

# MSC's stirring start

Sports Reporter



Reigning champions Mohammedan Sporting Club made a roaring start when they trounced promoted Bangladesh Boys 7-0 in the eventful inaugural match of the Star Premier Division football league at the Dhaka Stadium yesterday.

Skipper Rumman Bin Wali Shabbir was twice on target and inspired a hat-trick by Russian teammate Andrey Kazakov.

However, the black and whites' rollicking start of campaign for the most coveted domestic title was slightly smudged as German Inataev, one of the three Russians fielded on the day was sent off along with a rival player.

Inataev, who happened to have opened his account in the Dhaka league yesterday, was engaged in a scuffle with Amer of Bangladesh Boys and referee Rafiqul Alam did well to show red card to both of them leaving the teams to battle out the last 42 minutes of the match with ten men on each side.

The first match of the day billed for the Dhaka Stadium which got off to a routine delayed start by ten minutes was held up for about ten minutes as rowdy supporters invaded the pitch as a sequel to the marching orders issued by the man in black.

Shabbir, who has been regarded the livewire of Mohammedans ever since his joining the popular club from Dhanmondi in 1987, triggered off the goal rush in the ninth of the match in a spectacular fashion.

The diminutive winger, who prefers to operate from the deep these days, unleashed a power packed left footed volley from the edge of the box that gave no chance to Boys custodian Tota.

Mohammedans, who appeared little apprehensive at the beginning — not unlikely for a popular team that was eliminated from the semifinal stage of two tournaments prior

to the league championship — and survived two close calls, doubled the lead a minute later.

Inataev, the tall forward and a cynosure of the large number of Mohammedan fans for insipid display finished a neat build up involving Shabbir and Shamim.

His compatriot Kazakov struck twice in the space five minutes to give Mohammedans an unassailable 4-0 lead at first half.

There was little change in the pattern except for the scuffle and the subsequent twin red cards which automatically rule out the two offenders for the next two engagements of the Premier league.

While one fails to understand how the organisers DMFA could have the cheek to come up with such nonsensical excuses at the eleventh hour having all the time in the world at their disposal to prepare a free, inactive ground like Mirpur Stadium it beats the commonsense of every sentient citizen as to why the DMFA has decided to hold Star First Division matches under the floodlights when the whole country is grovelling under acute power shortage.

It's time DMFA stopped being a club of Don Quixotes.

**TODAY'S MATCHES**

Muslim Institute vs Rahmatganj MFS 6 pm (Mirpur Stadium)

East End vs Eskaton Sabuj Sangha 8 pm (Mirpur Stadium)

Victoria SC vs Shantinagar Club 4:30 pm (Dhaka Stadium)

Abahani KC vs Fakirpool YMC 6:30 pm (Dhaka Stadium)



ANDREY KAZAKOV

Substitute Zahid, who replaced Mahabubur Rahman Roxy renewed black and whites' rapport with the net in the 53rd minute and with plenty of time Mohammedans looked destined to improve upon their 5-0 thrashing of the same outfit in the DMFA Cup.

Kazakov notched the first hat-trick of the league when he connected a Shabbir cross to perfection in seven minutes from time.

Shabbir, who had opened the account for one of the oldest clubs around deservingly rounded off the goal feast.

Red cards: Inataev (Mohammedan SC) and Amer Khan (Bangladesh Boys).

Yellow cards: Tota, Amer Khan, Kajal (Bangladesh Boys), and Rehan (Mohammedan SC).

## TEAMS

**MOHAMMEDAN SC:** Lahul, Alamgir, Rehan, Kaiser, Shamim (Biplob Marmal), Manik, Roxy (Zahid), Shabbir, Inataev, Vitali and Kazakov (Munna).

**BANGLADESH BOYS:** Tota, Lokman, Kajal, Saroj, Pappu, Amer, Swapan, Milan, Bayezid (Shuvra), Sana and Bapon.

Referee: R Alam.

Badal of Agrani Bank pulled off a belated equaliser to snatch a point from Arambagh Krira Sangstha.

Earlier, Sobel had given Arambagh the lead with a fifth minute strike.

