

MSC drop further astern

Sports Reporter

Mohammedans paid dearly for the myopia of their marksmen as the reigning champions went down fighting to their second successive defeat losing to Brothers Union by a solitary goal in the Star Premier Division football league at the Dhaka Stadium yesterday.

A sixteenth minute penalty conversion by Shahzada meant the black whites slip further behind in the title race having dropped their sixth point in the current league. Mohammedans have only one game left in the first phase against arch-rivals Abahani, the league leaders, next Monday.

Badly needing a victory to boost their sagging morale as well as their chances to retain the title, Mohammedans naturally appeared in the aggressors role right from the beginning.

But Brothers, who with two earlier defeats seemed to have pulled their horns in for their first ever league title in a familiar fashion, employed a five-man defence in front of a consistent Ponir to hold off a charged Mohammedan offence which had the Russian Inataev Guermann returning from a two-match suspension.

However, the Gopibagh team which last beat its infinitely more popular rival way back in 1981 shot into the lead from its first serious sortie.

Attacking midfielder Sadequul Islam Uttam pushed a fine pass to fast improving left winger Ranjan and ran inside the danger zone for the return which duly came and when he was poised for the final crack at a goal, Rehan the tall robust Mohammedan defender committed the cardinal sin of bringing down a man inside the box and referee S. M. Manisoor who had good match with the whistle promptly pointed to the dreaded spot.

Shahzada strolled up to accept the early offer without any fuss with the match barely sixteen minutes old.

Two minutes later Brothers terrorised the unsettled Mohammedan defence when a pacy Biplob cut in from the right to unleash a thunderous shot at the first post which came back to play off the perpendicular wood work with Lahulwell beaten.

Thereafter, it was rather a one-sided tale of the shock absorbing quality of the Brothers defence and the panicky pounding of the goal-blind black and white frontliners. Young Asad, Russian Kazakov, all had their chances but none missed a surer sitter than the stop-gap skipper Mahabubur Rahman Roxy. He was provided with a superb minus by a hardworking Manik in the 36th minute but the midfielder's attempt from barely six yards somehow managed to miss and open inviting goal.

Brothers defence put up a cool show as exemplified in the individual excellence of Ruhul Amin and custodian

Ponir with the latter pulling off a marvellous save from a powerful left footer by a swivelling Inataev inside the box seconds before half time.

Tension and frustration demonstrated by the abortive and repeated play-acting in the Brothers citadel by the Mohammedan players infected the galleries. Some of the frenzied fans forced open one of the closed openings in the fence and police swung into action to trigger off a prolonged clash while Mohammedans quest for at least a face-saving equaliser degenerated into unimaginative passing and erratic shooting.

Although Mohammedans controlled the entire second half and came across chances,

Fakirpool Youngmen's Club and Agrani Bank shared points in a goalless encounter of the Premier league played earlier at the same venue.

Fakirpool have seven points and Agrani Bank six both having played eight matches each.

Away at the Mirpur Stadium Rahmatganj were locked in a two all draw with East End in a Star First Division outing.

Milon scored both the goals for Rahmatganj, who now have 12 points from eight matches and lead the table.

Selim and Ujjal struck once each to ensure East End a point which takes their tally to six from eight matches.

TODAY'S MATCHES

Sadharan Bini KS vs



An exciting moment during last night's crucial Star Premier Division football encounter between Mohammedan Sporting Club and Brothers Union at the Dhaka Stadium. Brothers won the match 1-0.

The prospect of a revenge of their semifinal loss to Brothers Union in the Federation Cup earlier this year was lost proving once again that it is only goals that count. Nothing else. Both Mohammedans and Brothers now jointly share the third position with ten points each having taken part in eight outings apiece. Abahani are the clear table leaders currently with 13 points from eight matches.

TEAMS

BROTHERS UNION: Ponir, Shahzada, Moon, Mizan, Ruhul Amin, Uttam, Pijush, Bakhtiar, Rupu, Biplob and Ranjan (Ripon).

