

Sweden's Stefan Edberg returns a ball during his first round match against Spain's Alex Coretja at the Monte Carlo Open on Apr 22. Edberg won 7-6, 6-3. - AFP/UNB photo

Excitements grip Europe



LONDON, Apr 23: The name Cruvff looks set again to grace soccer at the highest level as the Netherla-

nds meet fellow European Championship finalists Germany on Wednesday in one of a space of warm-ups for the June finals, reports Reuter. At the same time. Yugoslavia

- banned when they were about to take part in the last European finals in Sweden four years ago - return to international competition in a 1998 World Cup qualifier against the Faroe Islands.

And Icelandic father and son - Arnor, 35, and Eidur-Smari Gudjohnsen, a 17-yearold with PSV Eindhoven, will make history when they play for their country together in a friendly against Estonia in Tellinn.

Dutch coach Guus Hiddink looks set to give the great Johan Cruyff's son Jordi the toughest of debuts in the Rotterdam game against deadly rivals Germany, particularly as Ajax Amsterdam striker Patrick Kluivert is unavailable through injury

Johan Cruyff, now coach of Barcelona, said: 'It happens often a player from my team is selected for a national side but now it is my son and I feel very

proud." The core of the Dutch side will be made up of Ajax players. who are on the verge of a domestic league and European Cup double, while former striker Dennis Bergkamp, now with Arsenal in England, will lead the attack.

The match is a last chance for Werder Bremen midfielder Mario Basler to stake his claim for a central role in German coach Berti Vogts's European Championship plans.

Vogts has guaranteed Basler a full game in the pivotal playmaker's role normally occupied by Borussia Dortmund's

now turning to the battle for a

Victory next week over

UEFA Cup place for its excite-

Fiorentina at the San Siro will

seal the championship for Mi-

lan, whatever happens to sec-

seven-point lead, the arith-

metic means Milan need to

match or better their Turin ri-

vals on Sunday to take the title

lucrative UEFA Cup slot could

hardly be more exiting for the

fans, or harrowing for the

be playing in Europe next sea-

son, and the top sides are so

closely bunched in the table

that nine — exactly half the

some of the answers, but extra

spice is being added by two

mponderable Cup ties in May

If Juventus beat Ajax in the Eu-

ropean Cup final, they would

join Milan in next season's

competition as holders, and

And if third-placed

surrender their UEFA Cup slot.

Fiorentina beat lowly Atalanta

in the Italian Cup final, they

would move into the European

Cup Winners' Cup, meaning

that the next four sides would

men who has rejuvenated inter

Milan, is among those under

ventus saw them fall from

fourth to sixth in the table, to

Saturday's 2-1 defeat to Ju-

Roy Hodgson, the English-

head into the UEFA.

pressure.

League form will provide

Serie A -- can bid for a place.

Seven Italian teams could

.... or the Sunday after that.

ond-placed Juventus in their

With three games left and a

By contrast, the scrap for a

ment, reports AFP.

match at AS Roma.

coaches and players.

MILAN, Apr 23:

With AC Milan

just one match

away from their

15th league title.

the rest of Italy is

Andreas Moeler, ruled out of the game with torn lligaments.

"I want to see Mario Basler over 90 minutes and to see where he stands at the moment," Vogts said. "For that reason alone the match is of special importance. The Yugoslavs, suspended

as part of international sanctions over the Balkans war. beat European Championship finalists Romania 1-0 in a recent friendly with a goal by 1990 World Cup veteran Dragan Stojkovic. In the European group six

qualifier, the Faroe islanders should be no match for a side that can still count on some of the most skilled players in Europe despite the loss of wider choice through the dismemberment of the Yugoslav Federation. But coach Slobodan Santrac

said: "Every international match should be taken very seriously, with every error likely to have dire consequences, especially against socalled small teams.

