



The players of Bangladesh Rifles who clinched the NBL First Division volleyball title beating holders Titas Club in straight three sets at the court adjacent to the Dhaka Stadium. — Star photo

Rifle spikers lift NBL title

Sports Reporter

After surviving an one-year suspension Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) regained their status of being invincible when they won the Dhaka Metropolitan First Division volleyball league title for a record sixth time defeating Titas Club by straight sets in the final yesterday.

In front of a capacity crowd at the Volleyball Stadium the star-studded BDR spikers made a mockery of the contest to dethrone Titas Club 15-7, 15-4 and 15-8 in only 84 minutes. BDR, who were declared *bete noire* by the Bangladesh Volleyball Federation (BVF) last year for their alleged involvement in a semifinal engagement of the national championship in 1993-94 season, had earlier clinched the league title five times in a row before their fall from grace.

ROLL OF HONOUR

Year	Champions	Runners-up
1972-73	Wari Club	Sonali Bank
1973-74	WAPDA SC	Sonali Bank
1974-75	Wari Club	WAPDA SC
1975-76	WAPDA SC	Wari Club
1976-77	WAPDA SC	Azad Sporting
1977-78	Dilkusha SC	Audit & Accounts (Water Development Board)
1978-79	WAPDA SC	Audit & Accounts (Water Development Board)
1979-80	Not held	Audit & Accounts (Water Development Board)
1980-81	WAPDA SC	Wari Club
1981-82	Audit & Accounts (Water Dev Board)	Bangladesh Rifles
1982-83	Wari Club	Bangladesh Rifles
1983-84	Not held	
1984-85	Wari Club	
1985-86	Not held	
1986-87	Bangladesh Rifles	Titas Club
1987-88	Bangladesh Rifles	Water Development Board
1988-89	Bangladesh Rifles	Titas Club
1989-90	Bangladesh Rifles	Titas Club
1990-91	Not held	
1991-92	Not held	
1992-93	Bangladesh Rifles	Titas Club
1993-94	Titas Club	Water Development Board
1994-95	Bangladesh Rifles	Titas Club

Donald the terminator

LONDON, July 22: South African fast bowler Allan Donald fired title holders Warwickshire to a county championship victory inside two days over Glamorgan on Friday, reports Reuter.

Donald captured the Welsh team's first four second innings wickets for 25 and held the catch that accounted for the fifth as Warwickshire won by nine wickets on the second day of the four-day match at Cardiff.

Warwickshire, level with Northamptonshire at the top of the table going into the current round of games, had set up their win by establishing a crucial first innings lead of 86 in the low scoring match.

Donald then struck the telling blows with what Glamorgan captain Hugh Morris described as "high quality, aggressive fast bowling" as his team were dispatched for 122.

After Warwickshire scored the 37 needed for victory in 12.1 overs, their captain Dermot Reeve refused to allow the pitch to take any credit for the demolition of Glamorgan.

"Allan Donald simply bowled very, very well on it," said Reeve. The South African

took four for 25 in 10 overs. Tim Lamb, cricket secretary of the Test and County Cricket Board (TCCB), said: "I have spoken to both umpires, Nigel Plews and Barry Duddleston, and as far as they were concerned they were happy with the pitch and the surface."

Northamptonshire's captain and former England batsman Allan Lamb launched a spirited counter attack after Hampshire piled up a record-breaking 560 all out at Northampton.

Returning after three weeks absence with a cracked thumb, Lamb hammered 18 fours in a stirring 88 from 104 balls to help his side to 152 for three at the close.

Hampshire, 353 for three overnight, completed their highest total against Northants and the biggest by any visiting side at Northampton since 1938.

It was built around a fourth wicket stand of 249, of which 223 were scored on the opening day, between Robin Smith (172) and Mark Nicholas (120). Smith struck 33 fours in his 322-ball innings while Nicholas hit two sixes and 15 fours.

Gloucestershire captain and wicketkeeper Jack Russell gave watching England chairman of selectors Ray

Illingworth a timely reminder he is ready for a Test recall with a brilliant innings at Cheltenham.

Russell, a candidate to replace injured England wicketkeeper Alec Stewart in next week's fourth Test against West Indies, hit 83 in his team's first innings against Lancashire.

