

Victoria SC complete quorum

Sports Reporter Victoria Sporting Club completed the second round quorum in the 15th Damal Summer cricket tournament...

The facile victory for the Motijheel outfit means they will be placed in Group X along with defending champions Abahani Limited and GMCC...

Left-arm Piyal, who served Mohammedan Sporting Club a few years back, finished with an excellent analysis of four for 15 in his 5.1 overs while Tanveer and Iqbal claimed two and three wickets respectively...

Only two batsmen — Towhidul Islam (16) and Abdullah Harun (15) — managed double-digit scores in an innings, marked by seven ducks and topped by Mr. Sundries (17).

Navana Premier cricket league begins Dec 10

Sports Reporter The Navana Premier and the Milnars First Division cricket leagues will begin from December 10 and 1 respectively at different city venues...

When politics gets in cricket's way

CALICUT, India, Nov 26: Saturday's second day of the three-day match between West Indies and India which started on Friday has been cancelled after opposition Communist Parties called for a general strike...

Incontrad v'ball

Sports Reporter The Dhaka District Sports Association toyed with the Bakerganj spikers in the opening match of the final round of the Incontrad inter-district volleyball championships played at the Outer Stadium court yesterday...

Earlier, Minister for Post and Telegraph Tariqul Islam inaugurated meet, organised by the Bangladesh Volleyball Federation.

Another blow for FA

LONDON, Nov 26: Arsenal and England striker Paul Merson dealt English soccer a second bodyblow in three weeks when he confessed on Friday to snorting cocaine, reports Reuter.

Merson, the first Premier League player to admit to drug use, told the Daily Mirror he spent up to 150 pounds (£10,000) on cocaine over the last few weeks.

Mark Waugh hits career best 140

McDermott mauls England

BRISBANE, Nov 26: Mark Waugh completed the best innings of his career and Craig McDermott ripped the England top-order to shreds Saturday as Australia took complete control on the second day of the first cricket Test at the Gabba ground, reports UNB.

Waugh scored 140 — his highest Test score — as Australia made 426 in their first innings and then reduced England to 133 for six by stumps.

McDermott, playing in front of his hometown fans, generated great pace on a docile pitch and finished with figures of four wickets for 28 from 13 fiery overs.

He ended the day in great style, bowling Martin McCague for one with the final delivery — a yorker.

Australia had the opportunity for a total beyond the 500-mark, but England did well to fight back, taking the last eight wickets for only 118 runs.

The diligent Gough was rewarded with well-deserved figures of four for 107 from his 32 overs, while Phillip DeFreitas was accurate all morning.

DeFreitas and Hick combined again to dismiss Ian Healy for seven. DeFreitas got some bounce and Healy directed the ball to the gully, where Hick took a diving catch.

McDermott also removed Mike Gatting for 10, and McCague.

Off-spinner Tim May, introduced after only nine overs, removed Graham Thorpe (28), while leg-spinner Shane Warne had Graham Gooch caught and bowled for 20.

England team manager Keith Fletcher praised Atherton's determination.

The captain showed the rest of the batsmen how to 'guts it out', Fletcher told reporters. 'He's been doing that ever since he took over. What we need is for some of his attitude to rub off on the others. The batting let us bowlers through uneven bounce over the last two days.'

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard on the second day of the first Test between Australia and England at the Gabba today.



Australian Mark Waugh acknowledges the crowd's applause after reaching his seventh Test century during the second day of the first Ashes Test against England at Gabba, Brisbane yesterday.

Down, Fletcher added. 'I'd like to think we can still save the follow-on as we have Steven Rhodes and some other useful batsmen to come,' he said.

McDermott, who said media speculation about his Test future had motivated his performance.

McDermott ... four for 28. 'I thought I bowled well and I was happy with the way the ball came out today,' McDermott said.

And ominously for England McDermott commented: 'The pitch is wearing and I think it should turn more and offer something for the quicker'

SA 109 for four

JOHANNESBURG, Nov 26: South Africa were 109-4 in reply to New Zealand's 411 at the close of the second day of the first Test today, reports Reuter.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard on the second day of the first cricket Test between South Africa and New Zealand at the Wanderers today.

