



The eleven-member Bangladesh team which left Dhaka yesterday to take part in the 31st Chess Olympiad, beginning in the Russian capital, Moscow from November 30. — Star photo

Damal second round augurs unwell for Abahani

Victoria's victory indeed

Sports Reporter

A hit in time is a hit indeed. It was, in fact, two hits that helped materialise the biggest upset of the just begun cricket season yesterday as unfancied Victoria toned down Abahani's right to defend the title within a few hours with a stunning three wicket victory.

In an enthralling finish of the second round opener of the 15th Damal Summer cricket tournament at the Dhaka Stadium, Iqbal, who smacked an unbeaten 36 off 28 balls, whipped Gazi Ashraf Hossain over midwicket for his second six to pull off a truly memorable win with just one ball to spare.

Little known Iqbal dashed off to the pavilion in delight with his precious bat raised heavenwards once Naimur Rahman, the Abahani fielder manning that spot signalled the overboundary after completing the catch, much to the anguish of the Abahani fans up on their feet with bated breath.

In the hindsight it was a classic case of stealing thunder by the unheralded young man better known for his exploit with the ball rather than the willow. He came at the wicket when Victoria, chasing a challenging victory target of 181 in 45 overs, suddenly looked to have lost way at 116 for four in 33.5 overs.

He immediately pitched himself in, carting medium pacer Rahat for a massive sixer that slammed against the VIP balcony, plundering in the process 25 runs from the 40th and the 41st overs.

From 42 off 36 balls the equation suddenly came down to a very simple statistics of 17 from 18 balls, yet callousness coupled with panic resulted in two run outs in the last over and it had to be Iqbal, the man of the moment, to snatch victory fittingly with a sixer.

At the end of the day, the what-could-have-been Abahani supporters must have engaged themselves in fancy if the impulse of Mustafa Kamal, a club official, to take every one by a pleasant surprise by bringing Pakistan international Nadim Khan straight into the ground had cost them the match.

Abahani, who were actually awaiting the Indian pair of Raman Lamba and Maninder Singh, did find left arm spinner Nadim Khan at the ground, thanks to the initiative of the aforesaid official but it was a few minutes too late as the match just could not wait long enough for his arrival.

The Dhamondti team was destined to be doomed from the beginning once Azhar Hossain won the toss and opted to field first.

Wickets were held for dear life but took a heavy toll on the run rate and only a brilliant last over assault by star batsman Minhazul Abedin Nannu helped them raise a fighting though not safe total of 180 for five.

Minhaz smashed 24 runs

from left-arm spinner Biplab Sarkar's ninth and final over with two sixes, as many fours and a couple of couples.

The former national captain, who remained unconquered on a 38-ball 54, courtesy a dropped sitter by Ziauddin off Biplab to pile pain on pain, began the willow explosion by hoisting the first ball over long off for a sixer.

Jewel Hossain with 52 and Akram Khan with 23 stood out as the other notable contributors.

Apart from Biplab, who had his analysis metamorphosed in an over, all the Victoria bowlers bowled to the field to return respectable figures.

Unlike the Abahani batsmen, who went about their task rather circumspectly, reading too much in the pitch, put to use of the first time this season, Victoria openers Azhar Hossain and his nephew batted purposefully to lay the foundation of some sort.

While the experienced uncle, a former national cricketer got 38 in an opening partnership of 90 in 26 overs, Mihranb played his strokes authoritatively to make 42 before being bowled round his legs.

The solid start went a long way in the outcome notwithstanding the fascinating ups and downs of fortunes finally fixed by Iqbal.

TODAY'S MATCH
Biman vs Brothers (Dhaka Stadium)

ITF satellite main draw tomorrow

RAJSHAHI, Nov 28: The third leg of ITF Thailand-Bangladesh satellite circuit tennis tournament began at the Rajshahi Tennis Complex today, reports BSS.

Forty tennis players from thirty-seven countries are taking part in the week-long tournament. The main draw of the tournament will start tomorrow.

On the opening day, six singles matches of the qualifying round were decided. Saki (Ban) beat Collins (Ban) 7-5; 6-4. Kalsan (Ban) beat Taskin (Ban) 6-1, 6-4. Omar (Ban) beat Manik (Ban) 6-0, 6-3. Lampert (USA) beat Mao (China) 6-4, 7-6. Becker (Germany) beat Wang (China) 6-2, 6-7, and Guo (China) beat Barron (Ireland) 6-2, 6-2.

State Minister for Planning Dr Moin Khan will formally open the tournament as the chief guest tomorrow while Rajshahi City Corporation Mayor Mizanur Rahman Minu and Youth and Sports Secretary Azizul Huq will attend as special guests.

