

No decision yet on V-Day cricket final

Sports Reporter
The fate of the unfinished final of the Victory Day cricket tournament between Mohammedan Sporting Club and Abahani Krira Chakra was undecided till yesterday. In a rather unproductive meeting the tournament committee passed the issue on to the executive committee of the Bangladesh Cricket Control Board (BCCB) to resolve the stalemate.
Cricket came to an abrupt halt on Wednesday when Abahani Krira Chakra refused to play after their star batsman Athula Samarasekera was given out under preposterous circumstances. Batting first Abahani were cruising along at 55 for one when disaster struck the match.
Meanwhile, day's only cricketing engagement between Lalmita Club and City Club in the Milnars First Division league fell through for non-availability of umpires.
Two matches are scheduled for today. Agrani Bank will take on Sadharan Bima at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium while the Mirpur Pallabi ground will host the other tie of the day between Eskaton Sabuj Sangha and Evergreen.
Meanwhile, the Second Division league resumes after a day's gap today with Ajax playing against United Heroes on the western portion of the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium. In the other match of the day, Orient Sporting Club take on Mill Barracks Cricket Club at the Dhanmondi Club ground.

Handball results

Sports Reporter
Dipali Juba Sangha recorded a narrow 19-17 victory against West Jatrabari Kishore Sangha in one of the four matches of the Sunbal Second Division handball at the Outer Stadium handball court yesterday.
Khokon of Dipali and Akbar of Jatrabari were the joint highest scorers with six goals each. Dipali's Faruq was on target five times, so were Nasir and Shakluzzaman of Jatrabari Sangha.
Arunayatan dumped Bhatri Sangha 19-8 in another match. Vishnu of the winners was the topscorer with eight goals. Tamal was the other principal scorer with five. For the losers Debabrata with four and Subodh with two stood out as the notable scorers.
Old ideal outplayed Purbachal Parishad 40-12.
Winners led the first half 19-5.
Suman with ten, Lavlu with nine and Shariful with eight were the main scorers for the victors. Gafur with four, Shafin Babu and Babul with two each featured in the list of notable scorers.
Progoti Boys Club trounced Antrban Sangsad Club by 31 goals to 10.
Progoti led the first half 17-2.
Kajal of the winners was in prolific form scoring 16 goals. Hamim scored another seven for the winners.
For the losers Liton, Jilani and Kashem scored three apiece.

Bordeaux fail to convince FFF

PARIS, Dec 31: The French Soccer Federation (FFF) on Wednesday rejected an appeal by Bordeaux and ordered a replay of the league match they won against Toulouse after a refereeing blunder, reports Reuter.
It is the first time in the French First Division that a referees error has led to a replay.
The FFF's federal commission upheld last week's decision by France's Central Commission of Referees that there should be a re-match.
Bordeaux scored the only goal of the December 12 match four minutes from time with a free kick after Toulouse's goalkeeper had handled a backpass.
Referee Gilles Veissiere ordered the free kick to be taken less than two metres from the goal-line when, under FIFA rules, it should have been on the edge of the six-yard box.
"It's the first time such a decision has been taken," said CCA president Michel Vautrot.
"But I don't think it will lead to a loss of authority of our referees because the possibility of a replay following a technical fault is nothing new."
"France is the last country in which that possibility still exists," he said, adding that in other countries the referee's decision is final and cannot be overturned.
"This decision does not surprise us... We are fully satisfied with it," said Toulouse president Andre Labatut. "It does set a precedent but I don't think it will call refereeing into question."

BCCB-BFF tug-of-war over venue may hurt President Cup

Sports Reporter
With less than a week to go for the President Gold Cup football tournament, the Bangladesh Football Federation is still a little apprehensive about the venue for this international football meet. The traditional tug of war between the cricket and football supremos over the possession of the hallowed turf of the Dhaka Stadium — the apple of everyone's eyes for obvious reasons — has cast shadows over this tournament also.
Although the BFF appeared to have succeeded in convincing the National Sports Council, sole authority of playing grounds in the country, the letter directed to the NSC by A S M Mustafizur Rahman, Foreign Minister and the president of the Bangladesh Cricket Control Board (BCCB) urging a restriction on the number of matches to be played at the Dhaka Stadium caused a few alarms in the mind of the football-wallahs. The cricket authority was