One of the former Yugoslav Republics, Croatia, whose core of world-class players with some of Europe's biggest clubs saw them reach the European finals at the first attempt, will have their credentials tested against hosts England at

"For this occasion Croatia will play with their strongest team," coach Miroslav Blazevic said. Several key players, including Lazio's Alen Boksic. are back after injuries and bad form

Boksic will come face to face with his former Lazio teammate Paul Gascoigne, who has led the call for coach Terry Venables to stay on for the

1998 World Cup qualifiers. Venables' side has 1990 World Cup defender Mark Wright making a comeback after a four-year absence, his Liverpool teammate Robbie Fowler making his full debut

up front and David Platt coming in for the first time this season and re-installed as cap-

Yugoslavia's suspension let in Denmark as last-minute replacements in 1992 and they surprised everyone by going on to win the European title. The holders are at home to Scotland.

Brian Laudrup, who plays for Glasgow Rangers, said, "Scotland are excellent sparring partners for us ... Scotland could well prove dangerous in the finals, they are a very spe-

Spain, one of the four seeded finalists, again play Norway in only the second warm-up possible amid a congested, over-long Spanish league season. They beat the Norwegians 1-0 in February.

Coach Javier Clemente's team will be at full strength and boosted by the return to form of playmaker Jose Luis Caminero, who inspired Atletico Madrid in last Saturday's crucial First Division victory at Barcelona.

Former Yugoslav Republic's Macedonia and Slovenia open their first World Cup qualifying campaigns. Macedonia are at home to Liechtenstein in European Group Eight, while Slovenia visit Greece, who reached the 1994 US finals, in Group One.

Another former Yugoslav state. Bosnia, still new to international football, take on Albania in a friendly

Hungary and Austria. European giants of the 1950s. meet in Budapest in another friendly involving teams which failed to reach the European Championship finals.

The Hungarians, who have qualified for the Olympic Games they used to dominate in their heyday, will be looking to under 21 midfielder Kristian Lisztes of Ferencyaros for inspiration

Leconte taken aback

MONTE CARLO, Apr 23: Frenchman Henri Leconte, a favourite with Wimbledon crowds since he reached the semifinals in 1986, said on Monday he had been refused a wild card for this year's tournament, reports Reuter.

"I understand their reasons. They have a new generation of up-and-coming English players, but it's a shame," he said.

Leconte, 32, has turned his last season into a farewell tour and said he had been looking forward to playing in his 14th and last Wimbledon.

"I have lots of fond memories of Centre Court there but they told me I should first have good results in Helle and at Queen's. I said I couldn't guarantee that," he said. Leconte recently recorded a

video of his best shots in prestigious settings. He said he had to play 1,000 dollars to hire Wimbledon's Centre Court The Frenchman is sure to

be awarded a wild card for his last French Open next month. He said it was an emotion he was looking forward to.

"The French Open is the tournament in which I had my best and my worst results. It is something special for any French player," he said.

Life's little irony!

MONTE CARLO, Apr 23: Andrei Medvedev said on Monday he would definitely play tennis for Ukraine in the future even though he did not feel proud of being a Ukrainian citizen and hoped to one day represent a resurrected Soviet Union, reports Reuter.

"All my friends live in Kiev and it is my home town. It is the capital of Ukraine so I'm a Ukrainian citizen. I have a Ukrainian passport," he said, Earlier this month, the

world number 15 said he would ask permission to play for Russia rather than for Ukraine but he has since given up the idea.

"I will play for Ukraine but I won't feel proud of it. wouldn't feel proud of playing for Russia either. I belong to a country that no longer exists. said Medvedev. Medvedev. 22. has not

played Davis Cup tennis for Ukraine this year and said the team event interfered with his main objectives. "I don't want to think about

the Davis Cup or the Olympics right now. I just want to improve my ATP ranking," he said. "This is an individual sport and I'm playing for my

Medvedev said he hoped one day to be able to play for a country reuniting the former Soviet Republics "I hope one day the re-

publics get reunited and then would be proud to play for this country. I would be ready to die for it," he said.

Rai's Paris days prolonged

PARIS, Apr 23: Brazilian forward Rai signed a new three-year contract for Paris St Germain on Monday but said he hoped to return to his na tive country later to finish his career, reports Reuter.

