Mohammedans falter early

Sports Reporter

A tenacious Fakirerpool Youngmen's Club brought down defending champions Mohammedan Sporting Club to earth when they held their fancied opponents 1-1 in the Star Premier Division Football League at the Dhaka Stadium yesterday.

One of the two promotees to the elite Premier club, Fakirerpool enjoyed a lead for 32 minutes in the second match of the day which was also disrupted for 35 minutes of power failure during the second half.

Askar Khan Babu, Fakirerpool's hero of the night, headed home a Sattar minus in the 17th minute of the first half while Mohammedan's Russian recruit Andrey Kazakov restored parity four minutes after the breather in a match the black and whites hardly claimed to have dominated in terms of sustained pressure.

It was certainly a shock for the scores of Mohammedan fans who thronged at the stadium with high hopes of seeing another convincing victory after Mohammedans' 7-0 drubbing of Bangladesh Boys, the Star First Division champions.

Although the Mohammedan officials may attribute yesterday's dismal showing to the absence of Inataev, suspended for two matches for being sent off in the club's previous fixture, the 10,000-strong crowd at the Dhaka Stadium would certainly credit the Fakirerpool booters for their valiant effort.

Smarting under a 4-0 defeat at the hands of Abahani KC, Fakirerpool fielded the previous eleven and displayed an attacking football to take the lead in the 17th minute after surviving two close calls.

Sattar, who tormented the Mohammedan defence down the right flank, produced a measured cross, which Askar Khan Babu headed home with the Mohammedan custodian wondering what went wrong.

Mohammedans, who had a disappointing year so far following their lackluster performance in the DMFA Cup and the recently concluded Federation Cup, once again showed their over-reliance on their star midfielder Rumman bin Wali Shabbir who was not up to the mark yesterday.

After Muktijoddha Sangsad robbed off five of their key booters in this year's sensational players' transfer, Mohammedans never looked the same force again despite the inclusion of three Russian booters.

Andrey Kazakov, who scored the first hattrick of the league, missed a couple of chances before heading home the face-saving goal in the 49th minute when a Alamgir long throw came his way after slipping through the shaky grip of Fakirerpool custodian Kawsar.

Mohammedans could have walked away with a victory but ever-dependable Sabbir missed a sitter when his shot went out of play hitting the woodwork in the 78th minute.

Earlier, a 30-meter right-footer form Vitali bounced back into play of the cross-piece in the very fourth minute while six minutes later, Kazakov fired one into the side not six meters away from the post.

Mohammedans made a couple of changes in the second half but failed to stimulate the midfield which fumbled time and again in front of a five-men Fakirerpool defence.

Sohel Al Masum and Askar Khan Babu of Fakirerpool and Kaisar Hamid and Shabbir of Mohammedans were booked.

TEAMS

MOHAMMEDAN SC: Lahul, Alamgir, Kaiser, Rehan, Shamim (Biplob Marma), Vitali, Zahid, Manik, Munna (Roxy), Sabbir and Kazakov.

YOUNGMEN'S CLUB FAKIRERPOOL: Kawsar, Ibrahim, Masum (Mamun), Gobinda, Chhotan, Montu, Mokhtar, Asif, Askar, Sattar (Apu) and Arif (Rana).

Referee: M R Mukul.

In the first match of the day, Rahamatganj MFS recorded their second consecutive victory when they edged past Shantinagar by a lone goal in the Star First Division football league.

Towhid, who scored one goal in Rahmatganj's 2-1 victory over Muslim Institute, netted the match-decider when he made most of a defence lapse in the 78th minute.

Shantinagar, who enjoyed territorial dominance in the match, spoiled two easy chances. The first in the 37th minute was headed wide by Liton while Poni's out-of-the box shot in the 63rd minute was brilliantly fisted away by Rahmatganj custodian Biplo.

At the Mirpur Stadium, Victoria Sporting Club heat Eskaton Sabuj Sangha 2-0.

