

Muktis, BU share points

Sports Reporter

Appalling defensive errors made star-studded Muktijoddha Sangsad Krira Chakra maul twin opportunities of a revenge and a booster to their maiden title quest as they settled for a two-all draw with Brothers Union in a crucial Star Premier league match at the Dhaka Stadium yesterday.

The sharing of points between the two major names after popular heavyweights Mohammedans and Abahani leave the latter mirus another deterrent in their long drawn-out campaign for regaining the title.

Abahani, who are now all set to win the mantle back from arch-rivals Mohammedans, continue to reign at the top of the points table with 22 points from 13 matches, three more than Muktijoddha, who, following yesterday's draw, languish at the second position with 19 points from 13 matches.



Action from last night's crucial Star Premier Division football league encounter between Muktijoddha Sangsad Krira Chakra and Brothers Union at the Dhaka Stadium. The game ended 2-2.

Brothers, who despite living upto their reputation of getting into the groove in the big matches, came out of the ordeal with a point to cling to the rather inconsequential

lethal forward in the country, presented the best moment of the match when he unleashed a thunderous free-kick from about 40 yards but the brilliant effort was obstructed by the

TODAY'S MATCHES

Victoria SC vs Farashganj 4:30 pm (Dhaka Stadium)
Arambagh KS vs YMC 6:30 pm (Dhaka Stadium)

Baresi hangs up his boots

ROME, Oct 5: Italian captain Franco Baresi has retired from international soccer after making 81 appearances for his country, national coach Arrigo Sacchi said on Tuesday, reports Reuters.

Defender Baresi, 34, won his last cap four weeks ago during the 1-1 draw with Slovenia in Italy's opening qualifier for the 1996 European Championships.

Only goalkeeper Dino Zoff (112) and Defender Giacinto Facchetti (94) have made more appearances for Italy while midfielder Marco Tardelli also won 81 Italian caps.

"I had a long and frank conversation with Baresi who confessed his doubts about remaining in the national team until 1996," Sacchi said at a news conference in Florence where Italy are preparing for Saturday's European qualifier in Estonia.

Baresi prefers to let others take his place and all we can do is say 'thank you' to this extraordinary player, one of the best I've ever worked with," added Sacchi, who also coached Baresi at AC Milan.

Baresi was left out of the squad for the Estonia match because of an eye injury sustained in AC Milan's Champions League win over Salzburg last Wednesday.

His Milan teammate Paolo Maldini appears certain to succeed him as captain, having led Italy when Baresi was injured at this year's World Cup.

Champs canter past hosts

HIROSHIMA, Oct 5: Defending champions Pakistan gave glimpses of their awesome striking power by defeating hosts Japan 4-0 in the Asian Games men's hockey tournament here today, reports AFP.

It was Pakistan's second successive victory in Group B of the preliminary league, following their 3-1 win over Kazakhstan 24 hours earlier.

The hot favourites, two led 1-0 at half-time through a second minute goal by Kamran Ashraf, pulled out the stops after the breather to rout the home team.

Pakistan scored three goals in a spectacular 13-minute blitz before the final whistle to remove any doubts of their strength after the hesitant start against Kazakhstan.

The three second-half goals were scored by Tahir Zaman, substitute Asif Ahmed and midfielder Khwaja Junaid as

the Japanese defense, who had kept the Pakistanis at bay in the first half, caved in under the late assault.

Pakistan were well served by skipper Shahbaz Ahmed, who set up the first and fourth goals with precise passing from the top of the circle.

The Japanese, who had beaten Oman 3-1 on Tuesday, wasted two good chances. Terukiyo Asai shot into keeper Mansoor Ahmed's pads from five yards in the first half and Kenji Hasebe failed to deflect a hard centre in the empty goal in the 35th minute.

"We are striking top form now," Pakistan's Dutch coach Hans Jorritsma warned. "Other teams will have to play their best to beat us."

MARAUDING MALAYSIANS

Super sub Lim Chiow Chuan banged in four goals as Malaysia opened their campaign in the Asian Games with

Sports Reporter

third place with 18 points from 13 matches, two points ahead of holders Mohammedans who pant at the haul of 16 from the unlucky numerical of outings.

Hopes started giving way to horror for Muktijoddha, legitimately dreaming of a sweet revenge of their first round 1-2 loss to the Gopibagh team with a single two-goal first half lead, in the 73rd minute.

The two Bangladesh internationals manning the Mukti central defence Ataur and Jewel Ranu went after Ripon, leaving no body to mark and unmarked Biplob, who latching on the loose ball, finished the ball past a helpless Arun.

The Mukti rear was fatally at fault three minutes later when speedy winger Rangan, cashing on the stupor of the defensive quarter, petrified parallelly, put the ball into the net to finish off a midfield move initiated by Bakhtiar.

The fast-developing Ranjan, regarded by many as the most

woodwork with Arun simply frozen under the bar.

Earlier, Muktijoddha, who thoroughly outplayed Brothers in the first half, deservedly took the lead in the seventh minute of the match when hardworking Rakib, a former Brothers player, found the net from close to culminate a two-man move involving Mamun Joarder and Nakib.

