

Sport

Lodhi retains lead

Sports Reporter

Pakistani International Master (IM) Mahmud Lodhi retained his position at the top of the points table at the end of the sixth round of Dr Q M Hussain memorial International Masters Chess tournament at Hotel Purbani yesterday.

Lodhi took his tally of points to five with a win in his sixth match against Bangladesh's Rafiqul Islam. The Pathan who played with white in a queen's gambit opening game needed 42 moves to subdude his opponent.

National champion IM Reefat bin Sattar beat compatriot Fide Master (FM) Tahmidur Rahman. In a Grundfeld defence opening Reefat, the younger of the two contestants defended with black and had his bearded opponent checkmated in 27 moves.

Indian Sharvanan also won his tie, beating Kalimullah Khan of Bangladesh in 32 moves.

IM Shekhar Chandra Sahu, another Indian too recorded win. He made short work of IWM Rani Hamid of Bangladesh in 37 moves.

Bangladeshi IM Ziaur Rahman joined Reefat and Sharvanan in the points table with 4.5 points to cling to the second position.

Zia who rode for couple of days together beat Niamul Huq Nuru yesterday. Playing with black in Sicilian defence opening game Zia required 49 moves to win submission.

Prakash win promotion

From Our Correspondent

NARAYANGANJ, Oct 29: Prakash Club won promotion to next year's Narayanganj First Division football league with a thumping 4-0 victory against Sirajuddin Club in the final match of the Haji Jalaluddin Ahmed Smriti Second Division football league at the local Osmani Stadium here today.

The winners led the first half 3-0.

Shahabuddin scored the first goal in the 18th minute. Mujbar doubled the score seven minutes later. Shawkat further consolidated winners' position in the 30th minute.

Mujbar, who scored the second goal, completed the tally in the 25th minute of the second half.

Anwar of Kadam Rasul Club emerged top scorer of the meet with six goals.

Prakash Club goalie Murad earned the best player's trophy.

State Minister for Finance Mujibar Rahman distributed prizes among the winners.

MCA to hire 3 foreign coaches

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 29: The Malaysian Cricket Association will hire three foreigners, including former Australian Test veteran Richie Robinson, to coach its national team for the 1998 Commonwealth Games, MCA secretary Karu Selvaratnam said Thursday, reports AP.

"Most of our players are executives, doctors and others who could not afford to attend centralised training at one place," Selvaratnam said. "That is why we plan to set up four centres throughout the country and put the foreign coaches at these places."

Robinson, who is with the Northern Territory Cricket Board (NTCB), will stay in Malaysia for two months to prepare the national team for a "mini" World Cup in Kenya in February, he said.

He said they were hoping to sign Robinson to a three-to-five-year contract.

Besides Robinson, another Australian, John Inverarity, will assist the national team for a two-week period in January, he said.

As part of its long-term plan, the MCA has invited Englishman Lindsay Walker for another six weeks next year.

SA wicketkeeper reprimanded

JOHANNESBURG, Oct 29: South Africa's reserve wicketkeeper, Steven Palfraan, has been suspended for two matches after a racial slur on West Indian all-rounder Franklin Stephenson, reports AFP.

But the ban will not affect Palfraan's chances of making the South African squad to tour Australia this summer, United Cricket Board Managing Director Ali Bacher said.

The board's disciplinary committee ordered the suspension in keeping with its "ethos of the development of reconciliation" and for his breach of the board's code of conduct.

Div II cricket transfer

The three-day inter-club cricketers' transfer for the Metropolis Second Division cricket league begins on November 10, reports UNB.

32 teams, divided into four groups, will compete in this year's league, scheduled for last week of November.



Pakistani International Master (IM) Mahmud Ahmed Lodhi (L) and Bangladeshi Rafiqul Islam (R) at an early stage of their sixth round match of the 10th Dr QM Hussain memorial chess tournament at the Hotel Purbani yesterday.

Desert heat wears off and

All eyes turn to Europe

LONDON, Oct 29: After the Asian desert shootout, the World Cup qualifying circus turns back to cooler European climes with all eyes focused on the November 17 D-day when the nine remaining finalists will be decided, reports Reuters.

International heavyweights Italy, the Netherlands and France should qualify on that night, giving a more balanced look to the list of finalists in the United States next year. Saudi Arabia and South Korea both triumphed on Thursday in the Asian Final qualifying tournament in the Gulf state of Qatar to bring to 15 the number of qualifiers from five continents, but the only past winners among them are Germany and Brazil.

