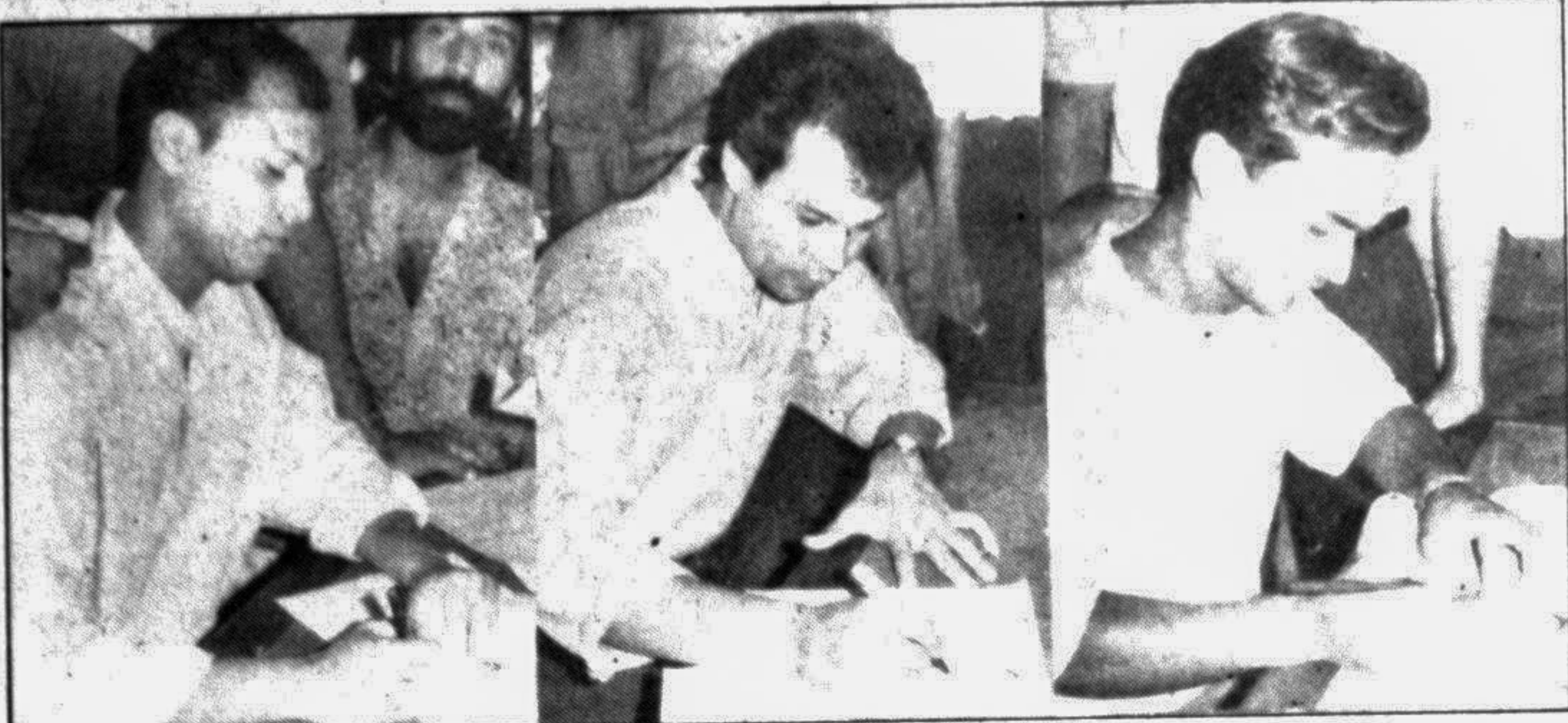


Sport



(Left to right) Nurul Abedin Nobel, the hard hitting opener, and Zahid Razzak Masum, the versatile allrounder, both of whom played for Brothers Union, parted ways with the former opting for Mohammedans and the gangling Masum pledging allegiance for new force Kalabagan. Also changing tent on the second day of inter-club cricketers' transfers was Naimur Rahman Durjoy, the captain of the Bangladesh youth team, who left Mohammedans for Abahani. — Star photo

Nat'l tennis open begins

Sports Reporter

Eleven matches were set on the opening day of the national open tennis championships at the Rajshahi Tennis Complex yesterday.

