

TODAY'S EURO '96  
FIXTURES

Today is a rest day.

EURO '96  
STANDINGS

LONDON, June 11 (Agence France Press) — Following are the Euro '96 group standings Monday:

**Group A** standings after the Holland-Scotland match (played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, goals against, points):

England	1	0	1	0	1	1
Switzerland	1	0	1	0	1	1
Holland	1	0	1	0	0	1
Scotland	1	0	1	0	0	1

**Group B** standings after the France-Romania match:

France	1	1	0	0	1	3
Spain	1	0	1	0	1	1
Bulgaria	1	0	1	0	1	1
Romania	1	0	0	1	0	1

Drink & gulp  
soccer down

LONDON, June 11: An English soccer fan has moved out of his home into the local pub so he can drink in every minute of the European championship, reports Reuters.

James Quinn, 20, has taken a spare room at the Albion Pub in Bristol, Western England, and will watch every game from his favourite bar stool.

Quinn is paying landlord Adam Burke less rent than he usually pays his parents for the privilege of watching all 31 Euro '96 matches.

"People used to say I spent so much time here it was like a second home — now it's my first," he said today.

90 pc Euro '96  
tickets sold

LONDON, June 11: More than 90 per cent of tickets for Euro '96 have been sold and less than 130,000 remain unsold, organisers said on Monday, reports Reuters.

Nine of the remaining 27 games are sold out and four more are nearly sold out, tournament director Glen Kirtson said. "We have sold more than 90 per cent of the 1.4 million tickets available for the tournament as a whole — 20 per cent more than our original sales projection," Kirtson said in a statement.

"We expect that the limited number of tickets still remaining will be snapped up quickly as the tournament progresses and public interest builds."

Bal's belated  
wisdom!

NEW DELHI, June 11: Hindu militant leader Bal Thackeray today paid a surprising compliment to Pakistani cricket players for their commitment to the game, but said the Indian XI lacked similar discipline, reports AFP.

The United News of India quoted Thackeray as saying in Bombay, which is ruled by his Shiv Sena party, that the Pakistani cricketers "put everything behind their country and Islam while playing."

"This, however, was lacking among Indian players," he said. Thackeray, a cricket fan, said Indian captain Mohammed Azharuddin "was more interested in beauty outside the cricket ground while (his deputy) Sachin Tendulkar was more into modelling."

The reference to Azharuddin was his known friendship with a movie actress. Thackeray is a bitter critic of Pakistan, India's arch foe, and had once threatened to break the legs of Pakistani cricket players if they set foot in Bombay.

Goram rallies  
behind 'Gazza'

LONDON, June 11: Goalkeeper Andy Goram, hero of Scotland's 0-0 draw with Holland, has leapt to the defence of his Rangers teammate Paul Gascoigne, reports AFP.

While Goram has been basking in glory after pulling off a stunning point blank range save to deny the Dutch a goal, Gascoigne has been pilloried in the press for his performance in last Saturday's Euro '96 opener.

"Gascoigne was pulled off in the second half as he seemed barely able to get up a trot. The stick he has had in the press here has been an absolute disgrace, so I will send him a couple of faxes to get his spirits up," said Goram.

Also rushing to Gascoigne's defence has been English manager Terry Venables.

"I found some of the criticism directed at Gazza vicious, vindictive and pathetic," said an upset Venables.

Critics have demanded Gascoigne be dropped from the all vital clash next Saturday when England face their old enemy — Scotland.

But despite his staunch defence of Gascoigne, Venables refused to commit himself to whether or not the Rangers player will start the match.

"It was a disappointing second half performance. But when people start to blame Gazza they ought to remember that seven or eight of our players were tired during the game."

"In my opinion it was not a case of any lack of physical fitness that we tired, but because we were not doing things we have been doing on the pitch," said Venables.

And he was adamant that Venables did not sit out this week's training sessions to recharge his batteries.

