

Div I hockey

Sports Reporter

Sonali Bank beat PWD Club by a solitary goal in the Green Delta First Division hockey league at the Hockey Stadium yesterday.

The winners, who dominated almost the entire proceedings, shot into the lead when Nasim scored a field goal in the 22nd minute. The bankers forced as many as eight corners but could not increase the margin.

In the other match of the day, Police shared points with Bangladesh Sporting Club with both sides scoring one each.

In a seemingly fixed match Ruhul Amin opened the account for Police in the 50th minute with a field goal.

Rintu restored parity the very next minute in an identical manner.

Pak players for Usha

Sports Reporter

Usha Krira Chakra have roped in three Pakistani players to bolster their chances in the Green Delta First Division hockey league.

The Independence Day Cup winners yesterday signed mid-fielders Sarfraz Ahmed Khan, Taslin Usmani and forward Noman Zaidi.

After having won six matches in a row Usha drew two matches on trot, a fact that may have considerably dented their chances of winning the league title for the first time.

Eggs thrown at Samaranch

LAUSANNE, Switzerland, June 24: Twenty German anti-Olympic protesters were detained by police on Wednesday after eggs were thrown at International Olympic Committee (IOC) president Juan Antonio Samaranch, reports Reuter.

Swiss police said there were two incidents by opponents of Berlin's bid for the 2000 Summer Games during ceremonies to mark the opening of the Olympic Museum in Lausanne.

Some were held after the egg-throwing incident at the Town Hall and the rest were escorted away after chanting slogans of protest outside the museum as Samaranch was making a speech.

Eyewitnesses said the eggs missed their target.

Still he is on

COLOMBO, June 24: An ardent supporter of the Sri Lankan cricket team has brushed aside Indian criticism of his vociferous cheering and vowed to continue his noisy presence during next month's Test series, reports AFP.

Sri Lanka's one-man cheer squad Percy Abeyekera was determined to continue his verbal barrage from the boundary despite reported criticism of his conduct by Indian captain Mohammad Azharuddin, the state-run daily news said today.

Hemmings fined for going against Dexter

LONDON, June 24: Former England spinner Eddie Hemmings was fined an undisclosed sum by Sussex on Wednesday for a newspaper article in which he called for the sacking of Ted Dexter, chairman of the English Test selectors, reports Reuter.

Hemmings was also severely reprimanded and warned as to his future conduct.

The ex-England bowler, at 44 the oldest player on the county circuit, moved to Sussex after being released by Nottinghamshire at the end of last season.

Ambrose scolded

BRIDGETOWN, Barbados, June 24: Fast bowler Curtly Ambrose has been reprimanded by the West Indies cricket chiefs for misbehaviour during Pakistan's recent tour of the Caribbean, reports Reuter.

The West Indies Cricket Board of Control (WICBC) said in a statement on Wednesday that Ambrose had behaved in an "offensive and unseemly manner" at an official dinner in Barbados before and after the presentation to him of a commemorative medal.

A letter of apology had subsequently been received from him accepting that his actions had embarrassed the board and deeply regretting the incident, said the WICBC statement.

While taking this apology into account, the board has nevertheless written to Ambrose, censuring him in the strongest possible manner and issuing a warning that any recurrence of this behaviour will be dealt with severely.

Ambrose is playing for Northamptonshire in the current English season.



Action from yesterday's Green Delta First Division hockey league encounter between Sonali Bank and Public Works Department (PWD) at the Hockey Stadium. The bankers won the match by a solitary goal. — Star photo

A dull day of drawn matches

Sports Reporter

A second-half rally helped Public Works Department to notch their fourth point in three matches when they ended their Star Premier Division football league encounter against Muktiyoddha Sangsad with a one-all draw at the Dhaka Stadium yesterday.

PWD trailed the first half 0-1. Attired in red Muktiyoddha Sangsad drew the first blood in a non-descript match that never rose above mediocrity.

In the third minute PWD defence made a heavy weather of Mukti build-up and in the prevailing confusion in the danger zone, Samrat smartly drove the ball into the PWD net with an angular shot that gave no chance to the PWD custodian [1-0].

PWD, who resembled title aspirants Mohammedans or for that matter Arambagh in their black and white combination, retaliated two minutes later. Mushtaq, the seasoned striker who had scored two goals in PWD's 4-2 victory against Rahmatganj MFS in their previous engagement, however, sacrificed direction for power.

After a brief spell of mid-field tussle the match came alive momentarily with two quick moves following from each camp. Muktiyoddha's Swapan chased a long clearance from the defence and had himself advantageously positioned in the shooting zone but he lost his cool at the sight of the PWD custodian coming at him and blasted the ball over the bar in haste.

