



Action from yesterday's Star First Division football league match between Eskaton Sabuj Sangha and Fakirerpool Youngmen's Club at the Hockey Stadium. The match ended in a one-all draw. — Star photo

Ambrose amercers Derbyshire

LONDON, Sept 12: Six-wicket Curtly Ambrose returned his best English country figures for three years on Saturday to lift Northamptonshire into second place in the championship behind winners Middlesex, reports Reuters.

England's selectors, who name their squad on Wednesday for the Caribbean tour early next year, were given a timely reminder by the V'st Indian fast bowler of what is ahead.

Ambrose took six for 49 to give Northants victory by an innings and 46 runs at Derby.

Derbyshire had no answer and once Ambrose had reduced them to 57 for five any hopes they had of scoring 241 to make Northants bat again had vanished.

Derby were all out for 195 as Northants recorded their first away victory in the championship this year. The four-day game ended a day early.

Ambrose's fellow West Indian paceman Courtney Walsh was also among the wickets against Nottinghamshire at Bristol.

Notts, 117 for one as they chased Gloucestershire's 277 for nine declared, slid to 153 for five as Walsh bagged four wickets in five overs after lunch.

But the visitors weathered the storm and recovered to 251 for eight before skipper Tim Robinson declared 26 behind. Gloucestershire were 59 for two at stumps, a lead of 85.

At Lord's, England's Mark Ramprakash made a patient, unbeaten 117 as new champions Middlesex reached 328 for seven off Lancashire.

Asian men's v'ball results

BANGKOK, Sept 12: Asian Games champions China downed Qatar in straight sets 15-6, 15-7, 15-4 in their Group D first round match in the 7th Asian men's volleyball championship today, reports AFP.

In the other Group D match, in Nakhon Ratchasima 260 kilometres (160 miles) northeast of here, Australia beat Bangladesh 15-4, 15-4, 15-9, 15-11, while Japan downed Iran 15-3, 15-2, 15-8.

In Group C, India edged Taiwan by three sets to two, 3-15, 15-6, 8-15, 15-7, 15-4.

TT course now from Sept 28

An 11-day Olympic solidarity course on table tennis, organised by the Bangladesh Table Tennis Federation (BTTF), will begin on September 28, three days later than the earlier schedule, reports UNB.

The course, organised in co-operation with the International Olympic Committee (IOC), Bangladesh Olympic Association (BOA) and International Table Tennis Federation (ITTF), was earlier scheduled to start on September 25.

British coach Tony Teff, nominated by ITTF, is due to arrive in the capital on September 27, to conduct the course to be participated by 25 representatives from across the country.

Prize giving ceremony

The prize-giving ceremony of the second annual chess competition of the Dhaka Deaf Sports Association will be held on September 14, at 5.30 pm at the National Deaf Association auditorium.

State Minister for Shipping Harun al-Rashid will be the chief guest.

Madrasha meet commences

RAJSHAH, Sept 12: The three-day school and madrasa summer football, handball and swimming competition, organised by the School and Madrasa Sports Association, began at Rajshahi Physical Education College today, reports BSS.

Divisional Commissioner of Rajshahi M Aminul Islam inaugurated the competition.

Fakirerpool stay on top



Fakirerpool Youngmen's Club dropped a valuable point in the Star First Division football league as their encounter with Eskaton Sabuj Sangha ended in a one-all draw at the Hockey Stadium yesterday, reports UNB.

Despite the draw, Fakirerpool YC maintained their sole lead in the league table with 19 points from 14 matches while Eskaton Sabuj Sangha improved their chances of avoiding relegation upping their collection to 13 points from 14 outings.

The league leaders led the first half 1-0.

Mehdi Masud put Fakirerpool ahead in the 36th minute of the first half by a nice chip over onrushing Nizam, the Eskaton custodian, after receiving a pass from Askar Babu (1-0).

Daboo, playing as substitute for Wakil, scored the equaliser in the 22nd minute of the second half from a spot kick (1-1).

