

Aussies win eves' World Cup

DUBLIN, July 25: Australia, the 1988 Olympic champions, won the women's World Cup for the first time with a 2-0 victory over Argentina on Sunday, reports Reuter.

Australia scored their goals within a minute midway through the second half, through Michelle Andrews, on a penalty, and Jackie Pereira.

The penalty was awarded when Marisa Lopez, the experienced Argentinian vice-captain, kicked the ball away after mishitting it in the circle. Andrews' conversion made her joint top scorer with Jang Dong-Sook of South Korea with six goals.

Then Pereira, the 29-year-old stalwart of the Australian attack, raced through on her own, went past the goalkeeper and pulled the ball back from a narrow angle for her 96th goal in international hockey.

The match followed a predictable pattern, with Argentina slowing the pace, defending in depth and relying on the occasional break.

Australia were unable to play with their usual flow and had just one good scoring chance wasted by Lisa Powell — and two corners in the first half. Argentina never threatened the Australian goal.

The second half started with the reserve umpire, Renee Chatas of the United States replacing England's Gill Clarke, who tore a calf muscle.

Australia increased the pace and pressure in the second half, coming close to scoring twice at corners before their double strike in the 53rd and 54th minutes.

Argentina forced their first corner after 57 minutes, but it was saved and a late corner proved fruitless.

The 2-0 margin in the final before a capacity 6,500 crowd was a repeat of the margin in the pool match, when they beat Argentina 3-1.

The player-of-the-tournament award was won by Karina Masotta of Argentina. The best goalkeeper award went to Sandra O'Gorman of Ireland.

Ric Charlesworth, coach of the Australian team, said later: "I felt justice was done. We went out to win and they went out to lose. They're a very good team but I don't think they have the offensive capability we have."

Rodolfo Mendoza, the

Argentinian coach, commented: "We played good defense but we couldn't make contact with the forwards and we couldn't get in Australia's circle."

In the earlier game, the United States took the bronze medal when they beat Germany 2-1 in the play-off for third and fourth place.

The US came into the tournament ranked 11th in the world and had exceeded marvelously their plans of improving into the top eight, after finishing last at the 1990 World Cup in Sydney and failing to qualify for the 1992 Olympic Games.

Tracey Fuchs opened the

scoring for the US when she converted a penalty corner in the 14th minute, and captain Barbara Marois scored from another penalty corner 13 minutes later.

Minutes after German winger Heike Latzsch returned to the pitch after having her knee strapped she took the ball into an almost empty circle and beat goalkeeper Patty Shea for a half time score of 2-1.

Shea and her defenders were the heroes in the second half when they repelled 11 penalty corners to shut the Germans out and take the surprise bronze with open arms.



Australian captain Rechelle Hawkes lifts the trophy aloft after the final of the eighth women's World Cup hockey tournament in Dublin yesterday. Australia beat Argentina 2-0.

— AFP photo

Cubans suffer minor setback

ST. PETERSBURG, July 25: The mighty Cuban boxing machine suffered its first defeat of the Goodwill Games on Sunday when national lightweight champion Dióselis Hurtado lost to Russia's Paata Gvasalia in an enthralling fight, reports Reuters.

Olympic heavyweight champion Felix Savon almost joined the also-rans later on when he struggled for two rounds against France's Christophe Mendy before finally scraping through.

But despite the setback, the Cubans, who won seven golds at the 1992 Olympics, again look the best-prepared side and nothing should prevent them amassing a rich haul of medals.

Hurtado's only consolation was that he helped to put on the best bout of the tournament so far with Gvasalia, the Russian national lightweight champion.

The boxers went at each other from the first bell and the match was even until Gvasalia, who had fought twice as many international bouts as

the rest of the match, with Savon happy to keep his distance and weave round the ring.

Mendy pressed forward in the third round and caught Savon with several good punches to the head but the judges still gave the Cuban an 8-6 victory, prompting whistles from spectators.

Savon, who declined to speak to journalists afterwards, looks set to retain the Goodwill Games title he won four years ago.

But Mendy struck back in the second and sent Savon's head snapping back with a surprise right-hand punch. He remained on the offensive for

Napunyi dead

LAS VEGAS, July 25: Wangila Napunyi, a 1988 Olympic boxing gold medalist from Kenya, died Sunday from a head injury sustained during a fight two days earlier. He was 26, reports AP.

Napunyi was on life support with injuries from a blood clot on the right side of his head when he died at 10:30 am (1730 GMT) at University Medical Centre, a hospital spokeswoman said.



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Sport

Army move into nat'l b'ball semis

Sports Reporter

Bangladesh Army moved into the semifinal of the Pepsi 17th national basketball championship when they romped past Bangladesh Police by 175-49 points in one of the five matches held at the NSC wooden floor gymnasium yesterday.

The soldiers smarting from their one point defeat against Bangladesh Rifles on the previous day, topped the lowly Police in a crucial match to earn a berth in the last four as Group B runners-up.

Army will meet defending champions Bangladesh Navy in the first semifinal tomorrow.

Bangladesh Navy who had earlier confirmed their place in the last four, thrashed Brahmanbaria by 169-34 points sailing to the top of Group A recording their fifth successive win.

Dhaka and Bangladesh Air Force who had won their matches against Chandpur and Rajshahi respectively will meet each other in their last robin league encounter today to decide the final semifinalists.

Five more Bangladeshi in FIDE list

Five more Bangladeshi chess players have been included in the latest FIDE rating with this their number rose to 31 in the country, reports UNB.

The country's only Grandmaster Niaz Morshed remained at the top among the Bangladeshi with his previous 2520. International Master Ziaur Rahman is in the second position with 2445 while IM Rifat bin Sattar holds the third spot with 2405, said a press release issued yesterday.

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