

Sport

Div I hockey

Sports Reporter

Independence Day hockey champions Usha Krira Chakra stayed on the winning trail when they registered their fourth consecutive victory in the Green Delta First Division league over lowly Bangladesh Railway at the Hockey Stadium yesterday.

Quamrul Islam Khatun struck twice in the second half to ensure his side's unbeaten run. In the other match of the day, Dhaka Wanderers and Bangladesh Sporting Club fought for a 1-1 draw.

Humayun put Wanderers ahead in the 30th minute through a final field goal.

Ten minutes later, Biplob drew level again with a field goal.

TODAY'S MATCHES

Mohammedan Sporting Club vs Bachelors Club  
Abahani Crira Chakra vs Police Athletic Club.

Div II cricket qualifiers

Sports Reporter

Zinzira Cricket Club, Kalindi Krira Chakra, Dhaka Youth, Ibrahimipur Eleven and Probhati Krira Chakra recorded victories in their respective Second Division cricket qualifying tournament matches at five different venues across the city yesterday.

Zinzira Cricket Club registered a 71 run triumph over Joysonor Road Club at the Mirpur Pallabi ground.

At the Jagannath Hall cricket ground of Dhaka University, Kalindi Krira Chakra outclassed ACC by a single run.

Dhaka Cricket Coaching Centre lost to Dhaka Youth by four wickets at the Dhanmondi Club ground.

At the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium (west), Ibrahimipur Eleven outplayed Badda Jagaran by 77 runs.

Probhati Krira Chakra posted a nine-wicket win over Uttaran Cricket Club at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium (east).

Stubbe agrees to train Bangladesh national squad

A German-born soccer coach who is expected to train the national side for the ensuing SAF Games depicted a dismal picture of Bangladesh football, reports UNB.

Peter Stubbe, who is currently in charge of the Thai national team suggested a short-term plan for improving the standard of local football.

"Gold in SAF Games should be the immediate target for Bangladesh," the 49-year-old professional coach who has trained many countries, including Qatar, Thailand, Nepal and the 1974 Australian World Cup team, told UNB in a hotel here Monday.

Stubbe, who will be finishing his Thai contract in June, is expected to conduct a coaching camp for Bangladesh SAF Games team from July.

Not a day for Maradona

MADRID, May 24: Diego Maradona's much vaunted appearance as Sevilla's captain against Real Madrid on Sunday proved a whole-hearted disappointment as his team suffered an ignominious 5-0 defeat, reports Reuter.

With only four weeks of the season to go, a victory by Sevilla would have been a serious setback for Real Madrid's league championship hopes. As it is they stay level with Barcelona on 52 points each at the top of the table, although Barcelona are still ahead on goal difference.

Close marking by Real Madrid's defenders Miguel Chendo and Manuel Sanchez neutralised Maradona, who returned to the field last weekend after five weeks out with back trouble.

Sevilla played a defensive line-up with only Davor Suker up front, but Real Madrid's Chilean striker Ivan Zamorano broke clean through their defences with three goals in quick succession to become the season's top scorer.

Navy basketball

KAPTAI, May 24: The annual basketball championship of Bangladesh Navy began at BNS Shaheed Moazzam here this morning, an ISPR press release said, reports BSS.

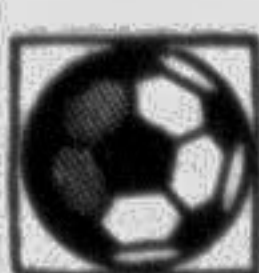
Eight teams from different ships and establishment of Bangladesh Navy are taking part in the three-day meet.

BNS Haji Mohsin beat BNS Issa Khan 67-47 in the opening match while Petrol Squadron defeated Khulna Squadron 70-66 and BNS Titumir had a 72-60 win over Frigate Squadron in the other two matches of the day.

Earlier, commanding officer of Bangladesh Naval Academy formally inaugurated the meet as chief guest.

MSC finish Group Two champs

Sports Reporter



Shekh Mohammed Aslam and Naqib struck once each in the last eleven minutes to see Mohammedan Sporting Club through to the semifinals as the Group Two leaders beating Brothers

In front of the 30,000 spectators, Mohammedans began the match with a well-organised game plan and pounded the Brothers defence time and again for goals but as luck would have it they failed to get one in the first half.

