

Sport

Kabaddi squad for SAF Games named

Sports Reporter
The Bangladesh Kabaddi Federation announced a 16-member squad for the upcoming sixth SAF Games, scheduled to begin in the city from December 20.

Amir Hossain Patwari has been appointed the team manager while Sheikh Nizamuddin will act as his deputy. The other two officials are chief coach Hamidur Rahman and assistant coach Jahangir Alam Chowdhury.

The players of the team are: Amzad Hossain, Abdul Jalil, Nazir Ahmed, Rabiul Alam, Mir Julhas, Tariqul Islam, Abdur Rouf, Zahurul Hoque, Hafizur Rahman, Nowsher Ali, Moshirur Rahman and Abu Baker Siddique.

Che sera sera, so let's wait

Sports Reporter
Football, the most adored discipline in Bangladesh, no matter how unconventional it may sound in the context of an Olympic style sporting competition like the sixth South Asian Federation (SAF) Games, scheduled to be held in Dhaka for the second time, will have its inaugural and eventual rites played at the faraway Mirpur Stadium.

Hosts Bangladesh will take on Maldives in the second of the two encounters billed for December 20, Monday, hours after the grand opening of the eight-day biennial sporting spectacle comprising the seven member nations of the regional forum South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC).



Whether the football finale, slated for December 26, will give a local habitation to the long pent up expectations of a football crazy nation was the unwieldy question dished out on the plate of the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) supremos in yesterday's share of package press conference in connection with the games.

After two and a half months of concentrated practice at the sprawling residential camp of the Bangladesh Krira Shiksha Protishthan (BKSP) that too under the watchful eyes of a FIFA coach, the trite interrogations over the expectations of a country, ranked higher than any of its South Asian neighbours in the latest FIFA seedings, is a periphrastic study in sheer redundancy.

Quite naturally purpose got drowned in the misshapen chaos of well seeming forms and of course the din caused by the hammer and the tongs of

vague renovators working at the other side of a filmy green and white shroud giving a rather inadequate rosy for a wall.

Looking more like a wall in an expressionist drama it offered an apt symbolism for things to come. Eventual success or should one say the elusive gold Bangladesh is in search of since 1984, the year of SAF Games' birth, is separated from the zone of failure by an almost imperceptible barrier

poetry was not bestowed till then was saved by divine interpretation and here the self-defeating expedition was called off by the witty Akmal who rounded off the show with a break-up of the expenses incurred by the preparation of the Games.

Svab, who is likely to announce the final list of 20 footballers out of 22 in the reckoning today, expressed his satisfaction with his soldiers. He was particularly pleased with his boys' aptitude for learning. But he never forgot to mention that he would have liked his warriors to have fared better during the 12 practice matches played in an outside the country over 53 days.

REVELATIONS

The implicit suggestion of football impresarios (Akmal Hossain, Svab and team manager Shamimuzzaman Basunia) to let time pluck the mystery out of future's bosom was preceded by monitoring committees evaluations of preparatory activities since its operation from August 1.

All was well according to Kazi Abdul Alim, the chairman who is also the deputy chief of mission of the Bangladesh contingent. While dwelling on Bangladesh's aureate prospects, he said that Taka one lakh has been announced for every gold winner with shooters in his estimation likely to make the most of this incentive. The marksmen and women are likely to deposit more than six gold while two to four should be churned out of the pool.

Light-fly-weight is a con-irmed event for Bangladesh in boxing according to the seasoned sports figure of the country.

Sampras, Graf named ITF world champs

LONDON, Dec 15: Pete Sampras and Steffi Graf on Wednesday were named world champions for 1993 by the International Tennis Federation, reports AP.

Sampras won Wimbledon and the US Open, was runner-up at the Australian Open and reached the quarter-finals of the French Open. He won eight tournament titles, had an overall match record of 85-16 and finished with the No 1 ranking on the ATP Tour computer.

Graf won 10 tournaments, including the French Open, Wimbledon, the US Open and the season-ending Virginia Slims Championships. She also recaptured the No 1 ranking from Monica Seles, who missed most of the season after being stabbed by a spectator on April 30.