MOHAMMEDAN SC: Lahul, Shamim, Kaisar, Rehan, Biplob, Parvez, Manik, Roxy (Zahid), Guaman, Andrey Kazakov and Asad (Reaz).

Eskaon (Mirpur Stadium 6:00)

Victoria vs Muslim Institute (Dhaka Stadium 4:30)

Muktijoddha vs Arambagh (Dhaka Stadium 6:30)

STANDINGS

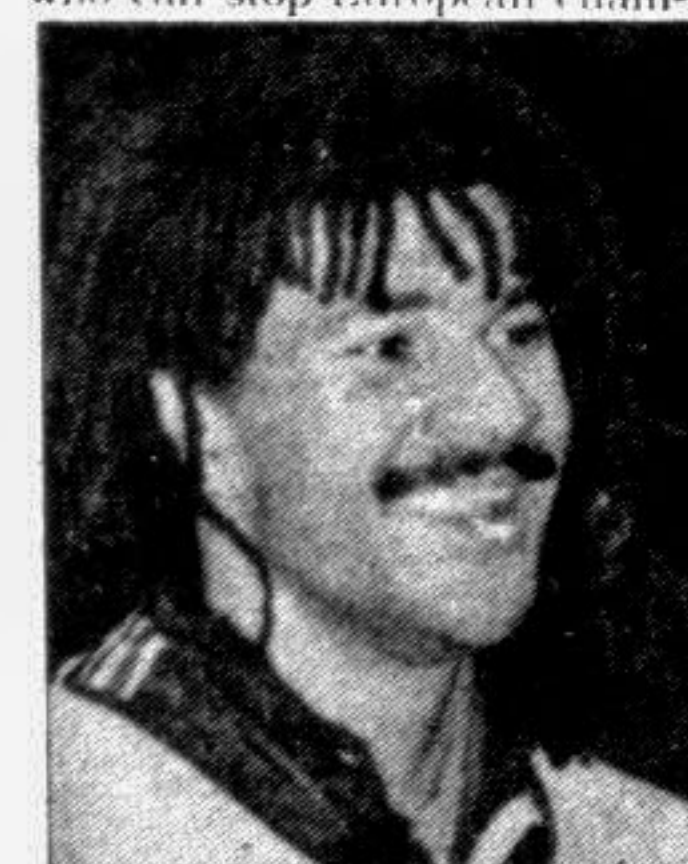
Following are the standings of the Star Premier Division Football League on competition of 40 matches yesterday.

Teams	M	W	D	L	GF	GA	P
Abahani KC	8	5	3	0	8	5	13
Muktijoddha Sangsad	8	5	1	2	14	7	11
Mohammedan SC	8	4	3	2	14	5	10
Brothers Union	8	4	2	2	11	6	10
Wari Club	8	3	2	3	8	9	8
Fakirpool YC	8	1	5	2	8	9	7
Arambagh KS	8	2	3	3	8	9	7
Agrani Bank	8	2	2	4	2	5	6
PWD SC	8	1	3	4	7	5	5
Bangladesh Boys	8	1	1	6	10	30	3

Starry Serie A from Sunday

ROME, Sept 1: Ruud Gullit and Dejan Savicevic, two stars who missed out on the World Cup finals, spearhead AC Milan's bid for a fourth straight title as Italian soccer experiments with three points for a win this season, reports Reuter.

The points system may have changed but the question ahead of next Sunday's Serie A kick-off remains the same — who can stop European cham-



RUUD GULLIT

pions Milan? The main opposition to Milan's attempts to match Torino's post-war record of four titles in a row is expected to come from Juventus and Parma while Lazio, Roma and Sampdoria could all figure in the title hunt.

Milan have been unusually quiet in the transfer market with the return of deadlocked Dutchman Gullit their major signing.

Gullit, who walked out on the Dutch squad shortly before the US World Cup finals, proved that Milan had been hasty in writing him off when he netted 15 times during a season in exile at Sampdoria.