Captain Wali-bin-Rummonner for Naqib to volley home (2-0). Having conceded two goals in the space of only four minutes, Brothers Union became desperate and Mizan unleashed a couple of blistering shots in the dying moments of the game that pushed Kanan, the



Action from the crucial DMFA Cup round-robin league tie at the Dhaka Stadium yesterday. Mohammedans beat Brothers 2-0 to the Group Two. — Star photo

Union in the last round-robin league match of the DMFA Cup at the floodlit Dhaka Stadium last night.

The win earned Mohammedans not only a place in the last four but possibly also the passage to the final as the booters in black and white are heavily favoured to win against Arambagh Krira Sangstha in the second semifinal on May 27. On the other hand, Brothers Union are now faced with a daunting task of beating Abahani Krira Chakra, who have scored as many as 12 goals in their three group matches, in the first semifinal on May 26 to reach the final.

After lacklustre performances in their last two games, the booters in black and white, with a dominant thought of avoiding a semifinal clash with arch-rivals Abahani, produced a superlative blend of soccer against the Gopibagh outfit yesterday.

Sabbir, Aslam, Naqib each missed more than once in the 45-minute session to deny their side an early lead.

Brothers Union, who only needed a draw to finish atop Group Two, concentrated on defending their citadel instead of launching attacks on the opponents. The players in orange almost accomplished their goal until Aslam, who joined Mohammedans this year from arch-rivals Abahani, intervened to change the course of the match.

After being kept at bay by the Brothers defenders for 79 minutes, the eventual Group Two leaders got their first goal of the match when Aslam dived full length to head home a brilliant Sabbir cross (1-0).

Aslam's goal fired up the Mohammedan booters and four minutes later Sabbir, the media who orchestrated almost each of his side's attacks, floated in a well-measured cor-

Mohammedan goalkeeper, to the limit.

Referee S K Mansur was called into action three times in the match when he had to caution Tito and Arman of Mohammedans and Debashish of Brothers for foul play.

In the other match of the day, Agrani Bank posted a convincing 3-0 victory over Victoria Sporting Club, thanks to a pair from Pony, who came in as substitute.

Pony, who came in as a substitute for Akhter, struck twice in the second half after Jahangir opened the account in the ninth minute for the bankers.

STANDINGS

Following is the final standings of Group Two: (Tabulate under match played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, goals against and points).

Mohammedan SC	3	2	1	0	5	1	5
Brothers Union	3	2	0	1	5	3	4
Agrani Bank	3	1	0	2	5	5	2
Victoria SC	3	0	1	2	0	6	1

European Cup final tomorrow



MUNICH, Germany, May 24: AC Milan and Olympique Marseille each have ghosts to exorcise as the continent's two

outstanding teams meet in the European Cup final on Wednesday, reports Reuter.

The last meeting between the two, in March 1991, ended in defeat and disgrace for the Italians.

Trailing and with time running out in a European Cup quarter-final, Milan refused to complete the second leg match at Marseille's Stade Velodrome after a floodlight failure.

The French were awarded the tie with Milan subsequently banned from European competition for a season.

But that 1991 campaign ended in tears for Marseille too, beaten on penalties after a scoreless joyless final with Red Star Belgrade.

It was the continuation of a European curse on clubs from France, who have never lifted a trophy that was the brain-child of French journalist Gabriel Hanot.

"We won't repeat the errors of two years ago when we saw the title whipped from under our noses," Marseille president Bernard Tapie promised at the weekend.

Milan, for their part, have admitted that they would rather have avoided Marseille — for superstitious as much as

footballing reasons.

However, history is on the side of the Italian's bidding for their fifth European Cup title and their third in the past five seasons.

The star-studded Milan squad have created another record this season by winning all 10 games en route to the final — scoring 23 goals to just one conceded.

Marseille had a tougher passage but the team from the southern port city now have the wind in their sails, their splendid recent league form making a fifth successive French title a certainty.

Milan, like Marseille, need just one point from their last two league games to retain their domestic title.

But the Italians have looked jaded in recent weeks, notching just one win in their last 10 league matches.

They also have injury worries going into the final. European footballer-of-the-year Marco van Basten, who has started just two matches this year after ankle surgery, is suffering pain from the old injury.

