

Sport

Column One SPORTS TALK



Brian Lara (West Indies batting supremo) 'I have an incredible level to live up to. Nick Price is lucky. He can miss a couple of golf tournaments just like Andre Agassi can take a break from tennis. I can't. Mine is a team game. If I say I want a break it can cause resentment and there is always someone ready to come and take your place.'

DID U' KNOW? (The Professor does)

THAT sporting disasters have off and on struck an area that is primarily meant for pleasure. According to recorded history, the world's worst was when one thousand and twelve spectators were killed when the major stands at circus Maximus collapsed during a gladiatorial contest sometime between AD 138-161.

In recent times the worst sporting disaster occurred when on February 26, 1918 the Hong Kong Jockey Club race course collapsed.

The subsequent fire killed an estimated 604 people.

In 1963 a riot at a football match in Peru killed over three hundred spectators.

Sports have led to wars. In 1969 a World Cup match between El Salvador and Honduras was decided in extra time with the latter winning 3-2. This was followed by rioting. The subsequent war cost the lives of an estimated three thousand people.

While indulging in sports, one should always give priority to safety and security arrangements. Excesses by rival supporters should be controlled by motivation. It might help to remember that there is always the darker side of pleasure.

Sports WHIZZ KID COMPETITION FOR SCHOOLCHILDREN (The rules are published every Saturday.)

Sports WHIZZ KID competition-19

Tick the Correct Answer

(Competition closes: 8 p.m. Dec 29, 1995)

- 1. Ilie Nastase was famous for playing Tennis Football Cricket
2. 'Beamer' is a term used in Cricket Rugby Squash
3. Where is Sabina Park, the famous cricket ground, located? Jamaica Barbados Trinidad
4. Who is Bangladesh's national football coach? Pfister Agranon Gaffar
5. Tottenham ...? Hesparus United Rovers

Name:
Class: Roll No:
School Address:
Phone: (if any)

Navy tennis

CHITTAGONG, Dec 24: The annual tennis and squash competition of the Bangladesh Navy begins at BNS Issa Khan here from tomorrow, reports BSS.

About one hundred competitors from different ships and establishment of the Bangladesh Navy will take part in the four-day meet, an ISPR press release said.

Tuur retains WBO crown

AMSTERDAM, Dec 24: Regilio Tuur of the Netherlands retained his WBO junior lightweight title with a unanimous decision over Giorgio Campanella of Italy on Saturday, reports AP.

It was Tuur's fourth successful defence of his world title.

Campanella suffered cuts to the head during the 12-round bout at RAI arena. The World Boxing Organization title is regarded as the least prestigious of the World Championships staged by boxing's four major organizing bodies.

SAF snippets

MADRAS, Dec 24: Dominating the track and field events during the last five days, India and Sri Lanka grabbed two more golds apiece to take their tally to 21 and 11 on the concluding day of the athletic competition of the SAF Games at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium here today, report agencies.

The day was very dry for Bangladesh in the track and field events. Bangladesh participated in two events — men's 4x400 metres relay and women's 4x400 metres relay — and finished fourth in both of them.

In the women's 10000 metres race, Sri Lanka's Sujewa Nilmini took the gold in a record time of 35 minutes 42.74 secs.

Aqarab Abbas of Pakistan hurled the hammer to a distance of 66.94 metres for the gold setting up a new mark in the event.

WEIGHTLIFTING

India's 24-year-old iron man and 1995 sr national champion and gold winner, Satish Rai, today created history by revising the Games record by lifting in the jerk 180.5 kgs and totalling 320 at Kalavarar Arangan.

Rai, a bronze medalist in the Pusan (S. Korea) championship, in the snatch lifted 130.0 kg, 135.0 kg and 140.0 kg respectively in his three attempts and in the 2-handed jerk lifted 170.0 kg, 180.5 kg in first two attempts and failed to lift 182.5 kg.



Bangladesh's heroes yesterday — a delighted Karar Mizanur Rahman (R) who clinched the gold medal in the 200 metres breaststroke poses in harmony with his equally buoyant countryman Mokbil on the victory podium during the swimming competitions of the Seventh SAF Games in Madras. — Star photo (by fax)

Wonderful yet complacent

From Al-Amin



MADRAS, Dec 24: Two first half goals from Rakib Hossain and Mamun Joardar paved Bangladesh's way into the round four when they defeated defending champions Nepal by the odd goal in three at the spectacular Nehru Stadium on Saturday.

