

## Russian Booter for Abahani

Sports Reporter

A Russian booter arrived in the capital last evening to play for defending champions Abahani in the second phase of the double-leg Danish Premier Division football league, beginning at the Mirpur Stadium from November 8.

Banladge Gusev, a 28-year-old Moscow-based player, played as a midfielder for the Druzhnosh Kar-ola, a Senior Division side in Russia.

Besides, Sergei, Abahani's pivotal force last year, is also expected to arrive in the capital before the commencement of the league.

## Chess league draw today

Sports Reporter

The draw of the 16-team First Division chess league, scheduled to begin tomorrow at 3 pm, will be held at the Bangladesh Chess Federation office this afternoon.

Different clubs and organisations, including defending champions Mohammedan Sporting Club, are expected to enroll a good number of foreigners this year.

Mohammedans, in their bid to retain the title, have included three Grand Masters in their six-man team which includes Russian GM Krasenkov, who also played for the Motijheel outfit last year, Indian GM Dibendu Barua and country's lone GM Niaz Murshed. National junior champion Abdullah Al Rakib, sub-junior champion Enamul Hossain Rajib and unheralded Khaled Shawkat Prince are the other members of team.

Last year's runners-up Biman keep their faith with last year's squad which feature all the local stars including national champion IM Ziaur Rahman, IM Reefat-bin Sattar and International Woman Master Rani Hamid.

The sixteen teams are: MSC, Biman, Leonine Chess Club, BTMC, Ansars, Sheikh Russel Chess Club, Farashganj SC, Prodeep Sangha, Fire Service, Kinoca Chess Club, Dhaka University Daba Dal, Narayanganj Chess Club, Narayanganj Daba Khelwar Kalyan Samity, Anishilan Chess Club, Touchstone Chess Club and Avijatrik Chess Club.

## Monirul in the city

Sports Reporter

Syed Monirul Haque, the leading scorer in the domestic cricket last year, arrived in the capital last afternoon to play for Abahani in the Damal Shriti tournament.

The middle-aged Pakistani, who stole the limelight while playing for Dhaka Wanderers last year with his batting prowess, had a light practice session with his new team yesterday.

Apart from Monirul, another Pakistani all-rounder Shahid Iqbal also arrived in the city yesterday to play for Kalabagan Krira Chakra.

## Special Olympics

Sports Reporter

A 22-member Bangladesh team will participate in the first Asia-Pacific Special Olympic Games to be held in Shanghai, China, from November 8 to 11, says a press release.

The team comprising 15 athletes, four coaches and three officials. Ashraf-ud-Dowla will lead the Bangladesh delegation.

Bangladesh won 5 gold, six silver and as many bronze in the Special Olympics held in New Haven, USA in 1995.

## Aussies put on a brave face

PERTH, Australia, Nov 4: Australia shouldn't be written off after their woeful run of failures in the Titan triangular one-day tournament in India. Australia Cricket Board chairman Denis Rogers warned here today, reports AFP.

"We have complete confidence in our boys and believe we should wait to see how they go on Australian wickets when they return from India, always a very hard place to play," Rogers said.

Rogers is in Western Australia to watch the opening game of the West Indies tour — a one-day carnival match today against his Australian Cricket Board Chairman's XI at Lilac Hill Park, Caversham near here.

He said he believed the Australian side would benefit from their tough experiences in India, where they have been humbled by South Africa and India and eliminated from the final of the competition after their narrow defeat by India Sunday night.

"We have some good players coming through and some excellent reserves and we fully stand by our players," Rogers said.

"They are now well paid professionals and we are looking forward with confidence for them to perform for us."

Australia claim to be the unofficial world Test champions after defeating the West Indies 2-1 in the Caribbean early last year.

But Mark Taylor's men have only two and a half weeks in which to regroup before they take on the determined West Indies in the opening Test of a five-match series starting in Brisbane, Queensland, on November 22.

