

Boost sports WHIZZ KID

COMPETITION FOR SCHOOL CHILDREN

Competition-98

✓ Tick the correct answers Post to The Daily Star Win attractive prizes Competition closes at 8 pm on July 10, 1998

- 1 Who was the first player to receive a red card in France '98? Song Zidane Nankov
2 Who scored the first hat-trick in 1998 World Cup? Batistuta Ince Baggio
3 The new French Open champion is Brugnera Sampras Moya
4 Striker Christian Vieri is an Austrian Brazilian Italian
5 Who is the captain of Paraguay Zubizarreta Chilavert Campos

Name Roll No. School Address Phone

EN-VITS

SPORTS TALK



Sepp Blatter (FIFA president)

'Thirty-two days is really, really a long period. It is not easy.'

While saying the next World Cup ought to be shortened.

ABSORBING ANECDOTES

PARIS, July 9 (Reuters): Facts and figures of Wednesday's World Cup semifinal between France and Croatia.

France's victory gave the World Cup its first ever final between the hosts and the defending champions. It will also be the first in which France have taken part.

The 16th final will be the eighth to match a European nation against a South American one. Brazil have played in four such finals, winning all of them - 5-2 v Sweden in 1958, 3-1 v Czechoslovakia in 1962, 4-1 v Italy in 1970 and 0-0 (3-2 win on penalties) v Italy in 1994.

French defender Lilian Thuram, who scored both goals against Croatia, was the first player to score twice in a World Cup semifinal since Diego Maradona in 1986. The Argentine scored twice in the 2-0 win over Belgium.

France could become the sixth team to win the World Cup as hosts and the first since Argentina in 1978.

Thuram's winning goal was the 165th of the tournament in the 62nd game. There have been 2.66 goals per match on average.

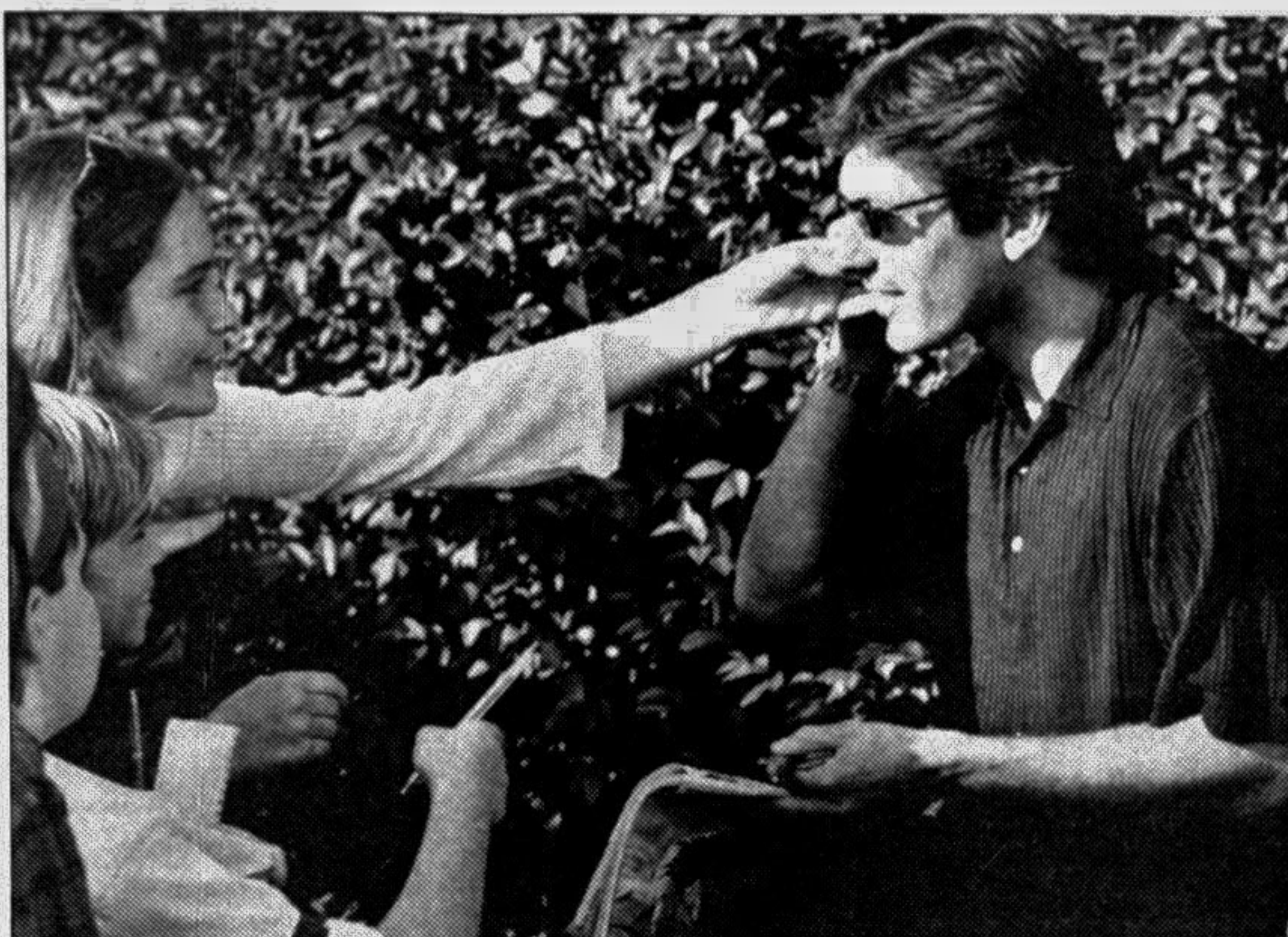
Croatian striker Davor Suker scored his fifth goal of the tournament to draw level at the top of the scorers' table with Christian Vieri of Italy and Gabriel Batistuta of Argentina. He has the chance to lead on his own should he score in the third place play-off against the Netherlands on Saturday.