Int'l umpires' panel now a reality

LONDON, Dec 15: An international panel of umpires which World cricket chiefs have been trying to set up since 1991 may soon become a reality, reports Reuter.

It appears they have succeeded in tying up a sponsorship deal that would mean every Test being controlled by one home country umpire and one official from overseas.

The International Cricket Council (ICC) have called a news conference at Lord's next Tuesday at which they plan to announce "An important new international-cricket sponsorship of interest to the nine Test match countries."

A pilot scheme during the past year has included England's Dickie Bird standing in Tests between West Indies and Pakistan in the Caribbean. Anticipating the formation of an international panel, England have not yet appointed their umpires for next season's home Tests against New Zealand and South Africa.

Bankers lose

Sports Reporter

Niaz notched up the highest individual score of the day but still ended at the wrong end of the table when his side, Agrani Bank, conceded defeat to Eskaton Sabuj Sangha by 54 runs in the Milnars First Division cricket league at the Mirpur Pallabi ground yesterday.

Eskaton Sabuj Sangha won the toss and decided to make the first use of the strip. The decision really paid off as the two openers put on 53 runs for the first wicket.

The Eskaton batsmen maintained the tempo set by the opening pair throughout their innings and rattled 225 for the loss of six wickets in the stipulated 45 overs.

Raj Kumara played a rapid-fire 35-ball innings of 40 that featured five shots across the fence while Jewel, one of the openers, also scored 40 but his knock spanned 86 balls, embellished with three fours.

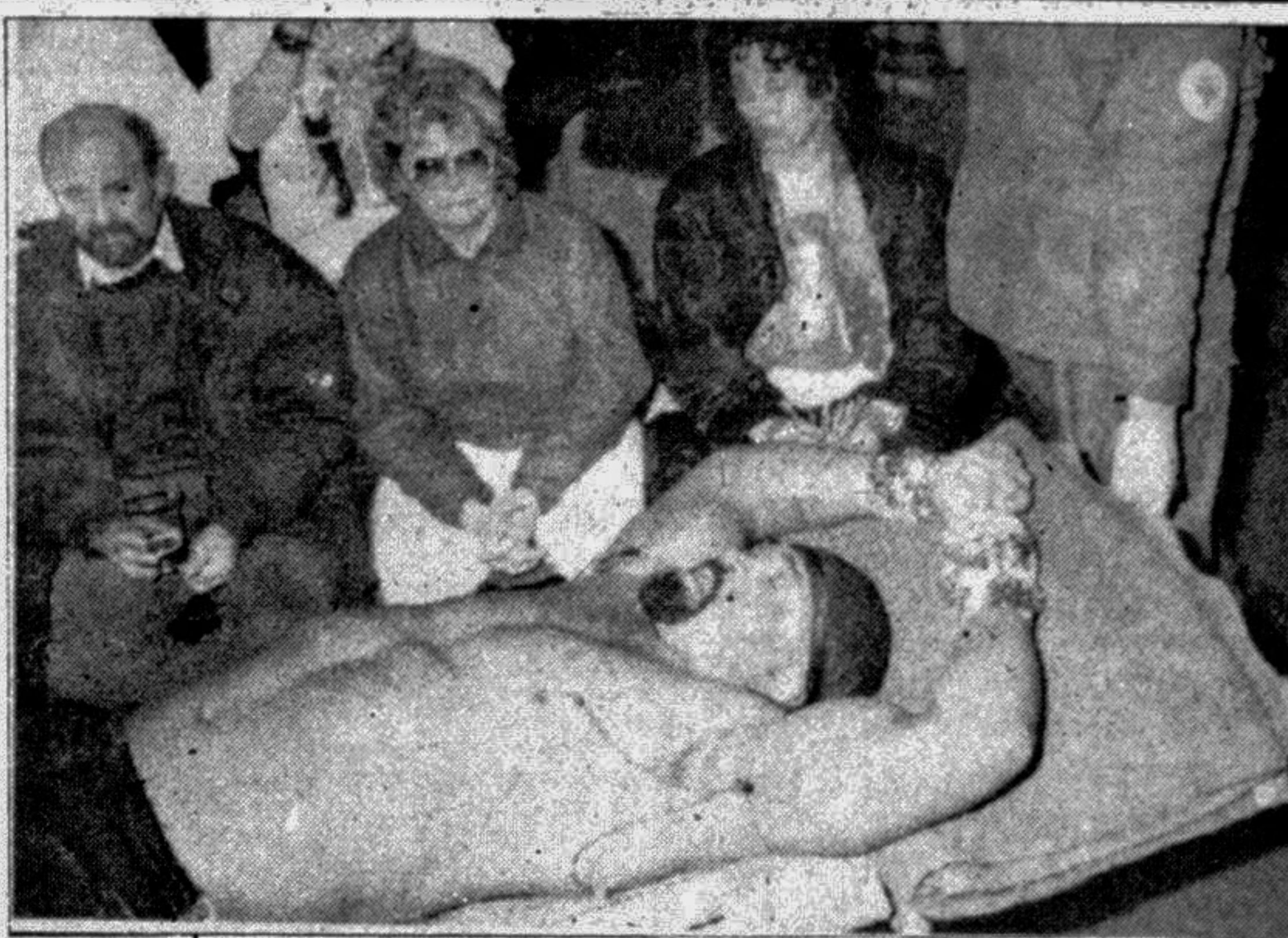
Four batsmen — Biplob, Khokon, Kaiser and Colonel — scored within the range of 24 to 30.