# Azad boys abase GMCC

Sports Reporter

## BRIEF SCORES

**AZAD SC:** 174 in 42.5 overs (Biplab 56, Shimul 28, Sajal 22, Nazir 3/27, Al-Amin 2/24, Mithu 2/27)

**GMCC:** 77 in 28.4 overs (Nadeem 30, Ruman 15, Shahnewaz 4/22, Nasim 2/2, Sujon 2/18)



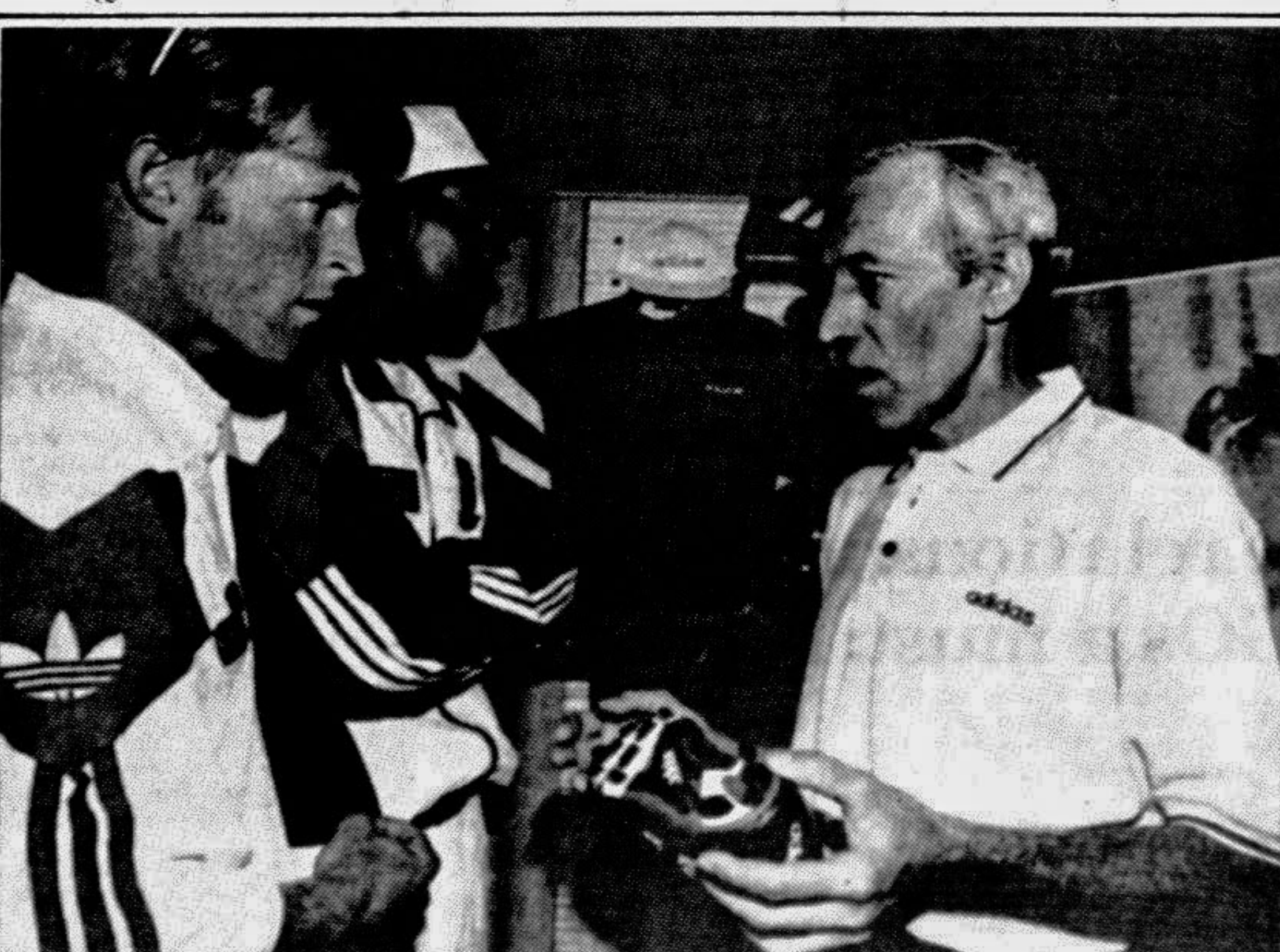
Azad Sporting Club inflicted season's first upset when they handed Greater Mymensingh Cricket Club a humiliating 97-run defeat in the first round Group E engagement of the Damal Shriti cricket tournament at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium

## RU sports

From RU Correspondent

**RAJSHAH:** Nov 4: The inter department volleyball championship of the Rajshahi University stadium this evening with Accounting Dept beat Applied Chemistry 2-0 in the opener.

Meanwhile, in the inter-department handball competition, Dept of Law edged past Islamic History 9-8 in a tie-breaker. In the day's other match, Management Dept recorded a 10-7 victory over Sociology.



South African cricketer Jonty Rhodes (L) discusses with Christoph Holland, managing director of Adidas, India, at a launching ceremony of the sports products in Bombay yesterday. —AFP/UNB photo

## Sydney gets the right

**SYDNEY:** Nov 4: Sydney has won the right to host the first round World Group tie of the Davis Cup against France next year, Australian tennis officials announced Monday, reports AFP.

"It should be a great match, we last played France at White City in 1983. Tennis Australia president Geoff Pollard said following a board meeting in Melbourne.

That provided a springboard for Australia to win the Davis Cup that year. Obviously we love the same result."

Pollard said one of the reasons behind the decision to play at Sydney's White City was its ability to attract more than 4,000 spectators to the February 7-9 tie and the high standard of its grass courts.

Sydney pipped Adelaide to stage the upcoming tie while Melbourne was seen as an outside chance.

With the proposed move to switch tennis from White City to Homebush in 1999, Davis Cup captain John Newcombe said it would be one of the last Davis Cup ties played at the historic venue.

"I say my first Davis Cup match ever at White City in 1954 when I was 10," said Newcombe.

"I met Harry Hopman and was fortunate enough to have a hit with Australia's Davis Cup team, which included Lew Hoad and Ken Rosewall. It was a significant moment."



German tennis queen Steffi Graf (C) arrives at a shopping centre to purchase a camera in Moscow on Nov 3. Graf went to Russia to attend the Kremlin Cup final, held on Saturday last. —AFP/UNB photo

## Test put to a test



**DURBAN:** Nov 4: Floodlit Test cricket could soon become reality following the experimental use of lights in a first class match in South Africa over the weekend, reports Reuters.

Artificial lighting was used at Kingsmead on Saturday on the second day of the four-day Supersport Series match between Natal and Border when umpire Will Driedicks, concerned about the fading lights, signalled for the five flood lights at the Test ground to be switched on.

Ali Bacher, managing director of the United Cricket Board of South Africa (UCBSA) is convinced playing under lights represents the future of the game.

"We're very happy about it. We believe it is the right decision and in the best interests of first class cricket here in South Africa," said Bacher.

"It just makes absolute sense from a cricketing point of view. If you have excellent lighting at grounds — as we do here in South Africa — then it must be used when the light isn't too good and when it curtails play for the day."

Artificial lighting in the first class game has got to be good for cricket, for the spectators and for the players and for the competition. Importantly, the increased playing time will mean more outright wins than previously.

The Durban experiment with artificial lighting was being

keenly followed by other Test playing countries. UCBSA president Krish Mackerdian told Reuters.

The other Test nations are awaiting a report from us on this experiment and in particular countries like Australia where the floodlighting is good. Brisbane has similar hours of light to Durban and their cricket officials have taken special interest in what we are going here."

The lights at Kingsmead came on with 20 over still to be bowled in the day but ironically the players had to come off six overs later because of poor vision.

Umpire Driedicks said: "The batsmen and the wicketkeeper weren't able to see the ball at one end because of shadows and the light reflecting off the white sight-screen."