It will be the fifth successive World Cup at which two European teams have met in the third place play-off. Sweden beat Bulgaria 4-0 in 1994, Italy defeated England 2-1 in 1990, France beat Belgium 4-2 in 1986 and Poland defeated France 3-2 in 1982.

Laurent Blanc's red card in the 74th minute of the match with Croatia was the 21st of the tournament. He was the second Frenchman to be dismissed (after Zinedine Zidane against Saudi Arabia) and the 11th European.

Suker's goal against France was the first conceded by the hosts in 328 minutes at the finals. It was also the first in open play - the only other player at the finals to beat French keeper Fabien Barthez was Denmark's Michael Laudrup, from the penalty spot.

If France win the final without conceding a goal, they would have the best defensive record of any winner. The French have let in just two goals. The previous best was three by Uruguay in 1930, Italy in 1934, England in 1966 and Brazil in 1994.



CHARMING LEO: Brazilian midfielder Leonardo (R) entertains some young fans at the Chateau de Grande Romaine in Lesigny on July 8.

A night of merry-making

PARIS, July 9: It was a crazy night of partying. About three lakh people of all nationalities, but mostly French for obvious reasons, gathered at the Champs Elysees last night. They held each other, kissed one another and most of all shouted, well sang, 'Ole, ole, ole oh! finale'. For the first time in the sixty years of World Cup football, France were in the final.

Throughout the night, Parisians trumpeted their car horns and chanted Thuram, Thuram. Restaurants and fast food outlets were open deep into the night. There was singing, dancing and merriment. This was unbelievable. As the sea of people moved up and down the largest avenue in the world, break dancers and tricksters added to the revelry. People played all sorts of musical instruments. Many still had their face paint on. There were also crackers and fireworks.

FIFA could not have hoped for a more rewarding end to their efforts over the past four years. This will be a dream final, the meeting of the hosts and the reigning champions. This will be a mega final, the clash of the continents. Thinking about it, over one hundred and fifty countries let out a lot of sweat, and there were many tears, over a span of two years, to qualify for France '98. In the end, the two countries which did not require to qualify are in the final. Brazil are waiting and perhaps sharpening their nails.

On the evening France won as the better team. Croatia never found the rhythm with which they humbled Germany. French manager Aime Jacquet did not show his inner delight after yesterday's victory. Immediately after the 2-1 win, he admitted that the Croats are a dangerous side but 'our morale was high'.

The semifinal had all the trimmings of a World Cup match. There was some life at the Stade de France in large-contrast to the French apathy to football. The only bit of excitement on the streets of Paris

World Cup notebook

PARIS, July 9 (AFP/Internet): World Cup notebook: Brazil have called up Mr Motivator for Sunday's World Cup final clash against France. As they did in the United States four years ago, the Brazilians are putting their faith in engineer and author Evandro Motta, a specialist in the psychology of success.