Bangladesh finished on top of Group B with three points from their two league engagements while Nepal, who had earlier confirmed their berth in the last four with a lone goal win over Maldives, finished second collecting two points from as many matches.

For Bangladesh, who were earlier, held to a goalless draw by Maldives, it was a wonderful start with Rakib Hossain, arguably the best player in the match, opening the winners' account with a cool placing shot past the onrushing Nepalese custodian Upendra Man Singh in the 16th minute.

Ten minutes later Rakib fed Mamun Joardar with a gem of a floater from the left flank corner for the mercurial workhorse to head the ball home amidst deafening roars from the eastern gallery where some thousand Bangladeshi youngsters who are studying at different institutions in India, waved

flags and honked horns. Apart from both the goals Bangladesh produced an attacking display of soccer during the first 45 minutes eventually cornering their



opponents with waves of attacks. But striker Mizan once again failed to live up to his reputation missing several opportunities and Bangladesh had to be content with the 2-0 lead at the breather despite their complete domination.

However, after the lemon-break, Nepal showed signs of a comeback in the match when substitute midfielder Mani Saha pulled one goal back in the 61st minute with a spectacular rainbow shot from the right-hand corner

of the box. Undaunted by the set back, Bangladesh got a wonderful opportunity to increase their lead when they earned a penalty two minutes later.

But Masud Rana's feeble 12-yarder was brilliantly saved by Upendra Man Singh, who dived to his left to deny the ultimate winners.

On the other hand Nepal, who took full advantage of Bangladesh's casual approach in the second half, almost got the equalizer in the 73rd minute when Gyani Serchen blasted a scorching right-footer from the edge of the opponents' box. But the ball rebounded off the cross-piece, much to the relief at the Bangladesh tent.

'I'm happy that we have won. But I must blame the players for a bizarre display in the second half,' said Otto Pfister, the German coach of the Bangladesh team.

In football there is no place for complacent players added Pfister to the press. While elaborating he said 'In the second half the approach of the booters was so dilly-dally that it appeared to me they have already scored enough goals to win the match.'

With this win Bangladesh took sweet revenge of their solitary goal defeat at the hands of the same outfit in the sixth SAF Games, held Dhaka in 1993.

... less than a year remains



ATLANTA, Georgia, Dec 24: (AFP) The 1996 Atlanta Olympics passed the one-year-to-go mark juggling a shrinking budget, sinking dormitories, irate international sports officials and sorely dissatisfied ticket applicants.

At the same time, several new Olympic venues passed their first international tests with flying colours and details of Olympic year events such as the torch relay were unveiled with great fanfare as Atlanta Games supremo Billy Payne maintained his relentlessly optimistic stance.

'It's an impossibility that these Games will not be a resounding success,' Payne said, a view he was called upon to repeat as often as a mantra in 1995.

Revised budget figures released in October showed less sponsor money than expected, more ticket revenue than projected and a break-even budget with little margin for error.

Organisers have contracts or money in hand for 86 per cent of the 1.58 billion-dollar budget, leaving 227 million dollars unaccounted for.

The revised figures left the Olympic contingency fund, once projected at 116 million dollars, at only 30 million dollars.

Sponsorship funds had been expected to produce 513.4 million dollars but are now projected to pay off with only about 428 million dollars.

Ticket money was anticipated to bring in 261.2 million dollars in funds, but that source is expected to bring 422 million dollars now. Higher than expected demand is one reason.

