

Column One SPORTS TALK



Nick Faldo (British superstar golfer) 'Life is a box of chocolates. You never know what you're going to get.'

DID U' KNOW? (The Professor does)

HAT mercurial Shahbaz, Pakistan's legendary hockey star loves many things Indian. Well, for one thing, his favourite music is Indian music, whatever that means. His favourite singer is Asha Bhosle, the famous Indian vocalist. His favourite actor is Shahrukh Khan and favourite actress is Taboo, both heartthrobs of the Indian silver screen. Shahbaz's favourite film is Hum Hai Rahi Pyar Ke.

But, among all these Indian favourites, his favourite food is Pakistani and anything Asian; that, too, includes India. But, I bet all of you, his favourite sound must be the ball banging against the board behind the Indian goalkeeper, even if he is Asha's brother or Taboo's cousin.

Sports WHIZZ KID COMPETITION FOR SCHOOL CHILDREN

Sports WHIZZ KID competition-36

Tick the Correct Answer

Table with 5 questions and multiple choice options for sports events and facts.

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

Azlan Shah hockey Malaysia pip Britain

IPOH, Malaysia, May 4: Malaysia staged a major upset when they edged Great Britain 3-2 in the opening match of the six-nation Sultan Azlan Shah Cup hockey tournament today, reports AFP.

In the second match, the Netherlands beat defending champions India 1-0 in a dull match which was affected by the heavy rain. The bad weather caused the third match between Australia and South Korea to be postponed to a later date yet to be decided by the organisers.

In the opening match, Britain were the early aggressors and almost struck in the third minute but Kalbir Takher's shot from a penalty-corner set-piece hit the bar.

Malaysia opened their account two minutes later when Mirwan Nawawi scored off a rebound after Nor Saiful Zainal's penalty-corner hit was blocked by keeper David Luckes.

S Nishel Kumar scored Malaysia's second goal when he tapped in a pass from Mirwan from the left in the 24th minute.

Britain fought back and were rewarded in the 31st minute when John Shaw tapped in a long cross from Howard Hoskin.

Jason Laslett's reverse shot off a penalty-corner set piece in the 46th minute heralded the equaliser.

Malaysia got the winning goal in the 64th minute when S Kahan sent a long cross in the box for Mirwan to slam in a reverse shot that beat Luckes.

