



Irfan (C) Mohammedan's Pakistani forward who struck twice during yesterday's vital Green Delta First Division hockey league tie to help his side to a 2-1 victory over arch-rivals Abahani stays focused on the ball amidst a flurry of off-the-ball actions. — Star photo by AKM Mohsin

Little change in pattern

Sports Reporter
to the Briton's charge.

With the chance of a title already evaporated, the rest of the bid to improve their respective positions and indeed the local players fared a lot better compared to Tuesday's performance.

Not much but the second United Insurance Grandmasters' chess championship experienced some change in the scenario yesterday with English GM Mark Hebden and Russian GM Mikhail Krasenkov both drawing their respective eleventh round matches at the Jalsha Ghar of Purbani Hotel. However, as far as the points table is concerned, the pattern remained unchanged with the Briton staying one point clear from his closest rival.

Hebden was forced to draw only for the second time so far, yesterday when Tajik International Master Magaram Magoedov declined the Englishman's Gambit approach to lead the match to a deadlock. Playing with black, Magoedov offered stern resistance of Hebden's attack and forced a draw after 41 moves.

Meanwhile, Krasenkov found Pakistani IM Mahmood Ahmed Khan Lodhi equally stubborn and maneuvered with white pieces for 61 moves before realising the jovial Pathan's King's Indian Defence was virtually impenetrable.

The top two take on each other in a crucial match today

Grandmaster Niaz Murshid, pitted against the weakling in the local charge, IM Zillur Rahman, got back to winning ways after his bespectacled opposition caved in almost without a fight despite having the advantage of playing with white pieces. Niaz's Modern Defence was good enough to wrest the initiative from the

win. Employing the Winwar variation in a game of Sicilian Defence, Reefat guided his white pieces to winning position to win submission in 32 moves.

The other Bangladeshi in the 14-man fray, IM Ziaur Rahman was still engaged in celebration against Indonesian Grandmaster Edhi Handoko when this report went to press late last night.

Tournament's highest FIDE-rated player Uzbek GM Gregory Serper drew his tenth round match with English GM Stuart Conquest after 44 moves of a game of Sicilian Defence, played in the lines of Sozin variation.

Indian IM Varugese Koshi also drew his encounter against IM Ruben Gunawan of Indonesia. Scheming his black pieces in the Modern Defence formation, the bearded Goanese nullified Gunawan's advantage of playing with white in 44 moves for half a point.

TWELFTH ROUND MATCHES
GM Hebden vs GM Krasenkov
GM Serper vs IM Gunawan



TWELFTH ROUND MATCHES

GM Hebden vs GM Krasenkov
GM Serper vs IM Gunawan



Varugese Koshi the Indian International Master is engrossed in deep cerebration as his sunken head propped by elbows on the table would suggest during his eleventh round match against Indonesian IM Ruben Gunawan in the second United Insurance Grandmasters' chess tournament at the Jalsha Ghar of Purbani Hotel yesterday. — Star photo

Kamsky in final

SANGHINAGAR, India, Feb 15: US Grandmaster Gata Kamsky drew his seventh game with Valery Salov of Russia here Wednesday to qualify for the final of the FIDE World Championships, reports AFP.

Kamsky, 20 became the youngest contender for the FIDE title when he forced a draw with white pieces in the 24th move.

The draw gave him the 5.5 points needed to compete for the FIDE title in August. Kamsky will play against the winner of the other semifinal being held here between Anatoly Karpov of Russia and Boris Gelfand of Belarus.

Where AIDS has no domination

PHILADELPHIA, Feb 15: Athletes have little reason to fear getting AIDS from on-the-field injuries, and infection with the HIV virus that causes AIDS should not keep an athlete from competing, a federal health agency said, reports Reuter.

In an article in annals of internal medicine, doctors at the US Centres for Disease Control in Atlanta also said athletes and coaches should focus AIDS prevention efforts on off-field activities, where greater dangers lie.

The risk for HIV transmission during sports is extremely low," the article said. "Efforts to prevent transmission of blood-borne pathogens among athletes should emphasize prevention in off-the-field settings."

Furthermore, it said: "Athletes need not be excluded from participation in a sports activity solely because they are infected with HIV of (the hepatitis B virus)."