After a goalless first half Angur and Ameer Khan notched one goal apiece for the winners.

TODAY'S MATCHES

East End Club vs Dhanmondi Club 6pm (Mirpur Stadium)

Agrani Bank SC vs PWD SC 4.30 pm (Dhaka Stadium)

Abahani KC vs Wari Club 6.30 pm (Dhaka Stadium).

A scene from yesterday's Star Premier Division football league match between Mohammedan Sporting Club and Fakirerpool Youngmen's Club at the Dhaka Stadium. Fakirerpool held Mohammedans to a one-all draw. — Star photo

FIFA bans Pakistan *sine die*

ZURICH, Aug 2: The Pakistan Football Federation, split into warring factions, have been suspended indefinitely from all international competition by FIFA, football's world governing body, reports AFP.

According to FIFA, two factions within the federation are battling for control of football in Pakistan and late last month the struggle spilled over into the courts.

On July 28th, FIFA was forced to suspend the federation indefinitely, said a spokesman at FIFA's headquarters here.

Under FIFA statutes, federation officials are banned from taking disputes to civil courts.

Disputes must be sorted out within the federations themselves without resort to the courts, the spokesman said.

FIFA have given the Pakistanis six months to put their house in order, after which the spokesman said the international body would nominate one of the warring factions to take control of the federation.

Schools chess

Sports Reporter

Six players were in command with full points after the fifth round of the ninth schools chess tournament at the chess room of National Sports Council yesterday.

The players jointly sharing the top spot are — Abdullah al-Rakib, Abu Sufian Shakil, Enamul Hossain, Tipu Sultan, Adnan Faisal and Ruhul Islam.

Four players — Yanur Rahman, Sadequl Haq, Ashequl Haq and Rani Bilkis — were trailing behind with four and a half points respectively.

Pagliuca moves to Inter

MILAN, Aug 2: Italian World Cup goalkeeper Gianluca Pagliuca has joined Internazionale from Sampdoria in an exchange deal which sees former national team players Walter Zenga and Riccardo Ferri moving in the opposite direction, reports Reuter.

Inter confirmed the deal had been finalised at a press conference on Monday. Pagliuca, 27, has signed a four-year contract with the Milan club.

The goalkeeper had a mixed World Cup, serving a two-match suspension for a sending-off, but returning and performing well as Italy reached the final.

He will replace the popular Zenga, his predecessor as Italy's number one, between the posts for Inter. Ferri, a defender, won 45 caps for Italy but has been troubled by injury in recent seasons.

Fiorentina sign Santos

FLORENCE, Italy, Aug 2: Brazilian international defender Marcio Santos joined Italian club Fiorentina on Monday from France's Bordeaux in a deal reportedly worth five billion lire (3.2 million dollars), reports Reuter.

MARCIO SANTOS

Santos, a star of Brazil's World Cup-winning side, arrived in Italy on Sunday and passed medical checks on Monday.