Milla's true farewell

YAOUNDE, Nov 28: Cameroon's veteran soccer star Roger Milla, retiring from professional soccer for the final time, failed to save Tonnerre Yaounde from a 2-1 defeat by Olympic Involve in the Cameroon Cup final on Sunday, reports Reuter.

Milla, 42, initially retired after the 1990 World Cup when Cameroon lost to England in the quarter-finals, but was persuaded out of what became a semi-retirement to help the indomitable lions' ultimately flawed bid for further success in this summer's World Cup in the United States.

The last goal of his long and colourful career came from a header 14 minutes from time.

Afterwards he ran to the side of the pitch to give his customary celebration gesture, wiggling his hips to an ecstatic capacity crowd.

Minutes before, Milla was visibly infuriated when he had a long range goal disallowed for offside, he was also booked for disputing a throw-in.

Nat'l junior badminton in Dec

The national junior and sub-junior badminton tournament organised by the Bangladesh Badminton Federation begins in the last week of the December, reports UNB.

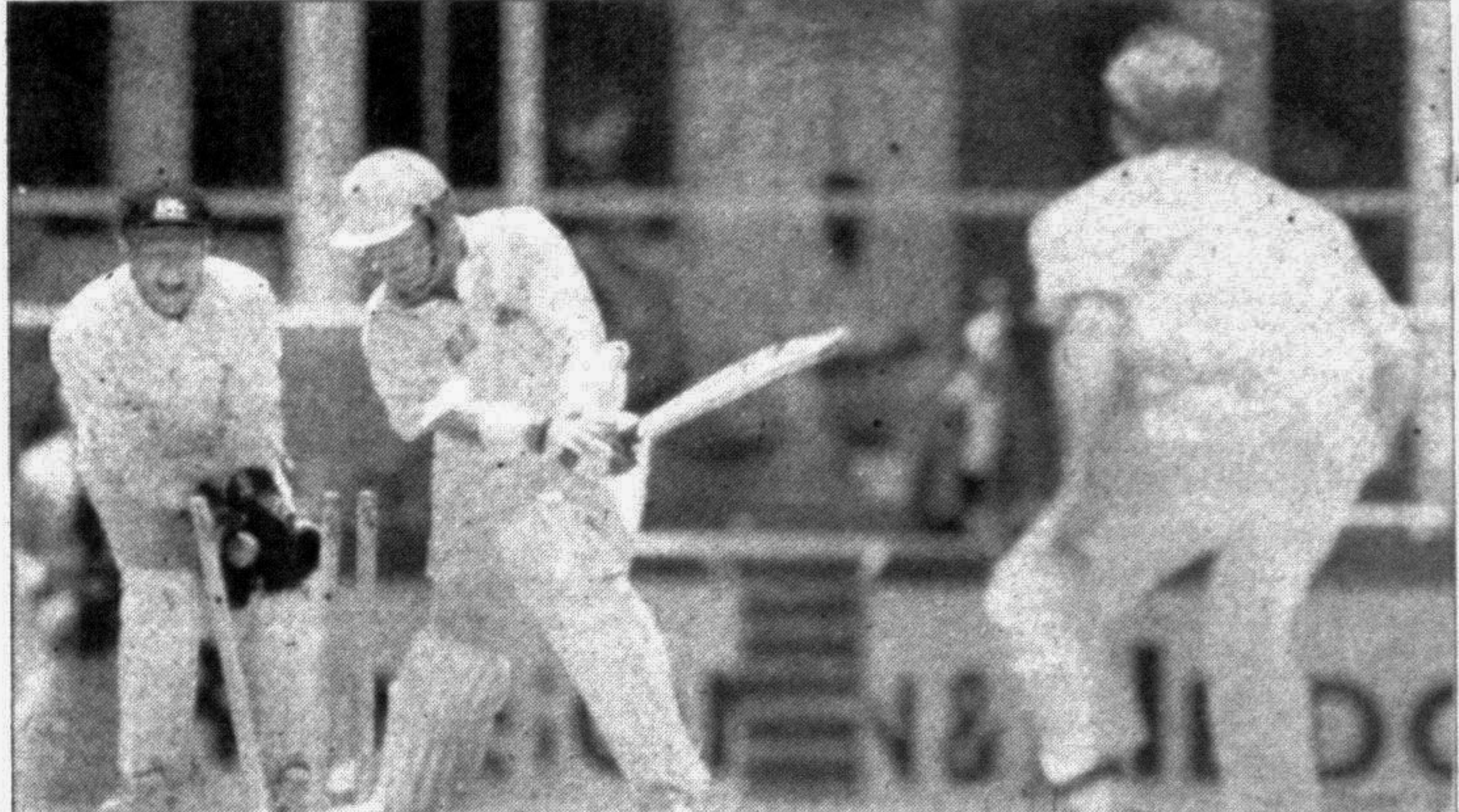
The tournament will have six categories — boys (under-18) singles and doubles, boys (under-14) singles and doubles, and girls (under-14) singles and doubles.