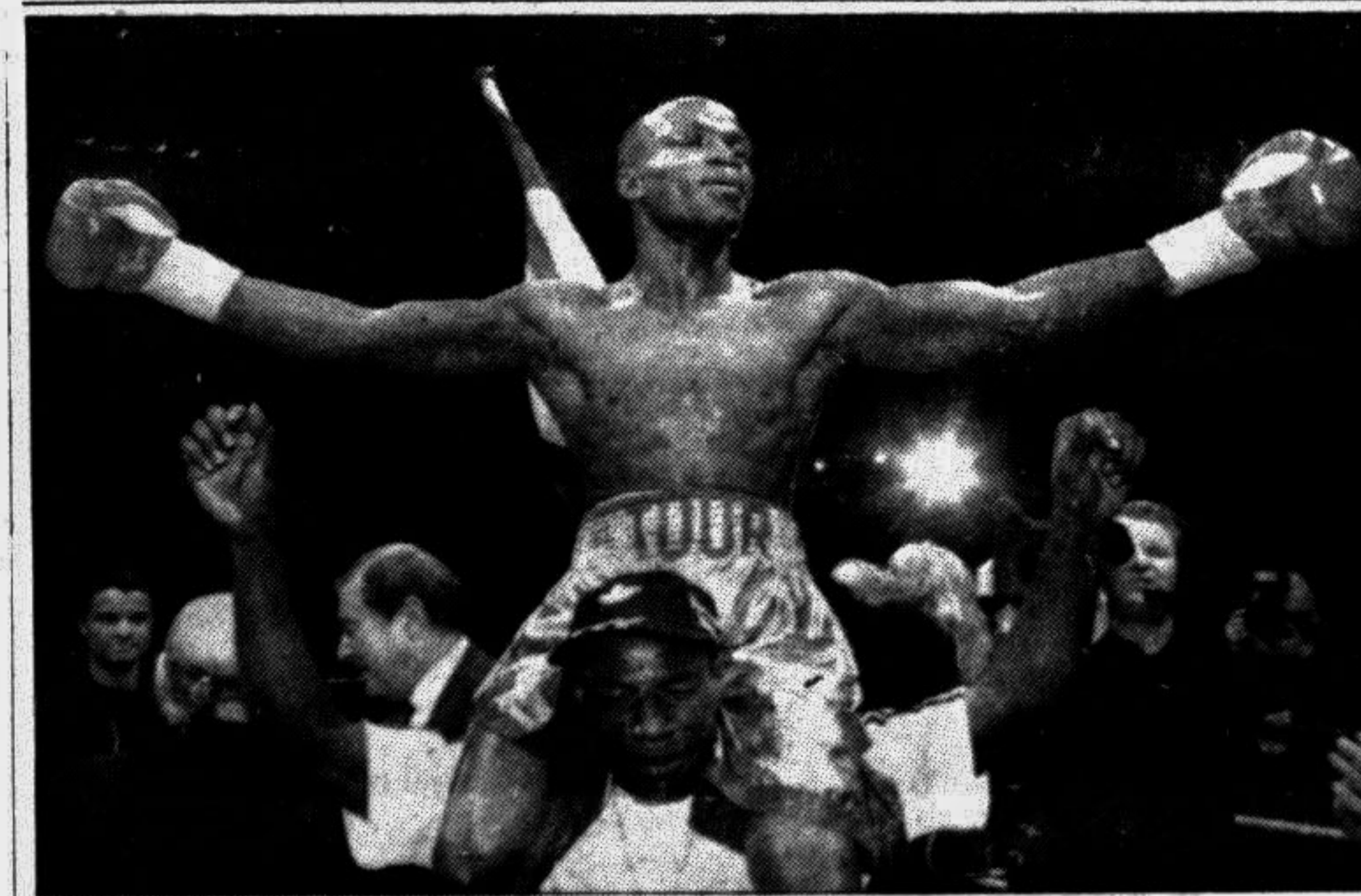
But that high demand led to one of the Games' biggest black eyes so far — when tens

of thousands of ticket applicants, including the parents of Olympic swimming champion Summer Sanders — sent in hundreds of thousands of dollars with their applications only to come up empty handed in the lottery.

Of those who got tickets in the lottery, many ended up with events they did not request, fuelling anger that four million tickets, many for premier events such as athletics, swimming and opening and closing ceremonies, were reserved for corporate sponsors, politicians, international VIPs and individual Olympic patrons.

There were also more immediate problems.

Work on the 85,000-seat Olympic Stadium, the show-piece of the Games, was stopped for two days after builder Jack Falls died when a light tower where he was working collapsed and sent him plummeting 50 feet.