Twenty-two matches will be held today.

Secretary of the Ministry of Youth and Sports M Azizul Huq, who is also the president of the Dhaka Metropolitan Football Association (DMFA), declared the five-day tournament open in the morning.

Ninety players including 12 women are taking part in the meet, organised by the Bangladesh Tennis Federation.

AB Bank TT

Sports Reporter

Reigning champions Bangladesh Biman stayed well on course for a successful title defence in the AB Bank metropolitan table tennis league when the airline team easily took care of Combined Sporting Club yesterday at the Dhanmondi gymnasium.

Spearheaded by three leading players of the domestic circuit, Nasimul Hassan Kochi, Saidul Huq Sadi and Musaddiq Huq Rochi, Biman had little trouble in disposing the lowly Combined, paddlers en route to their fifth consecutive victory.

Inter Sports Club, engineered by former national champion Kisloo and his disciple former national junior champion Akhlaque, maintained their unbeaten status in the league with a comfortable 3-0 triumph.

The other unconquered outfit in the fray, Armanitola Jubo Sangha lost the first match to Ajax but rounded up the next three for their fifth successive victory.

The other winners of the day, Wari Club had a real scare against Swamibagh Boys when the old towners rallied from 1-2 down to scrape through to a 3-2 victory.

Sociedad's first

MADRID, Sept 26: Mexican World Cup forward Luis Garcia was sent off on Sunday as his club Real Sociedad were beaten at Alencia in the Spanish First Division for the first time in 25 years, reports Reuter.

Garcia was first shown the yellow card in the 25th minute for protesting against the award of a penalty and received his marching orders three minutes later for a foul, his second bookable offence. Valencia won 2-0.

Sociedad's Lorean Juarros conceded the penalty for intercepting the ball with his hand.

Oleg Sallenko, who scored a record five goals in Russia's 6-1 defeat of Cameroon in the World Cup finals in June, netted from the penalty spot.

Pedrag Mijatovic made it 2-0 in the 76th minute to seal Valencia's first victory in San Sebastian since they achieved a 2-1 win there in the 1969/70 season.

It lifted Alencia to fourth in the table with six points, one point behind front-runners Real Madrid who trounced Athletic Bilbao 4-0 at home on Saturday and lead Deportivo Coruna on goal difference.

M A Khan memorial h'ball on

Reports Reporter

The Rear Admiral M A Khan memorial handball tournament got underway with Brothers Union thrashing Christian Youth Club by 39-12 in the opening match at the handball court adjacent to the Dhaka Stadium yesterday.

State Minister for Youth and Sports Sadeque Hossain inaugurated the meet organised by the Bangladesh Handball Federation in memory of the late founder of the federation.

Eight-team split into two groups are taking part in the championship with two teams from each group to fight it out for the title.

Predictable second day

Sports Reporter



Predictability was the order of the day on the second day of inter-club cricketers' transfers with Mohammedan Sporting Club and Kalabagan Krira Chakra to the fore in consolidation yesterday.

Following Kalabagan's dramatic but not unexpected drive that saw a number national cricketers including Athar Ali Khan, Faruque Ahmed, and some old pros like Rafiqul Alam and Golam Faruque Chowdhury, the hitherto unfancied club roped in another former national cricketer, from Zahid Razzak Masum with the versatile all-rounder snapping links with Brothers Union.

The Gopibagh club, hit hard by acute cash crisis this year, contributed to the consolidation of last year's runners-up Mohammedan Sporting Club who bought back hard-hitting opener Nurul Abedin Nobel.

It was some consolation for the slow-reacting Mohammedan officials whose effort to bring back Nurul's younger brother, the former national captain Minhazul Abedin, was pipped to the post by champions Abahani, who

besides ensuring the service of the brilliant right hand batsman retained almost all their stalwarts.

Mohammedans applied a ruse contra ruse yesterday when they signed veteran wicketkeeper Nasir Ahmed to fill in the void created behind

BHF picks 22 for trials

The Bangladesh Hockey Federation has primarily selected 22 players for training to form a national team for the Surjit Singh memorial hockey tournament beginning in the Indian city of Jullundur on November 8, reports UNB.