The 30-year-old Rai, who signed for PSG from Sao Paulo in 1993, said he had received several other offers from top European clubs but that he was happy in Paris and wanted to

When I came here I hoped to stay five years. You never know what the future will bring, but if I go to the end of my contract I would like then to go back and finish my ca-

with PSG and it ended badly when he lost his place as Brazil's World Cup captain during the US tournament and did not play in the final.

But he gradually found his feet in Paris and has had a su perb season as an outstan-ding member of a side which hopes to win the French title and European Cup Winners Cup.

BEDERATION feedback

"Endless-love" and "aimless-

battle" are two different

phrases very familiar to the

Bangladesh Cycling Federation

(BCF), perhaps the only federa-

tion of the country who have

not participated in any inter-

national competition but are

As far as the federation offi-

maintaining a healthy estab-

cials are concerned, they have

a tremendous affection for cy-

cling and they would love to

keep alive the sport at any

cost. With that level of dedica-

tion, few of the organisers have

spent most of their lives for

bearing no fruit. To run cycling

as a sporting event, one needs a velodrome where competi-

tions can be held and in

Bangladesh we simply don't

have one. So question may arise why do need such a fed-

eration which does not appar-

romantic and enthralling sport

in the present world. But due

to the negative outlook and

lack of patronisation we are far

behind in this sport in com-

parison to any other country

where cycling is recognised as

cycling because other than the

road races all the other short

events are held in this spe-

cialised track. This is a scien-

tifically-advanced track which

helps the cyclists to use aero-

Cycling in Bangladesh is still

practiced on flat grass tracks

which is not internationally

recognised. Moreover the

events which are held in velo-

drome can not be run in the

grass track. As a result, most of

our cycling events are locally

improvised versions, upon

which the BCF is running the

"endless-love" and "aimless

around 35 to 40 crore taka.

The BCF is trying heart and

soul to have a velodrome in

this country. But it is doubtful

whether they would succeed

battle will end?

So who knows when these

The cost of a velodrome is

For not having a velodrome,

A velodrome is a must for

Cycling is one of the most

ently have any future.

But all these efforts are

lishment.

eveling.

a sport

dynamic

Bangladesh Cycling Federation

part. Do you think it is justified to have such a costly project?

fied. Cycling is an internationally recognised sport. The

Indians and Pakistanis are

much ahead of us in this sport

because they have velodromes.

Until and unless we have that

we will never be able to com-

pete in any international meet.

MA: Yes, very much justi-

For want of a velodrome

A Star Special



because this is a costly project and we have other priorities.

Some people are of the opinion that it will not be wise to spend so much only for a velodrome when only 115 competitors took part in the National Cycling Championship last year in Dinajpur.

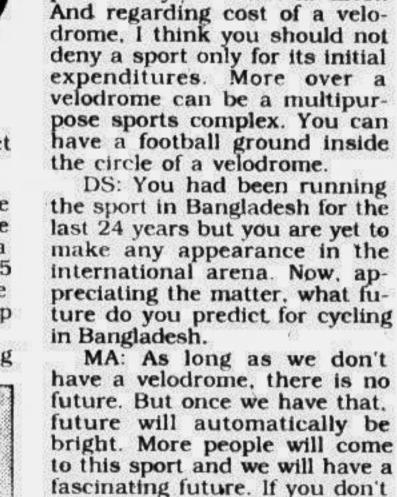
To know more about cycling



M AHSAN ULLAH

in Bangladesh. The Daily Star (DS) interviewed BCF general secretary M Ahsan Ullah this week in his office at the Dhaka Stadium. The followings are the extracts of the cogitation: DS: You are involved in cy-

cling for the last 38 years. You said that you need a velodrome, without which the local cyclists can not earn any international standard. And as far as the previous National Championship is concerned, very few competitors took



future will automatically be bright. More people will come to this sport and we will have a fascinating future. If you don't have a velodrome you do not have any scope of competing. DS: What manoeuvres have

you made so far to have a velodrome?

