

Muktijoddha stay in hunt

Sports Reporter



Star-studded Muktijoddha Sangsad kept alive their title hopes when they beat traditional giant-killers Wari Club by the odd goal in three in one of the two Star Premier Division football league matches played at the Dhaka Stadium yesterday.

The win gave the Federation Cup champions what is likely to be a short stay of the top of the points table along with Abahani, who played one match less. Both teams have eleven points each to their credit.

It was Muktis' second successive win after a three-match streak of dismal performances which marked their first defeat at the hands of Brothers Union and another one by Mohammedans.

However, the slender-margin victory, in fact, betrays Muktijoddha's total dominance over Wari.

Strikers Nakib and Mizan scored once each to give the victors a comfortable 2-0 first half lead.

Muktis pressed for more in the second half but rather against the run of the play conceded a 78th minute goal, much to the delight of several

hundred spectators, who turned out at the big bowl to see yet another Muktijoddha humiliation.

Muktijoddha, boasting a collection of almost all the current national players, dominated the entire proceeding with a better blend of soccer and took the lead in the very first minute of the play when Nakib nodded the ball home from an accurate Arman minus from the left flank.

Three minutes before the short whistle, Mizan dodged past a Wari defender and then an onrushing Arambagh custodian Selim before slotting the ball into the net to double the Muktijoddha lead.

The Muktijoddha onslaught continued in the second half and the scoreline could have been 4-0 in the space of two minutes had not Selim timely intervened to frustrate Mizan and Mamun Joarder in the 63rd and 64th respectively.

Selim, who joined Wari only this year from Abahani, then brilliantly saved Rumi's scorching drive for a corner in the 67th minute before his side-relieved sensation with substitute Bazlu latching on to a Shankar through to slam the ball past an onrushing Muktijoddha gold-tender Mohsin in the 78th minute.

This defeat left Wari Club — who drew with Abahani earlier — at their previous collection of eight points from as many matches.

In the first matches of the day, Arambagh earned two crucial points by defeating PWD 4-2.

Midfielder Shah Alam Babu scored twice in quick succession to give his side Arambagh a much-needed victory.

Babu Das and Sunny were the other scorers for the winners while Salam Khan and Bulbul notched one apiece for the losers.

With this win Arambagh raised their collection to seven from eight matches while PWD remained at their previous collection of five from eight matches.

Away at the Mirpur Stadium, promotes Muslim Institute recorded their maiden victory in the Star First Division football league with a 2-0 win over Dhaka Wanderers.

Mushtaq and Sanaulah were the scorers for the winners.

TODAY'S MATCHES
Farashganj SC vs Shantinagar 4:30 pm (Dhaka Stadium)
Abahani KC vs Bangladesh Boys 6:30 pm (Dhaka Stadium)

Muktis to play in Qatar

Sports Reporter

Muktijoddha Sangsad Kriya Chakra presently the virtual national squad take part in the Independence Cup football championship in Doha scheduled to begin from September 14.

Apart from Bangladesh, India, Sudan, Kuwait, Oman and hosts Qatar split into two groups will take part in the ten-day meet.

According to an agency report Bangladesh will take on India on the opening day of the championship and will meet Oman in their second round robin encounter.

Meanwhile, DMFA organisers of the two-tier Senior Division football leagues have decided to suspend the Premier Division football league during the tournament.

Muktijoddha is expected to leave Dhaka on September 12.

N'ganj Govt High clinch schools hockey title

Sports Reporter

Narayanganj Government High School clinched the schools hockey championship with a thumping 4-1 win over Ahmed Bawani Academy in the final at the Hockey Stadium yesterday.

The Narayanganj school led the first half by a field goal from Golam Zilani in the 31st minute.

Narayanganj Government High, who moved into the final eliminating Rajshahi Medical College Campus High School probably the best outfit in the fray, 5-4 in the tie-breaker, added another three goals after the breather to complete the Ahmed Bawani drubbing.

Shoab, Shahabuddin and Abu Nasser notched one goal apiece for the winners while Zahurul Islam got one for the vanquished.

