

Olympic Update

Column One

SPORTS TALK



Marie-Jose Perec

(French athlete)

"At home in France I am as famous as Michael Jordan. In Los Angeles I can walk down the street and no-one recognises me. May be that will change now."

After winning 100 and 200 metres gold in Atlanta Olympics.

Sports

WHIZZ KID

COMPETITION FOR SCHOOL CHILDREN



Sports WHIZZ KID competition-49

✓ Tick the Correct Answers

(Competition closes: 8 p.m. August 9, 1996)		
1. Double Olympic gold medalist Marie-Jose Perec is	French	American
2. The electronic timing devices were first introduced in	Tokyo	Stockholm
3. Which country leads the opening ceremony march-past in every Olympic Games?	Hosts	Albania
4. The number of golds US swimmer Mark Spitz won in the 1972 Olympics were:	Eight	Five
5. Cricket was a gold medal sport in 1900 Olympics. Who won the gold?	Great Britain	Australia
		West Indies

Name: _____

Class: _____ Roll No: _____

School Address: _____

Phone: (if any) _____

Iraqi awarded asylum

ATLANTA, Aug. 3: Iraqi weightlifter Raed Ahmed, who fled from his teammates at the Olympics and denounced his country's government, said Friday he has been granted political asylum in the United States.

The US Immigration and Naturalisation Service refused to confirm or deny the claim.

A document, with an INS letterhead, sent by fax to the Associated Press, said that Ahmed's request for political asylum had been approved.

The document was given to the AP by an Atlanta spokesman for the London-based Iraqi National Congress, an organisation opposed to Saddam Hussein's regime.

"It has been determined you have established a well-founded fear of persecution were you to return to your country," said the letter, which bore the signature of Joseph P. Martin, director of the INS asylum office in Arlington, Virginia.

The letter granted Ahmed asylum indefinitely and said the athlete could apply to be a permanent resident in one year.

Ahmed, 29, said Thursday he surely would be executed if he returned to Iraq. He met with the INS, then nervously waited for the decision.

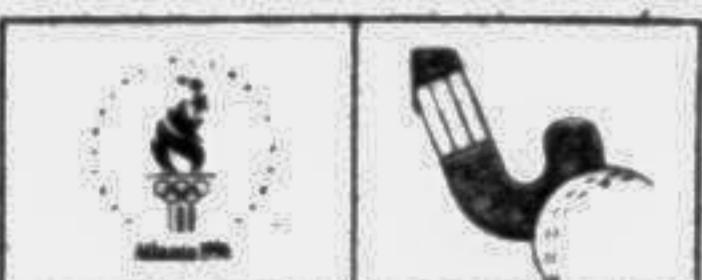
Ahmed said Friday,

"I was very sensitive, like a person waiting for exam results," Ahmed said through an interpreter. "But I was very optimistic. I know the American people will accept me."

Ahmed, who earlier expressed fear of reprisals against family members remaining in Iraq, said he has heard nothing about the government's reaction to his decision.

He also said he did not know his wife's status. The Iraqi National Congress reportedly arranged for her to be moved earlier this week from their home in Basra to a safe haven in northern Iraq's Kurdish region, where Iraqi forces are barred by international sanctions.

Dutchmen end a drought



ATLANTA, Aug. 3: The Netherlands won their first Olympic men's hockey title on Friday when they beat Spain 3-1 in the final, report agencies.

Floris Jan Bovelander scored twice in three minutes to rally them from a one-goal, second-half deficit to the Olympic gold medal.

Bovelander, a 30-year-old midfielder with 235 international appearances, scored in the 52nd minute on a penalty corner and then added a second off a penalty corner in the 55th minute to put the Netherlands ahead for good. The goals came after the Dutch failed to even a shot off during its first two penalty corner attempts.

Bram Lomans scored an insurance goal for the Netherlands off another penalty corner in the 67th minute.

Victor Pujol gave unrated Spain a shock lead in the 45th minute but Bovelander's goals turned the game around.

Their best previous performances were in 1928 and 1952 when they won silver.

In the first half, a series of fine saves by Dutch goal keeper Ronald Jansen had kept them in the game.

"It was our third final in 1-1/2 years and we lost the last two on penalty strokes" said Dutch coach Roeland Oltmans.

Referring to Jansen, he said: "The goalkeeper played a

fantastic game but that's because he's a very good goalkeeper. At halftime, it was Spain nil Ronald Jansen nil."

His Spanish counterpart Antonio Forrelat, given the credit for his team's meteoric rise in the last year, gave away his secret after the game.

"We made the team very aggressive, playing with a lot of forwards and taking a lot of risks because this is the only way to win. We gave the team Spanish personality."

Netherlands won within the rules but if the penalty corner didn't exist, they would never have beaten us."

Pujol, playing his 100th international, scored with a fine rising shot following a free-kick 30 metres out. Spain just about deserved the goal on the run of play.

Up to that point, Spain had moved the ball around quickly to create many problems, although their danger men Javier Arnau and Juan Escarré did not receive a lot of the ball.

It was only after the goal that the Dutch, beaten on penalty strokes in the finals of the last World Championship and European Championship, began to find their true rhythm.

In the 52nd minute, a break by Stephan Veen forced a rare error by Joaquin Malgosa, Spain's outstanding defender, to concede a penalty corner which resulted in the equaliser.

Three minutes later, Bovelander, who has scored over 215 international goals, struck again and Spain never looked

like recovering.

AUSSIES BAG THE BRONZE

In the bronze medal game played earlier in the day, Baedon Choppo scored on a penalty corner with 1:19 minutes remaining to give Australia a 3-2 victory over Germany.