HIV, or Human Immuno-deficiency Virus, is the virus which causes AIDS. It is spread primarily by sexual contact or injection with tainted blood.

Concern over transmission of AIDS through bleeding injuries on the playing field has surfaced in recent years.

Basketball star Earvin "Magic" Johnson has acknowledged being infected with HIV. Johnson retired in 1991 but played in the 1992 National Basketball association all-star game and the Olympics over the objections of a few opponents who feared a risk of AIDS.

Johnson ended a comeback attempt later that year after receiving a cut in an exhibition game, and said the reaction of other players was a key factor.

There has been no documented case of HIV transmission during sports, although there have been two reported cases of the virus being transmitted during bloody fistfights, the Centres for Disease Control article said.

In a separate study reported in the same issue of annals of internal medicine, researchers who had studied injuries during 155 national football league. Games in 1992 estimated the risk of an accident HIV transmission during a football game was no more than once in every 58.6 seasons.

The football study was conducted by researchers from the addiction research and treatment corp.

Aussies edge Japan

SYDNEY, Feb 15: Australia beat Japan 2-1 (halftime 2-1) in a friendly soccer international at the Sydney Football Stadium on Wednesday, reports Reuter.

Scorers:
Australia — John Markovski (6th minute), Steve Corica (41st).
Japan — Kenta Hasegawa (16th).

Mohammedans just make it

Sports Reporter

simply made things miserable for the Abahani defence. Apart from scoring both the Mohammedan goals yesterday, Irfan played an instrumental role off front.

However, Abahani, also featuring a Pakistani trio-Latq Ahmed, Salman Wahab and Aamir Ahmed, drew the first blood quite against the run of play.

The Dhanmondi outfit, who also boast a score of national players apart from the Pakistani presence, came strongly after surviving an early Mohammedan onslaught, winning two short corners in quick succession before scoring from the second awarded in the 33rd minute.

Jumman Lusat, who can only blame his last minute blunder for being overmar in a one on one situation against Irfan that cost Abahani both the match and honour, surprised the highly rated Mohammedans with a pile drive from inside the circle.

Trailing by the lone goal at the breather, Mohammedans came strongly in the second half and restored parity in the 45th minute when Irfan's scorching shot hit Masudur Rahman, one of the two umpires of the match, on its way to the destination.

TODAY'S MATCH

Usha KC vs Ajax Sports Club (Hockey Stadium)

England A due Feb 18

Sports Reporter

England A, who are due in the city on February 18 following their triumphant tour of India, will play two one-day and a three-day exhibition matches against Bangladesh.

Two one-day matches are billed on February 20 and 22, followed by a three-day one from February 24 to 26. All the matches will be played at the Dhaka Stadium.

Meanwhile, the Bangladesh Cricket Control Board (BCCB) has announced the rate of tickets for matches. Following is the rate of tickets:

- Daily tickets** — VIP Gate No 1: Taka 200; VIP Gate No 3: Taka 50; Special Enclosure (Gate No 20-21): Taka 40; Western Galleries (Gate 11 to 19): Taka 25; Eastern Galleries (Gate 4 to 10): Taka 15.
- Season tickets** — VIP Gate No 1: Taka 500; VIP Gate No 2: Taka 300; VIP Gate No 3: Taka 150; Special Enclosure (Gate No 20 to 21): Taka 150.

Season tickets will be available at Agrani Bank's branch at the Bangabandhu Avenue from today.

Sher-e-Bangla Cup soccer

Sports Reporter

Yunus notched a hat-trick as Kushtia whaled Narail eight-nil on the opening day of the Zone Six competition of the 19th Sher-e-Bangla Cup national football championship which began in Khulna yesterday.

While Yunus completed a treble Towhid and Helal struck twice each. Sohrah completed the tally for the winners.

Elsewhere winners did not emerge as easily. In a Zone Eight match at Rangpur, Nilphamari pipped the hosts 4-3 in penalty shootout after the regulation period ended in a deadlock with both teams finding the net once each.

Khoka put Nilphamari ahead with a 24th-minute strike cancelled by hosts' Niamul who scored in the 36th minute.