Motta claims to be an expert in channelling 'positive energy'.

CONGRATULATIONS AT LAST: Sports daily L'Equipe, which has waged an anti-Aime Jacquet campaign for the last two years, has grudgingly acknowledged the coach's achievement in qualifying France for the World Cup final.

'We still don't agree with his tactics and selection but in sport only the result counts,' wrote editor Jerome Bureau in Thursday's edition.

'GOALRUSH': Contrary to the belief held by many that the introduction of the knockout phase from the second round of the World Cup would boost the fear factor and foster defensive football, the round of last 16 actually produced a higher average of goals than the group phase.

The second round average was 2.875 goals per game, with the group matches only showing 2.625. The quarter-finals average was 2.75 goals per game while the semi-finals brought five goals for an average 2.5.

With the final looming tantalisingly close, the semis also brought the most shots - 32.5 per game. In the quarter-finals, there were only 26.5.

CARD TRICK: There have been 21 red cards at the World Cup - rather less than feared after FIFA's clampdown on tackling from behind. The average is just under one

From Nizamuddin Ahmed

before the match was due to a few Croat supporters who had driven all the way from Croatia. They were shouting and waving their red and white banner, much to the amusement and perhaps some annoyance of the Parisians, who enjoy a quiet cup of coffee on the street pavement.

Inside the stadium, the explicitly-dressed brass band and the roar of the supporters as the name of each player was being announced set the tone for the match. Unfortunately the semifinal did not leave up to its expectations.

The few flashes of brilliance included Aljosa Asanovic's defence splitting job that allowed Suker to display his elegance and artistry for Croatia's first and only goal. Following up quickly was Youri Djorkaeff's nudge to free 'Surprise of the day' Lilian Thuram for France's equaliser. But what astounded the world, the Croats, the French and Thuram (in that order) was the Parma defender's unleashing of a left-foot drive that stretched the Croat keeper but in despair.

Zidane's long shots, one of which brought an excellent save late in the first half, and Laurent Blanc's rash sending off were the other significant moments of a game that struggled all through to reach a level worthy of the occasion.

Most French went to the Stade de France as spectators, not as fans of their national team. Many were sceptic about Jacquet's judgement. He was criticised for not favouring the likes of Cantona, Papi and Gilma. And yesterday the young crop of French players did justice to Jacquet's confidence in their 'soul'.

Thuram's parents has been on French TV. His mother said she fainted after he scored a goal for France. Replying to a question this morning bespectacled, Thuram said he hardly scores goals in the league and he hardly manages one in practice.

France's victory and Brazil's presence has beefed up the price of the tickets for the final. At least one has been bought for

US 3000 dollars in the black-market. People are now frantic for match tickets. Blackmarketers display small placards saying, 'I need ticket' to dodge the police. Actually they have some tickets to sell. There is heavy bargaining and those willing to pay a price do not return empty-handed.

Blanc, who will miss the final because of the red card, has not earned the wrath of anyone because replay of the incident shows he perhaps deserved a yellow. Blanc narrated this morning the agonizing twenty minutes he passed after being sent off. 'I suffered a lot', he said.

Croatian fans have not stopped celebrating either. Disappointed though they may be, reaching the semifinal has been no mean six----- a nation born only consolation. Now they hope this is the Holland in the play-off for third place. That may not be easy. Their performance in yesterday's semifinal makes their German win look like a flash in the pan.

The French play with short passes. Some will say they emulate the Brazilians. But, as images of Roberto Carlos, Rivaldo, Ronaldo and Sampaolo flash by, one would agree the French are slower.

Celebrations have also been going on in the little French colony, Guadeloupe, which is home to Thuram. People have been singing and dancing for Thuram is their boy.

Jacques Chirac, the French president, who was at the semifinal, congratulated his team and was buoyant in his praise for Thuram.

Today there is quiet after a night of merry-making that went on till four in the morning. Perhaps this morning, the French will realise what they have achieved. Ecstatic fans were forecasting last night a 4-0 win against Brazil in the final. No doubt it is a prediction over the board. Only a goal will be enough to give the hosts the cup for the first time since Argentina became champions at home in 1978.