## OH DMFA!

Although Premier league got off to regulation start the scheduled Star First Division league encounter between Muslim Institute and Rahmatganj MFS fell through with the authorities attributing the non-action to their inability to prepare the ground.

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# Navy retain b'ball title

Sports Reporter

Bangladesh Navy clinched the national basketball title for a record nine times — five in a row — when they outclassed Bangladesh Rifles 102-64 in the final of the Pepsi 17th basketball championship at the NSC wooden floor gymnasium yesterday.

The winners led the first half 56-22.

The sailors scored 46 points against Rifles' 22 in the last part of the play to retain the crown after an impressive unbeaten run.

Information Minister Nazmul Huda, who was the chief guest on the concluding day of the eight-day meet, distributed prizes among the winners.

Eleven teams splitting into two groups took part in the meet.

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Sanjeeva, who bats left-handed like his brother Arjuna, the Sri Lanka captain, had to face the hostile pace of Akram, Waqar Younis and Ashfaq Ahmed from the second over of the morning after Test opener Chandika Hathurusinghe had departed without scoring.

Ranatunga weathered the storm but was forced to retire hurt shortly after completing his half century when he ducked into an Akram delivery and was hit on the side of the face.

He returned at the fall of the third wicket to share a fourth wicket partnership of 96 with another left-hander, Hemantha Wickremaratne, who made an attractive 69 with two sixes and eight fours.

As Ranatunga approached his century, Akram let loose another rearing delivery which hit him on the helmet. He was visibly shaken but battled on to the close.

The Pakistanis would not have been happy with their overall performance.

Waqar Younis and leg-spinner Mushtaq Ahmed were disappointing, while Ranatunga was dropped twice before reached 50.

## SL Board XI 280 for five

KURUNEGALA, Sri Lanka, July 28: Sanjeeva Ranatunga, forced to retire hurt after being struck in the face by a Wasim Akram delivery, hit a courageous unbeaten 93 for the Sri Lanka Board President's XI against Pakistan today, reports Reuter.

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## ROK to send WC squad in Asiad

SEOUL, July 28: South Korea will be sending their World Cup team under new coach Anatoli Byshovets to the Asian Games despite the Saudi decision to send a second string squad, reports AFP.

A Korean Football Association spokesman confirmed Thursday that the national team would be going to Hiroshima in October.

Asian Football Confederation general secretary Peter Velappan had called on countries not to send their best teams to the Asian Games. He defended the Saudi Arabia decision to send an under-23 side to Hiroshima. But hosts Japan will join South Korea in ignoring the call.

After the Saudis decided to let their World Cup surprise package have "a long rest," the South Koreans must be hot favourites for the Asiad gold.

Byshovets, the former Soviet international, was technical advisor to South Korea's World Cup squad in the United States. He was promoted in place of Kim Ho whose contract was not renewed at the end of USA '94.

Another contender for



American decathlete Dan O'Brien lands after jumping 7.81 metres during the long jump event in the Goodwill Games in St Petersburg yesterday. O'Brien hopes to be the first man ever to break 9,000 points in the event. —AFP photo

# O'Brien reformed, recharged



ST PETERSBURG, July 28: Each time Dan O'Brien steps into an athletics arena he knows the real competition will be against himself, reports Reuter.

A reformed alcoholic who suffers from what has been diagnosed as an "attention-deficit disorder", O'Brien has fought some tough battles to become the world's top decathlete.

Now he wants to push his world record, an 8,891-point total set in the same year he failed to qualify for the 1992 Olympics, beyond the 9,000 point barrier.

"I definitely am in the kind of shape right now that I do not need anybody to push me to a record," O'Brien said on Wednesday on the eve of the Goodwill Games competition.

"It's more of a battle against myself. What kind of effort level am I going to give in the 400 metres, from the start, what kind of effort level I am going to give over a two-day period... It's always a personal battle with myself and I'm just scoring against the tables."

"I'm good enough in the field events that I can go out there and concentrate and relax and try to get personal bests every time. Even if my running events don't go well I

know my field events will carry me."

Any score under 8,800 points would be disappointing to this man of great physical talent but surprisingly little self-confidence. A total of 9,000 is possible.