They have been requested to report to coach Abdur Razzak on October 4 at 4 pm at the Hockey Stadium, said a federation press release.

The players are: Tushar Kanti Hawladar, Isa Mia, Izaz, Abdul Razzak, Tutul Kumar, Maksudul Haq, Biaka Lusie, Akteasham Khan, Javed, Khokon, Muzibur Rahman, Mohammad Hossain, Dina Lusie, Tapan Kumar, Shamim Reza, Ali Jubair, Hassan, Asikuzzaman, Abdul Wahab, Imtiaz Hossain, Mahub Hossain and Enamul Huda.

their stumps by the departure of young Khaled Masud, who pledged allegiance for arch-rivals Abahani Sunday.

Although last year's captain and the nucleus of the team for the forthcoming season Aminul Islam Bulbul did not put the issue beyond doubt, all-rounder Selim Shahed and young opener Sajjad Mansur Shahed submitted their tokens to allow the Mohammedan officials breathe little easily.

A former, long-serving Mohammedan player Azhar Hossain Shantu, who played for Brothers Union last year, joined Victoria Sporting Club yesterday to further bolster the already well-organised middling team with a host of players under the thack and rape.

Abahani Krira Chakra, who completed their shopping on the opening day, roped in useful Naimur Rahman Durjoy, the handy all-rounder, from Mohammedan Sporting Club who captained the Bangladesh youth team in its triumphant tour of Malaysia.

Thirty four players changed clubs while ten others reconfirmed their services for their old teams on the second day of cricketers bourse scheduled to culminate on September 30.

McCall can call the shots



LONDON, Sept 26: Oliver McCall called it a picture perfect punch. What it did was knock Lennox Lewis, Riddick Bowe and Dan Duvu out of the picture, reports AP.

McCall's right-hand counter floored Lewis barely half a minute into the second round of their fight Sunday and relieved the British fighter of his WBC heavyweight title.

Lewis got shakily to his feet and wobbled in front of referee Lupe Garcia who stopped the fight 31 seconds into the round.

While McCall did a backward flip in celebration of his upset victory, Lewis and Duvu, the co-promoter, were counting the cost of the Briton's first defeat.

So was Bowe, the former undisputed champion, who

Syria win Asian U-19 football title

JAKARTA, Sept 26: Results of the final match in the Asian under-19 football championship Sunday, reports AFP.

Syria 2 (Mahmoud Mahmalji 40, Mahmoud Mahmalji 55) Japan 1 (Susumu Oki 67).

Third and fourth place:

Thailand 4 (Anan Tanthong, Noisa-Ardkew, Walpoj Muechaiyaphut, Kowit Foytong) Iraq 3 (Amer Mushrif Mhesen, Oad Muhammad Hachim, Amer Mushrif Mhesen).

was being lined-up for a showdown with Lewis and another big payday.

The result gave McCall's promoter, Don King, the chance of his own unification of world heavyweight titles. He has Tony Tucker lining up to take on Michael Moorer, as long as the WBA and IBF titlist defeats George Foreman in November.

Feyenoord lose

AMSTERDAM, Sept 26: Feyenoord Rotterdam made a dismal return to their home stadium on Sunday when they slumped to their first defeat of the Dutch First Division season in a 2-0 loss to Willem II Tilburg, reports Reuter.

Feyenoord, champions in 1993, were forced to play the first four games of the new season on away grounds while their stadium was renovated but Willem II made it an unhappy return for the Rotterdam club.

Feyenoord looked the more likely to score in a goalless first half but substitute Nabil Bouchlal put Willem II ahead in the 72nd minute and midfielder Marc Anhintum clinched both points for the visitors with a penalty five minutes from the end.

Feyenoord are sixth in the league with six points from five matches, four points behind leaders Twente Enschede who scored a 4-3 home win over Heerenveen on Saturday but have played one more game.

King hopes that McCall will be around to take on another of his fighters, Mike Tyson, when the former champion is released from a 6-year jail sentence in May.