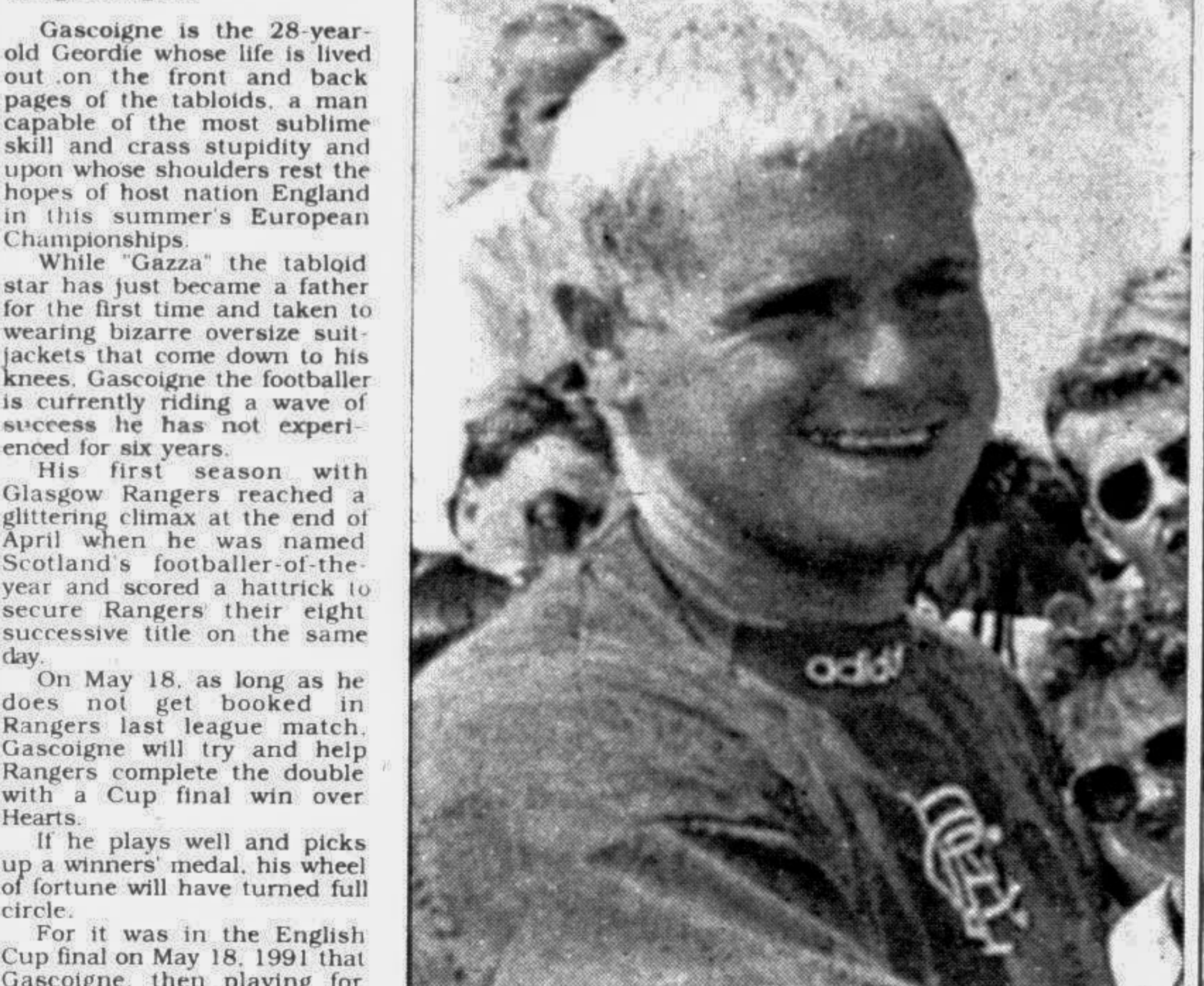
In the second match, Dutchman Cas Wolbert scored from a penalty-corner set piece for the only goal in a dull match for the Netherlands, the World Cup 1994 runners-up. Wolbert flicked in the ball to beat Indian keeper Edward Aloysius in the 45th minute.

BKSP, Khulna in semis Sajal stages solo show

An all-round performance by Sajal Chowdhury steered Bangladesh Krira Shiksha Protisthan (BKSP) into the semifinals of the 16th national youth cricket championship with a sensational tie-break win over Rajshahi DSA at the Dhaka Stadium yesterday. After scoring highest 79 for his side in the morning which saw BKSP, the defending champions, collecting 182 for nine in the stipulated 45 overs, Sajal took the last two Rajshahi wickets in two successive deliveries keeping them locked on 182 in 44.2 overs, still one short of a victory. BKSP emerged winners for losing less number of wickets. Sajal finished with two for 22 runs. He was equally supported by Saikat who captured two for 20. Put into bat, BKSP suffered a severe setback when they saw their top four batsmen return to the dressing room with the scoreboard on 16 in 7.5 overs. But, a responsible innings from Sajal, the skipper, and other BKSP boys Nasim

Gazza, a volatile virtuoso

LONDON, May 4 (Reuters): No-one has ever made a decent film about soccer because soccer has the capacity to suspend belief in a way film-goers would dismiss as fanciful nonsense. That's because soccer has its own soap opera with some of its main characters so extraordinary they defy belief. Diego Maradona, Eric Cantona and Bernd Schuster have proved classics of the genre, but Paul Gascoigne is something else again. Gascoigne is the 28-year-old Gaelic whose life is lived out on the front and back pages of the tabloids, a man capable of the most sublime skill and crass stupidity and upon whose shoulders rest the hopes of host nation England in this summer's European Championships. While 'Gazza' the tabloid star has just become a father for the first time and taken to wearing bizarre oversized suits that come down to his knees, Gascoigne the footballer is currently riding a wave of success he has not experienced for six years. His first season with Glasgow Rangers reached a glittering climax at the end of April when he was named Scotland's footballer-of-the-year and scored a hat-trick to secure Rangers their eighth successive title on the same day. On May 18, as long as he does not get booked in Rangers' last league match, Gascoigne will try and help Rangers complete the double with a Cup final win over Hearts. If he plays well and picks up a winners' medal, his wheel of fortune will have turned full circle. For it was in the English Cup final on May 18, 1991 that Gascoigne, then playing for Tottenham, launched himself at Nottingham Forest's Gary Charles in a suicidal tackle that smashed the cruciate ligament in his knee and almost cost him his career, shelving a proposed eight million pounds (£12.07 million dollars) transfer to Lazio in Italy. The transfer eventually happened a year later at reduced fee of five million pounds (£7.55 million dollars), but not before Gascoigne smashed the knee again in an incident in a nightclub. He had a bitter-sweet time in Italy, playing only 40 league



