

First win for Mukhtijoddha

Sports Reporter

Mukhtijoddha Sangsad recorded their first victory in the Star Premier Division football league when they beat Rahmatganj Muslim Friends Society 3-2 at the Dhaka stadium yesterday.

In the day's second match played under the flood-lights the winners led the first half one-nil.

On a slushy ground Mukhtijoddha emerged luckier than their opponents converting the chances that came their way in a rather high scoring match.

They took the lead before Rahmatganj settled down. Biplob floated in across and Samrat struggled a bit in controlling the ball before finding the net past a puzzled Tareq, the Rahmatganj custodian, in the first minute of the match (1-0).

The goal turned out to be a personal sacrifice as the striker, who in a way laid the foundation of his side's maiden victory had to leave the field because of an injury received in the goal-mouth scramble.

Dazed by this reprisal Rahmatganj took some time to carry the fight to the enemy territory. The incisive feature of Rahmatganj's fast breakaway

Rain the spoiler

Sports Reporter

The Green Delta First Division hockey matches fell through yesterday because of poor ground conditions. Heavy and intermittent downpour rendered the ground unplayable.

The matches — first one between Wanderers and Azad and the second one between Mariner Young's Club and Wari — will be played today provided the ground remains playable, causing a bodily shift in the fixture.

World Cup final round draw for Asian zone

ZURICH, July 16: Draw for the final rounds of the Asian World Cup qualifying tournament in Qatar made on Thursday:

- Oct 15 North Korea v Iraq
- Saudi Arabia v Japan
- Iran v South Korea
- Oct 16 North Korea v Saudi Arabia
- Japan v Iran
- Oct 19 Iraq v South Korea
- Oct 21 North Korea v Japan
- Oct 22 Iran v Iraq
- South Korea v Saudi Arabia
- Oct 24 Iraq v Saudi Arabia
- Oct 25 Japan v South Korea
- Iran v North Korea
- South Korea v North Korea
- Oct 28 Saudi Arabia v Japan
- Iraq v Japan

moves, which distinguished the green and yellows in their previous match against reigning champions Abahani Krita Chakra, was not felt, yesterday. Gone was the demonic absorption which drove Abahani mad in the drawn goalless encounter on July 12.

After a rather undramatic first half, Mukhtijoddha again forced ahead. Biplob again engineered a move and Chapal finished the ball into the net eight minutes into the second half (2-0).

Rahmatganj, who are fighting hard to avoid relegation with just two points in their kitty, hit back five minutes later when Angur found the net five minutes later. Angur, who had scored one of the two hat-tricks in the curtain raising DMFA Cup prior to the league, nodded a Ranjan cross from the close (1-2).

The recovery act of luckless Rahmatganj suffered a serious setback when Chapal of Mukhtijoddha scored his second goal in the 22nd minute from a

However, Rahmatganj got a consolation goal at the lag end of the match when Rubel beat Mukhtijoddha custodian Pannu utilising a Javed lob (2-3).

The goal was one too less and came too late to replenish the famished Rahmatganj collection of just two points from seven matches.

Mukhtijoddha's first win left them richer for two point taking their tally to seven from as many matches.

BOYS ON TOP

Bangladesh Boys, one of the two promotes in the Star First Division football league, climbed at the acme of the points table with nine points when they drew their seventh encounter against Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation (BRTC) one-all in the day's first match played earlier at the same venue.

Anwar gave BRTC the lead in the 11th minute of the match.

Liton restored parity for the babes in the 25th minute of the match, when he made the most



Scene from yesterday's first match between BRTC and Bangladesh Boys at the Dhaka Stadium. — Star photo

goalmouth scramble (3-1). The goal took the wind out of Rahmatganj's sail and the glimpse of a strong rally underlined in their first goal just vanished. With Mukhtijoddha snug and fortified in the cushioning of a healthy 3-1 lead Rahmatganj found it increasingly difficult to penetrate the densely-crowded Mukhtijoddha defence.

of a neat cross by experienced Badal Das.

The draw leaves BRTC with four points from seven matches. Rival supporters indulged in a clash just after the match leaving one critically injured.