MA: It's a tale now. We had been asking for a velodrome to every government that has come to power. But none responded positively. Late president Ziaur Rahman once committed on this and instructed the NSC to look into the matter. But the NSC never gave any priority to our proposal. We are still trying. DS: How many competitions

do you arrange in a year? Have you arranged any in the last six months? MA: We generally organise

eight to ten tournaments per year. But this year (1995-96) we could not arrange many of those because of the political situation. Anyway, we are going to arrange the 21st National Cycling Championship next month. DS: Do you have any sponsor

or any other source of income other than the NSC allotments?

MA: No, we do not have any sponsor or other sources of fund because cycling is not a very popular sport in Bangladesh. But once we have a velodrome we will definitely have many sponsors. DS: Do you arrange any

training or coaching programmes for the juniors? MA: No, we don't have any

programme because we don't have any fund for this. What ever money NSC allots (2.25 lakh Taka in 1995-96 fiscal) we need that for arranging tournaments. So we do not ise a training camp.

have any opportunity to organ-An ideal velodrome No stopping for Stevenson

SYDNEY, Apr 23: Commonwealth Games gold medalist Nicole Ster venson won her

10th consecutive national 100 metres backs troke title on Tuesday at the Australian Olympic trials, a meeting marked by unexpectedly slow times, reports

Reuter. None of the world records predicted by commentators and competitors before the trials have materialised after the first three days of a meet ing in which many swimmers

have failed to live up to expec-

Selectors, who on Saturday will announce Australia's team for the Atlanta Olympics, will now decide whether to use discretionary powers after the winners of many events failed to meet the minimum Olympic selection times set by Australian swimming officials. Stevenson saved selectors

that headache by winning the 100 metres backstroke in one

minute 2.08 seconds, 0.38 seconds inside the minimum qualifying time.

A double gold medalist in the 100 and 200 metres at the 1994 Commonwealth Games in Victoria, Canada, last year, Stevenson has won the event at every Australian championships since 1987. "I didn't get caught up in

the 10th in-a row thing. I just wanted to qualify for the Olympics," Stevenson said. "I'm very happy and very proud and it will be something

to look back on when I retire. Tasmania's Scott Goodman also qualified directly for Atlanta by winning the men's 200 metres butterfly in 1:57.07, over two seconds inside the Olympic selection time and just 0.03 seconds outside former Olympic cham-

pion Jon Sieben's 12-year-old

Australian record.

Despite winning the women's 400 metres freestyle. former 200 freestyle world champion Hayley Lewis will have to wait until the end of the meeting before learning whether she will be chosen to compete in Atlanta. Lewis won in 4:14.45, more

than two seconds ahead of Commonwealth Games silver medalist Stacy Gartrell, the pre-race favourite who was, beaten into third place by teenager Christina Thorpe. The selectors will also have to decide whether to accept

Chris Fydler's winning men's 100 metres freestyle time of 50.40, 0.67 seconds outside the Olympic selection time. Fydler beat Polish-born Michael Klim, who on Sunday

swam the fastest 200 metres freestyle time this year and

Div I handball

Old Ideals outplayed Christian Youth Club 27-15 in the Ashraf Real Estate First Division Handball League at the court adjacent to the Dhaka Stadium, reports UNB. The winners led the first half by 12-8.

Jony was the highest contributor for Old Ideals with 11 goals while Navan and Abul scored four each. Saidullah netted seven goals for Christian Youths.

The match was scheduled for Monday, but could not be held due to inclement weather.

qualified for Atlanta. Western Australian teenager Helen Denman continued her dominance of world champion Samantha Riley in the breast-

stroke, adding the non-

Olympic 50 metres to the 100

metres title she won on Mon-

The pair meet again on Wednesday in the 200 breaststroke, with Riley yet to give a convincing performance in her first major event since returning a positive drug test at the World Short-Course Championships in Brazil last Decem-

Triple world record holder Kieren Perkins will also swim on Wednesday in the men's 400 metres freestyle. Perkins failed to qualify for the final of Sunday's 200 freestyle after swimming a heat time five seconds outside his personal

Two Euro giants en route to Shanghai SHANGHAI, Apr 23: China's

champion soccer team Shanghai Shenhua, will host Italian and Spanish league leaders AC Milan and Atletico Madrid in May and June, organisers said today, reports Reuter. Shenhua will play AC Milan at their 28,000-capacity