Regilio Tuur of Netherlands rejoices after defending his WBO super featherweight crown against Italian challenger Giorgia Campanella in Amsterdam Giorgia Campanella in Amsterdam on Dec 23. Tuur won on points. — AFP/UNB photo

Madras masala

From Al-Amin

MADRAS, Dec 24: Bangladesh's German football coach Otto Pfister has seized the accreditation cards of his booters in hopes of keeping them on a short leash. But on Sunday morning he allowed the players to move around different shopping complexes in the city.

A dejected Pfister had earlier grabbed the cards of all the booters after finding most of them out of their rooms on Friday evening.

Besides, he had also advised the players not to shut the doors so that he could inspect the rooms whenever he wished.

Karar Mizanur Rahman made the most of a false start by Indian natant Harinder Singh to win the gold in the 100 metres breaststroke today.

Although the Indian finished first in a photo finish at the Vallechery Aquatic complex, Harinder was disqualified after the TV replay confirmed a false start.

Otto Pfister is well known for his humour. But none of his previous quips could match the one he cracked at the Games' Village dining hall on Saturday.

'I am from China,' replied Pfister to the Pak hockey team manager's inquiry. And when the apparently convinced Pakistan manager wanted to know the home state of the jovial soccer coach, he answered with a laugh, 'Dhaka...'

Diego not going to Canada

BUENOS AIRES, Dec 24: Soccer star Diego Maradona cancelled at the last minute a trip to Canada to spend the Christmas holiday with his brother Hugo, a news agency reported Saturday, reports AP.

Maradona, his wife and their two daughters were expected to board a flight to Toronto, but their reservations were cancelled by a tourist agency employee one hour before departure, the Diarios Y Noticias agency reported.

The reason for the cancellation was not disclosed.

Hugo Maradona plays in North America.

Peter's early Christmas!

BONN, Dec 24: The family of tennis champion Steffi Graf has made a quick pre-Christmas visit to cheer up her father Peter, in jail pending investigations into tax evasion allegations, Bild Am Sonntag reported today, reports AFP.

World number one Steffi, her mother Heidi and brother Michael paid a 45-minute call Friday on Peter Graf, detained in Mannheim since August 2, the paper said. It was the first family reunion since Peter Graf was remanded.

Steffi, who has just undergone a foot operation, tearfully embraced her father and promised to pay however much it took to win his release on bail. Bild reported, the paper added she was not allowed to bring along a Christmas present.

Peter Graf, 57, is spending Christmas behind bars after a Mannheim judge rejected a demand by his lawyers for his release. Judicial authorities will review the case for bail on December 29.

Bild quoted sources close to the investigation into Steffi Graf's tax affairs as saying that Peter Graf was likely to reappear before a tribunal hearing in February.

Graf, who administers his superstar daughter's earnings put at around 180 million marks (130 million dollars), is suspected of withholding details of her full earnings from tax authorities since she turned professional in 1982.

The 26-year-old player is believed to have paid just 10 million marks in tax during that period.

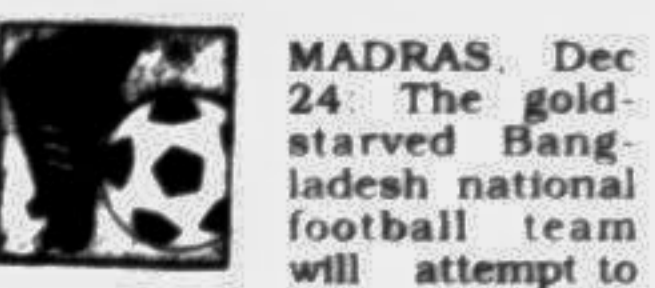
Steffi herself is still under investigation, but Der Spiegel magazine said it is unlikely she will be formally accused as tax officials working on the case believe her father withheld from her information on the state of the player's finances.

TODAY'S FIXTURES

- Premier Division cricket league: Abahani KC vs Agrani Bank SC (Dhaka Stadium)
Yamaha First Division cricket league: Ajax SC vs Dhanmondi Club (CCG)
Acme Second Division cricket league: Azad SC vs DOHS (MOS) Evergreen SC vs Rayer Bazar SC (DCS) Young Pegasus 'A' vs Lalbagh USC (DCG)

Booters battle Lankans today Pfister's perfect recipe

From Al-Amin



MADRAS, Dec 24: The gold-starved Bangladesh national football team will attempt to go a step further in their campaign to capture the long awaited SAF Games football gold when they take on a strong Sri Lankan outfit on the eighth day of the seventh edition of the biennial regional meet at the Nehru Stadium at 5:30 pm (local time) here tomorrow.

