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DHAKA FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 1998

Column One

DID U' KNOW?

(The Professor does)

THAT German car designer and engineer Ferdinand Porsche was born in 1875 and he died the year your Professor was born. Not related in any way, Ferdinand designed the Volkswagen Beetle, which was first mass produced in 1945, a few years before his death. How many years? You should never try to sneakily find out your Prof's age. Just ask him. By 1972 more than 15 million had been sold, making it the world's most popular model. The equally famous Porsche sports cars were developed by his son Ferry Porsche from 1948.
Beta ho to aisa, bhoooooo!

Boost sports WHIZZ KID

COMPETITION FOR SCHOOL CHILDREN

Competition-103

Tick the Correct Answers
Post to The Daily Star
Win attractive prizes

Competition closes at 8 pm, Sept 25 '98, and draw shortly afterwards

- How many nations are taking part in the 16th C'wealth Games cricket?
12 15 20
- Who is skipping Barbados in C'wealth Games cricket?
Wallace Gibson Campbell
- Where were the previous C'wealth Games held?
England Canada Australia
- How many countries are taking part in the 16th Commonwealth Games?
50 60 70
- In how many disciplines, is Bangladesh participating in the 16th Commonwealth Games?
Two Seven Nine

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SPORTS TALK



Shaun Pollock

(South African gold-winning cricket captain in the 16th Commonwealth Games)
"Captain, you take it back. These responsibilities are a bit too much."

A message intended for national team captain Hansie Cronje after the triumph in Kuala Lumpur.

Javed banks on winning form

KARACHI, Sept 24: Pakistani coach Javed Miandad today promised to maintain a winning spirit in the forthcoming home series against Australia that earned his team the Sahara Cup in Canada, reports AFP.

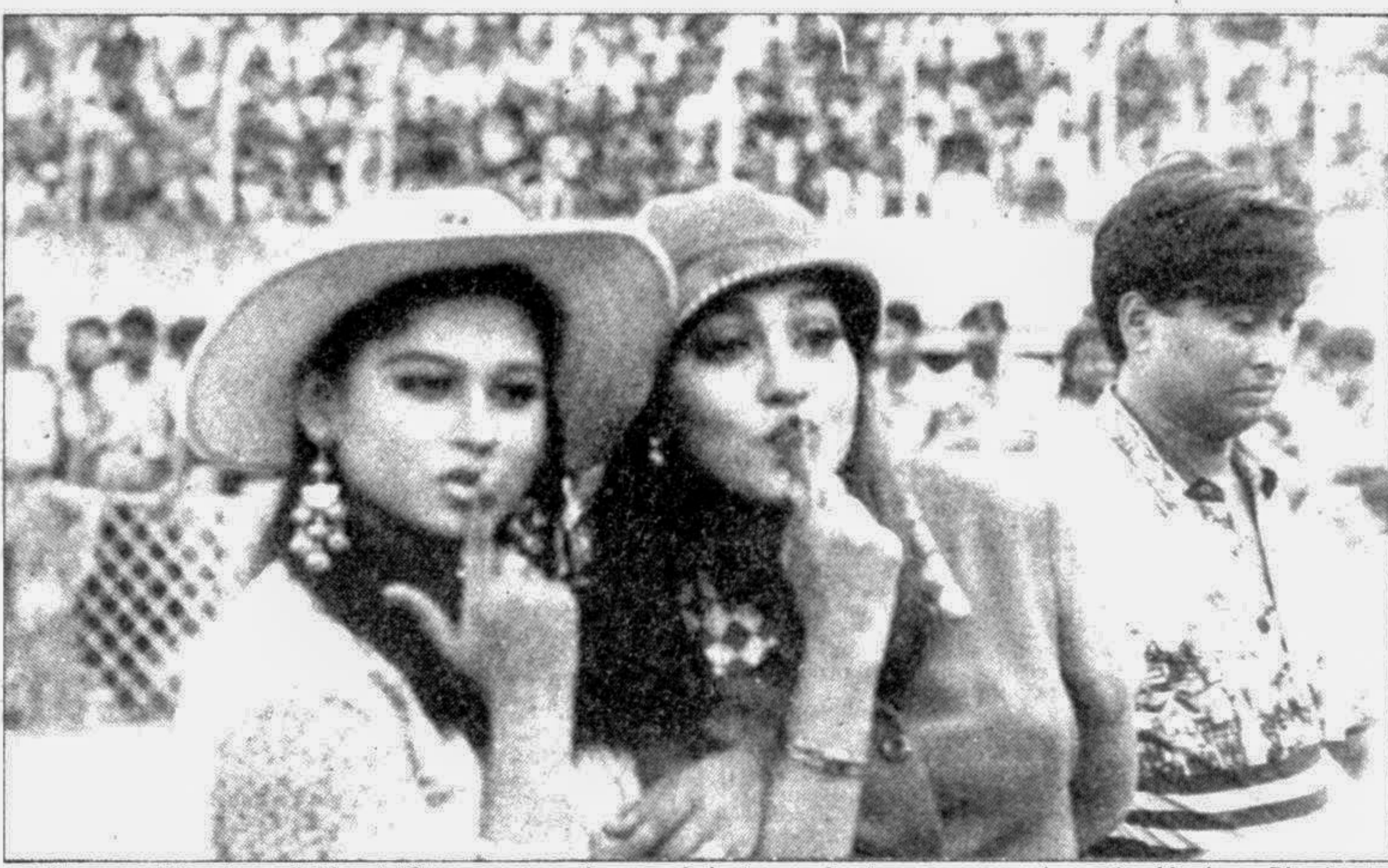
Pakistan team was given a resounding welcome on arrival here after their 4-1 triumph over traditional rivals India last week.