In the following minute PWD answered but Reza, the young player who showed some scoring prowess in the match against Rahmatganj with two goals, ballooned the ball over to make sure that all was quiet on both fronts for the remainder of the first half.

Both teams failed to justify their recently earned reputation following spirited shows against two traditional bidders for the league title with their second half performances. PWD were the first team to give the prelude of a tough league when they drew with reigning champions Abahani Krira Chakra 1-1 on the inaugural day. The very next day Muktiyoddha further touched up the emerging picture of the things to come with a highly commendable one-all draw with titans Mohammedans, keen on regaining league championship.

The only notable incident of a lack-lustre second half was PWD's equaliser, in the eighteenth minute of the match Mantu restored parity from a goalmouth melee (1-1).

Although PWD dominated most of the proceedings in this half, snug feeling of a point under the thick and rape quashed the possibility of a goal and quite expectedly the match petered out to a tame draw.

PWD have four points from three matches while Muktiyoddha have three from as many outings.

Earlier in the Star First Division league encounter, babes Bangladesh Boys shared points with fellow promotees East End Club but earned a bad name as their supporters manhandled one of the linesman to register protest against alleged partiality by the aide of the man in black. It all stemmed from a signal by the linesman which prompted the referee to disallow a 'goal' for offside.

East End were given an early lead when Selim's right footer of a neat minus by Mahmudul Huq Liton entered the Boys' net in the seventh minute of the match (1-0).

One minute before the short whistle Bangladesh Boys drew level after Montu latched on to a Swapan through to finish the ball in the East End net (1-1).

Pak hockey side off to M'sia

KARACHI, June 24: Pakistan's Malaysia bound 16 member hockey squad for the Champions Trophy left here Thursday for Singapore for practice matches, reports AFP.

The Pakistani squad is confident of winning the six nation 15th Champions Trophy world hockey tournament being played in Kuala Lumpur from July 3 to 11, said Khalid Mahmood, Manager of Pakistan hockey team.

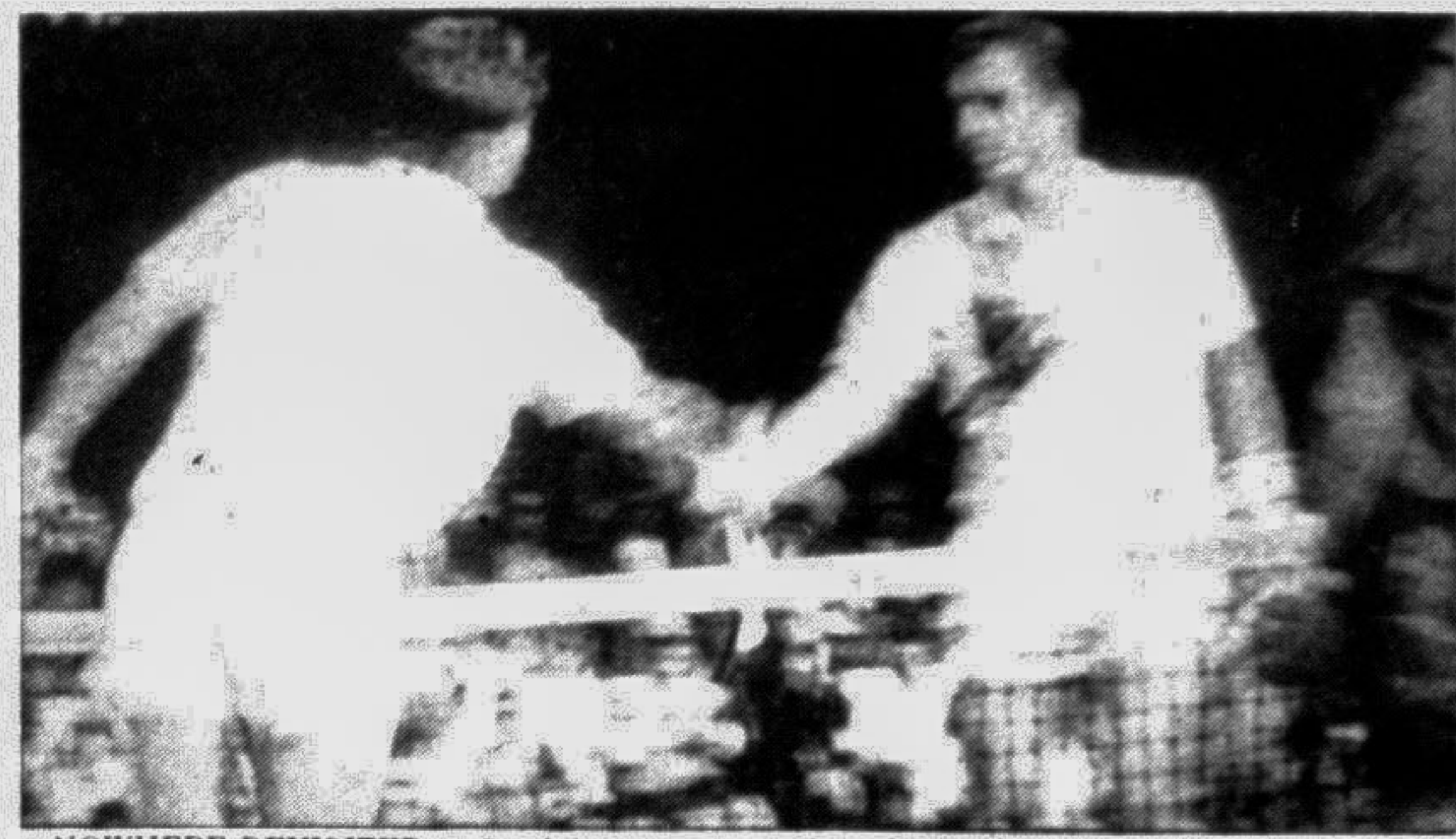
"Pakistan team is good enough to give a winning performance but much would depend on luck and combined performance on a giving day of the nine-day competition," he said.

