

Reefat draws

Sports Reporter
International Master Reefat bin Sattar drew for the first time in the Rahimuddin Bharsa open chess tournament but still maintained solo lead after the completion of the seventh round at the chess room of the National Sports Council yesterday.

Biman's Reefat who won his previous six matches drew with teammate Fide Master Rezaul Haq in this round to collect six and a half points.

Hastbul Hasan Hanif of Brothers Union, who lost to Reefat in the previous round, bounced back into the championship race, defeating Ali Anjad Mintu of Dhaka Metropolitan yesterday.

With this win Hasib raised his collection to six and shared the second slot with Ziaul Kader Tuhin and Rezaul Haq.

Tuhin beat Saifuddin Labu in this round.

Abahani let off the hook

Sports Reporter

Lowly, Agrani Bank bungled a genuine prospect of pulling off their second giant-killing act in a week as title aspirants Abahani Krira Chakra twice came back from behind to beat them 3-2 in a pulsating Star Premier Division football league encounter at the Dhaka Stadium last evening.

Struggling to avoid relegation to Star First Division, Agrani Bank, who had handed strong Brothers Union their first defeat last Friday, yesterday twice shot into the lead in a goal-strewn first half that saw all the five goals scored in a heady exhibition of some positive, pacy soccer and shabby goalkeeping particularly by the Bank custodian.

Abahani, who were recently caught in a whirlpool of draws, having shared points with the powerful Muktiyoddha Sangsad following yet another barren battle with an unfancied Public Works Department yesterday found themselves a goal down before settling down.

Agrani Bank's midfielder



Action from last night's Star Premier Division football league encounter between Abahani Krira Chakra and Agrani Bank at the Dhaka Stadium. Abahani won the match 3-2.

Liton produced a pearler of a through as early as in the fifth minute of the match and striker Jamal finished neatly placing the ball wide off an advancing Abahani custodian Dhanu.

Abahani took a little time to regroup themselves but once their traditional set-piece play fell into place the Bank defence came under severe pressure.

But it took a brilliant free-kick by their skipper and star defender Monem Munna to restore parity 15 minutes later.

The well built national player let fly a thunderous 22-metre drive from a dead ball that beat a five-man defensive wall and put the sky blues on par much to the relief of their large contingent of supporters.

Unadvised and playing with a nothing-to-lose mentality the Bankers surged ahead once again in the 33rd minute. Ripon's push from a free-kick found an unmarked Jahangir (jr) inside the box and the midfielder took a powerful-packed grounder that beat Dhanu at the near post.

Agrani Bank, who had to

field their second choice goalie Shimu in the absence of their regular custodian Totum, had their share of euphoria robbed off in the span of a minute, as their mighty counterparts twice cashed in on the inexperience and the nerves of a rookie custodian to seal the fate of the match.

Four minutes before the short whistle Abahani's Iraqi player back heeled from a flag kick and midfielder Swapan's feeble attempt on that hit a Bank defender before snailing into the net with the goalkeeper showing little understanding of the slowly developing disaster.

A minute later the last goal signalling DMFA Cup champions Abahani's third win of this year's Premier league came. Swapan sent in a cross from the right flank which was back headed by Aslam for an unmarked Mintu whose weak shot at first post eluded Shimu, hit the post and then reversed direction to roll into the net by the far post.

After an action packed hectic first half both teams appeared rather exhausted in the second half. Yet Jahangir (jr) gave Abahani a moment of scare in the 60th minute when he was on bow hand from close with only Dhanu to beat.

Abahani, who trail league leaders Mohammedans by a point, have so far garnered nine points from six matches while Agrani Bank suffered their fourth loss from six matches and their pinched tally of three points remains static at least till the next encounter.

In day's first match held at the same venue Farashganj drew goalless with Victoria in a Star First Division encounter. Farashganj have eight points from six matches while Victoria have seven from same number of matches.

In the other Star First Division encounter played at the Mirpur Stadium promotees Shantinagar collected their second win to endanger the existence of the traditional Wanderers Club in the Senior grade.

Shantinagar won the match by the odd goal in three. Masud scored both the goals for the winners while Sohag pulled one back for the losers.

