

Satellite tennis from November

The Gold Leaf Thailand-Bangladesh satellite tennis circuit masters' leg will be held in Dhaka in the fourth week of November, reports BSS.

The third-leg of the circuit will be held at Rajshahi in the third week while the first and second legs will take place in Thailand.

Bangladesh along with Pakistan organised the satellite circuit in 1991 and 1992. As Pakistan will organise a complete circuit this year, the International Tennis Federation allocated Bangladesh's proposed circuit with Thailand for the year 1993.

Bangladesh tennis federation, in its executive committee meeting Saturday with federation president and Planning Minister A M Zahuruddin Khan in the chair, has taken some steps for the smooth holding of the circuit in Dhaka and Rajshahi.

Besides, five standing committees have been formed to run the federation activities properly and smoothly.

The officials heading the committees are: Faizur Rahman Chowdhury, convener, Development, Promotion and Coaching Committee; Atiqur Rahman, convener, Maintenance Committee; Prof Rashiduddin Ahmed, convener, Selection Committee; M Moshed Khan, convener, Finance Committee and M Akmal Hossain, convener, Security and Discipline Committee.

The convener of the tournament committee will be announced later.

Schools kabaddi from Sept 17

The metropolis kabaddi league, organised by the Bangladesh Kabaddi Federation, will begin from September 17 at the kabaddi court of the Outer Stadium, reports UNB.

The league, earlier scheduled for a September 10, start will begin a week late due to unavoidable circumstances, a federation press release said yesterday.

On the opening day, Mirpur Juba Sangha will take on Anirban Sangskritik Sangha of Fatulla at 4:00 pm while BRA Recreation Club will face Manda Sangsad at 5:00 pm.

Sixteen teams, divided in four groups, will contest in the round-robin league basis matches.

The teams are: Mirpur Juba Sangha, BRA Recreation Club, Anirban Sangskritik Sangha, Manda Sangsad, Sonali Bank Club, Anirban Sangsad, Jagaran Sangsad, Surja Kamol Club, Jurain Janata Club, Maniknagar Unnayan Samiti, Bangladesh Boys' Club, Srijan Sangsad, Azad SC, Dilkusha SC, Bangladesh Bank Club and Faruq Smriti Sangsad.

Participating teams are requested to complete their registration by September 10.

An affirmative denial

SYDNEY, Sept 5: A senior Olympic official said on Sunday Sydney had everything going for it to stage the 2000 Games but denied a report he had told Australian Prime Minister Paul Keating the city was the frontrunner, reports Reuters.

"I did not say you were going to win. I said you had everything for winning," Mario Vazquez Rana, president of the Association of National Olympic Committees, told a news conference.

"I told (Keating) you have a lot of things that will help you win, but the other cities also have things that will help them win."

"Under the banner headline 'It's ours,' Sydney's Sun-Herald newspaper said Rana has told Keating at a meeting on Friday that Sydney was now the frontrunner.

Rana had personally switched his support to Sydney from Beijing, said the report.

Besides Sydney and Beijing, Manchester, Berlin and Istanbul are also vying for the Games.

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) meets in Monaco on September 23 to decide on the venue.

The Sun-Herald said Sydney bid officials were confident of 25 to 30 primary votes from the 191 IOC members — enough to ensure victory. Rod McGeough, chief executive of the Sydney bid committee, said the report did not reflect the committee's view.

"We regard it as an extremely hard race, we are not confident, we are very concerned that we get there on behalf of all the people in Australia," he said.

Rana, who is also Mexico's IOC member, would not be drawn on whether human rights issues would affect the Beijing bid nor whether he had any concerns about Australia's treatment of aborigines.

"There is no single country that respects human rights 100 percent and I think that the human rights issue can damage any of the cities," he said.



ON THE GO: Richard Snell, the cute South African fast medium bowler takes the final leap before letting go a delivery in the third and final day-night one-day international between South Africa and Sri Lanka in Colombo on September 4. Roshan Mahanama, the Sri Lankan opening batsman is watches from the non-striker's end. — AFP photo

SA trace back to tradition

COLOMBO, Sept 5: South Africa have decided to bolster their pace attack in a bid to win the second Test Against Sri Lanka starting on Monday, reports Reuters.

The springboks went into the first Test with two spinners but the success of their pacemen on the slow Sri Lankan pitches has prompted a rethink.

Fast bowlers Allan Donald and Brett Schultz troubled the Sri Lankan batsmen with their pace and bounce in the drawn first Test.

South Africa have left out left-arm spinner Clive Eksteen from their 13-strong squad and brought in all-rounder Brian McMillan to strengthen the pace attack.

