

Sport

Column One

Boost sports
WHIZZ KID

COMPETITION FOR SCHOOL CHILDREN

Competition-85

TICK THE CORRECT ANSWERS

Competition closes at 8 pm on
Dec 26, 1997

1	In which group have Brazil been drawn for France '98?	A	B	C
2	How many centuries has Alopahy hit in Test cricket to date?	1	2	3
3	Who is the national soccer coach of Saudi Arabia?	Hodgson	Parrera	Jaquet
4	Who were Bangladesh's opponents in the World Youth Cup cricket qualifiers' final?	HK	Nepal	PNG
5	How many teams are taking part in the Premier Division cricket league?	10	12	14

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SCHOOL ADDRESS

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Abahani captain Zakir tries to outfox an Agrani Bank defender during yesterday's Premier Division league replay at the Mirpur Stadium. Abahani edged the bankers 1-0. — Star photo

Comedy of errors at Mirpur Abahani baffle bankers

Sports Reporter



Giants Abahani finally stymied a stubborn Agrani Bank when the popular Dhanmohi outfit squeezed past the minnows by a lone goal in a Premier Division football league match at the Mirpur Stadium yesterday.

But not before yet another unwanted incident occurred in the repeat clash of the two unequal opponents after Wednesday's farcical finish.

Although referee Nazir Hossain, who earned a dubious reputation for calling off the match only three minutes away from the final whistle after Abahani refused play on a heavy outfield, was not around when match started afresh at three-day unscheduled recess. But Nazir's replacement Ehsanul Haq, tagged with a FIFA first-class badge, was not exception.

The man-in-uniform was chased and manhandled by the Agrani booters when he apparently ignored a vociferous appeal for a penalty after their substitute winger Ekram Rana was pulled down by Abahani defender Barun in the forbidden zone.

Not only that, Ehsan and his

two colleagues, had also face the wrath of Abahani officials immediately after the shot buzzer when Dewan Shafiq Arefin Tutul led a protest march.

The manager of Abahani, oblivious of the rules of the game, was seen arguing with Ehsan along with a bespectacled Monju over a close call that went against their way.

The incident was only the beginning of a comedy of errors that Agrani Bank delaying the restart of the game for about five minutes in protest against what they termed an unwanted "influence" by the Abahani officials during the breather.

The bankers, who held their awe-inspiring opponents to a goalless draw till 87th minute before the dubious whistle of Nazir robbed them off a valuable point on Wednesday, however strolled to the middle after much ado about nothing.

But apart from those unholy activities on and off the field, it was by any standard an eye-sore encounter marked by frequent physical displays. When the unimaginative Abahani booters struggle in a mad chase after the ball, Agrani players looked more keen to literally pull down the legs of their opponents throughout the lacklustre 90-minute.

But Ehsan turned a blind eye

over those cynical tackles conceded by the Agrani players especially in the second half. Abahani's captain Zakir received a nasty tackle from behind by Agrani's substitute defender Alamgir and striker Maksudul Amin Rana got the same treatment from Bishu. But Ehsan did not even bother to caution the culprits with a yellow card when FIFA was seriously contemplating to ban a tackle from behind.

The only high point however in the match was a dream run by Abahani's Uzbek midfielder Anatoly down the right flank that eventually paved the way for striker Tipu to break the evening's duck with a header in the 32nd minute. The sky blues escaped a possible debacle for their sixth win from twelve matches.

Yellow card: Pradip and Alamgir (Agrani Bank).

TEAMS

ABAHANI: Biplob, Mamun Joarder, Ali Mansoor, Pradip, Barun, John, Zakir, Anatoly, Raju (Jahangir), Amin Rana and Mizan (Tipu).

AGRANI BANK: Milan, Atiq, Pradip, Rafique, Bishu, Zahid (Alamgir), Rana, Narayan, Mangal, Jony and Bitu (Ekram Rana).

Referee: Ehsanul Haq

European soccer scene

UNDATED, Dec 14 (Reuters/AP): Barcelona widened the gap at the top of the Spanish First Division with a convincing 3-1 victory over Espanyol while Marseille and Blackburn closed in on the leaders in the French and English leagues respectively after the completion of matches on Saturday.

SPAIN: An embarrassing blunder by Espanyol goalkeeper Toni Jimenez set Barcelona on way to their 12th league win in the Catalan derby.