FLUSHED WITH FAILURE

Holland's hope of a World Cup final was not the only thing to go down the pan. Many of the 11 million Dutch who watched Tuesday evening's semi-final defeat by Brazil waited until breaks in the game to go use the loo, causing a huge strain on the water system.

'In the pauses and between the overtime sessions and the penalty shoot-out, toilets got massive use,' said the consultants brought in to deal with the problem.

'The simultaneous flushing of millions of toilets taxed the Dutch water system to its capacity.'

CONDEMNED TO WIN

Michel Platini, co-president of the World Cup organising committee, says France must make absolutely sure they win the tournament having reached the final after three semi-final defeats.

'Now we're finally there we just must win. It's a once-in-a-lifetime chance to make history,' said Platini, who twice experienced the agony of losing out in the semis in 1982 and 1986 - both times to Germany.

NO TEA BREAK

Anyone tempted to pop out to make a cup of tea around about the 75th minute during the final should think again - that is the most common time that goals are scored in the World Cup. Teams are twice as likely to score then as any other minute, according to FIFA statistics.

FRANCE STILL PLAY FAIR

Despite Laurent Blanc's sending-off in the semi-final against Croatia, France have maintained their place at the top of the fair-play standings, ahead of England and Norway.

LES BLEUS' KEEP THEIR COLOURS

One relief for France as they prepare to play Brazil in the final is that they will be able to play in their traditional tricolour strip - blue shirts, white shorts and red socks. Les Bleus had to play in all-white against Italy, and with blue shorts against Croatia.

Brazil, who will also be in their unmistakable yellow shirts, blue shorts and white socks.

DOMINIC'S DIARY

8/7/98

CROATIA VS FRANCE: 1-2

I yawned for the first 45 minutes as Youri Djorkaeff and Zinedine Zidane ran into Croatian cul-de-sacs.

Going forward the French are tactically rumbled because of their excessive defensive-mindedness. Not the most creative of midfielders, Emmanuel Petit and Didier Deschamps don't take enough chances and fail to provide proper support for the front men.

Less than a minute into the second half, a lapse by Lilian Thuram played that predator Davor Suker outside and the French were duly punished.

But Thuram had the last word. His rigorous performance was rewarded when he forced the equaliser and then clobbered home the winner.

Suspended from the final after giving Slavan Bilic a deserved slap, Laurent Blanc's bravery will be sorely missed by Bastille club four.

DS Man of the Match: While his defensive qualities are irrefutable, many have doubted Thuram's ability to come forward. Until yesterday that is, when he penetration was truly Cafuesque. Sunday's battle between Thuram and Roberto Carlos should be a cracker.

Kirsten keeps lambasting

AMSTERDAM, July 9: Opener Gary Kirsten continued his extraordinary run of form when he made an unbeaten 123 on Wednesday to help South Africa beat the Netherlands by 83 runs in a 50-over friendly match, reports Reuters.

Kirsten made light work of slow and heavy conditions to reach 50 from 70 balls and maintained an even pace to reach his century from 125 deliveries as South Africa reached 248 for six wickets after choosing to bat first.

The Dutch were dismissed for 165 one ball before the end of their allotted 50 overs with extras comfortably top-scoring on 46.

Left-hander Kirsten's last four innings have now produced scores of 205 not out, 33, 210 and 123 not out.

Media showers eulogy

PARIS, July 9 (AP): No adjective was too strong Thursday as French media swaddled the home team with rapturous eulogues after France defeated Croatia to win a berth in the World Cup final.

No matter what the result of Sunday's game with Brazil, the conservative daily Le Figaro predicted a "sumptuous" final for a team the newspaper said already has become a legend.

The leftist daily Liberation, which devoted no less than eight pages to covering the semifinal match, said Sunday's game represented the "dream final."

Even French intellectuals chimed in, reflecting the World Cup mania that is sweeping the country and unifying the nation.

'A magnificent match,' Erik Orsenna, a member of the Academie Francaise, told RTL radio Thursday morning.