The first semifinal of the soccer competition featuring the two teams, neither of whom have struck gold in the last six SAF Games, will be followed by the second semi between two two-time champions holders Nepal and hosts India at the same venue.

Radio Bangladesh is likely to broadcast running commentary of the Bangladesh game while both matches may be viewed live via satellite on Doordarshan, the state-run Indian television network.

The Bangladesh team are not expected to make any change to their regular eleven for tomorrow's clash with Sri Lanka, against whom our booters have a marvellous record of five wins in as many encounters — the latest being a lone-goal victory in the Myanmar quadrangular meet last month. Their last match-up in the SAF Games was in Islamabad in 1989 when the islanders lost 1-3.

'I'm against any change in the regular eleven unless any last minute injury forces me to do that,' said coach Otto Pfister to the journalists at

the Games village on Sunday. The German coach of the national football team further added that Sri Lanka is a good side capable of sudden counter attacks. 'They attack from behind with two players in the upfront. Besides, the physicality of stronger Sri Lankans are very much motivated towards the game,' said the illustrious German coach.



For the Sri Lankans, their main advantage is that they have played only one match in the tourney against our two. They fared very well against the Indians,' claimed Pfister while elaborating the strength of the opponents.

About his own team Pfister said 'Ours is also a very good side. But what hinders us is the players' loss of concentration in the middle which is a very bad sign.' Pfister, who has been irri-

tated by the organisers since the arrival of the Bangladesh football team in Madras on December 16, criticised the hosts for their poor handling of the ground. Besides, he also expressed his dissatisfaction at the bizarre fixture which dictates the 3rd-place play-off to be held within 24 hours of the semifinals and the final match to be held under the scorching sun at 1 pm on December 27.

When the condition of the pitch at the Nehru Stadium is not upto the mark, having the regular rehearsal for the concluding ceremony inbetween matches was a bad decision on the part of the authorities,' said a furious Pfister.

Even after pointing out all these difficulties, Pfister rounded off with an optimistic note saying, 'We will fight to win.'

On the other hand, Pfister's Sri Lankan counterpart Parreira said, 'My two key players — Amanullah and Roshan — didn't click in the previous match against India. If the two had offered their usual form, things would have been different.'

When asked if the two would fare better tomorrow, the Brazilian trainer said, 'It is their duty to put in their best.'

Regarding his opposing team Parreira opined, 'Bangladesh are a very good side and I have seen a few of their games since 1993. But, like the other seven nations, what they lack is motivation during the whole 90 minutes.'

'Besides,' said Parreira, 'their performance often fluctuates greatly.'

Fowler ignites Liverpool



LONDON, Dec 24: A Robbie Fowler hattrick spurred Liverpool to a 3-1 win over Arsenal and moved them to third in the English Premier league on Saturday, reports Reuter.

Tottenham lost their chance of filling second place when they were held 2-2 at home by bottom club Bolton.

Above them, high-flying Newcastle extended their overall lead to 10 points as they comfortably beat visiting Nottingham Forest 3-1.

With Manchester United not in action until Sunday when they visit Leeds, Tottenham must had left confident of replacing them, at least temporarily, as Newcastle's nearest challengers.

But two goals within three minutes from Scott Green and Icelandic international Gudni Bergsson late in the second half saw Bolton grab a draw.

Newcastle now have 45 points from 19 matches with Manchester United on 35 with a game in hand. Liverpool and Tottenham both have 34.

Fowler took his goal tally for the season to 18 as Liverpool recovered from being a goal down after only seven minutes when Ian Wright scored from the penalty spot after being brought down by defender Mark Wright.

Paul Merson should have put the London club further ahead soon after when he was put clear in the penalty area but his shot flew high over the bar.

But Liverpool began to take a firmer grip on the match with Stan Collymore prominent in a series of attacks and five minutes before the interval they gained their reward with a superb goal.

