

Bangladesh to take part in Asian U-16 soccer

Sports Reporter
Bangladesh will take part in the qualifying round of the sixth Asian under-16 football championship scheduled to begin in Saudi Arabia from April 13. Bangladesh have been placed along with hosts Saudi Arabia, Malaysia and Kuwait in Group One. Only the group champions will advance to the next round. On April 13, the opening day hosts Saudi Arabia, the hot favourites will take on Bangladesh at Prince Abdullah Bin Jalaawi Stadium. Meanwhile, Abahani and Mohammedans, the two most popular clubs of the country, have decided not to take part in an invitational football tournament in Calcutta. The meet organised by the Sports Journalists' Union of Calcutta with a view to raise funds for distressed footballers and journalists of West Bengal has reportedly been postponed due to the unavailability of the Bangladeshi clubs.

Dittmar calls it a day

CARDIFF, Feb 3: Australian squash star Chris Dittmar announced his retirement from the sport on Wednesday, reports AFP. Dittmar, who turned 30 last month, has been forced to quit after 14 years because of a left knee injury that has kept him out since last August. He was due a second operation on the knee last week, but on doctor's advice, the Australian former world number one called it a day. "He told me the knee had deteriorated and was very arthritic and he felt there was nothing to be gained by having further surgery," Dittmar said in a statement issued here by the ruling Professional Squash Association. "The final decision was up to me and I felt that in the circumstances it was not worth going through all that again. Dittmar, a former PSA president, ended a bitter sweet career in squash. He amassed championship victories across the world without ever winning the sport's highest accolade — the World Open — despite being a five-times finalist against Jansher Khan and Jahangir Khan.

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Seeds tumble in Toray Open
TOKYO, Feb 3: Marketa Kochta of Germany, so-called her biggest upset ever, beat third-seeded Gabriela Sabatini 7-6 (8-6), 7-5 Thursday in the second round of the dhrs 750,000 Toray Pan Pacific Open tennis tournament, reports AP.

Fourth-seeded Jana Novotna of the Czech Republic was another upset victim, losing 4-6, 6-4, 6-1 to Kristie Boogert of the Netherlands. The 18-year-old Kochta, ranked 82nd in the world, kept Sabatini on the run with well placed passing shots in their one-hour, 46-minute battle on the artificial court of Tokyo Metropolitan Gymnasium. "It was the biggest upset in my career. I was not nervous when I woke up this morning and I had expected a good day," Kochta said. "I concentrated a lot. When I was down, I concentrated more. I like this surface. I served very well."

Sabatini, an Argentine ranked fifth in the world, said, "I was very slow today. I could not concentrate. She passed me very well. I had many opportunities but I could not make it." Kochta fought back from 2-5 to force a tiebreak in the first set, and then rallied from 3-5 in the second set. After her loss to Boogert, Novotna, ranked sixth in the world, also said she had trouble concentrating and hitting firm passing shots. In other second-round matches, American Pam Shriver beat Kristine Radford of Australia 6-2, 6-2 and sixth-seeded Manuela Maleeva-Fragniere of Switzerland defeated China's wild-card entry Li Fang 6-2, 6-2. Larisa Neiland of Latvia downed Nathalie Tauziat of France, the eighth seed, 7-6 (7-5), 6-3.

Shafiq's treble for BKSP

Sports Reporter
31st minute. The win takes BKSP into the quarterfinals where they will play the winners of the Munshiganj-Jessore tie on Saturday. While BKSP scored a (humming) win over Chittagong, Dhaka Education Board (DEB) thoroughly outclassed unfancied Jamalpur DSA in days first match. In the rather more original schedule (since Wednesday's tie had to be held on yesterday due to time constraint), DEB, powered by hat-trick-less four goals from Anisuzzaman, trounced Jamalpur 8-0. Anis scored four goals but a hat-trick eluded him as his three goals did not come consecutively. He scored in the 6th, 11th, 31st and 57th minutes of the match. The winners, who led the first half 4-0, owed the other quarter to Rabbani and Zubair. Rabbani who scored three goals, found the target in the 51st, 56th and 68th minutes of the match. Zubair scored once in the 21st minute. DEB have entered the quarterfinals where they will take on the winners of today's Mymensingh-Rajshahi tie. Sylhet take up the Primary Sports Education Institution of Rajshahi in today's other originally scheduled match.

