



A scene from yesterday's Star First Division football match between Sadharan Bima and Adamjee Sports Club at the Dhaka Stadium. Bima won the match by two goals to nil. — Star photo

Hockey league resumes today

Sports Reporter
The Green Delta First Division hockey league resumes today with the remaining part of the ill-fated, unfinished July 7 match between Abahani and Usha scheduled for a one o'clock start at the Hockey Stadium.

Two routine matches will follow this 'fragmented' match. Azad Sporting and Bachelors Sporting Club will fight it out in the first match at 2:15 pm. Railway will take on PWD in the second match scheduled for a 4:15 pm start.

The league was suspended from July 8 after the crucial league match between Abahani and Usha ended in a fiasco as players engaged in a brawl after 39 minutes of play.

Active chess

Sports Reporter
Seven players led the points table with four points each at the end of the fourth round of the Ganges Travels Active Chess Championship at the chess room of the National Sports Council.

Niamul Haq Niru of Ansars, Sayefuddin Lavlu of BTMC, Hasibul Hassan Hanif and Jahangir Ahmed of Dhaka University, Shawkat Hossain Pallab and Aminul Islam of Chalandika and Taiyabur Rahman Suman of Pany are seven joint sharers of the top slot.

Bollettieri no longer Agassi's coach

NEW YORK, July 10: Last year's Wimbledon champion Andre Agassi has been dropped by the coach Nick Bollettieri, the New York Times reported on Saturday, reports Reuter.

Bollettieri, 61, resigned as Agassi's coach by letter, saying he distance between them made his job too difficult.

To help him get back to where he used to be which was number three in the world, there would have to be close contact," Bollettieri, 61, told the Times.

Agassi, 23, lives in Las Vegas, Nevada, while Bollettieri's base is his tennis academy in Bradenton, Florida.

"There's a space between us," he told the Times. "It's not like it used to be. Whether he'll ever reach his greatest potential, no one knows."

Bollettieri has coached the struggle-aided tennis heart-throb for the past ten years. Agassi dedicated his 1992 Wimbledon title to his coach and his father.

However, Agassi has been getting tennis advice on an informal basis from former world number one John McEnroe and when entertainer Barbra Streisand became part of his support group too, Bollettieri felt displaced, according to the Times.

At this year's Wimbledon, Agassi, who had been fighting a wrist injury, was seeded eight. Although a clear favourite with the crowds, he was knocked out in the quarter-finals by eventual winner Pete Sampras.

His ranking has dropped to 22nd in the world, the first time he has been below 20 since early in 1988.

"I gave more of my life to Andre than I did to any other student," Bollettieri told the Times. "I knew he was different and I let him remain different. And I'm sure that's why we were together so long and achieved the results we did...."

Famous Bollettieri students in 35 years of tennis include Carling Bassett, Aaron Krickstein and Monica Seles.

First victory for Victoria

Sports Reporter
Victoria Sporting Club celebrated their first victory in Star Premier Division football league when they beat giant-killers Wari Club 2-0 at the Dhaka Stadium yesterday.

The winners, who gave first sign of light at the end of the tunnel in their previous match against Muktiyoddha, led the first half one-nil.

Having suffered four defeats in consecutive matches Victoria snatched a point from Muktiyoddha last week to mark their revival. Bolstered by the success they did one better yesterday and romped home with full points for the first time in this year's league. The long sought victory was doubly

satisfying as it came against a side that enjoys awesome reputation having handed fancied Brothers Union a shocking defeat and snatching a point off champions Abahani Krira Chakra.

Playing all-out soccer for obvious reasons, victoria took the lead in the 21st minute of the match when Zahir found the net off a fast build-up (1-0).

Jewel confirmed victory for Victoria midway through the second half when he put the ball into the net 20 minutes into the second half (2-0).

Victoria Sporting Club have topped their tally to three from six matches. Wari, who now seem to have run out of the early drive, remain on six from as many matches.