Russell, who hit 13 boundaries, joined Robert Cullifre (92 not out) when Gloucestershire were reeling on 44 for six in reply to Lancashire's first innings of 231. Their seventh-wicket stand added 125 and lifted the final total to 265 — a lead of 34.

Lancashire's Pakistan fast bowler Wasim Akram finished with five for 58, but Indian paceman Javagal Srinath then produced an even more damaging spell of five for 37 as Gloucestershire sent the visitors crashing to 87 for eight at the close.

Pakistan leg-spinner Mushtaq Ahmed captured four for 74 as Somerset took charge against Essex at Southend.

Paceman Graham Rose claimed the first three wickets to fall in a 19-ball spell and with off-spinner Harvey Truump getting three for 30, Essex were dismissed for 186 giving Somerset a first innings lead of 235.

Torrence — the trouncer

OSLO, July 22: Gwen Torrence, the Olympic 200 metres champion, has re-opened old wounds by saying she does not acknowledge Florence Griffith-Joyner's world 100 and 200-metre records set seven years ago, reports Reuter.

After beating her great rival Jamaican Merlene Ottey to win the 200 at the Bislett Games Grand Prix on Friday night, Torrence launched a verbal broadside on the "unbeatable" records set by her American compatriot in 1988.

"Women sprinters are still suffering as a result of what she did to the times in the 100 and 200," said Torrence, 30.

"In fact I don't acknowledge those times as world records. To me they don't exist. They cannot be beaten as far as I can see for maybe five, 10, 15 years. Not by anyone running today, anyway."

"And they mean that women sprinters are losing out financially. We never can have a world record-holder running in our races so we can't get the pay we deserve, we can't go for the records because they are unbeatable, no women sprinter can ever be introduced to the crowd as the world record-holder."

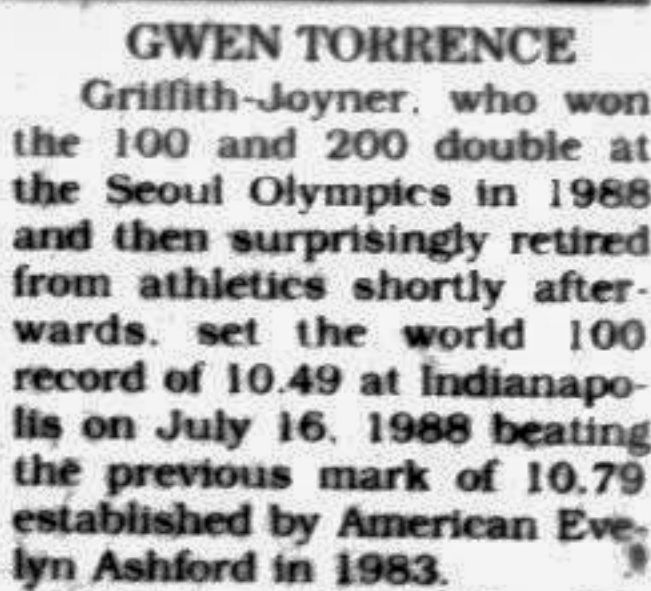
and I think that we are all suffering as a result of that. "I certainly feel cheated by it, not being able to go for a world record — unless you run at altitude with a wind behind you. But I just can't see them being beaten."

Athletes including Torrence have said some women's times over the past 10 years could only have been achieved with the aid of performance-enhancing drugs, but Griffith-Joyner has consistently denied any claims here helped by drugs.

The 200 record has never been remotely challenged either. In 1991 Ottey ran 21.64 seconds in Brussels and a year before, that clocked 21.66 in Zurich, the third and fourth fastest times ever. Torrence herself ranks eighth on the all-time 100 list with a best of 10.82.

Torrence is attempting to emulate Griffith-Joyner's sprint double at next month's World Championships in Gothenburg and said she was pleased with her victory over Ottey although not impressed by her winning time of 22.36 seconds. Ottey also said she felt "very flat indeed" to clock 22.66.

European champion Sonia O'Sullivan of Ireland set a year's best of 8:34.31 in the 3,000, while Olympic 5,000 champion Dieter Baumann matched that in the men's 3,000 with a year's best time of 7:33.56, also a German national record.



GWEN TORRENCE

Griffith-Joyner, who won the 100 and 200 double at the Seoul Olympics in 1988 and then surprisingly retired from athletics shortly afterwards, set the world 100 record of 10.49 at Indianapolis on July 16, 1988 beating the previous mark of 10.79 established by American Evelyn Ashford in 1983.