PAUL GASCOIGNE... Versatile, volatile playmaker.

made him such a wonderful player earlier in his career at Newcastle and Tottenham. His recent performances for England have been solid but unspectacular. He has worked hard, kept his temper and created opportunities, but is not quite the devastating, commanding player he was when he possessed that initial burst of speed. He still had that pace when he inspired England to a semi-final place in the 1990 World Cup in Italy, the summer his tears of frustration following a coming back to Gascoigne for all the positive things he can give them. Venables and the England team will be looking for Gascoigne's exuberance, his skill and his God-given gift for charming a football to take them all the way to victory in June. Whether or not he can do that remains to be seen. Will he be playing a central role in the drama about to unfold or will he retreat to the sidelines and offer mere glimpses of his undoubted talent?

Co-ordinators run short

LONDON, May 4: With only five weeks to go until the European Championship begins, city co-ordinators are complaining that a shortage of cash could result in a missed opportunity for Britain's tourist industry, reports Reuters. 'Euro '96 is great for Britain, but it could have been even greater,' said Laouise Gomez, co-ordinator for Manchester. City co-ordinators said some events and amenities had been cut because of the cash shortage, such as a huge screen in Manchester, where fans could have watched games live. 'It would have been just too expensive to make it safe. We would have needed barriers and extra security,' said Gomez. 'We would have liked to see the icing on the cake, a blaze of flags, razzmatazz... as well as the extra road signing and cleaning which will have to be done,' she added. Eleven sponsors have paid an estimated 4 million pounds (£6 million dollars) each for advertising rights for the tournament, but each of the eight venue cities has only received grants of 12,500 pounds from the government and 20,000 pounds from the English Football Association (FA). It will cost at least 30,000 pounds just to clean up the city after everyone has gone home,' Gomez told the agency. A spokesman for the Department of National Heritage (DNH) said the government had earmarked 400,000 pounds for cultural events, the amount local authorities had originally asked for. But he admitted 300,000 pounds of the money could only be accessed if it was matched by local sponsorship. Denise Preston, deputy director of Leisure Forleeds, said it had been almost impossible to find local sponsors who did not conflict with the major names and city councils had been loathe to pay for events and facilities for visiting fans. John Williams, senior researcher at the Sir Norman Chester Centre for soccer studies based at Leicester University was another unhappy man with the funding. He told Reuters, 'The local authorities have done a sterling job with very few resources. On a national scale, the cultural programme has come very late. There has been no sense of a national programme - it all seems to be too much of an afterthought,' said Williams. A six-a-side soccer contest for local schools will take place along with street parades, exhibitions and concerts. Despite all the financial obstacles, organisers said there will be plenty for fans and their families to do. Manchester is holding a Lord Mayor's Street Parade to open the tournament and will set up goal nets where fans can practice penalty shots. A soccer museum will be opened in Leeds, where visitors will enter through a tunnel and out on to a pitch to be greeted by the deafening roar of a crowd and the smell of turf. Liverpool will celebrate its maritime history with a river festival on the Mersey Durgine.

No compromise with mad cow!

LISBON, May 4: The Portuguese squad are not afraid of the Dames, Croats and Turks they will meet in June's European soccer championship, but they are taking no chances with Britain's beef, reports Reuters. Portuguese farmers signed a protocol with the country's soccer federation on Friday, agreeing to send a tonne of Portuguese meat to England for their players' consumption. Like other European Union countries Portugal has banned British beef because of fears about the spread of Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) or mad cow disease. The Portuguese squad leaves for Dublin at the end of this month for their final warm-up match against the Republic of Ireland.

