



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina delivering the inaugural speech of the Bangabandhu Cup Silver Jubilee of Independence football tournament at the Dhaka Stadium yesterday. — Star photo

Boys, Bima win

ESKATON SS: 208 for 9 in 45 overs (Mithu 35, Asad 23, Rose 3/32, Sayeed 3/54). BANGLADESH BOYS CLUB: 211 for 5 in 42.5 overs (Akbar 89, Anwar 40, Rana 34). Result: Bangladesh Boys won by 5 wickets. DHAKA WANDERERS: 177 for 8 in 45 overs (Sagor Abbas 42, Momin 27, Sentu 24, Jawad 3/36, Ratan 3/42). SADHARAN BIMA KS: 180 for 8 in 44 overs (Shafiqul 83, Jawad 34, Tuhean 3/31). Result: Sadharan Bima won by 2 wickets.

Campbell dents English ego

LIARARE, Dec 31: Zimbabwe captain Alistair Campbell attacked England's "superiority complex" after the second Test was abandoned as a draw here on Monday following overnight storms, reports AFP. Campbell, speaking after the two-Test series finished 0-0 because of Monday's blank final day, also hit out at England coach David Lloyd's "we murdered them" claim following the thrilling Bulawayo Test draw. He said, "England have to accept that we matched them. I wouldn't mind it if they said that both sides played well."

and them. "They have two good spinners. But then we have Paul Strang. They have Gough. And we have Heath Streak. And they have some good batsmen but so do we in Dave Houghton and the clutching at thin air. Perhaps they are trying to con themselves into thinking they have played well so that they can get the press out of their hair. "If we had a proper length series, I think we would see some keenly fought cricket. But I think we have got to wait now until at least the year 2000 before we get another chance to play England. That's ridiculous. "I think these two Tests have done a lot for Zimbabwe cricket. In four years and with a base of just 25 players who have had Test experience, we have come a long way and a little bit of credit would not go astray."



ALISTAIR CAMPBELL two flower brothers.

On current form the only England players I would put into our side are Croll, Gough, Knight, Stewart and Crawley. "England must shrug off their superiority complex and get down to the nitty gritty. "We have played most of our Test cricket away from home in Pakistan, India and Sri Lanka, and that's been hard work. The last time England went to India and Sri Lanka they lost all four Tests. They have to start competing in places like that. "To say here 'we murdered them and they know it' is just

Russian booter tests positive

PARIS, Dec 31: FC Lens Russian star Sasha Rychkov became the seventh French First Division player to be caught doping in the past year after testing positive Monday for taking cocaine, reports AFP. Rychkov, 22, who arrived from Irkutsk at the start of the season, was found to have taken the drug after the game with Strasbourg on November 23, officials said.

"Both games were drawn and I believe that both games could have gone either way. If they want to believe they murdered us in Bulawayo then that's fine by us. "There have been two good games of cricket and why they can't admit that I just don't know. To me England, New Zealand and us should now be ranked joint bottom in Test terms, there's certainly not much between us. "I would only pick four or five of the England team if I had to select a joint side between us

of foreign players in any one team—flocked to England. Top Italians swarmed in the Fabrizio Ravanello moving to unfashionable Middlesbrough and his former Juventus teammate Gianluca Vialli going to Chelsea as did Gianfranco Zola of Parma. The barriers on cross border transfers crumbled in 1996 as a result of the Bosman ruling and the year will be seen as a watershed in the history of European soccer. SIGNIFICANT YEAR FOR AFRICA While Euro '96 dominated much of European football, the year was also a significant one for Africa with the South Africans hosting and winning their Continental Championship in January. Nigeria then stunned most observers by winning the Olympic soccer title, while Liberia George Weah of AC Milan inherited Diego Maradona's crown and mantle of the best player in the world. FOOTBALL TRAGEDIES But the year was not without tragedy and 81 fans were killed in October before the start of a World Cup qualifying game between Guatemala and Costa Rica. The disaster was chillingly similar to the Hillsborough tragedy of 1989 when 96 fans were crushed to death in an overcrowded, fenced-in section of terracing in Sheffield, England. That led FIFA, world soccer's governing body, to call for the removal of all perimeter fencing—a possible problem for the 1998 World Cup organisers as fencing is required by law in France. Another tragedy left nine dead following a stampede at a World Cup qualifier between Zambia and Sudan in Lusaka in June. OTHER EVENTS At club level Juventus were crowned European champions for the first time in 10 years and went on to win the World Club Cup against South American champions River Plate in Tokyo. Manchester United created history in England by becoming the first club to win a second league and cup double. In Spain Atletico Madrid also achieved a