"I don't think he has been overdoing it," said Venables.

## 'Danish wall' up to mark



SHEFFIELD, England, June 11 (AFP) — Peter Schmeichel lived up to his reputation as a footballing hero as he took his place in the history books by becoming the first Danish player to win the UEFA Cup.

Though the fairytale winners four years ago after repulsing Yugoslavia, who were banned because of their civil war, many have discounted the holders at Euro '96.

But Schmeichel's virtuoso display at Hillsborough, which singlehandedly earned a 1-1 draw against fancied Portugal, surely means, with little between the posts, there's always hope.

The 32-year-old keeper pulled off a fabulous one-handed save from Rui Costa and darted bravely off his line to make his trademark save off a pointblank shot from Joao Pinto.

Keepers are a rare breed. Like England's Peter Shilton, Schmeichel is an intense perfectionist with a professional, single-minded, aggressive approach to his game.

But keepers need to be. One mistake and the game is lost. So they cover up their fear of letting down teammates with an almost irrational obsession to get it right.

Schmeichel is no different. He yells at opponents and teammates constantly. He demands from his defence as much as he demands from himself. Though unsavoury to watch from the sidelines, he commands instant respect, if not always goodwill, by his vocal style.

And the record is second to none.

Having won the double with Manchester United this year for the second time in three seasons, plus the 1992 European Champions' Cup with Denmark, and being voted world's best goalkeeper in 1992 and 1993, Schmeichel knows what he's doing.

Schmeichel could also become the first keeper to win a league and cup double and a major international title in the same year, and, of course, the first keeper to retain the trophy because no country has ever managed that.

At United, it is centre backs Steve Bruce and Gary Pallister,

affectionately nicknamed "Dolly and Daisy" for the way they nag at each other during matches who feel the heat most.

Though Bruce and Pallister tend to have a go at each other at times, Schmeichel delivers his all-too-audible advice with the emotional force of a megaton bomb.

Schmeichel, who has 85

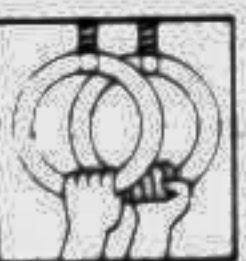
caps, is not perfect, however. Some believe he can be a little shaky at crosses, and others question why he has to charge out of his area late in the game and use his height at a corner.

But should Denmark go one up in any match, feel sorry for the poor old forwards who have the tough task of knocking one past him.



PETER SCHEMEICHEL — no going past the man.

## Scherbo, the family man



KIEV, June 11 (Reuters) — Five months ago Vitaly Scherbo, the most successful gymnast of all time, sat in intensive care at the bedside of his critically injured wife, determined to give up the sport he loved.

But wife Irina made a remarkable recovery from a near-fatal car crash and it was she who persuaded Scherbo to resume training for the defence of his six Olympic titles in Atlanta.

"At that time I put gymnastics aside," Belarusian Scherbo said of the accident. "I simply didn't care at all about sports."

Irina, mother of Scherbo's three-year-old daughter Kristina and a former sports acrobat, was given only a slim chance of survival after her car veered off the road and crashed into a telephone pole near the family's home in the United States.

She spent weeks in intensive care and underwent surgery three times.

"When she returned to consciousness she asked me not to give up my sport," said Scherbo, who has won a record 14 World Championship gold medals in his career.

"But it wasn't easy. For almost two months I didn't do any sports. I gained weight and my psychological stability suffered during that time. But I managed to overcome all of that."

Scherbo, whose achievement of six golds at one Olympics has only once been bettered — by American swimmer Mark Spitz who took seven in 1972 — began his comeback by taking the floor gold and two lesser medals at the individual event World Championships in Puerto Rico.

in April. Three apparatus golds and the all-round silver at the European Championships in Copenhagen last month, put him back in confident mood for a last shot at Olympic glory.