Nat'l cricket qualifiers begin today

The qualifying rounds of the Pepsi 22nd national cricket championship will begin in the country from tomorrow. A total of 43 teams will play in the qualifying rounds divided into six zones. The winners of each zone will meet last year's four semifinalists - champions Sylhet DSA, runners up Chittagong DSA, Dhaka DSA and Biman - in the final round which will be held in the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium from May 16 next. There was a last minute change in fixture as Rangpur DSA, host of Zone B qualifying rounds, expressed their inability to arrange the matches. Bangladesh Cricket Control Board has rescheduled the Zone B matches which will now be held in Dhaka from May 10. The followings are the teams participating in the qualifying rounds as per their zones. Zone - A (venue: Dinajpur Stadium): Pabna, Panchagarh, Lalmonirhat, Rangpur, Bogra, Kurigram, Nilphamari and Dhaka University. Zone - B (venue: Dhaka Stadium): Dinajpur, Jaypurhat, Thakurgaon, Rajshahi, Gaibandha and Chapainawabganj. Zone - C (venue: Comilla Stadium): Chandpur, Noakhali, Maulvibazar, BUEJ, Rajbari, Narayanganj and Sherpur. Zone - D (venue: Chandpur Stadium): Gopalganj, Comilla, Faridpur, Jamalpur, Barisal, Patuakhali and Jahangirnagar University. Zone - E (venue: Barisal Stadium): Madaripur, Narail, Khulna, Jhenidha, Kushtia, Satkhira and Magura. Zone - F (venue: Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium): Gazipur, Manikganj, Tangail, Mymensingh, Meherpur, Chuadanga, Narsingdi and Jessore.

Friendly handball

Bangladesh Handball Referees Association defeated Japan Overseas Corporation (JIKI) by 19 goals in an exhibition match held yesterday at the Dhaka Stadium handball court. The match, arranged by the Bangladesh Handball Federation (BHF) as part of their Eid reunion, was tied 9-9 in the first half. Kiran scored highest five goals while Babu, Salauddin and Lovelu added four each to the referees' account. On the other hand, Vasio (7) and Mutub (3) were the leading scorers for the JIKI side. BHF president and secretary - Abdul Hamid and Asaduzzaman, were present on the occasion.

Basketball tourney

A ten-team basketball tournament will be held in the capital from May 9 under the auspices of Dhumketu Club to mark the club's tenth anniversary. The following are the teams taking part in the tournament arranged with the support of the Bangladesh Basketball Federation: Josephites, Eagles, Greys, Saons, Surid, Mariner Youngs, Gregorians, Angels, Rangers and hosts Dhumketu Club.

Nat'l chess qualifying rounds on

The preliminary phase of the 22nd national chess championship began yesterday at the chess room of the National Sports Council, reports UNB. A total of 114 players, including 23 rated players, from all over Bangladesh and taking part in the 11-round Swiss league system competition.

Veterans' show of class

LONDON, May 4: Three of English cricket's senior pros demonstrated their resilience on Friday, ignoring the chilly temperatures which have accompanied the new county championship season, reports Reuters. Former Test players Martyn Moxon and Kim Barnett, who have given up the captaincy of Yorkshire and Derbyshire respectively to concentrate on their batting, responded by becoming the first players to register 1996 championship double hundreds. Moxon reached 213 as he and fellow opener Michael Vaughan put on 362 for the first wicket against Glamorgan, Yorkshire's best partnership for any wicket for over 50 years, lifting his side to a massive 836 for eight declared in Cardiff. Barnett was in equally good touch, scoring exactly 200 on his 350th first-class appearance for the county, allowing new Derbyshire skipper Dean Jones to declare on 362 for eight against Leicestershire. Graham Gooch, playing his first first-class innings since being named an England selector, also swiftly into his stride for Essex. The 42-year-old opener launched his 24th county season with 85 off just 98 balls as Essex reached 285 for five in reply to Worcestershire's 201 all out.