BIMA WIN

Sadharan Bima Krira Sangstha recorded comfortable two-nil victory against Adamjee Sports Club in the Star First Division football league encounter played earlier at the same venue yesterday.

Biswajit put the winners ahead 25 minutes into the second half.

Jahangir doubled the margin three minutes later to ensure win for the insurancemen.

The win raises Sadharan Bima's collection to five from six

outings while Adamjee remain at the bottom of the points table with two points from six matches.

TODAY'S MATCHES

Dhanmondi vs East End (4:30)
Brothers vs PWD(6:30)

Khulna DSA soccer

KHULNA, July 10: Mongla Port defeated Abahani Krira Chakra 2-1 in K D S A football tournament at the local stadium this afternoon, reports BNA.

Mongla Port led 1-0 in the first half with a score from Badal who shot the ball from D area at 27th minute. In the second half Wadud of Mongla netted the ball when Abahani custodian repulsed a penalty shot of Badal. Twenty minutes later, Hanif returned one for Abahani.

Meanwhile, some frenzied fans started throwing brick-bats towards the players and the referee Ehasanul Haq was forced to suspend the match for five minutes. Yunus of Mongla and Shaah of Abahani received yellow cards for making fouls.

Young Muslims, the last year's champions, will be up against Land Customs tomorrow.

Easy win for Japan

KOBE, Japan, July 10: Japan coasted to an easy straight-sets victory over Germany in a Group A match of the 12-team World League men's volleyball tournament here Saturday, reports AFP.

The Japanese squad, without its ace spiker Yuichi Nakagachidue to a foot injury, needed only 69 minutes to score a 3-0 (15-2), 15-3 (15-10) win over the struggling Germans.

Both teams have now identical seven wins against eight losses in the six-team preliminary competition, led by front runners Russia.

"We expected a tough match on our home ground against the Germans. I don't think we defeated them. They just self-destructed," said Japan's head coach Seiji Oko.

Meanwhile, Germany's coach Igor Prielozny said: "We played the worst game in the World League tournament. There are several reasons why we lost the match, but I don't want to tell you, because it will make an excuse."

The two teams will play each other again on Sunday.

Cuba beat ROK 3-0

SEOUL, July 10: Cuba easily beat South Korea 3-0 in a world league volleyball Group B match here Friday, reports AFP.

Set scores were 15-10, 15-7, 15-10.

Cuba thus registered 13 wins against two losses, and South Korea five wins against 10 defeats.

They play their second match today.

North Korea not to host ITT meet

TOKYO, July 10: North Korea has cancelled plans to host an international table tennis meet because of "domestic reasons," Kyodo news service quoted Japanese sports officials as saying Saturday, reports AFP.

Table tennis officials in North Korea did not clarify the reasons for the sudden cancellation of the invitational, which was to open August 5 in Pyongyang, the Japan Table Tennis Association officials were quoted as saying.

North Korea decided "Tuesday not to participate in the summer Universiad reportedly because of a feud between President Kim Il-Sung and his son and heir apparent Kim Jong-Il, according to South Korean press reports.

The international sports event opened in New York Thursday.

Kim Jong-Il reportedly made the decision without consulting his father.

Azhar expects a clean series

COLOMBO, July 10: India is looking forward to a clean series against Sri Lanka and is hoping to record their first overseas win in seven years in the coming three-Test series, team captain Mohammad Azharuddin said Saturday, reports AFP.

"My team is really looking forward to playing in Sri Lanka. We will try to make sure the game is the winner in the end," Azharuddin told a news conference held under tight security here.

"I really don't like controversies in this game. I hope this tour would bring both countries together in all respects," said Azharuddin, who arrived here Friday with his 16-strong Indian squad.

He said that he was "positive" about expecting a clean series in Sri Lanka. The Indians play three Tests and three one-day internationals

during their five-week tour. Team manager Ajit Wadekar said that India would try to reverse its fortunes abroad by



M AZHARUDDIN winning in Sri Lanka and noted that all Test sides had suffered his country's fate of having to go through winless

overseas tours. "This" is a phase everyone goes through... it is like a wheel with its ups and downs. I am sure it is going up now (for India)," Wadekar told reporters.