The former Olympian nevertheless said Germany, Australia and Holland were equally capable of winning the trophy.

Spain and hosts Malaysia are also participating in the championship.

Pakistan side, which is expected to play three matches in Singapore before proceeding to Malaysia, is led by forward Shahbaz Ahmed. Wasim Feroz, another forward, is vice captain.

Other members of Pakistani squad are: Shahid Ali Khan and Mansoor Khan (goal keepers), Rana Mujahid, Khalid Bashir and Akhlaq Ahmed (full backs), Tahir Zaman, Mohammad Khalid, Khawaja Mohammad Junaid and Irfan Mahmood (halves), Mussadiq Hussain, Kamran Ashraf, Mohammad Shahbaz, Rahim Khan and Ahsan Mohammad Khan (forwards). Hanif Khan is coach.



NOWHERE REVISITED... Czech-born American Ivan Lendl shakes hands with his French conqueror Arnaud Boetsch after being beaten 6-4, 5-7, 3-6, 4-6 in the second round of the Wimbledon men's singles yesterday. It was former world number one's 14th futile attempt to conquer his only unconquered Grand Slam title. — Star TV photo

Once Agassi rolls, he rolls

WIMBLEDON, June 24: Andre Agassi began at the speed of a slow freight train but finished like a fast express to lead a parade of seeds into the men's third round at Wimbledon on Wednesday, reports Reuter.

The title-holder, again taking time to get into his match, could not have been more pleased at how he finished off Portugal's Joao Cunha-Silva 5-7, 6-3, 6-2, 6-0 after making a technical adjustment midway through the second set.

might lose because he hasn't played enough matches," Agassi's mentor said. Top-seeded fellow American Pete Sampras followed Agassi into the third round beating Jamie Morgan, a semifinalist at Queen's two weeks ago where he beat former Wimbledon champion Stefan Edberg.

Second seed Edberg and third seed Jim Courier had the day off but three-times champion Boris Becker continued to look impressive with a 7-6, 6-1, 6-3 triumph over Russian Alexander Volkov, who appeared to lose interest after victory over Briton Clare Wood, but two more seeds were beaten.

Switzerland's Manuela Malcova-Franiere, seeded 11, lost 6-3, 6-3 to Naoko Swamatsu of Japan and 14th seed Amanda Coetzer of South Africa went down 6-3, 6-2 to American Shaun Stafford.

Agassi cheerfully conceded to amused reporters that yes, he had indeed cut of some of his chest hair as Britain's popular newspapers had reported earlier this week.

"I guess you could say there is much less of it than there was before," he said. He added that he usually cuts it himself—"but if there are other options I'll have someone else do it for me."

"It makes me more aerodynamic," he added with a grin.

Agassi trailed 5-2 in the first set of his opening match against German Bernd Karbacher on Monday before winning the set 7-5 and the match in straight sets, and against the 119th-ranked Cunha-Silva he again got off to a rocky start.

"I had no rhythm on my serve or return. I felt everything I counted on wasn't there at the start," he said.

