

Pak-Windies final one-dayer today

KINGSTOWN, St Vincent, Apr 2: Pakistani manager Khalid Mahmood admitted on Thursday he was concerned about the form of leg-spinner Mushtaq Ahmed and the squad's two young pace bowlers, Aamir Nazir and Ataur Rehman, reports Reuter.

Mushtaq, regarded as one of the most gifted leg-spinners in the game, made an impressive start to the tour with an eight-wicket match haul against Jamaica, but was dropped after a poor showing in the first two one-day internationals.

He is not bowling as well as he is capable," Mahmood said. The manager also said the experienced Nazir and 18-year-old rookie paceman Rehman were having problems with their run-ups, posing further worries for the team's bowling department which depends heavily on captain Wasim Akram and Waqar Younis.

The final one-day game is in Guyana on Saturday. The series is level at 2-2.

Schools handball

Sports Reporter

Last year's runners-up Shabed Nabi High School beat Rajarbagh Police Lines High School by 16 goals to 13 in the fifth Bata schools handball tournament at the Outer Stadium handball court yesterday.

Both teams were locked 6-6 after the first session.

Jamal Hossain scored five goals and Yusuf, Satter and Priyotosh got three goals each for Shabed Nabi School while Amtul Islam netted six and Zaman four for Police Lines School.

The other match between Bangladesh Ansars and VDP High School and Rahmatullah Model High School fell through when the latter failed to turn up.

COACHES' TRAINING

Meanwhile, a residential coaching camp for women handball coaches will be held from May 8 to 20 at the Bangladesh Women's Sports Complex in the city under the joint aegis of the Bangladesh Handball Federation and the Japan International Cooperation Agency.

Interested women coaches have been asked to submit their candidatures with two copies of passport-size photograph and as many stamp-size photos to the BHF by April 15.

1994 World Cup tickets sell well

NEW YORK, Apr 2: Organisers of the 1994 World Cup have completely sold the approximately 600,000 tickets allocated for the phase of the US ticket sale, US officials announced Thursday, reports AP.

The first segment of the plan to sell the roughly 3.6 million tickets for the quadrennial soccer championship ended Wednesday with the sale to the American "soccer family."

About 15 per cent of all tickets — 30 per cent of the 1.98 million set aside for US sales — were allocated at slightly reduced prices for registered members of the US soccer federation, officials, players, coaches, referees and those who had supported the US national team over the past few years.

Those tickets to the first and second rounds were exhausted at all nine venues, World Cup USA said in a press release.

The response to the sale was overwhelming and well beyond even our optimistic expectations," said World Cup chairman and CEO and US Soccer Federation president Alan Rothenberg.

Some of the approximately 35 per cent or 1.26 million tickets reserved for foreign distribution are available through tour operators who meet requirements set up by the World Cup subsidiary World Cup Travel Services.

Tickets for the first and second rounds will be available to the public beginning in June. Tickets are priced at \$400, \$265 and \$150 for a strip of five games at Chicago, where the opening game will be played, and dirs 355, dirs 245 and dirs 140 at Dallas; Foxboro, Mass.; Pasadena, Calif; East Rutherford, N.J; Orlando, Fla; Stamford, Calif; and Washington. The other site, Pontiac, Mich, has only four games, and strips cost dirs 270, dirs 185 and dirs 105.

Tickets for the quarter-finals, semifinals, third-place game and final will be sold starting in the fall, with prices ranging from dirs 55, to dirs 475. Tickets for individual games, if any are available, will not be sold until next February.

Of 3.6 million tickets, 2.3 million are being sold in the United States.



Karachi Airport Gymkhana's M Javed swings one to the long-on fence during the exhibition cricket match against Abahani Krira Chakra at the Dhaka Stadium yesterday. Javed contributed 75 to his side's 203. — Star photo

Abahani lose by a whisker

Sports Reporter

Nine runs to win from the last over. Batsman Khaled Mahmud Sujon waits for Karachi Airport Gymkhana bowler Aamer Hanif, whom skipper Rashid Khan has brought on from the Paltan end, not as a master stroke to cap a day's successful strategy but simply because the poor chap had to ask someone to get on with the unenviable job of bowling the last over with the batting side in clover, needing just nine runs for a win with four wickets in hand.