H'ball results

Sports Reporter
Old Ideals Club outplayed Victoria Sporting Club 24-11 in the Phoenix Insurance handball competition at the Outer Stadium handball court yesterday. The winners led the first half 11-3. Nayan topscored with 10 while Akul scored five for the victors. Shahid and Humayun netted four and three goals respectively for the losers. Earlier, the tournament was suspended on December 15 due to the sixth SAF Games.

Lankans see light at last

CHANDIGARH, Feb 3: Sri Lanka's beleaguered cricket team, crushed by an innings in the first two Tests against India, finally hit form in a practice match — home umpires notwithstanding, reports AFP. Left-Hander Hashan Tillekeratne hit a sparkling unbeaten 140 as the tourists piled up 282 for two by close of the first day's play in the three-day fixture against reigning Ranji Trophy champions Punjab. Tillekeratne and opener Dulip Samaraweera (89) added 207 for the second wicket on a slow paced wicket. At stumps, acting captain Aravinda de Silva kept Tillekeratne company on 34 not out. But Sri Lanka's first bright day on an otherwise dismal Indian tour was marred by an angry outburst by team manager Bandula Warnapura against "poor umpiring" in the tests. "I would say our defeats in the first two Tests has been a combination of bad batting and ineffective bowling, but more than anything else it has got us washed," Warnapura said. "If we have appeared to have batted in a hurry, it is because the batsmen want to make the most of their short stay before the umpires do them in." The Sri Lankans lodged an official complaint against the umpiring after the innings defeat in the second Test in Bangalore which gave Mohammad Azharuddin's Indians a decisive 2-0 lead in the three-match series. The third and final Test, starting in Ahmedabad on February 8, will be supervised by a new set of umpires — but Warnapura remained unsatisfied. "Six different umpires are being tried in the current series and that is a little too much," he said. "It would have been a good idea if our board had asked their Indian counterparts for a list of umpires. There is no need for any such action in future, because future Tests will be supervised by neutral umpires," he said.

No respite for 'em

COLOMBO, Feb 3: The state-owned "Daily News" today blasted the Sri Lankan cricket team touring India, saying after the bashing in the second Test the question being asked was "are we upto Test match standard," reports PTI. "Since gaining Test status our cricket has never before hit such a low as now," Elmo Rodrigopulle, Sports Editor of the Daily wrote. He said it was obvious from the way the team was performing (in India) that there was absolutely no team spirit. "The sickening results prove this", he said. The newspaper said Sri Lankans have no excuses to offer for these defeats. With each Test they were slipping into a chasm and a river of no return. "We have sent out our best possible squad and the way they are performing is a disgrace to the game," the daily said.

An apology for men in white

SYDNEY, Feb 3: Australia's top umpire, fending off increasing criticism of his colleagues, today blamed the conduct of players following a series of controversial incidents which marred Australia's Test series with south Africa, reports Reuter. Steve Randell said the pressure, being exerted by players who make gratuitous appeals was making the job intolerable for some umpires. "... the more the players appeal when they know it's not out, the more pressure is applied to umpires," Randell, a veteran of 15 Test matches, told a Sydney newspaper. Randell said the players "deserve what they get" in such circumstances. "If everyone played by the rules, it would be a lot better," he added. "If a bloke goes up for a bat-pad catch and gets the decision when he knows that it wasn't out, then he has no right to whinge if it happens to him next time round."

Umpires Terry Prue and Darrell Hair came under fire after Australia's 191-run defeat of South Africa in the third Test on Tuesday which tied the three-test series 1-1. The tourists were incensed by several decisions and demonstrated their frustration ing both South African innings after questioning several decisions. Without pointing a finger at any nation, Randell said the situation was deteriorating. "Most, if not all, of the nations do it to some extent and there's nothing we can do about it. If they appeal, we have to make a decision," said Randell, 37. "You can't tell them to stop appealing, because they have that right, but some umpires are going to succumb to pressure in that situation." Randell has umpired for 17 years, making his first Test appearance in 1984-85. Randell and Hair were named this week as Australia's two nominations for the International Cricket Council's new international panel of umpires. Under the new system, one member of the 20-strong panel will stand with a local umpire in each Test match. During Australia's recent home series against New Zealand and South Africa, visiting batsmen were almost twice as likely to be given out lbw than their opponents, according to the Sydney morning Herald newspaper.

