



Abahani's Russian midfielder Alexander Dozmorov tries to dodge past an Arambagh Krira Sangstha defender during yesterday's crucial Star Premier Division football league tie at the Dhaka Stadium. Abahani trounced Arambagh 5-1. — Star photo

Hockey league suspended till July 19

Sports Reporter
The Green Delta First Division hockey league has been suspended upto July 19. The league will resume on the 20th. The decision was taken by the league committee yesterday as monsoon rain rendered the pitch unplayable playing havoc with the fixture for the second consecutive day. The fixtures will be shifted bodily.

Spikers to train in China

Sports Reporter
Plays of Bangladesh men's and women's volleyball teams, now undergoing training for the forthcoming sixth SAF Games, will be sent to China within the next couple of months for further honing of temperament and skills. Maj General Mahbubur Rahman, president of the Bangladesh Volleyball Federation, yesterday disclosed his during an informal discussion with newsmen at his office.

Dwelling on the future programmes to enhance the prospect of the game in this country, the former supremo of the National Sports Council told that twelve members of the Bangladesh women's volleyball team, training under a Chinese coach, will be in the Chinese province of Liaoning by the middle of August.

The female spikers of Bangladesh, who are expected to play some 26 friendly matches, will be joined by a same number of their male counterparts some time in September.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh men's volleyball team will take part in the Asian volleyball championship, scheduled to be held in Bangkok from September 11 to 20. The female spikers are also likely to take part in an invitational tournament to be held in the Thai capital early August but the date is yet to be finalised.

Mahbubur Rahman, who is the man behind the residential training stint of the spikers in China, informed that the hosts have ensured lodging facilities free of cost.

Abdul Quddus Chowdhury, general secretary of the Bangladesh Volleyball Federation who was also present in the conversation, unveiled the plan of a scouting programme as a part of thorough preparation for future. The two Chinese coaches, now in charge of the Bangladesh volleyball teams, will stay here after the sixth SAF Games to help find talented players from all over the country.

Tories behind Manchester bid

MANCHESTER, England, July 17: Labour leader John Smith pledged his party's support on Friday for Manchester's bid to host the 2000 Olympic Games, reports AFP.

"I look forward to seeing the opening ceremony as Prime Minister," he said. "The opposition is 100 per cent behind the British bid for the Olympic Games."

"This means that we will not only use whatever influence at our disposal to help persuade delegates to vote for Manchester, but we will also underwrite every commitment the government makes."

Prime Minister John Major has already promised 50 million of government money to back the bid.

Abahani bounce back in style

Sports Reporter
League champions Abahani Krira Chakra made a roaring return to the winning ways when they pummeled Arambagh Krira Sangstha 5-1 at the Dhaka Stadium yesterday.

In the second match of the day, played under the flood lights, Abahani, who had drawn their previous match with Rahmatganj Muslim Friends Society, took an unassailable three-nil lead at first half. Golam Gaus scored twice while Abahani's Russian recruit Sudarikov and Zakir Hussain round the net once each to raise the dwindling spirits of the sky blues, who are gunning for an unprecedented second hat-trick of league titles.

In another match marked by poor supervision Abahani's much-needed booster was somewhat diluted by a whimsical decision of the man in black. Referee Muzaffar Hossain quite unnecessarily flashed the yellow card to prized defender Monem Munna, robbing once again the player of his right to play in Abahani's next vital league encounter against Brothers Union. The tough national defender, reckoned as the tower of strength in Abahani's defence, had earlier missed league matches owing to similar disciplinary measures. Munna, who was not in the line-up for Abahani's match against Rahmatganj, was badly missed by the champions as the unheralded forwards of lowly Rhamatganj probed the Abahani defence with alarming regularity.

Abahani shot into the lead in the 18th minute of the match when Sudarikov beat Arambagh custodian Bijoy, grandson of former national coach Saheb Ali, with an angular drive (1-0).

Rumi paved the path for Abahani's second goal nine minutes later when he sent in a cute lob across the goalmouth and a waiting Golam Gaus nodded the ball in without any fuss (2-0).

Zakir Hossain, Abahani's hardworking medio regarded very highly by Messers Zhukov and others, Abahani last year's Russian recruits, scored a gem of a goal three minutes later. He blasted a 35-yarder pile drive that entered the net leaving the Arambagh custodian confounded under the bar (3-0).

Arambagh, who went down fighting to title-aspirants Mohammedan Sporting Club 1-3 in their previous match, pulled a goal back against the run of play when Towhid beat

Khulna soccer

KHULNA, July 17: Mongla Port Club defeated Town Club 3-2 in tie-breaker in the second round match of the K D S A football tournament at the local stadium this afternoon, reports BNA.