McMillan produced a superb all-round performance to help

South Africa win the second one-day international last Thursday.

Springbok coach Mike Procter said the touring team were contemplating playing a fourth pace bowler in Richard Snell or Fannie de Villiers at the expense of a batsman.

Snell is expected to be the first choice because he is useful with the bat as well.

Jimmy Cook will probably be the batsman to be left out.

Off-spinner Pat Symcox, who has proved his value as an all-rounder, will be the only spinner in the side.

Sri Lanka are sticking to their original plan of playing three spinners but the combination has been changed.

Piyal Wijetunge and Jayanada Warnawera have been dropped and Asanka Gurusinha is out because of a groin injury.

Left-arm spinner Sanath Jayasuriya has been brought in to join Ruwan Kalpage and Muthiah Muralidharan.

Champaka Ramanayake and Pramodya Wickremasinghe will provide the pace.

Din, Reeve set Natwest final ablaze as Warwickshire pip Sussex

LONDON, Sept 5: Warwickshire, powered by brilliant performances from Asif Din and captain Dermot Reeve, won the Natwest Trophy in a dramatic climax to the final at Lord's on Saturday, reports Reuters.

Ugandan-born Asif struck 104 and Reeve hit an unbeaten 81 as Warwickshire snatched victory over Sussex by five wickets from the last ball of the 60 overs match.

Warwickshire, needing a record total to win a final of 322, faced the last over from West Indian fast bowler Franklyn Stephenson, wanting 15 more in gloomy light.

The resourceful Reeve plundered 13 from the first five deliveries, including two fours.

In an astonishing finish, Roger Twose drove the winning runs from the last ball to secure a magnificent victory at 322-5, overhauling the 321-6 of Sussex.

Man-of-the-match Asif's century — he reached three figures from 103 balls — ultimately overshadowed an outstanding 124 from Sussex opener David Smith, who figured in a blazing batting display with Martin Speight (50) and Neil Lenham (58).

It was the second day in succession Sussex had been on the wrong end of cricketing record books.

On Friday they lost to Essex in a County Championship match which yielded a record 1,808 runs.

Saturday's match produced the highest aggregate of runs for a final in the 31-year history of the competition.

The winning runs from Twose came from the only delivery he faced at the end of a most remarkable day's cricket.

A single would have done on the basis of losing fewer wickets but Warwickshire did it in style.

Sussex, whose total beat the previous highest for the competition's final of 317 by Yorkshire against Surrey in 1965, revelled in ideal batting conditions.

With their South African fast bowler Allan Donald on his country's tour of Sri Lanka, Warwickshire's attack lacked their cutting edge and were rarely able to contain the rampant Sussex batsmen.

Only Neil Smith's off-spin commanded any measures of respect. Smith bowled his quota of 12 overs at a cost of 37 runs and took the wicket of Sussex captain Alan Wells for 33.

Warwickshire made a deceptively good start when they removed Bill Athey for nought in the second over but their bowlers were subsequently savaged by Speight, Lenham and Smith.

Speight provided the spark that set the Sussex innings alight, driving freely and fiercely as he sped to his half century in 50 deliveries with eight fours and a six.

Smith put on 103 for the second wicket in 17 overs with Speight, and added 119 in 16 overs with Lenham, who completed his half century from 42 balls.

The stand between Smith and Lenham set a fifth-wicket record for the final as Sussex smashed 1.37 from their last 20 overs.

Warwickshire were a shaky 80 for two but were revived first by Paul Smith who hit a rapid 60 before Asif and Reeve thrust them towards victory.

The fifth-wicket pair put on 142 in 23 overs, with Asif reaching his 50 off 52 balls and Reeve completing his half century from 63 deliveries to set up the pulsating climax.



Pakistan's Rana Mujahid Ali (L) tries to caress the ball past a watchful Klaus Michler of Germany during the Pakistan-Germany encounter in the Four Nations hockey meet in Hamburg, Germany on September 4. — AFP photo

Sport

'Love birds' relive sensation

NEW DELHI, Sept 5: Indonesian love birds Allan Budi Kusuma and Susanti relived last year's Olympic glory by winning both the World Cup singles titles here Sunday, reports AFP.

The pair, who won individual gold medals in the 1992 Barcelona Olympics a few months after being engaged, won their final matches in contrasting styles at the Indira Gandhi Indoor Stadium here.

The 27-year-old Kusuma, ranked number two in the world, wasted four match points before ousting top seeded teammate Joko Suprianto 15-8, 17-16 in a hard-fought men's singles final lasting an hour and nine minutes.

