



Argentine soccer star Diego Maradona and teammate Oscar Ruggeri enjoy a good practice session together for the national team in Buenos Aires on Wednesday. — AFP photo

M United's 48-hr nightmare

LONDON, Apr 8: It could be the worst 48 hours of Manchester United's season.

On Sunday, Alex Ferguson's team could go out of the Football Association Cup, eliminated by modest Oldham at the semifinal stage, reports AP.

And on Monday, Blackburn can draw level on points with United in the Premier league standings by beating Aston Villa, ironically the Reds' conqueror in the League Cup final two weeks ago. At one stage, Ferguson's team had a 16-point lead.

Before that League Cup final at Wembley, star-studded United were favoured to achieve an unprecedented triple triumph in both cups and the league.

At that time, the odds on United winning none of the three titles were 25-1. Now last season's league champions are down to 9-2 to end up with nothing.

On Sunday, United meet the team they downed 3-2 last Saturday in league action.

Although Roy Keane, Eric Cantona and Andrei Kan-

chelskis will be missing from United's line-up through suspension. Oldham will be without Sean McCarthy because he has already played for another team in the competition and is ineligible.

Former England captain Bryan Robson is set for a recall to United's line-up at Wembley while Oldham hope to recall Nick Henry and Paul Bernard. Despite the league loss at Old Trafford, Oldham manager Joe Royle is upbeat about his team's chances in the semifinal.

"We will go into Sunday's game against United at Wembley with our self-respect intact and full of confidence," Royle said.

"When United beat us at our place in December I called them awesome. They are not quite that at the moment," Ferguson, however, knows his team has the firepower to overcome Oldham again, even without Cantona, Keane and Kanchelakidze. He appears more worried about Blackburn in the league.

"The way Blackburn are playing we may have to go for six straight wins," he said. "We just have to try and be perfect

from now on."

The other semifinal takes place Saturday between Chelsea and Division One Luton. It also will be staged at Wembley.

David Pleat's Luton team upset Premier league West Ham 3-2 in the quarterfinal, all three goals coming from 21-year-old striker Scott Oakes. The haters have made the final once before, losing to Nottingham Forest in 1959.

A Chelsea victory would mean a return to Wembley for Glenn Hoddle, the team's player-manager who previously had been a standout player for Tottenham and AS Monaco.

One of the most stylish and gifted players to line up for England, Hoddle, 36, now plays a deep, sweeper role for Chelsea as well as selecting the rest of the line-up.

Among other Premier league games scheduled for Saturday, third place Newcastle go to lowly Manchester City.

Fourth place Arsenal do not have a game this weekend but will prepare for next Wednesday's Cup Winners Cup semifinal second leg against Paris Saint-Germain at Highbury. The teams are tied at 1-1.

Tangail in Biman Cup final

Sports Reporter

Defending champions Tangail moved into the final of the Biman Cup Under-14 football championship, eliminating Dhaka 2-0 in the first semifinal at the Mirpur Stadium yesterday.

After the barren first half Sohagh and Ratan scored once each in the second.

Sohagh put Tangail ahead in the 53rd minute while Ratan converted a penalty five minutes from the long whistle to seal the fate of the match.

The second semifinal between Khulna and Sylhet will be held at 7 pm today. Tangail will take on the winners on Sunday at the Dhaka Stadium.

IFIC win well

Sports Reporter

Raimur Rashid hit a 'swash-buckling 98 not out to lead IFIC Bank to a facile five-wicket victory over Grindlays Bank in the office cricket league at the Jagannath Hall ground yesterday.

Raimur's quickfire 78-ball knock plus a breezy 83-ball 71 enabled IFIC Bank, needing 222 for an outright win, to post the required runs in 39.5 overs. When Raimur, who cracked twelve shots across and one over the rope in his blazing innings, walked back to the pavilion with Akhter, the other unbeaten bat on 11, the score read 223 for five.

This duo apart, only Selim could produce a double-digit score.

Earlier, put in to bat, Grindlays Bank made 221 for seven in the possible 43 overs with Atiq contributing the highest individual score of 54. Atiq, whose 64-ball stay at the crease was interspersed with only three fours, was followed by Tauhid, who made 46 in 69 balls with the help of five boundaries.

