

Sport

TODAY'S EURO '96 FIXTURES

Italy vs Russia (Group C)
Venue: Anfield, Liverpool
Time: 9:30 pm
Croatia vs Turkey (Group D)
Venue: City Ground, Nottingham
Time: 12 am
Note: All times are Bangladesh Standard Time (BST)

EURO '96 STANDINGS

LONDON, June 10 (AFP): Following are the Euro '96 group standings after Sunday's matches:

Table with 4 columns: Group, Team, W, D, L, Goals For, Goals Against, Pts.

June 9 - Spain 1 (Alfonso 74); Bulgaria 1 (Stoichkov 65 pen)

Group C standings after Germany-Czech Republic match (played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, against, pts):

Table with 4 columns: Team, W, D, L, Goals For, Goals Against, Pts.

June 9 - Germany-2 (Ziege 25, Moeller 32); Czech Republic-0

Group D standings after Denmark-Portugal match (played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, against, pts):

Table with 4 columns: Team, W, D, L, Goals For, Goals Against, Pts.

June 9 - Denmark 1 (B Laudrup 21); Portugal 1 (Sa Pinto 53)

Arrigo concerns at complacency

Manchester, England, June 10: Italy coach Arrigo Sacchi warned his players on Sunday that only those who are fully motivated will be picked for the European Championship game against Russia in Liverpool on Tuesday, reports Reuter.

Sacchi was understood to be concerned about possible complacency, especially among players from top clubs Juventus and AC Milan.

The team played a lethargic practice match against the youth team of English league club Stoke City on Saturday, winning only 2-0.

Sacchi admitted: "The game was slow, mainly because of tiredness or possibly for psychological reasons. I watched the video attentively last night and asked myself who was motivated and who wasn't. It helped me learn which players were concentrated. I want maximum commitment against Russia."

Sacchi also used the example of Switzerland's performance in their 1-1 draw against England to illustrate his point. "The Swiss lost at home to the Czech Republic last week, but look at yesterday," he said. "They were psyched up and deserved their draw."

The two attacking positions are likely to be giving him the greatest problems.

At Stoke, he started with Fabrizio Ravelli of Juventus and the smaller, quicker Gianfranco Zola of Parma. But newcomer Enrico Chiesa, who has played only one international, came on to score in an improved second-half performance and is pushing hard for a place.

Sacchi will name his team after a training session today.

Proudest boy in Scotland

LONDON, June 10: A five-year-old shot and seriously injured in the Dunblane school massacre in March was Scotland's leading representative in the Euro '96 opening ceremony at Wembley, it was revealed on Sunday, reports Reuter.

Coli Austin was treated for multiple gunshot wounds following the tragedy in which 16 small children and their teacher were killed by a gunman who then turned a gun on himself.

The identity of the boy was revealed by the Scottish Sunday Post newspaper who said he was picked by a family friend after the newspaper asked for nominations for the honour. "It has been the best-kept secret in Scotland," said the newspaper.

The child was nominated by George Sneddon who said: "Ever since I've known Coli he's been crazy about football. He's a bright lad and I'm sure he'll appreciate just how huge an event Euro '96 is."

Coli flew to London on Thursday with his father Joe and two-year-old sister Miri and led on school children representing Scotland in the parade of finalists during the opening ceremony.

His mother Rona was also in attendance but she went to London by train as she is expecting another baby.

Panama beat Belize

PANAMA CITY, June 10: Panama beat Belize 4-1 (halftime, 2-0) in a Central American World Cup qualifying match on Sunday, reports Reuter.

Scorers: Panama - Julio Cesar Dely Valdes (15th, 57th, 61st), Victor Rene Mendietta (87th); Belize - Jorge Garcia (60th)

Panama Qualified for the CONCACAF next stage.

Mixed fortunes for biggies

LONDON, June 10: Favourites Germany began the Euro '96 campaign with a convincing 2-0 victory over the Czech Republic on Sunday, champions Denmark could only struggle to a draw against Portugal and Spain came back from behind from six yards, fired a left-footed shot over the bar.