Lanky Mizan doubled the margin two minutes before the short whistle when in a super solo surge from the midfield, he beat three Brothers defenders before having the ball nestled in the net.

PALS THEY ARE

In a seemingly pre-arranged affair, Star First Division leaders Rahmatganj Muslim Friends Society and Sadharan Bima shared points in sterile drawn match played earlier at the same venue.

The draw leaves Rahmatganj still at the top with 21 points and Bima with 19, both playing 15 matches each.

Soft or tenacity tennis?

Sports Reporter

A war is not lost until a war is over — if there is such an adage anywhere on earth, it is in the hearts of the five tenacious soft tennis players.

The fury of the frustrated five didn't even spare the State Minister for Youth and Sports Sadeque Hossain, the National Sports Council (NSC) supremo, for the sensible role he played in omitting the Bangladeshi representatives in a sports completely unknown and unheard of in the country, from the Hiroshima-bound delegation.

With the 12th Asian Games already four days old, the quintet, which was only baptised in April this year to soft tennis, seem hell-bent on squeezing out their notion of justice.

The State Minister told this reporter during an informal chat at his NSC office yesterday that he was approached personally to overturn the official decision of leaving the soft tennis players out. However, Hossain stood firm on his ground, saying, "I don't see any reason why we should take part in a game which has the least familiarity with the sports lovers of this country, let alone its bleak medal prospect."

The minister said he was unaware of the existence of any formal or interim body for soft tennis in Bangladesh and somewhat side stepped a query regarding Bangladesh Olympic Association (BOA) officials' participation in the congress of the Asian Soft Tennis Federation (ASTF), held in the South Korean capital of Seoul some time in July this year.

Meanwhile, for some unknown reasons, the BOA has not yet officially informed the Hiroshima Games Organising Committee (HAGOC) of Bangladesh's non availability for soft tennis even after the Ministry's directive to exclude the sports from the official list.

However, the five players and their mentor, who reportedly even dared to disturb the minister's morning walk, seemed determined to see things through and when this reporter headed for the office late last night they were hanging around the NSC chairman's office looking for a chance to place their plea — perhaps for the umpteenth time.

England to test Aussie one-day formula

PERTH, Oct 5: England will test an experimental format for limited overs cricket, with four innings instead of two, when they begin their tour to Australia next month, officials said on Wednesday.

Baresi was surprisingly omitted from the team which gave a disappointing display at the 1986 World Cup in Mexico but has been a virtual fixture in the squad ever since.

He played in the side which finished third on home soil in the first time in seven years, sent back both openers either side of the tea interval.

David Boon, Australia's centurion of the first Test at Karachi, failed to stay for long. He fell for four to a beguiling delivery from leg-spinner Mushtaq Ahmed.

Australia's previous highest first-wicket partnership in a Test against Pakistan was 134 by Alan Turner and IC Davis at

last World Cup.

A superb tackler and reader of the game, Baresi had the ability to push forward out of defence and launch attacks after winning the ball.

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last World Cup.

The tourists have agreed to play the one-day fixture against Western Australia at the WACA ground in Perth on October 27 under the amended rules.

Baresi said later in Milan it was time to make way for younger players in the national squad.

"Italy is entering a new cycle, working towards the European Cup and then the 1998 World Cup in France, so I thought now was the time for younger men to join the team, he told a news conference at AC Milan's headquarters.

"After the World Cup I've had to think long and hard about my future and, even though it's sad to stop, I'm sure I'm doing the right thing."

Baresi, sporting a black eye sustained in Milan's Champions League win over Austria Salzburg last Wednesday, said he would continue playing for the club until his contract ends next June.

Baresi was persuaded by his wife to come out of his first international retirement in 1992 but he does not expect her to try to make him change his mind again.

"This time my wife is letting me quit for good," he joked.

AB Bank TT

Sports Reporter

Mariners, Bangladesh Bank, Cynthia Sports Club posted maiden victories in the AB Bank Metropolis table tennis league in a day marked by match-ups of lesser stars at the Dhanmondi Gymnasium yesterday.

After their eight successive defeats, Mariners, Bangladesh Bank and Cynthia, for the first time, ended up winners, beating Ajax, Lalmatia and Combined SC respectively by the similar margins of 3-1.

In the fourth match of the day, Swamibagh Boys also recorded a 3-1 win over Purbachal Parishad to earn their second win on completion of their nine round robin league matches.

Mariners' Mahfoodh Al-Sadri

was shown the red card and two other teammates earned yellows for swinging their sticks wildly and swearing at the umpires.

Lim, who came in as a substitute in the 24th minute, scored his first goal two minutes later and slammed in three more in the second session to lead Malaysia's goal spree.

The other scorers were Maninderjit Singh, Mirnawar Nawawi and skipper Nor Saiful Zaini.

It was Oman's second successive defeat in Group A following their 3-1 loss to hosts Japan on Tuesday.

MAJLIS

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