Steve McManaman threaded the ball through to Collymore who laid it off for Fowler to blast a stunning shot past David Seaman.

Liverpool stepped up the pace in the second half and went ahead in the 59th minute with another clinical finish from Fowler, a free-

kick from Wright was flicked on by Collymore and Fowler raced on to beat Seaman.

Fowler completed his hattrick in the 78th minute from another cross by Collymore. Seaman appeared to have the ball in his hands but he spilled the header and it trickled past him into the net.

With the chasing pack continuing to drop points, Newcastle looked even more assured of the title as they dismissed the challenge of Nottingham Forest.

David Gillola took centre-stage in a sparkling Newcastle performance as they moved another step closer to the title by making it 10 home wins out of 10 this season.

The French forward opened the way for Rob Lee to fire Newcastle in front in the 11th minute and altho-

Japan asked to relax explosives law

TOKYO, Dec 24: Japan, which hosts the Winter Olympics in 1998, has been urged to ease its tough explosives law to allow foreign shooters below the age of 18 to compete, Kyodo news agency reported on Saturday, reports Reuter.

Three Japanese groups -- the National Rifle Association, the Clay Target Shooting Association and the Modern Pentathlon and Biathlon Union -- asked the government to set up special rules for the 1998 Nagano Winter Games, Kyodo said.

The gun and sword control law allows shooters to compete in international and major domestic events with the permission of a regional public safety commission. The explosives control law bans handling of gunpowder by under-18s.

Three young foreign athletes ran a foul of the explosives law and were forced to pull out of the World Cup clay trap shooting championship in Japan last September.

ugh Forest responded almost instantly through Ian Woan, Newcastle were always in command.

Ginola set the seal on a performance of arrogant, but undoubted mastery with his first home goal to put Newcastle back in the lead and then set up Lee for his second, a thunderous 30-metre shot in the 74th minute.

Former Tottenham defender Bergsson prevented the London club from heading Manchester United when he equalised for Bolton 11 minutes from time.

Tottenham took a deserved lead after 54 minutes through Teddy Sheringham's 15th goal of the season. The England striker tapped the ball home from close range.

The points looked secure in the 71st minute when striker Chris Armstrong lobbed the advancing Keith Branagan.

Green cut the deficit to 2-1 in the 76th minute when he robbed Justin Edinburg on the edge of the penalty area and scored with a delicate chip into the corner of the net.

Spurs again lost possession on the left-hand side in the 79th minute, the ball was pulled back from the by-line and the unmarked Bergsson scored from close range.

Brazilian Juninho provided the inspiration as fifth-placed Middlesbrough took a three-goal lead over West Ham inside 29 minutes.

He created the first goal after 22 minutes with a telling through ball for Norwegian international Jan Fjortoft, who hit a superb rising shot into the roof of the net.

