

DMFA's moment of truth

Sports Reporter

The brewing dispute between the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF), and the Dhaka Metropolitan Football Association (DMFA) seems to have taken a decisive turn following the interference of the National Sports Council (NSC), the highest governing body of sports in the country.

matches widely practised by almost all teams. But the DMFA defied the proposal terming it as too late to carry out. It turned grave when some of the club's including Abahani Krira Chakra saw eye to eye with DMFA.

football buffs, who are being cheated by the fixed affairs practised over the years. Furthermore the concept of a super league and relegation league is quite familiar in the country," added the BFF general secretary.

Another ton for Atherton

LONDON, May 9: England captain Mike Atherton underlined his prolific form by stroking his fourth century of the season to thrust Lancashire to an eight-wicket victory over Durham in the country championship on Monday, reports Reuter.

A second wicket stand of 179 in 32 overs between Atherton and England teammate John Crawley, who hit 81 from 93 balls, all but finished the job.

fine 79 from 105 balls, looked comfortable. Derbyshire's 100 per cent winning start to the season in all competitions was ended when left-arm spinners Jimmy Hindson and Andy Afford bowled Nottinghamshire to a 114-run success at Trent Bridge.

Iceland hold United States

REYKJAVIK, May 9: Iceland beat United States 27-16 (halftime 13-11) in their first round game of the handball World Champions on Sunday to lead their group ahead of Switzerland and South Korea who also won, reports Reuter.

Windies not afraid of England

LONDON, May 9: Defeated West Indies captain Richie Richardson warned here on Monday: "We are not afraid of England," reports AFP.

start a four-month tour including six Tests, scoffed at talk that the West Indies were in terminal decline, adding: "People can say what they like. It's up to us to go on the field and do what we have to do."

Senegal beat Morocco 1-0

DAKAR, May 9: Senegal beat Morocco 1-0 (halftime 1-0) in the second leg of an African Olympic soccer qualifying first round soccer match on Saturday, reports Reuter.

Illingworth's appointments

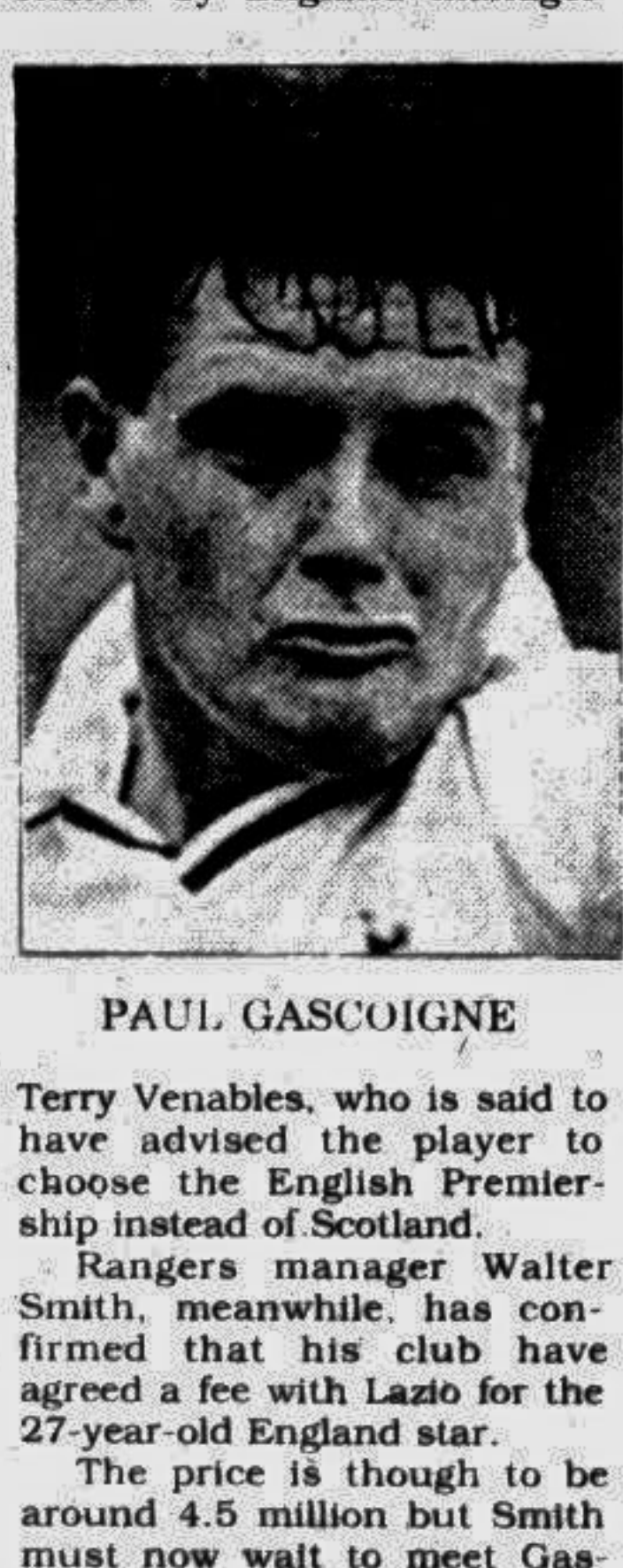
LONDON, May 9: England cricket manager and coach Ray Illingworth has appointed two former Test players, John Edrich and Peter Lever, as specialist coaches to help prepare for the six-Test series against the West Indies, reports AFP.

