

### Kanu Africa's best booter

CAIRO, Dec 1: Inter Milan's Nigerian international Kanu was elected African footballer of the year on Saturday by sports writers and officials of the African Football Confederation (CAF) at the organisation's headquarters here, reports AFP.

Kanu, who joined Inter from Ajax in the summer but who has been sidelined since with a heart complaint, beat AC Milan's Liberian striker George Weah, the world footballer of the year, as well as fellow Nigerian Daniel Amokachi.

South African defender Mark Fish of Italian side Lazio was fourth.

#### TOP TEN

1. Nwankwu Kanou (NGR)
2. George Weah (LBR)
3. Daniel Amokachi (NGR)
4. Mark Fish (RSA)
5. Finidi George (NGR)
6. Japhet N'Doram (TCH)
7. Kalusha Bwalya (ZAM)
8. Emmanuel Amunike (NGR)
9. Sunday Olieh (NGR)
10. Anthony Yeboah (GHA)

### Border to lead PM's XI

SYDNEY, Dec 1: Former Australian captain Allan Border will return to international cricket to lead the Prime Minister's XI in a one-day match against the West Indies in early December, reports AP.

Prime Minister John Howard announced the team Saturday during the second Test at the Sydney Cricket Ground.

The aim was to get a team of young players, captained by the great AB (Allan Border), that in the eyes of many would be knocking on the door of Test selection.

Howard said.

Players who will get another chance to impress the Test selectors are Australian wicketkeeper Adam Gilchrist, New South Wales pace bowler Anthony Stuart and Queensland opening batsman Matthew Hayden, who all played for an Australian XI against the tourists in Hobart earlier this month.

Also included in the team for the one-day match at Canberra's Manuka Oval on Dec. 10 is improving Tasmanian opener Michael DiVenuto.

#### SQUAD

Allan Border (captain), Michael DiVenuto, Adam Gilchrist, Ian Harvey, Matthew Hayden, Dene Hills, Martin Love, Stuart MacGill, Anthony Stuart, David Thornton, Brad Young, Brad Haddin (12th man).

### Bebeto guns for Spanish passport

SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELA, Spain, Dec 1: Brazilian striker Beбето of Spanish First Division side Sevilla, has applied for Spanish citizenship, the Galician sports daily DXT said Saturday, reports AFP.

"I don't know what's holding up the paperwork. But I believe they'll be there before the end of the season," Beбето, 32, told DXT.

The World Cup winning striker will face his old team Deportivo La Coruna today and said it was "imperative" that Sevilla took the three points as they attempt to move away from the danger zone.

Bebeto added he was now recovered from his recent groin strain and will be fit for Sunday's clash with third placed Deportivo.

### Futre's future unknown

SHEFFIELD, England, Dec 1: Paolo Futre, the Portuguese striker once hailed as the European Maradona, looks likely to leave West Ham next week for an uncertain future, reports Reuter.

Futre joined the London side on a free transfer from AC Milan in the close season but has failed to shake off a knee injury that has blighted what promised to be a glittering career.

West Ham manager Harry Redknapp, who saw his side draw 0-0 with Sheffield Wednesday on Saturday, said there was little point in Futre staying at Upton Park.

"Paolo is a great little professional but unfortunately he came to us with a bad knee injury," Redknapp explained. "I had a clause inserted in his contract that I could cancel the deal at any time if there was a problem with his knee."

"He is not fit enough to play or train. He'll never get back to being the player he was as he is constantly struggling."