Frenchman Jean-Pierre Papin has moved to Bayern Munich and Romanian Florin Raducioiu has joined Espanol,

leaving Gullit and Savicevic to bolster an attack which managed a miserable 36 goals in 34 matches last season.

Mercurial Montenegrin Savicevic, denied the chance to play international soccer by FIFA's ban on the rump Yugoslavia, failed to score in the league last season.

But he proved his worth with a superb performance and audacious lobbed goal as Milan thrashed Barcelona 4-0 to lift the European Cup last May — a sparkling showing totally out of keeping with their grey grind to the league title.

For Milan much will depend on the form and fitness of captain Franco Baresi who at 34 remains the key man in defence which conceded just 15 league goals last season.

Opponents of Milan at home and abroad will have noted that the average age of Fabio Capello's squad is creeping up.

Juventus, who won the last of their record 22 league titles back in 1986, and provincial Parma look best placed to take advantage should the champions falter.

Turin's Juventus are under new management with Marcello Lippi, lately of Napoli, having replaced Giovanni Trapattoni as coach and former Italy winger Roberto Bettega installed as general manager.

Much is expected of Portuguese playmaker Paulo Sousa and French midfielder Didier Deschamps, signed from Sporting Lisbon and Olympique Marseille respectively.

Their job will be to supply an attack featuring Italian World Cup hero Roberto Baggio and supported by veteran Gianluca Vialli plus 19-year-old prospect Alessandro Del Piero.

The other Baggio — Italian World Cup midfielder Dino — has surprisingly been allowed to leave Juventus for Parma.

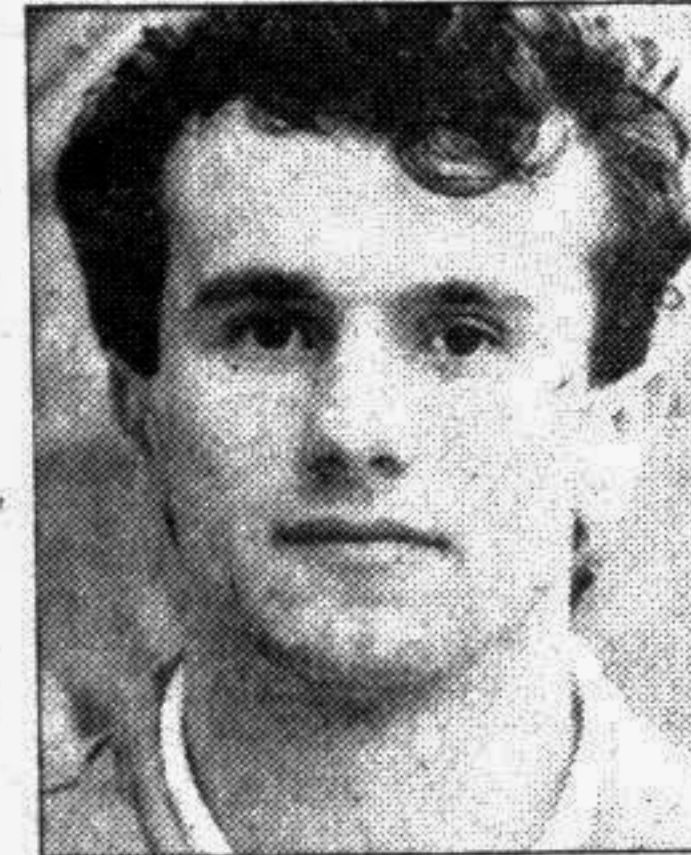
His arrival boosts a powerful squad aiming to win the title for the first time and cap a

remarkable climb after decades of anonymity in the lower divisions.

The ambitious northern Italian outfit have strengthened their defence with the signing of Portugal's Fernando Couto and Italian international Roberto Mussi.

No club has spent more than Roma — the team from the capital seeking to rebuild after a poor 1993-94 season.