The Spanish First Division clash had been finely-balanced until Toni mishit a clearance that rebounded off Luis Enrique into the net midway through the first half.

Barcelona then took control and wrapped up the game with fine goals from Giovanni and Sergi Barjuan.

Juan Eduardo Esnaider converted a consolation penalty for Espanyol.

Barcelona gave one of their best performances of the season, with Brazilian midfielder Giovanni and Dutch goalkeeper Ruud Hesp in particularly fine form.

Two late goals by international defenders Roberto Rios and Rafael Alkorta denied Celta Vigo the chance to move up to third place in the 2-1 defeat at Athletic Bilbao.

Israeli striker Haim Revivo had given Celta the lead just before the break, but the visitors let the game slip by conceding goals in the 88th and 89th minutes.

Celta remain sixth, one point ahead of Real Betis who kept seventh place after coming back from conceding a first-minute goal at Mallorca to win 2-1.

Goals from Croatian winger Robert Jarni and Nigerian Finidi George sealed Betis' fourth consecutive victory.

Second placed Real Madrid with a game in hand are on 32 points.

FRANCE: An early goal from striker Xavier Gravelaine handed ambitious Olympique Marseille a rare win at Lens to move within one point of leaders Monaco.

Gravelaine slotted home the winner from close range in the eighth minute for Marseille's 1-0 victory.

Marseille, without a win for three games, are now fourth on 37 points, level with third-placed Paris St Germain, while Monaco and Metz both have 38.

Monaco host 16th-placed Rennes and Metz visit Paris St Germain in a top-of-the-table clash at the Parc des Princes in today matches.

If victory was particularly sweet for Marseille, it was a setback for Lens, unbeaten at home, this season.

"We were very disappointed because we had several opportunities to level the scoring but we failed to convert them," defender Marc-Vivien Foe said.

Bottom-of-the-table Cannes made a big upset when they beat off-form Bordeaux 1-0 at the Parc Lescurie stadium thanks to a penalty from Dutch defender Gerald Vanenburg in the 33rd minute.

Despite this victory the southern side stay rooted to the 18th position.

Le Havre relished their first away win this season, edging unimpressive Lyon 1-0 at Gerland Stadium to move from 17th to 14th.

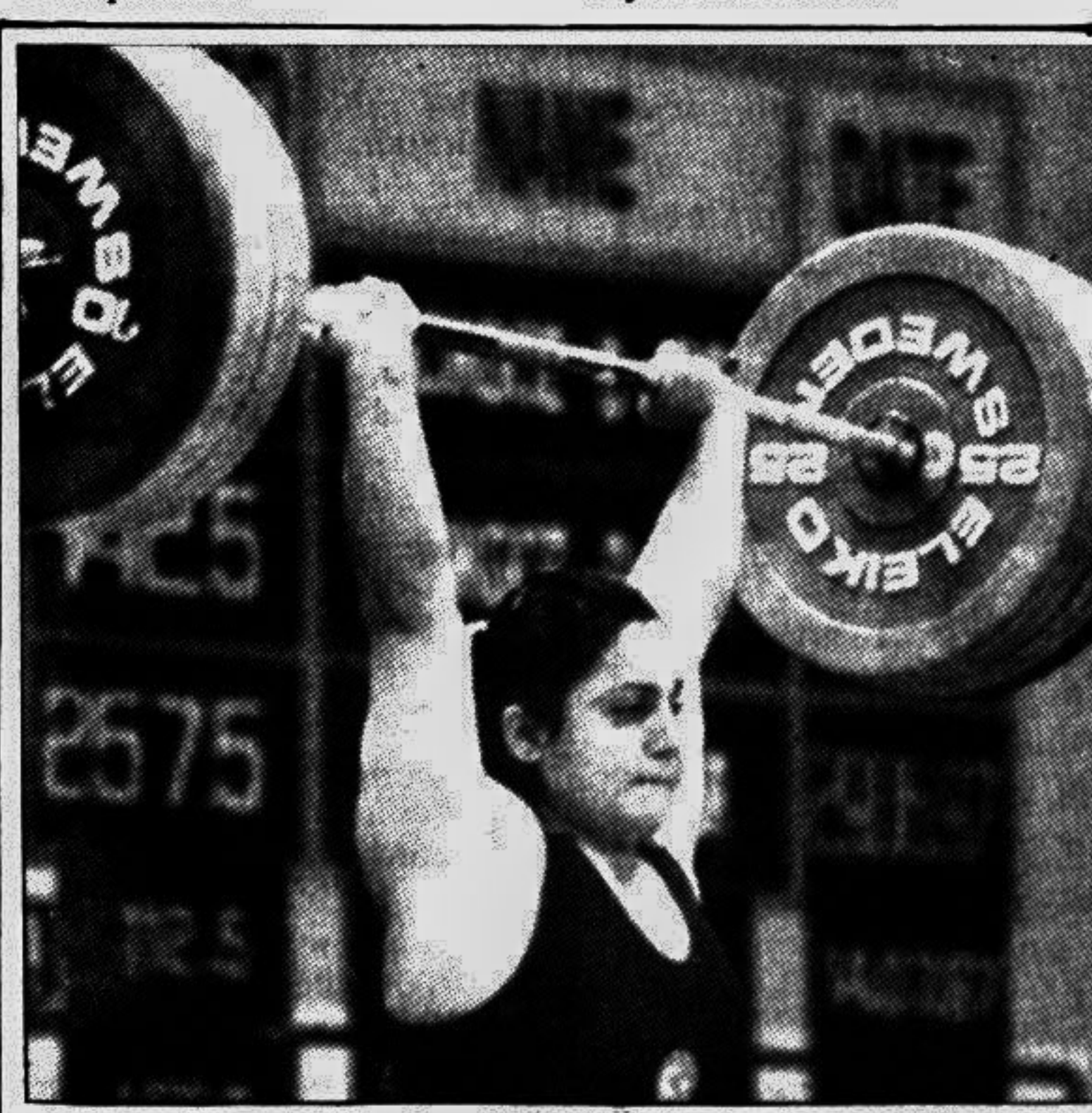
Strasbourg, who were eliminated from the UEFA Cup by Inter Milan on Tuesday, slumped to a 2-1 defeat at Nantes, tumbling into the relegation zone.