Susanti, 22, the reigning queen of women's badminton, showed her class by outwitting Swedish import Lim Xiaoping 11-7, 11-5 to regain the women's title she last won in 1989.

The duo completed a successful campaign for Indonesia which saw the badminton superpower grab three of the five titles in the 100,000-dollar invitation tournament.

Indonesia's world champion pair of Rexy Mainaky and Ricky Subagja took the men's doubles title by defeating second seeded Chen Kang and Chen Hongyong of China 15-9, 12-15, 15-9.

Indonesia's hopes of a fourth title went away as Aryono Miranat and Eliza lost the mixed doubles final to Peter Axelsson of Sweden and Gillian Gower of England.

The Indonesians do not figure in the women's doubles final to be played later today.

Sunday's twin success was the fourth time Kusuma and Susanti have won singles titles together. Besides the Olympics, they also swept the 1991 Thailand Open and the 1992 German Open.

Kusuma, who had a 1-1 record against Suprianto going into this match, called it "his greatest win" after picking of the winner's purse of 10,400 dollars.

"I must concede the pressure was on Joko Suprianto since he was the world champion, but I attacked from the start to snatch the initiative," he said. "The game plan worked well."

An uncharacteristic serve into the net by Suprianto when he was a point away from taking the second game gave Kusuma the chance to fight back and take the title.

Kusuma said he was "nervous" when he wasted four match points but the prospect of playing third game did not worry him. "I was not tired and was mentally prepared to go into the decider," he said.

"The heat did not bother me much today."

In the women's singles final, Xiaoping's dream of winning her first World Cup final evaporated after Susanti took the first game 11-7 in just 15 minutes and led 8-3 in the second.

Xiaoping took the next two points, but admitted later that she was "too tired" to make a match of it.

"I have been playing singles and doubles matches continuously over the last four days which took its toll," said Xiaoping, who migrated from China two years ago.

"I gave it my best but obviously it was not enough to bother a great player like Susanti."

Susanti, who took the Swede on guided tour of the court with her deft placements, said she felt comfortable right through the match.

"My game improved as the tournament progressed and this was easily one of my better matches," said Susanti, who picked up 8,000 dollars for her efforts. Xiaoping received 5,000 dollars.

Medvedev's brave new world

NEW YORK, Sept 5: The bad seeds of the US Open have left gaping holes into the men's draw, but the world number one at lively post-match banter, Andrei Medvedev, is thankfully still alive, reports Reuters.

"The trash is flying around, the people make some noise. It is incredible," Medvedev said for starters after his second-round victory over American Richey Reneberg. "I realise that just two weeks a year you can spend in Manhattan because it is so crazy."

Two-time defender Stefan Edberg, former Wimbledon champion Andre Agassi and Michael Stich and a quartet of other seeds have been drummed out early at the National Tennis Center, casting a pall over the proceedings.

Saving the show has been the talented Medvedev, a just-turned 19-year-old from Kiev, who is making his debut upon the New York stage.

Medvedev's running commentary on his impressions of life in New York city and at the concrete jungle of the National Tennis Center have provided some of the best entertainment at this year's Open.

"This is like a completely different lifestyle," Medvedev observed on Friday night about the Big Apple. "The people are just crazy. It is nice. They are crazy. They are nice."

"Seriously, you go in the street, they walk so fast, you can't keep up. You can't keep up. And you know, they drive fast and no accidents. It is unbelievable. I haven't seen one accident in New York and I was close 100 times."

"It is so beautiful that you can't keep up. You can't keep up. And you know, they drive fast and no accidents. It is unbelievable. I haven't seen one accident in New York and I was close 100 times."

Medvedev next meets Germany's Karsten Braasch, with a possible quarter-finals date with top-seeded world number one Jim Courier ahead. Neither this nor the horror stories about New York violence faze the Ukrainian.

"It is fun. It is fun. Seriously. Since you don't get shot, it it loads of fun," he said with the timing of a stand-up comedian. "Nobody asks for your wallet or your watch, it is really funny, but it is exciting to me."

"Because we are tennis players we don't see much of the real life. We are always playing in country club, good hotels and nice food and many people think that we are the different world. But we are the same people, like you, we have two legs, one body and a head, two hands."

Medvedev hopes his Open run will carry him through another week in the city.

"Seeing the different life, seeing the life outside the tennis is a completely different experience and you know being inside of it, even for two weeks, it is great."

"I don't want to live in Manhattan so far but being there for a little while, it is great."



