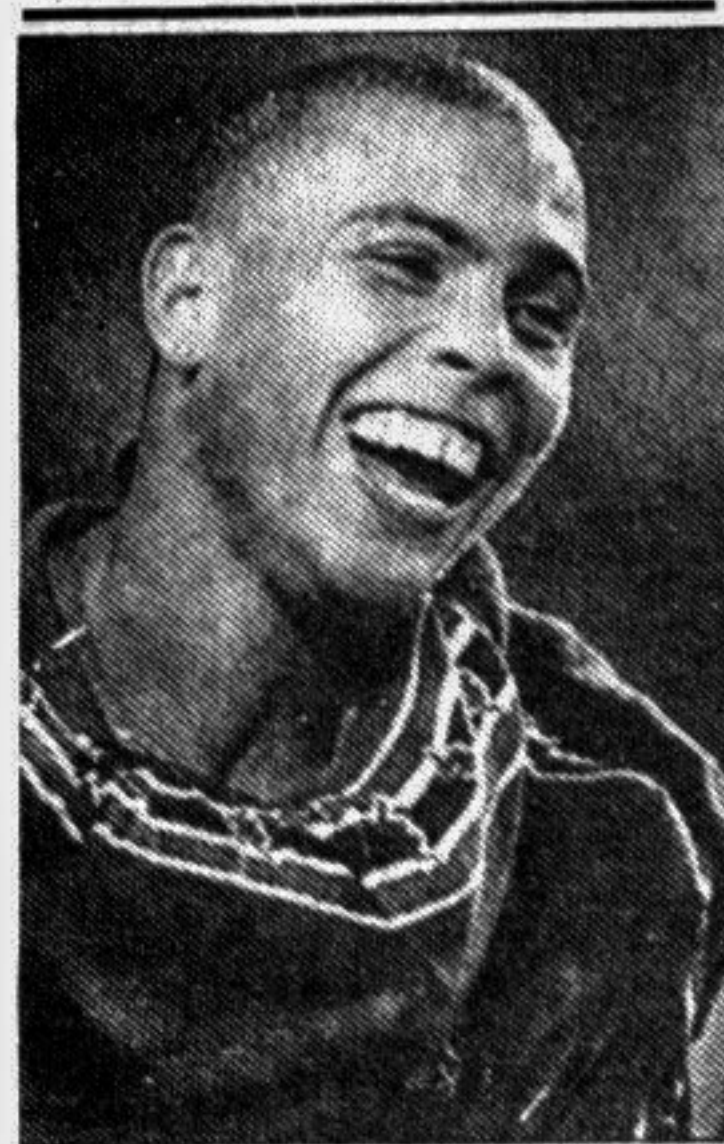


Column One

SPORTS TALK



Ronaldo
(Brazil's football superstar)
"People keep asking who I prefer to have playing alongside me as if I could choose between wonderful players such as Ronaldo, Romario, Dado or Edmundo. Fortunately that's not my job. I have enough to do trying to make sure I can keep my place in the team."

Boost sports WHIZZ KID

COMPETITION FOR SCHOOL CHILDREN
Competition-87

✓ Tick the Correct Answers

Competition closes at 8 pm on Jan 30, 1998

- Which Kiwi batsman scored the only ODI century against Pakistan?
Cairns Astle Crowe
- Which is the highest ODI individual score?
194 189 198
- How many ODI centuries has Azharuddin hit?
3 4 5
- Who scored the only half-century for Bangladesh in the Independence Cup?
Aminal Akram Mahmud
- Who is leading Bangladesh in the World Youth Cup cricket in South Africa?
Sabbir Al-Shahriar Sajal

Name

Class Roll No.

School Address

Phone: (if any)



Invitational hockey

An invitational international hockey tournament, under the auspices of the Bangladesh Hockey Federation (BHF), will be held in the last week of next month, reports BSS.

Six countries, out of invited 13, have confirmed their participation in the tournament. Sri Lanka, China, Singapore and Egypt would send their national teams while India will send their national runners-up. Tamil Nadu Eleven and Pakistan will be represented by the national champions Frontier Eleven.

The BHF executive committee will sit on January 26 to discuss the financial position and other preparatory issues.

Strict security for France '98

PARIS, Jan 20: France will deploy about 6,000 French police and several hundred soldiers to ensure security and guard against terrorism during the World Cup, the interior minister said Tuesday, reports AP.