Then on September 29, 1988 she set two 200 world records on the same day.

Curse of being a celebrity!

PORT OF SPAIN, Trinidad, July 22: Brian Lara's mentor, former West Indies batsman Joey Carew, says very high expectations have put too much pressure on the Trinidadian whose form on the tour of England has been modest, reports Reuter.

Lara, who holds the world records for the highest Test and first-class innings, has not made a century in 18 four innings and on Friday completed the first pair of his career, against Kent at Canterbury.

But Carew, who has helped to mould Lara's career, told the Caribbean news agency (CANA): "Too much emphasis is being placed on Brian's current form...because he is the double record holder a lot is expected of him and, while that is fine, people must not try to blame him when West Indies lose."

"Maybe it is that he knows the overall batting hinges on him, and at the moment there is a question over the form and ability of some of the other batsmen."

"What Brian needs now is a major score. That would do a lot for his confidence, but the other guys still need to know that they have to bat well, even when Brian is not making runs," Carew added.

Left-hander Lara's scores in the first three Tests of West Indies' six-match series against England were 53, 48 not out, 6, 54 and 21.

Carew said: "Brian seems to lack concentration at vital stages of his batting, and he has to get his commitment back into stride."

"For a player of his class he has not converted his innings, as in the past, into much larger totals."

Marinos march on

TOKYO, July 22: The Yokohama Marinos captured the first-stage title of the Japanese Professional Soccer League on Saturday, the stage's final day, beating the Kashima Antlers 1-0 on Argentine striker Medina Bello's goal, reports AP.

The Marinos led the first-stage most of the way this year. It was their sole first stage title since the league was inaugurated in 1993.

The first-stage champions meet the second-stage champions to decide the grand champions. The second-stage starts Aug 12.

Medina Bello struck from the outside of the penalty area into the right corner 12 minutes into the first half before 14,127 spectators at the team's home ground in Yokohama, south of Tokyo.

Verdy Kawasaki, the 1993-1994 league champions, made a slow start and stayed on the bottom of the standings for six games but climbed into second place by scoring a league record 12th consecutive victory.

Verdy could have won the first-stage title if they won and the Marinos lost Saturday.

More than 16,000 spectators at Hiratsuka saw Nobuhiro Takeda fire the winning shot with one minute left in the second half as Verdy beat the Bellmare Hiratsuka 3-2 at Hiratsuka, southwest of Tokyo.



France's Marie-Jose Perec comes in after winning the 400m hurdles at the Bislett athletics meeting in Oslo, Norway on July 21. She clocked 53.92 seconds.

WIMBLEDON NOTEBOOK

Three wise women

Tawfiq Aziz Khan back from Wimbledon

I decided to travel light. It was the second Saturday of the Wimbledon Championships '95. The day was very important for the ladies. Since the start of the championships I had been carrying a bus full of important papers, books, reference materials and a camera. Sometimes I felt the load was too much for me to carry, specially the camera with a heavy zoom lens. As photography from the Press Box at the Centre and Number 1 Courts was prohibited, the camera weighed heavier than usual. It was a psychological phenomenon rather than practical. Nonetheless, the reaction was strong and for once I decided to leave my bag and camera behind.

From the Southfields station the spectators would travel to the venue either by London Transport special bus or by taxi shared by five persons or the usual bus service, which, during the championships, was quite irregular and at times irritating.

Like our bus conductors, there were people in front of the station shouting and goading passengers into the taxis. Everyone was in such a hurry that none cared to mind the treatment they received at the hands of these conductors. Impulsively I hopped into the first available taxi on way to Wimbledon.

As I made myself comfortable for this short trip I saw three bespectacled elderly ladies sitting in front of me. From their pronunciation and intonation it soon became clear that they were from the United States of America. As our taxi made its way slowly towards the championships venue because of the long line of buses, taxis and cars, the discussions these three ladies were having amongst themselves gave me a clear signal that these were no ordinary mortals in search of fashionable pleasures but highly knowledgeable individuals who make it a point to enjoy the Grand Slam tournaments from the court-side seats. I marvelled at their knowledge of the game of tennis, about their personal equation with the top players and their sharp memory despite their age. They were freely discussing the finer points of each player at the Australian and French Open this year. They were as conversant with

Agassi's fierce double-handed backhand as Tarango's temperament. Easily they were three wise women of modern day tennis. The eldest of them with the most fair complexion and wrinkles all over her face was the most vociferous and possessed profound knowledge of the game. Despite her age she held herself straight.