ENGLAND: A win for Blackburn put them hot on the heels of Premiership pace-setters Manchester United who didn't play on Saturday.

Blackburn moved into second spot just a point below United's 37 but the leaders can extend the advantage when they play on Sunday.

Chelsea could only tie their game and lost ground to Blackburn. Ruud Gullit's side are now third with 35 points.

Liverpool erased last week's drubbing at the hands of Manchester United by blanking Crystal Palace 3-0.



Acikgoz Derya of Turkey in action during her world record 147.5 kg lift in the women's 83 kg class of the Weightlifting World Championships on Dec 13 at Chiang Mai, Thailand. — AP/UNB photo

Exhibition cricket on V-Day

Sports Reporter

On occasion of the Victory Day, Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) has arranged an exhibition match at the Dhanmohi Cricket Stadium on Dec 16.

Teams comprising of mostly young and upcoming players will compete under the banner of Shahed Jewel XI and Shahed Mushaq XI.

The BCB has requested the following 28 cricketers to report at the Dhanmohi Cricket Stadium at 8.15 am on the scheduled date of the match.

Hannan Sarkar, FH Shezan, Rashidul Haque Suman, Redwan Hassan, Mushfiqur Rahman, Al Shahrier Rokon, Sabbir Khan, AKM Ah-sanullah, Tanvir Islam Khan, Fahim Muntasir Shumit, Abul Hassan Nahid, Sajol Chowdhury, Monjurul Islam, Golam Murtaza, Shanewaz, Kabir, Rubelal Jamil, Moshed Alam, Towhid Hossain, Tarkul Hassan, Rezaul Haque, Tahmin Bashir, Ashiqur Rahman, Md Rafiqul Islam Khan, Saiful Islam, Babu, Shakel Chowdhury, Saleh Ahmed Razin, Bikash Chandra Das.

Sports awards '97 announced

National Sports Council (NSC) yesterday announced its sports awards for 1997, reports UNB.

The NSC, the highest body of the country's sports, has selected 14 sportsmen and organisers for the awards considering their past and present contribution in their respective fields.

The award recipients are: Dr Quazi Motahar Hossain (posthumous, organiser-chess); Capt (ret'd) Siddique Ahmed (organiser-football/Olympics); Aman Chowdhury (organiser-football); Jalal Ahmed Chowdhury (organiser-shooting); Raisuddin Ahmed and Syed Ashraf Haq (organiser-cricket); Sachin Kumar Chaki (posthumous-organiser); Shaheed Abdul Halim Chowdhury Jewel Bir Bikram (posthumous-cricket); Ashraf Chowdhury and Monwar Hossain Nannu (football); Ibrahim Saber (hockey); Sultana Kamal (posthumous-athletics); Fahmida Hossain Luna (mentally retarded athletics) and Parveen Laila (gymnastics).