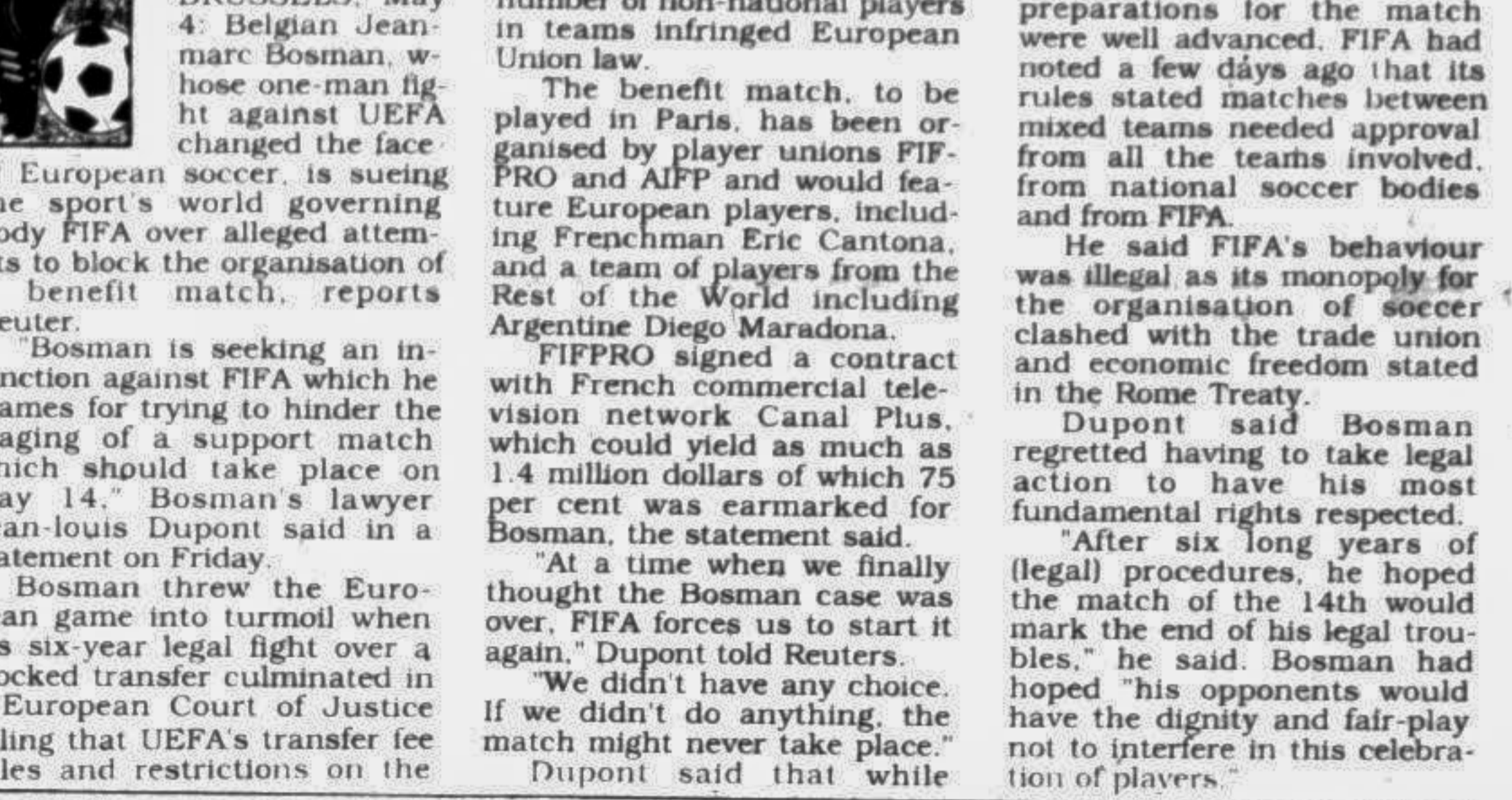
Venables' final voyage

LONDON, May 4 (Reuters): Even if coach Terry Venables leads England in the European Championship final on June 30, he will be out of a job on July 1. Venables announced his resignation as England's national coach in January, saying that legal cases he is fighting later in the year would occupy too much of his time for him to continue to do justice to the job. And on Thursday the English Football Association ended four months of intense speculation by announcing Chelsea manager Glenn Hoddle as Venables' successor. So the outgoing chief has just one chance to bring his country the soccer glory it has craved for 30 years. If England win the Championship Venables will go out as a hero. And in the eyes of millions of English fans that is the only thing that will bring his brief 2-1 and a half years tenure to a successful conclusion. As host nation, Venables has had the dubious luxury of being able to experiment with his side during a series of friendlies since 1994. So far in his 16 matches in charge, England have won seven times, drawn eight and lost just once - to world champions Brazil - but the real test is about to come, starting with the group matches against Switzerland, Scotland and the Netherlands. England, who codified the laws of the game and gave soccer to the world in the mid-19th century, have just one tangible success to show for all their influence on the world game - victory in the 1966 World Cup which they also hosted. In theory at least, Venables appears to have the players capable of celebrating the 30th anniversary of that sole honour by becoming European champions. He has talented strikers, creative and resolute midfielders, tough defenders and sound goalkeepers, but whether he can mix all of those appetising ingredients into a prize-winning recipe remains to be seen. In attack, England have class strikers such as Blackburn's Alan Shearer and Newcastle's Les Ferdinand. In midfield, Venables can call on Paul Ince, finding the sort of form that persuaded experimenting with playing three at the back and five in midfield. When he tried that formation against Croatia last month, England looked solid as a team, created a number of chances, but ultimately were held 0-0. Simply by being hosts, and also because they seem more organised than they were under previous boss Graham Taylor, England cannot be discounted as possible title contenders. They do not often lose at home, and will have fervent crowds behind them. Most of Venables' squad are too young to remember - or weren't even born - when Queen Elizabeth presented Bobby Moore with the old Jules Rimet trophy after England beat West Germany in the 1966 World Cup final - but they are old enough to know their history. Since that day England have reached the semifinals of just two major tournaments - the European Championship in 1968 and the World Cup in 1990. And apart from reaching the last four of the World Cup in 1990, their recent record in international tournaments is poor. In 1986, they were eliminated in the quarterfinals of the World Cup, and failed to make the finals in 1994. In 1980, they were eliminated after the first round of the European Championship. In 1984, they failed to qualify for the finals in France. In 1988, they lost all three group matches and in 1992 in Sweden drew two and lost one of their group matches to make another early exit. It is now up to the players to help Venables and some gloss to those sad statistics and to create for themselves a special place in English soccer folklore like the one currently reserved for the heroes of 1966. As the official slogan for Euro '96 proclaims: 'Soccer comes home.' For English fans nothing less than the Henri Delauney trophy staying behind after the tournament is over will make it a worthwhile exercise.