quite justified in making a move to gum up the works of their soccer rivals simply because the tournament came in the middle of the annual cricket season. The BCCB president, in his letter to the NSC, called for the hosting of only four of the meet's 16 matches at the Dhaka Stadium, i.e. the opening match, the two semifinals and the final. The rest of the matches, the letter suggested, could be played at the Mirpur Stadium, exclusively built for football.
The BFF, meanwhile, is going the whole hog to generate interest of football fans after repeated inscrutable failures of the national football team. Renovation of a part of the stadium is going on with a tentative proposal for fixing the media centre at the Dhaka Stadium office of the Table Tennis Federation, already in the air. The two local outfits — Bangladesh Reds, the deferring champions, and Bangladesh Greens have already been announced with Abahani custodian Mohsin leading the former and Mohammedan

Pakistan keen to clinch Champions Trophy

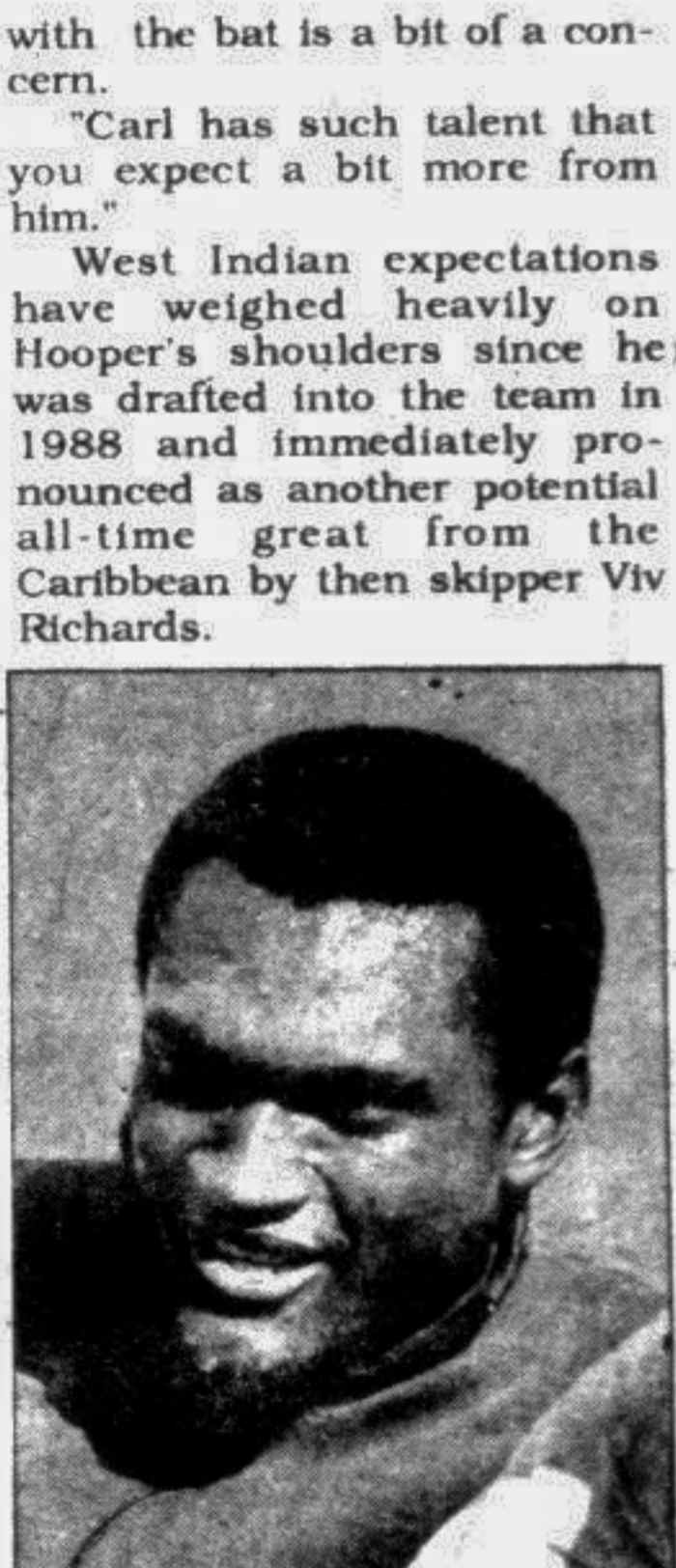
KARACHI, Dec 31: Pakistan is planning hard to clinch a gold medal at the 15th Champions Trophy starting in Kuala Lumpur from July 3, 1993, hockey officials here said Thursday, reports AFP.
Pakistan is already set to host the 16th Champions Trophy in April 1994.
"We have a packed programme for our hockey team in 1993," Nawaz Tiwana, president of the Pakistan Hockey Federation (PHF).
"It will expose our boys to international competitions prior to Champions Trophy," Tiwana said. The PHF had already selected Mudassar Asghar as its secretary.
Pakistan's major test at Kuala Lumpur would be in February when the Netherlands arrive to play several Tests.
"Our main aim is the Olympic Gold," Tiwana said adding that 1993 would be the year of reforming the Pakistan team. It is being infused with new blood for the Olympic encounters.
He said the Asia Cup at Hiroshima from November 4 to 14 will be yet another exposure for Pakistani boys next year.