The drama continued at the start of the second period before Portugal drew level with a well-taken goal that their greater adventure and incisive passing deserved.

Benfica striker Joao Pinto broke down the left before picking out his namesake Sa

yellow cards. Ziege, who missed the 1994 World Cup finals because of a knee injury, set the tone for the victory in the 26th minute with a spectacular long-range effort, only his third goal for his country.

The Bayern Munich wing-back drifted in from the left flank, took a pass from striker

Fred Bobic and fired the ball into the left-hand post after beating two defenders. Six minutes later Moeller, a major disappointment at USA '94 when the Germans went out in the quarter-finals, scored another brilliant goal from almost the same place.

The swift Borussia Dortmund star struck a low shot into the left-hand corner from some 20 metres after a blistering run from just over the halfway line.

The Germans' final build-up to the England tournament was marred by problems including a rare home defeat by France last weekend.

But despite intense Czech pressure in the second half, they played some good football on the smooth Old Trafford surface and can face tough group games against Italy and Russia with extra confidence.

Group B's seeded team, Spain, were saved from defeat by substitute Alfonso Perez who scored with his first touch of the ball in a fast and ill-tempered match which saw two red cards.

Perez glanced in a shot by Sergi Barjuna at a time when the Bulgarians had been reduced to 10 men.

Bulgaria had gone ahead after 65 minutes through a Hristo Stoichkov penalty after Emil Kostadinov was fouled.

The expulsions began with Bulgaria's Petar Hubchev - the first man to be sent off in the finals for 12 years - who brought down Jose Luis Caminero in the 72nd minute.

Four minutes later Spain's Juan Pizzi was ordered off for fouling Radostin Kishishev.

Stoichkov was scathing in his condemnation of Italian referee Piero Ceccarini. The man on the field who most erred was him," he said.

"Neither (player) had a prior caution - I don't know what UEFA are after."

Kohler - the squad's most experienced player with 84 caps - was captain for the day in the absence of the suspended Juergen Klinsmann.

Team spokesman Wolfgang Niersbach said the 30-year-old player would fly home for an operation.

The injury spelt a slick performance from the Germans, who deserved to take three points from a hard-fought game which saw 10



BRIAN LAUDRUP

to share points with Bulgaria in a 1-1 draw, report agencies.

Denmark, fairytale winners in Sweden four years ago, were brought back to reality after surrendering the lead in a pulsating 1-1 draw against Portugal.

And the Danes were lucky not to lose a match in which the Portuguese showed why Pele is tipping Antonio Oliveira's talented youngsters to go all the way to the title.

To the delight of their 15,000 fan-packed Hillsborough Stadium for this Group D opener, Laudrup got the Danes off to the perfect start with a 21st minute strike.

But Portugal, who were true to their promise of all-out attack, finally grabbed the equaliser their slick, fluid football deserved with a header from Sporting Lisbon striker Ricardo Sa Pinto after 53 minutes.

Laudrup, playing alongside his elder brother Michael for the first time in the finals of a major championship, was the beneficiary of a dreadful mistake by highly-rated Vito Baia.

The Porto goalkeeper tried to clear a backpass but hit the ball straight at young Danish striker Mikkel Bekk. The ball ricocheted off his head straight to Laudrup on the right of the box.

The Glasgow Rangers striker burst towards the goal line before cutting sharply inside and rifling an unstoppable shot into the roof of Baia's net for an oblique angle.

The goal delighted the 15,000 travelling Danish fans who immediately burst into a rendition of "we are the champions".

Portugal had a number of chances to draw level, not least when Ricardo Pinto broke down the empty spaces on the right and crossed for midfielder Luis Figo.

Figo turned the defence but with just Schmeichel to beat



MOELLER

Pinto with a perfectly weighted cross for the unmarked 23-year-old Sporting Lisbon to head beyond Schmeichel from eight yards out.