Japan, bidding to become the first Asian World Cup hosts in 2002, were 2-1 up against Iraq and poised to rob South Korea of a third successive berth in the finals, but allowed the Iraqis to steal a last gasp equaliser and went out on goal difference.

As if specially scripted for the born-again Diego Maradona, twice winners Argentina's name should be the 24th and last on the list if they win their two-leg playoff against Australia.

The second leg is Buenos Aires on November 17, where the clocks are three hours behind GMT and four behind most western European capitals, will end a few hours after the last games — 11 in all and nine decisive — in five European Groups.

England, World Cup winners in 1966, need a miracle not to join Uruguay as past champions falling to qualify.

The Dutch, who won their crucial home tie with England 2-0 two weeks ago, should join Norway from European Group Two unless they lose to Poland and the English beat San Marino heavily in Bologna.

France need a draw at home against Bulgaria to go through with Sweden as qualifiers from Group Six.

Italy, Switzerland and Portugal are vying for the two spots in Group One with the Italians facing the Portuguese at home on November 17.

Portugal can add spice to the denouement by beating Estonia at home a week earlier

to join Italy on 14 points at the top of the group, one point in front of the Swiss, who are at home to the Estonians in their final tie.

An equally tight Group Three has European champions Denmark, unbeaten in their series, facing possible elimination in a daunting trip to Spain, while Ireland must beat Northern Ireland in Belfast to be sure of reaching their second finals in a row.

Belgium, who opened a big gap early on with five straight wins in Group Four, still need at least a point to be sure of their berth from a tough home game against the representative of Czechs and Slovaks (RCS). Wales and Romania, who clash in Cardiff, are also in contention.

Interestingly, most pundits' favourites to reach the July 17 final in Los Angeles, holders Germany and three-times winners Brazil meet in a friendly in Cologne on the same night.

The 15 qualifiers so far are: United States (hosts), Brazil, Bolivia, Colombia, Mexico, Greece, Norway, Sweden, Russia, Cameroon, Morocco, Nigeria, Saudi Arabia and South Korea.

Gullit has a score to settle

PARIS, Oct 29: Ruud Gullit will have a point to prove on Sunday when AC Milan visit Sampdoria for the first time since he left the Italian champions, reports AFP.

The Dutchman, who announced this week he is willing to return to his national side if Johan Cruyff takes over as coach, took a severe blow to his pride when Milan only offered him a one-year contract on reduced terms at the end of last season.

Gullit opted instead to take his skills to Sampdoria where he has enjoyed a new lease of life, free from the ferocious competition for places among Milan's foreign players.

Inspired by Gullit, Sampdoria have emerged as serious championship contenders and they could go top if they beat Fabio Capello's side in Genoa.

Milan will be without Stefano Eranio, the Italian international forward who is injured, which means Dejan Savicevic should get a rare outing as Milan's third foreigner, alongside Jean-Pierre Papin and the Croat Zvonimir Boban.

Parma, who head Milan on goal difference at the top of the league, face a difficult trip to the San Siro Stadium to face Inter-Milan.

They will have to wait until this afternoon to know if Faustino Asprilla is able to play. The Colombian striker is appealing against a two match suspension following his sending off against Cremonese on October 20.

Juventus, who are level with Sampdoria just one point behind the pacesetters, will be looking to bounce back from one of the worst defeats in their history when they take on Genoa in the Stadio Delle Alpi.

Like father like son

BARCELONA, Oct 29: Johan Jordi Cruyff, the 19-year-old son of Barcelona's Dutch coach Johan Cruyff, has signed a four-year contract with the Catalan club, reports AFP.

Johan Jordi currently plays for Barcelona B in the Spanish Second Division but made his debut for the first team in a friendly in Copenhagen last Tuesday.

Barcelona president Josep Luis Nunez predicted that Cruyff Jr. who will be the club's first assimilated player, was likely to quickly become a regular first team player.

His signing comes almost exactly 20 years after his illustrious father made his debut as a player for Barcelona.



LONELY LADY: There are moments when one can feel pretty lonely even in a crowd. This young lady who yesterday entered the DMFA office, now being used as a make shift recruiting office for liaison officers for the forthcoming SAF Games, with a view to get the job seems to be in her elements while taking on the interviewers. Seven-nation SAF Games begins here in Dhaka from December 20.

Pak tour to India remains uncertain

SHARJAH, Oct 29: Pakistan's cricket team is as uncertain as the man in the street about the fate of its scheduled tour of India next month, reports AFP.

