favour of the power game.

In his heyday McEnroe's talents were such that he had never needed to push himself through strenuous Lendl-style training sessions. He once boasted that when he wanted to tighten up his game he merely put his name down to play in the doubles as well as the singles.

But in later years McEnroe had to work hard to trim his body and master new techniques. Although he was still able to offer glimpses of his former greatness, he was never able to sustain it.

Ironically two of the most memorable milestones in McEnroe's career came in defeat.

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His victory, the first of his

# Army, Rajshahi qualify

Sports Reporter



The fourth Bangladesh Games hockey champions Bangladesh Army qualified for the final round of the 15th national hockey championship with a convincing 5-0 victory against Noakhali at the Dhaka Hockey Stadium yesterday.

Army, who finished as runners-up in the last national championship, led 3-0 at the breather.

Nk Amin sounded the board for Army in the very second minute with a spectacular field goal (1-0).

Amin made it 2-0 in the 11th minute in a similar fashion (2-0).

Nk Shafi increased the margin in the 25th minute with another field goal (3-0).

Havilder Akram scored the fourth goal for the soldiers in the 56th minute (4-0) while Havilder Rameez completed the tally for the winners five minutes from time by converting a penalty corner (5-0).

Army, who maintained absolute supremacy over lowly Noakhali, forced as many as six

penalty corners and five long-corners.

Sujan of Noakhali received a green card warning from the umpire.

## RAJSHAHI MOVE UP

Rajshahi DSA also moved into the final round by beating Bangladesh Navy 3-2 in the tie-breaker in the other match of the day at the same venue.

The regulation 70-minute period ended in a goalless draw with both sides preferring the status quo.

Rabiuddin Ahmed, Taherul Islam and Raihanuddin Ahmed found the mark for Rajshahi while Montaz and Aminul Islam scored for Navy in the tie-breaker.

Top eight teams from the current preliminary round will compete in the final round to be held as part of the fifth Bangladesh Games scheduled for December 18 to 25 in the city.

Meanwhile, in our yesterday's issue it was inadvertently reported that Bangladesh Police beat Gazipur by a solitary goal. In fact, Gazipur beat Bangladesh Police by a lone goal, Lal Mia being the scorer.

## CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down words. Includes a solution time of 26 mins and a list of words like Velvet Fog, princessly, movie, 1 Flanders flower, 37 Verne captain, 21 E.T.'s craft, etc.

Cryptoquip puzzle grid with a 11x11 grid of letters and numbers. Includes the clue: 'Yesterday's Cryptoquip: PRINCIPLED VETERINARIAN ORDERED HIS CANINE PATIENTS TO HEAL.'

Today's Cryptoquip clue: U equals H. The Cryptoquip is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.