



Pakistan's captain Shahbaz Ahmad (R) tries to weave his way past Dutchman Brinkman during the second half of the match of Champions Trophy hockey tournament in Lahore yesterday. Pakistan defeated Netherlands 2-1.

— AFP photo

Pakistan, Germany roll on

LAHORE, Mar 20: Pakistan secured their third successive victory in the Champions' Trophy hockey tournament here Sunday by defeating the Netherlands 2-1 before a crowd of approximately 36,000, reports AFP.

Apart from dictating the pace of the game Pakistan tightened their defence and gave the Dutch attacks little chance to develop. The home side had no short corners in the first half and the Netherlands obtained four, all of which proved abortive mainly because of the vigilance of the Pakistan defenders.

The first threat by Pakistan was a short corner in the 12th minute by Kamran Ashraf who swept the ball over the top from a pass by Muhammad Shabaz. Kamran made amends five minutes later when he put Pakistan ahead after a scramble in front of goal. The chance was set up by Muhammad Shahbaz.

An onslaught by the Dutch to level the match was beaten off with shots from short corners either saved by goalkeeper Mansoor Ahmed or deflected by a defender.

Pakistan put the Dutch defence under increasing pressure in the second half, a timely interception by Bastion Portenaer denying Muhammad Shahbaz a goal in the 42nd minute.

Germany found themselves trailing 2-1 at halftime. But Sven Meinhardt scored in the 48th minute to even the count and Uli Moissi knocked in the game winner in the final minute of the match.

Australia were also trailing at halftime, down 3-2 against Britain. But second-half scores by Stephan Davies, Mark Hager and Jay Stacy gave Australia the match.

Australia are in third place overall, with a record of 2-0-1. Britain are last with a record of 0-3.

courage the Dutch but they were unable to find an equaliser.

Germany staged a second-half comeback to beat Spain 3-2 to remain tied for the first place.

In Sunday's other match, Australia topped Britain 5-4.

Pakistan and Germany are both 3-0 in the six-team tournament.

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Floris Bovender missed the target from the fifth short corner awarded to the Dutch. Pakistan, however, had better luck with their third short corner when Rana Mujahid scored with a clean hit along the ground to increase the lead.

Four Minutes before the end Bovender at last landed the ball on the target to end.

Over all, Graf just won Indian Wells, the Virginia Slims of Florida and the Lipton Championships.

She also won the coveted Australian Open and Pan Pacific event earlier this year to bring her career titles count to 84.

Now all Graf wants is to rest. Ironically, Graf's match winning streak began with the 14th-ranked Zvereva when she beat the Belarus native in the opening round of the Virginia Slims Championships last November.

Despite the loss, Zvereva will be remembered as the first player to take a set from the unconquerable Graf in 1994. The capacity crowd was well aware of Zvereva's achievement after she won the first set they treated her to a standing ovation.

The two women have played each other 14 times and this was only the third set Zvereva has ever captured over Graf.

Zvereva, who won 75,000 dollars, did not have an easy time in route to winning the first set. She took the edge by breaking Graf's serve at 30-40.

Graf tied Zvereva with 35 unforced errors for the match — 17 of Graf's errors were in the first set. She improved her play in the final two sets — having only nine unforced errors in each of the remaining two sets.

Graf had 31 winners in the match, while Zvereva only had 17.

The tide turned in Graf's favour almost from the outset of the second set. Zvereva only held serve once, in the second game, of the middle set.

In the third set, Graf took a 4-1 lead with two service breaks. Zvereva recouped one service break in the sixth game, but Graf won the final two games to remain undefeated in 1994.

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