TODAY'S MATCHES

Youngmen's Fakirerpool vs Wanderers (4-30)
Abahani vs Arambagh (6-30)

Waqar puts Surrey on top

LONDON, July 16: Pakistan paceman Waqar Younis took six for 42 to help Surrey skittle out bottom-of-the-table Gloucestershire at Guildford on Thursday, reports Reuter.

Gloucestershire were dismissed for 153 in 52.3 overs after being put in to bat.

Surrey were 24 without loss at the end of a rain-shortened first day of the four-day county championship match.

Champions Essex fought back after Leicestershire got off to a good start when they were put in to bat at Southend. Tim Boon (70) and Nigel Briers (42) shared a century opening stand but Leicestershire slipped to 203 for five at stumps.

Championship leaders Middlesex took control against Warwickshire at Edgbaston, thanks to spinners John Emburey (3-54) and Phil Tufnell (2-43).

Warwickshire struggled to 168 for five off 84 overs despite an innings of 82 by Jason Ratcliffe.

Aussie hopes of jackpot go down the drain

DERBY, England, July 16: Australia's cricketers saw 50,000 pounds sterling (75,000 dollar) disappear down the Derbyshire drains on Thursday when their match against the county side was abandoned following several hours of rain, reports Reuter.

No play was possible on the third and final day and the umpires called off the match before midday. That ended any lingering hopes Australia had of claiming a sponsor's prize for winning 10 of their 14 three-day games against county teams.

The Australians have now won four and drawn five.

Their next port of call is Durham where they will hope to gain some practice ahead of Thursday's fourth Test at Headingley.

The three-day match beginning on Saturday will see former England all-rounder Ian Botham playing what will almost certainly be his last match against Australia.

For Brasilia the fight is still on

BRASILIA, July 16: Brasilia said on Thursday it would press ahead with its bid to stage the 2000 Olympics despite suggestions by IOC president Juan Antonio Samaranch that it should withdraw, reports Reuter.

"Brasilia is still a candidate and we will go to the vote," said Marcia Kubitschek, president of the Brasilia 2000 Olympics Association.

"I find it difficult to believe that Samaranch said this without first saying anything to us," she added.

Brasilia was castigated earlier this week in a technical report compiled by the IOC on the six candidates bidding for the Games.

The report said the Brasilia bid was motivated mainly by local politics and lacked any discernible connection with sport.

"If they (Brasilia) don't have the support of sport in their country and their National Olympic Committee, maybe it would be better for them to withdraw," Samaranch told a news conference in London on Wednesday.

The IOC meets in Monte Carlo on September 23 to select the 2000 Olympic venue from the six candidates — Beijing, Berlin, Brasilia, Istanbul, Manchester and Sydney.



FULL SCALE BATTLE: Hell broke loose at the Dhaka Stadium when some trouble mongers got involved in a row that had nothing to do with the BRTC-Bangladesh Boys encounter yesterday. The row led to lethal clash which left some people badly injured. — Star photo by Anisur Rahman

Spinners India's trump card

KANDY, Sri Lanka, July 16: India are expected to play all three spinners in an effort to exploit a rain-affected pitch in the first Test against Sri Lanka starting on Saturday, reports Reuter.

Persistent rain over the past two days may delay the start of the match and India are likely to pick off-spinner Rajesh Chauhan, left-arm spinner Venkatesh Raju and leg-spinner Anil Kumble in the hope of exploiting a drying pitch.

Pace bowler Kapil Dev is banking on the three-Test series yielding the 12 wickets he

needs to break New Zealander Richard Hadlee's world Test record of 431 wickets.

Sri Lanka have named a 15-strong squad, including two newcomers in off-spinner Ruwan Kalpage and left-arm spinner Piyal Wijetunga.

The Sri Lankans believe they have done enough to show they should be taken seriously in international cricket.

"Now that Sri Lanka have tasted victory over New Zealand and England, they know what victory means," said manager Duleep Mendis.

Armed police have been deployed on roads leading to the stadium as a precaution against possible attacks by Tamil separatist guerrillas.

Junior Gold Cup

COX'S BAZAR, July 16: Pratishruti Club beat Ramu Little Eleven 4-0 in the second match of the round robin league of the Junior Gold Cup football tournament at the local stadium this afternoon, reports BNA.

The winners led the first half 3-0 through goals from Abbas, Tofazzal and Nasu. Nasu completed the winners' tally.