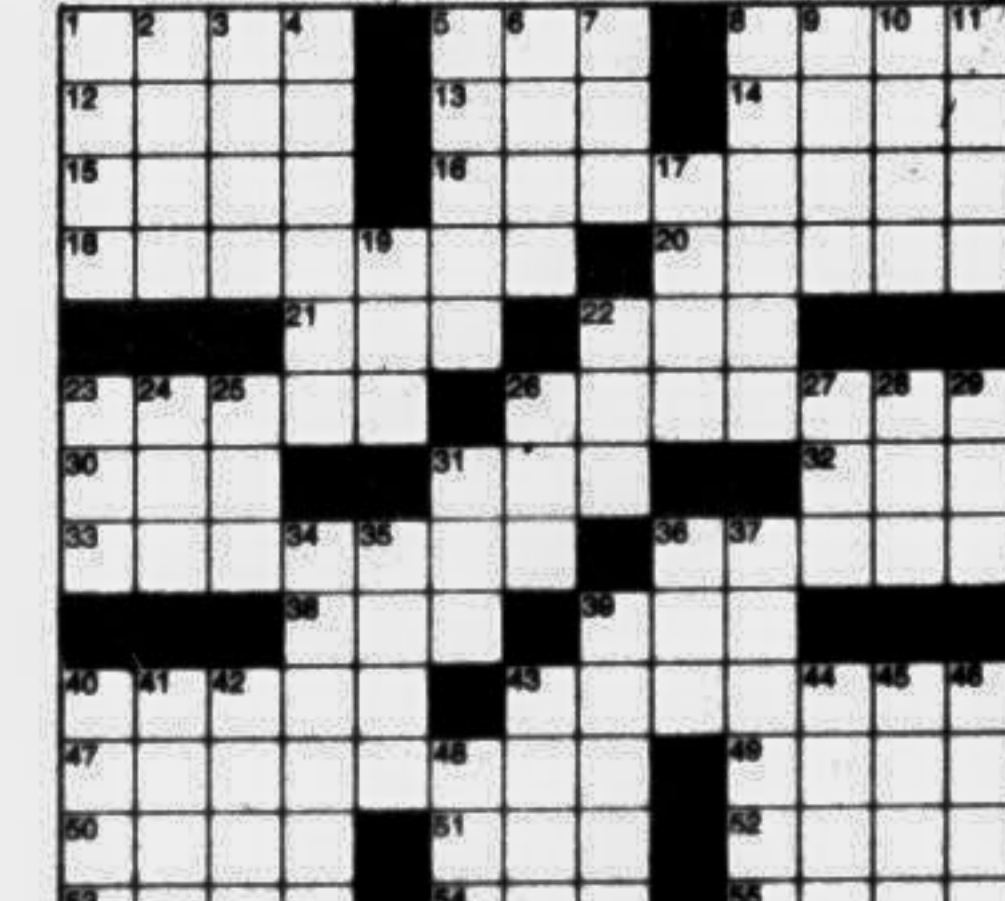
Neil Cox made it 2-0 a minute later with another excellent shot from just inside the box and fellow full-back Chris Morris headed home the third on 29 minutes.

West Ham pulled a goal back through Tony Cottee nine minutes from time but Middlesbrough immediately restored their three-goal cushion with John Hendrie scoring his first of the season.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

- ACROSS 1 Love too much 43 The whole situation 5 Arafat's org. 47 Long lurch? 8 Moist 80 Stopover 13 Bungalow 14 Slangy 15 The latest gossip 16 Overnight 18 Person or persons unknown 20 Essence 21 Yule quest 22 Apoca 23 Dander 25 Speech 26 Coop 31 Teeter-totter quorum 32 South 33 Prolonged absence 36 Blood-hound's cue 38 Trelis 39 Court 40 Phony 4 Stretch 5 The Capital of Togo 7 Kyoto cum-merbund 8 Kalahari, e.g. 9 Mel melody 10 Chello 'love boat' was one 11 Bridge, in periods 17 New York field 19 Fireworks audience's reaction 22 Paid player 23 Personal question? 24 Gun the engine 25 Literary collection 26 Make the last payment on 27 Dander 28 Art medium 29 - pros. 31 Item in Santa's sack 34 Children of Uranus and Gaea 35 Currier's partner 36 One of the Holy Trinity 37 Or-lit-tled word 38 Dahl's factory owner 40 Milne brain fraction 42 'The Lion King' badge 43 Essence 44 Architect Saarinen 45 Picture of health? 46 Pitch 48 Cartesian conclusion

Solution time: 24 mins. G L O W G A D G O T T L E O W E A D I L E O U A I E B I A D E L I E T H R I P P I E T T E R N O U N B E A B E N D O M E R B U P A R A N E V E R G O E G A I L E B I E N D I E D S A R K A L A H A R I A M E L M E L O D Y C H E L L O W E B O A T W A S O N E B R I D G E I N P E R I O D S N E W Y O R K F I E L D F I R E W O R K S A U D I E N C E ' S R E A C T I O N P A I D P L A Y E R P E R S O N A L Q U E S T I O N ? G U N T H E E N G I N E L I T E R A R Y



CRYPTOQUIP D S Y G A V Y O N A W H A V Z O X V D Y K D J B K I X P D S X K Y X I Q K J B V D A V Z D X N A W H Y P Q G Yesterday's Cryptogram: I FIGURE YOU COULD CALL THE BOSS OF A DAIRY THE BIG CHEESE. Today's Cryptogram clue: G equals P The Cryptogram is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that X equals G, it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.