Needing just over five runs an over to win, Agrani Bank lost two early wickets with only 25 runs on the board. Although Niaz anchored two useful partnerships with Atique and Intu, the bankers were never really in the chase.

In the end, to the second ball of the 43rd over, the Bank innings folded, 54 runs adrift of the victory target.

Niaz missed a half century by two runs. His patient 103-ball knock was punctuated by four fours: Atique and Intu contributed 23 and 20 respectively.

Raj Kumara followed up his success with the willow with impressive bowling figures of three for 25 in 7.2 overs.



American grappler Larry Cameron, 41, is being carried off on a stretcher after apparently collapsing to death during the interval of an international wrestling event in Germany on Dec 13. — AFP photo

Ratnayake makes way for Vaas

COLOMBO, Dec 15: Former Test bowler Rumesh Ratnayake has been dropped from the Sri Lanka squad, that face a daunting task to beat the West Indies in the second one-day international here Thursday, reports AFP.

Ratnayake, battling to regain his place in the Sri Lankan team after injury, has been replaced by up-and-coming teenager Chaminda Vaas in a 14-man squad that will take on the West Indies, who are eagerly looking forward to an uninterrupted game.

"We are looking forward to a game," David Holford, West Indies manager said Wednesday. "I hope the rains keep away, and that we will be able to have a complete day of cricket."

Everyone is fit and raring to go. The conditions at the ground look great. I just hope it stays that way tomorrow," said Holford.

The West Indies have so far been dogged by bad weather and poor ground conditions on

their short tour of Sri Lanka. All three matches that have been played — the first one day in Colombo, a three-day match in Galle and the one-off Test at Moratuwa — have been abandoned.

"It is sad that having waited nearly 12 years to tour Sri Lanka after they gained Test status, bad weather has thwarted us from playing cricket," added Holford.

The second limited over match will be played under floodlights at the Khetarama Stadium, in the heart of the city.

Sri Lankan manager Bandula Warnapura, meanwhile, said his side had gained a little bit of heart after having bowled out the powerful West Indies batting lineup for 204 in the Test match.

"I can't say we are fully confident, but we feel we have got a chance now in the last two one-dayers," said Warnapura. "To beat the West Indies, we will have to score at least about 250 runs."

Sri Lanka know they have a tough task in front of them. They have a dismal 15-1 one-

day record against the West Indies, with their only win coming in the Nehru Cup in 1989.

More significantly, the Caribbeans side have comprehensively beaten Sri Lanka in their last four meetings recently — twice in Sharjah and twice in India.