"We are managing a crowd phenomenon. These are phenomena which are difficult to control, and excesses are possible," Interior Minister Jean-Pierre Chevènement told a news conference. "As a result, we will take the necessary measures."

Millions of people, including tens of thousands of fans from nearby European countries, are expected to attend the 64 matches of this year's World Cup at 10 different stadiums across France.

French authorities are being especially vigilant about potential disturbances by so-called soccer hooligans, and terrorist attacks. Police already are exchanging photos of potential soccer hooligans in order to minimise the possibility of altercations between rival fans.

Between 5,000 and 6,000 police will be on hand to ensure security during the 33 days of competition between June 10-July 12. And at least 300 soldiers will help ensure safety as part of anti-terrorist measures already in effect. Special security checks of fans will take place before they enter the stadiums, and security officials will patrol public transportation and parking lots.

Security measures will be tested during the inaugural match of the new Stade de France outside Paris on Jan 28.

Sajal, Muntasir stymie Kenya

Sports Reporter



Fahim Muntasir and pacer Sajal Chowdhury waded a long tail to inspire Bangladesh to a sensational three-wicket win over Kenya in the Plate league of the second World Youth Cup cricket at Potchefstroom University ground in South Africa on Monday.

In a unique union, both Fahim and Sajal, who had earlier evenly shared four wickets among them to restrict their African rivals to a paltry 132, remained unbeaten on 33 runs as Bangladesh recovered from a middle-order collapse to clinch victory in 37.2 overs.

At one stage, Bangladesh were stuttering at 54 for seven. But Muntasir and Sajal added 80 in an unbroken eighth wicket partnership to stun the Kenyans.

Although the scorecards provided by the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) last evening was hardly legible, it was however learnt that Fahim faced 81 balls in his gritty undefeated knock while an obdurate Sajal played 85 balls.

Opener Hannan Sarkar with a breezy 27 off 15 balls gave Bangladesh a flying start after the fantastic bowling performance from skipper Al-Shahriar, who took four wickets for only seven runs.

But support at the other end was insignificant. Hannan aside, the other top five batsmen including skipper Al-Shahriar failed to even reach a double-digit mark.

AFP adds: England turned around last week's humiliation

by Bangladesh into a shock win over fancied Pakistan. The in-form Pakistan, who had an untroubled passage through the preliminary round, made England fight all the way but they were eventually edged out by 18 runs.

A first-wicket partnership of 91 between Steve Peters and Robert Key got the English boys off to a settled start. Peters was eventually run out by Saeed Anwar for 92, with England 177 for four, but his 126-ball innings laid the foundation for a challenging total of 251.

Pakistan were always in with a chance, despite losing five wickets for 50 runs during a spell of 13 overs when off-spinner Graeme Swann and Giles Hayward pinned them back.

The run out of Hasan Raza, the only Test player in the tournament, by Swann, was a further blow to Pakistan.

What swung the game, however, was a top-drawer boundary catch by Jonathan Powell which got rid of Waqas as Pakistan looked to be in with a chance, although they needed 30 off the last four overs.

England's next match will be against India on Saturday, while Pakistan face Australia on Friday.

India play Australia today in the next super league fixture. There were no upsets in the plate league games.

Greg Burchart scored the only century of the day with 128 for Scotland against Namibia, with the Scots winning by 156 runs.

A more committed West In-

dies thrashed Denmark by 200 runs and Ireland celebrated when they beat Papua New Guinea by six wickets.