"Oliver will make two or three defences and by that time Mike Tyson will be out of prison," King said.

McCall was Tyson's sparring partner for nine fights at a time the ex-champion appeared unbeatable. Although he had never fought for the world title before, McCall now could be in a position to defend the title against him.

"That's my ultimate goal, you hear," 29-year-old McCall said. "To knock out Tyson, the No. 1 guy, who I helped prepare for nine title defenses."

Lewis' team have lodged a protest with the WBC, saying referee Garcia acted too soon in stopping the fight. More realistically, they believe the best way back for Lewis is through another title, though that could take more time.

"I was prepared in my mind that a day like this would come," Lewis said in reference to the knockdown. "But I didn't realize it would be like this."

"Now, if the protest does not work, I will have to go a different route to bring a world title back to England."

"Who (my opponent) is doesn't matter but I hope it's as soon as possible. I want to fight again in about three months time."



State Minister for Youth and Sports Sadeque Hossain is being introduced to the players on the opening day of the Rear Admiral M A Khan memorial handball tournament which got underway at the handball court adjacent to the Dhaka Stadium yesterday. — Star photo

Farashganj keep promotion hopes alive

Sports Reporter

Farashganj Sporting Club earned a crucial lone goal victory over Muslim Institute in one of the two Star First Division football league matches billed for the Dhaka Stadium yesterday.

The Star Premier sides had a day off.

Nayan struck the match decider for the old towners in the 42nd minute, rekindling Farashganj's hopes of promotion into the Star Premier Division football next year.

With this win Farashganj upped their collection to 16 points from 13 matches, three points adrift from league leaders Rahmatganj and one point behind of Victoria, who shared points with Dhaka Wanderers in the other match of the day.

But it was yet another blow for the promotes Muslim Institute who suffered their tenth defeat and are doomed to be relegated. The new booters in the circuit have only four points from 13 outings.

In the other match of the day, Dhaka Wanderers once again failed in the hunt for their first victory when they held Victoria SC in a goalless draw.

Dhaka Wanderers, who have earned ten points from 13 matches have drafted in three Nepalese booters in a bid to break the jinx in their remaining matches.

Meanwhile, organisers, the Dhaka Metropolitan Football Association (DMFA) have suspended all the matches of the two-tier football leagues for the next two days for what they termed as "unavoidable reasons."

The league will resume on September 29 while the schedules will go through a bodily shift.

Hong Kong sixes tourney from October 1

HONG KONG, Sept 26: England, the West Indies and South Africa have emerged as the top seeds for the Hong Kong international cricket sixes on October 1-2, the organisers said Monday, reports AFP.

England will head up the "Red" Group that includes New Zealand and Hong Kong, while the West Indies will lead the "Blue" Group comprising India and Holland, and South Africa the "Green" Group with Australia and Pakistan.

The seedings are based on last year's performances, the respective sides' experience and their player composition.

India's side, unveiled Monday, will be captained by Mohammed Azharuddin and include batsmen Sachin Tendulkar and Vinod Kamble.

The Pakistanis, meanwhile, will mix Test veterans with youngsters Shoaib Akhtar and Mansoor Khan.

Organisers also said the tournament would be held in two stages to enable fans to see all the teams as many times as possible.

Stage One will have all teams playing under a round-robin formula, with the top two teams in each group moving on to stage Two, in which they will be lumped into two groups for more round-robin action.

"Stage Two ... will also mean several clashes between the heavyweights in world cricket — and that's what will excite all sixes fans," said Peter Slack, Chairman of the Hong Kong Cricket Association.

Award for BASF president

Sports Reporter

Asafuddinowla, president of the Bangladesh Amateur Swimming Federation (BASF), will be honoured at the opening ceremony of the 12th Asian Games, scheduled to begin in the Japanese city of Hiroshima from October 2, by the Asian Amateur Swimming Federation (AASF).

The federation will award Asafuddinowla a gold medal in recognition to his outstanding contribution in the constitution of the federation back in 1978 in the Thai capital of Bangkok.

Asafuddinowla, who leaves for Hiroshima today, will act as a member of the jury of appeal in the Asian diving.