Bacher insists such problems are surmountable. "It was reassured by Border wicketkeeper Steve Pollard and there were no problems with the up right sight-screen at the one end. It was only at the other end where picking up the ball was a problem. This we can correct and I don't believe there'll be any more problems."

First class cricket was played under lights in Australia two years ago, prompted by declining crowds at Sheffield Shield matches.

Australia pioneered the use of floodlights with the launch of Kerry Packer's rebel World Series cricket in 1977.

## Windies start off on the wrong foot

**PERTH:** Nov 4: Brendon Julian scored an unbeaten 96 for an Australian Cricket Board Chairman's XI to send the West Indies crashing to a three-wicket defeat in the opening match of their Australian tour on Monday, reports AP.

Brian Lara hit a sizzling 66 as the West Indies scored 256 for nine from their 50 overs at Lilac Hill, but Julian and Tom Moody then lifted their team to 258 for seven in reply with eight overs to spare.

Julian and Moody (66) came to together with the Chairman's XI struggling at 95 for six and put on 148 for the seventh wicket off just 88 balls.

Julian smashed his 96 from 52 deliveries, including seven fours and six sixes, but was denied a century when former Australian fast bowler Jeff Thomson hit the winning runs.

West Indies paceman Ian Bishop took 4-44 in an impressive display but lacked support. Lara earlier blazed his runs from just 65 balls, including eight fours and a six.

Rookie opener Robert Samuels hit seven boundaries in his 31, and his partner Adrian Griffith made 26 as they shared a stand of 61.

Carl Hooper hit a quickfire 24 and Roland Holder made 31, while left-arm paceman Julian took three for 33 for the Chairman's XI and veteran fast bowlers Dennis Lillee and Michael Holding, who was playing against some of his former teammates, claimed one wicket apiece.

Scores: West Indies 256-9 (Brian Lara 66; Brendon Julian 3-33).

Australian Cricket Board Chairman's XI 258-7 (Brendon Julian 96 not out, Tom Moody 66; Ian Bishop 4-44).

ACB Chairman's XI won by three wickets.

## Enter Sanjay, exit Sidhu

**NEW DELHI:** Nov 4: Indian opening batsman Navtej Sidhu is out of India's team to take on South Africa in the Titan final of a one-day triangular tournament in Bombay on Wednesday, reports AFP.

The United News of India (UNI) reported Monday that Sidhu, who has only just been recalled following a 50-day ban, would be replaced by Sanjay Manjrekar.

Sidhu, India's most experienced batsman, was injured during Sunday's victory over Australia.

The 33-year-old was recalled to the side last month after serving a 50-day ban for walking out of the tour to England earlier this year, following a row with then-skipper Mohammad Azharuddin.

Sidhu, who averages over 40 in both Test and one-day cricket, scored two against South Africa and 11 against Australia in his only two innings of the tournament.

Australia's defeat in Mohali on Sunday eliminated them from the tournament.

South Africa go into the final as the huge favourites after ending on top of the table with six wins out of six.

## Cricket clinic

Sports Reporter

A training camp for the under-sixteen cricketers, organised by the Uttara Sporting Club, will begin from the third week of November.

Three national trainers — Abdul Hadi Ratan, Syed Altaf Hossain and Shawkat Rahman Chinu, will conduct the camp, arranged as part of the annual sports development programme of the club.

Interested players have been requested to enroll their names, at the club office, House-8, Road-2, Sector-4, Uttara, on or before November 15 between 5 pm to 9 pm.

## Pollock, Adams may join SA in India

**DURBAN:** Nov 4: South Africa have "kept the door open" for unorthodox wrist-spinner Paul Adams and fast bowler Shaun Pollock to be added to the squad touring India, reports Reuters.

Convener of selectors Peter Pollock said on Monday: "We're very happy with the way things have gone in India in the Titan triangular limited overs tournament and we'll stick with the 14 guys that are there."