Eskaton got the penalty

when Ibrahim of Fakirerpool handled the ball in the danger zone while tackling Rinku.

Mehdi of Fakirerpool spoiled two good chances — in the 13th minute of first half and the fifth minute of the second. On both occasions, he failed to drive the ball home from vantage position.

Mizan and Rinku of Eskaton SS and Ibrahim of Fakirerpool were cautioned with the yellow card.

TEAMS

FAKIRERPOOL YC: Kawser, Ibrahim, Masum, Hassan Mamun (Sohel) (Shahid), Lokman, Gobinda, Mukter, Asif, Askar, Mehdi and Arif Mamun.

ESKATON SABUJ SONGHA: Nizam, Wakil (Daboo), Rafique, Ruhul, Mizan, Litu, Mokhes (Archil), Asad, Rinku, Watana and Kusht (Don).

Referee: R Alam.

In the Star Premier Division league, Agrani Bank Club shared points with Wari Club as the league tussle between them ended in a goalless draw at the Dhaka Stadium.

The match appeared to be a fixed with neither of the two outfit making any serious move to score.

The first-phase match between the two teams also ended in a 2-2 draw for which DMFA fined both teams Tk 5,000 each on charge of playing an arranged game.

Agrani Bank earned 14 points and Wari Club 13 points, playing 16 matches each.

TEAMS

AGRANI BANK: Totum, Bishu, Shahnoor, Kala, Raj, Shamsu (Mangol), Bakhtiar, Badal (Iqbal), Jahangir, Munna and Akhter.

WARI CLUB: Tony, Mansur, Partha, Ripon (Chanchal), Haran, Yusuf, Shankar, Babu, Bazlu, Straj and Makbul.

Referee: Nazir Hossain.

Sadharan Bima KS will take on East End Club in the First Division tie at the Hockey Stadium while Victoria SC will face PWD SC in the Premier Division at the Dhaka Stadium today.

Magical run of Ma's girls



BEIJING, Sept 12: Known at home as the 'Ma Family Army,' China's women runners waged a war over the weekend to smash world records in the 1,500 and 3,000 metres and underscore their emergence as a world athletics power, reports AFP.

Under the tutelage of coach Ma Junren — inspiration for the moniker — their surprise attack, which began at the World Championships in Stuttgart last month, went ballistic here at the national track and field competition.

Wang Junxia, the 10,000m world champion who set a world record at the distance here last Wednesday to become the first woman to go under 30 minutes, bettered the 3,000m world record by 10 seconds Sunday.

In two semifinal heats, Wang and four other runners broke the previous mark of 8:22.62 set in 1984 by Tatyana Kazankina of the former Soviet Union.

With coach Ma screaming out encouragement and split times, Wang sprinted home in a time of 8:12.19.

Running in the same heat, newly crowned 3,000 metre world champion Qu Yunxia, who broke the world record in the 1,500 metres final Saturday, came in a close second with a time of 8:12.27.

Both athletes, holding a huge Chinese national flag between them, embarked on a victory lap after the race at the Games Village.

Ma Liyan came in third in 8:19.78.

Zhang Linli and Zhang Lirong also beat the old 3,000m mark in a separate heat, clocking 8:22.07 and 8:22.44 respectively, the final was to be run Monday.

In a dizzying five days that saw records fall like ninepins, Qu shattered the oldest standing record in women's athletics on Saturday, taking two seconds off the 1,500m record, also set by Kazankina in 1980, with a time of 3:50.64.

Wang finished behind Qu in a time that also bettered Kazankina's record.

The sudden emergence of China's women runners as a new dynasty has left the world

BDR v'ball ends

SYLHET, Sept 12: The inter sector volleyball tournament of Bangladesh Rifles '93, organised by Sylhet sector concluded here today at the Sylhet Sector ground, reports BSS.

The nine-day competition, which commenced on September 4, was participated by 12 sector teams of BDR.