Sujon, the darling of the Abahani supporters only a few days ago when he dead-lifted his side to victory with a fine bowling spell against arch-rivals Mohammedans, moved to the leg side to make room for a stroke and the straight ball dislodged the balls; gusts of disappointment and shower abuse followed; Browning's The Patriot reminded.

Next a wide. A single for new man Babul. Then an in-faust attempt for a run and Babul is run out at the bowler's end. Akram Khan manages four off the last three balls to remain unbeaten on 32 made from 30 balls but his side Abahani Krira Chakra lose a match they should have won.

The relief, the delight of the visiting Karachi Airport Gymkhana team for having won their third exhibition one-day match by the barest of margins conjured a rare contrast for the mood of the crestfallen crowd, so aptly set against an ashen, cheerless late afternoon after a very humid, unpleasantly warm and humid day.

Ironically, Abahani made the most of the muggy part of the day. Chasing 204 for a win from 45 overs after having bowled out the tourists on a lovely batting strip for 203, the league champions were well on course when skipper Faruque and Akram Khan were batting.

The unflinching attack of the visitors was cruelly exposed by the two local batsmen sustaining the good work done by

opener Jahangir, and one-down Habibul Bashar Suman.

The wicketkeeper-opener had left after a fine 65 made off 104 balls with the help of four fours. Suman, one of Abahani's three borrowed players — the other two being Athar Ali and Saikat — played some elegant strokes off the backfoot to compile 32, before being stumped off the left-arm Ashraf.

Faruque sparked again, dispatching the toiling bowlers to the fence with disdain. A couple of close calls not engineered by the bowlers but by the impetuosity of the batsman did not drive home the message. After having made 52 off 65 balls, studded with four fours, Faruque fiddled with the most impressive of the tourists' bowlers — Zahid Ahmed and Aamer Hanif clung on to a catch at mid-off and Abahani's hopes of a win just nosedived after that. They finished on 202 for seven, one drift from Gymkhana's total of 203.

play their fourth exhibition match tomorrow against the BCCB Under-25 Eleven led by Amtul Islam Bulbul.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard of the exhibition match between Karachi Airport Gymkhana Cricket Club and Abahani Krira Chakra at the Dhaka Stadium yesterday:

GYMKHANA:

Kaiser Rashid b Anis 6
Rizwan-uz-Zaman c Akram b Babul 4
Aamir Hanif c and b Effe 43
M Javed c Jahangir b Babul 75
Zahid Ahmad lbw Effe 12
Saikat lbw Effe 6
Zafar Ahmad run out 5
Rashid Khan b Saikat 10
Tahir Nisar c Jahangir b Saikat 8
M Ashraf b Sujon 5
Pervez-ul-Hasan not out 1
Extras: (b 10, lb 8, wb 9, nb 1) 28
Total: (all out, 44 overs) 203

Fall of wkts: 1-13; 2-21; 3-113; 4-125; 5-157; 6-170; 7-180; 8-185; 9-201; 10-203

Bowling:

O M R W
Anis 5 1 24 1
Babul 9 0 37 2
Sujon 8 0 38 1
Athar Ali 3 0 17 0
Saikat 9 2 21 2
Effe 9 0 34 3
Shovon 1 0 14 0

ABAHANI:

Jahangir lbw Ashraf 65
Shovon lbw M Javed 0
Suman at Parvez b Ashraf 32
Faruque c Aamir b Z Ahmad 52
Akram Khan not out 32
Athar Ali run out 0
Sujon b Aamir 3
Babul run out 1
Anis not out 0
Extras: (lb 8, wb 9) 17
Total: (for seven wickets, 45 overs) 202

Fall of wkts: 1-13; 2-84; 3-123; 4-185; 5-189; 6-195; 7-200

Bowling:

O M R W
Rashid Khan 9 1 36 0
M Javed 4 1 13 1
Z Ahmad 9 0 23 1
Zafar Ahmad 5 0 29 0
M Ashraf 9 0 41 2
R Zaman 6 0 35 0
Aamir Hanif 3 0 17 1