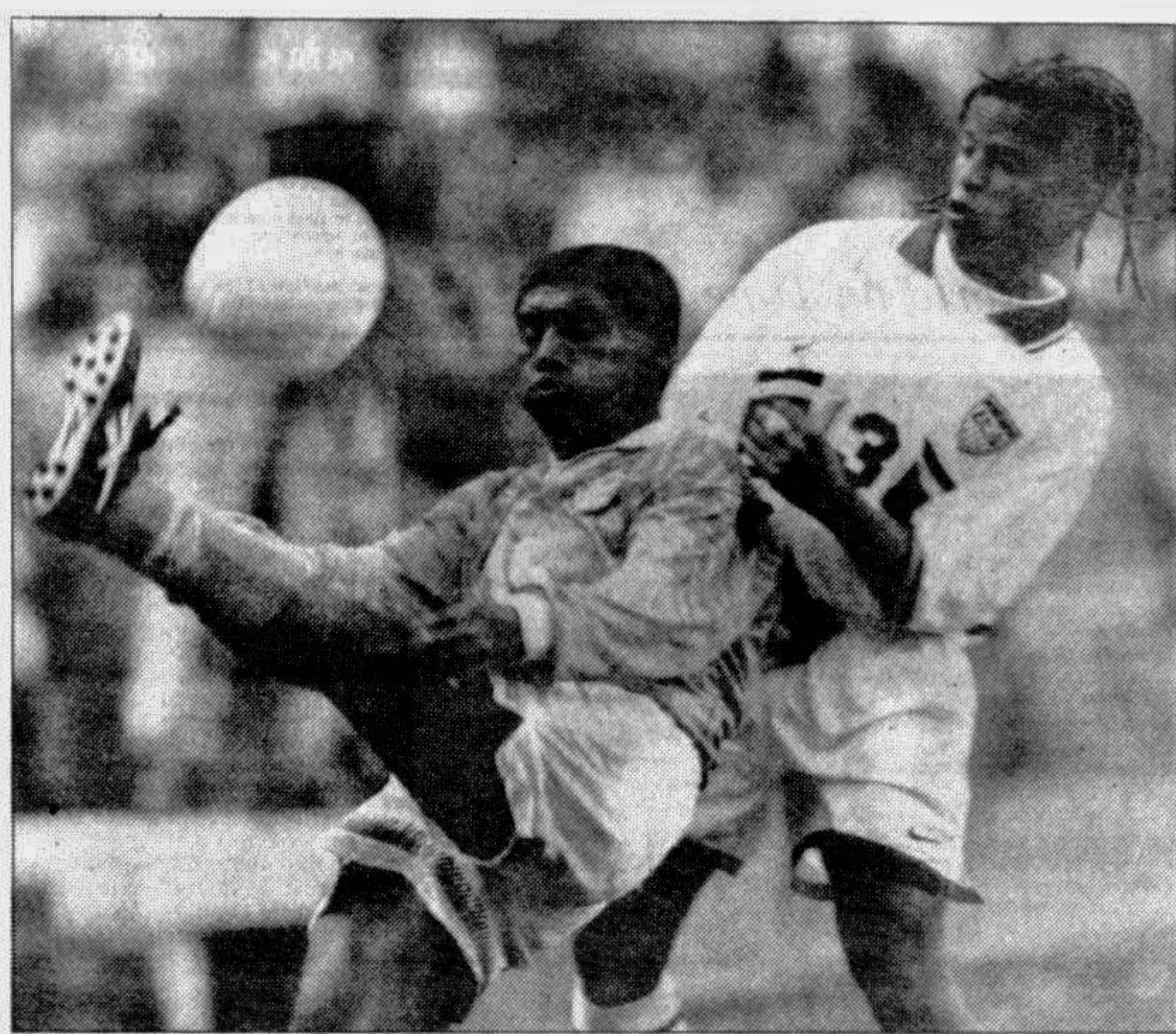
"But we don't want to close the door on Paul Adams and Shaun Pollock. We reserve the right, as far as those two are concerned, to add them to the team if they satisfy fitness requirements over the next few weeks."

Pollock is still recovering from an operation on his left ankle which curtailed his first season with Warwickshire in English county cricket, while Adams has been suffering from shin splints and a groin strain.