"We are in the hands of our government," said Waqar Hassan, manager of the Pakistani team currently playing the three nation Champions Trophy tournament here.

"There respective boards want the tour to go ahead, in fact we would very much like to go to India, but we have no say in the matter," Hassan told AFP Friday.

"The Indian authorities will obviously have to ensure adequate security for the team if we are to go there," he said, referring to the Hindu militant Shiv Sena Party's threat to disrupt the tour.

Pakistan are scheduled to take part in the six-nation limited over series in India starting November 7 and stay on for three tests.

But there are indications that the resumption of India-Pakistan cricket ties, suspended since 1989, have been put on hold.

According to the original schedule, India were to reciprocate Pakistan's visit by a short return tour in December for the Asia Cup and a Test series in December.

However, the Pakistani board has negotiated with Zimbabwe to come instead for a brief tour.

Zimbabwe, along with West Indies, South Africa, Sri Lanka and hosts India are to play in the Indian tournament, being organised to celebrate the diamond jubilee of the Cricket Association of Bengal.

Patel leads NZ revival

NEWCASTLE, Oct 29: Off-spinner Dipak Patel took six wickets Friday as New Zealand fought back strongly on the first day of their four-day cricket match against New South Wales, reports AP.

Kenyan-born Patel helped the tourists restrict the Sheffield Shield champion to 299 for eight from 91 overs after New South Wales had made an impressive start.

Patel's figures of six for 87 helped boost New Zealand morale after the Kiwis had slumped to losses in their opening three tour matches.

Patel came on with the score at 147 for two and bowled 23 overs unchanged into a blustery wind to give the Kiwis their best day on tour.

The three most aggressive New South Wales batsmen: Steve Waugh, Mark Waugh and Michael Bevan, all were dismissed by the wily 35-year-old spinner after compiling half centuries.

Steve Waugh made 88, Waugh 63 and Bevan contributed 55.

New South Wales will resume on Saturday with former Test allrounder Greg Matthews on 31 and Glenn McGrath on three.

Four wickets fell in the final session as New Zealand showed plenty of fighting spirit.

Patel's first seven overs cost 35, but he stuck to his task and was amply rewarded.

His best support came from medium-pace Simon Doull, who got the first two wickets and ended a tiring day with an excellent nine-over spell for the loss of just 16 runs.

Doull claimed the first two wickets in the space of 12 balls.

In his second over, Mark Taylor chopped a shortish ball onto his stumps with the score 43. He then had Michael Slater caught low at cover by Bryan Young.

The Waugh brothers cut loose in the second session as the New Zealand bowlers struggled to maintain their line and length.

The 100 stand came up in 158 minutes but Mark Waugh departed soon afterwards, when he holed out to mid-wicket off Patel.

Classy Windies do it again



SHARJAH, Oct 29: A classy West Indian display stopped World Cup champions Pakistan in their tracks in the Champions Trophy limited-overs match here today, reports AFP.

After piling up 267 for seven in 50 overs, the brilliant West Indians restricted Pakistan to 228 for nine to win by 39 runs.

It was the second victory in two days for Richie Richardson's men who outclassed Sri Lanka by eight wickets in yesterday's opener of the three-nation tournament.

West Indies owed their success to Keith Arthurton and Jimmy Adams who struck valuable half centuries to rescue their team from a shaky 57 for three in the 15th over.

The pair put on 119 for the fifth-wicket with left-handed Arthurton scoring an attractive 84 off 99 balls and man-of-the-match Adams contributing an unbeaten 81.

West Indies hammered 83 in the last 10 overs against a Pakistani attack without spearhead Waqar Younis, who limped off with an attack of cramps while bowling his eight over.

Younis was expected to be fit for tomorrow's match against Sri Lanka which will round off the first leg of the preliminary league.

The teams play one another again from Monday with the top two teams advancing to the final

Scoreboard of the first innings in the Champions Trophy one-day international between