NEW ZEALAND: First innings. B Young c McMillan b Snell 7. D Murray c Richardson b De Villiers 25. S Fleming b De Villiers 48. M Crowe lbw b Snell 83. K Rutherford c Cronje b Eksteen 68. S Thomson b Matthews 84. A Parore c McMillan b Matthews 13. M Hart c Richardson b Matthews 0. D Nash c Hudson b Eksteen 18. S Doull not out 31. R de Groot b Snell 26. Extras: (lb-5, w-2, nb-1) 8. Total: 411.

SOUTH AFRICA. A Hudson c Pajore b Nash 10. G Kirsten c Crowe b De Groot 9. B McMillan c Murray b Nash 5. H Cronje lbw b De Groot 20. D Cullinan not out 35. J-Rhodes not out 23. Extras: (lb-6, nb-1) 7. Total: (for four wickets) 109.

To bat: Dave Richardson, Richard Snell, Clive Eksteen, Craig Matthews, Fanie de Villiers.

An apology for Lara, courtesy Tendulkar

NEW DELHI, Nov 26: West Indian star Brian Lara, struggling to score on the current Indian tour, has received support from an unexpected quarter — Indian batting genius Sachin Tendulkar, reports AFP.

The 21-year-old Tendulkar, the main challenger to the record-breaking Lara's mantle of the world's best batsman, said Friday the West Indian was too good a player to fail for long.

'He is at the very top of the charts,' the Indian vice-captain said of Lara. 'He will come good before this tour is over. Lara is talented enough to get over the bad patch.'

Lara, 25, who stunned the world earlier this year by notching up the highest individual scores in both Tests (375) and first-class cricket (501 not out), has so far failed to show his prolific batting to Indian fans.

His best in nine one-day internationals at the start of the tour was 89, and managed only 14 and zero in the first Test in Bombay this week, which India won by 96 runs.

Tendulkar has dominated the series billed the 'Lara-Tendulkar show', with two one-day centuries and a match-winning innings of 85 in the Bombay Test.

Pakistan edge past hosts

SYDNEY, Nov 26: Pakistan charged clear in their World Cup qualifying group today after a controversial 2-1 win against hosts Australia, reports Reuter.

The victory, their third successive in the tournament, took Pakistan two points clear of Australia and England at the top of Group A. Each side has two more matches to play with two sides qualifying for the semifinals.

England missed the chance to move up to second in the group when they dominated Argentina but had to be content with a 1-1 draw.

In other match today, also in Group A, Spain achieved their biggest win of the tournament, beating Belarus 4-1 with a hat-trick from 21-year-old Javier Arnan.

Pakistan's match ended in turmoil when two of their players were sent off in the last three minutes as Australia pressed for an equaliser, squandering a penalty corner in the final seconds.

Australia came back into the game at 2-1 following a hotly disputed penalty. Italian umpire Adriano Vecchi held the game up for more than one minute before signalling his decision.

After the long delay, Australian captain Warren Birmingham coolly converted the stroke.

Pakistan inside left Tahir Zaman, who played despite the death of his father on Thursday, gave his side the lead from a 23rd minute penalty stroke.

Pakistan increased their lead after 40 minutes with a goal made by their captain Shahbaz Ahmad and scored by centre forward Kamran Ashraf.

Shahbaz tossed the ball past Australian fullback Ken Wark near the half way line, outpaced the defence and gave a subtle reverse pass to Ashraf who took full advantage of the opening.

Four players — David Wansborough of Australia, Pakistan's Naveed Alam, Tahir Zaman and Wasim Peroze — were given temporary suspensions during the match.

England equalised with a wellstruck field goal from Jason Laslett in the 44th minute. Spain's win over Belarus was their first of the World Cup and kept open their chances of making the semifinals. They are a point behind Australia and England. Arnan converted a stroke, scored in open play and then converted a corner for his hat-trick.