Peter Pollock said that neither player was fit enough for selection at the moment but that Adams was closer to full match fitness.

"Paul will play again for Western Province against Boland in two weeks time and if he comes through there, the likelihood is very strong that we'll add him to the team."

South Africa play India in the Titan tournament final in Bombay on Wednesday, then continue their schedule with three Tests against the home side and three three-day matches.



Guatemalan forward Carlos Juan Plata and American Cobi Jones fight for the ball during their World Cup qualifying match at the RFK Stadium in Washington on Nov 3. US won 2-0. —AFP/UNB photo

## America stay on course



**WASHINGTON:** Nov 4: The United States, which surprised the soccer world by reaching the second round of the 1994 World Cup, took its first step towards the 1998 finals Sunday, beating Guatemala 2-0, reports Reuters.

A second-half goal from leading scorer Eric Wynalda and a late tally by Brian McBride — his first international score — were enough to carry the Americans through in their first Concacaf Group A qualifying match.

The win put the United States atop in the Group in the semifinal qualifying round to decide the three teams from the North America, central America and Caribbean region that will advance to France 1998.

A tough Guatemalan team, which has one point from a 1-1 draw away to Trinidad and Tobago, was playing its first match since 84 fans were crushed to death three weeks ago in a stampede before the qualifying match against Costa Rica.

The US team, playing with

only three defenders at the back and prodded forward by midfielders Claudio Reyna, Tab Ramos and John Harkes, found it difficult to find a rhythm in the chilly sunshine at RFK Stadium.

But they broke through ten minutes into the second half when Reyna found space on the left wing to swing in a cross over the head of Guatemalan defender Eduardo Acevedo. The ball fell sweetly for Wynalda on the edge of the goal area and he brought it down with his right foot before sliding a left-foot shot low past keeper Edgar Estada.

It was Wynalda, who has scored more goals than any other US international, who laid on the clincher for McBride a minute from the end.

He broke down the left, drew the goalkeeper and slid the ball across the goalmouth for McBride to side-step by Estada.

Jamaican referee Charles Barrett allowed an extra two minutes and 45 seconds in the first half which featured rough play, especially from the visitors. Surprisingly only two yellow cards were handed out, one to Wynalda and one to

Guatemalan midfielder Julio Giron.

American forward Cobi Jones was hurt in one clumsy tackle and was substituted in the 44th minute by Preki Radosavljevic, the star Major League Soccer striker making his debut in the national team.

The Yugoslav-born player, who likes to be known by just the name Preki, only became a US citizen nine days ago. With his first touch, he shot narrowly over and in the 48th minute his low right-foot shot was tipped around the post by Estada.

Guatemala threatened early in the game and twice Martin Machou came close, forcing Kasey Keller to tip his shot from 10 yards over the bar.

The Guatemalan players were wearing black armbands in remembrance of the 84 fans crushed to death.

The United States Soccer Federation has pledged to donate 25,000 dollars to the disaster relief effort.

The United States plays its next World Cup qualifier next Sunday against Trinidad and Tobago in Richmond, Virginia.

## Gazza confesses his sin



**LONDON:** Nov 4: Troubled England star Paul Gascoigne finally broke his silence and confessed on Sunday that he battered his wife Sheryl while in a drunken frenzy, reports AFP.

He blew into a rage for no apparent reason and was "out of control", he told Sunday's News of the World, an English weekly newspaper.

The Glasgow Rangers star, controversially picked for England's World Cup tie with Georgia next Saturday, said he was seeking counselling to control his temper.

The 15-minute assault at the Gleneagles Hotel in Perthshire two weeks ago left Sheryl with facial cuts and bruises and three dislocated fingers.

Women's rights campaigners and politicians called for the 29-year-old star to be left out of Glenn Hoddle's England squad because of the beating.

And he was heckled on Saturday as his team Rangers were ousted from the top of the Scottish Premier Division for the first time in more than a year.

The fiery midfielder was regularly booed by fans when he got the ball during a lacklustre appearance as the Glasgow giants drew 2-2 away at Raith.