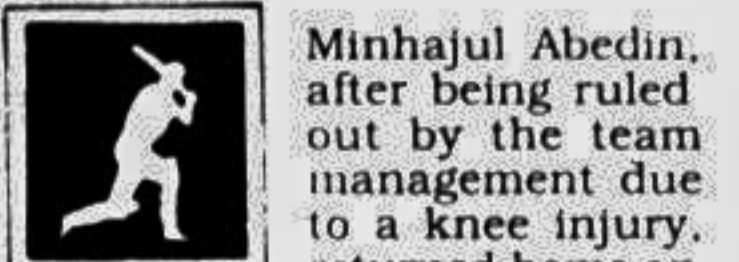
Aime Jacquet, the dour French coach who is often criticised for having sacrificed style in favour of a steady, sure defence, won praise for leading France to a World Cup final for the first time.

'Bravo!' crowd the national sports daily, L'Equipe in paying tribute to the French team, full-back Lilian Thuram, whose two goals put France in the final as well as Jacquet.

'Historic' said L'Est Republicain newspaper. In its editorial, the regional daily lauded Jacquet. 'We have discovered a man who is firm, ardent, with clear ideas.'

Minhaj now in Dhaka

Sports Reporter



Minhajul Abedin, after being ruled out by the team management due to a knee injury, returned home on July 4 mid-way through the national cricket team's one and a half month long tour of the British Isles.

The most experienced player of the country, who played only three matches, sustained an injury to his left knee during a training session in London on June 19. The middle-order batsman was advised to take rest for fifteen days by the doctors. But Minhajul, who scored 54 runs, at an average of 27:00, opted to fly back after consulting with the team officials.

Although the decision was made on June 30 and was duly informed by tour manager Ahmed Sajjadul Alam, Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) only disclosed the matter four days after Minhajul's arrival.

Tanjeeb Ahsan Saad, executive secretary of BCB, yesterday said that they knew the matter from the beginning, adding, 'But we did not consider this important enough to make public.'

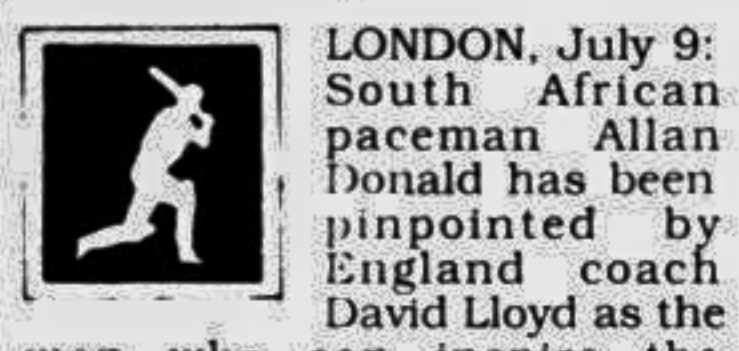
Meanwhile, talking to The Daily Star last night, the former national captain said, 'I slipped on the wet ground and over stretched on my left knee joint,' said Minhajul, who played his last match against the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) Eleven on June 21.

'I felt no pain during that game, but after the match the knee joint was so swollen that I had to rule myself out for the next match,' he added.

He informed that the decision about his return was taken by the team management on June 30 after the doctor advised him to take rest for 15 days.

Bangladesh left for Northern Ireland on June 3 for the tour which has been arranged as part of the team's preparation for next year's World Cup. The team, who are now left with two limited-over Cairn Trophy matches against Scotland and a three-day affair with the same opponent, is expected to return home on July 20.

Lloyd exemplifies Donald



LONDON, July 9: South African pace man Allan Donald has been appointed by England coach David Lloyd as the nation's next generation of fast bowlers, reports AFP.

Lloyd was relieved to see England defy the odds and draw the third Test against the tourists and 24 hours later he spoke of 'a huge challenge now to the young fast bowlers we have got in this country coming through.'

And he stressed: 'What an inspiration it must be to watch this man Donald coming in to bowl for South Africa. "On Monday, for instance, he was hurting from an ankle sprain and he was knackered from bowling so many overs over three successive days."

'He was on his own because of Pollock and Klusener's injuries but he just kept on coming and coming. "In the end, it was only the resilience of our tail which stopped him and the fact that Robert Croft has worked so hard and well to improve his technique against the quick stuff after his problems of last summer."

Changes are likely and batsman Graham Thorpe may have to miss the rest of the series let alone the fourth Test at Trent Bridge on July 23, in a bid to sort out his chronic back trouble before the winter Ashes mission in Australia.

'Lloyd admitted the euphoria of grabbing such a brave and unlikely draw should not prevent England's management and selectors from facing up to current problems and the harsh truths of life as a team short of consistent Test-winning qualities.'