Choppo's match-winning shot against Germany deflected off defender Carsten Fischer into the German goal as Australia got a little revenge from the gold medal game of four years ago in Barcelona. Germany prevailed in that contest 2-1.

Australia scored all its goals on penalty corners, converting all but one of its four attempts. Germany, conversely, converted only one of nine.

POSITIONS

Final standings in the Olympic hockey competitions which concluded Friday, reports AFP.

Men:

1. Netherlands — gold
2. Spain — silver
3. Australia — bronze
4. Germany
5. South Korea
6. Pakistan
7. Britain
8. India
9. Argentina
10. South Africa
11. Malaysia
12. United States

Women:

1. Australia — gold
2. South Korea — silver
3. Netherlands — bronze

(There were no play-offs for women's minor standings)

Some solace for Brazil

ATHENS, Georgia, Aug. 3: World Cup striker Bebeto struck a second half hat-trick as Brazil thrashed Portugal 5-0 on Friday to take bronze in the Olympic soccer tournament, reports Reuter.

Bebeto's three goals took his tally to six, making him the leading scorer in the Games.

Argentine Hernan Crespo, who plays in today's final against Nigeria, has five.

The Brazilians, who threw away the chance of a first Olympic soccer gold in Wednesday's shock 4-3 semi-final defeat by Nigeria, took out their frustrations on their former colonial rulers.

The four times world champions went 2-0 ahead within 11 minutes thanks to goals from Ronaldo and Flavio Conceicao before captain Bebeto took over in the second half.

Portugal were denied even a consolation goal when Brazilian goalkeeper Dida pushed California's weak penalty on to the post in the 63rd minute.

Barcelona-bound striker Ronaldo opened the scoring in the fifth minute, rifling home a powerful shot which went straight through Portuguese goalkeeper Costinha.

Midfielder Flavio Conceicao doubled the lead six minutes later with a simple tap after a fine run and a cross by defender Ze Maria.

Portugal, beaten 2-0 on Tuesday by Argentina in their semifinal, flooded in the second half.

Bebeto slide home his first and his side's third in the 47th minute and sent Costinha the wrong way from the penalty spot seven minutes later.

His third goal, 15 minutes from time, was gifted to him by Costinha. The Portuguese goalkeeper, fumbled a back pass and Bebeto, a World Cup winner in 1994, pounced on the rebound before rounding the goalkeeper and slotting the ball into an empty net.

MSC Fed Cup karate champs

Sports Reporter

Mohammedan Sporting Club emerged champions while Shaolin Temple Club became runners-up in the second Federation Cup karate tournament '96 which concluded at the National Indoor Stadium on Friday.

As many as 170 karatekas from 18 clubs took part in the two-day meet organised by the Bangladesh Judo and Karate Federation.

Obaidul Quader, State Minister for Youth and Sports, distributed prizes among the winners.

Rebel Moses Kiptanui, al-

most axed from his national team just before Atlanta, saw

the winners.

Sheikh Kamal's birthday today

Sports Reporter

The 47th birthday of late Sheikh Kamal, son of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and the founder of Abahani Krira Chakra, will be observed in a befitting manner by Abahani Samarthak Goshthi tomorrow.

The programme, to be held at the Abahani Club premises tomorrow at 5:00 pm, includes a seminar on "Krirangane Sheikh Kamal", a photo exhibition and a prize distribution ceremony for the winners of essay and children drawing competitions on Sheikh Kamal.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will attend the function as chief guest. Among others, Mohammad Hanif, the Mayor of Dhaka City Corporation, Obaidul Quader, State Minister for Youth and Sports and Salman F Rahman, Chairman of Abahani Limited, will also be present on the occasion.

Next on the list was Canadian 800-metres specialist Charmaine Crooks with 928 votes, followed by Crtvlik — known to his US teammates as "Buy-a vowel."

Boulmerka, who failed to defend her women's 1,500 metres title in Atlanta, received 908 votes. Boulmerka has resisted Islamist pressure back home to stop training and running in shorts and running on her legs.

Prominent singer Sabina Yasmine and two former national footballers, Golam Sarwar Tipu and Ashrafuddin Chunnar, will take part in seminar.

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The Tongan, who caused a sensation by outpointing Cuba's Alexis Rubalcaba in the quarter-finals of the boxing tournament, threw a last-gasp winning punch to beat Doki-

PEPSI Because you play to win...

USA consolidates lead

ATLANTA, Aug. 3: The United States, already assured of overall domination, closed in on a triple digit medal count Friday, with gold in everything from archery to synchronized swimming. It is also favoured to win a slew of medals during the closing weekend, report agencies.

The home nation will have to achieve the 100-medal target without double gold medalist Michael Johnson, who

in men's platform diving.

Dmitry Sautin of Russia won

his Olympic steeplechase

dream dashed.

Underhanded Joseph Keter of

Kenya upstaged the triple

world champion with a sprint

off the final hurdle to win in 8

min 07.12 secs, leaving the

triple world (8.0833) staring

at his spikes in disbelief.

The bronze went to Italian

Alessandro Lambruschini

(8.1128).

In men's platform diving,

Spain did get a team gold

Friday when its five-athlete

team won the first Olympic

gold in rhythmic gymnastics

with an upset win over world

champion Bulgaria.

But Bulgaria also got its

share of glory. Seven-time

world champion Valentine

Jordanov beat Azerbaijan's

Namik Abdullaev in overtime

to win his first Olympic gold in

the 52-kilogram (114.5-

pounds) freestyle wrestling class.

In the 90-kilogram (198-

pounds) division, Russia's Mak-

harbek Khadarsev was

denied his third consecutive

gold medal, losing 3-0 to

world champion Rasul Khadem