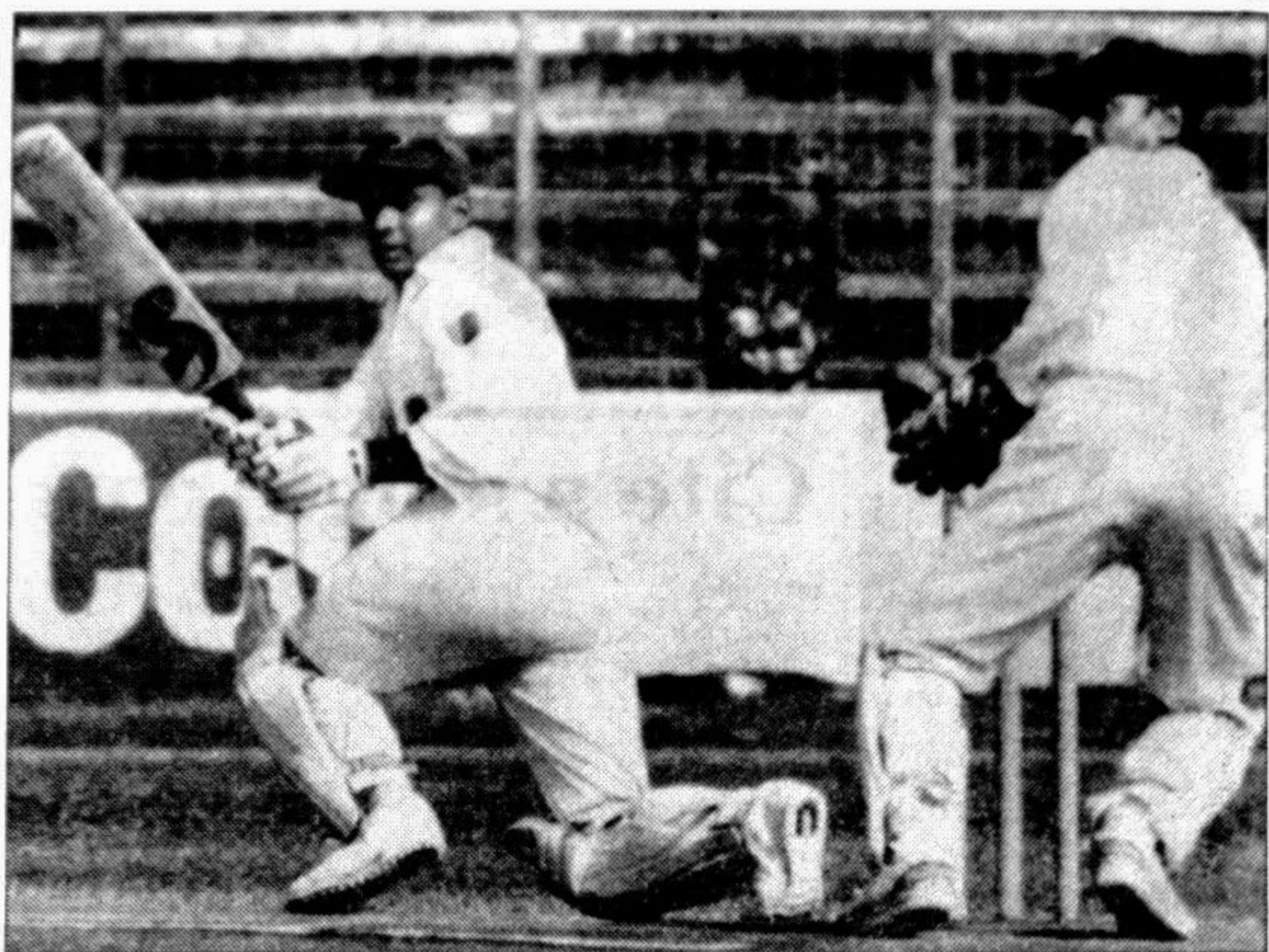
"He had one or two games in which he was able to turn the match for us but I have had to substitute him on a regular basis."

### Inter's great escape act

MILAN, Dec 1: A last-minute penalty from French playmaker Youri Djorkaeff salvaged a 2-2 draw for Internazionale against strugglers Cagliari on Saturday which took the Milan side to joint top in Serie A, reports Reuter.

Cagliari, languishing in the relegation zone, dominated the second half and looked good for a surprise victory before their Swiss international defender Ramon Vega was penalised for handling the ball in the area with seconds left.

It was the second successive match that Cagliari had conceded an equaliser in the final seconds. Fabio Pecchia salvaged a 1-1 draw for Napoli against their last Sunday with a goal in the 90th minute.



Man-of-the-match Naimur Rahman Durjoy of Abahani sweeps the ball during their Reporters' Cup final against Mohammedan at the Dhaka Stadium yesterday. — Star photo

## Abahani lift Reporters' Cup

Sports Reporter



Abahani Kriha Chakra, still relishing the hangover of celebrations after their Damal Smriti triumph last Thursday, had more cause for a feast on Sunday when they stopped their arch-rivals Mohammedan Sporting Club six runs short of target to lift the Biman Reporters' Cup at the bubbling cauldron of Dhaka Stadium.

In a gripping drama of a finish, the country's two most crowd-pulling outfits surprised the twenty thousand strong crowd by churning out a belting final. Abahani, thanks to some sloppy fielding by Mohammedans late in the innings, mustered a challenging total of 233 and went on to pick up the season's second trophy by the breadth of a hair with some excellent examples of often world class fielding.