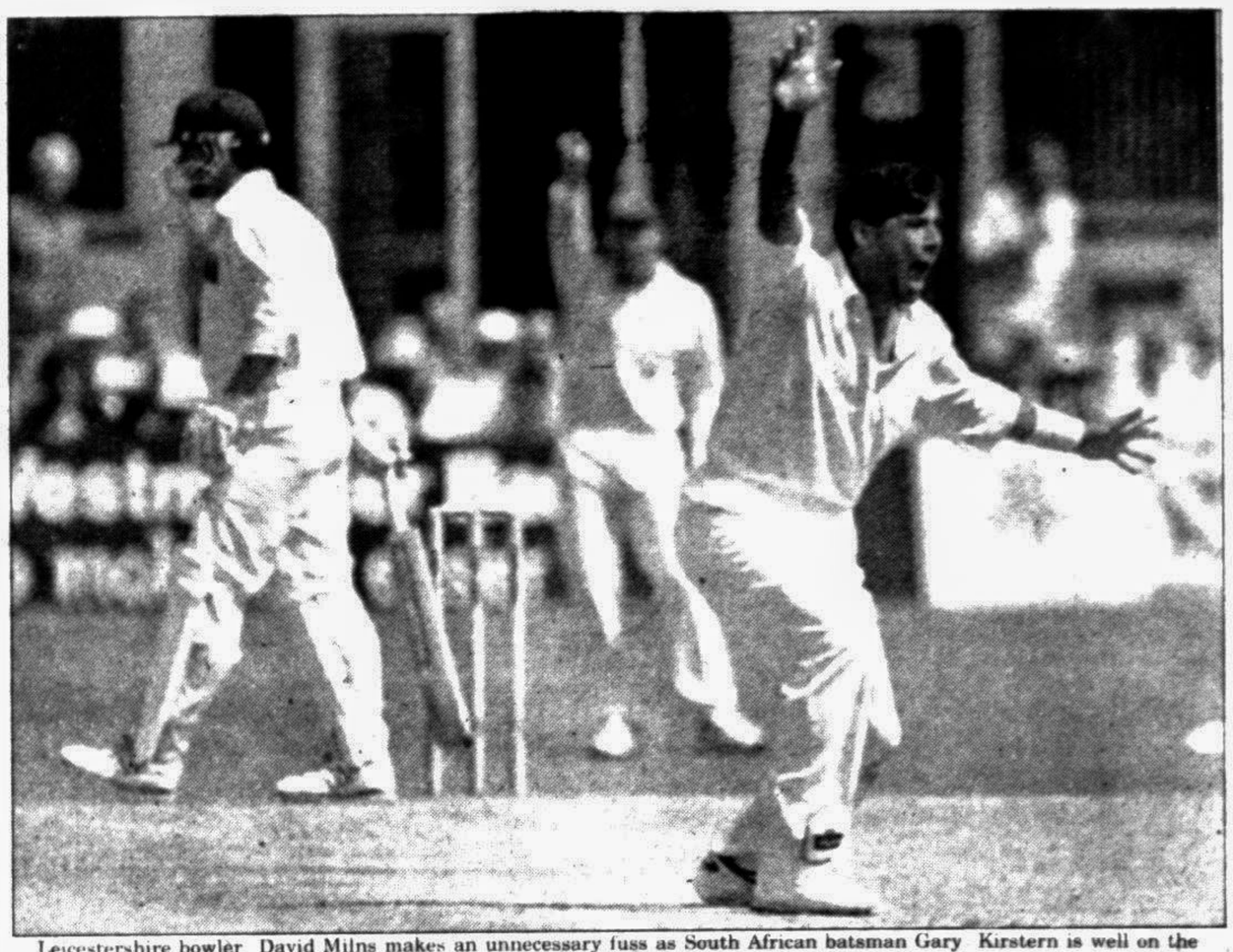
Fiorentina, back in Serie A after a season in the Second Division, said the defender was due to return to Brazil later on Monday and reports back to for pre-season training on August 10.

"Fiorentina were really interested in me and I want to live up to their expectations," Santos told the Daily Corriere Della Sera. "The league will be tough, but I'm not scared. "I'm willing to work hard."

Santos, who was also being chased by English Premier league side Tottenham, joins two other foreign stars at Fiorentina - Argentine striker Gabriel Batistuta and Portuguese midfielder Rui Costa.

"Batistuta and Costa are great talents. The team has a chance to get into a European Cup tournament," Santos said.

Italy's press have tipped Fiorentina to be among the title contenders after dominating the Second Division last year. The last of their two post-war championship titles was in 1969.



Leicestershire bowler David Milns makes an unnecessary fuss as South African batsman Gary Kirstern is well on the way to the pavilion after being caught by Adrian Pierson for 62 during a three-day match on August 1. The match was drawn. — AFP photo

Lankans face world champs in first one-dayer

Pakistan under pressure

COLOMBO, Aug 2: Sri Lankan skipper Arjuna Ranatunga says his side is waiting to pile on the pressure for Pakistan when the two teams launch the psychologically important one-day series here Wednesday, reports AFP.