Jute Minister Brig Hannan Shah, who was chief guest on the concluding day, gave away trophies among the winners. Major General Abdur Rab, president of the Bangladesh Hockey Federation (BHF), was also present.

Fast bowling camp ends

Sports Reporter

The Lotus-Kamal Fast Bowling Training Programme, a private initiative for unearthing local pace bowling talents, have selected eight youngsters for at least another year of better training.

In the certificate-giving ceremonial at the Abahani Kriya Chakra club premises on completion of the five-month camp involving initially 350 trainees, the organisers, Lotus-Kamal Companies, named Ashfaq Ali, Mohitosh Dewan, Tamjidur Rahman, Syed Farhan Bux, Shaiful Hossain, Khurshid Alam, Rashidul Islam and Mushfiqur Rahman for this special treatment which also includes a monthly stipend of Taka 500 each.

South Africa toil again

Sports Reporter

SCARBOROUGH, England, Aug 30: South Africa's end-of-tour slump continued with a four-wicket defeat by a President's XI at the Scarborough Cricket Festival on Monday, reports Reuter.

Following on from two one-day failures against England, South Africa's batting again let them down. They were bowled out for 151 from the final ball of their 50 overs.

Stand-in captain Hansie Cronje top-scored with 53 but his painfully slow innings spanned 143 balls with only one four.

Geoff Marsh rests his bat

PERTH, Australia, Aug 30: Former Australian Test opening batsman Geoff Marsh stunned Western Australian Cricket Association chief executive Chris Smith said, 'he was shocked to learn of Marsh's decision.'

"Swampy" (Marsh) has been a great servant to cricket in this state and internationally here late Tuesday when he announced his retirement from the first-class game, reports AFP.

Marsh, 35, a veteran of 50 Tests and captain of Western Australian for more than four seasons, announced his decision only six weeks before the start of a new inter-state season, throwing the state's preparations into confusion.

Countering the inevitable suggestions that he might have been pressured to relinquish office after two disappointing seasons by the former Sheffield Shield champions, Marsh declared at a media conference: "It was a tough decision, but I want to say it was my own decision. I have not spoken to anybody. I just wanted to make my own mind up."

He cited family commitments and a lack of desire to train as major reasons for quitting top cricket after 17 seasons.

"I took five months to make the decision and I am relieved now that I have made it," he said.

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Vogts calls in two rookies

BERLIN, Aug 30: Germany coach Bert Vogts has decided against making sweeping changes to his squad after their disappointing World Cup, including only two uncapped players for the team's first outing since the finals, reports Reuter.

Vogts on Monday named 20-year-old Karlsruhe defender Jens Nowotny and Freiburg midfielder Jens Todt, 24, in his 20-man party for a friendly against Russia in Moscow on September 7 — the German's first game since they were beaten by Bulgaria in the World Cup quarter-finals.

Vogts knows he had to rebuild a younger team for the 1996 European Championships in England.

Although, as expected, veterans Rudi Voeller, Guido Buchwald and Andreas Brehme were left out of the squad, Vogts decided to include 15 of the party which failed to live up to expectations in the United States.

Captain Lothar Matthaeus, 33, has decided to continue his international career. But goalkeeper Bodo Illgner, who has quit international football, and midfielder Stefan Effenberg, who was sent home from the finals for making an obscene gesture during a match, were not included.

"The team has not changed that much but it must change its face on the pitch," Vogts said.

"We are starting back at square one. We don't just want to, we must qualify for the European Championships in 1996."

While Nowotny's inclusion was expected, Todt's selection was a surprise.

A tall central midfielder who used to be a keen basketball player at school, Todt impressed Vogts in his first season in the Bundesliga last year when he scored six goals.



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UEFA gives go-ahead

BERNE, Aug 30: The European Football Union (UEFA) on Monday gave the green light to Albania and Georgia to play their opening matches next week in the qualifying competition for the 1996 European Championship, reports Reuters.

UEFA had earlier extended a deadline to the two countries to give guarantees on player defections and security before allowing them to play their games in Group Seven.