"I'm going to Atlanta to win medals," the 24-year-old Scherbo said in a telephone interview from the Stalki sports training centre near his old hometown of Minsk.

"I'm sure I'll win at least one gold. I don't take silver

and bronze medals seriously and for me they don't count."

Though he has gone back to Belarus to train, Scherbo sees his family's future as being in the United States.

"Our (post-Soviet) system makes us victims of insecurity and fear. I want my family to eat properly, not to be lining up for daily bread, not to be carrying kilos of cash in the pocket but to be able to pay for things by credit card."

"In the States I can concentrate more on my family. I can relax better and I feel alive," added Scherbo, who plans to return to his home in Pennsylvania after the Games.

Scherbo, though, has no intention of changing his nationality.

"Belarus is my native country. It's so small, and the people are very polite and calm. Every Belarusian knows me and supports me," he said.

In Atlanta, Scherbo will be defending titles in the all-round event, on the pommel horse, the rings, the vault and the parallel bars.

His triumphs in Barcelona also included a team gold with the Commonwealth of Independent States, the grouping which filled the gap after the break-up of the Soviet Union.

Belarus will hope to win a team medal in Atlanta but do not have the strength or support structure of the old Soviet system whose women's team won gold or silver at every Olympics they attended between 1952 and 1988.

But, despite that Scherbo has no regrets about the demise of the Soviet Union.

"The Soviet Union was so huge that I never felt it was one single country. The USSR, and its republics were so varied that it all was rather alien to me and I never felt pleasant or comfortable being a Soviet," he said.

Italy beat  
Russia

Sports Reporter

Hot favourites Italy got off to a winning start in their bid to clinch the Euro '96 crown with a convincing 2-1 win over Russia in a Group C match at Anfield stadium, Liverpool, according to a BBC sports bulletin monitored here last night.

Striker Pier Luigi Casiraghi netted both the goals to for the World Cup runners-up while Russia pulled one back through Tsabalar. All the goals were scored in the first half.

Venables rejects  
shrink-aid

LONDON, June 11: England coach Terry Venables has rejected an offer of a mind-bending boost for his Euro '96 squad, reports Reuters.

Psychic Uri Geller, who shot to fame by using "thought power" to bend cutlery on British TV, claimed he could lift team morale — badly dented by last weekend's draw with Switzerland.

Geller had suggested that England could clinch glory by visualising themselves scoring and by touching the 1966 World Cup winning ball.

But Venables turned down the offer, saying the players were already psyched up for Saturday's Wembley showdown with Scotland. "We appreciate everybody who is interested in the well-being of England's footballers but Terry felt this was one particular line he could pass by," an English FA spokesman said.

## Lamb lambasts!

LONDON, June 11: Former England batsman Allan Lamb fired the opening salvoes a day early on Monday at Benson and Hedges one-day cricket rivals Warwickshire, saying the county champions had more mouth than Muhammad Ali, reports Reuters.

Lamb's Northamptonshire host Warwickshire in a potentially explosive semifinal on Tuesday.

Sledging between the two sides dates back to a championship clash some seasons ago when West Indian pace bowler Curtly Ambrose greeted Warwickshire captain Dermot Reeve with a pair of head-high full tosses.

Since then relations between the two sides have soured noticeably.

Then, 10 days ago, Northamptonshire's England all-rounder David Capel came eyeball to eyeball with Warwickshire's Keith Piper during a county match, at one stage pointing his bat angrily at Piper after some verbal exchanges.

Two days later, to the delight of Northamptonshire fans, Ambrose smashed the fourth ball of the last over to the boundary to keep them top of the Sunday League with a three-wicket success over Warwickshire. Capel had set up the win with a fine 82.

But for Lamb, one of the most experienced players in English county cricket, cheeky comments directed at the batsman from behind the wicket are all part of the game.

"Once you react to little digs, your opponent knows he has you, and Warwickshire are past masters at it," Lamb said. "It's far better to have a dig of your own at the right time."