"I like the fact that I am just competing against myself, and not a big field with 15 or 20 guys trying to gun you down," O'Brien said.

"I look at this as kind of a show, not so much as a major competition. A chance to show the sponsors and people at home what it is I do and what I am capable of doing."

His biggest obstacle could be the winds that have swirled in Petrovsky Stadium during the first three days of athletics.

"If the conditions are correct I could really have a good shot at the world record," O'Brien said. "But I need to have a good start in the 100 metres and long jump to have a chance."

A drinking binge last January made him realise he needed help with his alcoholic problems. It was during counselling and testing that the attention deficit disorder was confirmed.

"If there was a 200 metres running while he was high jumping in the decathlon, he would stand there and watch the whole blasted race," his coach, Mike Keller, said earlier this year.

It is consequently remarkable that O'Brien could do so well in an event that requires so much concentration.

A lot of decathletes tell you that is the most difficult thing about the competition, O'Brien said. "It is not the physical stress but the mental stress."

Now three times a day he pops a non-stimulant tablet to improve his concentration.

"It has been helpful," O'Brien said. "Especially when I would get into the field events and feel a little bit ragged."

But he must improve on his stamina for the 1,500 metres. In Knoxville, at the US Championships, he practically walked home in the concluding event, finishing in five minutes 16.42 seconds to score 8,707 points.

That came after he had posted the second-highest score ever, 4,738 points on the first day.

"I know I will run faster here," O'Brien said. But whether he has the confidence and stamina to push himself fast enough to break the record will be a challenge even for O'Brien.

# Savon leads Cuban charge



ST PETERSBURG, July 28: Cuba's almost invincible squad of boxers, led by Olympic gold medalist and world heavyweight champion Felix Savon, stormed into five finals at the Goodwill Games on Wednesday, reports Reuter.

Hot on their heels were the Russians, who also reached five finals, but the United States lost all three semifinals in a series of poor performances.

There was almost a sense of anticlimax as Cuban climbed into the ring to pound each hapless semifinal opponent into submission. The team is also contesting five of today's six semifinals.

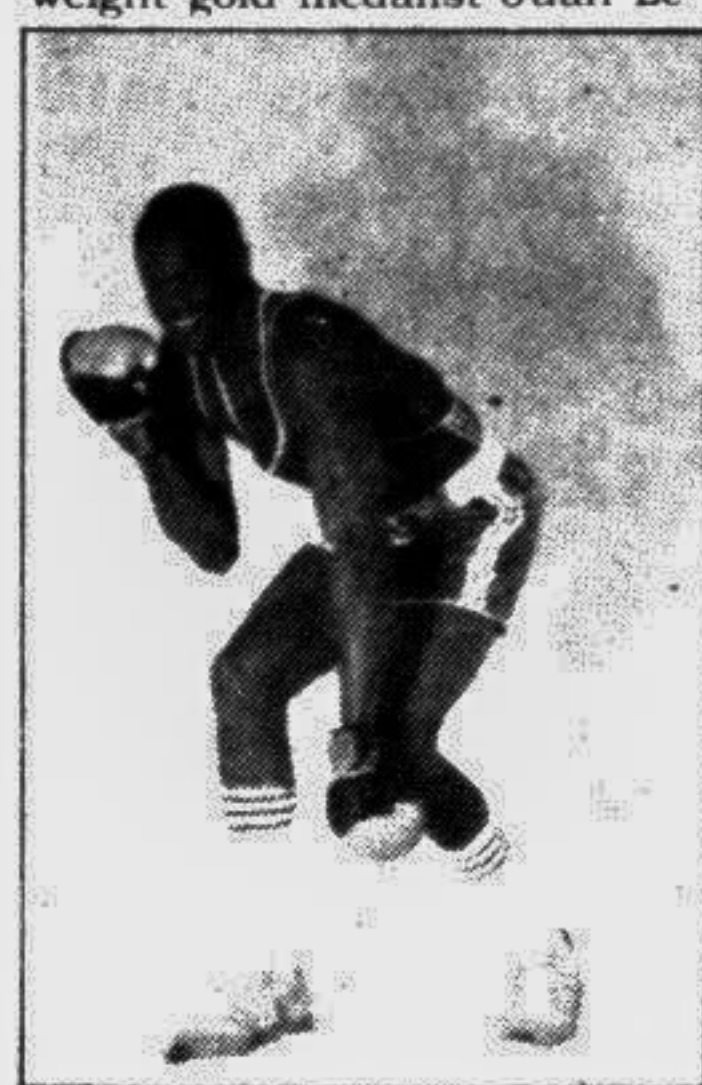
Savon bounced back from an unconvincing quarter-final win by producing a superb punch to lay out Germany's Peer Muller halfway through the first round.