Tarun Muslim Club will be up against Rakhatine Sporting Club tomorrow.

Khulna soccer

KHULNA, July 16: RRF Club beat Cosmos Club 1-0 in the last match of the preliminary encounters in the KDSA football tournament at the local stadium this afternoon, reports BNA.

Shady ancestor still causing chaos

By Bob Holmes

Violence is all too common among football hooligans, who fight each other with no holds barred. But in the past, it was the players of medieval football themselves who fought each other, tussling for the ball in a game with no rules. As Gemini News Service reports, there are still a few keen players of the game.



"If the English call this playing, what do they call fighting?" asked a bewildered French witness of mob football in 1839.

For more than a century and a half after the Frenchman's comments, things do not appear to have changed — at least not in several scattered village outposts or at Eton, Harrow and Winchester schools.

Indeed, if any strangers had been at Ashbourne in Derbyshire recently, it is likely that they would have thought the players were just hooligans, practising for the violence they showed in Sweden recently that spoiled the European Cup contest.

Medieval football, the rugged ancestor of the planet's most popular pastime, is commemorated in half a dozen other unlikely venues around Britain — Kirkwall in the Orkney Islands, St Colum in Cornwall and Alnwick in Northumberland being the most famous.

Perhaps the most outrageous with the male population dividing into two battalion-strength hordes, from either side of the River Henmore, each disputing possession of a lovingly hand-

played leather ball with all the subtlety of grizzly bears on heat.

Known as Upwards and Downards, they attempt to 'goal' it at opposite ends of the village — and with no rules, no referee and no holds barred, the ensuing mayhem would have the New Zealand All Blacks screaming for their mothers. Mercifully, however, no policeman ever has to lift his truncheon.

Indistinguishable in their motley 'uniforms' or boiler suits and jeans, the participants grapple for 2 pm until 10 pm, in town and country, in icy river and through busy main street. Unsuspecting motorists find their cars suddenly engulfed and the local shops are not immune from the odd incursion.

Sportsmen claim that football hooliganism is a clone of the ancient game but the exchanges contain nothing of the cowardly venom of the terrace psychopath, only the courage, commitment and rugged sense of fun that centuries of tradition have instilled.

With preliminaries that include a formal banquet and a lusty rendering of the national anthem, the game not only flaunts its official blessing but many local elders still treasure

the balls they 'goaled' in past battles more highly than the family silver.

Organising committee chairman John Gadsby, a local solicitor who scored in 1956, says: "Ashburnians cannot aspire to anything higher," while a bedraggled Downard took time off from his beer to declare: "Getting a goal here is like scoring the winner at the national cup final." No one who has seen steam rising from what is euphemistically called 'the hug' would argue.

If you can imagine a rugby scrum involving hundreds, you will begin to get the picture. But the surges that carry the ball anywhere except the off-limits war memorial and cemetery are a sight to behold. Not even Mrs Meakins' front room nor Mr Gibbons' cabbage patch manage to stay off the mob's path once a goal is scored, the hug having a momentum all of its own.

Usually played in freezing weather, the game unfolds in time-honoured fashion with craft manoeuvres and plots hatched in advance dovetailing with sheer brute force. Runners lurk on the fringes as the hug lurches toward predetermined hiding places for the ball.

But no one has ever had an easier passage to glory than one Joseph Harrison, whose desire to get on the scoresheet was such that when the ball landed in a pool of untreated sewage back in 1909, he waded in to rescue it.

Not surprisingly, when he emerged, ball in hand, it was the only time in centuries that the opposition showed a reluctance to tackle. Harrison duly scored but paid a high price when his wife temporarily deserted him and he came out in boils that lasted for weeks. Unbowed, he is said to have claimed: "It was worth it."

Much more confined, but no less refined, are the goings-on at Eton where two sets of colourfully-striped schoolboys indulge in another peculiar ritual alongside a bit of ancient masonry.

If there is any truth in the famous assertion that wars have been won on the playing fields of Eton, it must surely exclude the 120 metre stretch that is the scene of the celebrated Wall Game — for the two major wars of the century have come and gone since a goal was scored.