In a Zone one match played at Faridpur, Munshiganj prevailed over Madaripur 5-4 in tie-breaker.

Here also the normal playing time ended in balance with both teams scoring once each. Sharifullah netted for Munshiganj while Meraz restored parity for Madaripur.

Romario Chinese sportsman of 1994

BELJING, Feb 15: Chinese sports fans picked Brazilian soccer star Romario as their sportsman of 1994. Xinhua news agency reported on Wednesday, reports Reuter.

A nationwide poll put Russian swimmer Alexander Popov and Chinese woman swimmer Le Jingyi, who both won gold medals at the World Championships in Rome last year, second and third.

Athletes Noureddine Mercel of Algeria and American Jackie Joyner-Kersey were fifth and sixth respectively with world heavyweight boxing champion George Foreman sixth.

The variety of sports and nationalities in the list reflects the enthusiasm in China for many sports, with soccer the most popular, and their extensive coverage by state television.

Not quite a place for Romario

RIO DE JANEIRO, Feb 15: Brazilian striker Romario, one of the world's top players, has come home to play in a team which for the last year has rarely looked anything better than mediocre, reports Reuter.

With a shaky, error-prone defence and a midfield of workhorse players with little creative ability, Flamengo appear unworthy of possessing a player of Romario's talent in their line-up.

In three games so far, two of them friendlies, Romario's new teammates have been incapable of providing the service Brazil's World Cup hero needs to thrive, and he is still waiting to hit the back of the net.

Romario barely had a sniff of goal during Sunday's Rio de Janeiro championship match with Fluminense, his first competitive game since joining Flamengo from Spanish club Barcelona last month.

It was almost surreal to see the world-class Romario playing in a team which committed numerous basic errors that amateur players would be ashamed of.

In all three games, Romario has often found himself alone against two or three defenders and has unusually received the ball with his back to goal with nobody to lay the ball off to.

Romario referred to the lack service after the Fluminense match, though without directly criticising his team-mates.

"We tried to do what (coach) Vanderley (Luxemburgo) asked us to do, unfortunately the chances didn't appear," he said as he left the pitch.

"Romario and (fellow striker) Savio were condemned to complete isolation and a thankless and lone battle against four and five Fluminense players," said Fernando Calazans, a leading newspaper critic.

Romario's return to Brazil was banked by a pool of seven companies but the club itself has little money to reinforce the rest of the team.

Romario apart, Flamengo are depending largely on the same side which last year infuriated the club's fans. Three coaches attempted to put the club to rights but all ended up resigning.

The supporters first had to endure seeing arch-rivals Vasco da Gama win the Rio de Janeiro championship for the third year in a row.

This was followed by a dire campaign in the Brazilian championship when Flamengo failed to reach the last eight, the very least expected of them.

The only other reinforcement to the side has been World Cup left-back Branco, a player with a rifling left-foot shot but who is also notoriously short of pace and stamina.

It is quickly becoming clear that success for Flamengo this year lies exclusively on the shoulders of Romario, as illustrated by a headline on the day of the Fluminense games, "It's Romario against Fluminense," the headline said.



Shahbaz Ahmad, the Pakistani hockey wizard (shaven head), is chased by his rival during yesterday's crucial Green Delta First Division super league tie between giants Abahani and Mohammedans. Although Shahbaz could not score Mohammedans won the derby by the odd goal in three at the Hockey Stadium. — Star photo by AKM Mohsin

which may well decide the fate of the 13-round tourney. Hebden, however, enjoys a slight edge as he need only a draw to remain on course for the title whereas for the Russian, the task is even more demanding since he must meet his English counterpart to make a reversal

white pieces and Zillur's resistance was good for only 27 moves.

After playing out a safe draw with Niaz, Reefat bin-Sattar also bounced back to the winning trail and Enrique Sivlano couldn't get in the way of the anthropology students' sixth

GM Niaz Murshid vs IM Ziaur Rahman
GM Conquest vs GM Handoko
IM Magoedov vs IM Koshi
IM Zillur Rahman vs IM Sivlano
IM Reefat-bin-Sattar vs IM Lodhi

Inzamam stands tall in Pak ruins

Good start for Zimbabwe

HARARE, Feb 15: Despite a superb century by Inzamamul Haq, Zimbabwe took the honours on the first day of the third and final cricket Test against Pakistan today, reports AFP.