Div II hockey

Tejgaon Agragami defeated Uttara Hockey Club 2-0 in the only match of the Metropolitan Green Delta Second Division hockey league at the Hockey Stadium yesterday, reports UNB.

After a barren first half, Belal scored the two field goals in the 47th and 69th minute.

Meanwhile, all matches, scheduled for Tuesday and Wednesday, have been postponed due to 'unavoidable circumstances'.

The league will resume on Thursday.

Galling goal difference

by Ranajit Biswas



Well, sometimes it may so happen that your fate remains in others' grip; your fortune depends on others' acts and achievements.

This was the case for Bangladesh football team in Qatar Independence Cup football tournament. Their thin hopes of getting a semifinal berth depended entirely on the result of India-Yemen match. They desperately needed an Indian victory, even more than Indians did; if not, a draw at least.

But, their neighbours, who cruised to a victory over them with an astonishing margin of 4-2, were outplayed by the Yemenis. The Indians conceding a goal in each of the halves, unfortunately, never looked either committed or capable to stage even a draw, let alone a victory.

And, the resultant effect of their failure was that Bangladesh, who played the inaugural match of the tournament after a hectic hopping journey from Dhaka, that too following an important Dhaka-league match

the night before they boarded the plane and who finished their group matches earlier than any team, was also the first to bid good-bye to Khalifa International Stadium in Doha.

They left the Hotel to catch the home-bound carrier before the last group-match between the host-country Qatar and Sudan. Though they were at par on points with Yemen and India, it was the goal margin that showed them the way out of the six-nation tournament.

But this disappointment will take long before it is buried for the Bangladesh booters, who could not have given more to stage a comeback. They were practising hard and trying to organise themselves to exhaust the entire reservoir of their endeavour, capability, fitness and what not. It is a pity that they could not figure out a sound strategy to contain the Indians in their first match.

Even though the expectation they were harbouring was not unrealistic, India's defeat, something like an unconditional surrender, was really not foreseeable.

"But," the Bangladesh coach Kazi Salahuddin said when it was all over, "to me; India's defeat to Yemen is not a surprise; neither we are incapable as our performance depicted nor India was that strong that one might be tempted to believe."

Salahuddin went, "Actually, we lost not only the match, in fact, the whole show in the first 10 minutes of the match with India; coming back from behind 0-4 goals warrants a magic and miracle and we could not do that. Despite that I tried to imbue the boys with spirit and zeal saying, 'Well, my boys, no game is over before the final whistle and do not forget that miracle still happens.'"

Do you think it paid? When asked, he said, "Yes, I do."

He believes that his boys were gaining confidence and both the goals they netted were the best goals of the day.

So, with all these Bangladesh left Doha ahead of five of the foreign teams with the consolation that the team, vanquished in their hands, was the victor over the Indians.

Milan crash at Cremonese



ROME, Sept 26: Second-half substitute Marco Branca struck twice in four minutes to help Parma to a 2-2 away draw with Lazio and leave them bracketed with Roma and Juventus at the top of the Italian First Division table on Sunday night, reports Reuter.

Giuseppe Signori scored twice for Lazio in the Olympic Stadium, taking his tally to five goals in four matches as Parma lost their 100 per cent record.

Roma beat Sampdoria 1-0 and Juventus swamped

Reggiana 4-1 earlier on Sunday. All three leading clubs have 10 points from four games.

Defending champions AC Milan suffered a 1-0 defeat against lowly Cremonese — their first loss of the season — and had international defender Christian Panucci sent off.

Signori gave Lazio a halftime lead against Parma with an acrobatic volley in the 26th minute and added his second in the 74th after Branca had notched his two goals in the 66th and 70th.

A goal by defender Angelo di Livio gave Juventus their

hard-fought win over Sampdoria, while Roma's impressive thrashing of Reggiana was spearheaded by South Americans Abel Balbo and Daniel Fonseca.

Argentine Balbo claimed two goals in the opening 22 minutes and Uruguay's Fonseca saw off a threatened Reggiana comeback with his side's third in the 63rd minute.

The upset of the day came at Cremonese where Luigi Gualco out jumped the Milan defence on the hour to head the game's only goal.