Sanwar, who later on the day had a wonderful time with the willow, was the most successful IFIC bowler, taking four wickets for 38 in the regulation quota of nine overs.

BSWA awards

Sports Reporter

The Bangladesh Sports Writers' Association (BSWA) announced the names for its best sports personalities award for the year 1993 for their outstanding performance in their respective arena, said a press release, issued yesterday.

Swimmer Mokhesur Rahman of Bangladesh Navy, who clinched the gold in the 200 metre breaststroke in the sixth SAF Games, was adjudged sportsman of the year.

The other awardees are: Bimal Chandra Tarafder (athletics) and Karar Mizanur Rahman (swimming), of BKSP, Jahangir Alam of Bangladesh Biman (cricket), Rahmatullah Asir of Abahani KC (hockey), Saiful Alam Chowdhury of Gulshan Shooting Club (shooting), Moazzam Haque of Bangladesh Police (boxing).

Golam Rasul Mollah of Tangail DSA was adjudged the best organiser while National Bank Limited was named the sponsor of the year.

Ronaldo shows Boca way out

BELO HORIZONTE, Brazil, Apr 8: A superb individual goal by 17-year-old Brazilian striker Ronaldo sent Argentina's Boca Juniors crashing out of the Libertadores Cup, reports Reuter.

Ronaldo dribbled brilliantly through three defenders and then rounded goalkeeper Carlos Navarro Montoya to score in the 74th minute and give Cruzeiro of Brazil a 2-1 win over Boca in Wednesday's first round, Group two match.

The result means the team coached by Argentina's 1978 World Cup winning Coach Cesar Luis Menotti will finish last in the group. Only the bottom team in each of the first round groups fails to make the second round.

Uruguayan striker Sergio Martinez gave Boca some hope when he capitalised on a goal-keeping mistake by Dida to give them a third minute lead.

But Cruzeiro dominated after Luiz Fernando's 15th minute equaliser and twice hit the woodwork in the second half.

Courier gets wild card

MONTE CARLO, Apr 8: Jim Courier has been given a wild-card for the Monte Carlo Open starting on April 18, organisers said on Thursday, reports Reuter.

After the American's surprise defeat by Spain's Alex Corretja in the first round of the Spanish Open on Tuesday, Courier has altered his schedule.

Opponents should include compatriot Andre Agassi and Sweden's Stefan Edberg.

Spoilers they'd be if need be



BUENOS AIRES, Apr 8: Argentina were widely held to be the bad boys of the 1990 World Cup and in Mexico in 1986, they reached the final again in Italy four years ago — but left behind a disgraceful legacy with just two wins and five goals in their seven matches.

They will not be worried if they preserve their reputation as world-class spoilers in the United States, reports Reuter.

Coach Alfio Basile says the only thing that concerns him is to placate the 30 million Argentines back home who will be paying for his blood if his team fail to win the World Cup for the third time.

He also knows they will hero-worship him if he brings the Cup home and when he was asked recently if he preferred Argentina to be successful or win fans over by playing attractive football, Basile, 52, gave a blunt reply.

"What you have to realise is that both Brazil and Argentina are under enormous pressure, we have the whole weight of our soccer history on our shoulders.

"When we win a match, everybody back home rushes on to the streets to celebrate. It's the result that counts."

Basile predicted that other teams would take the same attitude, especially in the first round when only eight of the 24 teams will be eliminated.

Argentina have been bracketed with Greece, Nigeria and Bulgaria in Group D. "Every-one's priority is going to be to qualify and I don't think you're going to see anyone opening up and attacking in the first round," the coach said in his distinctive hoarse voice.

Former Brazil coach Tele Santana became the latest to criticise the Argentine style recently when he slammed them for playing what he described as "football of results."

Despite their image, and despite problems with tactics and players, Argentina go into

the finals as one of the favourites after reaching the final in three of the last four tournaments.

Winners at home in 1978 and in Mexico in 1986, they reached the final again in Italy four years ago — but left behind a disgraceful legacy with just two wins and five goals in their seven matches.