TWO OF CRICKET'S ALL TIME GREATS: Wesley Hall and Sir Garfield Sobers of the West Indies must have been far from satisfied with their team's dismal performance on the final day of the second Test against Australia at the MCG on Wednesday. The Windies lost by 129 runs to go one down in the five-Test series. — AFP photo

Windies likely to axe Hooper

SYDNEY, Dec 31: Australia's 139-run victory in the second Test is set to cause some significant blood-letting in the West Indian cricket camp before the third Test starting at the Sydney Cricket Ground here Saturday, reports AFP.
Australia opened up a 1-0 lead in the five-Test series Wednesday after leg-spinner Shane Warne demolished the tourists' batting order with 7-52.
The West Indians forfeited their last nine wickets for only 76 runs in a little over two hours and changes are ready to be made with all-rounder Carl Hooper and wicket-keeper David Williams the likely casualties.
Hooper is causing most concern and captain Richie Richardson confirmed the talented Guyanese's position in the side was under threat after a lacklustre second Test performance.
The 26-year old scored three and a second innings duck, dropped three catches and took 0-104 from 38.4 overs with his offspinners.
Aside from his lack of runs, the manner of Hooper's demise was almost as damning. He threw away his second innings wicket with a wild pull at Warne, following some similar debacles in the one-day matches.
"We have got to do some thinking," Richardson said today.
"Hoops didn't quite look himself in this match. For whatever reason, I don't know why."
"He's been bowling a lot and perhaps he's a bit tired because he hasn't had a match off. Obviously, his performance



CARL HOOPER

He began his international career with an unbeaten 100 on a spinning wicket at Calcutta in just his second Test match. Yet after 34 Tests, he is still only averaging 27.61 with the bat.
While Hooper is at the crossroads, Williams will face a difficult task to hold reserve keeper Junior Murray out of the third Test side.
Murray has already superseded Williams in the one-day side because of his superior batting and Williams had a shocking game in Melbourne after missing three chances and making a pair with the bat. Williams spilled catches off

both Australian century-makers Allan Border and Mark Waugh early in their innings and also gave Waugh a second life after he missed a stumping chance.
In contrast, the Australian camp is settled after a long night of celebrating and had a day off from training today.
Paceman Craig McDermott is expected to shrug off his lingering thigh strain but number three batsman Steve Waugh is well aware that his spot in the side will come under close scrutiny.
As with Hooper, Waugh's talent has not matched results. Waugh has scored 10, 20, 38 and one in the series and said he realised Australia's victory had given him a one-match reprieve ahead of dumped batsman Dean Jones and promising young Western Australian Justin Langer.
"I'm probably where I was at the start of the series in that I need to score run," Waugh said.
"I felt pretty confident in the first innings in Melbourne and I was pretty annoyed to get out when I did."

Wright's bad luck

HAMILTON, Dec 31: New Zealand opener John Wright has pulled out of Saturday's cricket Test match with Pakistan after suffering a broken finger, team officials said Thursday, reports AP.
Former captain Wright, 38, broke the finger during his century for Auckland against Canterbury at Lancaster Park on Wednesday.
Wright, New Zealand's all-time top Test run-maker with 5,097, was to have started his 80th Test at Trust Bank Park on Saturday. Team officials have not yet decided on a replacement.