Standings after the fourth day of the eight men's World Cup hockey today (tabulate under played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, against, points):

Table with columns: Group A, Pakistan (3, 3, 0, 8, 2, 6), Australia (3, 2, 0, 1, 5, 3, 4), England (3, 1, 2, 0, 2, 1, 4), Spain (3, 1, 1, 1, 5, 4, 3), Argentina (3, 0, 1, 2, 2, 6, 1), Belarus (3, 0, 0, 3, 1, 7, 0). Group B: Netherlands (2, 2, 0, 0, 12, 5, 4), Germany (2, 1, 1, 0, 7, 1, 3), India (2, 1, 0, 1, 4, 4, 2), South Africa (2, 0, 2, 0, 1, 1, 2), South Korea (2, 0, 1, 1, 0, 2, 1), Belgium (2, 0, 0, 2, 1, 14, 0).

Drugs on top of IAAF agenda

LONDON, Nov 26: Drugs will feature prominently on the agenda of the three-day International Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF) council meeting starting in Barcelona on Sunday, reports Reuter.

The council is likely to reinstate American hurdler Danny Harris, banned for four years in 1992 after testing positive for cocaine, and make significant adjustments to the present doping regulations.

It will also consider reinstating five-time world cross country champion John Ngugi, banned for refusing to take a dope test, under its exceptional circumstances regulations.

IAAF sources said the council would consider a proposal under which one positive urine test would be sufficient to ban an athlete.

At present two samples are taken an athlete is not banned until laboratory tests confirm the second, or B sample, is also positive.

In practice there has never been a case where a B sample was clean when the first sample was positive and the sources said only a small percentage of athletes even bothered to turn up for the test on the second sample.

Under the proposal, results of positive tests will be announced after the first sample unless the athlete specifically requests that the second sample be also tested.

suspicions that the top athletes are not touched by our tests.' The Harris case is likely to be first on the agenda with the council almost certain to respond favourably to the 1984 Olympic 400 metres silver medalist's submission that he has overcome his addiction to cocaine.

Harris was reinstated by the US Federation this year and ran in four European meetings before the IAAF belatedly discovered he was running while still officially banned. He was

owed in a speech by IAAF president Primo Nebiolo in Mar del Plata, Argentina, last month. 'The council will hear new ideas from the president of what the IAAF can do to assist USA Track and Field,' Winner said.

The pledged assistance should not be affected by some provocative remarks from USA Track and Field chief Ollan Cassell, who has accused 'forces outside the United States, maybe within the IAAF' of seeking to discredit him.

Akram may play against SA. JOHANNESBURG, Nov 26: Pakistan fast bowler Wasim Akram, sidelined due to a sinus problem, may be fit to join his team-mates in South Africa in time for the one-off Test starting on January 19, manager Intikhab Alam said today, reports Reuter.

'We should know within the next week or so, it all depends on whether or not he has to undergo an operation,' Intikhab said after his team's arrival in Johannesburg.

Pakistan will play the Test and a one-day series involving South Africa, Sri Lanka and New Zealand, during their tour. Akram missed the last Test in Pakistan's recent home series against Australia. He is currently undergoing medical tests in London.

English in DU soccer qtrs. Sports Reporter The Department of English advanced to the quarterfinals of the Dhaka University inter-department football championship with a lone goal victory over the Department of Finance at the university ground adjacent to the central gymnasium yesterday.

J-League — a money mine

TOKYO, Nov 26: So much for playing hard to get. On their first day in Japan to prepare for the Intercontinental Cup against AC Milan, two stars from Argentina's Velez Sarsfield team said Saturday their goal isn't just to win, reports AP.

They'd like a career in Japan's high-paying J-League. 'We'd love to play here,' said midfielder Jose Horacio Basualdo, who is also a member of Argentina's national team. 'Getting some offers after the game would be great.'

Though Japan is still a long way from becoming a world soccer power, the 2-year-old J-League's buying power is undeniably world-class.

Triot and former River Plate forward Ramon Diaz has been one of the J-League's most successful imports. Diaz plays for the Yokohama Marinos. 'He has really opened the door, and there are many of us who would like to follow,' Basualdo said.

Any player would be happy to play here,' added defender Roberto Luis Trotto. Neither player said how much they are currently paid.

Robson renews contract with Porto. LISBON, Nov 26: Former England manager Bobby Robson has extended his contract with Portuguese First Division Porto for a further two seasons, club president Jorge Pinto da Costa said on Friday, reports Reuter.