ITF Circuit

First leg belongs to Indians

From Our Correspondent

RAJSHAH, Dec 14: The Indian pair of Vishal and Gajjar captured the best of the first leg in the first round of the ITF South Asia Tennis Circuit held at the Rajshahi Tennis Complex today.

The boys' and girls' singles title also went to Indian players as P Vishal and Megha reigned supreme.

P Vishal and Gajjar out-classed Pakistani pair of S K Niaz and Nadeem 6-4, 6-3 in the boys' doubles final.

In the singles, P Vishal beat S K Niaz of Pakistan 6-1, 4-6, 6-4 while Megha thrashed Elina of central Asia 6-1, 8-0.

Meanwhile, after the conclusion of the final matches of the first leg, the first round of the second leg of the Circuit began today at the same venue. A total of five matches were decided.

In the boys' singles, Babul of Bangladesh overwhelmed Cheema of Pakistan 6-1, 6-1. Nadeem of Pakistan beat N R Jha of Maldives 6-4, 6-1.

Haider of Bangladesh dumped Lama of Nepal 6-0, 6-0 sets. A Hossain of Bangladesh beat Walsanpaya of Sri Lanka 6-0, 6-3 while Doskarav of Central Asia defeated Jangcho of Bhutan 6-0, 6-0.

A total of 29 matches will be decided tomorrow.

Champions' title Connors'

SYDNEY, Dec 14: Former world No. 1 Jimmy Connors fought back from a set down against England's John Lloyd to win his 29th champions' tennis title here today, reports AFP.

Connors, the veteran of more than 130 ATP singles titles, played more consistently than Lloyd to eventually win the final 3-6, 6-2, 10-7.

Under the Champions' tournament format, matches are the best-of-three sets, but the third is played as a tiebreak with the winner being the first player to win 10 points.

Connors began the Champions' Tour for over 35s with the first three events in 1993 and it has blossomed into a 22-stop worldwide circuit.

The Sydney field this week included two-time Australian Open winners, Guillermo Vilas and Johan Kriek, along with 1990 French Open champion Andre Gomez.

Russian lifter sets new world marks

CHIANG MAI, Thailand, Dec 14: Russia's Andrei Chemerkin broke two world records in the over 108 kg category in the Weightlifting World Championships today, with 282.5kg in the clean-and-jerk and 462.5kg in the overall, reports AFP.

The previous record for the clean-and-jerk was set at the Atlanta Olympics in 1996 with 260kg. The previous record for the overall category had been held since 1994 by Alexander Kurlovich of Byelorussia with 457.5kg.

Brothers stumble again

Sports Reporter



Title aspirants Brothers Union hurtled to their second defeat in the Janakantha Premier Division cricket league when babes Azad Sporting Club pulled off a sensational 30-run win over the Gopibagh outfit at the BKSP ground in Savar yesterday.

The resuming day of the league after week-long weather-forced injunction on games turned out to be a nightmarish experience for Brothers Union, who chasing a fighting Azad total of 161 for eight in a reduced 40-over a side match, were bundled out for a paltry 131 in 37.1 overs.

With their two prized foreign recruits — former Pakistan international Aamir Hanif and Indian Sanjeev Sharma — failing to turn up in due time, Brothers had to pay through the nose when their fragile local

bating line-up tumbled like nine-pins. Set to score just over four runs per over, Brothers were off to a disastrous start losing two wickets for only nine runs on the board.



Out-of-form opener Shahriar Hossain scored two before Azad skipper Rakib Hasan had the young right-hander caught by Biplob in the fourth over. Rakib then struck again in the same over when the

BRIEF SCORES

AZAD SC: 161 for 8 wickets in 40 overs (Imtiaz Koreshi 65, Mona 40, A Sahab 22; Shahnewaz 4/17, K Mahmud 2/31).

BROTHERS UNION: 131 all out in 37.1 overs (Jahangir 60, Sejan 17; Rakib Hasan 3/18, A Sahab 2/10, Sumon Barua 2/21).

Result: Azad won by 30 runs.

VICTORIA SC: 96 all out on 37 overs (Ekram 21, Ferdous 14; Moshed 3/15, Zaman 2/6, Abid Hanif 2/6, Torik 2/18).