The chances continued to appear at both ends but the best chance of victory fell to the Danes when Brian Laudrup found himself clean through on Baia after 70 minutes only to blast his shot straight at the advancing Baia.

Portugal almost snatched a dramatic last-minute win when a misunderstanding between Marc Rieper and Schmeichel let in substitute Jose Tavares who fired just wide from the edge of the box.

On a fast and passionate second day of the Championships in which two players were sent off and 23 received yellow cards, Germany lost key defender Juergen Kohler through injury. Kohler, who had said Euro '96 would be his last major tournament, limped off after tearing ligaments in his right ankle.

Germany, noted at 7-2 favourites after Sunday's Group C win, scored two spectacular first-half goals through Christian Ziege and Andy Moeller.

But coach Bert Vogts' joy was tempered by the loss of Kohler whose sliding tackle against Czech striker Pavel Kuka after less than 10 minutes of the game ended in the Borussia Dortmund stopper being carried off with a damaged knee and out of the tournament.

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HRISTO STOICHKOV

Inspector Danny Gilhooly said the police intended to catch the thieves before they ruin the tournament for thousands of visitors.

Police said the teams from Chile, Ecuador and Peru - who travel the globe on false papers targeting top sports events - were on the prowl in the streets of Sheffield.

Officers from the National Criminal Intelligence Service have warned regional police forces that the gangs could target motorway service stations and hotels as an estimated 300,000 fans from mainland Europe arrive for the three-week event.

"Watch your pockets," warned inspector Gilhooly. "I think we will be targeted because there are rich pickings to be had."

"Ordinarily, they wouldn't come to Sheffield because they would stand out - but that's not a problem during Euro '96."

Scotland hold Holland

Scotland provided the first semblance of a shock when they held fancied Holland to a scoreless draw in Group A encounter at Villa Park, home of Premier league side Aston Villa last night, according to a BBC sports bulletin.

In what was supposed to be a cakewalk for the dazzling Dutch, the Scots' fortress held firm under relentless onslaught of the European champions of 1988.

The Dutch raiders' supremacy was evident as they forced no less than 15 corners but still couldn't break the duck.

South Americans, a threat to Euro '96!

SHEFFIELD, England, June 10: The biggest problem facing police during the European Championships is not the hooligans but teams of South American pickpockets, said police here Sunday, reports AFP.

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England's plan of action

LONDON, June 10: Government plans to use national lottery money to help England win the 2006 World Cup, were firmly supported by the Football Association here on Sunday, reports AFP.

National heritage secretary Virginia Bottomley said a billion pounds could be used to campaign for the Cup.

The Prime Minister and I are determined that we don't have to wait another 30 years before we once again play host to the sporting nations of the world," said Bottomley.

The idea has already won the backing of Lennart Johansson, president of UEFA and likely to play an increasingly influential role in FIFA affairs after persuading the world governing body this week to allow Japan and South Korea to stage the 2002 World Cup jointly.

Johannsen is to stand against FIFA president Joac Havelange of Brazil when he stands for re-election in 1998.

Blackburn takes 7th place in Russia

Italian Guido Cappellini stamped his authority on the World Championship series with his third victory in as many races in front of over 300,000 people in St Petersburg, Russia, says a press release.

Starting in third place, Cappellini blasted into the lead followed in hot pursuit by Finn Pertti Leppala and John Player Gold Leaf driver Jon Jones a close third place. The three drivers set a blistering pace at the head of the field and on lap 6 Leppala dived on the inside of Cappellini to take the lead.

Cappellini then returned the compliment on lap 11.

At this stage, Jones was constantly looking for a way past the two lead boats when on lap 16 the pace boat was brought out due to another driver breaking down in a dangerous position on the circuit.

On the re-start, the three front runners recommended their fight for supremacy.

Massimo Roggiere nipped in on the inside of Jones to take third position on lap 26 but Jones recovered his original position on lap 33.

With 12 laps to go, disaster struck when John Player Gold Leaf driver Jon Jones' power boat engine stopped and he had to withdraw from the race.