Uruguayan Daniel Fonseca and Swede Jonas Thern have moved in big-money deals



SAVICEVIC

from cash-strapped Napoli. The pairing of Fonseca and Argentine Abel Balbo should ensure plenty of goals for the Romans, whose second and last title came in 1983.

City rivals Lazio also boast a potent attack, led by Giuseppe Signori, top scorer in Serie A over the past two years.

Lazio are now coached by tough Czech Zdenek Zeman, regarded as a miracle worker for keeping small town Foggia afloat in Serie A. Zeman faces the harder task of satisfying fans desperate for a repeat of Lazio's 1974 title triumph.

In addition to Gullit, cup holders Sampdoria have lost Italy goalkeeper Gianluca Pagliuca, who joined Internazionale in a deal which took veteran Walter Zenga in the opposite direction.

Ansars cruise swimmingly

Sports Reporter

Ansars mermaids confirmed their supremacy in the Agrani Bank open age group women's swimming championship when they collected eight more golds on the concluding day of the three-day meet at the Dhanmondi Women's Swimming Complex yesterday.

Ansars, who took an unsailable lead amassing 19 golds on the first two days, finished with a haul of 27 golds out of 37 up for grabs in the meet.

Hasina Akhter, who took two golds in the 13-14 age group on the last day. She finished top in both 100-metres backstroke and breaststroke.

Nibedita Das was the other successful performer on the day earning two more golds for Rajbari in the 100-metres backstroke and in the 200-metres freestyle of the 15-17 section.

With these two golds Rajbari surged ahead to the position, eight golds ahead of Dhaka Swimming Pool who bagged two.

Foreign Minister ASM Mostafizur Rahman distributed prizes among the winners.

MEDALS TABLE

	G	S	B
Bangladesh Ansars	27	22	13
Rajbari DSA	8	3	9
Dhaka Swimming Club	2	6	2

Sumon advances

Russel Kabir Sumon, the only Bangladeshi shuttler competing in the second World junior badminton tournament now being held in Kuala Lumpur, has advanced to the pre-quarter final, reports UNB.

He will meet a German rival in the pre-quarter final today at the Malaysian capital.

Earlier, Sumon beat two opponents from the Maldives and the Philippines, said a press release.

SU inter-dept soccer

SYLHET, Sept 1: The inter-departmental football tournament of Shahjalal University of Science and Technology was inaugurated at the campus ground today, reports UNB.

Vice Chancellor Prof Syed Mohib Uddin Ahmed inaugurated the competition. All the nine departments are taking part in the tournament in three groups.

Meanwhile, another report says: Economics department retained the inter-department basketball championships defeating chemistry department 13-11 in the final at the university basketball court on Wednesday.

Velez clinch Libertadores Cup

SAO PAULO, Sept 1: Argentina's Velez Sarsfield won the Libertadores Cup for the first time in their history on Wednesday, beating Sao Paulo of Brazil 5-3 on penalties in the final, reports Reuter.

The tie went to penalties after Sao Paulo, winners of the competition for the last two years, won Wednesday's second leg 1-0 to level the aggregate score at 1-1.

But their dreams of a hat-trick of titles were buried in the shoot-out by the heroics of Velez goalkeeper Jose Luis Chilavert.

The giant Paraguayan saved Sao Paulo's first penalty, taken by Pathinha, and then scored himself with Velez's second kick as the Argentine's went on to convert all their attempts.

It was the first time an Argentine side had won the competition since River Plate's victory in 1986.

Sao Paulo did most of the attacking during the 90 minutes but were unable to reproduce the flowing, stylish play which brought them their first two titles.

They could manage just one goal for their efforts, a 33rd minute penalty converted by former Torino striker Muller following a foul on left-back Andre. The decision was furiously disputed by the Argentine players.

Overall, the match was an ugly, unpleasant affair and a poor advertisement for South American soccer, with both teams guilty of play acting and arguing with the referee and each other.

Kasparov beaten

LONDON, Sept 1: World chess champion Garry Kasparov has been beaten by a computer-using programme that cost less than 200 dollars.