The only thing in favour of the home team is that they have not lost a one-day series, here, since August 1992.

WEST INDIES: Richie Richardson (Capt), Desmond Haynes, Brian Lara, Curtly Ambrose, Jimmy Adams, Keith Arthurton, Kenneth Benjamin, Winston Benjamin, Anderson Cummins, Roger Harper, Carl Hooper, Courtney Walsh, Phill Simmons, Junior Murray, Roland Holder.

SRI LANKA: Arjuna Ranatunga (Capt), Aravinda de Silva, Roshan Mahanama, Sanath Jayasuriya, Hashan Tillekeratne, Ruwan Kalpage, Hemantha Wickremarantne, Romesh Kaluwitharana, Dulip Liyanage, Don Anurastris, Pramadya Wickremasinghe, Upul Chandana, Qulip Samaraweera, Chaminda Vaas.

Div II cricket

Sports Reporter

Masud produced a superb bowling spell to spearhead Young Pegasus to a narrow 12-run victory over Azad Boys Club in one of the two Second Division cricket league matches at the Dhannondi Club ground yesterday.

Masud claimed five wickets including a hat-trick to restrict Azad Boys, chasing the Young Pegasus score of 166 for eight in 40 overs, to 154.

Rono, who hit three fours and a six before being run out for 32, was the top scorer for Azad Boys. Kamrul made 30 while Mihir contributed a useful 22.

Earlier, batting first, Pegasus made 166 runs losing eight of their batsmen in their stipulated 40 overs.

Jubair top scored with 54 runs made off 64 balls with the help of six fours and a six while Rumi followed him with 31 that included three fours. Hira made 27.

In the other match at the Dhannondi Cricket Stadium, Mirpur Nabin Sangha beat Nirman XI by 32 runs.

Batting first, Nabin Sangha made 176 for the loss of eight wickets in 40 overs with Babu top scoring with 48. Tarun contributed 30 and Pavel 29 while extras provided a hefty 37.

Dipu bagged three wickets for 33 runs while Habib, Nirmal and Asad got one apiece.

In reply, despite a couple of sensible knocks from Sumon and Nantoo, the Nirman innings stopped at 144 in 39.2 overs.

Sumon scored 54 while Nantoo notched up 42.

SA hopeful Rhodes will make it

SYDNEY, Dec 15: South African officials are hopeful ace fielder Jonty Rhodes will recover from a hand injury in time to play in the first cricket Test against Australia, starting Dec 26 in Melbourne, reports AP.

Rhodes broke a bone below the little finger of his left hand while fielding in the World Series limited-overs match against Australia on Tuesday.

His hand was strapped Wednesday and he was unable to practice.

Team manager Rob Muzzel said Rhodes believed he could recover in time to play in the Test, despite being told by doctors that he needs to rest for up to three weeks.

"Jonty has an outside chance of playing in the Test and we will work to try and get him fit in time," Muzzel said.

South Africa will not now seek a replacement player for either Rhodes or all-rounder Brian McMillan, who is recovering from a knee operation.

"McMillan won't be fit for the first Test but should be back after that," said an optimistic Muzzel.

Muzzel said South Africa could use off-spinner Pat Symcox in its World Series match against New Zealand in Hobart on Saturday.

Handball results

Sports Reporter

Bangladesh Police and Brothers Union won their respective matches in the Phoenix Insurance handball tournament at the handball court yesterday.

Police trounced Old Ideals 15-8.

The winners led the first half 7-6.

Shahidul and Nazrul scored four goals each for the victors.

Khokon also scored four times for the vanquished.

Brothers Union, in keenly-contested affair, defeated Victoria Sporting Club 19-14.

FIFA plans to rock the boat

LONDON, Dec 15: Only three days before the draw, World Cup officials are reportedly planning to reshuffle the rankings of the 24 qualifiers, reports AP.

British newspapers reported Wednesday that the top seeds — defending champions Germany, hosts United States, Brazil, Italy, Argentina and Belgium — will remain the same. But the other 18 now will be split on the basis of geography instead of seedings.