Foreigners fare well in US nat'l's

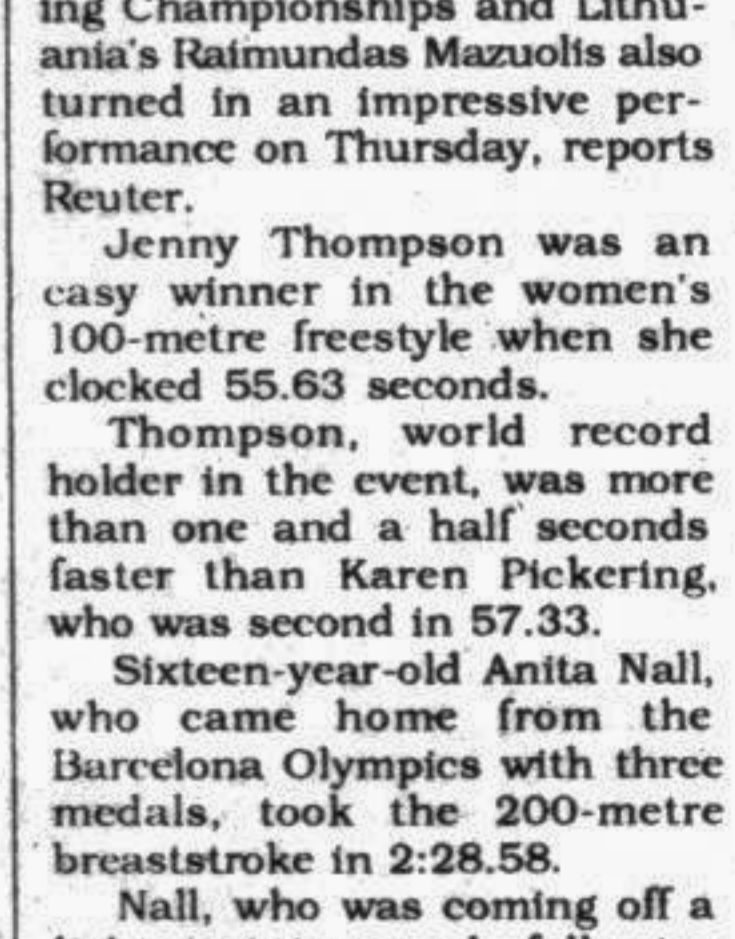
NASHVILLE, Tennessee, Apr 2: A pair of world record holders recorded victories at the US Spring Long Course National Swimming Championships and Lithuania's Raimundas Mazuolis also turned in an impressive performance on Thursday, reports Reuter.

Jenny Thompson was an easy winner in the women's 100-metre freestyle when she clocked 55.63 seconds.

Thompson, world record holder in the event, was more than one and a half seconds faster than Karen Pickering, who was second in 57.33.

Sixteen-year-old Anita Nall, who came home from the Barcelona Olympics with three medals, took the 200-metre breaststroke in 2:28.58.

Nall, who was coming off a light training week following an illness, did not go all out but also won easily in the event in which she holds the world record.



Mazuolis won his first major US national title since moving from Lithuania to Fort Lauderdale, Florida, four months ago with little money and sparse belongings.

The 21-year-old Mazuolis competed for Lithuania at the 1996 Atlanta Olympics.

Other foreign swimmers also fared well at the US nationals on Thursday.

Ugur Taner of Turkey won the men's 200 metre butterfly in a Turkish national record of 2:01.51. And Poland's Bartosz Sikora finished second in the men's 200 metre backstroke in 2:01.80. American record holder Royce Sharp won the event in 2:00.80.

The championships resume today and continue through Sunday.

Cycling results

Sports Reporter

M Aslam of Lafia Memorial won the schools 15 km race while Bangladesh Army's Abdul Aleem raced all the way to victory in the 30 km event in the Independence Day cycling competition held in the city yesterday.

Aslam finished the 15 km race in 26 minutes, ahead of schoolmate Anis. Aleem took 55 minutes to win the 30 km event, ahead of Dhaka Cycling Club's Zahid Chowdhury Suman, riding around the Suhrawardy Uddyan.

Kazi Abdul Allim, vice-president of the Bangladesh Cycling Federation, gave away the prizes.

There is more freedom to train in Fort Lauderdale," said his nation's top sprinter. Mazuolis said he is thinking about applying for US citizenship, but will probably compete for Lithuania at the 1996 Atlanta Olympics.