"We will keep the winning spirit intact against the Aussies and after the win over India, I believe that we have picked up the pieces of a scattered team," Miandad said.

Nobody knows the Aussies better than the 42-year-old Miandad, who played eight series against Australia during his 124-Test career. He captained Pakistan in three series against Aussies.

"Australia have always been a formidable team. At present they are one of the best in the world but we are ready to face them and beat them," Miandad vowed. "It will be a tough battle."

Australia are scheduled to play three Tests and as many one-day international matches against Pakistan.



Filmstars Eka (L) and Mauri (C) gesture at the crowd during a charity soccer match at the Maulana Bhashani National Hockey stadium yesterday. — Star photo by AKM Mohsin

Aussies sound confident



KARACHI, Sept 24: Australian captain Mark Taylor and coach Geoff Marsh Wednesday expressed confidence their team would pull off Australia's first series win in Pakistan in nearly 40 years, reports AFP.

"Pakistan is a very competitive side in both Tests and one-day but we have the capabilities to beat them. I hope this time the ball will turn our way," a confident Taylor said on his arrival.

Taylor and his colleagues have embarked on a six-week tour of Pakistan in search of a series victory which has eluded Australia for 39 years.

Australia will play three Tests, as many one-day internationals and two four-day games in Pakistan.

"The boys are really focused and the tour to India earlier in the year has helped them of course, we are here to win," Marsh said.

Pakistan cricket is currently embroiled in a match-fixing and betting controversy. A Lahore high court judge investigating charges against some players is expected to submit a report after the first Test in October.

Taylor played down the match-fixing controversy.

"We are here to play cricket," he said, before jokingly adding: "We will refuse any offers if they come to throw away a match."

"We had as good a series as

Pakistan had last time and had the better of them in all three Tests but luck deserted us," Taylor said of the last series which Aussies lost 1-0.

Since then Taylor has led Australia to series wins in the West Indies, South Africa and England. His 22 wins in 42 Tests as captain make him one of the most successful Australian captains of all time.

The sub-continent has never been a happy hunting ground for the Aussies, their only series win in Pakistan came way back in 1959-60 when Richie Benaud led them to a 2-0 triumph.

"The victory drought is in player's mind and they are determined to win here," Marsh said.

ITINERARY

Sept 25-28: Four-day game against KCCA at Karachi.
Oct 1-5: First Test at Rawalpindi.

Oct 8-11: Four-day game vs KRL at Rawalpindi.
Oct 15-19: Second Test at Peshawar

Oct 22-26: Third Test at Karachi.
Nov 6: First ODI at Karachi.
Nov 8: Second ODI at Peshawar.
Nov 10: Third ODI at Lahore.

Of the 40 Tests played between the two nations Australia have won 14, including 12 at home. Pakistan has 11 wins, seven on home grounds.

"We will definitely miss Shane Warne but we have a balanced attack with Glen McGrath back and Damien Fleming bowling very well. Stuart MacGill is a good leg-spinner and expects to fill in Warne's shoes, Taylor said.

Warne, the master leg-spinner with 313 wickets in 67 Tests, is recuperating after a shoulder operation and was not available for the tour.

Rookie leg-spinner Stuart MacGill, an understudy to Warne, is one of the five players on their first full tour to Pakistan.

Colin Miller who bowls fastish off-spin is the only uncapped player in the side.