Albania's way match in Wales and Georgia's home game with Moldova next Wednesday may now both go ahead, UEFA said.

UEFA had told Albania on Thursday that it would be thrown out of the tournament if it did not provide guarantees that players would not defect.

Butt barred from PFF

HONG KONG, Aug 30: The Pakistan Football Federation has barred former secretary general, Hafiz Salman Butt, for 10 years on charges of embezzlement and misconduct. Asian Football Confederation sources said, reports AFP.

The decision was taken by the Federation General Council and announced by its president, Milan Mohammad Azhar, the sources said.

The Nation newspaper of Lahore said Butt described the meeting in Karachi as "an illegal gathering of opportunists" because there were no representatives of FIFA or AFC present.



US athlete Edwin Moses waves the Olympic flame in the presence of the International Olympic Committee president Juan Antonio Samaranch (2nd L), Paris mayor Jacques Chirac (2nd R), Henri Serandour (L), president of the National Olympic Committee, and French Sports Minister Michel Alliot-Marie (R) on August 29 in front of the Eiffel Tower during the organisation's centennial congress. — AFP photo

Wheel comes full circle

PARIS, Aug 30: The International Olympic Committee opened its first congress in 13 years Monday with France's Prime Minister giving the strongest suggestion so far that Paris will bid to host the 2004 Summer Games, reports AP.

"I would like to declare before you today a wish: that our country has the desire to welcome, at the beginning of the next century, the Summer Olympic Games," Prime Minister Edouard Balladur said in a speech opening the 12th IOC Congress.

While he did not specify a city or year, it has been widely rumored that Paris will bid for the 2004 Games. Paris had been a candidate for the 1992 Summer Games, which were awarded to Barcelona. Another French city, Albertville, hosted the Winter Olympics the same year.

Earlier, five parachutists fell from a near-cloudburst sky, bringing with them the Olympic flame lit in Greece last week. They landed in front of the Eiffel Tower as a French climber rappelled 120 metres (400 feet) down from the second level of the tower, carrying an Olympic flag.

A relay of 33 champion athletes, led by two-time Olympic champion hurdler Edwin Moses, took turns carrying the torch through the streets of Paris, stopping briefly, at the celebrating its centenary at this congress.

"Already, the International Olympic Committee has proven its influence," said Balladur, who was a last-minute stand-in for ailing President Francois Mitterrand.

"It has contributed to fighting against apartheid in South Africa. It supports national Olympic committees of countries at war. Time and again, Olympic solidarity has had beneficial effects."

The IOC's 88 members are meeting all week with officials of 57 international sports federations and 196 national Olympic committees, examining the Olympic movement under such themes as its contribution to society, the contemporary athlete, sports in its social context and sports and Sorbonne University where Frenchman Baron Pierre de Coubertin founded the modern Olympic movement 100 years ago.

"After a century, the flame is in some way returning to its starting point, from where it will set off again into another century," IOC president Juan Antonio Samaranch said at the Sorbonne.

The flame was then taken to the Bercy indoor sports arena, where Olympic 400-meter hurdles champion Marie-Jose Perec lit a larger flame following a concert by Dee Dee Bridgewater and band leader Michel Legrand.

Balladur and other officials hailed the Olympic movement, the mass media.

When the congress ends Friday, "I wish to speak to the world and show what we've done for solidarity and peace over a century," IOC president Juan Antonio Samaranch said.

"I want to tell the world that it was not only the centennial congress, but also the congress of unity."

The working sessions of the IOC Congress, the first since Baden-Baden, Germany in 1981, are scheduled from Tuesday to Saturday. About 3,500 people are expected to attend, with nearly 500 speeches to be delivered.

The series of Olympic meetings, which comprises an IOC Executive Board session, IOC Congress and IOC general session, and which is expected to arrive at major decisions, has been criticized by some for its \$16 million cost.

No exhuming LA scandal

PARIS, Aug 30: The Olympics' medical chief confirmed Monday that several positive drug tests were destroyed at the 1984 Los Angeles Games but he denied any conspiracy or cover-up, reports AP.