He was left out of the team for last Friday's 1-1 league draw at Cagliari but vows to be fit for Wednesday.

"I want to play in Munich, whatever it costs," the Dutchman said.

But his compatriot Ruud Gullit looks unlikely to recover from this trouble, leaving the way open for former Marseille

striker Jean-Pierre Papin to play against his old club.

Milan are not due in Germany until Tuesday.

Marseille, who arrived in Bavaria on Saturday night, have no such injury doubts with tough defender Basile Boli restored to full health after a muscle strain.

Their Croat striker Alen Boksic is in rampant form and his total of 21 league goals this season has ensured that Papin has not been too badly missed.

The 23-year-old Boksic, coveted by the top Italian clubs, describes Van Basten as his "maestro" — his master.

"I only hope he can still say that on Wednesday evening, after the match," the Dutchman retorted.

PROBABLE TEAMS

AC MILAN: Sebastiano Rossi, Mauro Tassotti, Paolo Maldini, Alessandro Costacurra, Franco Baresi, Demetrio Albertini, Frank Rijkaard, Gianluigi Lentini, Roberto Donadoni, Jean-Pierre Papin, Marco van Basten.

OLYMPIQUE MARSEILLE:

Fabien Barthez, Basile Boli, Jocelyn Angloma, Marcel Desailly, Eric di Meo, Jean-Jacques Eydelie, Didier Descamps, Franck Sauze, Abedi Pele, Alen Boksic, Rudi Voeller.

Referee: Kurt Roethlisberger (Switzerland).



Scene from yesterday's Green Delta First Division hockey league match between Usha Krira Chakra and Bangladesh Railway at the Hockey Stadium. Usha won the match 2-0. — Star photo

It's Graham Gooch professionalism

Sports Reporter

LONDON, May 24: England skipper Graham Gooch will play in Essex's second XI for the first time in 19 years on Wednesday in order to get extra practice before the first Test against Australia starting on June 3, reports Reuter.

Australia completed a clean sweep of the one-day internationals when they defeated England by 19 runs on Sunday.

"Essex have no championship match between now and the first Test so I'm going to play for the seconds against Somerset at Colchester, a three-day game starting on Wednesday," Gooch said.

"The last time I played for the second team was 1974, but I like to bat in the middle rather than in the nets and it will give me some good practice."

"In fact there is a lack of cricket around this coming week," and some of the other England players are considering playing a second team game too.

"We have got to get our act together before the Test (Andrew) Caddick and (Graham) Thorpe did quite well during these one dayers, but overall we didn't bowl well enough in all three games."

Johnson leads Notts to victory

LONDON, May 24: Paul Johnson smashed a superb 167 not out as he led Nottinghamshire to a nine-wicket victory over Kent in the Sunday cricket league, reports Reuter.

In a match of 529 runs, Johnson's innings included seven sixes and 20 fours off only 106 balls.

Johnson shared in an unbroken second-wicket stand of 213 in 28 overs with skipper Tim Robinson (63 not out), and Notts reached their 265 target with 14 of the 50 overs to spare.

Trevor Ward must have thought he would finish on the winning side following his 131, his first one-day century.

Kent looked set for 300 but New Zealander Chris Cairns (6-52) took five wickets in 14 deliveries.

Things were done in a much more leisurely fashion at Worcester where the home side crawled to a four-wicket triumph over Somerset, who were dismissed for 99.

Stuart Lampitt and Neal Radford with three wickets apiece set up what appeared an easy target, but Worcester made heavy weather of it taking 41.4 overs.

Reefat needs a point more

Sports Reporter

When Reefat-bin-Sattar walks into the National Sports Council chess room this afternoon he will possibly have only one thought in mind and that of winning his thirteenth round match to retain the national title.

Reefat, who now needs only one point for his successful title defence, is four points clear of his nearest rival Niyamal Huq Niru, who earned seven points from 12 matches.

The defending champion, whose International Master status awaits FIDE's recognition, continued his stylish march to the title with yet another easy victory over Abdul Khaleque yesterday. In a game of French Defence, both players adopted Tarasch variation and after only 23 moves Khaleque resigned. It was Reefat's tenth victory in the meet.