TODAY'S MATCHES

Dhanmondi Club vs Eskaton
Sabuj Sangha (Mirpur Stadium 6 pm)
East End vs Muslim Institute (Dhaka Stadium 4.30 pm)
PWD vs Wari (Dhaka Stadium 6.30 pm)

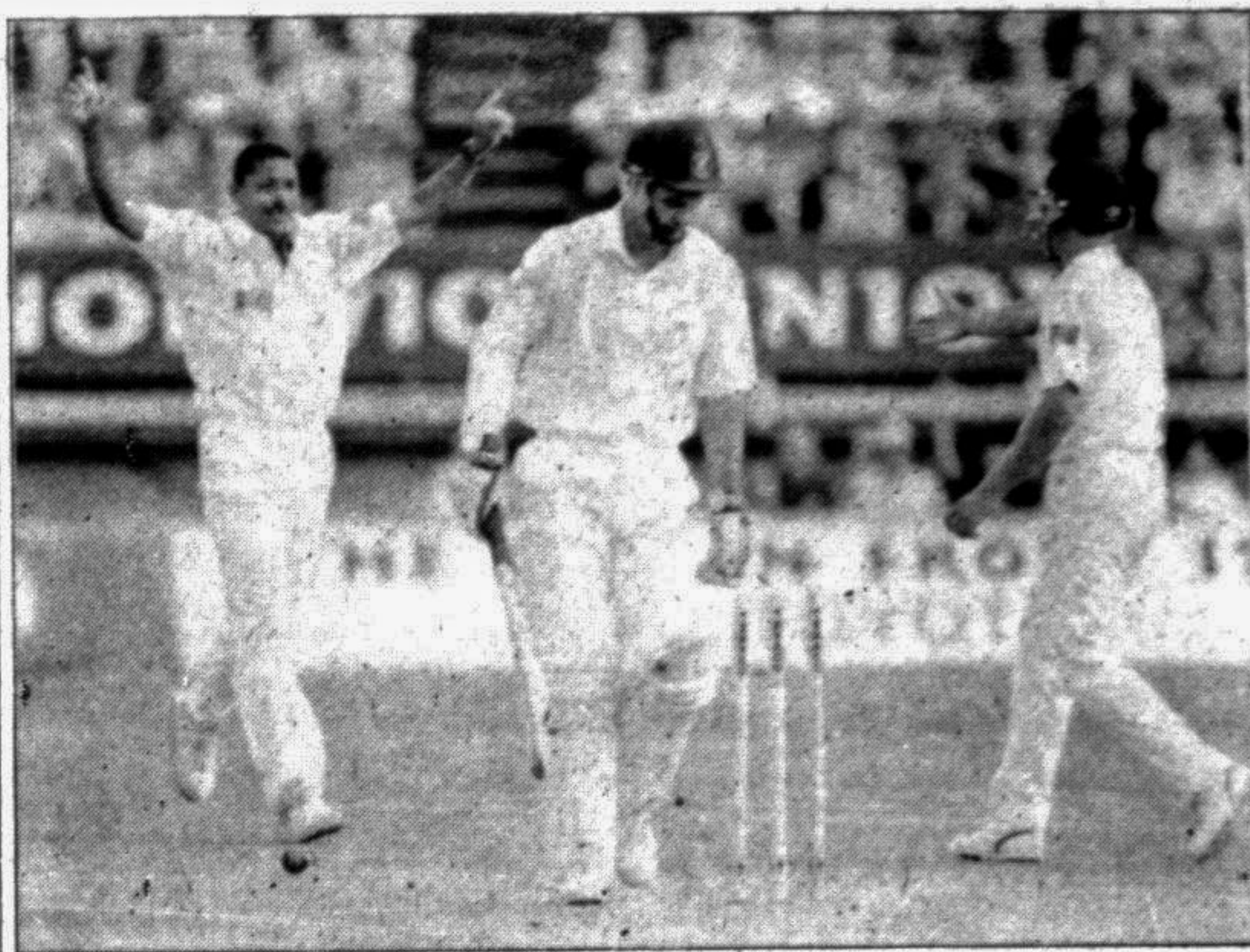
S Africa 215 for seven

BIRMINGHAM, England.
Aug 25: Phil DeFreitas took three wickets and made one catch Thursday as a revitalised England held South Africa to 215 for seven in the first one-day international at Edgbaston, reports AP.