Prince Alexandre de Merode, chairman of the IOC medical commission, called the case an "accident" and blamed it on the haste of LA organisers to close down as soon as the Games ended.

"This was a small incident," de Merode said in an interview at the International Olympic Committee's Centennial Congress in Paris. "It's not a scandal."

A BBC television programme, quoting two anti-doping officials, reported last week that nine athletes failed drug tests during the last two days of the Games.

The programme said the tests were never acted upon because all material related to the case were taken from de Merode's offices at the Biltmore Hotel in Los Angeles and destroyed in a shredder.

The BBC report suggested that orders had come from a top official to shut down the drug-testing laboratory before the end of the Games and to cover up the nine positives. Twelve positive tests had been publicly announced earlier during the Games.

De Merode confirmed parts of the story but denied others. He said he knew of five, or possibly six, positive tests but denied there were nine. He said he doesn't know who the athletes were because all the test codes were destroyed before he could look at them.

"Nobody knows," he said. De Merode said he was told of the positive tests the evening after the final day of the Games. But when he went to his Biltmore headquarters,

he found that everything had disappeared and the offices had been converted back into a hotel suite.

De Merode said the hotel explained that all Olympic offices were closed as soon as the Games ended because the privately-funded Organising Committee was not paying for rooms beyond the closing date.

"I called the Organising Committee and was told, 'You must understand, you are in the United States. The Games are finished, everything is finished,'" de Merode said.

The next morning, de Merode went to the Organising Committee headquarters to find out what happened. He said he was first told by a committee official, Tony Daly, that the drug test documents were being flown to IOC headquarters in Lausanne, Switzerland.

After de Merode said he would get on the next plane to Lausanne to study the tests, Daly changed his story.

"I must tell the truth," de Merode quoted him as saying. "Everything was destroyed in the paper shredder. We are sorry, but we can't produce anything from your documents. I apologise but we can't go anything."

De Merode said he considered the episode an honest mistake.

"I don't believe it was intentional because it's certainly not in their interest," he said. "The US mentality was the Games were finished. They didn't want to pay. They were a private organisation. The US attitude is not the same as the European one. They have their efficiency. Everything is done very quickly. They like to save money."

"That's why I believe it was an accident. It's an unfortunate story, but it was not done deliberately."

A main source for the BBC report was Arnold Beckett, a former member of de Merode's commission. Beckett was dropped from the panel after the 1992 Barcelona Games because of disagreements over several doping cases.

De Merode questioned Beckett's motives, saying, "I don't believe it's a constructive attitude."

Paris to bid for 2004 Games

PARIS, Aug 30: A possible Paris bid for the 2004 Olympics has surprised Chinese officials who were considering a similar bid of their own.

"We did not expect this news," Chinese Sports Minister Wu Zhaozu told AFP here Tuesday.

French Prime Minister Edouard Balladur's unexpected announcement during Monday's opening ceremony for the 12th Olympic congress also surprised Paris mayor Jacques Chirac.

Guy Druet, the 1976 Olympic high hurdles champion now a member of the French National Assembly, described the announcement as "unusual".

"It's normally the city which announces its intentions to bid," he said. "But as a sportsman I must welcome it."

Chirac, who went close to defeating Barcelona when he led a Paris bid for the 1992 Games, has already asked Druet to submit a feasibility report on another Paris bid.

France stages the 1998 World Cup soccer tournament and Druet was not sure whether another Olympic bid would have a better chance in 2004 or 2008.

Cape Town in South Africa was already considered by many IOC members as an excellent candidate for the 2004 Games.

Wu, who was attending the 12th Olympic congress here, said China was also pondering when would be the best time to make a new bid.

"The matter is now in the hands of our government," he said. "We are very positive about bidding again but there is no final and official decision yet."

"All the factors which pushed us to bid for 2000 still remain," he added.

Beijing, whose bid last year was surrounded by controversy over China's human rights record, lost by two votes to Sydney in last September's IOC election in Monte Carlo.

Gatting's sixth

LONDON, Aug 30: Mike Gatting strengthened his claim to a place on England's tour to Australia with his sixth century of the season in Middlesex's two-wicket win over Surrey at The Oval on Monday, reports Reuter.