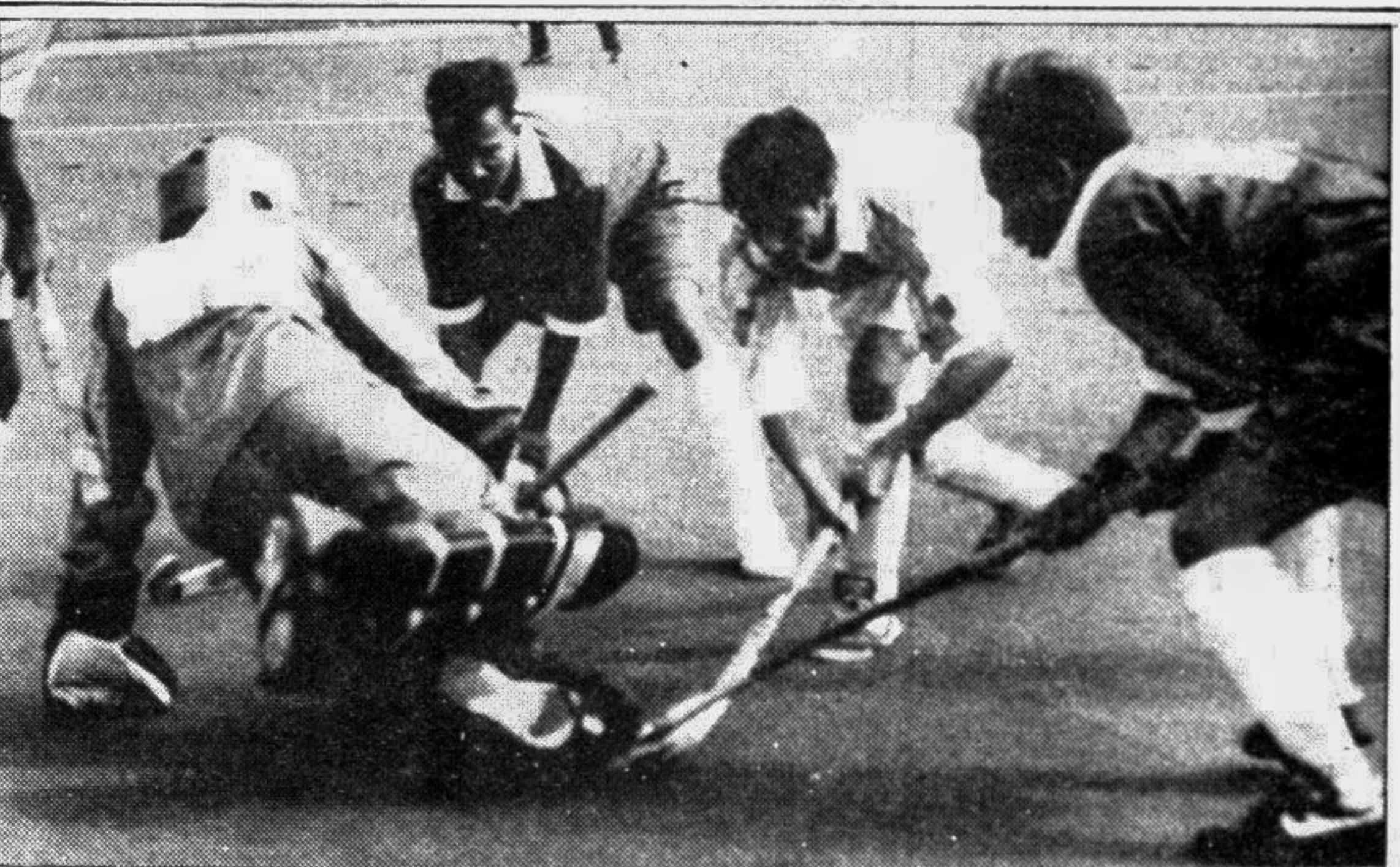
SCOREBOARD

KENYA					
Gopee c Murtaza b Mushfiq	28				
Mohammad c Fahim b Monjurul	1				
Tono c Mushfiq b Al-Shahriar	33				
T Odoyo c Murtaza b Fahim	44				
B Karmali c b Al-Shahriar	0				
Mboyia run out	0				
H Modi c Sabbir b Fahim	7				
Kamande c Murtaza	3				
b Al-Shahriar	1				
Nboyia b Al-Shahriar	3				
C Otieno not out	2				
Extras: (lb-3, nb-1, w-9)	13				
Total: (all out in 44.5 overs)	132				
BOWLING	O	M	R	E	C
Sajal	7	2	21	0	1
Manjurul	6	1	20	1	2
Sabbir Khan	6.5	2	20	1	2
Mushfiq	7	1	27	2	2
Fahim	10	0	27	2	2
Al-Shahriar	6	3	7	4	4

BANGLADESH

Hannan c Odeh b Mboyia	27				
Ehsanul c Odeh b Mboyia	5				
Mehrab c Otino b Kamande	9				
Al-Shahriar c (wk) b Odoyo	1				
Sabbir c b Odoyo	0				
Mushfiq lbw b Kamande	2				
Fahim not out	33				
Ahsanullah c (keeper) b Odoyo	2				
Sajal not out	31				
Extras: (lb-7, nb-6, w-8)	23				
Total: (for 7 wts in 37.2 overs)	133				
BOWLING	O	M	R	E	C
Odoyo	10	0	32	3	2
Mboyia	6	0	32	2	3
Parson	7	0	30	0	0
Kamande	5.2	0	19	0	0
Otieno	3	0	8	0	0
Tono	6	0	10	0	0

Result: Bangladesh won by 3-wkt



Action from yesterday's national championship encounter between Dhaka DSA and Patuakhali DSA at the Hockey Stadium. Dhaka won 10-0. —Star photo

Saints M United's nemesis

SOUTHAMPTON, England, Jan 20: Southampton's Kevin Davies breathed fresh life into the race for the Premiership title by consigning leaders Manchester United to a shock 1-0 defeat here at the Dell on Monday, reports AFP.