DeFreitas claimed the first two wickets of the innings, dismissing opener Kepler Wessels for four and Peter Kirsten for eight. The 28-year-old all-rounder, who took his 100th Test wicket earlier this year, is now one short of the century mark in one-day internationals.

With a modest target, England began their 55-over innings poised to end their erratic summer on a high note. The team beat South Africa last weekend to draw the Test series, and Michael Atherton, despite calls for his resignation after receiving two fines during the series, was reappointed Thursday as captain for the upcoming winter tour of Australia.

On a slow Edgbaston pitch, South African captain Wessels won the toss and elected to bat, placing himself at the top of the lineup in place of the struggling Peter Kirsten.



England paceman Philip DeFreitas exults after sending back South African captain Kepler Wessels for four runs during the first one-day cricket international at Edgbaston yesterday.

Excelsior peerless Perkins



VICTORIA, Aug 25: Australia's Ki-eren Perkins broke two world records at the Commonwealth Games on Wednesday, clocking 14 minutes 41.66 seconds in the 1,500 metres freestyle and smashing the 800 metres mark along the way, reports Reuter.

The Queenslander went through the 800 barrier in 7:46.00, bettering his own mark of 7:46.60 set in Sydney in February 1992.

His previous 1,500 record was achieved at the 1992 Barcelona Olympics and stood at 14:43.48.

Perkins, one of only six people ever to swim under 15 minutes, left the other competitors in his wake as he tore through the water, passing the 1,200 metres mark more than one and a half seconds faster than he had at the Olympics.

The Saanich Commonwealth Pool, which has seen generally slow times during the meeting, erupted when he finished.

Perkins's ecstatic team made an archway of cheering support as he collected his medal, along with compatriots Dan Kowalski, who won silver, and bronze medalist Glen Housman.

All three have gone under 15 minutes, the others being Vladimir Salnikov of Russia

and Joerg Hoffmann and Stefan Pfeiffer of Germany.

Kowalski, although completely outclassed, still clocked a personal best 14:53.61, with Housman timed at 15:02.59.

The trio were also racing for two places on the squad for next month's World Championships in Rome.

Tears glistened in Perkins's



PERKINS's record breaker eyes as he accepted his medal from Britain's Prince Edward.

Perkins had said earlier on Wednesday that he did not feel ready for a record, because he had not had enough recent race preparation.

Perkins, who works as a television journalist when he is not in the pool, began swimming seriously at the age of nine after he fell through a plate glass window and severed a calf muscle.

Swimming was considered good physiotherapy and he was carried to the pool and dropped in so he could do repetitive leg exercises.

He won minor medals at the last Commonwealth Games in Auckland at the age of 16, but made the world sit up and take notice with his world record-breaking performances at Olympic trials in Canberra before setting off for the 400, 800 and 1,500 world marks, but lost the 400 to Russian Evgeni Sadovy by a whisker in Barcelona.

On Monday, he edged close to that 400 mark, missing it by 0.77 of a second and said had he known he was swimming so fast he would have pulled out all the stops for a quicker last length.

Perkins described his coach John Carew who told him only to aim for the 800. "I was feeling good and I was feeling the pain but I was still buoyed by everybody else's reaction — the crowd and also the fact I knew I was well and truly on the pace," he said.

Carew said: "It will be a long time before we see another swimmer like this."

Perkins said his next goal was to win the World Championship title next month in Rome and he wanted another record there.

"I would like to think I could better it," he said.

Schools hockey

Dhaka Nabakumar Institute booked a semifinal berth in the schools hockey tournament eliminating Ahmed Bawany Academy 4-0 at the Hockey Stadium yesterday, reports UNB.

The first half score was 2-0. Selim Hassan scored all the four goals for the winners in the 2nd, 32nd, 52nd and 64th minutes to earn the tournament's third hat-trick.

Nabakumar Institute will play against the winners of Armanitola Govt High School and Barisal Zilla School on Sunday, who both got walkovers in their opening matches to reach the quarter-final.

Sohail ticked off

COLOMBO, Aug 25: Pakistan opener Aamir Sohail was warned by match referee Cammie Smith for shouting at the umpire during the final one-day international in Colombo, an official said Thursday, reports AP.

Sohail showed his disappointment Wednesday after umpire Udaya Wickremasinghe turned down an appeal for leg-before-wicket decision against Sri Lankan batsman Sanjeeva Ranatunga.