Medvedev finds his feet

HAMBURG, May 9: Defending German open champion Andrei Medvedev, who has been through a frustrating time on the clay courts in recent weeks, finally found some satisfaction in a cold and windy Hamburg on Monday, reports Reuter.

Ferguson claims innocence

GLASGOW, Scotland, May 9: Everton striker Duncan Ferguson pleaded not guilty Tuesday to charges of assaulting an opposing player during a Scottish League game 13 months ago, reports AP.



PAUL GASCOIGNE

Wilkins, the Queens Park Rangers manager who played north of the border with Rangers, believes Gascoigne, surplus to requirements at Lazio, will be attracted by the Scottish club's involvement in the European Champions Cup.

Bangladesh boys to play in India's U-16 cricket

A 16-member Bangladesh cricket team will play in the All-India U-16 cricket tournament, scheduled to begin in Calcutta from May 14.

The Bangladesh selection which included 14 players and two officials, are expected to leave for Calcutta on May 13 and will play their first match on May 15.

Samaraweera at Lankan U-24's helm

COLOMBO, May 9: Test batsman Dulip Samaraweera has been named captain of a Sri Lanka under-24 side that will play South African counterparts when they tour the island in August, cricket officials said today, reports AFP.

Wimbledon trio will be there

LONDON, May 9: Former Wimbledon champion Boris Becker, Wimbledon finalist Goran Ivanisevic and Wimbledon semifinalist Todd Martin are among the entries for a traditional pre-Wimbledon Europe v Rest of the World Challenge tennis match at Roehampton from June 22-24, reports AFP.

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Wright, Gunners going for glory

PARIS, May 9: Arsenal's Ian Wright will have achieved one of club football's greatest feats should he score against Spain's Real Zaragoza in Wednesday's European Cup Winners' Cup final here, reports AFP.

times this season, but his five goals in their run to the final has made up for his other misdemeanors.



IAN WRIGHT

No team has ever retained this cup, though Fiorentina, Ajax Amsterdam, Anderlecht and Parma have all reached the final the year after winning the title.

be Arsenal's trump card. Arsenal won in Auxerre in the quarter-finals, before earning their final spot with a penalty shoot-out victory in Sampdoria.

George Graham, who led Arsenal to six trophies, was axed earlier this season for claiming a 425,000-pound (637,000-dollar) bung from transfers of two Scandinavian players.

PROBABLE TEAMS

ARSENAL: David Seaman, Lee Dixon, Tony Adams, Andy Linighan, Nigel Winterburn, Ray Parlour, Martin Keown, Stefan Schwarz, Paul Merson, Ian Wright, John Hartson.

the 1976 FA Cup final who were beaten by Second Division Southampton.

Through he quietly paid back the sum to Arsenal when the irregularity was discovered, Graham had already pushed the self-destruct button and was sacked on February 21.

Blackburn title bound

LONDON, May 9: Blackburn Rovers stood on the brink of the English Premier League championship after Alan Shearer gave them a 1-0 home win over Newcastle on Monday with his 36th goal of the season, reports Reuter.

liant second half performance against a Newcastle side battling for a place in the UEFA Cup for the second successive season.



ALAN SHEARER

minutes when he beat away a Tim Sherwood free kick which Chris Sutton, close to the keeper, dismissed between

his legs. Newcastle, who won an FA Cup third round replay 2-1 at Ewood park in January, served notice of what might come in the second half with a near miss from England veteran Peter Beardsley ten minutes before the interval.

But it need not have been such a fraught 45 minutes for Blackburn's supporters.

He then turned over a long-distance effort by Robert Lee that curled wickedly in flight.

It's Italian day in Rome

ROME, May 9: With the top eight seeds given first-round byes, attention was focused on home-grown success on the opening day of the 800,000 USD Italian Open women's tennis tournament on Monday, reports Reuter.

Backed by an army of noisy fans, Italy's number one Sandra Cecchi fought back from a set down to defeat Elna Reinach of South Africa on the Foro Italico's new-look Centre Court.

Veteran Cecchi, who has never gone beyond the last 16 on Rome's slow-paced clay courts, lost the first set on a tie-break after dropping her service when serving for the set in the ninth game.