"They are the world champions. They are the ones under pressure, we have nothing to lose. We can only add to their pressure", said Ranatunga on his side's chances in the three one-day internationals.

"Frankly, to have the one-dayers in one go is good. We can them sort out the Tests one by one," said the confident Ranatunga.

The two teams confront each other in a day-night encounter Wednesday and play two successive limited-over games during the weekend before playing the first of three Tests next week.

Indeed, the pressure of living up to their world image appeared to have affected Pakistan when a second string Sri Lankan side shocked the champions by two wickets in a warm-up limited overs match here Monday.

"It is true they have one of the best sides in the world. But when it comes to one-dayers, we have done pretty well, said Ranatunga.

Pakistan know only too well what to expect from an unpredictable Sri Lankan side. On Monday, they discovered that even limb-looseners can turn out to be a rude awakening.

"I don't want to take away the credit from them. We played serious cricket. But winning or losing doesn't matter. In one day cricket anything can happen," said Pakistan manager Inthikab Alam.

He said the defeat would not affect his side's performance in the main matches.

"As you know we have been very unfortunate with the weather. This is the first full day we had, for a touring side it takes time to adjust to different conditions," Alam said.

Rain ruined their first three-day match in southern Matara and also robbed a few hours play in another three-day game in northwestern Kurunegala.

If there was one heartening factor in the defeat, it was the resurgence of fast bowler Waqar Younis. The sprightly youngster finally put behind his injury-stricken past and poor form by returning the best figures of 3 for 48.

"More or less it (the match) was a good chance for Waqar. I am glad to see the way he bowled," said Alam.

That observation certainly does not augur well for Sri Lanka, especially when the other pace ace, Wasim Akram, has already made his mark here. If Akram can overcome a sore back, the swing kings could give Sri Lanka a torrid time.

Ranatunga acknowledged the match-winning capabilities of Akram and Younis but was typically defiant.

"Big names have never bothered us. If we play our normal game we can handle them well."

Pakistan will be hoping one-day specially Basit Ali regains his fluency after managing only a top-score of 19 in three innings. His top-order colleagues Aamer Sohail, Inzamam and Saeed Anwar have all been among the runs.

The tourists can be rest assured, because skipper Salim Malik in fine fettle after scoring consecutive half centuries, Malik seems to have made Sri Lanka his punch-bag since his Test debut century against the islanders in 1981.

Ranatunga's main worry is to find a steady pair of opening batsmen. He is handicapped by the absence of star opener Roshan Mahanama due to injury, and three others eyeing the top order slot have been struggling with the bat.

Both sides are expected to pick their teams later today taking into consideration the slow track at the R. Premadasa Stadium. Yet, their best plans can always evaporate in the present inclement weather.

Sanjeeva Ranatunga, the brother of Sri Lankan Captain Arjuna, has been included in a 15-member squad.

The younger Ranatunga, who has still to play alongside his famous brother in the national team, was brought into the squad after scores of 97, 20 not out and 41 in three successive innings against Pakistan.

The selectors also included right-arm off-cutter Kumar Dharmasena in the squad after his fine bowling for a Sri Lankan Cricket Board team in their drawn match against Pakistan last week. Dharmasena took seven wickets in that Game.

Pakistan will also pick their eleven for Wednesday's encounter from a 15-member squad. The second and third one-day internationals will be played here Saturday and Sunday.

TEAMS

SRI LANKA: A Ranatunga (capt), PA de Silva, ST Jayasuriya, D Samaraweera, AP Gurusinha, HP Tillekeratne, RS Kalpage, PB Dasanayaake, GP Wickramasinghe, M Muralidharan, CP Ramanayake, Vaas, K Dharmasena, UDU Chandana, S Ranatunga.