Tuesday's other semifinal could also produce fireworks as holders Lancashire take on in-form Yorkshire at Old Trafford.

Yorkshire's former England opener Martyn Moxon is struggling with a severely bruised right thumb but was determined to play after coming through Sunday's victory over Surrey unscathed.

## Gough spell sinks Surrey



LONDON, June 11: England seam bowler Andrew Gough helped Yorkshire clinch the top of the county championship table on Monday, snatching four of the five remaining Surrey wickets in a brisk morning session, reports Reuters.

Gough took four for 25 in 11 overs at Middlesbrough to finish the match with five for 36. Yorkshire won by 221 runs to clinch 23 points.

They now turn their attention to Tuesday's Benson and Hedges one-day semifinal against arch-rivals Lancashire.

Sussex needed only seven balls to wrap up their second championship victory in three games, beating Durham by an innings and 67 runs on the final day at Hove.

Strugglers Durham, resuming on 324 for nine and still 69 runs behind, added only two runs before paceman Ed Giddins bowled David Cox with his first ball of the morning.

It was Durham's fifth successive championship defeat by Sussex and the Northerners have now gone 16 games this season without a win against first-class opposition.

Yorkshire's win gives them a total of 91 points, just one ahead of Kent. But Derbyshire and Warwickshire kept up the pressure by collecting valuable wins to take them to third and fourth respectively.

Derbyshire can thank off-spinner Matthew Vandraw who took six for 34 as they com-

pleted a 54-run win over Hampshire. Needing 171 to win, Hampshire reached 51 for two before Vandraw and young pace bowler Andy Harris (four for 48) ripped out the heart of the innings to dismiss the home side for just 116.

Another spinner to bowl his

side to victory was Warwickshire's slow-left armer Ashley Giles who took four for 69 as Somerset, chasing 339, were bowled out for 239.

Australian Shane Lee continued his fine run of form with a well-struck 61 but it was not enough to prevent Somerset from sliding to a 99-run defeat — their first championship loss of the season.

The day's other two matches both ended in draws. Northamptonshire's bid for their first championship win of the season continues after the rain and some dogged Nottinghamshire batting held them at bay.

Following on 242 behind, Nottinghamshire's chances of survival were helped by the rain which meant just four balls were bowled during the morning. Then, despite three wickets from former England spinner John Emburey, they held out to reach 176 for four at stumps.

At Chelmsford, the high-scoring match between Essex and Lancashire also ended in stalemate but not before Lancashire had caused a few flutters in the home change room.

First Ian Austin struck a rapid 89 not out and shared a 10th wicket stand which produced 91 runs and took Lancashire to the massive total of 686 — a lead of 177.

Then, Essex jumped to 108 for four but half-centuries from Jonathan Lewis and Darren Robinson took them to 229 for six and safety.

GOUGH... 4 for 25

FEDERATION  
feedback  
TKO for unelected body

A Star Special

Boxing was the sport which put Bangladesh first on the international sports atlas in 1986 when Havidar Mosharraf, a gold medalist in the 1985 SAF Games, clinched a bronze in the heavyweight category of the Seoul Asian Games.

The trend continued with another flyweight boxer Mozammel Haque keeping the green and red flag at the top of the winners' podium by winning a gold in the 1993 SAF Games.

But that was all there was as far as Boxing laurels were concerned because matters went reverse from then on; the only successes coming as SAF silvers and bronzes in the 1995 Games.

The fall began with the defection of Mozammel from the 1994 Commonwealth Games in Canada. Controversy surrounds the defection of Mozammel. Many people concerned with our sports are of the opinion that Mozammel dumped his boxing career because of the ill behaviour meted out by the leader of the Bangladeshi contingent.