by causing a 100 dollars worth of damage to their dressing room at the Adelaide Oval. Veteran batsman Peter Kirsten was also fined for dissent during both South African innings after questioning several decisions. Without pointing a finger at any nation, Randell said the situation was deteriorating. "Most, if not all, of the nations do it to some extent and there's nothing we can do about it. If they appeal, we have to make a decision," said Randell, 37. "You can't tell them to stop appealing, because they have that right, but some umpires are going to succumb to pressure in that situation." Randell has umpired for 17 years, making his first Test appearance in 1984-85. Randell and Hair were named this week as Australia's two nominations for the International Cricket Council's new international panel of umpires. Under the new system, one member of the 20-strong panel will stand with a local umpire in each Test match. During Australia's recent home series against New Zealand and South Africa, visiting batsmen were almost twice as likely to be given out lbw than their opponents, according to the Sydney morning Herald newspaper.



A press conference was organised by the Institute of Engineers, Bangladesh (IEB), in connection with the Jabbar Memorial tennis tournament which begins today. In the picture (left to right) IEB secretary Ibrahim Miah, IEB president Altaf Hossain and referee Azizul Hoque. — Star photo

Patel gives way to Hart

WELLINGTON, Feb 3: New cap Matthew Hart replaced Dipak Patel as New Zealand's main spin bowler when the team to play the first of three Tests against Pakistan next week was announced today, reports Reuter. Hart will be backed up by all-rounder Shane Thomson, also an off-spinner, in the Auckland Test. New Zealand face Pakistan fresh from a 2-0 series defeat in Australia and failing to reach the finals of the triangular World Series one-day competition. Patel, a key figure in New Zealand's success in the 1992 World Cup, when the team reached the semifinals, has failed to recapture his bowling or batting form this year. New Zealand are also without captain and star batsman Martin Crowe, who has not fully recovered from a knee operation, but strike bowler Darryl Morrison has recovered from a leg injury that forced him out of the Australian tour. Crowe has said he will not be fit for the Pakistan tour, but should be ready for India's tour of New Zealand next month. New Zealand selected youngsters Bryan Young and Blair Pocock as openers. The team has struggled to find a strong opening combination since veteran John Wright retired last year. The first Test begins on February 10 and is followed by two more Tests in Wellington and Christchurch.

Martyrs of mirth

NEW DELHI, Feb 3: A cylinder of Helium gas used to fill balloons exploded at an athletics tournament in the southern Indian city of Madras, killing two persons and injuring 24, press reports said today, reports AFP. The injured included 17 school children who were releasing the balloons into the sky at the opening ceremony Wednesday, the Press Trust of India said. The injuries were not serious. More than 90 foreign athletes are taking part in the three-day tournament, including Kenyan distance runner Wilfred Kirochi, Irish runner Paul Donovan, German discus thrower Alrs Riedel, Jamaican sprinter Twilet Malcolm and Ukrainian long-jumper Larissa Bereznyaya.

Jabbar Memorial tennis from today

Sports Reporter
The 1994 M A Jabbar Memorial tennis tournament begins at the Engineers' Club today. President of the Institute of Engineers, Bangladesh (IEB), Professor Mohammad Shahjahan, will inaugurate the eight-day meet.

BJMC meet ends

Sports Reporter
Khulna zone finished first in the 16th annual sports competition of the Bangladesh Jute Mills Corporation (BJMC), which concluded yesterday at the Karim Jute Mills playground at Demra. Khulna collected 186 points. Adamjee became runners-up with 59.5 points. Mumtaj Mollah and Nasima Akhter became the individual champions in the male and female groups respectively. Jute Minister Brigadier (ret'd) ASM Hannan Shah gave away the prizes among the winners.

BWDB athletics from Feb 6

Sports Reporter
The two-day interoffice athletic meet of the Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB) will begin from February 6 at the Razarbag Police Lines ground. Minister for Irrigation, Water Development and Flood Control M Majidul Hoq will inaugurate the meet while State Minister for Youth and Sports Sadeque Hossain MP and Mosharraf Hossain Shahjahan, the State Minister for Irrigation will be special guests.