They also became the first team to have players dismissed in a World Cup final with both Pedro Monzon and Gustavo Dezotti shown the red card in the closing stages of their 1-0 defeat to West Germany.

Argentina also became the first team failing to score a goal in the final and many seasoned observers were delighted they went home empty-handed.

They had already begun the final with five players absent through suspension and they finished the tournament with more yellow cards than any other team. They also had three players sent off — and three opponents sent of playing against them.

They won both their quarter-final and semifinal matches on penalties and owed much of their progress to the goalkeeping heroics of Sergio Goycochea in the shoot-outs.

A 2-0 defeat away to Brazil in a friendly in March showed little change in their approach. Midfielder Diego Simeone was booked but could easily have been sent off after stamping on Brazil forward Rivaldo Fernando Caceres was given a yellow card for an astonishing bodycheck and almost every Brazilian move in the second half was interrupted by a foul.

Basile enjoyed a 31-match unbeaten run of full internationals — 33 of two other matches against representative sides are counted — after he took over from Carlos Bilardo following the 1990 competi-

tion. During that time, Argentina twice won the Copa America.

But more recent results and performances have been far from the standard expected from world championship candidates.

Argentina were brought down to earth when they were beaten 5-0 at home by Colombia in a World Cup qualifier in one of the most humiliating results in the country's history. It is a result none of the Argentines like to talk about.

"It was an accident that can happen to anyone," said Goycochea. "It's in the past and now we are looking ahead."

In the end, Argentina scrambled into the finals through the back door — beating Australia 2-1 on aggregate in a play-off.

And the lasting effects of the traumatic Colombian experience are obvious, starting with Basile's coexistence with Diego Maradona.

Maradona has made two failed comeback attempts, one with Sevilla in Spain and the other with Argentina's Newell's Old Boys, since he ended an 15-month ban for drug abuse.

He was clearly overweight when he sat on the substitutes' bench against Brazil and in February showed his fearsome temper when he fired on reporters with an airgun at his holiday home outside Buenos Aires.

Yet, faced with a midfield which has repeatedly failed to produce the creative goods, Basile is overlooking Maradona's problems and gambling on the temperamental star's recuperation.

Similarly, he has announced that he is hoping to have Claudio Caniggia, also banned for drug abuse, available even though the striker will have

little over a month to prepare after his suspension ends.

Basile has talented midfielders in Sevilla's Simeone and Tenerife's Fernando Redondo but the combination has rarely worked well, leaving Argentina over-dependent on moments of inspiration from Fiorentina striker Gabriel Batistuta.

The Colombia debacle also had repercussions in defence, with Basile actively looking for a possible replacement for veteran Oscar Ruggeri, whose lack of pace was cruelly exploited and exposed by the Colombian attack.

Even Goycochea has looked shaky recently, so much so that he was dropped for one match by his club side River Plate following a series of blunders which culminated in a horrendous own goal.

But Goycochea dismissed the episode and said it had not affected his confidence. "It did not bother me in the slightest, it was only for one game," he said. "River Plate went on to win the championship."

Feel of the field

DETROIT, Apr 8: Six teams due to play first-round World Cup matches indoors at the Pontiac Silverdome will be allowed a day's training inside the stadium, reports Reuter.

Local organisers, announcing training locations in the Pontiac area, said on Wednesday that each team would be allowed to practice on the specially-developed natural grass playing field before their first matches.

The grass has been grown in trays outside the stadium and is due to be installed shortly before the first World Cup match — to be played indoors kicks off on June 17.

Gullit going back to AC?

MILAN, Italy, Apr 8: Dutch forward Ruud Gullit will rejoin AC Milan next season following a one-year stint at Sampdoria, Italy's largest sports daily reported Thursday, reports AP.

According to Gazzetta dello Sport the 31-year-old Gullit and the Milan club, owned by media tycoon and would-be premier Silvio Berlusconi, reached a general agreement earlier this week.

Gazzetta reported that the one-year contract, worth about 2 billion lire (dhs 1.2 million) tax-free to Gullit, would be signed at the end of the season on May 1.

Italian clubs are forbidden to negotiate transfers before the end of the season. AC Milan did not confirm the report.