AC Milan: New year, new goals

LONDON, Dec 31: Runaway Italian league leaders AC Milan aim to start the new year the way they ended the old — with yet another record, reports Reuter.
Victory over AS Roma on Sunday would give the champions a seventh consecutive away win, a feat never achieved in the Italian First Division.
But history is on the side of the Romans. It was Roma who beat Juventus in January 1977 after the Turin team had reeled off six straight away wins.
Milan equalled that record with a 2-1 victory at Sampdoria on December 23, a result which made them the only Italian team to complete a calendar year without league defeat.
They have gone 48 league matches unbeaten.
With European footballer-of-the-year Marco van Basten still injured, Milan are expected to field French striker Jean-Pierre Papin and Dutchmen Frank Rijkaard and Ruud Gullit as their permitted foreign players.
UEFA Cup quarter-finalists Roma have found some league form recently with six points from four matches before the brief Christmas break.
They are expected to be without former Red Star Belgrade midfielder Sinisa Mihajlovic, who has a foot injury.

Milan, with 23 points from 13 games, lead the top-sided table by eight points.
As they disappear into the distance, chaos reigns below where only three points separate second-placed Fiorentina from Foggia, who occupy the fourth relegation spot.
Torino and Internazionale are level on 15 points with Fiorentina.
Danis winger Brian Laudrup returns after suspension as Fiorentina entertain Atlanta on Sunday.
Torino face a tough trip to Sardinia to meet Cagliari while Uruguayan striker Ruben Sosa returns after injury as Inter host Genoa.
England midfielder Paul Gascoigne will miss Lazio's trip to Ancona after injuring a thigh in training.
Gascoigne has flown home to be at the side of his father who is in hospital after surgery to remove a cyst from his leg.
Fellow Englishman David Platt, who recently underwent knee surgery, has not recovered to play for fifth-placed Juventus against Parma.
But Juventus welcome back gifted playmaker Roberto Baggio for his first appearance since suffering a rib injury playing for Italy in November.
Napoli, champions in 1987 and 1990 but threatened by relegation, must win their home match against bottom club Pescara. Third from bottom with just eight points, Napoli will be without suspended Brazilian striker Careca and defender Paolo Zilliant, who has knee trouble.
Though leagues in Germany, France and the Netherlands remain idle this weekend, Spanish football returns with victory beckoning for league leaders Deportivo Coruna.
Deportivo, at home to Espanol, have dropped just one point in their last seven home games. Espanol have only won twice at La Coruna in 21 visits.
History also points to victory for second-placed Barcelona who are on Celta at home. Celta, 14th in the table, last won in Barcelona 50 years ago.
But titleholders Barcelona must do without star Bulgarian striker Hristo Stoichkov, the league's top goalscorer with 15.
He faces a one-match suspension after being sent off in his last game against Rayo Vallecano.
Real Madrid, third in the table and three points adrift of Deportivo, play host to Osasuna.
Real are the only league team not to have dropped a single point at home this season. But coach Benito Floro will have to reorganise his mid-field with Michel Gonzalez suspended for a match, Croatian Robert Prosinecki doubtful with torn leg muscles and Chilean striker Ivan Zamorano also injured.

Blewitt signs for Lancashire

MANCHESTER, England, Dec 31: South Australia's opening batsman Greg Blewitt is to play Lancashire league cricket in England next season for Rishton, reports AFP.
They outbid several other clubs for Blewitt's signature as their professional for the 1993 campaign.

Connors says key to success is fun

NEW YORK, Dec 31: Jimmy Connors has his sights in a seniors tennis tour, reports AP.
"We have to crawl before we can walk," the 40-year-old Connors said, "but the most important thing is that all the players are interested in making this happen. Nastase, Borg, Vilas, Clerc, Tanner, all the players I grew up with."
"They key to making it a success will be more than playing good tennis. We have to make it fun and worthwhile for the fans. We have to make them feel like they're on the court with us. That's been the key to success of the senior golf tour. If we can make that happen, how can senior tennis not take off."
Connors' latest television commercial running in the United States shows him working on-court as hard as ever. The spot, for the pain reliever Nuprin, also features Chris Evert, who tells Connors, "Relax, Jimmy, have some fun. You can't go on forever." "Wanna bet?" Connors replies.