Although match adjudicator ex-national star Raquibul Hasan awarded the Tk 5000 best fielder's wreath to Mohammedans' skipper Bulbul, the difference ironically between the two teams was the fielding.

Passion, red-blooded duels and intriguing little rivalries took their toll in the last over when Mohammedans were left with the daunting task of scoring 11 runs from the six Shahid Iqbal deliveries. Abahani needed but a wicket to give the shout of hurrah.

But the right-arm seamer from Pakistan, instrumental in Mohammedans' stunning defeat to Agrani Bank in their Damal Smriti semifinal last week, carried out the unenviable job of bowling the last over and was wily enough to concede only three runs what with tailender Hasibul Hossain Shanto wielding his willow in failing daylight like a harmless Roman swordsman.

The season's first clash of the giants put the crowd on a roller-coaster ride once Abahani skipper Akram Khan decided to bat after calling the coin correctly in the moist morning.

It was, however, not an inspiring start for Abahani when they lost both their openers including a dashing Imran Hamid Partho, who was caught at deep mid wicket after scoring only 17. The otherwise doughty Javed Omar Belim Golla (12) followed him shortly, leaving Abahani at 44/2 in 11 overs.

After the jumpy start, Naimur Rahman Durjoy, pushed up in the batting order by his skipper, led the recovery operation with a brilliant 63. The stockily-built middle-order batsman, who later did one better with the cherry to claim the Tk 10,000 man-of-the-match laurel, featured in two vital partnerships before being dismissed in the 42nd over.

The dark and dapper right-hander and an useful off-spinner, who took two vital Mo-

ammedan wickets at a crucial stage to swing the pendulum Abahani's way, shared 50 runs for the third wicket with Monirul Huq before the Mohammedan captain. However, Bulbul congratulated Abahani for their win. "They played better and deservedly won the trophy," said Bulbul.

The tournament, first of its kind, was organised by the Dhaka Reporters' Unity which featured four leading clubs of the country. But the novelty of the prize distribution ceremony was, instead of the traditional chief guest handing over the trophies, the two captains exchanged their share of the booty in a simple yet lively ceremony. Abahani got a cash award of Tk 50,000 apart from the winners trophy while Mohammedans were half the richer.

sufficient light", said a dejected Bulbul after the match.

The authorities must come up with a solution to stop such nonsense", said the Mohammedan captain. However, Bulbul congratulated Abahani for their win. "They played better and deservedly won the trophy," said Bulbul.

The tournament, first of its kind, was organised by the Dhaka Reporters' Unity which featured four leading clubs of the country. But the novelty of the prize distribution ceremony was, instead of the traditional chief guest handing over the trophies, the two captains exchanged their share of the booty in a simple yet lively ceremony. Abahani got a cash award of Tk 50,000 apart from the winners trophy while Mohammedans were half the richer.

#### SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard of the Biman Reporters' Cup cricket final match between Abahani Kriha Chakra and Mohammedan Sporting Club at the Dhaka Stadium yesterday:

ABAHANI KC	Golla hit wkt b Shanto	12
	Partho c Litu b Tariq	17
	Durjoy c Tariq b Litu	63
	Monirul run out	21
	Akram c Arshad b Shanto	38
	S Iqbal c Bulbul b Sujon	34
	Iqbal Hossain run out	0
	Pilot not out	18
	Dulu c Litu b Sujon	0
	Zakir not out	1
	Extras (lb-12, nb-2, wb-15)	29
	Total (eight wickets in 50 overs)	233
	Fall of wickets: 1-29, 2-44, 3-94, 4-161, 5-191, 6-201, 7-220, 8-220	

BOWLING: O M R W
Shanto 10 2 47 2
Sujon 9 0 52 2
Tariq 6 1 30 1
Nannu 10 0 27 0
Sumon 10 0 25 0
Arshad 3 0 25 0
Litu 2 0 15 1

MOHAMMEDAN SC	
Arshad c Durjoy b S Iqbal	25
Litu c Pilot b S Iqbal	6
Parvez c Golla b Zakir	14
Tariq run out	36
Bulbul c Arkan b Salahuddin	0
Nannu c Golla b Zakir	56
Karwar lbw b Durjoy	45
Shanto not out	17
Nanu run out	3
Sumon Not Out	1
Extras (lb-2, lb-9, wb-8)	19
Total (nine wickets in 50 overs)	227
Fall of wickets: 1-34, 2-41, 3-71, 4-72, 5-100, 6-186, 7-197, 8-213, 9-220	

Bowling: O M R W
Dulu 9 0 51 0
S Iqbal 10 1 30 2
Zakir 10 1 41 2
Salahuddin 10 0 46 1
Hossain 7 0 28 0
Monirul 1 0 4 0
Durjoy 3 0 15 2
Result: Abahani won the match by six runs.
Man-of-the-match: Naimur Rahman Durjoy.