Nasir, Dipak and Hannan scored for the winners while Liaqat and Sardar scored for the losers. Topu of Mongla and Fazlu of Town Club received yellow cards.

Khulna Newsprint Mills Club will be up against Moheshwar Pasha Club tomorrow.

Junior Gold Cup

COX'S BAZAR, July 17: Tarun Muslim Club registered a 3-0 victory over Rakhain Club in the third match of the round-robin league of the Junior Gold Cup football tournament at the local stadium this afternoon, reports BNA.

Enayet scored twice in the first half while Nurul netted the other one in the second half.

Mohsin with an angular shot from close seven minutes after the resumption (1-3).

Arambagh defender Ikram contributed to the steady and inevitable downfall of his team when he headed the ball into his own in a abortive attempt to thwart a Zakir foray in the 26th minute of the second half (4-1).

Golam Gaus, scored his second goal ten minutes before the end to help Abahani record the biggest win of the league so far. He nipped in from the flank to blast the net from a difficult angle (5-1).

Abahani's principal goal-getter Rumi Rizvi Karim was off colour for the second consecutive day. The highest scorer of the DMFA Cup, leading the men from Dhanmondi this year, yesterday missed a penalty. Abahani were awarded a penalty in the 29th minute of the second half when Arambagh defender pulled Rumi down inside the box and Jahangir junior the substitute Arambagh custodian blocked Rumi's shot. Incidentally this was Rumi's second failure to convert a spotkick in this year's league. Earlier, the national player failed to score from penalty in Abahani's two-all draw against Wari.

The convincing victory puts Abahani at par with their arch

rivals Mohammedan Sporting Club in the points table. Abahani have 11 points from seven matches while DMFA Cup champions Mohammedans have same number of points having played a match less. Arambagh, who finished fourth in last year's league and underlined their strength by finding a place among the last four in the curtain raising DMFA Cup remain struck to their paltry collection of four from seven matches.

WANDERERS LOSE

In the first match of the day billed for the same venue, Fakirerpool Youngmen's Club beat Dhaka Wanderers Club by a solitary goal to strengthen their position in the Star First Division football league.

Hassan Al Mamun scored the match-winner in the 35th minute of the first half. Fakirerpool, one of the strong claimants for a promotion to next year's Premier League, took their tally to ten from seven matches while traditional Wanderers Club could add nothing to their collection of eight from seven matches following yesterday's encounter.

TODAY'S MATCHES

Farashganj vs Dhanmondi (4-30)
Mohammedans vs Brothers (6-30)

Rain reduces India-SL Test to 4 days

KANDY, Sri Lanka, July 17: Adverse ground conditions prevented play on the first day of the first Test between India and Sri Lanka at the Asgiriya Stadium here today, reports AFP.

Umpires K T Francis and T. M. Samarasinghe decided 45 minutes before the scheduled tea interval to call off play as the run-up area was affected by overnight rains.

"The wicket and outfield is fine. But the run-up is still soft and it is difficult for the bowler to get a proper foothold," said umpire T.M. Samarasinghe. There was no play in the morning session as ground staff began mopping up a wet outfield and preparing a damp wicket before handing it over to the umpires for inspection.

Drizzle continued from time to time as hundreds of spectators waited in vain for the commencement of play amid unprecedented security by heavily armed police.

Intermittent rains in this central city in the past two days had made the outfield soggy but ground staff had managed to drain to the water by noon Saturday.

Marseille case takes a twist

VALENCIENNES, France, July 17: Jean-Jacques Eydelie, the Marseille player at the centre of match-rigging allegations, met the investigating judge at his own request in a surprise twist to the case on Sunday, reports Reuter.

Eydelie, named by three Valenciennes players as the man who offered them a bribe to throw a French league match on May 20, has maintained his innocence and did not change his story in a six-and-a-half hour confrontation with his accusers on Friday.

Investigating judge Bernard Belfy spoke to Eydelie for 45 minutes on Sunday but declined to talk to reporters afterwards.

Judicial sources said Eydelie made a request on Saturday night for an urgent meeting with the judge.

Belfy questioned the player's wife, Christine, for three hours on Saturday morning. She went missing when her husband reported to police last month but was found staying with a friend in Nantes on Thursday.

Public prosecutor Eric de Montgolfier said the story she told Belfy on Saturday differed substantially from her husband's version of events and could be decisive in the case.

Christine Eydelie has asked for police protection.

Marseille won the French league and the European Cup last season.