In a victory for silicon chip over chess brain, Kasparov was humbled on Wednesday night by Chess Genius 2, a computer programmed to analyse up to 100,000 positions a second, reports Reuter.

Verdy march on

TOKYO, Sept 1: Winger Nobuhiko Takeda and Brazilian Antonio Bent Dos Santos lifted Verdy Kawasaki to the top of the table as the 1993 champions beat JEF United Ichihara 3-1 in the Japanese football league Wednesday, reports AFP.



Rehana Akhter of Ansars in action during the 100-metres freestyle at the Agrani Bank open age-group women's swimming championship at the Dhanmondi Women's Complex Pool yesterday.

— Star photo

Kapil's twilight test



COLOMBO, Sept 1: Indian cricket icon Kapil Dev has not faced such pressure to perform as he

does now at the start of his 17th international season. The 35-year-old all-rounder knows his future depends on how he fares in a four-nation tournament against Pakistan, Australia and hosts Sri Lanka, beginning here on Sunday, reports AFP.

The man who has spearheaded India's challenge since 1979 and is Test cricket's leading wicket-taker, suddenly finds that he can no longer take his place in the team for granted.

Speculation is rife in India that Kapil has already played his last Test, and may be displaced in one-day cricket too unless he regains his old touch over the next two weeks.

His declining strike rate and India's new-found confidence in spin could thwart Kapil's hopes of taking part in the 1996 World Cup to be jointly hosted by India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

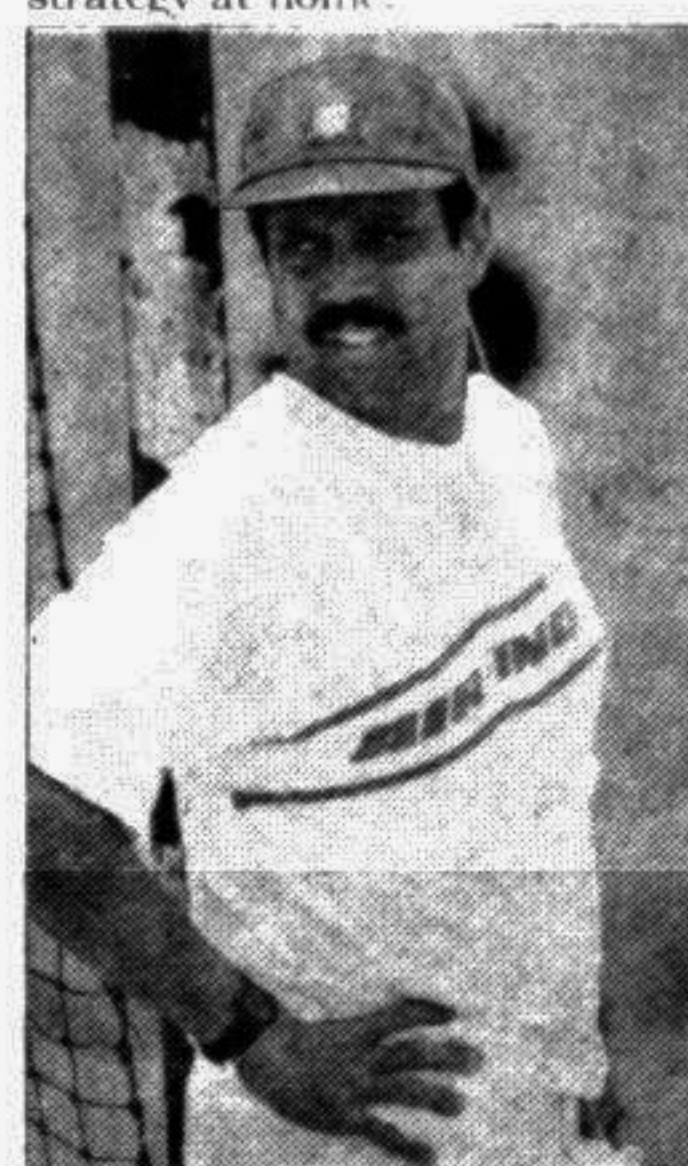
There were demands for his exclusion from the Test team soon after he struggled in his home series against Sri Lanka earlier this year.