When minnows meet big fishes

LONDON, Dec 31: It's the time of the season the soccer giants dread and the little clubs dream of. The minnows meet the big fish in English soccer's Football Association Cup with Yeovil hosting might Arsenal and Marlow meeting eight-time titlist Tottenham, reports AP.
A sellout crowd of 8,900 will turn up at Yeovil where the semi-pro team has created upsets in the past. Their most notable victory was over a star-studded Sunderland team in the fourth round in 1949.
Although the feared nine-foot slope on the Huish Park ground has been leveled, Yeovil's giant-killing reputation remains. The team has posted on the road victories over two English league clubs, Torquay and Hereford, on the way to the third round.
Arsenal, a five-time cup winner, also won't want to be reminded they were eliminated in the third round last season by struggling fourth division team Wrexham.
Marlow, another team of semi-pro players from outside the football league, had agreed to switch the game to Tottenham's White Hart Lane stadium. The move means a much bigger crowd and more money for the club who are struggling at the foot of the Divisors League.
"Really, you're talking about what is no more than a village side taking on one of the biggest clubs in Europe," said Marlow's assistant manager, Laurie Craker. "If we were to win, it would be the biggest upset in the history of the Cup — bar none."
Another semi-pro team to make it to the third round is Marine, which visits Third Division Crewe.
But there may be upsets among the League teams.
Defending titlist Liverpool travel to Second Division Bolton and are suffering from a form nosedive. The Merseyside team was crushed 5-1 at Coventry last Saturday and then could only tie 1-1 at

home to Manchester City on Monday.
Aston Villa, third in the Premier League and a seventh-time cup winner, could be embarrassed at home by First Division struggler Bristol Rovers, now being managed by the colorful 65-year-old Malcolm Allison.
Fourth place Blackburn receive Second Division Bournemouth, and league champion Leeds host Charlton from division one.
Sheffield Wednesday have a tricky game at Cambridge from division one, Manchester City welcome Second Division Reading and Crystal Palace, now climbing away from the foot of the Premier League, travel to in-form division two team Hartlepool.
Ipswich, who have risen to fifth in the Premier League, should profit from a home game against Second Division Plymouth and Sheffield United hosts Burnley, also from division two.
Manchester United will not be in action because they await the result of a second round replay not in action because they await the result of a second round replay between Bury and Wigan before they know who they will play.
The third round draw have also thrown together some Premier League teams.

Manchester claims better weather than Sydney

LONDON, Dec 31: Manchester's Olympic bid organisers claimed on Thursday the weather in northern England was preferable to Sydney, their main rivals to stage the 2000 Games, reports Reuter.
As the race between the contending cities prepared to begin its final lap, Manchester organisers were reacting to reported comments by Barcelona 100 metres champion Linford Christie, in Australia for warm-weather training, that the British public were "disillusioned" with the Manchester bid.
The organising committee reached for the rain gauge and insisted the city's traditional image as the wet weather capital of England was inaccurate, while maintaining athletes would prefer the "lack of humidity" Manchester could offer.
"Perceptions of rainfall when we would host the Games are simply not borne out by the facts," the organising committee said in a statement.
Over the last 10 years, the total monthly rainfall has been 52 mm in July and 78.2 in August, compared with 75.1 in Sydney in October when they propose to stage the Games.
"Humidity in Manchester averages about 63 per cent and it is unlikely that Sydney will be as low. It was a great deal higher in Barcelona and will also be higher in Atlanta (in 1996)."
Manchester provides an excellent climate for maximum athletic achievement and spectator enjoyment.
The International Olympic Committee will choose the venue in September, with Sydney currently tipped ahead of Beijing and Manchester.
Christie was reported as saying the British public "are only hearing about Manchester's bid and never seeing concrete results."

Jansher ends the year on top

LONDON, Dec 31: Jansher Khan completed the successive months as the world's best squash player when he headed the new rankings issued by the International Squash Players Association here Wednesday, reports AFP.
The 23-year-old Pakistani ends 1992 by retaining the top spot after winning the British Open for the first time at Wembley in April and winning back the World Open in Johannesburg in September.
A bigger factor in Jansher's supremacy, however, has been his magnificent record throughout the whole year on the world circuit.
He was beaten only once in ISPA tournaments—when Rodney Martin overcame him in the Australian Open final in Melbourne in August — and he won ten titles altogether.
The first was the Leckes Classic in Cardiff in February, and it was followed by the Spanish, German, British and Singapore Opens, before his World Open success.
Then came the Dutch, European and Pakistan Opens before he completed his tournament year with the 21,375 dollar first prize at the Qatar International in Doha a week ago, the richest outside the world circuit.