Gatting scored 103 to steer Middlesex to their victory target of 389 with four overs to spare.

It was Surrey's fourth successive defeat and effectively ended their hopes of winning the country championship. They trail leaders Warwickshire by 54 points with just two games to play.

Gatting, opening the innings in the absence of the injured Desmond Haynes, hit 14 boundaries in his 136-ball knock.

He put on 178 for the second-wicket, with Mark Ramprakash, who scored a fine 90. John Carr then hit 62 not out to see Middlesex home.

Yorkshire demolished Worcestershire by an innings and 61 runs to register their first championship win at New Road, Worcester, for 33 years.

Worcestershire were skittled out for 73 — the lowest championship score of the season.

Mark Robinson took a season's best five for 48 while Peter Hartley's four for 20 gave him match figures of nine for 109.

Bottom club Glamorgan gained their first home championship win of the season when they beat Leicestershire by 150 runs at Cardiff.

Our common wealth of failure

Sports Reporter

The fifteenth Commonwealth Games, the quadrennial sporting assembly of the countries still basking in the suffused glory of British Raj's risqué concept of a joint family, ended in the Canadian city of Victoria Sunday.

The big names of the pro circuit, who were made to rub shoulders with the yobbos and amateurs spread all over the face of the globe more because of a political compulsion than any sporting necessity performed their routine practice of mopping up the offerings up for grabs between the mythical days of July 18 to August 28, often smeared by the drug trials and have deserted the host, leaving all quiet on the northern front.

Our participants, laden with the burden of being empty-handed, have begun their odyssey in trickle. Two of the fifteen sportsmen and women — sprinter Bimal Tarafdar and hurdler Abdur Rahim Nayeem — are back in

town. The rest are on their way.

But what have we got by the way? Dumb show cannot hide the statistical statement: NOTHING in this age of media revolution.

For all the grand rush to catch the flight to Canada and the subsequent fuss, Bangladesh backtracked from their achievement in the 1990 Games to plunge into an abyss of nothingness.

Four years ago in Auckland, Bangladesh managed two medals — a gold and a bronze, courtesy the marksmanship of Ateequr Rahman and his fellow shooters.

Although Bangladesh was represented in four disciplines — shooting, athletics, swimming and boxing — it was only shooting that held any remote medal-winning prospects for them even though some of the crackshooters like Ateeq and Shahana Parveen were not there for personal reasons.

But the picture at the end of the day was depressing.

In men's air rifle shooting Saiful Islam and GM Haider totalled 1143 points to finish fourth after hosts Canada, England and Scotland, who won the gold silver and bronze respectively.

In men's small rifle (prone position) Nasiruddin and GM Haider collected 1161 points to settle for the ninth slot in a event Sri Lanka clinched the silver medal.

In small bore rifle 3 position GM Haider and Nasir mastered 2249 to settle for the fourth slot.

Kazi Naushad and Anki Chowdhury hauled 1061 points to finish seventh in the women's small bore rifle (prone position).

Kazi Firdousi Parveen Polly and Fauzia Karim collected 744 points to come seventh in an event neighbours Sri Lanka picked the gold medal.

In a piece of a seemingly eternal irony, swimming scenario had much more disappointment in store for the Bangladeshi natants.

Veteran Mokhesur Rahman finished eighth in the third heat for men's 100m backstroke. He clocked 1:16.70 seconds.

Qamar Mizanur Rahman, who made his mark on the national scene in the last SAF Games, was abject failure after having been looked to be disqualified.

Bangladesh's lone gold winner in sixth SAF Games in Dhaka was nipped in the bud by his Nigerian counterpart.

Bimal Chandra Tarafdar, the toast of the country last December following his emergence as the fastest man of South Asia, clocked 10.87 in the heat for men's 100m dash and was duly left in the cold for the real part of the show.

Hurdler Abdur Rahim Nayeem clocked 52.52.97 seconds to finish the second last in a pack of eight in the third heat for men's 400m hurdles.