West Indies: 267 (119-6) 37-48; 4-59; 5-147; 6-185; 7-190; 8-194; 9-213

Pakistan: 228 (91-6) 25-46; 4-59; 5-147; 6-185; 7-190; 8-194; 9-213

Extras: (lb-6; nb-1; w-14) 21

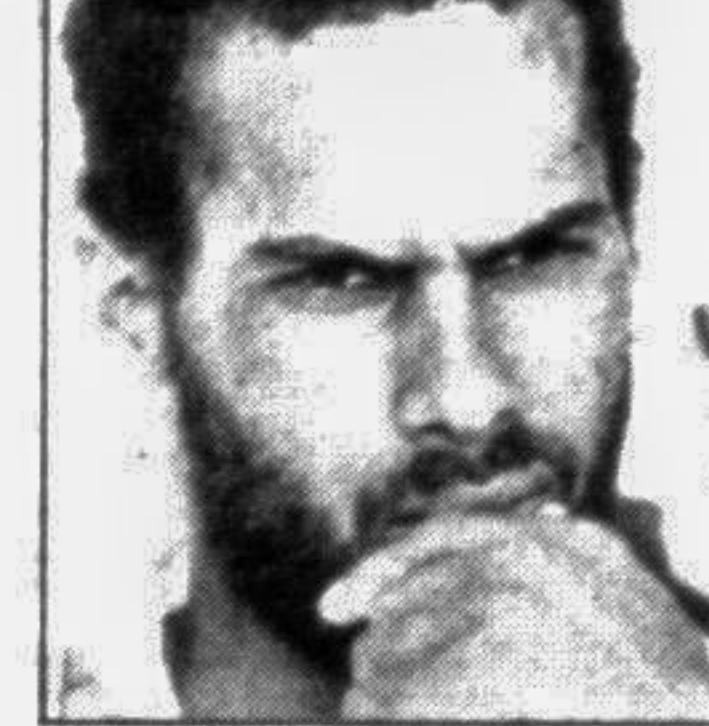
Total: (for nine wickets, 50 overs) 228

Fall of wickets: 1-4; 2-47; 3-48; 4-59; 5-147; 6-185; 7-190; 8-194; 9-213

Result: West Indies won by 39 runs

Man-of-the-match: Jimmy Adams

Did not bat: Ambrose, K Benjamin				
Bowling:	O	M	R	W
Akram	10	0	36	3
A Javed	10	0	38	1
Younis	7.1	0	57	1
Mushtaq	10	1	44	2
Sohail	4	5	0	31
Mujtaba	8	0	41	0



J ADAMS... man-of-the-match

West Indies and Pakistan played here Friday:

WEST INDIES:

Stimmons c Latif b Younis 25

Lara c Latif b Akram 14

Richardson c Anwar 2

b Aaqbil Javed 2

Arthurton c Sohail b Mushtaq 84

Hooper c Latif b Mushtaq 6

Adams not out 81

Murray lbw b Akram 6

Cummins b Akram 18

W Benjamin not out 2

Extras: (lb-1; lb-19; w-7; nb-2) 29

Total: (For seven wickets, 50 overs) 267

Fall of wickets: 1-32; 2-35; 3-57; 4-82; 5-201; 6-225; 7-263

Upsets galore in Stockholm

STOCKHOLM, Oct 29: The top seeds fell like flies at the ATP 1,650,000 dollar Stockholm Open on Thursday, reports AFP.

Jim Courier and Boris Becker both crashed out leaving the tournament without its top three seeds. World number-one Pete Sampras made his exit 24 hours earlier when he was beaten by Spaniard Carlos Costa.

Switzerland's big-serving Davis Cup player Marc Rosset fought a tough battle and held on to beat Courier 6-7 (5/7), 6-3, 7-6 (7/6).

"I served incredibly well. He did have a lot of good returns, but my serve and volley also worked well," said the 22-year-old Swiss who is ranked 21 in the world.

He will now meet ninth-seed Petr Korda of the Czech Republic in the quarter-finals.

The two were scheduled to play each other in last week's quarter-finals in Vienna, but Rosset was forced to pull out because of stomach illness.

In Thursday's second big upset, Maliva Washington of the United States slaughtered three-times Stockholm Open winner Boris Becker 6-1, 6-3.

"It wasn't that easy down there on the court, although I did start really well. Got my serve to work. Becker was a little slow to start with, which was good for me," Washington said.

"The second set was much tougher. But my serve continued to work, and I returned really well," added Washington, who has made it to several finals this year and is ranked 33rd in the world.

Washington now faces Sweden's Jonas Svensson for a place in the last-four.

Svensson, ranked 35th, was also responsible for an upset in Stockholm's Globe arena on Thursday. He beat fifth seed Sergi Bruguera of Spain 3-6, 6-3, 6-2.

Sweden's sixth-seed Stefan Edberg, desperately looking for a win after a long series of disappointments, dropped a set out got safely past stubborn Russian Andrei Cherkasov. Edberg eventually won 4-6, 6-1, 6-2.