Gascoigne told the News of the World: "Sheryl and I were having a really happy dinner and enjoying a great night. Yes, I'd had a bit to drink but I wasn't

dead drunk and for no apparent reason I just flipped.

"I went wild. I didn't know what I was doing. When I was hitting her I wasn't in control and that's the frightening thing."

"And when she fell and dislocated her hand, her screaming snapped me out of my rage. Immediately I was ashamed and collapsed in tears of regret."

Gascoigne said he considered pulling out of the England squad and thought Hoddle would be doing "the decent" thing if he dropped him.

And he paid tribute to the England boss, who sat with him during counselling session to offer moral support and to see how he was dealing with his problem.

He said: "I've become very close to Glenn in the last few weeks and I owe him everything. I'm going to thank him by the way I play on the pitch and the way I behave off it. My England place is the most important thing in the world to me."

Sheryl Gascoigne speaking for the first time about her night of terror, has denied insulting the Gascoigne family and added: "Paul knows why he attacked me. He just flipped."

"I have never taunted his family. Never in a million years would I do that. I feel disgusted and hurt by the story."

Sheryl, 31, told the Glasgow based Sunday Mail: "I don't want to say a lot at the moment, but I want to keep my dignity."

She refused to discuss her husband's drinking habits declaring: "I am not going to talk about drink."

PAUL GASCOIGNE

Gascoigne denied he had been provoked by taunts from Sheryl, insisting "My problem has nothing to do with her. I am the one to blame."

He promised Sheryl's children Bianca and Mason that he would undergo counselling to learn how to control the "self-destruct" button inside him.

## Other side of the coin



**JOHANNESBURG:** Nov 4 (Reuters): South African soccer success after decades of isolation has contrasted starkly with tales of deep intrigue in the administration of the country's favourite sport.

While South Africa have won the African Nation's Cup and moved into the top 20 of the FIFA rankings after just four years back on the world stage, revelations of corruption and farcical on-field incidents have threatened to retard this remarkable progress after almost 30 years of apartheid-enforced isolation.

Details of administrative corruption, allegations of a poisoning plot, a 10 million dollar lawsuit served on a journalist and a top league match where just 10 players from the one team turned up, are among recent events which cloud South Africa's forthcoming World Cup qualifiers.

A judicial commission into the affairs of the South African Football Association has heard that the association's executive president Solomon Morewa has been involved in financial irregularities.

Morewa has admitted to the commission, appointed by sports minister Steve Tshwete after press allegations of corruption, that he accepted an interest-free loan of more than 100,000 dollars from the marketing company appointed to run SAFA's affairs.

He has also admitted taking money from a special fund set up to help soccer players seeking to finance their tertiary education. Other leading administrators had also been given "grants" from the fund.

South African newspapers called for Morewa's resignation at the weekend after it was revealed that he had attacked a journalist covering the commission's hearings in Johannesburg.

Morewa, who last year formed part of world governing body FIFA's inspection team to Japan and South Korea ahead of the announcement of the World Cup finals venue for 2002, forms part of the so-called "a team".

The group comprises powerful sports officials, club owners and prominent black businessmen who wear expensive Italian suits and entertain lavishly at top restaurants.

The "a-team" have locked in a bitter power struggle with members of the so-called "b-team", made up of club owners critical of the power wielded by their rivals.

A team member Kaizer Motaung, owner of the country's best known club Kaizer Chiefs, alleged he had stayed away from the launch of the new professional Premier soccer league in August after being tipped off that an attempt was being planned to poison him by spiking the cocktails and snacks on offer at the function.

A high-level police investigation has since been launched into Motaung's claims.

The Premier soccer league, administered by Englishman Trevor Phillips who left the Football Association in London earlier this year under a cloud of controversy following European championship ticket allocations has made a spluttering start.

Last month players of Witbank Aces went on strike ahead of their match against league leaders Kaizer Chiefs, leaving just 10 of the team in-tact including two goalkeepers to take the fields.