He said the adjustment he made was to move in on Cunha-Silva's serve. He was forcing me to come up with almost impossible angles to hit passing shots. So I took his serve a little earlier and it made all the difference in the world.

He added that he felt good but lacked a little intensity in responding to the ball. "But that will come with more matches," he said.

Fourth seedbecker had perhaps the best victory of the five leading men's seeds in action as his opponent, Volkov, is ranked 20th in the world.

Morgan is ranked 58th, Elting 81st and Stolle 124th. Stolle, son of Australian great Fred Stolle, has won only one match this year but perhaps he was waiting for grass, his best surface.

"His serve gave me a lot of trouble and I wasn't moving very well returning," Stich said.

Stich, winner at Queen's 10 days ago and favourite in many eyes here, won the second set handily to square the match but dropped his serve early in the third. Two successive breaks in the ninth and 11th games gave him that set and at 4-4 in the fourth set he broke Stolle again.

Of the other victorious women's seeds, number seven Jennifer Capriati dropped the opening set for the second time. But the 17-year-old American moved up a gear to dispose of Australian Liz Smylie 4-6, 6-3, 6-2.

Arantxa Sanchez-Vicario of Spain, seeded third, put out Latvian Larisa Neiland 7-6, 6-0 and Spanish sixth seed Conchita Martinez survived 6-1, 4-6, 6-1 against Judith Wiesner of Austria, a seed in former years.

Becker or Stich, who'll it be?

LONDON, June 24: This year's men's singles title at the Wimbledon championships could well be decided by the outcome of Boris Becker's quarter-final with his fellow German Michael Stich, reports AFP.

On the evidence so far, whoever wins will be extremely difficult to stop.

Becker's form so far will have sent shivers running down the spines of Pete Sampras and Stefan Edberg, the other major contenders for the crown held by Andre Agassi.

Becker, aiming for his fourth title here, set out at the start of the year with the aim of grabbing back the world number one spot.

He looked on course with wins in Doha and Milan until a combination of illness and injury kept him out for nearly two months. Leaving him out of condition and laying the ground for a disastrous run on clay—he won only five games in six tournaments.

But back at the scene of his greatest triumph and with grass under his feet, Becker has quickly recovered his zest for the game.

Now 25, Becker believes he played the best tennis of his life to win his second title at Wimbledon in 1986 and it is an ominous sign for his rivals that he believes he is once again close to that level.

Course on sports medicine on

A training course on sports medicine for the national coaches began here at the National Sports Council conference room yesterday, reports UNB.

State Minister for Youth and Sports Sedek Hossain inaugurated the two-day programme organised by the Bangladesh Association of Sports Medicine (BASM).

Secretary of the Ministry for Youth and Sports M Azizul Haque, president of BASM Prof Rashiduddin Ahmed and general secretary Dr Kanak Kanti Barua also addressed the inaugural function.

Fifty-four national coaches representing about 20 national federations and organisations including Bangladesh Krira Shiksha Protisthan (BKSP) are taking part in the training.

Maradona heads home amidst speculations

SEVILLE, Spain, June 24: Argentina's Diego Maradona has headed home to Buenos Aires, bringing the curtailed down to a dismal comeback to top flight football, reports AFP.

The former Argentine skipper boarded a plane here on Wednesday night, accompanied by his wife Claudia and daughters Dalma and Gianina, but not before delivering a blistering attack on his former club.

Sevilla, bitterly disappointed with Maradona's performances and his dislike of training, said on Monday they would not be paying the last 1.125 million dollars, slice of his contract.

"Sevilla's officials haven't disappointed me — they are not my friends," he told sports daily Marca.

"First of all they say one thing, then they stab you in the back... I've earned every peseta that I've been paid here."

"When they say that I wasn't going to training, just let them ask the club doctor how many times he had to give me injections so that I could play."

"How many times did my heart and my head tell me to play but my legs said the opposite — and yet I'd still play."

The 32-year-old return to football here last September after being banned for 15 months because of a cocaine habit. He had failed a drugs test while playing for Napoli in the Italian calcio.

Meanwhile, transfer speculation over Maradona remains unabated and has now moved to Japan.

As an unlikely bid from English First Division club Birmingham City looked doomed on Thursday, after Maradona's agent demanded six million dollars for the move, Japan's fledgling J-League became the next talking point.

Maradona has now been linked with the Urawa Reds. Birmingham's owner, David Sullivan, was willing to put 1.5 million-pounds into an attempt to sign Maradona.