Champions Rangpur Sector defeated Comilla Sector 15-8, 15-5 and 15-10 in the final.

Major General Mohammed Anwar Hossain bp, psc, Director General of Bangladesh Rifles witnessed the competition as chief guest and gave away the prizes among the participants.

gasping, with athletes and coaches suggesting it would have been highly unlikely without the use of performance enhancing drugs. No one on the Chinese team has ever tested positive for drugs.

Ma, who has set up a rigid training programme with 18 women disciplines in China's northeastern Liaoning province, angrily denied the allegations at a press conference Saturday.

"China firmly bans the use of steroids. The 'Ma Family Army' has never used steroids. We rely on our own talents," he said.

"Whenever we what to pull off another world record, we will just do it," he said, with his usual bravado.

Flanked by his top stars, Ma attributed the success to team work, a rigid training programme involving frequent stints at high altitude and concoctions of Chinese food, including a "caterpillar fungus" tonic, dog stew and jubjub paste.

"The coach had said after Wang's stellar 10,000m performance — which destroyed the old record by 47 seconds — that his runners were tired and that world records in the 1,500m and the 3,000m were unlikely.

But after President Jiang Zemin extended his congratulations over Wang's run, he said,

"I decided to repay the (Communist) Party and state by breaking more world records."

Wang and Qu also said at the conference they had never used drugs.

"This kind of talk makes me really angry," Wang said.

Ma denied that trainers from the former East Germany, notorious for using performance enhancing drugs, had been recruited by China.

But he refused to reveal his training secret, saying it was "my patent and I have to protect my patent right."

The failure of Chinese men runners to match the success of their female counterparts has also been cited as a cause for suspicion, but Ma said he had already started training men with initial success.

The euphoria over the running spectacle was reflected in China's state-run media, with all major newspapers, including the Communist Party mouthpiece The People's Daily, leading with it on their front pages.

Still, the stress of being at the centre of a new running dynasty has obviously taken its toll on the coach, who often has insomnia and has come down with pancreatitis.

After the 1,500 race Saturday, Ma was seen holding his stomach and vomiting.



Wang Junxia, wearing number 13, on her way to setting a new world record in the women's 3,000 metres at the seventh Chinese national games in Beijing with a time of 8:12.19. Following her is Qu Yunxia, who slashed ten seconds off the 1,500 metres world record on Saturday, was also well inside the previous mark. — AFP photo

Steffi Graf's third GS this year



NEW YORK, Sept 12: World number one Steffi Graf garnered her third Grand Slam title of the year by

blasting Helena Sukova in straight sets on Saturday to win the women's singles championship at the US Open, reports Reuters.

Graf's rocket forehands and precise groundstroke placements stymied the net-charging Sukova, who fell 6-3, 6-3 in one hour and six minutes on a crisp, clear day at the National Tennis Centre.

The victory was Graf's 36th in a row on the women's tour and added a third US crown to her collection of 14 Grand Slam titles.

The 24-year-old Graf has been unstoppable since the forced absence of Monica Seles, who was stabbed in the back during a tournament in Hamburg last April and has yet to return from muscle and nerve damage she sustained.

Graf, who was beaten by Seles in the final of the Australian Open, regained the top ranking in June from the recovering Seles, who had held the number one spot for 91 weeks.

Graf graciously remembered Seles during the awards ceremony.

"I had an incredible year so I am very happy," Graf began. "But I do know that there is one player who is not around the last three Grand Slams and that is Monica. And I hope she will soon be back."

The victory was worth \$35,000 dollar to Graf. The 12th-seeded Sukova, who became a Grand Slam runner-up for the fourth time, more than doubled her year's earnings with the runner-up prize of \$67,500 dollar.

Graf carried a 19-1 career advantage over Sukova, and had not lost against the tall Czech since their first meeting 10 years ago when the German sensation was a mere 14.

But it took some time before the German juggernaut got rolling and Graf benefitted from Sukova's inability to take advantage of opportunity.