Niru, a distant second after twelfth round, drew with his Ansars teammate Kalimullah Khan Kalam after only eight moves.

Former national champion International Woman Master Rani Hamid, must have rued her decision for not accepting Abdullah Al Raqib's offer for a draw in the 27th move as the three-time British Open champion was eventually forced to resign 11 moves later.

King's Indian Defence suited Khandaker Kayes Hassan well as the young Ansars campaigner pressed former national champion Rezaul Huq to resign on the 35th move. The win upped Kayes' tally to six and a half.

However, it was not that easy for Ziaul Qader Tuhin as Mahub Ali Ferdous of Feni refused to give in until the 58th move. Tuhin, playing with white pieces, adopted Sicilian Close system.

In an all-Dhaka Metropolis affair, Ali Amjad Mintu needed 55 moves to beat A N M Ruhul Quddus in a game of Caro-Kann system.

White pieces proved lucky for the Chittagong cerebral war-farers as both Rafiqul Islam and Omar Khaled registered impressive victories. Rafiq needed only 14 moves to get rid of Abul Kashem Bhuiyan while Khaled's tie with Saifuddin Labu was settled after 33 moves.

Critics open fire at England



LONDON, May 24: After seven defeats in one-day games and five in a row in Test matches, most team captains would be shown the exit door.

But this is cricket. And this is England.

Under Graham Gooch, England lost three one-day games to Australia in five days as their losing streak continued. They now have lost to Pakistan, India, Sri Lanka and Australia with six Tests matches looming against the Australians this summer, reports AP.

After Sunday's defeat at Lord's, the critics were firing at the team and the selectors Monday. But Gooch, who already has been named as captain for the first three Tests against the Australians, was not the main target.

Only two of the 10 British dailies, the Sun and Today tabloids, called on the 39-year-old opening batsman to quit. Gooch, who once scored 333 in one innings against India, has failed to score a half-century in his last 17 England appearances although he managed 42 in the 19-run defeat at Lord's.

London's evening Standard newspaper even said talk of replacing Gooch as captain was "irresponsible and counter-productive."

It said England's best chance of beating the Australians was under Gooch's

leadership. "He is the best we have," the Standard said. "It is ludicrous even to think of sacking him."

At least Gooch has decided to try and do something about his slump in form. Because his county, Essex, does not have a first-team game this week, he will line up for the second team against Somerset.

The critics said Somerset's uncapped opener Mark Lathwell should have been chosen for at least one of the games having been included in the squad. So should Middlesex batsman Mark Ramprakash.

Now observers are busy picking their own line-ups for the Test series against Australia.

It is widely tipped that Gloucestershire's Jack Russell will return as specialist wicket-keeper to allow Alec Stewart to concentrate on being a batsman only.

Neil Fairbrother, who batted erratically against the Australians in the one-day games, is likely to be left out.

What England badly need right now is confidence, the critics say.

"Beaten in their last five Tests and seven one-day internationals, losing is becoming a dangerous habit for England," the Daily Telegraph said after Sunday's defeat.