India's last overseas Test win was over England at Headingley in 1986.

Wadekar also called for a non-controversial series and said they had nothing to complain about.

Wadekar acknowledged that umpiring decisions had marred previous tours, but India had not requested for neutral umpires for the current tour.

"Of course there used to be a lot of controversies. But I think that was because of the lack of experience on our part of umpires," he said.

Azharuddin, who led his country to a superb 3-0 home series win over England earlier in the year, declined to rate India's chances but said he was very confident.

England finally manage a win

HAARLEM, Holland, July 10: England managed to win their first cricket international for four-and-a-half months — even if it was only against minnows Holland, reports AFP.

Yet Mark Benson's XI were under strict orders to take the match seriously after England's fiasco four years ago against the Dutch, when a side led by former Somerset star Peter Roebuck lost a one-day match in Amsterdam.

Nasser Hussain, who played in that defeat, repeated his Ashes form at Trent Bridge by hitting 52 from 33 balls, with two sixes and five fours, to set up a 128-run win.

Half centuries from Benson (61) and Trevor Ward (53 from 57 balls) also helped set up the win.

Hussain said: "Four years ago we were a bit naive, coming over here expecting to win by right."

The 25-year-old batsman, who made 71 and 47 not out against Australia at Nottingham in his first Test for more than three years, adapted quickly to



NASSER HUSSAIN the batting pitch on which the ball can often bounce disconcertingly. Holland's batsmen ever

looked capable of matching England's 238 for five, and England manager Keith Fletcher was left to reflect on his first victory since England beat India in a one-day international against India at Jamshedpur back on March 1.

Fletcher said: "We were up at 6 am for our flight from Heathrow this morning but I thought the side played very professionally."

"We came out here to do a job and we are taking the two matches very seriously. I think we adapted to the batting pretty well."

Friday's 40-over contest is followed by a 55-over game today.

Holland, without Somerset's Dutchman Adrianus van Troost who is hoping to qualify for England, simply did not have the fire-power to test England's batting as Kent opener Ward blazed away in the first 17 overs to dominate an opening stand of 84.

Benson and Hedges Cup rematch played at Lord's

LONDON, July 10: Derbyshire hire play Lancashire in today's Benson and Hedges Cup final at Lord's in a rematch of last month's ill-tempered championship match at Derby, reports AFP.

Winners Lancashire are still smarting over the way star fast bowler Wasim Akram was dragged into another ball controversy.

The Pakistani fast bowler destroyed Derbyshire with a spell of six for 45, but there was drama after the game when Derbyshire sent the ball to Lord's for examination.

Suggestions of tampering — like those which marred Pakistan's tour here a year ago — were quickly scotched by Test and County Cricket Board officials.

But even though Derbyshire claim the matter is now closed and there should be no hard feelings, Akram, in particular will need no going up today.

"If we wanted any extra incentive they have handed it to us on a plate," said Lancashire captain Neil Fairbrother.

Derbyshire captain Kim Barnett defended his actions saying: "We were concerned about the state of it and were within our rights to send it away. But Lord's decided it was OK and that's fair enough."

Victory would be a timely boost for financially struggling Derbyshire and a perfect farewell present for coach Phil Russell, who is emigrating to South Africa at the end of this season.

DERBYSHIRE: Barnett (capt), Bowler, Morris, Adams, O'Gorman, Cork, Griffith, Krikken, Warner, Malcolm, Mortensen.

LANCASHIRE: Atherton, Titchard, Speak, Fairbrother (capt), Lloyd, Akram, Watkinson, Hegg, DeFreitas, Austin, Barnett.

Wright said on Friday his decision to quit was a personal one following a poor season and the county had put no pressure on him.