The changes are expected to be ratified Thursday by the executive committee of FIFA, world soccer's governing body.

Last week, the teams were split into four pools of seedings with six top seeded teams ranked together followed by three more sections separated on the basis of World Cup results and experience.

At Sunday's draw in Las Vegas, one team would be pulled from each of the four ranks of teams to produce six groups which play each other in round-robin competition.

The reshuffle means that one group could now be made up of four strong teams, such as Brazil, Colombia, the Netherlands and Sweden, while another could have four weaker teams such as United States, Bolivia, Bulgaria and South Korea.

Last week, FIFA announced that Spain, Russia, Cameroon, Ireland, Romania, Mexico would be grouped together so that they would avoid each other in the draw. So would Colombia, Netherlands, Morocco, Bulgaria, South Korea and Sweden, and Bolivia, Greece, Nigeria, Norway, Saudi Arabia and Switzerland, all with limited World Cup experience, would be in the fourth group.

According to the reports, the teams would now be divided into the following pools: —Cameroon, Morocco, Nigeria, Bolivia, Columbia and Mexico.

—Spain, Russia, Ireland, Romania, Netherlands and Bulgaria.

—South Korea, Saudi Arabia, Sweden, Greece, Norway and Switzerland.

The reports said the United States and the Netherlands

were among teams unhappy with the original seedings. Others, such as Ireland, preferred them to be unchanged.

"The initial seedings threw up some odd pairings, but that's the way FIFA have done it in the past," Sean Connolly, chief executive of the Football Association of Ireland, was quoted as saying in the Daily Telegraph. "My initial reaction is that we are losing our No 2 seeding. That was something people here treasured a bit."

"If they guaranteed we're in Boston or anywhere along that northeast seaboard it will make it easier," Connolly told the Telegraph. "But we could be in a damn tough group — Belgium, Cameroon, Ireland and Norway, for example."

The changes will provide more ammunition for critics who say the draw is rigged to set up an easy passage to the next round for some teams and a tough one for others.

FIFA always has refuted any claims that the draw could be fixed. But to make changes only three days before the draw creates an opening for more controversy.

Liverpool plight continues

LONDON, Dec 15: Wimbledon's unbeaten run against Liverpool continued Tuesday when they marched into the quarter-finals of the League Cup, reports AP.

But it took Neal Ardley's final kick in a penalty shoot-out to seal the victory.

Wimbledon squeaked through the fourth round replay 4-3 on penalties after finishing extra-time level at 2-2. The prize is a home tie with Sheffield Wednesday.

Dutch goalkeeper Hans Segers saved three penalties for Wimbledon, after giving up an own goal in the dying minutes of the second-half.

His first save came in extra-time when he stopped a John Barnes attempt. He completed

his hat-trick by saving from Jamie Redknapp and Mark Walters in the shoot-out.

Segers' three brilliant saves made up for his blunder in injury-time which forced the game into extra-time. Segers punched a cross from Steve Nicol into his own net as he was pressured by Robbie Fowler.

The victory extended Wimbledon's unbeaten streak against Liverpool to six in league and cup games.

The London side started confidently, with Peter Fear blasting only inches wide from a Vinnie Jones' cross.

They went ahead in the 18th minute when a Robbie Jones' long ball was collected by Fear who crossed for Dean Holdsworth.

Struggling Liverpool found themselves in even more trouble

when both Mark Wright and Jaa Molby limped off but still managed to pull level after Scott Fitzgerald brought down Steve McManaman outside the area.

Neil Ruddock's low shot, bounced off the wall and past a wrong footed Segers.

Rob Jones, Ian Rush and Fowler all had chances to give Liverpool the lead but it was Wimbledon who went ahead in the 70th minute when another Robbie Jones pass found John Fashanu.

Bruce Grobbelaar could only beat the ball down and Robbie Earle leapt on the loose ball to slot home.

In the closing minutes John Barnes shot over the bar and Fowler and McManaman both had attempts turned away before Segers' own goal blunder.