The big 24-year-old Pakistani middle-order batsman hammered 101 in Pakistan's disappointing first innings score of 231.

Inzamam, who hit 12 fours and two sixes in a 168-ball innings during his 205 minutes at the crease, also became the first Pakistan batsman to score a century against Zimbabwe.

At the close, Zimbabwe were four for no loss after three fiery overs from Wasim Akram and Aaqib Javed.

But Pakistan, who were playing with the bribery allegations very much on their minds, will be kicking themselves for not making better use of a good batting strip after winning the toss and batting.

Yet there was nothing in the early stages to suggest that the Pakistanis would struggle throughout the day against tight if not incisive Zimbabwe bowling.

Opens Aamir Sohail and Shakeel Ahmed put on an entertaining 42-run stand for the first wicket with the former looking in fine form.

But in the space of 12 balls Pakistan lost both Sohail, who was caught at point for 21 and number three Saeed Anwar for four.

Both played injudicious strokes to give Health Streak, the leading wicket-taker in the series, another four for the match.

Shakeel Ahmed went for 29 and when captain Salim Malik, who admitted that he was shaking while he was batting because he had been implicated in the bribery scandal, hofed out for 20 Pakistan were in deep trouble at 83 for four.

A fighting 76-run stand for the fifth-wicket between Inzamam and Ijaz Ahmed then added some respectability to the innings.

Striek broke the partnership by trapping Ijaz leg before wicket for 41 and the rest of the innings caved in.

Bryan Strang, bowling a tight line and length, took three wickets for 43 off 32 overs.

SCOREBOARD
Scoreboard on the first day of the third cricket Test between Pakistan and Zimbabwe on Wednesday:
PAKISTAN: First Innings
Aamir Sohail c P Strang b Streak 21
Shakeel Ahmed c A Flower b Whittall 29
Saeed Anwar c Butchart b Streak 4
Salim Malik c G Flower b Streak 20
Ijaz Ahmed lbw b Streak 41
Inzamamul-Haq c P Strang b Brain 101
Rashid Latif c P Strang b B Strang 6
Wasim Akram b B Strang 0
Manzoor Elahi c Streak b B Strang 0
Aaqib Javed run out 0
Aamir Nazir not out 0
Extras: (lb-3, w-3, nb-3) 9
Total (88.3 overs) 231
Fall of wickets: 1-42; 2-46; 3-64; 4-83; 5-159; 6-180; 7-180; 8-183; 9-203; 10-231.
Bowling: O M R W
Streak 18 4 53 4
Brain 12.3 81 48 1

Only for the Muslims

KUALA LUMPUR, Feb 15: Malaysia will allow the Muslims among recently charged footballers to celebrate Ramadan before issuing warrants for their arrest following a crackdown on soccer corruption, local press said Monday, reports AFP.

"We want the Muslim footballers to celebrate with their families and not languish in the prisons," Deputy Home Minister Megat Junid Megat Avob was quoted as saying Sunday.

Megat Junid made the concession for the Muslims among another 20 players and coaches who are to be sent into internal exile for two years under the restricted residence act.

The Muslim Ramadan fasting festival takes place early next month and Megat Junid said arrest warrants for Muslim players would be issued after the festivities.

"Non-Muslim players will, however, be detained and banished from next week," he said.

"We are not out to discriminate against the footballers," Megat Junid said, adding that the government wanted all Muslims to enjoy the celebrations.

Malaysia has already banished three footballers and six bookmakers and arrested 62 other players and two former coaches since starting a campaign late last year to rid the local game of rampant match fixing.

Hingis hacks Maleeva down

PARIS, Feb 15: Swiss teenager Martina Hingis launched her Paris Open challenge by ousting the experienced Katerina Maleeva of Bulgaria in straight sets on Tuesday, reports Reuter.



Inzamam... 101
B Strang 32 15 43 3
Whittall 18 3 73 1
Butchart 3 0 11 0
ZIMBABWE: First Innings
G Flower not out 0
S Carlisle not out 3
Extras: (nb-1) 1