Kapil's critics, like former chief selector Raj Singh Dungarpur, believe he must now concentrate only on one-day cricket, leaving the arduous task of bowling in Test

matches to younger colleagues.

In any case Kapil is unlikely to have a role to play in three home Test against the West Indies this year where wickets will be tailor-made for spin to stop the rampaging record-breaker Brian Lara.

Kapil's performance to play in the four-nation event here will determine whether he remains part of the one-day strategy at home.



KAPIL DEV

India are scheduled to play six one-day internationals against the West Indies and a triangular competition, also involving New Zealand, soon after their return from Sri Lanka.

Kapil, faced with an ageing superstar's dilemma of decid-

ing when to bow out, is non-committal of his future plans.

"I still enjoy the game and want to remain a part of the team as long as I am not a burden," he said. "I think I still have a lot to contribute to Indian cricket."

His optimism is shared by team manager Ajit Wadekar, who believes Kapil's experience is invaluable.

"We missed him badly when he opted out of the Australasia Cup in Sharjah in April. His presence itself is a morale-booster for the others in the team," Wadekar said.

Sunil Gavaskar, the other Indian cricketing legend, also sprang to Kapil's defence, saying he should be left alone to decide his future in the game.

"Instead of speculating, we should wish this great servant of Indian cricket all the very best. We pray he quits the scene in a triumphant manner," Gavaskar wrote recently.

"Players like Kapil Dev are rare and so let us savour his presence, instead of trying to rush him off the stage."

Kapil, sporting a Roberto Baggio-style pony-tail, appeared fighting fit during the Indian team's training camp at Madras prior to their departure for Colombo.

He bowled with fire at the camp, setting at rest speculation that he is troubled by a shoulder injury.

Kapil's team-mates hope he will translate his renewed enthusiasm into match-winning performances during the four-nation event.

Sampras sails into Round 2



NEW YORK, Sept 1: World number one and defending champion Pete Sampras shrugged away worries over his ailing ankle and summarily dismissed South African qualifier Kevin Ullyett Wednesday to reach the second round of the US Open, reports Reuter.

Sampras, who had not played a match since mid-July due to tendinitis of the left ankle, began his bid for a third US Open title in commanding fashion with a 6-2, 6-2, 6-2 victory that took less than an hour and half.

"The ankle is feeling fine," said the top-seeded Sampras, who has won four of the last five Grand Slams. "I was pretty much happy with every aspect of my game."

From the 206th-ranked Ullyett's vantage point, the Australian and Wimbledon champion had not suffered much from the layoff. "His game is on another level... I think he looked pretty good today," Ullyett said.

Getting more of a test was sixth seeded Michael Chang, who outbattled fellow American Malival Washington 4-6, 6-2, 6-3, 7-6 (7-3) to become the first men's seed into the third round.

Chang a quarter-finalist here last year and a semifinalist the year before, avenged a defeat to Washington last month at the Canadian Open in Toronto.

"A few points here and there and it could have been Mal's match," Chang said after the three-hour two-minute match.

Women's second seed and French Open champion Arantxa Sanchez Vicario was pushed by Nathalie Tauziat of France, but still came through 6-2, 7-6 to reach the third round.

"I was not aggressive as I was in the beginning, that's why I got in trouble," the Spanish speedster said of the tight second set.

Sanchez raced to a 5-1 lead in the tie-break only to drop the next five points. But she saved the set point at 5-6 and won the next two to end the 78-minute contest.

Sanchez's compatriot, Wimbledon champion Conchita Martinez, had an easier time beating American Nicole

Arendt 6-3, 6-3, and fifth seed Kimiko Date of Japan rolled into the third round by crushing compatriot Yone Kamio 6-0, 6-2.