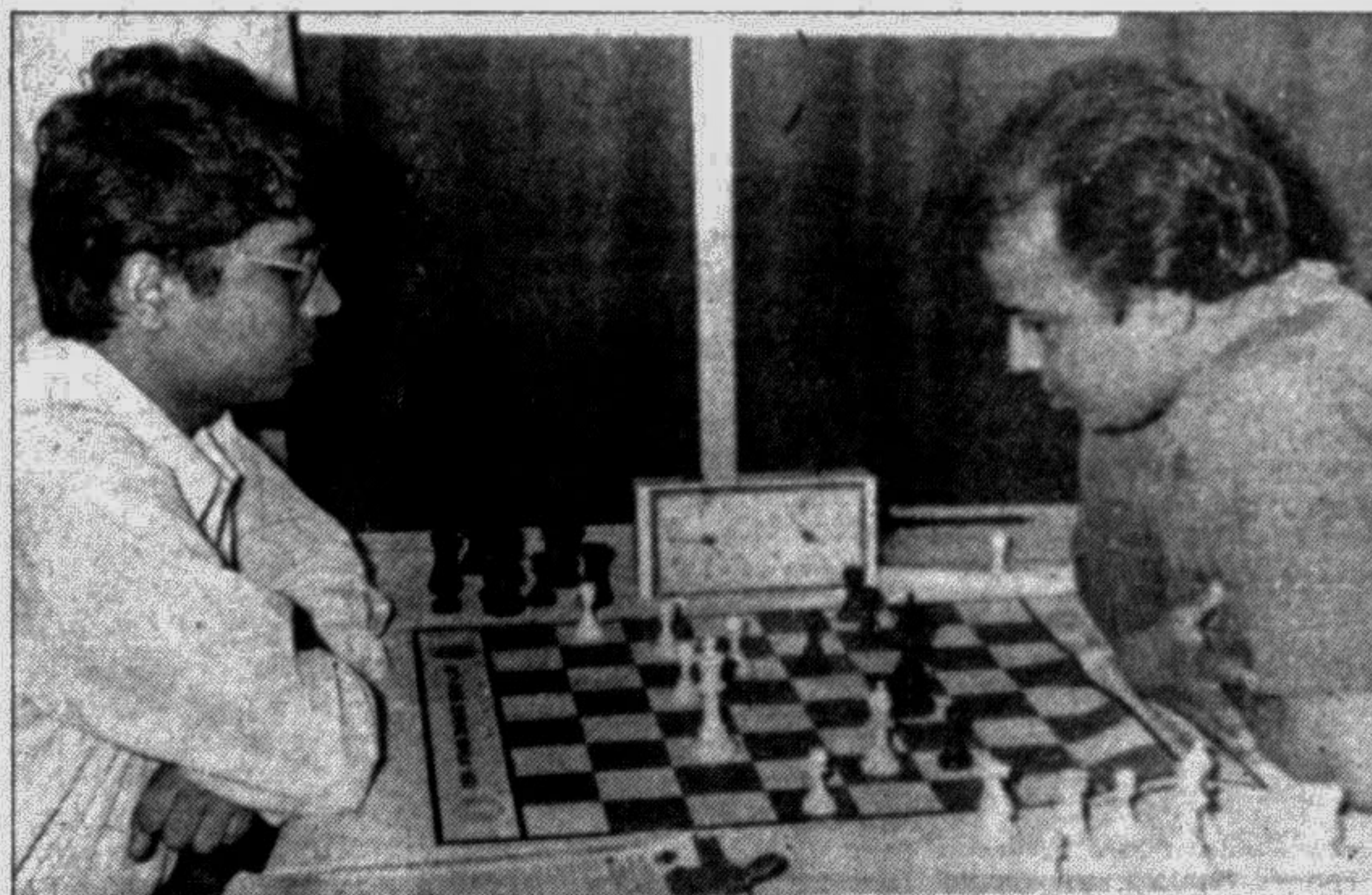
"Tidily as the Australians bowled, and well as they fielded, this was a game lost in the mind."

GRAHAM GOOCH

"It's 19 years since I've played for the seconds. But I'm the sort of player who needs to bat a lot and Essex don't have a game before the first Test in 10 days' time," Gooch said.

The critics' main targets were team selection and the fact that England twice had thrown away winning chances against the Australians.

In the second one-day game at Edgbaston, Birmingham, England scored 277 for five. But their bowlers failed to protect that score and Australia won by six wickets.



Mahub Ali Ferdous of Feni waiting for Ziaul Qader Tuhin's next move during the twelfth round match of the nineteenth national chess championship at the National Sports Council yesterday. Tuhin beat Mahub. — Star photo

Inter Milan's dreams dashed



ROME, May 24: Internazionale's hopes of catching Milan in the Italian league championship virtually disappeared on Sunday when they could only draw at home to Foggia after Uruguyan Ruben Sosa missed a penalty, reports Reuter.

With only two more games to play, Milan remain four points ahead after their 1-1 draw against Cagliari on Friday.

Inter now have only the remotest chance of pulling off a remarkable upset over the Italian champions.

Not only must they win the last two while Milan lose, they would also have to beat their city rivals in the play-off which decides titles and relegation in Italy when two teams end the season level on points.

Sosa, whose presence has been vital to Inter this season, scored after 27 minutes when he capped a deft dribbling run

with a sharply angled shot into the net.

Three minutes later Inter were awarded a penalty which Sosa converted — but then had to take again after the referee spotted an infringement.