Lemus will meet Russia's Sergei Karavayev, who surprisingly beat Olympic silver medalist Orhan Delibas of the Netherlands. Karavayev forced the Dutchman to take a first-round standing count and won convincingly 14-6.

The one American without a performance, Russia's Sergei Mochalov must almost be wishing he had not edged past Samil-san Sinan of Turkey in the other semifinal.

Another contender for pu-

nech of the night came from Cuba's Olympic light-middle-weight gold medalist Juan Le-



FELIX SAVON

mus, who knocked down German Dirk Dzemski in the first minute with a mighty right-hand blow.

hope before the start was in-

## France lift h'ball gold

ST PETERSBURG, July 28: France fought back from a six-point deficit against Russia to take the handball gold at the Goodwill Games on Wednesday, reports Reuter.

Their 22-20 win was sweet revenge for a crushing 28-19 defeat by Russia in the World Championship final last year.

French coach Daniel Constantini said: "As far as I know, this is only the second time we've ever beaten Russia — and the first was in a friendly."

For a long time it looked as if France, who finished a disappointing sixth at last month's European Championships, would suffer a repeat of last year's defeat.

The Russians led 9-3 after 16 minutes and were 13-9 in front at halftime.

"We were asleep for the first 15 minutes and the Russians played excellently," Constantini said. "But then we changed our system of defence and they had much more trouble getting their attacks in."

France fought back to 14-14 after the break and the balance tipped in their favour when goalkeeper Christian Gaudin saved a seven-metre penalty at 18-18. Gael Monturel then put France ahead for the first time in the match.

Russia were runners-up to Sweden at the European Championships but had to radically rebuild the side after losing five key players.

experienced flyweight Erik Morel, who ended up imprisoned on the ropes by Cuba's Manuel Mantilla for much of the first two rounds before crashing to a 19-8 loss.

In the final, Mantilla will meet-unheralded South Korean Joon-Ok Choi, who beat US champion Albert Guadardo 8-5 after the American was penalised three points for keeping his head too low in the second round.

Choi fought better throughout, keeping Guadardo at bay with his long right arm before hitting the American with a series of left-hand punches every time he came within reach.

Cuban world silver medalist bantamweight Enrique Carrion mesmerised Timofei Skryabin of Moldova by dancing non-stop round the ring before landing crucial punches. The bemused Moldovan, often left thrashing thin air, lost 11-5.

Carrion will face world bronze medalist Vladislav Antonov of Russia, who dismissed 1993 European champion Raimkul Malakhbekov of Russia 11-4 in an uninspiring fight.

World welterweight Juan Hernandez continued Cuba's charge into the finals when he sent Santos Daniel of Puerto Rico crashing to the floor in the third round.

Hernandez will meet Russia's Alexander Shkalikov, who destroyed Hans Janssen of the Netherlands in the first 90 seconds with a flurry of punches which forced the referee to give the Dutchman two standing counts before ending the fight.

The only category which will have a Cuban-free final is at lightweight.

Hard-hitting Russian champion Paata Gvasalia, who looked very impressive when beating Diosvelis Hurtado of Cuba in the first match, further boosted his reputation by pouncing the experienced Bruno Wartelle of France into submission.

Gvasalia, inexplicably only granted a narrow 5-4 win by the computer judging system despite making Wartelle take a second round standing count, set up a meeting with Germany's Heiko Hinz in what could be one of the best finals.

Hinz, another big-hitter, took apart US boxer Larry Nicholson with the help of two standing counts in the third round on the way to a 16-10 victory.