Botham jr joins Hampshire 'B'

LONDON, July 10: Liam Botham, 15-year-old son of former England all-rounder, Ian Botham, is to play second team cricket for Hampshire, reports Reuter.

Abandoned half-way through

HOVE, England, July 10: The England XI versus Rest-of-World XI one-day match was abandoned here on Friday. Rest-of-World scored 217-5 (C.L. Hooper 72) before rain interrupted play, reports AFP.

ENGLAND XI: W Larkins, A Stewart, M Gatting, R Smith, I Botham, D Pringle, R Russell, G Miller, J Emburey, M Bicknell, N Cowans.

REST-OF-WORLD XI: P Simmons, Sanjay Manjrekar, K Arthurton, D Houghton, C Hooper, D Jones, L Botham, C Cairns, F Stephenson, C Walsh, A Donald.

Footbridge to heaven

GUAYAQUIL, Ecuador, July 10: Like a stairway to heaven, the new footbridge spanning the murky Estero Salado river links the hovels of a Guayaquil slum to soccer eldorado, reports Reuter.

The monumental, a giant modern stadium with capacity for 100,000 spectators, is the imposing home of leading Ecuadorian club Barcelona.

The stadium has been a major venue for Copa America Tournament matches and will host the final on July 4.

Slum dwellers like Jose, a smiling youth who says he scrapes a living doing "a bit of everything" — fishing, construction, "pour across the bridge to see the big matches."

They used to have to rely on log canoes to make the crossing.

"We have to thank the (Barcelona Club) president for giving us the bridge," said Jose.

"It helps the people living (in the slum) because there is no public transport."

The matches offer a chance to forget for a while the poverty which plagues millions of South Americans.

Copa America match tickets cost nearly his week's earnings but the tournament has gripped this small South American country.

The national team, who have never played in a World Cup or won the Copa America, have rewarded their fans by surging into the quarter-finals from the weakest qualifying group.

Yugoslav-born coach Dusan Draskovic has given the Ecuadorian players self-belief to add to skills learnt on the dirt streets of slums like the one in Guayaquil.

He has instilled discipline, banning two reserves from his squad last week for staying out late and getting drunk.

Barcelona, funded as the name suggests by a Catalan immigrant in 1925, were runners-up in the South American Libertadores Cup Club championship in 1990.

They built the monumental stadium four years ago and increased its capacity for the Copa America at a cost of more than 7.5 million dollars.

A spokesman for the club's wealthy president Isidro Romero Carbo said the footbridge was built for sporting and social reasons and cost about 500,000 dollars.

Jose, who says he earns about 12,000 sucres (7 dollar) a week, can get a ticket to see Barcelona's league matches for 2,500 sucres (1.5 dollar).

Jose and the other slum-dwellers no longer need to pull out their log canoes to enjoy a short break from their grim existence.

Walsh steps into Wright's boots

LONDON, July 10: West Indies pace bowler Courtney Walsh is to take over from Tony Wright as captain of Gloucestershire, who are bottom of the County Championship, reports Reuter.

Wright said on Friday his decision to quit was a personal one following a poor season and the county had put no pressure on him.

Seville plans to host 2004 Games

SEVILLE, Spain, July 10: A year after the highly successful Barcelona Olympic Games, Seville's city leaders want to get in on the act and are considering putting in a bid to host the 2004 Games, reports Reuter.

The young all-rounder, who has played for England under-15s, will spend a month with the county's staff.

Torino trying to lure Gullit

ROME, July 10: Italian Cup holders Torino said on Thursday that they were hoping to sign ex-European footballer-of-the-year Ruud Gullit from champions AC Milan, reports Reuter.

"I am optimistic about reaching an agreement which will allow the Dutchman to play for us next season," Torino president Roberto Goveani told reporters.

Goveani added he planned to meet the 30-year-old Gullit on Monday for talks.

The dreadlocked Gullit has said he plans to leave Milan after six successful, albeit injury-plagued, seasons with the Italian champions.