Hongkou Stadium on May 28 and Atlentico Madrid on June 5. in the two biggest matches ever to be staged in the city. "It is costing three million

yuan (361,000 dollars) to bring them AC Milan team here." said Yang Shanpu, chairman of promoter Betjing Golden Pond Media Ltd. The firm aims to get back

the money from ticket sales. television revenue and advertising, he told reporters. AC Milan have promised to

bring their strongest team he said. Soccer is enjoying a boom in Shanghai after Shenhua won the national club championship in 1995. AC Milan, seven points clear

of Juventus with only three

matches to play, are odds-on

favourities to win the Italian

Serie A, while Atletico Madrad

have opened a six-point lead at

the top Spanish League with

five games to play.

Mini-ban on Mike Tyson

INDIANAPOLIS, Apr 23: Mike Tyson has been ordered to stay out of bars and strip clubs after a woman claimed the boxer assaulted her in

Chicago, authorities said, reports AP. Tyson has disputed the woman's version of events, in which she said he fondled her

and tried to bite her face at a Chicago nightclub. Tyson is on probation after serving a prison sentence for

raping a woman at an Indianapolis hotel. The purpose of the new restrictions is to keep Tyson out of potential trouble situations, George Walker, chief probation officer for Marion

Superior Court, said Monday. "In other words, he couldn't figure it out before." Walker said. "It not only puts him on notice, but his staff and friends on notice."

Walker said Tyson agreed to abide by the new restrictions. The new restrictions were imposed by probation officials in Ohio, where Tyson lives.

Joe Andrews, a spokesman for the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction, said officials decided to prohibit bar visits because that's where the alleged assault took place two weeks ago.

"Strip bars are sexual in nature, and his offence was sexually related," Andrews

Tyson had his out-of-state travel restrictions tightened last week by Marion Superior Court Judge Patricia Gifford while Chicago police investigate the April 7 incident at a nightclub.

Palmeiras' third in a row RIO DE JANEIRO, Apr 23:

Irrepressible Palmeiras scored five goals in a game for the third time in a week as they hammered their latest victims Juventus 5-1 in the Sao Paulo soccer championship on Sunday, reports Reuter. Palmeiras had beaten Uniao

Sao Joao 5-0 on Thursday and Atletico Mineiro 5-0 in the Copa Brasil on Tuesday. Former World Cup striker Muller and volatile midfielder

Djalminha both scored two each after left-back Junior had opened the scoring in the seventh minute. Marcio Grigio scored Juventus' consolation goal. Palmeiras, who won the first stage of the competition.

have five straight wins in the second stage and saw Sao Paulo, level on points with them before the weekend. suffer a shock 3-1 defeat at home to America Sao Jose de Rio Preto. Santos, heaten 2-1 by Sao

Paulo last week further helped Palmeiras by overcoming Corinthians 3-2 with two goals by midfielder Giovanni and one by Macedo. Palmeiras will win the title

automatically if they finish top of the second stage, otherwise, the top two teams in the second stage will join Palmeiras and first stage runners up Portuguesa in a four team play-

Striker Romario scored two minutes from time to salvage a 2-2 draw for Flamengo, who dropped their first points in the Rio de Janeiro champi-

onship, against Fluminense. Flamengo were thrice behind in a game which saw there players sent off, all for second bookable offences.

Women's tennis' top twenty ST PETERSBURG, Florida,

Apr 23 (Reuter): Leading women's tennis rankings as issued by the WTA Tour on Monday: 1 Steffi Graf (Germany)

Monica Seles (US)

2 Arantxa Sanchez-Vicario (Spain) Conchita Martinez (Spain)

4 Iva Majoli (Croatia) 5 Anke Huber (Germany) Chanda Rubin (US) Kimiko Date (Japan)

Gabriela Sabatini (Argentina) Magdalena Maleeva

(Bulgaria) 10 Lindsay Davenport (US) 11 Jana Novotna (Czech

Republic) 12 Brenda Schultz-McCarthy (Netherlands)