The number of hits credited to Nicholson, team captain and 1994 US boxer of the year, was extremely flattering given his hapless display.

# Anand beats Kamsky

HYDERABAD, July 28: Indian Grandmaster Viswanathan Anand defeated his American rival Gata Kamsky Thursday, in the FIDE World chess championship candidates quarterfinals, reports AP.

In the other matches Thursday, Russian Grandmaster Vladimir Kramnik beat Belarus Grandmaster Boris Gelfand and Dutch Grandmaster Jan Timman drew with Russian Grandmaster Valery Salov.

Three players from the \$150,000 prize money tournament will advance to the semifinals.

After three games each, Anand and Kramnik lead 2-1 over their opponents, while Timman and Salov have 1/2 point each with one unfinished game. Each of the players will play a total of eight games.

Anand, playing white, repeated his favourite Spanish Opening — also known as Ruy Lopez — which Kamsky repelled with his usual Marshall Gambit. Anand won in his 60th move.

In the other game, Kramnik took only 35 moves to defeat Gelfand.

In the third game, Salov failed to convert the advantage of an additional pawn, as Timman defended his position forcing for a draw after the 30th move.

## Christie fit for Euro meet?

LONDON, July 28: Olympic sprint champion Linford Christie will be fit to defend his European 100m title in Helsinki, according to Great Britain teammate Colin Jackson, reports AFP.

The 34-year-old Londoner, sidelined for two weeks with a torn hamstring, has been given the thumbs-up by a specialist in Munich. Jackson said on Wednesday.

The world 110m hurdles champion, in St Petersburg for the Goodwill Games, said Linford "is going to be there. The problem has cleared up and it should be plain sailing for him from now on."

"He believes, the break might have been for the best. He had been feeling quite tired."

Jackson said Christie, bidding for a third successive European title, would either return in a Monte Carlo Grand Prix meeting next Tuesday, or head straight into the championships five days later.

## Italian cagers dash US dream

ST PETERSBURG, July 28: Italy beat the United States 81-72 in the semifinals of the Goodwill Games basketball competition on Wednesday to end the American dream of taking a young team of collegiate players all the way to gold.

And Puerto Rico completed a remarkable second half recovery to put out Russia, the European silver medalists and favourites, 69-65.

The victory for Italy's young side was some consolation for failing to reach next month's World Championships in Toronto where the Americans will entrust the quest for gold to the best professionals the NBA has to offer.

Puerto Rico brought their championship line-up to St Petersburg looking for a confidence booster and finished up with their first medal in a world competition.

"We played great defence, were very patient in offence — in fact it's the greatest win in the history of Puerto Rican basketball," said coach Carlos Morales.

His US counterpart, George Revin, made no attempt to disguise his disappointment.

His side were outplayed from midway through the first half by an Italian side better placed on the rebounds, more patient in their build-up and spearheaded by dominant 2.14 metre forward Gregor Fucak. He scored 14 points.

## Lalas signs for Padova

PADUA, Italy, July 28: US World Cup player Alexi Lalas ended speculation over his future when he joined Italian First Division club Padova on Wednesday, reports Reuter.

"Lalas faxed us a signed copy of the contract today," Padova spokesman Gildo Fattori said.

Lalas, who was greeted by hundreds of screaming fans in the northern Italian city on Tuesday before a meeting with club officials, is on a one-season loan from the United States Soccer Federation.

The future of the American defender, whose goatee beard and flowing red hair made him a celebrity at the World Cup, had been in doubt for several days after reports linked him to English Premier league club Coventry and VfL Bochum in Germany.

Lalas will begin training with Padova next week.

# Tampering now catches Bedi



NEW DELHI, July 28: Former Indian captain Bishan Bedi was at the centre of a new cricket ball tampering controversy today, reports AFP.

Bedi is threatening to sue Australian newspaper the Age for publishing accusations that he illicitly tampered with the ball, his lawyers said today.

Bedi claims he was defamed by an article in the July 26 issue of the Melbourne newspaper comparing him with Mike Atherton, the England captain embroiled in a ball-tampering row.