Davies' exquisite third minute header proved enough to send the reigning champions crashing to just their fourth defeat of the season as lowly Saints made it three home wins in succession against England's most formidable team.

The Southampton striker hobbled off the pitch 15 minutes later after twisting an ankle, but his one significant contribution to the game proved decisive and could ultimately have a major say in the destiny of the title.

United, who were thrashed 6-3 last season and 3-1 the year before, were hoping to slam the door on their title rivals with victory over the relegation-haunted club.

But Saints were fired up for the occasion and never let Alex Ferguson's side get into their stride, chasing every ball and throwing themselves into tackles with a ferocity that clearly rattled their illustrious opponents.

Defeat for United means that what could have been an eight point lead over Blackburn at the top remains just five, with 15 games remaining.

Southampton took a shock lead after just three minutes when former England star Matt le Tissier floated an innocuous-

looking free kick from the left towards the edge of the United area.

But just as the ball reached the box, United midfielder Nicky Butt lost his footing allowing Davies to pounce with a glancing header into the bottom left of Peter Schmeichel's goal.

The capacity crowd inside the Dell erupted in delight before producing a sustained rendition of "we want seven" in reference to last season's astonishing 6-3 victory over United.

Such was Southampton's domination of the reigning champions that the visitors failed to muster a single shot on goal in the first half, restricting them to just a handful of chances.

United, though, turned up the pressure in the 10 minutes before the break and should have equalised when Giggs caused havoc in the Southampton defence only for Andy Cole to squander a clear chance by firing wide of the mark.

Cole was guilty of another

glaring miss moments later when Giggs, against the supplier, crossed from the left only for the United striker to head wide from six yards with only Saints goalkeeper Paul Jones to beat.

United, without call strain victim Teddy Sheringham, started the second half as they had finished the first with a siege on the Southampton goal.

David Beckham forced Jones into action after 58 minutes with a bending free kick from 25 yards out and almost scored 10 minutes later with another attempt from an identical position.

Beckham beat Jones on this occasion but his curling effort crashed off the cross bar. Cole almost forced an equaliser on 85 minutes when his close range stab was brilliantly saved by Jones.

With the match heading into injury time, Jones then produced another astonishing save to deny Paul Scholes as Southampton hung on for another famous victory.



World No three Michael Chang of the United States plays a backhand return against Kenneth Carlsen of Denmark in Melbourne yesterday. Chang won 6-3, 7-6, 5-7, 6-3. —AP/UNB photo

Bangladesh thrash PNG

Sports Reporter

Bangladesh recorded their second successive win in the Plate league of the second World Youth Cup with a 161-run thrashing of Papua New Guinea at Johannesburg in South Africa yesterday.

Batting first, Bangladesh amassed 263 runs before being all out in 49.5 overs. Mehrab Hossain scored highest 64 while Rashedul contributed 50 and skipper Al-Shahriar chipped in with 46.

In reply, Papua New Guinea were bundled out for a meagre 102 in 40.5 overs.

With this win Bangladesh brightened their hopes for a final clash against the champions from other group in the 8-team league.

Bangladesh will play their last match against Ireland at Benoni tomorrow.

Nat'l hockey

DU, Dhaka DSA Navy book qtrs berth

Dhaka University, Dhaka DSA and Bangladesh Navy — moved into quarterfinals of the 20th national championship winning their respective matches at the National Hockey Stadium yesterday, reports UNB.

Dhaka University thrashed Chittagong DSA 9-0.

The winners led the first half 3-0.

Tutul Kumar Nag struck three goals while Ashiquzaman, Khurshid Alam, Sharful Alam, Mobassher Salam, Zahid Hossain Raju and Mamun-ur-Rashid scored one goal each for the winners.

Earlier, in the day's first match, Bangladesh Navy got a walkover against Dinajpur DSA.