Ninth seeded American Mary Joe Fernandez survived a nail-biter with compatriot Patty Fenick, winning 6-2, 2-6, 7-6 (7-4), and 1990 champion Gabriela Sabatini, seeded eighth, held off American Meredith McGrath 6-4, 6-7, 6-1.

Three seeded players bit the dust on the third day of the 9.3 million dollar championships.

Tenth seeded Spaniard Alberto Berasategui, more comfortable on clay than on these hardcourts, was a first round loser.

The French Open runner up was ambushed by 135th ranked South African Marcos Ondruska 6-1, 2-6, 6-3, 6-3.

Leila Meskhi of Georgia beat 14th seeded German Anke

Huber 6-2, 6-2 and 16th seeded American Amy Frazier was picked off by Ukrainian Natalia Medvedeva 6-2, 6-7, 6-4 in second round play.

Medvedeva squandered a 5-2 second set lead but bounced back in the third set to join her younger brother Andrei Medvedev, the men's eighth seed, in the winner's circle.

Medvedev celebrated his 20th birthday with a 6-3, 6-4, 6-0 first round victory over Austrian Gilbert Schaller.

The Ukrainian mindful of the first round loss to Boris Becker and Goran Ivanisevic played a safe and steady match, never losing his serve.

Two of last year's Open semifinalists were also first-round losers.

Australian Wally Masur was beaten by American David Witt 6-2, 3-6, 7-5, 6-1 and Alexander Volkov of Russia lost to Karel Novacek of the Czech Republic 6-2, 3-6, 6-1, 7-5.



Conchita Martinez of Spain returns a backhand against Nicole Arendt of the United States during the US Open in New York on Aug 31.

— AFP photo

Jansher in HK Open qtrs

HONG KONG, Sept 1: World number one Jansher Khan cruised into the quarter-finals of the Hong Kong Open squash tournament today with a straight sets victory over Finland's Sami Elopuru, reports Reuter.

"I think I am getting better every day now. I have not played a tournament since May and I was a bit rusty, but the timing is coming back," said the 25-year-old Pakistani after his 15-6, 15-9, 15-8 victory in 37 minutes.

He now faces England's former world junior champion Simon Parks, who beat Australian qualifier Simon Baker 15-10, 15-7, 15-10 in 46 minutes.

South Africa's Craig Wapnick continued his giant-killing act to reach the last eight of a major event for the first time.

After knocking out former world champion and twice Hong Kong title winner Rodney Martin of Australia in the first round, he followed up with a crushing 15-13, 15-2, 15-11 win over England international Jason Nicolle.

Wapnick, who has seen his place in the world rankings slip 13 places to 59th, said after his victory: "I have had some poor results and last week got beaten in the first round of a tournament in Singapore by a player not in the top two hundred."

"It was just the kick in the pants I needed and I knew I had to work harder if I was ever going to get anywhere in this sport."

Wapnick now plays another Englishman, world number three Peter Marshall, for a semifinal place. Marshall overcame compatriot Danny Meddings 15-10, 15-7, 15-6.

Lara waiting

LONDON, Sept 1: World number one batsman Brian Lara frustrated by the rain as he attempted to equal Alvin Kalicharran's county record of nine first-class centuries in a season on Wednesday, reports AFP.

The West Indies hit an unbeaten 89 off only 93 balls before the weather intervened at Edgbaston — also holding up Warwickshire's march towards the English county championship.

Lara also needs only 36 more runs to become the first Warwickshire batsman to make 2,000 runs in a season since Kalicharran and Dennis Amis, both in 1984.

After five innings without a century, Lara put on an unbroken stand of 156 with Roger Twose (84 not out) as the leaders made 210-1 from 45 overs in reply to Hampshire's 278.

Botham patches up with Somerset

TAUNTON, England, Sept 1: England legend Ian Botham made this peace with Somerset County Cricket Club on Wednesday — eight years after walking out on them, reports AFP.