The full contingent of the Bangladesh athletics team for the sixth SAF Games scheduled to be held in Dhaka from December 20 to 27. Although Indians are likely to sweep the track and field events Bangladeshi athletes who have undergone rigorous training under Chinese trainers are tipped to spring sporadic surprises. — Star photo

Tim May may return today

MELBOURNE, Australia, Dec 15: Australian spinner Tim May was expected to play in Thursday's day-night limited-overs cricket match against New Zealand, skipper Allan Border said here Wednesday, reports AP.

Border said selectors had considered including May in Tuesday's 103-run win over South Africa in Sydney, but upon inspection of the green Sydney Cricket Ground pitch it was considered not the right conditions for the off-spinner.

May, part of Australia's lethal spin twin combination with Shane Warne, has missed the opening matches of the one-day triangular series after straining a hamstring before the opening game here last Thursday.

"He'll definitely play tomorrow," Border said.

"We thought about playing him against South Africa but decided it was not worth risking him."

May trained Wednesday with his Australian teammates and is likely to replace Warne, who didn't bowl against the South Africans on Tuesday night.

Border intended keeping Warne under wraps until the three-match Test series against the proteas beginning on Boxing Day but May's injury forced his hand.

Border said there was little that was positive about the victory over the South Africans apart from the performance of seam bowler Paul Reiffel, who

collected four wickets for just 13 runs, scored 29 with the bat and took two catches and figured in a run out.

"We gained a bit psychologically, but other than that we just played the conditions better," he said.

"There's little you can draw on and take away positively for tomorrow's match, except say for the performance of Paul Reiffel."

The Melbourne Cricket Ground surface looks in better shape than it did for last Thursday's opening one-day game between South Africa and Australia.

Damage from recent rock concerts forced groundsmen to cover the surface with tonnes of sand to make it playable.

Ground secretary John Lill said the ground was on the im-

Duran still as mean as ever

BAY ST LOUIS, Mississippi, Dec 15: Four-time world champion Roberto Duran celebrated his 100th pro fight by outslugging a man half his age as the 42-year-old Panamanian stopped Tony Menefee in the eighth round of a middleweight bout on Tuesday, reports Reuter.

Duran knocked Menefee down in the fifth round and again in the eighth with crushing rights to the head.

After sending the 21-year-old Menefee to the floor in the eighth, Duran gestured to the referee that he thought his opponent had taken enough punishment and the referee agreed, waving an end to the fight at 2:34 of the round.

Duran, who has held world titles in the lightweight, welterweight, junior middleweight and middleweight divisions, raised his record to 91-9 with 63 wins coming within the distance.

Menefee fell to 19-2.

Duran ruled the lightweight division for nearly a decade after beating Ken Buchanan for the world title in June 1972. He made 12 successful title defences before voluntarily surrendering the crown in 1979.

Duran reached the peak of his career in June 1980, when he outpointed unbeaten defending champion Sugar Ray Leonard for the World Boxing Council welterweight title.

But five months later, he reached the low point when he abruptly quit in the eighth round of the rematch against Leonard without any apparent

injury. In the 13 years since the loss to Leonard, his second as a professional, Duran has gone 17-7, losing to champions Marvin Hagler, Thomas Hearns and Wilfredo Benitez, and Leonard again as well as journeymen such as Kirkland Laing.

Bent's first title defence

LONDON, Dec 15: Michael Bent's first defence of the World Boxing Organisation heavyweight title he took from Tommy Morrison is expected to be against unbeaten British fighter Herbie Hide at a soccer ground in March, reports AP.

Hide's promoters are in talks with Bob Arum in London and have March 19th at Millwall soccer stadium as the date and venue.

"Contracts haven't been signed yet but the time and place have been arranged," said John Wischhusen, spokesman for British promoter Barry Hearn.

"We hope to make an announcement Friday or Monday," Bent, who was born in Britain but holds British and American citizenship, knocked Morrison down three times in the first round to capture the title from Morrison in an upset victory October 29 in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

Hide is unbeaten in 25 fights. His last victory was a two-round knockout against former International Boxing Cruiserweight titlist Jeff Lampkin in South Africa