Year of passion, pains & promises

LONDON, Dec 31(Reuters): Football came home to its birthplace in the summer of 1996 but it was Germany not England who were celebrating loudest and longest at the end of the major event of the year—the European Championship. England was transformed for three heady weeks in June as Euro '96 gripped the nation's imagination in a way no sports event had done in the home of the game since England hosted the World Cup 30 years ago. The ideal finals to the Championship would have been England winning as they did in 1966. Instead, millions of distraught English men, women and children suffered the agonies of seeing their team lose to Germany on a penalty shoot out in the semifinals or a major championship for the second time in six years. In Italy in 1990 the Germans knocked England out of the World Cup on penalties and they did the same again at Wembley on the night of June 26. Bertie Vogts' team then went on to beat the Czech Republic 2-1 in the final at Wembley four days later, courtesy of a controversial sudden death golden goal, scored by Oliver Bierhoff four minutes into extra time. It was the first time a major title had been decided in such a

way and while it gave Germany a deserved third European title, the debate still rages about the best way to decide matches level after 90 minutes in championship football. OFF TO A GOOD START, BUT KNOCKOUT DISAPPOINTING For while the opening group stage of Euro '96 was peppered with bright, flowing games, the knockout section was a disappointment with two of the four quarter-finals decided by penalties as well as both semifinals. The sports governing bodies have yet to find a fairer way of concluding games and, until they do, major championships are likely to be settled in this unsatisfactory manner. Still, not all Englishmen were disappointed this summer. England striker Alan Shearer ended Euro '96 as the tournament's top striker with five goals and a month later moved from Blackburn Rovers to Newcastle United for a world record fee of 15 million sterling 25 million dollars. BOSMAN RULING A WATERSHED Plenty of overseas players—taking full advantage of the December 1995 Bosman ruling which allowed players to become free agents at the end of their contracts and did away with restrictions on the number

double. While the lasting memory of 1996 may well be that of German captain Juergen Klinsmann lifting the European Championship trophy high above his head in June, at least two other images made a deep impression. The sight and sounds of orange-becked Dutch brass bands brought vigour and colour to the stadiums of Euro '96. Soccer may be more sleek and sophisticated than ever before but the Dutch brass bands and the Scottish fans shoed it is still the game of the people.

জাহাঙ্গীরনগর বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় সমাবর্তন বিজ্ঞপ্তি

Students of Azimpur Girls High School performing during the opening ceremony of the Bangabandhu Cup Silver Jubilee of Independence football tournament yesterday. — Star photo

Double delights for Akram & Co

BOMBAY, Dec 31: Wasim Akram and the Pakistan cricket squad top the Ceat International individual and team ratings at the end of 1996, reports PTI. Pakistan skipper Akram has 73 points to his credit and keeps his top slot while India's wily fast-medium bowler Venkatesh Prasad has surged to the second spot with 67 points under his belt by leapfrogging over five others above him in the previous list, a release stated today. Prasad gained 20 points during the period following his excellent ten-wicket haul in the first India-South Africa Test at Kingsmead, Durban which was lost by the visiting team by a huge margin. Pakistan, with 73 points, also maintained their lead over the other Test playing countries in the ratings to decide the Ceat International team of the year, introduced recently. India stood second with 37 points.

RATINGS Individual: 1 Wasim Akram (Pak) 73 points; 2 Venkatesh Prasad (Ind) 67; 3 Mushtaq Ahmed (Pak) 59; 4 Saeed Anwar (Pak) and Moin Khan (Pak) 57; 6 Anil Kumble (Ind) and Saqlain Mushtaq (Pak) 52; 8 Nayan Mongia and Sachin Tendulkar (Ind) 51; 10 Ijaz Ahmed (Pak) 46. Team: 1 Pakistan 73 pnts; 2 India 37; 3 South Africa 34; 4 Sri Lanka 31; 5 England and Australia 20.