ANDREI MEDVEDEV

Want of evidence miffs FNL

PARIS, Sept 5: The French National Soccer League (FNL) said on Saturday it did not have enough evidence to make a ruling yet over the Marseille bribery allegations, reports Reuters.

"Considering that the committee doesn't have at its disposal sufficient evidence... the committee has decided to postpone its ruling," the FNL's disciplinary committee said in a statement after a nine-hour hearing.

French soccer officials have come under mounting pressure from the game's European and international governing bodies to resolve the Marseille case.

The FNL is due to make a report to the European Football Union (UEFA), which meets in Zurich on Monday to rule whether Marseille can defend their European Cup title.

Marseille, who are also French champions, are mired in allegations of match-rigging in a league game against Valenciennes last May.

The International Football Federation (FIFA) has threatened to ban France from international soccer if the Marseille case is not resolved by September 23.

A key figure in the case, Marseille player Jean-Jacques Eydelie, did not turn up at Saturday's hearing.

Valenciennes defender Jacques Glassman, who accused Marseille of rigging the May 20 match, was the first to arrive at the FNL's Paris offices.

He was followed by former teammates Christophe Robert and Jorge Burruchaga, an Argentine international, and Boro Primorac, Valenciennes's former coach.

Robert, Burruchaga, Eydelie and former Marseille general secretary Jean-Pierre Bernes, who arrived at the hearing later, are all under judicial investigation for alleged bribery. Bernes has been named by Eydelie as the man who gave him 250,000 francs (50,000 dollars) to hand over to the Valenciennes players, who have also said the official offered them the bribe.

Bernes has denied involvement.

Marseille chairman Bernard Tapie was the last to arrive at the hearing after his Valenciennes counterpart Michel Coenen.

Tapie expressed confidence about UEFA's ruling on Monday.

"I'm confident. I know UEFA a bit. They make strict and severe decisions but only when they have evidence in their hands," he told reporters.

Bernes said: "There isn't a single truth (in the allegations). In a few weeks we'll know other truths. There will be surprises." Glassman said he told the committee what he had told judge Bernard Befy, who is in charge of the judicial probe.

"We repeated all we had told the judge," he said. "It's a pity that Jean-Jacques Eydelie did not appear."

"The French Soccer Federation (FFF) said in a statement on Friday that it would meet FIFA's September 23 deadline.

FIFA president Joao Havelange is due to meet FFF chairman Jean Fournet-Fayard on Monday before the UEFA meeting.

Marseille are scheduled to play Greek club AEK Athens in their opening European Cup match on September 15.

Bayern's narrow escape from Bundesliga babes

BONN, Sept 5: Newly promoted Duisburg, who humiliated champions Werder Bremen 5-1 on Tuesday, were denied another prestigious scalp on Saturday when a last-minute equaliser rescued Bayern Munich in the German First Division, reports Reuters.

Mehmet Scholl scored in the 90th minute to squeeze a 2-2 draw for visitors Bayern, who have won the Bundesliga record 12 times, after Duisburg had dominated a tense highspeed clash.

Eintracht Frankfurt remained two points clear at the top of the table with a 3-1 away win over struggling Schalke which gave them 11 points from six games.

Bremen, 1-0 away winners over Nuremberg on Friday after Tuesday's debacle against Duisburg, and Bayer Leverkusen, who beat Cologne 2-1 at home on Saturday, are second and third.

Prolific Ghanaian striker Anthony Yeboah, joint top scorer in the Bundesliga last season, opened Frankfurt's tally in the 20th minute.

Thomas Linke equalised for Schalke in the 43rd minute but two minutes later German international Uwe Bein headed Eintracht in front again and Maurizio Gaudino sealed victory midway through the second half.

Gritty Aussies make it wide open

HAMBURG, Germany, Sept 5: Australia came back from two goals down in the first 10 minutes to draw 2-2 with the Dutch World Cup holders in the four nations hockey tournament here on Saturday, reports AFP.

Stephan Veen put the Dutch 1-0 up after only two minutes and full back Floris-Jan Bovelander quickly made it 2-0.

The Aussies reeled, but managed to hold their ground until Mark Hager pulled one back after 23 minutes.

Jay Stacky scored the equaliser in the 47th to throw the tournament wide open.

Consolation for the Dutch was the knowledge that Olympic champions went down 2-1 to Pakistan before a noisy but bitterly disappointed home crowd.

Two goals from Shahbaz Ahmed sank the heroes of Barcelona, and even German midfielder Christian Bunk admitted afterwards that they deserved to lose.

The Germans face Australia on the last day, today, while the Dutch take on Pakistan.