Robinson reigns supreme



LONDON, July 17: Mark Robinson became the first Yorkshire bowler to claim nine wickets in an innings on Friday since Tony Nicholson 26 years ago, reports Reuter.

But Northamptonshire fought back magnificently on a day of dramatic English county cricket action at Harrogate.

Robinson, dropped from Yorkshire's last championship game against Warwickshire, responded with nine for 37 as his former club Northamptonshire



MARK ROBINSON ... first Yorkshire bowler in 26 years to claim nine wickets in an innings.

were bowled for only 97 on a damp pitch.

Then Kevin Curran responded with seven for 47 as Yorkshire collapsed from 115 for two to 166 all out—a lead of 71.

Curran claimed the last four wickets for no runs in eight deliveries.

They were Curran's best bowling figures in county cricket and equalled his career-best, made for Natal in South Africa.

Yorkshire appeared to be in control as both Richie Richardson (56) and David Byas (54) put together a substantial third wicket stand.

But after they were out Yorkshire's innings fell away.

John Carr and John Emburey combined to inspire a great fightback by championship leaders Middlesex with an unbroken century stand against Warwickshire on a turning Edgbaston pitch.

The seventh-wicket pair put on 115 as Middlesex reached 205 for six in reply to Warwickshire's 237.

Middlesex were in deep trouble at 90 for six but Emburey continued his good form with the bat by reaching 43 not out.

England batsman Nasser Hussain spared Essex the embarrassment of being asked to follow on against Leicestershire at Southend.

Replying to a total of 321, the reigning champions were struggling at 134 for seven, still 38 short of the 172 required. But Hussain hit 78 not out to help steer Essex to 190 for nine.

Earlier, England off-spinner Peter Such claimed the last four Leicestershire wickets to finish with five for 66 against his former county.

Christie, Gunnell go untested



BIRMINGHAM, England, July 17: The record books took a hammering from Britain's Olympic champions

Linford Christie and Sally Gunnell at the World Championship trials here Friday night, reports AFP.

The duo underlined their Stuttgart credentials by powering to impressive triumphs.

Christie majestically retained his season's unbeaten 100m record by becoming the first man since McDonald Bailey 40 years ago to win three successive titles at the distance — and, in the process, he took his overall record of national crowns both indoors and out to a remarkable 24.

Hurdles queen Gunnell, switching to the sprint hurdles for a night, proved herself the complete master over the barriers by breaking Shirley Strogan's record of six WAAA titles in the event.

Despite accusing his race starter of being of "grand national" quality, Christie still round no problems eclipsing his domestic rivals in 10.13 secs.

"It's a shame nobody is pushing me but they don't seem hungry enough," insisted confident Christie.

"Mentally, I'm too strong for them. They take one look at me on the start line and they're intimidated."

Christie, who had won his heats in 10.56 secs and 10.22, enjoyed a flying start in his final. He surged away and kept Australian runner-up Dean Capobianco (10.25 secs) at bay to land his sixth AAA 100m title.

Gunnell, so far untouchable over the hurdles this season, ran the fastest time by a British runner this year — 13.08 secs. It proved too strong for Shaftsbury's Jackie Ageypong, a sprint hurdles specialist who was good enough to win European Cup silver last month.

"This has almost become a bit of a ritual for me," said Gunnell, after beating Ageypong by 0.07 secs and winning her seventh 100m hurdles title. "And it's shown I'm in better form than this time last year."

Colin Jackson glided to his sixth 110m hurdles title but only enjoyed the last laugh after a comedy of errors involving the meeting's accident-prone starter Doug Bedford.

The runners were recalled

four times after Bedford judged they had jumped the gun — but, fifth time away, Jackson ignore the farce to jet clear and leave his great rival Tony Jarrett trailing, 13.15 secs to 13.37 secs.

Jackson would attach no blame to Bedford, who had appeared to hold the runners at the start far too long during all the evening's sprint races. But Christie, who had also been involved in false starts earlier, was scathing.

"It does get annoying and sometimes you want to scream," said Christie. "What happened in the hurdles final was grand national standard."

Steve Cram, aiming to resurrect his 1,500 metres career in Stuttgart when everyone thought it was dead, emphatically claimed his place in Saturday's final with a no-nonsense heat win.

With Stuttgart places automatically up for grabs for all trial winners who have achieved the qualifying standard, the happiest man in the stadium was Sheffield's Jon Brown. He won a sprint finish from European silver medalist Gary Staines to book his place in the 5,000m.