Davis Cup draw delights Singaporeans

SINGAPORE, Feb 3: Singapore were delighted today with the draw for the opening singles against Pakistan in the Asia-Oceania Group 11 Davis Cup tie beginning here Friday, reports AFP. Non-playing captain Albert Ten said he was "very happy that Singapore's number one Adrian Lam was to play Pakistan's number two, Omar Rashid." "We hope the opening singles will give us an edge and a good start," he said.



A cameraman and reporter from a Buenos Aires television station are sprayed with water at the home of soccer star Diego Maradona on Feb 2. Journalists were hoping to interview Maradona after he quit the Argentine soccer club Newell's Old Boys. — AFP photo

Maradona in a mess again

BUENOS AIRES, Feb 3: Soccer idol Diego Maradona opened fire Wednesday with an air gun at reporters besieging him after he was sacked by his club, bringing a police raid on his home and calls for him to quit the sport, reports Reuter. Maradona, who hopes to lead Argentina to another World Cup triumph in the United States this year, barricaded himself in his country home, shouting obscenities at reporters and blasting at them with an air gun that fires pellets. Argentine police later searched his country home and fingerprinted him but he could not find the air gun that he and his friends fired. Police went into the home with a search warrant based on formal charges against the stocky midfielder by four journalists. They made the soccer superstar "play the piano" on a police fingerprinting ink pad but found no trace of a rifle earlier seen on television. Hugo Wortman Jofre, one of Maradona's attorneys, told DYN news agency. The investigating judge, Francisco Lilo, conformed to reporters that the gun was missing and that Maradona would be summoned to testify in the next few days. His career in ruins and his morale in tatters, the Argentine national team captain had appeared on television earlier, crouched with two other men behind a maroon Mercedes and aiming at the camera. "If you don't get out of here, we're going to start shooting real bullets," he shouted. "You're all a bunch of shit-heads. Next time you shout I'm really going to lose it."

The wild incident happened one day after Maradona, hero of Argentina's 1986 World Cup victory and soccer's greatest star of the 1980s, was released by First Division team Newell's Old Boys after repeatedly failing to show up for practice. Faced with formal charges filed by journalists, Maradona picked as his chief defence lawyer Luis Moreno Ocampo, one of the two ace prosecutors in the historic 1985 human rights trials of Argentina's former military rulers for the "Dirty War" disappearances of nearly 10,000 people. But Bernardo Neustadt, Argentina's most influential journalist and a friend of President Carlos Menem, said Maradona had made a serious mistake in attacking the press. "Maradona is a sick human being. It's a very powerful profession he's taken on," Neustadt said. "He's not going to get off lightly on this one."

Club president Walter Cattaneo said Tuesday the physical injuries which have dogged the star in his mere seven matches over four months with Newell's were surmountable. "We've put up way too long with far too many things from Maradona," said a radio commentator. The 33-year-old Maradona's career has been in decline since the 1990 World Cup in Italy. He failed a drug test for cocaine while playing for Napoli in March 1991 and was banned for 15 months by FIFA, the governing body of world soccer. He returned to Argentina, declared he was retired and entered a treatment programme. Maradona went back to Europe and played in Spain for Sevilla before returning once again to Argentina. After an eight-month lay off he signed on with Newell's Old Boys. Last year, Maradona rose to the occasion and helped Argentina in a critical World Cup qualifying match against Australia by serving as "inspiration" for the team, according to Argentina coach Alfio Basile. Despite his troubles with Newell's Maradona said before his clash with reporters that he planned to continue playing and looked forward to this summer's World Cup. "I am still as enthusiastic as ever. I want to play in the World Cup until I drop," he told local radio. "Although many people want to see me dead, they'll see that I'll get there and I'll be in great shape."