The Age's cricket writer, Peter McFarlane, alleged in the article that Bedi used to rub dirt on the ball before bowling. Atherton has been accused of using dirt in his pocket to rough up the ball.

"Rubbing dirt onto a cricket ball in a Test is a crime, but not necessarily a capital one," McFarlane wrote. "India's Bishan Bedi used to do it regularly and was rarely admonished."

The Delhi-based law firm Bhasin and Co. said it had sent a legal notice to the newspaper

demanding 100,000 dollars compensation for the damage to Bedi's reputation "and for the grave shock and mental agony caused."

The lawyers have threatened "suitable action" if the demand for compensation was not paid within 15 days.

Bedi, who took 266 wickets in 67 Tests as part of the



BISHAN BEDI

famed Indian spin quartet of the 1960s and 1970s, said he was shocked at the allegation and was left with no option but to take legal action.

"Throughout the world, I was one bowler who never gave an umpire any reason to believe that cricket was not a gentlemen's game," said Bedi, acclaimed as one of the game's greatest players. "This one little paragraph attempts to negate all that I have achieved."

Bedi, 47, said the charge against him was "malicious and baseless."

"I used to keep the ball in my right hand and rub my left hand on the ground and then wipe that hand clean on my trousers," Bedi said. "If the ball was new or the conditions were humid, it became difficult to grip the ball."

"Because of this kept my hands totally dry. But I never rubbed anything on the ball, never kept anything in my trouser pockets."

In their notice to the newspaper, Bedi's lawyers said: "There was no occasion, much less any justification, to make such a sweeping statement against one of the greatest left-arm spinners of this century."

# Dust yet to settle over 'dirt'



NOTTINGHAM, England, July 28: The long-running saga of England captain Michael Atherton's alleged ball-tampering took a new turn here on Wednesday when he was backed — by South African pace bowler Allan Donald, reports AFP.

Donald, who took seven wickets during South Africa's first Test win at Lord's said: "I just hope the storm blows over soon without 'the losing his job."

"He's been a bit silly but the pressure he's under is incredible for such a minor issue."

But the pace bowler, nicknamed "white lightning", added he was disappointed his side's lord's victory had been overshadowed by the affair.

"We're over here for the first time in 29 years and have won a Test match, but all we're getting is what the England captain is supposed to have had in his pocket," he said.

Atherton was fined 2,000 pounds by England chairman of selectors Ray Illingworth for applying dirt to the ball on Saturday and subsequently not giving a full explanation to match referee Peter Burge.

Earlier Intikhab Alam, who managed the Pakistani touring team to England in 1992 when Wasim Akram and Waqar Younis were accused of tampering with the ball, called for Atherton to be sacked.

The former leg-spinner, quoted in The Sun newspaper, said: "Just think if this had happened to a Pakistan player

in a Test. The whole world would have gone crazy."

But former Pakistan captain Imran Khan, who caused widespread controversy earlier this year when he admitted using a bottle top on a ball during a county championship game in 1981, refused to condemn him.

He said, "I know what he (Atherton) is going through and I hope he can cope with the pressure."

"The main thing is 'Did he tamper with the ball or not? He says he is innocent. Ray Illingworth says he is innocent, and the umpires have never said he tampered with the ball.'"

Donald himself came under scrutiny on Wednesday in a series of Sun pictures showing him looking intently at the ball during the Test, while appearing to dig the tip of his thumb into it.

## SA BATSMEN BLAZE

But that did not put off the South Africans, who continued from where they left off in their 356-run Test victory by taking charge against Nottinghamshire on Wednesday.

The tourists reached a commanding 327-6 in record time on the opening day of the three-day match, before declaring.

Acting skipper Hanse Cronje set a glowing example with a century, hitting 13 fours and two sixes in a 214-minute 108, while Peter Kirsten and Jonty Rhodes added half-centuries.

Cronje shared in partnerships of 68 with Andrew Hudson, 53 with Daryl Cullinan and 93 with Kirsten.



The players and officials of the Bangladesh Navy pose with the Pepsi 17th national basketball championship trophy after eliminating Bangladesh Rifles 102-64 in the final at the NSC wooden floor gymnasium yesterday. — Star photo