Matete cuts a sorry figure

BUFFALO, July 17: Derrick Adkins of the United States won the 400-metre hurdles in 49.35 seconds, as world champion Samuel Matete of Zambia stumbled into fourth place at the World University Games on Friday, reports Reuter.

Matete, the only world or Olympic champion entered in the athletics competition here, led from the second hurdle and maintained an advantage that grew to a full stride by midrace. But Matete, whose propensity to hit hurdles has been his undoing in the past, hit the eighth hurdle after shuffling his steps and was off balance for the rest of the race.

Matete was one of the favourites at the Barcelona Olympics last summer, but after finishing third in a semifinal heat, he was disqualified for knocking over a hurdle in an adjacent lane with an errant trail leg during the race.

He left in a huff after the race here, saying only of his declining form, "I blew up. I blew up."

Conversely, the American's fortunes went from bad to good. "I felt real tired in the first hundred metres of the race," said Adkins, the defending Games champion.

"I tend to lose my force over the last part of the race, so I kept reminding my legs to stay strong over the last part," he said.

Adkins missed an Olympic berth last summer by the eye of a photo finish at the US trials. At times, some suggested, the mechanical engineering student may have analysed his races too much.

"Sometimes it's better to run first and ask questions later," Adkins said. "I'm learning the balance."

World silver medalist Istvan Bagyula of Hungary also defended his Games titles, scaling 5.70 metres on his final attempt in the pole vault.

Bagyula was locked in three

way battle with Italy's Alberto Giacchetto, the eventual silver medalist, and France's Jean Galfione, who placed third. Both Giacchetto and Galfione cleared 5.60.

It was the Hungarian's best mark of the year, though he said the swirling winds on the track kept him from trying to better his personal best, 5.92. "I'm very tired today," Bagyula said. "I'm happy with the result, but I'm in the same shape as the others."

Galfione, who cleared 5.92 in France three weeks earlier, blamed the effort on poor equipment. "My pole was not responding," he said. "I ran fast, but my pole was behind. The choice of poles was just bad."

Dutchman Marko Koers won Holland's first gold medal of the Games, winning the 800 metres in one minute, 48.57 seconds.

Amy Wickus of the United States held off Jamaica's Inez Turner in the women's 800 to win in 2:03.71. Turner duelled with Wickus until the final backstraight when the American applied the decisive burst.

Decisive lean did the trick for Germany's Heike Meissner, who finished the women's 400-metre hurdles one hundredth of a second ahead of Jamaica's Debbie Parris.

"I didn't feel I did as well as I could have, and to the eye, the placing was anyone's guess," Meissner said.

Spain's Antonio Serrano took the lead in the final lap of the 10,000 metres and sprinted to an impressive victory in 28 minutes, 16.16 seconds.

Ukrainian men made a pair of championships tosses at the shot put competition. Alexander Klimentov threw 19.72 metres to repeat his University Games championship.

Klimentov was the world bronze medalist in 1991, but he fell to eighth in the Olympics last year. Vadim Kolesnik then followed his countryman's lead

throwing the hammer 77.00 metres, just 12 centimetres beyond the best toss of Hungary's Balazs Kiss.

Lee Young Sun of North Korea won the women's javelin with a fifth round thrown of 8.62 metres. Tanya Damaske of Germany came from seventh, place to take the silver medal on her last attempt, a 57.62 metre heave.

Australia's Peter Winter took a 46-point lead over Italy's Ubaldo Ranzi after the first day's decathlon events.

Winter fourth after four events, recorded the day's fastest 400-metre time among decathletes, 48.80 seconds, to take the lead. Darrin Steele of the United States held third place, 69 points off the pace.

Great expectations

MIAMI, July 17: A Cuban baseball player, who left his team at the World University Games in northern New York state, surfaced on Monday in Miami, where he said he wanted to play in the big leagues, reports Reuter.

Edilbert Oropesa, 23, disappeared on Saturday after scaling a chain-link fence at a Buffalo, New York, Baseball Stadium in front of hundreds of spectators, police and stadium security. He got into a car that was apparently waiting for him.

Cuban team officials said on Sunday that they had not heard from him.

Oropesa told reporters in Miami on Monday that he had considered defecting "for months" before he finally fled the team in Buffalo.

He said he wanted to follow in the footsteps of another Cuban defector, Rene Arocha, a baseball player who asked for political asylum in the United States two years ago and now pitches for the St Louis Cardinals team.



Olympic gold medalist Florence Griffith-Joyner (L) joins President Bill Clinton for morning jog along the mall near the Washington Monument on July 16. Griffith-Joyner is the chairperson of the President's physical fitness council. — AFP photo