Graf held in the opening game but needed five more points after racing to a 40-0 lead. The two then traded service breaks in the next three games with Graf emerging with a 3-1 lead.

The 28-year-old Sukova nearly brought the set back on serve in the fifth game when on break point she lifted a lob that landed just beyond the baseline. She held off Graf in the next game finally prevailing on her sixth game point with a second service ace to make it 4-2.

The 6-foot-2 (1.88m) Sukova squandered three more chances to break back in the next game but Graf powered in some big serves when she needed them most.

Graf saved one more break-point — the sixth last chance for Sukova — in the final game before belting a deep drive into the backhand corner that the Czech could not return.

By this time, the German was hitting her stride, ripping winners and frustrating Sukova by sending balls at her feet as the Czech tried to rush the net.

Service breaks in the first

and fifth games gave Graf a 4-1 lead in the second set. After double faulting to give Sukova break for 4-2, Graf held serve in the eighth game and broke in the next to claim the title.

doubles and scored a big victory in the semifinals Saturday night, beating top-seeded Gigi Fernandez and Natalia Zvereva 1-6, 6-3, 6-4.

The loss snapped a 41-

"This feels very special. I haven't played very well the last four or five years in New York" Graf said.

"Winning a Grand Slam is always a great, great feeling."



World number one Steffi Graf of Germany holds aloft her US Open trophy after beating Helena Sukova of the Czech Republic in the women's singles final at the National Tennis Center on Saturday. It was Graf's third Grand Slam of the year. — AFP photo

"I had chances but I wasn't as sharp as I needed to be at the important stages of that match," said Sukova, who said she felt a half-step too slow.

Sukova missed a chunk of the year with a broken bone in her right foot but has enjoyed a revival at the Open. She ousted four-time open champion Martina Navratilova in the round of 16 and eliminated doubles partner Arantxa Sanchez-Vicario, the second seed, in the semifinals.

On Thursday, she teamed with Australian Todd Woodbridge to capture the mixed doubles, defeating Navratilova and Australian Mark Woodforde. Sukova and Arantxa Sanchez Vicario were the third-seeded pair in the women's

match winning streak in Grand Slams for Fernandez and Zvereva and ended their hopes of a sweep of the four Slam titles this year.

"I'm definitely going to be back next year," Sukova said at the awards presentation. And go one more step."

Graf said it was difficult to be at her sharpest in the breezy conditions at Louis Armstrong Stadium.

"In windy conditions when you're playing someone who comes in all the time, it's difficult," she said. "To play perfect is impossible."

Graf, whose last Open triumph was in 1989, was overjoyed to have tasted victory again in New York, where she now has an apartment.

Graf said she had given no thought to how close she had come to a second Grand Slam sweep to match her 1988 achievement and that her remarks about Seles had been spontaneous.

"It's a fact. It's just obvious," Graf said about mentioning the missing star of women's tennis. "It's nothing I had to say."

"I'm usually very nervous when I have to make a speech. I had no idea what I was going to say. It just worked out that way."

"It's a great achievement to win three Grand Slams and be in the final of the other one. I had it once (1988) and that's fine with me."

Chinese runners lashes out at drug charges

BEIJING, Sept 12: China's leading women runners on Saturday angrily denied their repeated topping of world records was due to drugs, reports Reuters.

Qu and Wang Junxia, who lowered the women's 10,000 metres world record by 43 seconds on Wednesday, both denied they had used stimulants.

"I can say here firmly that we have not used (drugs)," Qu told a news conference.

"I get very angry at this kind of talk. It's impossible for us to have taken (them)," said Wang, adding she and other Chinese runners had repeatedly tested clean.

Qu, 21, clocked three minutes 50.46 seconds at China's National Games in Beijing to eclipse the 3:52.47 set by Tatyana Kazankina of the former Soviet Union in August 1980.

Wang was second. Her time of 3:51.92 was also inside the old world mark.