The team will play four games on the tour, but the Al-Qadisiyah newspaper, which announced that the Iraqi players were due back Thursday from a training visit to Bulgaria, did not give the opponents or dates.

Iraq are in the same Asian qualifying group as China, Jordan and Pakistan. Their first tournament is in Jordan in May and the second in Beijing in October.

While in Bulgaria, the team, coached by Adnan Derjal, drew 1-1 with Bulgarian First Division side Lokomotiv and won two other games.

Last year, the Iraqi sports authorities said there would be no foreign visits because of financial restraints caused by the international embargo against Iraq.

Wanderers win promotion

Sports Reporter

Dhaka Wanderers Club earned the right to play once again in the mainstream cricket of the country.

The city club with a long tradition which has produced quite a good number of cricketers as well as footballers over the years, yesterday registered a convincing 81-run victory over Bangladesh Boys Club in a play-off match of the Second Division cricket league at the Mirpur Pallabi Ground to qualify for the Mirnas First Division league next season.

Earlier, last month, Shantinagar Club B made it to the First Division by eliminating Nirman Schools XI in another play-off match to finish as the Group X champions.

Wanderers Club emerged the Group Y champions.

Wanderers' victory yesterday makes today's third play-off series match between Bangladesh Boys and Ajax Sports club unnecessary. Wanderers beat Ajax in the first Group Y play-off just before the Eid-ul-Fitr.

For yesterday's victory Wanderers owed much to their veteran skipper Jahangir who gave a superb all-round display.

First we went great guns with the willow making an invaluable 79 and then ripped through the Bangladesh Boys batting claiming four wickets for 10 from just 4.3 overs.

Jahangir beat his counterpart in the spin of the coin and elected to make first use of the pitch.

Wanderers amassed 213 for the loss of six wickets from their allotted quota of 45 overs.

Jahangir made an 80-ball 79, a knock embellished with eight hits across the fence and one over it.

Rana chipped in with 38 and opener Shaifque got 29 while Gouri remained unbeaten on 17.

Babla with three wickets for 31 was most successful of the Bangladesh Boys bowlers while Azad, Ujjal and Kamrul claimed a wicket each.

In reply, Bangladesh Boys were shot out for 132 in 27.3 overs.

Kamrul, the most successful Bangladesh Boys bowler, went one better with the bat by scoring 40.

Nasim made 21 while Shaifque, Sumit and Tushar scored 17, 12 and 11 respectively.

Bablec took two wickets for 23 for Wanderers. Gouri also claimed two scalps conceding 27 and Nasim and Rana got one each for 27 and 33 respectively.

Wanderers Club last played in the First Division league a couple of years ago.

But against Japan, who have already introduced semi-professional soccer and hope to stage the World Cup in the year 2000 — and the UAE who represented Asia along with South Korea in the last World Cup in Italy — the Bangladesh boys are unlikely to receive any favours.

Salahuddin, who will prefer a 3-5-2 formation against the two co-hosts, will definitely look to skipper Kaiser Hamid, Jewei Rana, Rezaul Karim Rehan, Masud Rana and Arif Hossain Moon of doing their

Team leaves for Japan tomorrow

Sports Reporter

With the Bangladesh national team all set to leave tomorrow, Sunday for Japan to participate in the 1994 World Cup Asian Zone F first leg qualifying matches, the talk of the town yesterday was not whether they would win or lose but how many goals they would concede to prove the bankruptcy of local football.

It was none other than coach Kazi Salahuddin, the star striker of yesteryears who, for from being optimistic, had pointed to this fact Thursday night when he told reporters that the local boys would adopt an ultra-defensive strategy during their first and second leg matches.

The second-leg matches will be held from April 28 to May 7 in the United Arab Emirates.

Salahuddin said that Bangladesh's only realistic chances lay against Sri Lanka but given an all-out effort by the boys we might even have a chance against the Thais.

Other players in the ranks are Barun Bikash Dewan, Alamgir, Golam Ghaus, Ataur Rahman Khan, Pjush Nandy, Arman, Md Rakib, Imtiaz Naquib and Mamnoon Joarder.

Salahuddin, while talking to journalists Thursday, said that all players were physically fit and he expected them to give of their best.