The umpires did not file a report to the match referee, said Anura Tennakoon, secretary of the Board of Control for Cricket in Sri Lanka.

"Smith acted on his own after noticing the incident on TV in keeping with the international cricket council player's code of behaviour," he said.

Smith spoke to Sohail about his behaviour and later informed the team's management. Pakistan won the match by 27 runs, to take the five-match series, 4-1.

It's curtains for Tassotti

ZURICH, Aug 25: Italian defender Mauro Tassotti had his appeal against an eight-match international ban rejected by FIFA on Wednesday, almost certainly ending his international career, reports Reuter.

Edberg exits

COMMACK, NY, Aug 25: ManVai Washington beat second-seeded Stefan Edberg and Renzo Furlan defeated defending champion Marc Rosset on Wednesday as unseeded players dominated the second round of the Waldbaum's Hamlet Cup, reports AP.

Washington, ranked 31st in the world, beat the fifth-ranked Edberg 6-0, 3-6, 6-3, his first victory over the Swede in six meetings.

Furlan, a foot shorter than Rosset and ranked 31 places lower, eliminated the seventh seed from Switzerland 3-6, 6-4, 6-2. The 6-foot-7 (2.01-metre) Rosset is ranked 15th in the world.

Washington and Furlan, of Italy, advanced to the quarter-finals of this \$13,750 dollar warmup for next week's US Open along with fourth-seeded Todd Martin and sixth-seeded Cedric Pioline of France.

Edberg, down a service break early in the second set, fought back to reach the third set.

"I made too many mistakes and that cost me the match," Edberg said. "It took me time to get into the match, I didn't win enough points off his second serve and I missed chances in the third set."

"I had him down 0-30 in the first game of the third set and missed an easy volley."

Maradona: More sinned against than sinning?



BUENOS AIRES, Aug 25: It's still Diego Maradona and Argentina against the rest of the world — one last time.

Backed by Argentine President Carlos Menem, Maradona cried foul Wednesday after receiving a 15-month ban from world soccer body FIFA for failing a dope test at the World Cup finals, reports Reuter.

You can tell these guys at FIFA have no families. They're

ally didn't take anything into consideration," Maradona told local television reporters outside his home in Buenos Aires.

President Menem, himself a keen soccer fan, said FIFA had been too hard on the man who had enthralled the world with his magic until what local commentators say was his last mistake.

"We expected something lighter," Menem told reporters. "We thought expelling him from the last World Cup had been enough. This looks like too much, a very harsh

punishment."

Maradona, 33, had pledged to end his career in a blaze of glory at the World Cup finals in the United States.

Putting himself through a punishing training programme, he shed some 15 kilos in the runup to the tournament.

Hours before he was set to break a record of World Cup appearances, he was suspended after a doping test detected a cocktail of performance-enhancing drugs in his system.

Protesting his innocence despite FIFA doctors' assertion that this was no mere mistake on his part, he said the world soccer body had cut his legs from beneath him.

Maradona, who led Argentina to World Cup glory in 1986, has been dogged by controversy throughout his 18-year career.

In March 1991, while playing for Italian side Napoli, he was banned for 15 months after failing a dope test for cocaine. The following year he was arrested for drug possession.

In February, Maradona shot an air rifle at reporters outside his country home after he was sacked by his club Newell's Old Boys. He was indicted in the case early this month but remained free on 40,000 dollar bail.

Argentina, rocked by Maradona's second 15-month ban in little more than three years, reacted on Thursday with a mix of anger and resignation to the fate of its disgraced idol.

"We've had so much hassle with Maradona and we always got away with it, this time we couldn't," Argentine Football Association president Julio Grondona told local radio.

FIFA, world football's governing body, excluded him from "all activity related to football," effectively ending the top-flight playing career of the former Argentina captain, 34, in October.

Maradona said he would "rest and never play again" after FIFA's World Cup Standing Committee imposed the ban in Zurich.



An AFP file photo dated June 29, 1994 shows disgraced Argentine soccer captain Diego Maradona in Dallas. Maradona was suspended from playing for 15 months by FIFA in Zurich on August 24 for his latest doping offence.

Bubka upset

GOTHENBURG, Aug 25: Sergei Bubka won the pole vault at the international athletics meeting here Wednesday and promptly fired at broadside at the Ullevi Arena, site of the 1995 World Championships, reports AP.