The Blues' managing director, Karren Brady, said "When we first started talking I thought that we had a 50-50 chance of signing Maradona. Now it's down to 10-90."

"If the Japanese want to pay any price to sign him then obviously we can't match that."

Aussie batsmen reap rich

OXFORD, June 24: Australian opener Michael Slater, a century-maker in their Lord's Test triumph, lashed a hundred before lunch against the combined Universities on Wednesday, reports Reuter.

Slater (111), Damien Martyn (138 not out) and Mathew Hayden, who missed his hundred by two runs, spurred the touring team to 388 for five declared.

The Combined Universities were 107 for two at the close on the opening day of the three-day match.

Slater, who plundered 152 off England last Thursday in the second Test which Australia won by an innings and 62 runs, reached three figures off 113 balls, striking 15 fours.

He became the first Australian tourist to hit a hundred before lunch on the first day of a match since Bob Cowper's century against T N Pearce's XI at Scarborough in 1964.

Slater was then caught in the first over after lunch, having put on 189 with Hayden. Martyn, whose century came off 87 balls and contained two sixes and 14 fours, faced only 112 deliveries altogether for his unbeaten 138.

Fast bowler Wayne Holdsworth struck an early blow after the declaration, having Jason Gallian lbw for one, but Richard Montgomerie (52) and Russell Cate added 79 for the second wicket.

Scoreboard on the first day of the three-day match between Combined Universities and Australia on Wednesday:

AUSTRALIA: First innings Hayden c Windows b Gallian 98 Slater c Gallian b Pearson 111 Martyn not out 138 Julian b Hallett 1 Zoehrer c and b Hallett 4 Warner lbw b Hallett 5 Waugh not out 29

Extras: (b-2) 2 Total: (for five wickets, declared) 388

Fall of wickets: 1-189; 2-260; 3-261; 4-270; 5-283 Did not bat: Taylor, Reiffel, May, Holdsworth

Bowling: O M R W Hallett 19 1 85 3 McDonald 10 1 68 0 Gallian 13 0 62 1 Person 20 1 107 1 Snape 11 1 64 0

COMBINED UNIVERSITIES: First innings Montgomerie st Martyn b Warner 52 Gallian lbw b Holdsworth 1 Cake not out 33 Lovell not 7

Extras: (b-2, lb-2, nb-10) 14 Total: (for two wickets) 107 Fall of wickets: 1-15, 2-94 To bat: Snape, Windows, Wileman, Shephard, Hallett, McDonald, Pearson

Bowling: O M R W Holdsworth 8 1 18 1 Julian 7 0 40 0 Reiffel 5 1 17 0 Zoehrer 8 2 21 0 Warner 4 1 7 1

MEXICO IN QTRS Away at Portoviejo, Mexico qualified for the quarter-finals but only after being held to a scoreless draw by lightly-regarded Bolivia in a game devoid of excitement.

Mexican goalkeeper Jorge Campos provided the match's few bright spots with his eccentric style and dazzling pink uniform.

Bolivia, eliminated by the result, had three clear chances for a shock win.

Mexico's Ignacio Ambriz cleared a Marco Etcheverry shot off the line in the first half, Bolivia's Carlos Borja was sent clear in the 57th minute but sent his shot flying widely of the goal and Luis Cristaldo nearly scored direct from a corner in the 87th minute, but Campos just managed to tip the ball over the crossbar.

Mexico had to wait until the 88th minute for their only real chance when the otherwise anonymous Hugo Sanchez had a header saved by goalkeeper Ruben Rojas.

Colombia controlled on-tos with Carlos Valderrama and Rincon pulling the strings and forwards Victor Aristizabal and Adolfo Valencia looking for spaces to break through towards goal.

Argentina played far better than their poor game against Mexico, but their passing was less accurate than the Colombians early on.

Rincon was tracked by Argentine captain Oscar Ruggeri inside the box as he bore down on Goycochea with a good chance of increasing Colombia's lead.

Valderrama, the "Blonde Gullit," set up a chance for Herrera whose shot was blocked by Ruggeri.

Argentine winger Ramon Medina Bello Forced Cordoba into two vital saves, one in each half.

When Redondo won more ball in midfield Argentina came close with several chances and claimed a penalty, not awarded, when defender Alexis Mendoza appeared to deflect a header by Jorge Gorelli with his hand.

The match deteriorated after the sendings off with little goalmouth action.

Goycochea dived to catch a well-placed free kick by Wilson Perez in the 70th

minute.

Argentina's Gustavo Zapata, Leo Rodriguez, Ruggeri and Simone and Colombians Gabriel Gomez and Herrera were booked.

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