Velez won their berth in the Intercontinental Cup, an annual game between the top clubs from South America and Europe, by defeating Sao Paulo for the Copa Libertadores, or Liberators Cup, in August.

They now co-lead their domestic league with River Plate. European Champions' Cup winner AC Milan, meanwhile, has had a dismal season.

They will take to the field Thursday without Dutch stars Marco Van Basten or Ruud Gullit, and Montenegrin midfielder Dejan Savicevic arrived with the team Friday but is injured and may not play.

Asian club soccer results

CHANGWON, South Korea, Nov 26 (Reuter): Results of the final games of the East Asian quarterfinal round-robin group matches played on Thursday.

Laoning (China) drew with Yomiuri Verdy Kawasaki (Japan) 0-0.

Ihwa Chunma (South Korea) beat Thai Bangkok (Thailand) 1-0 (Halftime 0-0).

The Indian little master, however, refused to place himself in the pecking order. 'That's not my brief. My job is to get runs,' he smiled.

Tendulkar also termed as 'Ridiculous' the suggestion that this current series was mainly a battle between Lara and himself.

'I'm not surprised that many are looking at it this way. But there's no question of a competition between Lara and myself,' he said.

'One of us could click, or even both. It's also possible that a 30-odd from my bat could prove more useful than a Lara century. That's what cricket is all about.'

Batistuta on threshold of record books

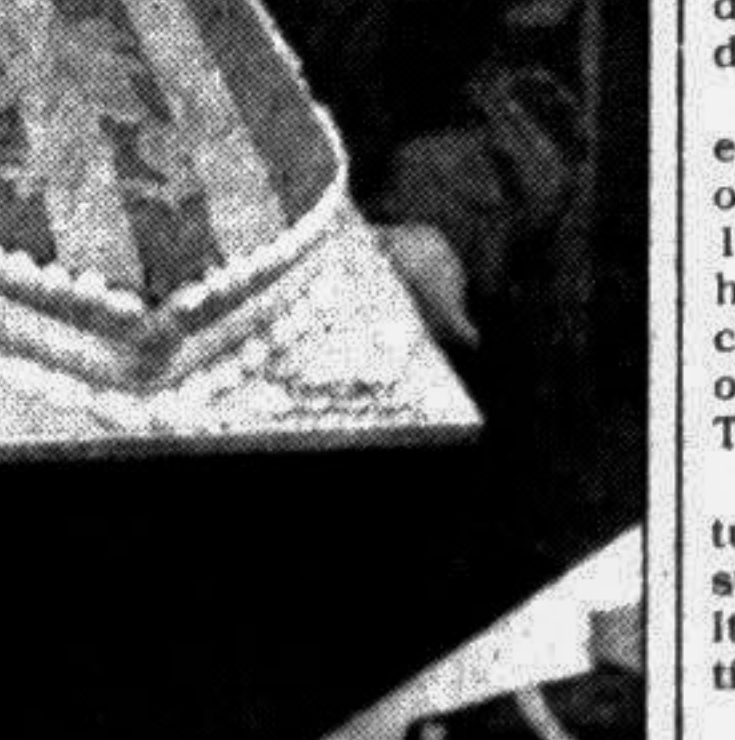
Florentina's Argentine striker Gabriel Batistuta is racing to break a 32-year-old Italian scoring record but he won't be driving to the stadium on Sunday, reports Reuter.

Batistuta, who last week equalled Ezio Pascutti's mark of scoring in each of the first 10 games of the league season, had his driver's licence confiscated by police who pulled him over in central Florence on Tuesday.

The newspaper said Batistuta, who was driving in a restricted area, did not have an Italian licence and his Argentine one had expired.

Top scorer in Serie A with 12 goals, Batistuta can better the run Pascutti enjoyed for Bologna in 1962 by scoring at home against Sampdoria on Sunday.

Doug Ellis (L), chairman of English soccer club Aston Villa, welcomes new manager Brian Little to the club in Birmingham on Nov 25.



Doug Ellis (L), chairman of English soccer club Aston Villa, welcomes new manager Brian Little to the club in Birmingham on Nov 25.