LALMATIA CLUB: 99 for 4 wickets in 23.2 overs (Tlekaratne 60, Chayan 15 not out, Ferdous 3/23).

Result: Lalmatia won by six wickets.

right-arm seamer dismissed Shahnewaz for a duck.

Discarded national opener Jahangir Alam, however, tried to mend the early damage with a defiant 60 off 96 balls. But there were hardly any support at the other end.

Earlier, sent in to bat in the morning, the Azad total was built around a brilliant half century from their Pakistani recruit Imtiaz Koreshi.

Koreshi struck a couple of fours in his 101-ball 65. Besides, opener Mona chipped in with a breezy 40 off 60 balls and Ahmed Sahab contributed 22 runs.

For Brothers new-ball bowler Shahnewaz returned most successful with four for only 17 runs in his six overs.

LALMATIA WIN

Meanwhile, in the other match of the day, Lalmatia Club picked up a facile six-wicket win over Victoria Sporting Club.

In a low-scoring affair, Lalmatia, who had earlier shot Victoria out for a meagre 96, raced on to 99 for the loss of four wickets with their Sri Lankan opener Tlekaratne scoring a whirlwind 60 off 55 balls punctuated with ten firm hits across the rope.

TODAY'S MATCHES

Janakantha Premier Division Cricket League: Wari Club vs Ajax SC (BKSP).

Premier Division Football: Brothers Union vs YMC Fakirpool (Mirpur Stadium, 2 pm).

Muktijoddha Sangsad KC vs Farashganj SC (Mirpur Stadium, 4 pm).

First Division Football: Shantinagar Club vs Dhaka Wanderers Club (Army Stadium, 2:30 pm).

An aerial tussle between Helman Mkhalele (L) of South Africa and Czech Republic's Michal Hornak in their confederations cup clash at the King Fahd Stadium in Riyadh on Dec 13. The match ended 2-2. — AP/UNB photo

Uruguayans win, Czechs held



RIYADH, Dec 14 (Reuters/AP): Teenage strikers Nicolas Olivera and Antonio Pacheco showed the promise of youth in steering a new-look Uruguay to a 2-0 win over the United Arab Emirates in the confederations Cup on Saturday.

Both scored in the Group B match.

South Africa and the Czech Republic drew 2-2 in the day's second match.

The Emirates, keen to compensate for their disappointing performance during their unsuccessful World Cup qualifying effort, started but was met with a stiff defence from the 1995 South American champions.

Playing under Czech coach Milan Macala, who was brought from Kuwait temporarily after Brazilian Lori Sandri was sacked for failing to take the team to France next year, the Emirates players dominated the first half and repeatedly threatened the Uruguayan goal.

Two runs by midfielder Hasan Saad on the right wing almost saw the Asian Cup runners-up take the lead, but Uruguayan goalkeeper Flores saved the first, a shot by Abdul Salam Jouaini and the defence cleared the second cross.

Olivera, the outstanding per-

former at the World under-20 championships in Malaysia in June, showed persistence in giving Uruguay the lead just before halftime.

He had his initial effort saved but followed through on a deft pass from Alvaro Recba to score from the rebound.

Substitute Pacheco added a second in injury time for the Uruguayans, who have reshuffled their team and elevated many of their top under-20 players following their own disappointing World Cup campaign.

South Africa came from behind to storm all over the Euro '96 runners-up but missed a glitche chance at the death to secure a victory.

The African champions trailed until just five minutes from time when Helman Mkhalele scored a stunning equaliser from the edge of the penalty area.

But the same player then fluffed a chance from close range in the final minute.

South Africa's equaliser came after Czech captain Jiri Nemec had been sent off for a second bookable offence.

Vladimir Smicer took advantage of a porous South African defence to score twice for the Czechs, the first after 19 minutes and the second five minutes from the break.

In between, South African striker Brendan Augustine scored with a header at the back post after Newcastle goalkeeper Pavel Smrcek missed the cross.

Brazil and Australia meet today in a top of the table match in Group A, preceded by Saudi Arabia against Mexico.

STANDING

S Arabia	1	0	0	1	0	3	0
Group B							
Team	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts
Uruguay	1	1	0	0	2	0	3
Czech Rep	1	0	1	0	2	2	1
S Africa	1	0	1	0	2	2	1
UAE	1	0	0	1	0	2	0