Interested participants are requested send their entries by December 20, says a federation press release yesterday.

Barisal soccer

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, Nov 28: Touch Video Club blanked Brothers Union 3-0 in a super league engagement of the Emma Overseas First Division football at the local stadium here today.



CASTLED: England opener Alec Stewart is completely foxed and bowled by a flipper from dangerman Shane Warne, the celebrated Aussie leg spinner, on the fourth day of the first Test of the Ashes series in Brisbane yesterday. Stewart made 33 but England were placed between history and ignominy by Thorpe and Hick who helped raise a total of 211 for two at close. — AFP photo

Hick, Thorpe defy Aussies

BRISBANE, Nov 28: England batsmen Graeme Hick and Graham Thorpe shared a courageous unbeaten century stand to halt Australia's victory charge in the first Ashes Test today, reports Reuter.

The pair, who came together in the first over after

gether, showed increasing frustration as the day wore on.

Leg-spinner Shane Warne, who grabbed the wickets of openers Alec Stewart and England captain Mike Atherton, was the only bowler who looked capable of breaking through.

Warne broke England's first-wicket partnership with the total on 50 when he bowled Alec Stewart for 33.

The Surrey batsman, expecting the ball to spin away from his stumps, attempted to cut a short ball and slumped in despair when it straightened and sped off the wicket to beat his defences.

Warne struck again with the third ball after lunch by trapping Atherton leg, before wicket with his score on 23.

Australia, who resumed on 194 for seven, batted for another hour before declaring at 248 for eight.

The home side declined to enforce the follow-on in the belief the dying wicket would offer more assistance to spinners Warne and Tim May as the match wore on.

A buoyant England team manager Keith Pletcher said later the tourists had a chance of victory on the final day.

"It's on, it's an outside chance, but it's on," he said, adding: "We must bat until tea then look at the position."

"But if we bat until tea, we should have scored between 170 to 180 runs. Then there will be an hour plus fifteen overs left," Fletcher added.

"The ball is turning, though, and the odds are still on Australia. But if we show the same character we did this afternoon we can save it."

He added: "We couldn't afford to lose wickets in the last session, we needed to go into the final day with only two wickets down, and Graeme Hick and Graham Thorpe took responsibility and stuck it out."

In a further boost for England, strike bowler Devon Malcolm, who missed the game after being struck down with chicken pox last week, had recovered sufficiently to visit his teammates at the ground.

SCOREBOARD

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

AUSTRALIA: First innings: 248 (for eight wickets, declared) 117: 3-139; 4-174; 5-183: 6-190; 7-191; 8-201.

Did not bat: G McGrath.

Bowling	O	M	R	W
DeFreitas	22	1	74	2
Gough	23	3	78	2
Tufnell	38	10	79	4
Gooch	3	2	5	0
Hick	2	1	1	0

England: Second innings: Mike Atherton lbw Warne 23; Alec Stewart b Warne 33; Graeme Hick not out 72; Graham Thorpe not out 66; Extras: 17.

Total: (for two wickets) 211

Fall of wickets: 50, 59

Bowling	O	M	R	W
McDermott	15	4	61	0
Glenn McGrath	14	3	47	0
Shane Warne	25	8	44	2
Tim May	15	8	29	0
Mark Waugh	7	1	17	0
Michael Bevan	1	0	4	0

Batting time: 301 minutes. Overs: 77.

IAAF does not like Christie's behaviour

BARCELONA, Nov 28: The International Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF) is planning to complain to the British Athletic Federation (BAF) about the behaviour of Olympic and world 100 metres champion Linford Christie in doping control stations, reports Reuter.

IAAF sources said on Sunday the federation's council had heard examples of bad-tempered outbursts during the 1992 Barcelona Olympics and at this year's World Cup at London's Crystal Palace. The council began a three-day meeting here on Sunday.

The sources said the council was likely to send a letter to the BAF formally complaining about Christie's behaviour.

"Christie has been out of hand and should be warned," he said.

IAAF spokesman Christopher Winner confirmed the federation was considering sending a letter to the BAF about Christie but said he could not comment on the details of the complaint.

But Winner did say two highly publicised incidents this year, one also involving Christie, had been a cause of concern to the IAAF.