Gullit, who transferred to Sampdoria season after the

arrival of several new foreign players during the off-season put his starting job in question, is enjoying one of his best Italian seasons in Genoa.

He has 15 goals in league matches and has led Sampdoria into the Italian Cup finals.

Gullit's transfer to AC Milan, if confirmed, would mean that the Milan club has given up plans to sign expensive Uruguayan forward Daniel Fonseca from Napoli.

Fonseca also is being sought by Juventus of Turin and Real Madrid. The Uruguayan said Thursday that his personal manager, Peco Casal, will be in Italy next week to negotiate his transfer from the Neapolitan team, which is on the brink of bankruptcy and plan to sell its best players to raise cash.

AC Milan, who can clinch their third consecutive league title this weekend, have been

actively seeking a new forward following the decision to transfer French striker Jean Pierre Papin.

That decision came despite the still questionable status of Dutch central-forward Marco van Basten, who has missed most of the last two seasons with a chronic ankle injury.

Berlusconi, who scored a stunning electoral victory as leader of Forza Italia party, said recently he regretted Gullit's departure and that he hoped to lure the Dutchman back to AC Milan.

Gullit transferred to Italy in 1987 from PSV Eindhoven. In six seasons Gullit helped the Milan team to three Italian titles, two European Champions Cups and one Intercontinental Cup.

He's expected to play with the Netherlands in the 1994 World Cup in the United States.

Grit sees Sabatini through

AMELIA ISLAND, Florida, Apr 8: Fourth-seeded Gabriela Sabatini of Argentina refused to surrender

a match she seemed destined to lose and beat ninth-seeded Amanda Coetzer of South Africa 4-6, 6-0, 6-1 in the third round of the 400,000 dollars Bausch and Lomb Championships on Thursday, reports Reuter.

Top-seeded Spaniard Arantxa Sanchez-Vicario, who defeated two-time defending champion Sabatini to win last year's title, moved into the quarter-finals with a quick 6-0, 6-2 victory over Laurence Courtois of Belgium.

Second-seeded Conchita Martinez of Spain, who won last week's event at Hilton Head, posted a 6-2, 6-3 win over 13th-seeded Leila Meskhi of Georgia.

The quarter-final pairings pit Sanchez against 10th-seeded Sabine Hack, Martinez against sixth-seeded Lindsay Davenport, third-seeded Martina Navratilova against 12th-seeded Chanda Rubin and Sabatini against seventh-seeded Mary Pierce.

The sixth-ranked Sabatini is hoping to win her fourth.

Bausch and Lomb Championships title and end a 32-tournament title drought. She has not won a tournament since taking the Italian Open in May 1992.

When Sabatini netted an easy forehand volley at 30-40 in the tenth game to yield the opening set she let out an anguished grunt that showed she

Bruguera breezes past Berasategui

BARCELONA, Spain, Apr 8: Spain's Sergi Bruguera glided through to the quarter-finals of the Spanish Open on Thursday with an easy 6-4, 6-3 win over compatriot Alberto Berasategui, reports Reuter.

It took the second seed just one hour 19 minutes to overcome Berasategui, ranked 37th in the world.

Seventh-seed Richard Krajcek from the Netherlands was one of only three foreign players to make it to the quarter-finals, beating Andrei Chesnokov 7-6, (9-7), 6-3.

Bruguera opened with a double fault against Berasategui and went on to lose the first game but it was only a temporary lapse.

is human — and that tennis without winning isn't as much fun as she keeps insisting.

"I didn't want to lose that set, that's why I screamed," Sabatini, said after the one hour, 41-minute match. "I thought I played good tennis in that first set. I maintained my mind in the match."

After losing the first set, Sabatini won the next 10 games before the 15th-ranked Coetzer held her serve in the fifth game of the third set.

"As the match went on the score got worse and worse," said Coetzer, who has beaten Sabatini once in six meetings. "After a while, I lost my cool a bit. It just couldn't get it back."

When Coetzer double faulted twice at 30-30 to lose the first game of the third set, the match was all but over.

The second-ranked Sanchez expended little energy in her 41-minute drubbing of the 88th-ranked Courtois.