La Gazzetta poll Pereg, Johnson best athletes ROME, Dec 31: American sprint champion Michael Johnson and France's Marie-Jose Pereg were named as the top sports stars of 1996 by the Italian newspaper La Gazzetta dello Sport today, reports Reuter. Johnson, who pulled off an unprecedented double in Atlanta as the first man ever to win the Olympic 200 and 400 metres races, easily beat patriot Carl Lewis and Russian swimmer Alexander Popov in annual poll held among the newspaper's journalists. Pereg, who also triumphed in the 200 and 400 metres in Atlanta, headed Russian athlete Svetlana Masterkova and Hungarian swimmer Krisztina Egervari in the women's vote. In the domestic arena, Olympic gold-winning gymnast Jury Chechi was named best Italian male while Olympic and World Giant Slalom champion skier, Deborah Compagnoni, was voted top woman. Soccer team Juventus, who won the European Cup, were named best Italian team.

Dejan yet to make up mind

BELGRADE, Dec 31(Reuters): AC Milan's Yugoslav striker Dejan Savicevic said on Monday he had still not decided where to continue his career. "But that the most favourable option at the moment is a move to Manchester United next autumn."

With his contract at Milan nearing an end, he told the daily newspaper Pobjeda: "Milan will naturally endeavour to get the best possible price for me and the best possible return on its investment in me." He said he had received offers from many clubs, including Monaco. The latest had come from Japan. "The decision on my future career rests with me and me only and all reports which have appeared in the Yugoslav and other media in that context are totally unfounded," said Savicevic. Savicevic, a talented striker, was the inspiration behind Milan's 4-0 thrashing of Barcelona in the 1994 European Cup final.

Medvedev joins casualty list

ADELAIDE, Australia, Dec 31: The Australian Hardcourt tennis championship lost another seed on Tuesday when Andrei Medvedev of Ukraine was beaten in straight sets by US player Jonathan Stark, reports Reuter. Stark thrashed Medvedev 6-1, 6-1 to move through to the second round. Medvedev's defeat came after a similar straight sets drubbing suffered by top seed and defending champion Yevgeny Kafelnikov of Russia at the hands of Sweden's Mikael Tillstrom on Monday. Stark will meet Jonas Bjorkman in the second round after Bjorkman disposed of fellow Swede Nicklas Kulti 7-5, 6-1. Eighth seed Bohdan Ulihrach of the Czech Republic made it through to the second round with a 6-4, 6-4 win over Venezuela's Nicolas Pereira. Ulihrach's next opponent is Australian wild card entry Scott Draper, a 6-3, 3-6, 6-3 winner over Alex Radulescu of Germany.

TODAY'S MATCHES Bangabandhu Cup Silver Jubilee of Independence Football Tournament (Venue: Dhaka Stadium) East Bengal (India) vs Friends Club (Nepal) 4 pm Bargh Siraj (Iran) vs Eastern All Star (Thailand) 6 pm Premier Division cricket league: Gulshan Youth vs Lalmitia Club (Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium) First Division cricket league: Gopibagh FA vs Ajax SC (Mirpur City Club ground) Dhanmondi Club vs Ultra SC (Jagannath Hall ground)

Anwar's tour comes to an end World Series resumes today

SYDNEY, Dec 31: Pakistan opening batsman Saeed Anwar returns home on Thursday after failing to recover sufficiently from a virus picked up during the early stages of the team's cricket tour to Australia, reports AFP. Team sources said the Pakistani team management has requested Asif Mujtaba and Ijaz Ahmed junior join the tourists as replacements. It is believed that the Pakistan Cricket Board has yet to inform the team who will be arriving here later this week on Anwar's replacement.