The sailors team will play the first quarterfinal against Dhaka University on Thursday at 12 noon.

In the day's third and last match, Dhaka DSA handed a massive 10-0 drubbing to Patuakhali DSA.

National forward Mohammad Sadek and Shamsuzzaman both scored hatricks netting five and three goals respectively. Kamal and Hasan netted one apiece.

Dhaka DSA will take on Bangladesh Air Force in the second quarterfinal, also on Thursday at 2 pm.

Coca-Cola's refreshing ideas

PARIS, Jan 20: In a drive to strengthen its presence in France, the Coca-Cola Co. on Tuesday announced multimedia plans for the new 80,000-seat Stade de France that was built for this year's World Cup, reports AP.

The multi-year arrangement takes effect Jan 28, the stadium's official opening day, with eight giant ceiling screens, contests for "dream prizes" at half-time, and a multimedia Coca-Cola cafe on top of the giant stadium.

The announcement comes 100 days before the World Cup kicks off in 10 French stadiums and the same day the French post office launched commemorative, round and embossed soccer-ball stamps.

"We hope to revolutionise the environment of a stadium," said Daniel Malcorps, the president of Coca-Cola France.

While many American stadiums have developed entertainment, in France "the stadium is thought of as a cold, masculine place," said Coca-Cola spokesman William Louis-Marie.

"Coca-Cola has developed an entertainment program to change the perception of stadiums (in France) so it will be like a festive place, for a family-oriented, joyful public."

The ceiling screens will show sports clips, music videos and other entertainment at the stadium built in the suburb of Saint-Denis, north of the capital.

Louis-Marie declined to give the budget or exact duration of the project.

The deal is not exclusive and the Stade de France has said it is also talking with several other youth, technology and sports-oriented groups for similar arrangements.

Coca-Cola stepped up its campaign to woo the French last December, when it bought France's favourite soft-drink, Orangina, from the French Pernod-Ricard for 850 million dollars.

WTA rankings

WASHINGTON, Jan 20 (AFP): Women's Tennis Association (WTA) rankings issued in Miami, Florida on Monday:

Player	Points
1. Hingis	6264
2. Novotna	3753
3. Davenport	3696
4. Coetzee	3360
5. Seles	2888
6. Majoli	2874
7. Pierce	2861
8. Spirlea	2577
9. Sanchez	2361
10. Joe-Fernandez	2114
11. Tauziat	2003
12. Martinez	1988
13. Testud	1841
14. Huber (Ger)	1829
15. Schultz-McCarthy	1543
16. Appelmans	1502
17. Raymond (USA)	1437
18. Van Roost	1394
19. Dragomir	1333
20. Sugiyama	1252



Onlookers at the packed Dhaka Stadium during a match in the Coca-Cola Independence Cup tri-nation cricket tournament which ended on Jan 18. —Star photo

Where had the tickets gone?

Tawfiq Aziz Khan



Did anyone know the seating capacity of Dhaka Stadium? Perhaps this has remained as the 'most well-guarded secret' in the sporting circles since the commissioning of the big bowl in 1955. It was not for an ordinary spectator to know about it, but it was expected of those who run popular sports like football and cricket in this country. And they are yet to come up with any figures.

What about the National Sports Council then — the so called owners of the stadium? Did they have any idea about the capacity of the stadium? Had they ever tried to find out? If so, what were their findings? Was the sports ministry aware of it. Did the minister in charge know about it? The sport-loving public, who pay through the nose for every match, have the right to know the truth. There has come for an honest disclosure by the relevant authorities.

I remember, the former National Sports Control Board, now NSC, had started in the eighties to mark the seats with numbers on completion of the second tier on the north-eastern side of the stadium. They had come up with a figure of 35,000 (approximately) minus the space allotted for the VIPs on the southern side. Accordingly, the Football Federation at that time released 33,000 tickets for the Abahani-Mohammedan league matches and the outcome

was quite interesting. There was overflow of spectators in the first match and under utilisation in the second. On both occasions, the BFF claimed a sell-out. This was done under tremendous criticism to check the mafia of ticket black-marketeers. But subsequently they gave up practice following pressure from the ticket touts. This coterie remained powerful under all regimes. And I am afraid they are still strong and active.