Salahuddin said he had so far received excellent support from the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) and none of the officials had interfered in any of his decisions.

About the performance of the national team in Qatar last week where they lost an exhibition game against Al-Arabi Sports Club, Salahuddin said that they were a much stronger side than the Bangladesh team.

"But our players performed upto the mark," said the coach. "Our opponents in the World Cup qualifiers are also very strong and so we will adopt a defensive strategy," Salahuddin explained.

Salahuddin, however, lamented the fact that his players had been out of competitive football for about nine months now.

"Of course, they have played in the seventh President Cup

bloody best in the defence, not to mention the abilities of the three goal-keepers in the squad — Mohammad Mohsin, Sayeed Hassan Kanan and Mohammad Ponir.

Also much will depend on the performances of Syed Ruman bin-Wali Shabbir, Rizvi Karim Rumi, Mamun Joarder and Saiful Bari Tito and Saityajit Das Rupu who will marshal the midfield.

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"Of course, they have played in the seventh President Cup

tourney in January and two exhibition matches in Qatar but that fact remains, these are not enough," Salahuddin said, adding "some more matches were essential for getting the rhythm back."

In Japan the local players will have light practice sessions, the national coach said.

A H Mofazzal Karim, Additional Secretary in-Charge of the Ministry of Textiles, who is also a senior vice-president of the BFF, will lead the delegation while the BFF secretary Sheikh Akmal Hossain is the manager.

Abdus Salam, who played for Brothers Union in his prime, is the assistant coach while three other BFF members will accompany the team as assistant manager and observers.

The team met State Minister for Youth and Sports Sadek Hossain Khoka at the BFF office yesterday.

Bangladesh will start their campaign by playing against hosts Japan on April 11 while they will play the boys from the emerald island on April 13. Bangladesh will meet co-hosts the UAE on April 15 and end their first leg competition on April 18 taking on the Thais.

Following is the two-leg fixture of Bangladesh's World Cup qualifiers:

First leg: in Japan
April 11: v Japan
April 13: v Sri Lanka
April 15: v UAE
April 18: v Thailand
Second leg: in UAE
April 30: v Japan
May 3: v UAE
May 5: v Thailand
May 7: v Sri Lanka

Tension mounts at AC Milan camp

PARIS, Apr 2: AC Milan's stuttering form has prompted inevitable talk of crisis as the Italian league leaders prepare for Saturday's visit of struggling Napoli, reports AFP.

There are signs that the pressure may be getting to Jean-Pierre Papin. The French striker said he would take no more spot kicks after missing a penalty in the Italian Cup.

St Etienne, who have ground out eight 0-0 draws in their last 12 matches, are certain to present awkward opposition for Marseille's strikers. Monaco has an easier game, visiting seventh place Strasbourg.

No French team has ever won a European club trophy, but the progress this season of Paris St Germain, Auxerre and Marseille has again raised hopes of a breakthrough.

This unprecedented success, however, has created the problem of fixture congestion.

That the English league knows all about.

"When I wonder how we are going to survive the month of May, all I can do is pray," said Paris coach Artur Jorge, whose team is still unable to fix a date for their UEFA Cup semifinal with Juventus.

In Germany, second place Werder Bremen will look to new Zealander Wynton Rufer, the Bundesliga's joint top scorer with 12 goals, to help them to victory over mid-table

Van Basten to miss England-Holland WC qualifier

MILAN, Apr 2: Dutch striker Marco van Basten, who has not played since an ankle operation last December, will miss his country's World Cup clash with England later this month, reports Reuter.

Van Basten's Italian club AC Milan on Friday ruled out a new operation but said he would need at least another month to complete his recovery.

England host the Dutch in a key European Group Two qualifier at Wembley on April 28.

Van Basten had been expected to return last month after surgery on his troublesome right ankle but his recovery has been slower than expected.

A consultation with surgeon Marc Martens in Belgium on Thursday showed further patience was required.

"The surgeon ruled out the possibility of another operation. He agreed with the Milan medical staff on a gradual rehabilitation programme for one month," Milan said in a statement.

"He reserved the possibility to see the player again in the first week of May," the statement added.

Runaway Italian league leaders Milan are expected to qualify for the European Cup final on May 26 and still hope Van Basten will be fit for that date.