'They have got their own qualities but the three of them operate at speeds that average from between 78mph and 84mph. The South African fast bowlers Donald, Pollock, Klusener, Ntini and Kallies are averaging between 84 and 89 and in some cases they are getting up to 91 and 92. "That difference of around six miles per hour is very significant and I was fascinated to see how much easier batting became when their bowlers tired and the average dropped to around 83 around 83 or 83."

'I had an admirable pace attack in this last match and they all tried their very best. Fraser's fine seamer, Cork has proved he can win you matches if it swings and Gough is a wholehearted fast bowler.'

Lloyd's admiring pace attack in this last match and they all tried their very best. Fraser's fine seamer, Cork has proved he can win you matches if it swings and Gough is a wholehearted fast bowler.'

'I had an admirable pace attack in this last match and they all tried their very best. Fraser's fine seamer, Cork has proved he can win you matches if it swings and Gough is a wholehearted fast bowler.'

Youth cricket final today

The one-day final of the Gazl Tank 18th National youth cricket championship begins at the Khulna Stadium today, reports UNB. Sylhet will take on BKSP in the match. Sylhet moved into the final beating Comilla while BKSP reached by defeating Rajbari.

Khulna Betar will broadcast live commentary of the match. Office hockey: Sadharan Bima KS and Bangladesh Army yesterday emerged group champions in the Shah Sports office hockey league with all-win records, reports UNB.

Both the teams earlier confirmed their berth in the four-team super league, beginning Saturday.

On the opening day, Bangladesh Army will take on Blue Berry Travels at 3 pm while Sadharan Bima KS will play Sonali Bank Club at 4.30 pm.

In the last group matches at the National Hockey Stadium, Sadharan Bima KS defeated Bangladesh Air Force 2-1 while Bangladesh Army beat Bangladesh Navy 2-0.

off to Moscow: A 10-member Bangladesh team, led by member of Bangladesh Olympic Association (BOA) Shahed Reza, left yesterday for Moscow to participate in the World Youth Games, reports BSS.

FRANCE '98 SIDELINES

UNDATED, July 9 (AP): The most frequent outcome of a World Cup soccer match is 1-0. In the history of the World Cup, 100 matches or 17.3 per cent ended in this score, FIFA statistics show.

At the tournament now underway, 18.3 per cent of matches up to the semifinals ended in 1-0 victories.

The second most frequent score is 2-1, an outcome in 14.6 per cent of World Cup matches in tournament history. At France 1998, however, 16.6 per cent of the matches through the quarterfinals ended in that score, including Brazil's 2-1 victory over Scotland in the opener.

Ranking third is the 2-0 score, with 9.7 per cent of matches in World Cup history. But that score is lagging behind a bit this tournament with only 6.6 per cent of matches ending in 2-0.

FIERY CLOSING

The closing ceremony for France '98 will be short and centered around fire, director Yves Pepin said Wednesday.

The 8-12 minute show Sunday night at Stade de France will begin with a colourful parade of musicians and acrobats.

Then comes the "race of the joyful ones," Pepin said, including a lot of pyrotechnical effects.

The 2002 World Cup in Japan and South Korea will be saluted with the help of Korean and Japanese percussionists.

ISRAELIS GETTING FATTER

Guys in shorts are sweating it out in France, but the Israeli World Cup fans watching them on TV only have extra pounds to show as the soccer tournament nears the final.

Seventy-five per cent of Israeli men watching the soccer event have gained between at least 3.3 pounds (1.5 kilos) and 5.5 pounds (2.5 kilos), according to a telephone survey of 115 men conducted by an Israeli diet food company.

ITALY STILL IN FRANCE!

France may have knocked Italy out of the World Cup but the Italians have mounted a style offensive in Paris for the summer.

Commemorating the centenary of the Italian Football Association, various functions and events are being held at Casa Azzurri, just off the Champs Elysees, to display Italian culture and fashion.

'Our intention is to make the wider public... here for the World Cup, aware of the high-class products made in the Campania region, especially those in fashion, jewellery and accessories,' said Giuseppe Maccauro, regional minister of Campania.