PAKISTAN: S Milk (capt), A Mujtaba, R. Latif, A Sohail, S Anwar, B. Ali, Inzamam, Z Fazal, Mustaq, A Raza, W. Younis, W. Akram, A Ahmed, Kabir Khan, R Raja.

Panagoulias to quit

ATHENS, Aug 2: Following Greek's disastrous World Cup finals debut, Alketas "Alkis" Panagoulias declared Monday that he would step down as coach of the Greek national soccer team, reports AP.

Panagoulias sent a letter to the Greek Soccer Federation saying that he did not want to renew his contract that ends Aug. 31. The 60-year-old coach thanked the federation for having entrusted him with the national team.

Panagoulias, a former coach of the US national team, has coached Greece since 1992, helping them qualify for the first time for the World Cup finals.

But this triumph was quickly forgotten in a blizzard of goals that overwhelmed the team in the first round in the United States. Greece lost 4-0 to Argentina, 4-0 to Bulgaria, and 2-0 to Nigeria, returning home with the poorest record among the 24 World Cup finalists.

Panagoulias blamed his players, saying they were cowed by the competition.The players blamed their coach, saying he made poor choices in his lineups and tactics. Newspapers demanded Panagoulias' sacking.

Panagoulias went to the United States as a student in 1961 and later became a dual citizen. He was hired in 1983 to coach Team America — which was part of the North, American Soccer League and also served as the US national squad.

He led the US soccer team at the 1984 Olympics in Los Angeles, but the Americans failed to qualify for the 1986 World Cup. Panagoulias returned to Greece to coach a series of clubs before taking the helm of the Greek national squad.

Bayern await good old days

MUNICH, Germany, Aug 2: Bayern Munich are set to become a force in Europe again after a four-year decline, club vice-president Franz Beckenbauer predicted here on Monday, reports AFP.

The former German captain, who came out of retirement last season to lead the side to the title said: "We must now show that we can play at the highest level again.

"The decline of the last four years is over."

Bayern, with former Juventus coach Giovanni Trapattoni in charge, also boasts new signing Jean-Pierre Papin, bought after the French international was offloaded by AC Milan.

All about Amunike

LISBON, Aug 2: Nigerian World Cup striker Emmanuel Amunike is at the centre of a transfer tug-of-war between Sporting Lisbon and German club Duisburg, reports AFP.

Amunike signed a three-year contract with the Portuguese club here late Monday, turning his back on a prior agreement to join the Budesliga.

"Amunike was under pressure when he signed the contract with Duisburg," said Sousa Cintra, president of Sporting Lisbon, announcing the new signing.

He said the German club had made no contact with Amunike's previous club, African champions Zamalek of Cairo.

New challenge for Parreira

VALENCIA, Spain, Aug 2: Just two weeks after guiding Brazil to their fourth World Cup title, coach Carlos Alberto Parreira arrived Monday to take over Spanish First Division club Valencia, a team starved of titles in recent years, reports AP.

I have great hope for my new team and I can't wait to start work," the soft-spoken Parreira told the handful of journalists who greeted him on his arrival.

Valencia, who finished seventh in the 20-team First Division last season, have not won a league title since 1971. Their last cup triumph was the European Cup Winners title in 1980.

As coach of Valencia, Parreira will have to go up against some of the stars of his Brazilian World Cup team — Romario, who plays for defending league champion Barcelona, and Mauro Silva and Bebeto, who star for last year's runners'-up Deportivo de La Coruna.

His first appearance as coach will come Wednesday when Valencia take on the Algerian national team in a pre-season exhibition game.

"The first thing I have to do is get to know the side and see what it needs," said Parreira. "That way if we need a player like (Brazilian), Mazinho or some other player we can study their transfer."

Valencia have bought seven new players to boost their lineup this season, including former Barcelona and Spanish national team goalkeeper Andoni Zubizarreta and Russian star forward Oleg Salenko, who tied for the scoring lead in the World Cup finals.