JEAN-PIERRE PAPAN match in midweek. That goal cost Milan their place in the competition.

Perhaps the French captain is getting nervous about the imminent return of Dutch rival Marco van Basten, who kept the 15 million dollar star out of the Milan team at the beginning of the season.

Papin will not be reassured by comments made by his boss Silvio Berlusconi, who said that "without Marco, our attacking game changes totally. He can hold the ball, create moves and finish them."

Van Basten has started light training and aims to be fit for the European Champions final on May 26. AC Milan have not yet qualified for the final but remain hot favourites even with their problems.

On Sunday, second place Inter Milan go to Sampdoria in the belief that the Italian league title is not beyond their reach even though they are nine points behind.

High-flying Lazio welcome back Paul Gascoigne, scorer of England's second goal against Turkey, for their game at Italian Cup finalists Torino. Both clubs are competing for UEFA Cup places next season.

Enzo Scifo, Torino's Belgian

Knees let him down

OSLO, Apr 2: Norway's soccer-playing chess Grandmaster Simen Agdestein has quit the game with a knee injury and will now concentrate on chess, the Norwegian news agency NTB reported on Thursday, reports Reuter.

Agdestein, 25, decided to hang up his soccer boots because his knee still hurts after three operations.

"It's over. It's not healthy to continue playing soccer with my knee. I have to think of my health," he said.

Agdestein, who played with Norwegian First Division side Lyn, tore ligaments in his right knee in both 1991 and 1992.

The youngest chess Grandmaster in the world when he was 18, Agdestein has managed to combine soccer and chess, in which he is ranked 23 in the world.

"I'm going to concentrate on chess," said Agdestein, currently a political science student at the University of Oslo.

He played eight international games for Norway and national coach Egl Olsen rated him highly.

"Simen has probably made the right decision, but it's a great loss for Norwegian soccer. Simen had what it takes to get far as a soccer player," Olsen said.

Iranian soccer players were due back Thursday from a training visit to Bulgaria, did not give the opponents or dates.

Iraq are in the same Asian qualifying group as China, Jordan and Pakistan. Their first tournament is in Jordan in May and the second in Beijing in October.

While in Bulgaria, the team, coached by Adnan Derjal, drew 1-1 with Bulgarian First Division side Lokomotiv and won two other games.

Last year, the Iraqi sports authorities said there would be no foreign visits because of financial restraints caused by the international embargo against Iraq.



MARCO VAN BASTEN Kaiserslautern on Sunday.

Iraq booters to play in ROK, M'sia

BAGHDAD, Apr 2: The Iraqi national football team is to play a series of games in Malaysia and South Korea as part of preparations for its World Cup qualifying campaign, reports AFP.

The team will play four games on the tour, but the Al-Qadisiyah newspaper, which announced that the Iraqi players were due back Thursday from a training visit to Bulgaria, did not give the opponents or dates.

Iraq are in the same Asian qualifying group as China, Jordan and Pakistan. Their first tournament is in Jordan in May and the second in Beijing in October.

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Tyson's lawyer denies report

INDIANAPOLIS, Apr 2: Mike Tyson is learning about Islam in a prison study group but has no plans to convert to the religion, his teacher and lawyer say, reports AP.

Muhammad Siddeeq, a teacher in the Indianapolis public schools and a Muslim, said he had heard reports of Tyson's expected conversion attributed to a New York newspaper. The report said Tyson also planned to change his name.

Siddeeq is a volunteer chaplain at the Indiana Youth Centre, where Tyson is held, and other Indiana prisons and is also tutoring the boxer in algebra, prison officials said.

"I've heard the entire report and it is unfounded," Siddeeq said. "There's nothing in it that is correct."

Tyson is in a group of 50 inmates that studies Islam, mathematics and other subjects, Siddeeq said.

"My focus is to lead the prayer and to bring the teaching to the inmates," he said. "I've noticed that he is there. But it's been off and on for a period of time."

Alan Dershowitz, Tyson's attorney, also said Thursday the report was false.



A relieved Rashid Khan, skipper of the touring Karachi Airport Gymkhana, leads his side's march back to the pavilion after beating reigning Navana Premier Division champions Abahani Krira Chakra by just one run in an exhibition match at the Dhaka Stadium yesterday. — Star photo