A very prominent national coach said, "Abdul Hamid, the leader of the Bangladesh contingent to the 1994 Commonwealth Games, should be specially held responsible for Mozammel's defection. Hamid was against including a crash or a second to accompany Mozammel to Canada. You know how much a boxer needs someone while in training and particularly during competition bouts. But, only for Hamid's obstinacy, the government didn't allow anyone. Mozammel was alone in Vancouver and none of the Bangladeshi officials took good care of him."

This led Mozammel to think twice about his future in Bangladesh with all those irresponsible sports officials. And he decided "not to return," he further added without trying to justify the defection.

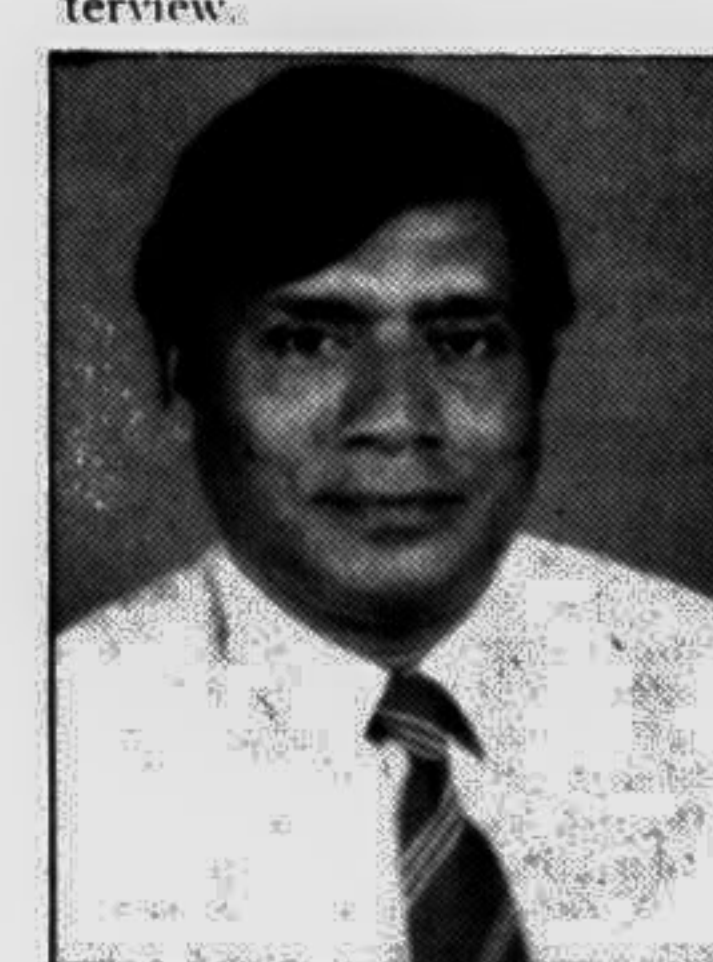
Bangladesh Amateur Boxing Federation (BABF) is the sole governing body of boxing in Bangladesh. It is still in the amateur level. The federation is being run on ad-hoc basis since its birth in 1972. So far they have arranged eighteen national championships and 17 international championships in the last 25 years. Besides, the federation also organises, though not regularly, intermediate level tournaments.

Boxing is not as popular a sport in Bangladesh as in many western and some oriental countries. The game is played on an amateur basis which consists of only three rounds in a bout. Most of the prominent boxers belong to the services teams — Army, BDR, Police and Ansars. There are a



few districts including Dhaka, Jessore, Rajshahi, Dinajpur and Kushtia where boxing is played in a limited scale.

To know more about boxing and its future in Bangladesh, The Daily Star (DS) had a cordial cogitation with the general secretary of BABF — Md Latifur Rahman Khan, in his office at the Mohammad Ali Boxing Stadium this week. The following are the extracts of the interview.



L R KHAN

DS: Why did Bangladesh fail to get a gold in the Madras SAF Games despite your pre-SAF Games hopes of Bangladesh winning two golds? Was it only for the absence of Mozammel?