### Africa TT meet begins in Nairobi

NAIROBI, Dec 1: The 12th Africa table tennis championships start here on Sunday with officials hoping a new star will emerge to bolster the sport's development in the continent, reports AFP.

Despite its size and population, Africa has been unable to produce a world ranked player of Nigerian Atanda Musa's caliber since he retired in early 1990s.

George Segun, Nigeria's Africa table tennis federation president, said the eight-day tournament, which has attracted 140 players from 18 countries, will also be used to try various distinctive styles of players most African countries have discovered.

The continent has been told to discover its own style of play in order to make a mark in international competition. Asian or European styles have eluded African players over the years.

Out of 18 participating nations, six had already arrived in Nairobi for today's opening ceremony, including Algeria, Angola, Egypt, Ethiopia, Mauritius and South Africa.

Segun hopes International Table Tennis Federation (ITTF) deputy president Adham Sharara will see the need to help African countries technically.



Newcastle striker Alan Shearer (down) seen grappling with Arsenal captain Tony Adams during their Premiership match at St James' Park on Nov 30. Arsenal won 2-1. — APP/UNB photo

### ACME-BBSF snooker Gonsalves bows to Sri Lankan champ

Mohammad Shafiq of Pakistan proved to be too strong for Aung San Oo of Myanmar and won 4-1 (56-17, 32-47, 73-24, 65-38, 100-1) with the break of 45 in the fifth frame in a match of the ACME-BBSF President Cup snooker championship at the Gulshan Club Billiards Room. K P Akbar Ali of Bangladesh got walkover in an other match as Mohammad Yusuf of Pakistan could not come because of illness, says a press release.

Susantha Boteju, the Sri Lankan national champion won his match 4-2 against Bangladesh national champion Adrian Gonsalves. Susantha took the first two frames with the day's highest break of 51 in the second frame. Adrian came back to win the 3rd & 5th frame but Susantha wrapped up the match winning the sixth frame (68-26, 86-16, 36-56, 71-29, 38-66, 64-41).

Kwan Poomjan of Thailand won in straight frames against Anwar Hossain of Bangladesh 4-0 (86-15, 61-8, 78-25, 84-24) with a break of 47 in the 2nd frame. Amin Chowdhury, the National Junior no 2 lost to Win Myint of Myanmar 1-4 (55-56, 22-45, 62-39, 29-61, 31-85).

Roslani Yurnalis of Malaysia won comfortably against U. Kyi Soe of Myanmar 4-0 (89-24, 80-18, 76-27 & 81-2) with a break of 41 break in the first frame.

Earlier on Saturday evening, Azimuddin Ahmed, president of the Bangladesh Billiards and Snooker Federation opened the championship in a simple ceremony. A Rahim Chowdhury, president and Azmat Moysen, vice-president of Gulshan Club Ltd, also spoke on the occasion.

### Bayer keep hopes alive

BONN, Dec 1: Early-season leaders Bayer Leverkusen seized the chance to return to the top of the German First Division on Saturday with a 4-2 win over fifth-placed Cologne, intensifying a four-way struggle for the title, reports Reuter.

Leverkusen had their chance because champions Borussia Dortmund could only manage a 1-1 draw at home to Hamburg on Friday while leaders Bayern Munich were travelling to third-placed VfB Stuttgart on Sunday.

Goals from Markus Happe, Ulf Kirsten, a glorious drive into the top corner from Brazilian Paulo Sergio and an own goal from Karsten Baumann decided the Rhine side derby for the home side, all coming in a pulsating second-half display.

Cologne struck back with two goals in the last eight minutes from Henrik Andersen and Romania's Ion Vlადuoi, either side of Baumann's own goal.

In the day's other matches, Hansa Rostock beat Arminia Bielefeld 3-1 and 1860 Munich drew 1-1 with Karlsruhe.