He said the first was the fight in a hotel lobby between American Olympic 100 metres bronze medalist Dennis Mitchell and Nigerian sprinter Olapade Adeniken following the Zurich Grand Prix on August 4.

The other was the withdrawal of Christie, John Regis and Sally Gunnell from the Stockholm Grand Prix on July 5 after the three Britons had apparently confirmed that they would be running.

Winner said the council believed such incidents came within its regulations prohibiting any behaviour bringing the sport in to disrepute.

"These sorts of behaviour will be cracked down on," he said.

"The council members will be reminded that rules do exist and they should apply them."

DU cricket, soccer results

Sports Reporter

The Department of Public Administration recorded a facile eight-wicket win over Botany in the Dhaka University inter-department cricket championship at the Jagannath hall ground yesterday.

Chasing a modest target of 139 for an outright victory in the allotted 30 overs, Public Administration reached 141 for two wickets with more than six overs to spare.

Rashed with 49 top scored for the winners while Azam made an unbeaten 39.

Earlier, sent in to bat first, Botany scored a modest 138 for five wickets in the stipulated 30 overs.

Jahangir (47) and Wasim (29) were the two notable scorers for Botany.

Meanwhile, in the inter-department football competition, Social Welfare earned a convincing 3-1 win over Sociology at the university ground adjacent to the central gymnasium.

Inter-varsity swimming, water polo on

The inter-university swimming and water polo championship began yesterday at the Dhaka University Swimming Pool with Rajshahi University establishing their supremacy securing four gold, three silver and a bronze, reports UNB.

Hosts Dhaka University followed the North Bengal natants with one gold, one silver and three bronze medals while Agricultural University bagged one silver and a bronze.

Batistuta's unique distinction

Branca pulls Parma thru'

ROME, Nov 28: Marco Branca's spectacular overhead kick earned 10-man Parma a 1-1 draw with Inter Milan on Sunday night to keep the First Division's early season pacemakers one point clear at the top of the table, reports Reuter.

Uruguay's Ruben Sosa had fired Inter in front from the penalty spot in the 23rd minute after central defender

Luigi Apolloni deliberately handled in his own six-yard box, before Branca struck his acrobatic equaliser in the 61st minute.

But Parma, reduced to ten men after Apolloni was shown the red card in the 88th minute, were indebted to goalkeeper Luca Bucci for a brilliant injury-time save from Pierluigi Orlandini's freekick.

Earlier Juventus briefly drew level with Parma after a late goal from unsung striker Fabrizio Ravanelli gave the Turin side a hard-fought 2-1 win at Padova.

But Juventus lived dangerously for much of the second half after Dutchman Michel Kreek's 68th minute strike wiped out Roberto Baggio's superb 20-metre freekick.

Parma now lead Serie A with 24 points from 11 matches, one ahead of Juventus, who have played a gameless and two clear of Fiorentina, held to a 2-2 draw by Ruud Gullit's 86th-minute equaliser for Sampdoria.

At least there was some consolation for Fiorentina's Argentine striker Gabriel Batistuta who broke a 32-year scoring record.

Batistuta's 56th-minute penalty, which matched a first half penalty converted by England captain David Platt, meant the Prolipic striker had found the net in each of Fiorentina's first 11 games of the season.

The goal beat the record set by Bologna winger Ezio Pascutti who struck in each of the first 10 games of the 1962-63 season.

The unstoppable Batistuta almost got his name on the scoresheet again in the 73rd minute, but his deflected header was credited as an own-goal to Petro Vierchowod.

Fiorentina's double celebration was short-lived as Gullit struck his late goal, his first since rejoining Sampdoria from Milan, to give the visitors a point.

Roma's South American duo of Abel Balbo and Daniel Fonseca inspired their side to a stunning 3-0 triumph over arch-rival Lazio in a heated derby marred by ugly scenes on the terraces.

Roma, who had struggled over the last month after topping the table, took the lead as early as the third minute after Balbo raced between

three Lazio defenders to head Fonseca's cross into the bottom corner past Marchegiani.

Massimiliano Cappioli put Roma two up in the 25th minute before Fonseca cancelled hopes of a second-half Lazio revival soon after the break, with a far post header for his side's third goal.

Frustration boiled over among Lazio fans on the Curva Nord who ripped out seats which they hurled at police and set fire to banners.

The stunning result reawakens Roma's title challenge and, most importantly, dashed their local enemy's hopes of going top.



A recent picture of Fiorentina's Argentine striker Gabriel Batistuta. Batistuta broke a 32-year Italian scoring record netting his thirteenth goal in eleven matches against Lazio in a league match on Nov 27. He has scored in every game of the season beating a ten-match record established by Ezio Pascutti in 1963 for Bologna. — AFP photo