The performances of Qu and Wang underlined China's emergence as a major force in women's middle and distance running.

Qu won the 3,000 metres at last month's World Championships in Stuttgart.

Ma Junren, coach of the record-breaking runners, hit out at the drug rumours.

"The Chinese people don't rely on anything... These two (Qu and Wang) didn't rely on anything," he said.

Ma said western reporters who expressed surprise at the wide margins by which the records were tumbling did not understand the development of athletics.

New Delhi meet in jeopardy



NEW DELHI, Sept 12: World-class athletes will face more than just competition when a two-day interna-

tional athletics event begins here Monday — steady rain, a dilapidated track and jet lag will be their other worries, reports AP.

Pole-vault star Sergei Bubka, runner Michael Johnson and long jumper Mike Powell will be among the more than 200 athletes who are scheduled to perform at the ITC International Athletics Meet.

But the Indian capital,

Palestine may compete in Atlanta Games

TERRASSA, Spain, Sept 12: Palestine could take part in the Atlanta Games in 1996, International Olympic Committee president Juan Antonio Samaranch said here Saturday, reports AFP.

"The IOC would have no objection to Palestine joining the Olympic movement," he said while attending the junior women's hockey World Championships here.

Samaranch said recognition would be dependent on the Palestine Liberation Organisation and Israel signing their agreement in Washington on Monday.

The IOC leader said a Palestine delegation could take part in the 1996 Games in the United States.

He added that the IOC was still studying the possibility of including women's football, beach volleyball and mountain bike racing at the Games.

lashed by incessant monsoon rains since the last one week, is not likely to get a respite soon, the Weather Office said Sunday.

Last week, rains disrupted the World Badminton championship in New Delhi when the roof of the indoor stadium sprung leaks and water dripped on the courts.

"Monsoon has been vigorous in the region and heavy rain is likely during the next 48 hours," a Weather Office spokesman said.

Besides, the red Olympre track at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium is "dilapidated and worn out in several places," said Suresh Kalmadi, president of the Amateur Athletics Federation of India.

He blamed the government-run Sports Authority of India for not repairing the track that has been in use since the stadium was built during the 1982 Asian Games.

"If they cannot have a new track, what is the use of having such a big stadium," Kalmadi was quoted as saying by Press Trust of India news agency.

"So many world and Olympic champions are coming. What impression will they have?" he asked.

Most athletes have arrived in the capital, but four top US stars — Johnson, Powell, Butch Reynolds and Gwen Torrence — missed their Air India flight on Saturday and will not arrive until a few hours before the tournament starts at sundown.

Bubka and Kenyan half-milers Paul Ruto, the current world champion, and William Tanui, are also expected on Monday.

The events kick off with the 200 metres in which Johnson is competing. Then, Powell, the world and Olympic champion, will be seen in the long jump

pit. Bubka will not have to perform until Tuesday evening. Fresh from his Grand Prix victory at London, Bubka's main competitors here will be elder brother Vassily, American Scott Huffman and Igor Potapovich of Kazakhstan.

On Saturday, stadium officials found the pole vault runway in a poor condition and shifted it to the long jump pit after breaking its concrete runway. The Pioneer newspaper reported.

Volkov snaps at reporters

NEW YORK, Sept 12: Weary after facing 126 mph (203 kph) serves from Pete Sampras in his semifinal loss at the US Open on Saturday, Alexander Volkov snapped at questions about the No. 1 player in the world, reports AP.

"If you want to ask questions about Pete, he's going to be here in five minutes and you can ask him," Volkov said. "You are always asking questions about somebody else. OK, he will be here in five minutes. Ask him."

"He is the No 1 player. What else do you want me to tell you? He's No 1. He serves more aces than anybody else. You want me again to tell you he served well. Yes, he served well. Everyone on the court can tell you he served well. And you ask me."

Volkov also was unhappy about playing on the Stadium court for the first time.

"You know, if you are playing six matches in a row, the first time on center court, it's difficult to be there," he said.