As the taxi approached Gate 4, I asked "Are you ladies from the States?" Put

camera with me, I could only blame myself for my foolishness.

Harry Hopman was a fine doubles player of Australia and won seven major titles but made his name as the most successful of all Davis Cup captains piloting Australia to 16 Cups between 1939 and 1967. His was the era of perhaps the greatest players of all, the Hall of Fame Aussies from Frank Sedgman through Lew Hoad.



A tennis player returns after a practice session at Wimbledon. — Star photo by Tawfiq Aziz Khan

came the reply, "Yes." I could not resist the temptation of asking "Did you play tennis?" The fairest of them replied, "No. But my husband did."

"Who is he?" I ventured. As she paid the taxi driver, she turned around and said in clear voice "Hopman, Harry Hopman," and they started for the gate.

I was stunned. Before I could realise who was I travelling with Mrs Hopman came back and said, "Please spell the name correctly, H-O-P-M-A-N." She then returned quickly to her friends and disappeared in the crowd.

As I realised what have I done by not carrying my

Ken Rozewal, Ashley Cooper, Neale Fraser, Roy Emerson, Rod Laver, John Newcombe, Fred Stalle, Tony Roche.

Following his last Davis Cup match as captain, a loss to Mexico at Mexico City in 1969, he emigrated to the US to become a highly successful teaching pro, counselling such champions-to-be as Vitas Gerulaitis and John McEnroe at the Port Washington Tennis Academy (NY).

He later opened his own Hopman Tennis Academy at Largo, Florida. He was born August 12, 1906 in Sydney and died December 27, 1985, in Largo, Florida. He entered the Hall of Fame in 1978.

Kiptanui back on song

OSLO, July 22: Kenyan Moses Kiptanui just failed to break his own world 3,000 metres steeplechase record when he clocked eight minutes 03.36 seconds at the Bislett Games on Friday, reports Reuter.

Kiptanui set his world record 8:02.08 in Zurich in August 1991 but had to be content with the second fastest run of all time on Friday. With his 8:05.25 run in Rieti, Italy in September 1992

he now owns the three fastest times ever run over the tough seven-and-a-half lap endurance test.

"I was beaten in Stockholm (11 days ago) but that was because I had a sore hamstring," Kiptanui, the world champion, said afterwards.

"But now I feel good and I am really looking forward to the World Championships in three weeks time. I thought I had it in the last 100 metres but I just missed out," added Kiptanui, bidding to set the 53rd world record in the 71-year history of the cramped, atmospheric Bislett Stadium in the middle of Oslo.

"I will try and break it next time I run, but if not I will come back here next year and try to do it then," he said.

A Kenyan clean-sweep was completed by Patrick Sang, second in 8:13.02, Bernard Barmasai third in 8:14.70 and Joseph Keter, fourth in 8:19.43.

Britain's Linford Christie took advantage of an upset in the men's 100 metres to win the race in 10.12 seconds, coming through strongly over the last 20 metres to overtake Canadian Donovan Powell (10.15) and Olapade Ademiken of Nigeria (10.19).

But his expected meeting with Canadian Donovan Bailey, who last week clocked the year's fastest time of 9.91 second. Failed to materialise when Bailey was unexpectedly eliminated in one of the three 100 heats.

Bailey also lost out on a possible highly lucrative pay day. He now cannot win the huge bonus on offer to any athlete winning their event at all the 'Golden Four' meetings in Oslo, Zurich, Brussels and Berlin.

Twenty gold bars worth a total of 150,000 dollars go to any athlete who achieves that feat, as well as a bonus prize of 7,000 dollars each time they win their event at a golden four meeting.

Bailey said he made a slow beginning in his race after a false start, and Christie commented: "It's just one of those things."

Asked about his close

friend Colin Jackson, who earlier on Friday pulled out of defending his 110 metres hurdles title at the World Championships because of a groin injury, Christie said: "I am going to win in Gothenburg for both of us."

There was another significant victory for American Michael Johnson, who is planning a 200-400 double at Gothenburg. He won the 400 in 43.86 seconds, a time only he has beaten this year, to finish well clear of American teammate and world record holder Harry "Butch" Reynolds, second in 43.86 seconds.