Courtois held serve once in the entire match — in the second game of the second set. She broke Sanchez's serve at 30-40 in the seventh game of the second set.

"I feel very comfortable on court," Sanchez said. "I'm moving really well."

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Quiz 1.

Read the instructions carefully. Then tick (✓) the answer which you think is correct.

- When was the inaugural World Cup held?
1930 ☐ 1932 ☐ 1934 ☐
- Who were the first World Cup champions?
Brazil ☐ Chile ☐ Uruguay ☐
- How many teams took part in the first World Cup?
12 ☐ 13 ☐ 16 ☐
- Which country hosted the second World Cup?
Spain ☐ Italy ☐ Brazil ☐
- Which country has played in all the World Cup finals?
Italy ☐ Brazil ☐ France ☐
- How many goals were scored in the 1938 final?
4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐
- When did England make its World Cup debut?
1938 ☐ 1934 ☐ 1950 ☐
- How many goals did French striker Just Fontaine score in the 1958 tournament?
11 ☐ 12 ☐ 13 ☐
- When did Pele make his World Cup debut?
1954 ☐ 1958 ☐ 1962 ☐
- How many hatricks were scored in Italia-90?
1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐

COMPETITION RULES

- The Daily Star World Cup Quiz 94, is a series of 6 (six) Quiz Competitions on World Cup Football. Sets of questions will be published for 10 (ten) consecutive days in the Sports Page of the Daily Star for the first 5 (five) Quiz Competitions. For the last and final Bumper Quiz Competition, a set of questions will be published for one month in the Sports Page of the Daily Star according to the schedule (Fixture of the Rounds) as fixed by the Daily Star authorities.
- For the first 5 (five) Quiz Competitions there will be 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 5 (five) consolation prizes. The prizes will be Colour TV, Black & White TV, Super Turbo 2-in-1 Stereo Recorder and light bulbs respectively.
- Any taxes or levies, as per rule, for all the above prizes, will have to be borne by the winners.
- Names and addresses of all prizewinners will be published in the Daily Star. Winners will be responsible for collecting their prizes from the Daily Star office after satisfactory authentication of their identity.
- For the Bumper Quiz Competition, there will be the BUMPER PRIZE consisting of a ticket to the World Cup Final match, along with an Economy Class return air ticket (Dhaka-Los Angeles-Dhaka) and an amount for incidental expenses. The Daily Star does NOT take any responsibility for any visa or other travel documents that may be required. The BUMPER PRIZE Winner will have to make his/her own arrangements in this regard. In case of the Bumper Prize winner's inability to travel to the USA he/she may choose to receive a sum of Tk. 100,000/- in cash in lieu of the air fare and living expenses.

Each entry form should be clearly filled-in complete with a ball-point pen. Participant's name, address, father's name, must be clearly written. Each entry form must bear the correct date and signature of the participant.

Participants must ensure the following. All entries must reach the office of the Daily Star on or before the closing date marked on the entry form. Envelopes of entries must be clearly marked "STAR QUIZ". Entries may be hand delivered or sent by post to the Daily Star House No: 11, Road No: 3, Dhanmandi Residential Area, Dhaka-1205.

Entries will be opened by the Daily Star authorities. Entries with all correct answers will be placed in a sealed box for the lucky draw, to be held on the notified/appointed date in public in the presence of invited guests and quiz participants, if any.

The Daily Star authorities, in their absolute discretion, reserve the right to amend, modify or substitute any of the above rules and/or change or re-schedule any and all dates of the Daily Star World Cup Quiz 94 in any circumstances.

All participants agree to abide by all rules, instructions and guide-lines as may be issued, from time to time, by the Daily Star authorities. Participants' entry in the quiz competition shall be construed as their respective agreement to all such rules, instructions and guidelines.

Any decision of the Daily Star authorities in the conduct of the Quiz Competition (including the answers selected as correct) shall be deemed final and binding on all participants and shall not be called in question and/or challenged in any manner whatsoever.

NAME: _____

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TELEPHONE: _____

SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____

Write with a ball-point pen in clear, CAPITAL LETTERS. Cut along the dotted lines and mail it to us FAST!