13 Mary Pierce (France) 14 Mary Joe-Fernandez (US) 15 Amanda Coetzer (South

Africa) 16 Martina Hingis (Switzerland) 17 Barbara Paulus (Austria)

18 Irina Spirlea (Romania) 19 Julie Halard-Decugis (France) 20 Natasha Zvereva (Belarus)

WTA's leading money-makers

ST PETERSBURG, Florida. Apr 23 (Reuter): Leading money winners in women's tennis this year as issued by the WTA Tour on Monday: 1 Arantxa Sanchez-Vicario

(Spain)

417.557 dollars

405,990

95,449

2 Monica Seles (US) 336,653 3-iva Majoli (Croatia) 321,314 4 Chanda Rubin (US) 310,000 5 Steffi Graf (Germany) 227,465 6 Anke Huber (Germany) 198,886 7 Lindsay Davenport (US) 181.414 8 Concluta Martinez (Spain) 177,357 9 Irina Spirlea (Romania) 10 Julie Halard-Decugis (France) 174, 182 11 Jana Novotna (Czech Republic) 159,035 12 Mary Joe-Fernandez (US) 141.273 13 Amanda Coetzer (South Africa) 134,809

14 Martina Hingis (Switzerland) 115.753 413.511 15 Larisa Netland (Latvia) 16 Brenda Schultz-McCarthy (Netherlands)

109,229 108,259 17 Kimiko Date (Japan) 18 Barbara Paulius (Austria) 093,371 19 Meredith McGrath (US) 20 Gabriela Sabatini (Argentina)

games. place in the Intertoto and, you never know, follow Bordeaux's

the dismay of president Massimo Moratti who has made it clear he wants European football next season.

But Hodgson refused to be downcast, saying We'll get a UEFA Cup place if we take nine points from the last three "If we don't, we'll take our

fiers all the way to the final.

However, Inter goalkeeper Gianluca Pagliuca was not so keen on the summer tournament for Europe's midtable sides, which opens up three places in the UEFA Cup but ru-

I'm praying to God we don't have to play the intertoto," he admitted Parma, 3-1 winners over Bari at the weekend, lie a

followed by the two capital clubs, AS Roma and Lazio. Roma will be looking to striker Marco Delvecchio, on loan from Inter and who bagged a hattrick in Saturday's 4-1 romp over Napoli, while Lazio have the Serie A's joint top scorer in 22-goal skipper

Beppe Signori.

the moon

Gianluca Vialli said on Monday he was flattered so many clubs wanted to sign him at his advanced age and announced he would go to the European Championship finals in England in June — as a specta-

"It's nice to get so many offers at the age of 32 and to talk about them, rather than about retiring." the shavenheaded Italian striker told reporters.

"It's like buying a beautiful car - first you look at a lot of them, then you choose."

this season, said the Turin club-remained his first choice. Juventus reach the European Cup final. He said he would decide his future after the final against Ajax Amsterdam in

received several lucrative offers from foreign clubs, including Scotland's Glasgow Rangers. But he insisted that money

would not be the driving force

behind his decision.

ins players' holiday plans

relatively comfortable fourth.

Signori, who like many now Vialli over

MILAN, Apr 23: Veteran tor, reports Reuter.

Vialli, whose contract with Juventus expires at the end of His goals have helped

Rome on May 22. Vialli is reported to have

example and go from the quali-

Italians busy in guessing is desperate to impress national coach Arrigo Sacchi before the European Championships, said. My objective is to score my 100th league goal on Sunday against Atalanta "It might not be decisive.

> European campaign. Another seven points should see us through Signori's rival for a trip to England this summer is the

season's revelation. Enrico Chesa of Smpdoria The 25-year old brought up Sunday, a penalty two minutes

his 20th goal of the season on from time which earned Samp a 3-3 draw with Lazio. I hope to score a few more before the championship," he said. "But for now I'm just glad

to have scored a penalty which

keeps us on course for the

LEFA Cup.

but it's a crucial match for our

reer in Brazil, he said. Rai had a poor first season



Action from a Ashraf Real Estate First Division handball league encounter yesterday. -- Star photo