The most popular victory of the night came when Norway's European champion Gier Moen won the 200 in 20.40 ahead of Britain's Solomon Wariso (20.58) and Belgian Patrick Stevens (20.60).

The capacity crowd of 20,000 roared on Moen, who, with his good looks and long blond hair, has become a national hero in Norway since



MOSES KIPTANUI

winning the European title in Helsinki almost a year ago.

"I wish I could take you all with me to Gothenburg," he told the crowd afterwards, although he said he was disappointed with the modest time just two weeks before the start of the worlds.

"I had a good start but there was nobody pushing me to a faster time at the end, I felt as though I was in a vacuum."

Agassi, Edberg in semis

WASHINGTON, July 22: Top seed Andre Agassi survived a threat by Columbia's Mauricio Hadad and second seed Stefan Edberg struggled but advanced to the semifinals of the Legg Mason tennis tournament on Friday, reports Reuter.

Agassi scored a 6-3, 6-4 victory over Hadad, who had made a habit of recovering from large deficits in the tournament.

Edberg had sailed through his first two matches but found himself in a dogfight with unseeded Cristiano Caratti. The 25-year-old Italian entered the tournament with a 2-8 record in 1995 but took a 5-2 lead in the final set before falling 6-4, 5-7, 7-6 (7-1).

Clash of clay court experts

STUTTGART, Germany, July 22: French Open champion Thomas Muster will clash with Spaniard Sergi Bruguera in a battle of the clay court specialists in today's semifinals of the Stuttgart Open ATP tennis tournament, reports Reuter.

Despite a foot injury and hot conditions, the Austrian cruised to 6-2, 6-0 quarterfinal victory over Spaniard Tomas Carbonell in just 53 minutes on Friday to set up the tie with Bruguera, the French Open champion in 1993 and 1994.

The Spanish third seed beat Germany's former Davis Cup player Carl Sester 6-3, 6-4 to reach the last four of the 1.04 million dollars clay-court event.

Daring Date

GIFU, Japan, July 22: World number six Kimiko Date retained her place in the Fed Cup tennis world group when she smashed aside Patricia Hy-Boulaix to take an insurmountable 3-0 lead over Canada today, reports AFP.

Date, semifinalist at Roland Garros and quarterfinalist at Wimbledon this season, underlined her ranking with a 3-6, 6-4, 6-1 win over the 68th-ranked Cambodian-born Canadian in the third singles match.

On Friday, Date breezed past Jana Nedjedy 6-2, 6-2, while Masako Kawamura defeated Hy-Boulaix 7-6 (7/4), 6-1 at the Gifu Memorial Centre, Central Japan.

A granny brands Mac a maniac!

NEW YORK, July 22: A 61-year-old grandmother claims tempestuous tennis player John McEnroe physically and verbally abused her during an argument over using the elevator in their apartment building, the New York Daily News reported Saturday, reports AP.

Eleanor Weinstein says McEnroe, who retired from his career as a player to become a tennis broadcaster, grabbed her from behind and spun her around in a fury over her complaints about his holding the elevator.

"I was afraid for my life," the newspaper quoted the grandmother as saying. "He was wild. He was absolutely out of control. I was so frightened of this raging maniac."

Once ranked No 1 in the world, McEnroe won Wimbledon three times and the US Open four times. But he also was famous for his volatile temper on and off the court and for his frequent arguments with officials and opponents.

Weinstein said she and other tenants were angered by the way McEnroe habitually held the elevator at one of the three floors he owns in their elegant building.

She said the argument Tuesday night started after she complained to the doorman that the elevator was broken or stuck on one of McEnroe's floors.

Suprianto in semis

SINGAPORE, July 22: Joko Suprianto of Indonesia beat Malaysian Number One Rashid Sidek here Friday to enter the men's singles semifinals in the Konic Cup Singapore international badminton championships, reports AFP.

Suprianto, a former world champion, won 15-3, 15-4 in 35 minutes, scoring with pin-point drop shots that repeatedly caught Sidek wrong-footed and wrapping up the match with a dandy smash.

Suprianto will face China's Dong Jiung — who fought hard to conquer Denmark's Peter Rasmussen 15-9, 13-15, 15-7.

Also through to the semis was Suprianto's compatriot Harmawan Susanto, who beat Fung Permadi of Taiwan 15-5, 18-13.