Latif: Thank you for the question. Yes, we were about to win two golds in Madras. Two of our most talented boxers — Sheikh Alauddin and Rehan Ali Sardar — reached the finals of heavyweight and lightweight categories respectively. But, the Indian umpires did not allow us to win and you know how they can do this. We had to be satisfied with the silvers from those two finals. But I can tell you this will not happen in the future. In Nepal, we will have our chances again to prove our worth.

DS: You have arranged 18 national championships so far but none outside the capital.

Latif: Yes it's true. The DSAs are under the control of National Sports Council (NSC). They are not under us. Whenever we approach them to host

the championships they skip us through the NSC. You know our sports lack proper infrastructure. Unless we can change the existing system, this will continue. Even though we are trying our best to hold the next junior championships in Kushtia next January.

DS: You are not sending any team abroad these days. Is it only because of the defection of Mozammel?

Latif: Mozammel is responsible in one way but the other cause is our government, specially the sports authorities. They don't want boxing to succeed. I think, Mozammel is not an elected official. So I have hardly any power to exercise for the benefit of boxing in the country. What-ever the NSC and the ministry decide we simply abide by those. Yes we require to send our boys abroad because they need the exposure. In boxing, fear is the main problem. If the boys go abroad to various tournaments, it will help them to conquer fear. But who will listen to us? The football team went to Myanmar and Malaysia for practice matches before the SAF Games. They have won one silver at Madras. And, without any training or practice outside the country, we went to Madras and won two silvers and five bronzes. Had I been given proper authority to look after the development of boxing, I could at least try to arrange some participation in foreign tournaments. But that has not been possible for me.

DS: So why don't you form an elected federation and act accordingly?

Latif: You are kidding. It lies in our constitution that the federations will be run by the NSC-appointed presidents who can change the body and any decision at any time. As long as the constitution is not amended, we have to bear with this. I have an appeal to the future MPs who will be elected this time that immediately after their oath, they should change the NSC constitution for the better of our sports. Sports can then run its functions independently with elected bodies.

DS: What sources of fund do you have?

Latif: We have only one source and that is the NSC who have allotted us four lakh taka for the current fiscal. Well, we also have some sponsors for some tournaments but that is not very regular. Bata once sponsored the national junior championships. But that was for five years. We are grateful to Sonali Bank who sponsored the last national senior championships.

One can only hope the new parliament will heed to the Boxing General Secretary's plea. The Nepal SAF Games is just round the corner.

## Games'engineer suspended



ATLANTA, June 11: The state has suspended the license of an engineer who designed the Olympic Stadium light towers, one of which collapsed and killed a construction worker last year, reports AP.

Brian Miraki, who discovered a flaw in the design 12 days before the fatal accident but did not recommend emergency action to correct it, was suspended for three years, to be followed by three years probation.

The action by the state licensing board for engineers is the first stemming from the accident that killed iron

worker Jack Falls and injured a co-worker.

A federal investigation last year blamed the accident on an engineering error, but the Occupational Health and Safety Administration was unable to impose any penalties because Falls was not employed by the company at fault.

The state's investigation of the accident could produce sanctions against others, said Charlene P. Dawkins, a spokeswoman for the State Board of Registration for Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors. She would not elaborate.

Miraki, who left the design firm Rosser International after the accident to start his own

business, did not return a telephone message left at his home Monday. Rosser is part of a joint venture that designed the \$232 million stadium.

Lyn May, a spokeswoman for the Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games, declined to comment.

Steve Jones, business manager for the Ironworkers union Local 387, said the state board did not go far enough.

"It's not much consolation to the family and friends of Jack Falls," he said. "The engineers... are who we put our faith in that it's safe. I would like to see it go further as far as what they do to him."

Falls fell to his death on March 20, 1995.



Scottish fans celebrate after their team held the Netherlands to a goalless draw in Euro '96 Group A at Villa Park, Birmingham on June 10.

—AFP/UNB photo