Parreira said he chose Valencia because it was the first club to approach him prior to the World Cup.

The Brazilian coach does not seem affected by the step down from coaching a star-studded team like Brazil to managing a rather mediocre Valencia squad.

"I've performed my mission for Brazil by helping in the fourth world title conquest, and I have no desire to manage Brazil again," he told the Jornal do Brasil on Sunday his departure.

As national coach, Parreira was constantly criticised by the media and public opinion polls for his defensive tactics and team lineups.

" At least I won't have 150 million people down my back," Parreira told the paper referring to his new post.

Workers of a soccer ball factory stitch balls with hand-made tools at Sialkot, some 250 km from Islamabad on Aug 1. Sialkot is famous for its international standard of sporting goods. This factory 'sublime' is a main exporter of balls for the World Cup from 1982 to 94, under the Licence of Adidas. — AFP photo

Romario annoys Cruyff

BARCELONA, Spain, Aug 2: Brazilian World Cup star Romario failed to turn up for the formal presentation of the 1994-95 Barcelona team on Monday, earning sharp criticism from Dutch coach Johan Cruyff, reports Reuter.

"This shows a lack of respect for his teammates," Cruyff told journalists at the presentation.

"We hope he will turn up and, when he does we will take the decisions which must be taken."

Spanish news reports said the striker had decided to prolong his holiday at home in Brazil, where he has been since his country's World Cup triumph in the United States last month.

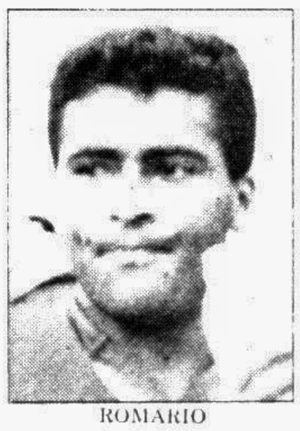
Around 20,000 fans attended the presentation which included Romanian World Cup midfielder Gheorghe Hagi among the new signing for the champions, who have won four Spanish league titles in a row.

"He's a great player who will give us the quality we need. Also he has a good long-range shot, something which Laudrup lacked," Cruyff said.

Striker Michael Laudrup left Barcelona for arch-rivals Real Madrid in July after a season of disputes with Cruyff, who often left the Dane out of his match squads in favour of his other three foreign players.

Hagi, who joined Barcelona from Italian club Brescia after two seasons at Real Madrid will be vying with Romario, Hristo Stoichkov of Bulgaria and Dutchman Ronald Koeman for the three foreign places permitted in the team each match.

Barcelona's other new signings are goalkeeper Julen Lopetegui from Logrones, striker Xavier Escaich and defender Abelardo Fernandez from sporting Gijon, midfielder Francisco Sanchez Jara from Osasuna and midfielder Delfi Geli from Albacete.



ROMARIO

The Catalans released Spain's veteran World Cup goalkeeper Andoni Zubizarreta, who has joined Valencia, while striker Julio Salinas has moved to league runners-up Deportivo Coruna, striker Quique Estebaranz to Sevilla and defender Juan Carlos to Valencia.

Barcelona were due to travel to the Netherlands on Monday evening to start pre-season training. During their 10-day stay, they are expected to play several friendlies against rivals that include former Dutch champions PSV Eindhoven and German side Bayer Leverkusen.

Romario told newspapers in Rio de Janeiro he intended to spend at least another fortnight on holiday in Brazil.

"I need a rest," he was quoted as saying by Daily O Globo in article bearing the headline: Romario vs Barcelona.

"I'm going to do some travelling and relaxing for at least 15 days more," the striker said.

Romario has barely lost contact with soccer since returning from the United States.

He has drawn large crowds on numerous occasions to a beach where he plays a football version of volleyball.

Last Saturday, he played in the first half of a local game on a dust pitch in his childhood neighbourhood of Vila da Penha. Romario failed to score, however, and his team lost 1-0.