John Player Gold Leaf rookie driver Paul Blackburn put in another steady performance to take seventh position in the race.

The World Championship series moves up to Chalon-sur-Soane for the Grand Prix of France on June 23.



Peter Schmeichel the brilliant Danish custodian thwarts yet another dangerous attempt from the relentless Ricardo Sa Pinto of Portugal during their Euro '96 Group D opener at Hillsborough Stadium in Sheffield on June 9. The match ended 1-1. - AFP/UNB photo

Americans ride on Reyna

FOXBORO, Massachusetts, June 10: Claudio Reyna scored in the 75th minute to give the United States a 2-1 victory against the Republic of Ireland in the US Cup '96 tournament before 25,332 fans at Foxboro Stadium on Sunday, reports Reuter.

It was the second match of the four-team, six-game round-robin tournament that includes the national teams of Bolivia and Mexico.

"I think we were all working harder in the second half," said Reyna. "It was a nice ball across and I just met it at the right time. We just kept digging and refuse to give up."

In the 56th minute of play, Ireland's David Connolly was sent free by Niall Quinn and easily beat US goalkeeper Brad Friedel low to the right side from 15 yards.

It was Connolly's first goal

and only the 19-year-old's third full international appearance for Ireland. The Watford player is one of the youngest on the Ireland squad that averages only 22 years of age.

The goal, coming against the run of play, broke a scoreless and relatively poorly played first half open.

The US equalised only two minutes later as midfielder Tab Ramos hit a shot from 38 yards into the left side of the Ireland net, giving little chance for 19-year-old goalkeeper Shay Given to prevent the goal. It was Ramos' fifth goal in 66 matches.

The eventual game-winner came when Reyna beat Given to a low cross from Wynalda on the left side as the midfielder connected with a sprawling kick from six yards.

This was not a game we should have lost," said Mick McCarthy who is 0-5-1 (W-L-D) since taking over for Jack Charlton as Ireland's manager.

"We shouldn't have given up a goal like that especially right after we'd gone ahead. This has happened on two or three occasions over the last few games."

The match was Ireland's third in the last eight days and came three years to the date that the United States defeated England, 2-0 in US Cup '93.

The first half was evenly played with the United States getting the better opportunities.

In the ninth minute, Ramos bid from 20 yards was stopped by goalkeeper Given going low to his left. Midfielder John Harkes set Ramos free at 28 minutes but Ramos' shot went wide to the right in the 43rd minute. Wynalda's direct kick from 24 yards was stopped by Given along the left post.

The US had an 11-7 advantage in shots while Ireland had a 7-3 edge in corner kicks.

Games' cost & concession

ATLANTA, June 10 (AP): Fans who get hungry while watching Olympic athletes pursue medals this summer might wish they'd brought some gold and silver of their own. The world's largest sporting event will feature some hefty prices at the concession stands.

Since ticket holders won't be allowed to bring food or drinks - except plastic water bottles - into Olympic venues, they will form a huge captive audience for 4 dollars hot dogs, 3.25 dollars Cokes, 3.25 dollars popcorn and 4.50 dollars beer.

And try this for Olympic sticker shock: 4 dollars for a litre bottle of water that sells at grocery stores for less than 1 dollar.

The concession prices at the Summer Games are higher than the average for major league sports arenas across the country. But the Olympic Games, organisers emphasise, are no ordinary sporting event.

Officials defended the prices, saying they are naturally higher for a major event like the Olympics, just as they would be for a major hotel.

"I don't know the last time you went into the Ritz-Carlton, sat down at the bar and ordered a Perrier, but you're probably going to pay 4.50 dollars," said Scott Anderson, managing director for Games services at the Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games.

For those who are merely thirsty, Anderson said, all Olympic venues will have free water available.

"Water is a beverage when it's in a container like that and is served at a concession stand," he said. "For those that are looking for something to quench their thirst, there is free water... so it is a choice that you or I make as a consumer."