He reportedly has a gentlemen's agreement with Milan that he will move only to a foreign club but Torino believe they can lure the 1987 European footballer-of-the-year.

To tell the truth I consulted (Milan director Adriano) Galliani and he told me there was no problem if we wanted to go ahead with talks," Goveani said.

Experience sees 'em through

NEWPORT, Rhode Island, July 10: Despite their high seedings, Luis Herrera of Mexico and Javier Frana of Argentina became surprise semifinalists on the grass courts at the Hall of Fame tennis championships on Friday, reports Reuter.

Experience playing in extreme heat, however, may have had more to do with the victories than grass court prowess as second seed Herrera overcame Arane Thoms of Germany 7-6 (7-5), 6-7 (5-7), 6-0 and third seed Frana outlasted American Brian MacPhee 6-7 (2-7), 6-4, 6-3 in sweltering conditions.

Christine Eydelie cross-examined

VALENCIENNES, France, July 10: The wife of Jean-Jacques Eydelie, the Marseille player at the centre of match-fixing allegations, was interrogated for three hours on Saturday by the judge investigating the case, reports Reuter.

Christine Eydelie gave a different account of events leading up to the French league match between Valenciennes and Marseille on May 20, said public prosecutor Eric De Montgolfier.

She went missing last month when her husband reported to police for questioning.

Her husband has been named by three Valenciennes players as the contact-man who offered them a bribe.

Marine-Christine Robert, wife of one of the players, has said Jean-Jacques Eydelie handed her 250,000 francs (50,000 US dollar).

Eydelie, confronted with all four of his accusers on Friday in a six-and-a-half hour session before investigating judge Bernard Befly, maintained his innocence throughout.

De Montgolfier said Christine Eydelie had a version of events which differed from her husband's.

"Mrs Eydelie could be confronted very shortly, notably with her husband," he said. "But she is free and has demanded that she benefit from protection."

Police searched for Christine Eydelie for several days after she disappeared from her home. She was found staying with a friend in Nantes on Thursday and was taken to Valenciennes to see Befly.

The victors both said they were not bothered by the extreme humidity and heat that approached 100 degrees (38C), which appeared to take its toll on the vanquished.

The Latin American pair, better known for the abilities on clay courts, will square off in today's semifinals, while the other semifinal pits fifth seed Alex Antonitish of Australia and Canadian Greg Rusedski, both of whom advanced on Thursday.

Herrera and Thoms split a pair of tie-breaks as the Mexican squandered numerous break opportunities in the first two sets.

"I felt like I had hundreds of break points but couldn't convert them," said the 88th-ranked Herrera.

The second seed got the big break he was looking for in the third set as the German, apparently feeling the efforts of the heat, double-faulted twice in the opening game. From there, Herrera was on a roll and he swept the set.

All during the match I felt I was playing better than he was, but I couldn't convert those break points. Finally in the third set I started right away by breaking, and once I made one

break, I went all the way through," Herrera said. MacPhee, a 21-year-old amateur, took advantage of erratic play by Frana to seize the first set as the Argentine double-faulted to lose the tie-break.

Frana fought back and used solid returns of serve and a beautiful backhand cross-court pass on a dead run to secure the key break of the second set for a 4-3 lead. He saved two break points to hold for the set and send the match into a third.

Frana was a bit slower to the net in the third set, but he still benefited from MacPhee's determination to live or die by his serve.

At 3-3, the less experienced MacPhee finally crumpled.

Two double-faults set up the crucial break for Frana, who grabbed a 4-3 lead when MacPhee's volley flew deep. Frana then broke the young American again on his next serve to take the match.

"I started putting pressure even on his second serve, and that could be why he was going for more and then hitting double-faults," Frana said.

Maybe the difference is experience when he made those two double-faults after almost two hours of play," Frana added.



Players seen during the fourth round matches of the Ganges Active Chess championship at the chess room of the National Sports Council yesterday. — Star photo