Lazio hit the woodwork twice in the opening 10 minutes and it came as no surprise when Signori volleyed his side into the lead, meeting a superb cross-field pass from Croatian Alen Boksic in spectacular style.

After the break, Parma's coach Nevio Scala replaced World Cup midfielder Dino Baggio with Branca and was rewarded with two quickfire goals — both set up by Gianfranco Zola.

Branca headed the first from a Zola corner and put the finishing touch to the second after Zola's fine run and cross.

But within four minutes Lazio were level, Signori racing into the area to sidefoot Roberto Rambaudi's cross into the roof of the net.

Diego Fuser narrowly failed to grab three points for Lazio when his 20 metre shot cannonned back off the upright.

With the return to full fitness of Frenchman Marcel Desailly and striker Marco Simone, Milan began their match against Cremonese keen to put their injury-racked start to the season behind them.

During the first half there was little sign of an upset as Cremonese goalkeeper Luigi Turci pulled off a series of inspired saves from Simone and Roberto Donadoni.

But the match turned on the 38th-minute dismissal of Panucci, shown the red card for his second bookable offence.

Reduced to 10 men, the second half became a test of nerves for the champion's defence as Cremonese looked to exploit their numerical advantage.

The break through came when a speculative cross from Enrico Chiesa found Gualco who flicked a powerful header past goalkeeper Sebastiano Rossi.

Roma's summer spree of expensive transfer deals looks like paying off as the team, claimed their third successive league win with impressive ease.

Balbo scored his first from the penalty spot and then unleashed a sizzling first-time shot from more than 20 metres for the second.

Reggiana, without a win this season, pulled a goal back in the 53rd minute but Fonseca, signed from Napoli in the close season, made it 3-1 for Roma with a fine solo effort and Francesco Moriero added a fourth in the 76th minute.

Juventus, still without injured stars Roberto Baggio and Paolo Sousa but buoyed by last week's impressive win at Napoli, owed their victory over Sampdoria to character and tactical organisation.

The home side spent much of the match on the backfoot as Attilio Lombardo inspired a series of Sampdoria attacks which besieged the Juventus penalty area.

In the 35th minute and against the run of play, Juventus young playmaker Alessandro di Piero picked out Di Livio with a pinpoint cross for the defender's first-ever goal in Serie A.



Padua's American World Cup star Alexi Lalas (R) and Bari's Marcello Montanari are engaged in an aerial duel during their Italian First Division encounter on Sept 25. Bari beat Padua 2-0. — AFP photo

Mackenzie latest British doper



LONDON, Sept 26: English javelin thrower Colin Mackenzie protested his innocence on Sunday after becoming the seventh British athlete to fail a drugs test this season, reports Reuter.

The 31-year-old Mackenzie, who took a painkiller containing a banned substance for an ankle injury, declared: "If it did anything to boost my performance, then I'm a monkey."

Mackenzie, Britain's third-ranked thrower behind Steve Backley and Mick Hill, tested positive for the stimulant dextropropoxyphene at a minor meeting in Italy on July 24. He now faces a three-month suspension.

It is another embarrassment for the British Athletic Federation after cases involving sprinter Solomon Wariso, boom runner Diane Modahl, shot putter Paul Edwards and three club athletes.

Spokesman Tony Ward said: "The matter has been passed on to our drugs advisory group to deal with."

"Until such time as an athlete appears before a hearing, he or she is not presumed to

have committed an offence."

Ward refused to comment further, but the federation is certain to step up its drugs education programme, stressing in particular the danger involved in taking-over-counter products.

Mackenzie, who waived his right to be present at the testing of his B sample, failed to qualify for the European Championship final in Helsinki last month, then pulled out of the Commonwealth Games in Victoria with his injury.

He said: "I took something to relieve the pain and I was not aware it contained a banned substance."

"Far from being performance-enhancing, it makes you feel drowsy if anything, I feel I'm being unfairly bracketed with some people who have deliberately taken drugs to gain an unfair advantage."

A fortnight ago, Wariso lost his appeal against the same suspension after claiming he was unaware that a health supplement he took contained the stimulant ephedrine.

Modahl and Edwards are also protesting their innocence. Neither has yet appeared before a hearing.