Spectators got a glimpse of the cost of Olympic refreshment last month at the Atlanta Grand Prix, a track meet that inaugurated the Olympic Stadium. The stadium gets one more pre-games workout when the US Olympic track and field trials begin Friday.

The wide selection and quality offered at Olympic concessions justify the prices, Anderson said. "I think they are reasonable and comparable with similar sporting events of this caliber... the Super Bowl, the World Series, the NCAA Final Four," Anderson said.

While an Olympic soft drink could set you back 3.25 dollars, the average price for a soda is 1.75 dollars at NFL stadiums, 1.82 dollars at NBA arenas, 1.81 dollars at major league baseball parks and 1.85 dollars at NHL venues, according to Chicago-based Team Marketing Report Inc., which publishes an annual survey of concession prices at big league sporting events.

The Olympic prices are comparable to those at Atlanta Braves games, ranked as baseball's most expensive in the Team Marketing Report survey.

Olympic spectators, typically well-heeled compared with the average bleacher fan, likely will take the menu prices in stride, said Jed Pearsall, a sports marketing consultant whose firm tracks consumer habits.

"It's not a hard sell," Pearsall said. "In almost every event, people will respond. It's high, but we expect it."

But Pearsall, president of Performance Research in Newport, Rhode Island, said the premium prices contribute to the perception that the games are becoming merely an oversized pro sports event.

"I wish the Olympics had taken the high road on this," he said.

Not only refreshments will strain the pocketbook. Souvenir stands inside the venues also will offer "specialty" items at higher prices than the standard fare available elsewhere.

For example, spectators attending basketball at the Georgia Dome can buy exclusive "site specific" T-shirts. A basketball T-shirt, available only at the Dome, will cost 25 dollars, compared with 18 for the cheapest regular Olympic shirt.

General merchandise, such as shirts with the Centennial Games flame logo, will cost the

Atlanta Games Palestine's first

GAZA, June 10: Palestinian sportsmen will take part in the Olympic Games for the first time in Atlanta, the Palestinian Olympic Committee (POC) said on Sunday, reports Reuter.

The Palestinian flag will fly high on the poles in Atlanta for the first time in modern history, alongside the flags of 197 other nations," said Sa'ad Hakoura, spokesman for the POC.

The committee said it would send three athletes - two runners and a boxer - to Atlanta next month.

Majed Abu Marahil, a policeman from self-ruled Gaza, will compete in the 10,000 metres and will carry the flag in the opening ceremony. They POC's 13-member delegation will march behind a sign reading "Palestine."

The other competitors will be Ihab Salameh, 20 and also from Gaza, who will run in the 5,000-metre race, and boxer Rashad Judeh from Jerusalem.

"We don't expect to win prizes in the Olympic Games but the mere fact that we are taking part is important," said Ahmad Yazji, director general of the Palestinian Youth and Sports Ministry.

Abu Marahil, whose time over 10,000 metres is 31 minutes 16 seconds - more than four minutes slower than the world record held by Ethiopian Haile Gebrselassie - said: "I'm ready and I'm putting massive efforts into this. I feel proud to represent my country."

The POC had been trying to achieve recognition from the International Olympic Committee since 1978 and received provisional recognition in 1993.

Hakoura said: "This is a victory for all the Palestinians and for Palestinian sports."



Russian Pavel Tonkov holds the 79th Giro d'Italia Cycling trophies in Milano on June 9. He won the race in a total time of 105 hrs 20 min 23 sec, leaving Italian Enrico Zaina and Spanish world champion Abraham Olano behind. - AFP/UNB photo

Invitation for Bid Bangladesh Gas Fields Company Limited (A Company of Petrobangla) Court Road Brahmanbaria-3400 Asian Development Bank Loan No. 1293-BAN (SF): Third Natural Gas Development Project, Part-A Invitation of Bids for Procurement of Wireline Investigation Services against International Tender No. BGFL/TNG (SV)/011, Dated 11.6.1996