"The pole vaulting has been placed at the wrong end of the arena, a serious problem. There won't be any top results here in the World Championships if something isn't changed," Bubka said.

According to Bubka, the winds are strong and erratic at the pole vault end of the arena, and the lighting was insufficient.

"Lousy. It was too dark. You can't perform top results under such conditions, no one can," he said.

Bubka cleared his first attempt at 5.80, but strong winds prevented him from clearing his next attempt at 6.0 he saved his last two vaults for 6.15 metres but failed.

Mixed day for C'wealth shuttlers

VICTORIA, Aug 25: Australian Paul Stevenson and Chan Oi Ni of Hong Kong, both seeded in the 5-8 group, suffered upset opening round defeats in the Commonwealth Games badminton tournament on Wednesday, reports Reuter.

Stevenson, who performed well in the team championship crashed 15-4, 15-7 to New Zealander Dean Galt.

Fellow Australian Lisa Cambell continued to demonstrate her improvement by beating Chan 11-3, 11-4 in the women's singles.

Men's top-seed Rashid Sidek of Malaysia had an easy opening workout, dropping only two points against Danjuma Fatauchi of Nigeria to reach the last 16.

Another Nigerian, Oby Olorunsola, was involved in one of the best matches of the women's event, beating Jayne Plunkett of Northern Ireland 5-11, 11-3, 11-8 for a place in the final 16.

She now faces Canada's Danysse Julien who eliminated Diana Kneka of Cyprus 11-3, 11-4.

It was a better day for the Canadians, who were called in for a special squad meeting following their poor showing in the team event.

Top player Iain Sydie beat Geraint Lewis of Wales 15-9, 15-10 to earn a crack at number three seed Anders Nielsen of England today.

Murray, Denmark delight



VICTORIA, Aug 25: Scot Yvonne Murray and England's Rob Denmark enlivened a lackluster athletics programme at the Commonwealth Games on Wednesday with classic performances in the women's 10,000 and men's 5,000 metres respectively, reports Reuter.

Murray sat behind South Africa's Olympic silver medalist, Elana Meyer until she judged the time was right then pounced with 500 metres to run and steadily increased the

gap to win in 31 minutes 56.97 seconds.

"I really enjoyed it," Murray said. "I couldn't believe how easy it felt at the first five kilometres."

Denmark emerged from a leading group of five in the final straight and strode through the middle to win the biggest race of his life in 13:23.00.

"I can't believe I've actually done something at long last," he said.

The 10,000 turned in to a two-woman race after 6,000 metres when the diminutive Meyer took the lead to spark a duel reminiscent of her

thrilling battle with Ethiopia's Derartu Tulu in the Barcelona final.

Meyer had been unable to train properly for six weeks. Because of a blood disorder and said she had hoped for a quicker early pace.

The pace, though, was ideal for Murray, the 1990 European 3,000 metres champion who was able to choose her time to strike.

"I just felt I could pick up the pace," she said. "I just felt very, very strong."

Kenya's world, bronze medalist Sally Barsosio, who forced Meyer out of the Stuttgart final by continually running in her path, did not start.

"We heard in the call-up room that she had fever or something," Murray said.

Denmark clearly had more to prove than simply his ability to win a major title.

Upset at what he considers the lack of races put on for distance runners in Britain, Denmark gesticulated angrily as he crossed the line.

"I just hope the British Athletic Federation will give us more respect," he said.

There could be a boycott of the World Cup. That's just not coming from me but from a lot of people. I just hope it doesn't come to that."

After Kenyans Laban Chege and Paul Sum had made the early pace, the race developed into a contest between the top eight with Denmark proving strongest in the final 50 metres.

"It was the deal I deserved," Denmark said. "I feel so elated."

Mike Smith, who withdrew after the first day in Barcelona then fouled all three long jumps in Stuttgart, finally got it right on the day by retaining his decathlon title.

"I had two bad days in two years," the Canadian said. "I was ranked number one in the Commonwealth. I wanted to come out number one."

The day's other title went to English shot putter Judy Oakes, who promptly demanded another, saying she should be awarded the Commonwealth gold given to Gael Martin in 1986 because the Australian had subsequently admitted taking drugs.



Yvonne Murray of Scotland celebrates after winning the women's 10,000 metres final at the Commonwealth Games in Victoria. Murray's time was 31:56.97.