### Metropolis bridge

The following are the results of weekly pair duplicate bridge contest of the Dhaka Metropolis Bridge Association, held on Friday at the Bangladesh Bank Club premises at Motijheel, reports BSS.

First: Farooq H Khan and Rafiqul H Siddiqui (61.15 per cent).

Second: Saiful Haque Masud and N C Rudra (60.19 per cent) and third Md Shamsul Alam and A K Alizzaman (57.50 per cent).

The next weekly bridge contest will be held on December 6 (Friday) at 3:30 pm at the same venue.

#### TODAY'S MATCHES

Danish Premier Division football league: (Venue: Mirpur Stadium) Rahmatganj MFS vs Dhanmondi Club (4:00pm)

Mohammedan SC vs Youngmen's Club Fakirerpool (6:00pm)

Danish First Division football league: (Venue: Army Stadium) Badda Jagorani Sangsad vs Mirpur Chalanika SC (3:00 pm)



Abahani skipper Akram Khan (R) receives the winners' trophy and a cash award of Tk 50,000 from the Mohammedan counterpart Aminul Islam Bulbul during the award-giving ceremony at the Dhaka Stadium yesterday. — Star photo

## Champs stay on course

Sports Reporter



Defending champions Abahani Kriha Chakra stayed on course in their chase for a league treble with a comprehensive 2-0 win over Arambagh Kriha Sangha in one of the two Danish Premier football league matches at the Mirpur Stadium yesterday.

In a lop-sided affair, the holders scored both the goals during the first half to confirm their 11th win from 15 league engagements, topping the table with highest 37 points, one point ahead of their arch-rivals Mohammedans who played one match less.

Abahani, who fielded the same eleven including their two overseas recruits — Russian Andre Kazakov and Myanmar midfielder Aung, pushed the relegation-threatened Arambagh on the receiving end with waves of assaults right from the word go.

But they had to wait till 33rd minute before Rumi Rizvi Karim broke the dead-lock with a neatly placing-shot after being fed by an over-lapping Chanchal.

Kazakov, the opportunist striker of the sky blues, doubled the margin two minutes later when he stabbed the ball home

from a goal-mouth meles following a defence-slicing from Aung.

Kazakov, who played for Mohammedans a couple of years back, however, deprived Abahani of another goal in the 67th minute heading a Rakib left-flank floater straight to the hands of substitute Arambagh custodian Jamal.

Jamal then came to his side's rescue from further humiliation when he parried off a sudden right-footer from Aung in the 72nd minute.

Mizan, the national striker who came in as a substitute for Rumi in the second half, got another chance to extend Abahani's lead, but his fierce shot was brilliantly fisted away by Jamal six minutes from the final whistle.

The defeat left Arambagh glued to their previous collection of 12 points on completion of their 15 matches of the double-leg league.

Yellow cards: Chanchal of Abahani, Prodigy (Apul) and Choton of Arambagh.

#### TEAMS

ABAHANI: Biplob, Chanchal, Munna, Sobel Reza, Partho, Aung, Rakib (Jahangir), Barun, Rumi (Mizan), Mamun Joarder and Kazakov (Farhad).

ARAMBAGH: Tony (Jamal), Yousuf (Jr), Prodigy (Apul) Choton, Faisal, Anwar, Tushar.

Roxy (Bidyut), Yousuf (Sr), Babu Das and Soab.

Referee: Ram Krishno Ghosh.

#### SHBASH USURPS AGRANI BANK

Meanwhile, in the first match of the day, a controversial penalty by referee Subash Roy saved the day for East End when the old-town outfit ran away with a one-all draw against Agrani Bank.

With the pendulum hung on the balance for both the relegation strugglers, Agrani Bank, desperately in need of a victory to stay in the elite group, took the lead in the 10th minute through their captain Jahangir.

But their valiant effort to cling on to the slender lead came to an end when, in the 68th minute, referee Subash Roy pointed his finger to the dreaded spot after defender Rafique cleared the ball apparently with a header.

Saurav Raju, the agile striker of East End, stepped up to convert the 12-yarder to celebrate his seventh goal in the league.

The draw left East End with 14 points from 15 matches while Agrani Bank increased their tally to 12 on completion of their 15 outings.

They are now sharing the second position from the bottom with Arambagh.

## Arsenal top the table



LONDON, Dec 1: Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger praised his team's fighting spirit after they defied the odds to beat Newcastle 2-1 and replace Kevin Keegan's side at the top of the English Premier league on Saturday, reports Reuter.