Edberg has now reached the quarter-finals 14 times on the ATP tour this year but has won only one tournament — in Madrid six months ago.

Despite a weak serve, Edberg returned well and broke Cherkasov seven times.

Cherkasov, who has beaten Edberg twice on clay, managed to keep the Swedish number-one on the baseline and took the first set 6-4 after breaking serve three times.

In the second and third sets, however, Edberg rediscovered his touch and his more familiar attacking game, and dropped only three games in the second and third sets.

German Davis Cup star Michael Stich became the highest-seeded player in the event when he beat Magnus Gustafsson of Sweden 7-6 (7-2), 6-4. The fourth-seed now faces Edberg for a semi-final place.

In other matches Thursday, Petr Korda beat veteran Anders Jarryd of Sweden 3-6, 6-2, 7-6 (10/8) while Arnaud Boetsch of France, seeded 16th, beat Carlos Costa of Spain 6-3, 6-7 (5/7), 6-1.

Eighth-seed Goran Ivanisevic of Croatia won his match against 10th seeded American Todd Martin 6-2, 6-4. He now plays Boetsch in the quarter-finals.

Amateur or professional?

TULSA, Okla, Oct 29: Michael Bentt looks at his amateur record and boasts. Tommy Morrison looks at Bentt's professional record and laughs, reports AP.

Neither heavyweight argues that experience will play a big role when Morrison defends his WBO title in a 12-round fight Friday night. They just don't agree whether amateur experience means anything.

"Amateur boxing as opposed to professional boxing is like day and night," said Morrison, 24, whose powerful left hook has carried him to a 38-1 record with 33 knockouts.

"All the people in his corner are telling him all these great things," Morrison said. "But once he gets in there, he's going to be in there by himself. The bottom line is, I've been there and he hasn't."

But his professional record is 10-1. He lost his debut to Jerry Jones in February 1989, took 18 months off to contemplate his future, and has won all 10 of his fights since, with five knockouts.

"I think I was the most accomplished amateur never to make an Olympic team," Bentt said. "I've worked almost 20 years for this. I've groomed myself for this moment. I'll win this based on experience alone."

Morrison said Bentt's belief that his amateur experience will carry over is "completely retarded."

"He hasn't seen one-tenth of the power he will see from me, said Morrison, after weighing in at 227 pounds (103 kilos). Bentt weighed 226 (102 kilos).

As an amateur, Bentt fought three-round bouts that reward points over power. In his 11 professional fights, six have been decided by the third round and three six-round fights went the distance. His last two fights went the distance at eight and 10 rounds.

"We've trained very hard, very vigorously," said Bentt trainer Eddie Mustafa Muhammad. We are a 15-round fighter, not a 12-round fighter."

Morrison's durability also has been questioned. He won 15 of his first 27 fights in the first round, and was pouncing Ray Mercer in the first three rounds before running out of steam. Mercer knocked him out in the fifth.

Since then, Morrison got TKO victories over Joe Hipp in the ninth and Car Williams in the eighth. In June, he won a 12-round decision over George Foreman to win the vacant WBO title.

"A lot of people have that thought in their head that after three or four rounds I tire out and become beatable. That's not true," Morrison said. "I was once that way, but I've learned how to get to know my body and my limits. I'm a 12-round fighter."

Tom Virgets, Morrison's trainer, told Bentt he deserved to be on the Olympic team.

English cricket in for a shake-up

BIRMINGHAM, Oct 29: England's system of picking Test cricket teams could be overhauled in the wake of their 4-1 Ashes drubbing by Australia last season, reports Reuters.

Officials from the 18 first-class countries are expected to discuss changes at a special meeting of the Test and County Cricket Board (TCCB) here today.

"We need to get younger people involved in the set-up such as (Durham captain) David Gray and (Hampshire skipper) Mark Nicholas," said one county chairman.

"I'm hoping the meeting will look at the structure and then decide who are the best people or the job or jobs."

Under last season's system, Ted Dexter, as chairman of the England committee, headed a selection sub-committee comprising the captain, team manager and one annual-appointed representative of the counties.

Some of the counties believe the set-up should be extended, with the involvement of such cricketers as Gray and Nicholas, who still play the first-class game and see the available talent at first hand.

"This is an opportunity for us to look at ourselves and see if we can do anything better," said Somerset chief executive Peter Anderson.

No firm decisions are expected today's meeting, while a successor to Dexter who resigned at the end of the Ashes Series last August, will not be appointed until December or even next March.