WASIM AKRAM

The illness completes a dire year for 28-year-old Anwar, who missed last summer's three-Test tour of Australia with typhoid. The Karachi left-hander's only appearance on the current tour was the opening warm-up match against the Australian Cricket Academy in Adelaide. Pakistan next play Australia here Wednesday in a

World Series one-day international, having lost to the 1992 World Cup champions at their only previous meeting in Adelaide a fortnight ago. Australian captain Mark Taylor, meanwhile, demanded today his players find an extra gear for the second half of the season following their six-wicket third Test loss to the West Indies in Melbourne last Sunday. With Australia leading the Frank Worrell Trophy series 2-1, the five-Test series goes into recess for three weeks for the triangular one-day competition. "It is time to find the extra



MARK TAYLOR

gear. Other sides are changing gear, it's up to us to make sure we change gear and stay in front," Taylor said. "It takes a while for other sides to get used to our wickets, like us when we go to India for example. "I still believe we are a better team in both competitions but we have to now make our little

step up to up the ante as well." Taylor admitted he was one player needing to improve after making just 264 runs in 12 Test innings since December 1995. "I'm not batting at my best but I've done it before, I've played first-class cricket for 11 years and I've been in more than one trough," he said. "I'm going to try a few different things—skipping, a bit of short running—just to get myself that little bit sharper."

TEAMS AUSTRALIA: Mark Taylor (captain), Mark Waugh, Steve Waugh, Stuart Law, Greg Blewett, Michael Bevan, Tom



SAEED ANWAR

Moody, Ian Healy, Paul Reffel, Shane Warne, Glenn McGrath, Andrew Bichel (12th man to be named). PAKISTAN (from): Aamir Sohail, Zahoor Elahi, Inzamam-ul-Haq, Ijaz Ahmed, Noor-ul-Haq, Wasim, Shahid Afridi, Wasim Akram (captain), Moin Khan, Saqlain Mushtaq, Mushtaq Ahmed, Waqar Younis, Mohammad Zahid.

Indian's worry continues

DURBAN, South Africa, Dec 31: India crashed to their second successive defeat at Kingsmead in three days when they were beaten by 52 runs by Natal in their 55-over practice match here Monday, reports AFP.

Despite an encouraging 54 by Workerji Raman, India's opening batter remains unstable while their second string bowling attack proved virtually non-existent. As worrying for the Indian camp is that captain Sachin Tendulkar has yet to find his feet on South African soil. Third wicketkeeper Fankaj Dharmani scored a speedy 38 including four fours, of 40 deliveries but once against it was Rahul Dravid who impressed most with affluent 64 including nine boundaries of 81 balls. Promoted to number three after batting six in the first Test at Kingsmead—which ended two days early Saturday with a 328 run victory for South Africa—Dravid is almost certain to fill the same role in the second Test starting at Newlands in Cape Town on January 2.

Just how the Indians are going to reshuffle their attack, however, remains a mystery. Even without three of their internationals—Shaun Pollock, Andrew Hudson and Lance Klusener where in Cape Town—the home side still managed to smash their way to 288 for 5. Test aspirants David Johnson, D Ganesh and Venkathapathy Raju did themselves no favours with respective returns of one for 66, one for 58 and none 73. To add injury to insult, reserve wicketkeeper Saba Karim was forced to quit the action with bloodied nose.

Medvedev joins casualty list ADELAIDE, Australia, Dec 31: The Australian Hardcourt tennis championship lost another seed on Tuesday when Andrei Medvedev of Ukraine was beaten in straight sets by US player Jonathan Stark, reports Reuter. Stark thrashed Medvedev 6-1, 6-1 to move through to the second round. Medvedev's defeat came after a similar straight sets drubbing suffered by top seed and defending champion Yevgeny Kafelnikov of Russia at the hands of Sweden's Mikael Tillstrom on Monday. Stark will meet Jonas Bjorkman in the second round after Bjorkman disposed of fellow Swede Nicklas Kulti 7-5, 6-1. Eighth seed Bohdan Ulihrach of the Czech Republic made it through to the second round with a 6-4, 6-4 win over Venezuela's Nicolas Pereira. Ulihrach's next opponent is Australian wild card entry Scott Draper, a 6-3, 3-6, 6-3 winner over Alex Radulescu of Germany.

A hard return from fielder Johnson hit a divot and the ball shot straight up into the hapless Karim's face. After the loss of Doug Watson in the third over of the morning left hand opening bat Neil Jonsson and Errol Stewart held sway for the next 30 to put on 138 in just 125 minutes for the second wicket. Jonty Rhodes romped to 37 off only 46 balls while another ex international, Derek Crookes, hit four fours and two sixes in his unbeaten 63 off 50.

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