Britain's late former prime minister Harold MacMillan was on the field the last time and the presence of future leaders does nothing to gentrify the proceedings. An unfathomable combination of football, rugby and medieval mudlarking, the

object is to secure a throw at either goal — the Lower House Master's door at one end and the trunk of a long-deceased Dutch Elm at the other.

But the game usually disintegrates to a permanently collapsed scrum from whose tangled limbs the ball seldom emerges. Maybe this is why the college handbook admits with commendable honesty: "No game offers less to the spectator."

It is perhaps also the reason there were no foreign observers and why, for all the sheer bloody-minded shenanigans of its ancestor, modern football need not lose any sleep about being associated with its shady past. It would not do itself any harm, however, if it showed more of its spirit and sense of fun.—GEMINI NEWS

About the Author: BOB HOLMES is a British freelance sports and travel writer. He is author of the best selling Match of My Life, a collection of great football matches.

Martinique make their mark

MEXICO CITY, July 16: Lowly Martinique, anxious to erase the memory of an outrageous 9-0 drubbing by Mexico last weekend, claimed a last-minute goal to draw 2-2 against Canada in Round B of the CONCACAF soccer tournament on Thursday, reports Reuter.

Thierry Fondelot saved Martinique's blushes, slotting home in the 89th minute to cap a spirited fightback in the Azteca Stadium by the Caribbean Island team.

Martinique were left wondering whether they should have won the match: Fondelot earlier missed a penalty in the 68th minute.

Canada took control in the first half, notching up a 1-0 lead with a cross-goal shot by Jeff Auger in the 25th minute. Alex Bumbury made it 2-0 in the 44th minute to give Canada a comfortable half time advantage.

But Martinique, looking more accustomed to the rarefied Mexico City air than they were against Mexico, came charging out in the second half with surging attacks along the wings.

Georges Gertrudes pulled one back after 75 minutes, heading home from a Coridon pass.

Cheered on by the crowd, Martinique then poured everything into the attack and were rewarded with Fondelot's clincher a minute from time.

Transfer fever grips Egypt

CAIRO, July 16: Forget Duncan Ferguson, Ruud Gullit or David Platt. Soccer transfer fever has hit Egypt's two major clubs, whose battle for a star has become a national scandal, reports Reuter.

The rivals' attempts to outbid each other have sparked fierce attacks in Egypt's press over rampant 'free market economics' on the soccer pitch. Some have called for an end to the infant professional game.

Some commentators even suggested that the money involved was potentially politically damaging at a time when basic food prices have soared as economic reforms are introduced.

Although unprecedented in Egypt, the sums are paltry in comparison to the 5.2 million pounds sterling (7.8 million dollar) offered by Italian club Sampdoria for English midfielder Platt, or the British soccer transfer record of four million pounds (\$9.7 million) offered by Glasgow Rangers for Dundee United striker Ferguson this week.

But last week, Reda Abdel-Aal, midfielder for Egyptian champions Zamalek announced he would move to arch-rivals Ahli after becoming angry with his present club, when they offered him only 75,000 Egyptian pounds (22,000 dollar) to sign for three more years.

Ahli officially counterbid with 100,000 pounds (30,000 dollar) and sidestepped Egyptian federation rules that Abdel-Aal could only receive 40 per cent of that by offering an extra sum from its supporters club which would go direct to the player.

But now, Zamalek, who as the current club are not subject to the 40 per cent rule, have countered with a record 250,000 pound (75,000 dollar) offer, which commentators say will spark uncontrollable soccer inflation in Egypt.

Deniau loses his job

BERNE, July 16: The Swiss Tennis Association (STV) has decided not to renew the contract of national coach Georges Deniau in September, Swiss television reported on Thursday, reports Reuter.

The Frenchman has been embroiled in a bitter row with former Davis Cup stalwart Roland Stadler over who should run a training programme for juniors.

Swiss television said Stadler, chairman of a committee for leading players, had been suspended by the STV.

The STV was quoted as saying in a statement that Deniau and Stadler had been devoting more time to their war of warts than on drawing up a new programme for juniors.

The Swiss Davis Cup team, led by Olympic champion Marc Rosset, supported Deniau in the power struggle and forced Stadler's resignation as non-playing captain.



A seriously injured soccer fan is being carried away for medical attention after the Star First Division football league encounter between BRTC and Bangladesh Boys at the Dhaka Stadium yesterday. — Star photo