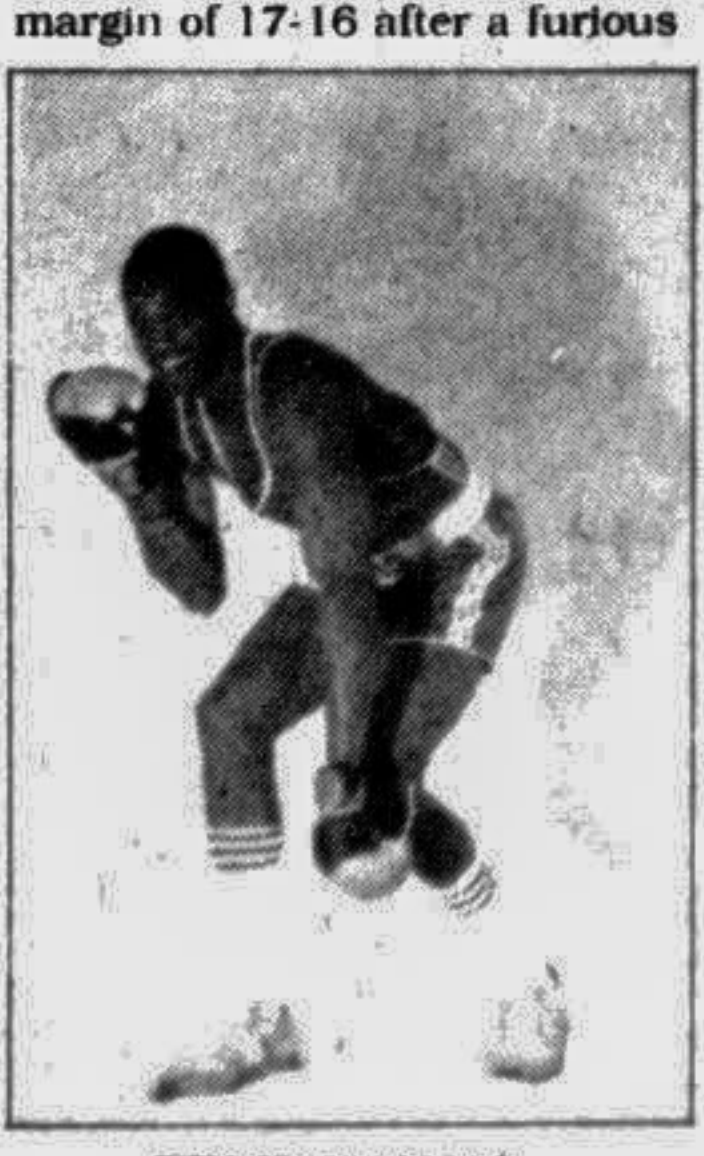
Unseeded Flora Perfetti also gave home fans something to cheer with a straight-sets victory over Alexja Dechaume-Baillet of France.

Perfetti, ranked only fifth in Italy, now faces fourth seed Gabriela Sabatini of Argentina, four times Italian champion and eager to avoid the second-round exit she suffered last year.

Cuba cruise: Savon starts in style

BERLIN, May 9: Cuban legend Felix Savon started the defence of his heavyweight title in spectacular fashion here on Monday when he took just 93 seconds to end the challenge of his hapless South Korean opponent, reports AFP.

two countries, Jan Quast became the only German not to make it through to the next stage when Cuban light-flyweight Juan Ramirez was awarded a win after a tied points decision.



FELIX SAVON

encounter with Russian Raimkul Malachbekov in which the two boxer exchanged a bewildering series of punches.

But there was no such problem for his teammate Hector Vinent, the light-welterweight gold medalist two years ago in Finland, who inflicted one of the competition's rare knock-outs on Moroccan Abdallah Ben Biare.

Only four per cent of contests so far have ended in knock-outs but Cuban super-heavyweight Leonardo Fitz also introduced his opponent to the canvas when he floored Vasily Melnikov of Latvia in the third round.

Earlier, signs of mounting tension emerged when tempers flared after defending light-flyweight champion Nchan Munchian of Armenia was defeated by Andrzej Rzany of Poland here on Monday.

The organisers have been quick to congratulate themselves on a controversy-free start to the tournament but there was a conspicuous lack of goodwill on show after the judges awarded the win to the Pole following a tied points decision.

Munchian had to be led from his corner to the centre of the ring for the announcement of the decision.

progressed towards Wednesday's quarter-finals.

Munchian would have met world number two Daniel Petrov of Bulgaria in the last eight in a repeat of the 1993 final in Finland.

The Bulgarian disposed of Jose Laureano of Puerto Rico in his bout on Monday and is now clear favourite to take the gold medal.

The South Koreans have had a disappointing championships so far with five out of seven boxers already eliminated but they enjoyed greater success on Monday.

Three out of the six South Koreans to take the ring emerged victorious but the narrowness of the points decisions in their favour raise doubts about their ability to go the whole distance.