To the fury of a packed San Siro Stadium, the 27-year-old striker missed the re-take.

Defending doggedly in the second half, Inter looked set to cling on to their lead but eight minutes from time Luigi de Agostini was sent off for foul play and five minutes later Foggia's Dutch winger Bryan Roy headed home.

The relegation battle produced a thrilling game in Florence where Fiorentina kept their hopes alive with a 2-2 draw against fellow strugglers Udinese.

Fiorentina, once fourth in the table, have faded badly in the second half of the season and now face going back into the Second Division for the first time in 55 years.

Both their goals came from German midfielder Stefan Effenberg after Udinese had gone two up before the break.

UEFA Cup winners Juventus kept themselves on track thanks to a goal by England's David Platt against Sampdoria.

Platt, dropped from the side which beat Borussia Dortmund 3-0 in the second leg of the UEFA final on Wednesday, scored in a goal-mouth scramble after a 47th-minute corner.

Sampdoria had gone ahead after only four minutes with a header from their ex-Yugoslav midfielder Vladimir Jugovic.

Another UEFA Cup hopeful, Lazio, failed to give coach Dino Zoff much to celebrate on his 100th match with the club, losing 2-0 to lowly Brescia.

The day's highest-scoring game was on the East Coast in a local Derby between Ancona and Pescara, both already relegated. The clubs scored eight between them, Ancona winning 5-3.

Barcelona, Real in dead-heat



MADRID, May 24: Spain's soccer giants Barcelona and Real Madrid stayed locked in battle royal for the league title

after scoring nine goals between them in big wins on Sunday, reports Reuter.

Champions Barcelona beat First Division new boys Rayo Vallecano 4-0 while Madrid went one better against Diego Maradona's Sevilla, thrashing them 5-0.

The results left the two leaders glued together on 52 points with four games left to play but Barcelona are ahead on goal difference.

Third-placed Deportivo in the Coruna, who led the table for much of the season, remain in touch, four points off the pace, after a 1-0 home win over Real Zaragoza.

The Galleitans know that Madrid and Barcelona will have to slip dramatically for them to have a chance of the championship, but at least Sunday's victory made absolutely sure of their UEFA Cup place next season.

Performance of the day was Madrid's demolition of Sevilla in front of more than 100,000 ecstatic fans in Santiago Bernabeu Stadium.

Their scintillating first-half

play, which brought four of their five goals, including a hat-trick for Chilean striker Ivan Zamorano, had Maradona himself singing their praises.

"Madrid had moments of real class which reminded me of the Milan of Arrigo Sacchi," said the former Argentine captain.

"The fact is they simply rolled over us and they have to be given all possible credit for a great show."

Zamorano, whose three goals moved him one ahead of Deportivo's Brazilian striker Jose Beteto with 27 for the season, agreed.

"We played a great first-half, especially one 20-minute spell which was magnificent. In the second-half our pace dropped a bit because of the effort of the first 45 minutes," Zamorano said.

Coach Benito Floro refused to be euphoric. "We should have scored twice more from dead ball situations. I am satisfied but not entirely satisfied," he said.

But he added: "It is true we played one of the most complete first halves of the season."

Barcelona's win over Rayo Vallecano in Camp Nou Stadium was almost as emphatic.

A comfortable superiority at

half time, through goals by Julio Salinas and Jose Bakero, was underlined in the second-half when Dutch defender Ronald Koeman scored first from a free kick and then with a penalty.

Coach Johan Cruyff said the champions, suffering a run of unconvincing form in recent weeks, were recovering their poise.

"We are better now than we were three weeks ago, and we still have a five goal advantage over Madrid," Cruyff said.

To score four against Rayo is not bad. Remember they drew in Bernabeu," he added.

Bayern beaten

BONN, May 24: Bayern Munich collapsed to a 4-2 defeat at Karlsruhe on Sunday but just clung to the German First Division lead, reports Reuter.

With two games to come, Bayern lead by a slightly superior goal difference from Werder Bremen, who beat Saarbruecken 4-0 on Friday.

Karlsruhe led 4-0 three minutes into the second half after striker Eberhard Carl scored twice in the first 34 minutes and Wolfgang Roffl and Rainer Schuetterle added further goals either side of the interval.