Tickets for the Coca-Cola Independence Cup tournament were released through a bank only three days before the start of the tourney. There were great rush and all tickets seemed to have sold out. In fact it was a sold-out tournament. But till today did anybody know how many tickets were put on sale? How much money did the sporting public pay to see the six matches? We had seen how many went to watch the first match. Even the India-Pakistan league match did not draw a tremendous crowd. The first and third finals did not have full house. Only the second final drew a capacity crowd. There were long queues outside even after the start of the match and the touts had a brisk business.

Taking these situations into account, do we have to understand that people who had gone into great length to acquire tickets with their hard-earned money sat pretty on the tickets at home and watched television? Since there was no season

pass these tickets were not valid for the next match. The touts approached the spectators with long faces. Business was pretty dull. The crowd was so thin that a Tk 150 ticket was offered for as less as Tk 100.

The tickets for the tournament was offered through a bank only for the people of Dhaka. There was no arrangement for Chittagong, Khulna, Sylhet or Rajshahi. In fact they were forced to come to Dhaka at least three days before the start of the tourney for buying tickets and waiting for 72 hours spending their valuable time and money.

In the beginning the BCB firmly declared their pious intention of not issuing any complimentary passes. But it was reported from many quarters that hundreds of tickets (not passes) were issued free of charge by influential people to their relatives and guests. There were even powerful gatecrashers!

Shaheed Mushtaq gate was supposed to be exclusively for the VIPs and journalists. But many uninvited guests were also seen enjoying the tournament along with the selected entrants. Not only that some of them claimed they bought those non-salable tickets from touts. Lapses notwithstanding, and there were bound to be points for criticism in such a massive occasion, the whole show had brought tremendous prestige for the country.

But the questions remain to be answered.

Euro 2000 draw finalised

Smooth passage for seeds



GHENT, Belgium, Jan 20: In a draw to make post-World Cup life tough for England, France as well as Yugoslavia and Croatia, defending champions Germany escaped with an easy path to the 2000 European Championship, reports AP.

England drew Bulgaria, Poland, Sweden and Luxembourg in their qualifying Group Five, with only the group winners assured of making the finals.

"Sometimes you get a lucky draw, other times you do not and this one has gone against us," said England coach Glenn Hoddle.

Yugoslavia and Croatia were drawn in the same Group Eight that also included Macedonia, another former republic of Yugoslavia.

Yugoslavia fought a six-month war with Croatia in 1991 after Zagreb declared independence from the former Yugoslav Federation. It will be the first time the two meet.

Yugoslav coach Slobodan Santrac also played down any lingering animosity. "Our players are together in Real Madrid, the Italian and Spanish leagues. They are friends."

France, who have complained bitterly about not being seeded at Sunday's draw, now face Russia and a resurgent Ukraine in their qualifying Group Four.

"To get through, we will have to be tough, and for a very long time," said French coach Aimé Jacquet.

Only Belgium and the Netherlands were able to sit back and enjoy the nerve-racking draw — as co-hosts they qualify automatically for the ninth European Championship finals.

Reigning champions Germany did not have that luxury. They were seeded first but was not given direct entry into the finals.

GROUPINGS

Group 1: Italy, Denmark, Switzerland, Wales, Belarus.

Group 2: Norway, Greece, Georgia, Latvia, Slovenia, Albania.

Group 3: Germany, Turkey, Finland, Northern Ireland, Moldova.

Group 4: Russia, France, Ukraine, Iceland, Armenia, Andorra.

Group 5: England, Bulgaria, Sweden, Poland, Luxembourg.

Group 6: Spain, Austria, Israel, Cyprus, San Marino.

Group 7: Romania, Portugal, Slovakia, Hungary, Liechtenstein, Azerbaijan.

Group 8: Yugoslavia, Croatia, Ireland, Macedonia, Malta, Lithuania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Faroe Islands, Estonia.

But Germany got a relatively easy draw, in the same group as Turkey, Finland, Northern Ireland and Moldova.

"Fans in Germany must be very satisfied because this is an extremely interesting group," said coach Bert Vogts.

"By the time the group starts, Germany already could have

won the World Cup," said Finland's coach Richard Moller Nielsen. Qualifying starts in September, less than two months after the July 12 World Cup final.

Another tough qualifying group is Group One, featuring Italy, Denmark, Switzerland and Wales. "You can lose a point against anybody, especially in away games," said Italian coach Cesare Maldini.

Group Seven is evenly matched with Romania, Portugal, Slovakia and Hungary.

The draw, hosted by soccer greats Johan Cruyff of the Netherlands and Belgium's Paul van Himst, featured 49 teams ranging from giants like Germany and Italy