The London side were reduced to 10 men for the second successive match after skipper Tony Adams was sent off for grappling with his England teammate Alan Shearer midway through the first half.

Wenger replaced forward John Hartson with defender Andy Linington to fill the defensive hole left by Adams' departure and Arsenal survived an almost constant bombardment from the league leaders to escape with three points after Ian Wright grabbed what proved to be the winner after an hour.

For a while in the closing stages Arsenal had only nine men on the field after Lee Dixon, who put them ahead

with an 11th minute header, was stretched out. He returned to the fray the last few minutes.

Shearer, who had scored in every home league match he has played for Newcastle since his world record 15.0 million pounds (25 million dollars) transfer from Blackburn in the summer, maintained that record with Newcastle's equaliser after 21 minutes.

The odds were certainly tipped Newcastle's way after Adams' dismissal but, despite attacking almost non-stop for the rest of the match, they could not break down Arsenal again, and Wright, playing alone up front, scored with Arsenal's only real break of the second half.

Although he was lucky that he was able to control a mishit Paul Merson shot that ran into his path, he took his 19th goal of the season with style, firing a left-footed long cross-shot wide of goalkeeper Pavel Srnec.

"I am never surprised when Ian scores — and neither is anyone else in England," said

Wenger. "But it was a collective team effort and we played with a great fighting spirit. I have to congratulate my players. We did not panic at the back."

Arsenal's title odds were cut from 6-1 to 4-1 following the win but the title race is still wide open, with any one of seven teams in with a chance.

One of those must be fourth-placed Wimbledon. They stretched their unbeaten run to 17 matches with a 1-0 win over bottom-placed Nottingham Forest who have now gone 14 league matches without a win.

Robbie Earle's 37th minute goal gave Wimbledon their win and put them on 28 points — the same as third-placed Liverpool who play at Tottenham on Monday.

Champions Manchester United warmed up for their Champions' League clash with Rapid Vienna on Wednesday with a 3-1 win over Leicester who had beaten a weakened United side 2-0 in the League Cup on Wednesday.

## Jansher invites trouble



BOMBAY, Dec 1: World squash champion Jansher Khan may face a ban from the sport if the Professional Squash Association (PSA) do not accept his reasons for withdrawing late from the world's second richest tournament, the 105,000 pound (160,000 dollars) Mahindra International, which starts here tomorrow, reports AFP.

Jansher could also face a fine for withdrawing after the closing of the tournament's entry deadline.

The Pakistani has cited fears for his safety in India in the current political climate between the two countries.

It was this which caused Jansher to withdraw late from the Mahindra in 1994 and dissuaded him from entering in two other occasions.

However, his change of mind this time has come as a surprise partly because on Wednesday his agent Satinder Bajwa, an Indian, said that all parties, including Jansher, appeared to feel the situation was safer now.

Jansher was, said Bajwa, "99 per cent likely" to take part.

It had also been thought Jansher was particularly keen to get a lucrative trial run at the venue which this week was announced as the location of the 1998 World Open, with the same sponsor — he would be seeking his ninth World Open title and seventh in a row after winning in Karachi last week.

However, Jansher apparently indicated to the PSA on Thursday that the Pakistan

Squash Federation (PSF) was now not in favour of his participation.

That brought a sharp response from the PSA's executive director John Nimick.

As late as Friday November

reasons for three other late withdrawals this season, which he said was due to injuries, to see whether they constitute a tour guide violation.

If so he could get zero points on the computer for any of these tournaments, which might affect his number one ranking. If the withdrawals are considered to be damaging to a tournament or detrimental to the sport, Jansher may have broken PSA rules relating to unsportsmanlike conduct. Punishments for this can mean a fine or even a ban.

Jansher's absence from Bombay during the next week will be a great boost to British champion Peter Nicol's chances of defending the Mahindra title which he won last year by beating Australia's Rodney Eyles in the final.

Eyles, who lost to Jansher in four games in the World Open final, should now be the top seed with Nicol second in the final Super Series event of 1996.

This means there could be a battle in Bombay for the eighth and last qualifying place in the Super Series final, probably to be held in England in the new year.

At the moment another Australian, Anthony Hill, occupies that position. However Simon Parke, the former England number one who has recovered so bravely from cancer and chemotherapy this year, could still snatch it if good performances enable him to make up 108 points on Hill during the Mahindra International.

JANSHER KHAN

22nd the PSF expressed to me