Bosman still on warpath

BRUSSELS, May 4: Belgian Jean-marc Bosman, whose one-man fight against UEFA changed the face of European soccer, is suing the sport's world governing body FIFA over alleged attempts to block the organisation of a benefit match, reports Reuters. Bosman is seeking an injunction against FIFA which he blames for trying to hinder the staging of a support match which should take place on May 14. Bosman's lawyer Jean-Louis Dupont said in a statement on Friday. Bosman threw the European game into turmoil when his six-year legal fight over a blocked transfer culminated in a European Court of Justice ruling that UEFA's transfer fee rules and restrictions on the number of non-national players in teams infringed European Union law. The benefit match, to be played in Paris, has been organised by player unions FIF-PRO and AIFP and would feature European players, including Frenchman Eric Cantona, and a team of players from the Rest of the World including Argentine Diego Maradona. FIFPRO signed a contract with French commercial television network Canal Plus, which could yield as much as 1.4 million dollars of which 75 per cent was earmarked for Bosman, the statement said. 'At a time when we finally thought the Bosman case was over, FIFA forces us to start it again,' Dupont told Reuters. 'We didn't have any choice. If we didn't do anything, the match might never take place.' Dupont said that while preparations for the match were well advanced, FIFA had noted a few days ago that its rules stated matches between mixed teams needed approval from all the teams involved, from national soccer bodies and from FIFA. He said FIFA's behaviour was illegal as its monopoly for the organisation of soccer clashed with the trade union and economic freedom stated in the Rome Treaty. Dupont said Bosman regretted having to take legal action to have his fundamental rights respected. 'After six long years of (legal) procedures, he hoped the match of the 14th would mark the end of his legal troubles,' he said. Bosman had hoped 'his opponents would have the dignity and fair-play not to interfere in this celebration of players.'

Charles Barkley (L) of Phoenix Suns battles with San Antonio's Will Perdue (R) of the possession of the ball during their NBA playoff game at West Arena on May 3.



Charles Barkley (L) of Phoenix Suns battles with San Antonio's Will Perdue (R) of the possession of the ball during their NBA playoff game at West Arena on May 3. - AFP/UNB photo

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer. Includes crossword puzzle grid and word lists for Across and Down.

CRYPTOQUIP. Includes a grid for a cryptogram puzzle and the text: 'Saturday's Cryptogram: WHILE WAITING TO SEE THE ACUPUNCTURIST I WAS ON PINS AND NEEDLES. Today's Cryptogram clue: E equals F. The Cryptogram is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that X equals O, 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.'