Meanwhile, another report added: Maradona may seek a court order to protect himself and his family from a press corps now at war with him. The troubled Argentina captain is pondering seeking "some kind of court measure to protect his privacy," one of his lawyers, Hugo Wortman, told a radio interviewer Thursday. "But when there are problems of psychological, emotional depression, that's where the serious trouble starts," he added. In the evening, television crews reporting live from outside the star's residence for the main newscasts were doused with water from a hose inside the eight-foot (2.5 metre) walls. A small crowd of Maradona fans nearby jeered and spat at reporters. "In principle, these are non-arrest misdemeanors," judge Lilo told local radio. The local police chief, Commissioner Augustin Masferrer, explained to reporters angry at the lack of official action seven hours after the attacks that a forensic physician had found the journalists' injuries to be very slight. "If what we're looking at is the use of an air gun, according to the law it's not a firearm," Masferrer said. Maradona's lawyers said he would appear before Lilo this

DIEGO MARADONA
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Parma lifted European Super Cup in style. The Italian club defeated Marseille 1-0 in the final of the trophy. Parma dominated the match, squandering five clear chances in the first half before they finally broke the deadlock in the 67th minute thanks to a shot from Argentine Roberto Sensi.

Parma's attack of Colombian Faustino Asprilla and Italy International Gianfranco Zola constantly threatened to wrap the game up with searing runs into their opponent's half. But the match was only secured in the 95th minute with Massimo Crippa scrambling the ball in after a goalmouth melee, giving the provincial Italian club the third major trophy in their history. The artificial nature of the contest was underlined by the fans who stayed away in their droves leaving Milan's vast San Siro Stadium almost three quarters empty. Nonetheless Parma's victory was convincing their neat passing and movement tearing holes through the Milan defence — the tightest in Italy which has let in just eight goals in 21 league games this season.

After a dreadful mid-winter spell Parma, fourth in the Italian League and five points behind leaders Milan, have now scored 14 goals in their last four matches. On Wednesday they could have had more than two, Asprilla missing two clear chances in the first half and Swede Tomas Brodin skying a shot when he had just goalkeeper Sebastiano Rossi to beat. But in the second half, a thunderous freekick from Zola 20 metres out ricocheted off the crossbar, the ball falling to Sensi who pushed it into the back of the net and set his team on its way. Crippa, who moved to Parma from Napoli with Zola last year, sealed Milan's fate five minutes into extra time. The former Italy midfielder took his chance after Parma defender Antonio Benarrivo had caught the normally immaculate Paolo Maldini in possession.

AC Milan lie in stupor

MILAN, Feb 3: A revitalised Parma prised open AC Milan's normally impregnable defence twice on Wednesday to stun the Italian champions by clinching the European Super Cup 2-1 on aggregate, reports Reuter. Milan, replacing disgraced French club Marseille in the annual clash between the European champions and the Cup Winners' Cup holders, came into the game with a 1-0 advantage but lost 2-0 after extra time in the second leg. For Milan it was the third disappointment in international competition in the past nine months, following their European Cup final defeat by Marseille last May and their loss to Sao Paulo of Brazil in the Intercontinental Cup in December. Parma dominated the match, squandering five clear chances in the first half before they finally broke the deadlock in the 67th minute thanks to a shot from Argentine Roberto Sensi. Parma's attack of Colombian Faustino Asprilla and Italy International Gianfranco Zola constantly threatened to wrap the game up with searing runs into their opponent's half. But the match was only secured in the 95th minute with Massimo Crippa scrambling the ball in after a goalmouth melee, giving the provincial Italian club the third major trophy in their history. The artificial nature of the contest was underlined by the fans who stayed away in their droves leaving Milan's vast San Siro Stadium almost three quarters empty. Nonetheless Parma's victory was convincing their neat passing and movement tearing holes through the Milan defence — the tightest in Italy which has let in just eight goals in 21 league games this season.

Amway Classic tennis results

AUCKLAND, Feb 3: Patricia Hy of Canada, the No. 2 seed, breezed by Misumi Miyauchi of Japan 6-1, 6-1 Thursday to advance to the quarterfinals of the dhrs 100,000 Amway Classic women's tennis championship, reports AP. The unseeded trio of Anna Smashnova, Ueronika Martinek of Germany and Jolene Watanabe of the United States also progressed to the last eight. Smashnova defeated No. 8 Karin Kschwendet of Germany 6-1, 2-0, 6-2. Martinek downed Andrea Strnadova of the Czech Republic 6-4, 6-1, and Watanabe struggled by Nicole Pratt of Australia 6-2, 6-7 (5-7), 7-5. Top seed Julie Halard of France was inactive Thursday.

Kingdom to vie with Jackson

BIRMINGHAM, Feb 3: Two-time Olympic champion Roger Kingdom will race against world champion and record holder Colin Jackson at an indoor track meet Feb. 26, reports AP.