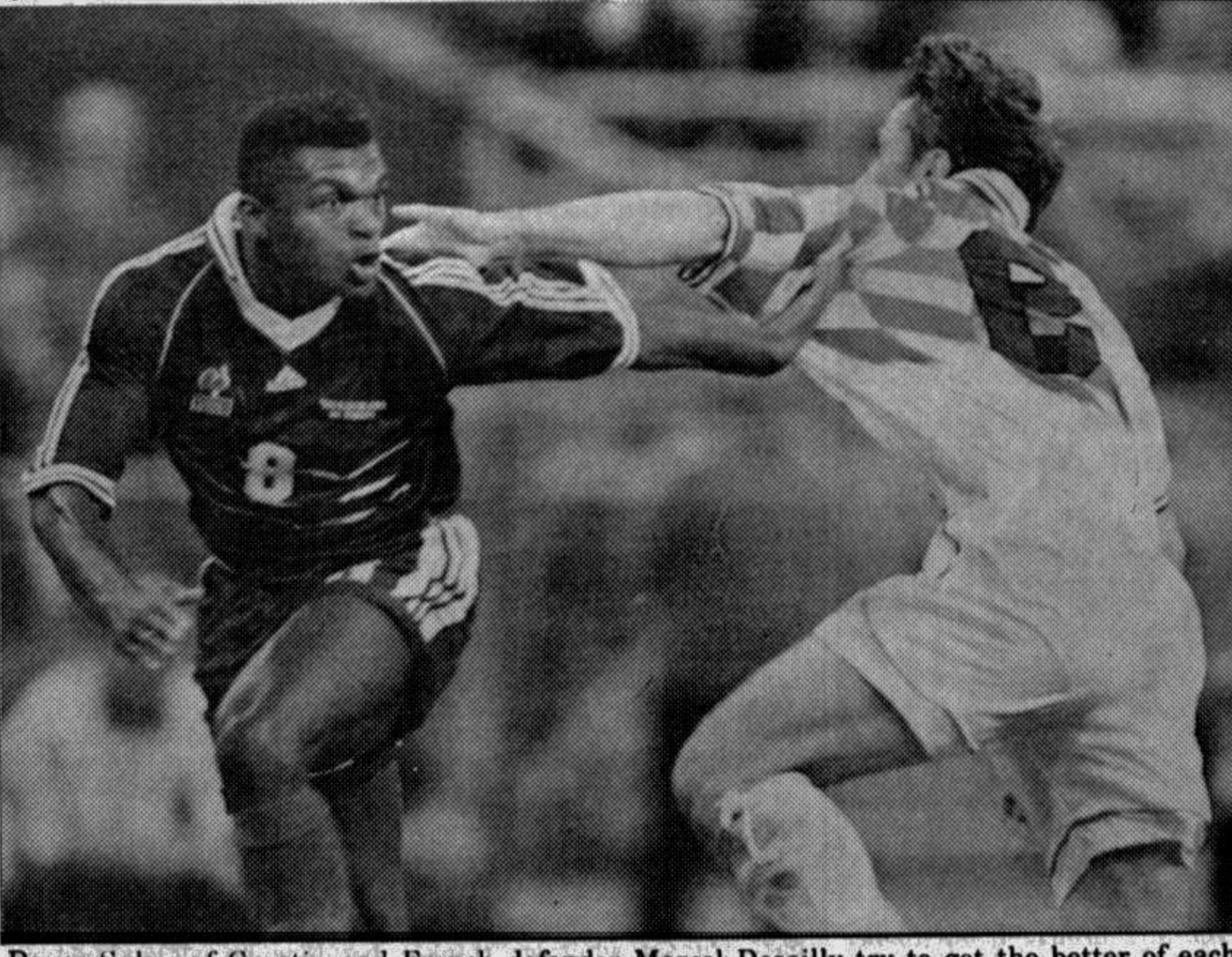
'BANLIEUES DU MONDE '98'

Saint-Denis suburb of Paris and home of the imposing Stade de France is holding "Banlieues du Monde '98" (Suburbs of the World '98) for youths from around the globe.

DFB'S GESTURE

German soccer federation officials on Wednesday visited the family of the French policeman who was left in a coma after an attack by German neo-Nazi hooligans.

DFB president Egidius Braun and general secretary Horst Schmidt went to see Lorette Nivelt, the wife of the injured policeman, Daniel Nivelt.



Davor Suker of Croatia and French defender Marcel Desailly try to get the better of each other at Saint Denis on July 8.