Indurain, the Spanish cycling star who won the Tours of France and Italy in 1992, edged US track stars Kevin Young and Carl Lewis in the men's lists published by the widely circulated daily.
In the women's lists the Hungarian swimmer, a triple Olympic champion in Barcelona, beat Yugoslav tennis star Monica Seles — 562 to 553 points.
Indurain, who got 627 points compared with Young's 531, ended a long streak of track and field winners in Gazzetta dello Sport yearly surveys.
The Spanish ace had been also picked as the 1992 star by another leading Italian sports daily earlier this week.
The Olympic basketball champions of the United States, better known as the "Dream Team," led the teams standings with 297 points, ahead of European soccer champion Denmark and the Olympic 400-metre US relay team.
Italian skier Alberto Tomba, a triple Olympic champion, beat world cycling champion Gianni Bugno in the national lists published by Gazzetta.

handers from Adelaide is more than 400 points behind the Pakistani on the latest ranking. Dittmar has won two ISPA titles, and Martin, who is at number three, just one.
Brother Brett Martin climbs into the top four for the first time and an Aussie quartet in the top five is completed by Tristan Nancarrow.
The steady increase in the popularity of squash globally is shown by the inclusion of players from 13 different countries in the top 30.
Hansi Wiens becomes the first German to reach the top 20 with a jump of six places to No. 18.

Year's best?

MILAN, Dec 31: Miguel Indurain and Krisztina Egerszegi on Thursday were picked as the best athletes of 1992 in a survey by Italy's largest sports daily, Gazzetta dello Sport of Milan, reports AP.
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TOP 10

1. Jansher Khan (Pakistan)
2. Chris Dittmar (Australia)
3. Rod Martin (Australia)
4. Brett Martin (Australia)
5. Tristan Nancarrow (Australia)
6. Peter Marshall (England)
7. Chris Walker (England)
8. Ross Norman (New Zealand)
9. Sami Elopuro (Finland)
10. Rodney Eyles (Australia)

Abédi Pele owes it all to Goethals

MARSEILLE, France, Dec 31: Abédi Pele, African player of the year for the second successive season, says he owes a lot to Belgian coach Raymond Goethals, reports AFP.
The Ghentian was loaned out to Lille in 1988 after an unhappy first season at Marseille but brought back in 1990. However, Franz Beckenbauer was in charge at the time and the German preferred Philippe Verriyusse and Dragan Stojkovic.
He was given a free hand when the 70-year-old Belgian coach replaced Beckenbauer and has never looked back.
"I owe him and the team a lot. Now I look forward to winning the European cup with Marseille and qualifying for the World Cup with Ghana," he said.

Paris get Rai for \$4m

SAO PAULO, Dec 31: Brazil's captain Rai said here Wednesday he had joined Paris St Germain for four million dollars, reports AFP.
"I shall go to Paris on January 10 or 12 to settle the final details," he added.
Earlier in the day Atletico Madrid claimed the only thing stopping Rai from joining them was the size of his signing-on fee.
However, Rai's agent Manuel Barbosa, representing the French club, confirmed Sao Paulo concluded the transfer after five hours of talks which finished yesterday.
"Rai is a Paris player," he added.
He gets an 800,000 dollars signing-on fee, twice the amount Atletico Madrid offered. Sao Paulo get 2,680,000 dollars of the four million and the rest covers expenses, Barbosa said.
Rai Vieira de Oliveira, younger brother of former World Cup star Socrates, is not expected to play for Paris until next season.
Although the Brazilian season has finished Rai would not be available from mid May to the beginning of July as he plays for Brazil in a World Cup qualifying tournament and then the South American Championship.
Paris already have two Brazilian internationals, defender Ricardo and midfielder Valdo, and a Portuguese coach Artur Jorge.
Barbosa handled the transfers of Ricardo and Valdo who joined Paris from Benfica Lisbon.
Paris have been talking to Rai since he played for Brazil in a friendly against France in August but his two-goal performance for Sao Paulo against European champions Barcelona in the Intercontinental Cup in Tokyo attracted offers from other clubs.
RAI... \$4m
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