Australia begin the tour with a four-day fixture in Karachi. Pakistan captain Amir Sohail will lead a Karachi side that also include paceman Waqar Younis and Shahid Afridi.

SQUAD

Mark Taylor (captain, 33, 96 Tests), Steve Waugh (vice captain, 33, 103 Tests), Damien Fleming (28, 4 Tests), Ian Healy (34, 103 Tests), Michael Kasprovicz (26, 13 Tests), Justin Langer (27, 8 Tests), Darren Lehman (28, 1 Test), Stuart MacGill (27, 1 Test), Glenn McGrath (28, 37 Tests), Colin Miller (34, no Tests), Ricky Ponting (27, 18 Tests), Gavin Robertson (32, 3 Tests), Michael Slater (28, 37 Tests) and Mark Waugh (33, 78 Tests). Manager Steve Bernard and coach Geoff Marsh.

Protest against BCB selectors

Sports Reporter

A group of furious cricket fans staged a rally in front of the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) office at the Bangabandhu National Stadium last evening, protesting the exclusion of the former captain Akram Khan from the Nepal-bound team.

The disgruntled supporters chanted slogans against the selection committee chairman Enayef Hossain Siraj for dropping Akram, the most capped captain of the national team, from the ACC trophy squad.

The angry supporters of the discarded player also damaged a couple of cars parked in front of the BCB office. However, most of the BCB officials were not present in the office when the incident at around 7 pm was taking place.

ABAHANI LIMITED

Abahani Limited has expressed its utter dismay over the surprise exclusion of Akram Khan from the 14-man squad which will take part in the Asian Cricket Council (ACC) Trophy, starting from October 3.

"We along with the country's cricketers' fraternity were stunned and shocked after not seeing the name of Akram Khan on the list of the Nepal-bound ACC squad," said the press release issued by Abahani, one of the two crowd-pulling outfits of the country. The omission of Akram is an evidence of "evil plot" of the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB), read the statement, undersigned by the cricket chairman of Abahani Limited Mustafa Kamal.

Terminating the former national captain as the third highest run-getter in the disappointing tour to the British Isles and one of the few successful performers with the willow for the last 18 months, Abahani Limited has asked the BCB for not to find a victim only in Akram for the debacle of the just-concluded Commonwealth Games in Kuala Lumpur.

"Instead of finding a scapegoat in Akram and Durjoy for the sheer Malaysia debacle, the (Board) members concerned should follow in the footsteps of Gazi Ashraf Hossain Lipu," said the press release.

Taking his share of the failure, Gazi Ashraf has resigned as coach of the national team soon after the Commonwealth Games.

Charity soccer

The charity football match between filmdom's heroes and comedians ended in violence at the Moulana Bhasani Hockey Stadium yesterday, reports UNB.

Soon after the match, the soccer fans turned violent due to the absence of heroines as declared earlier.

They pelted stones at the organisers, assaulted some women and damaged several vehicles to express their annoyance.

Bangladesh Chalachitra Samannoy Parishad organised the match to raise fund for the flood victims.

State Minister for Information Prof Abu Sayeed inaugurated the match as chief guest.

State Minister for Youth, Sports and Cultural Affairs Obaidul Quader was also present as special guest.

Nearly 20,000 spectators witnessed the match.

Argentina-Germany match in Feb

BUENOS AIRES, Sept 24: The Argentine national team will play Germany in a test match in Miami, the president of the Argentine Football Association said Wednesday, reports AP.

Commonwealth cricket manager uncorks Incapacity, grouping, diet, coaching ...

Tanveer Haider

Nizamuddin Ahmed's "We need a cricket manager" (DS September 19) has prompted me to write this. As manager of the Bangladesh cricket team to the 1998 Commonwealth Games I must reveal certain facts to the nation because I love cricket. I have nothing to lose or gain. Cricket has given me many friends around the world.

Admittedly my comments to the press after losing to Northern Ireland was rash and I now understand that the interest of our cricket would have been better served had I waited for the opportune time to disclose my observation as tour manager. However, had my colleagues previously made known the information about the team, Bangladesh cricket would have benefited. Let me also explain that I was manager for this particular tour and sent on the explicit mission to find facts about the team, whose performance in the last eighteen months has left much to be desired.

I did mention to the press that our boys were not in a position to play cricket at this level. I meant that they do not have the capacity to face bowling of 80-90 km/hour. There were many fast bowlers at the Commonwealth meet. Our boys have practised at speeds of around 70 km/hour with the bowling machine and that too with a rubber ball. At Kuala Lumpur we have lost only one wicket to a spinner, all the wickets went to opposing fast bowlers. We do not have fast bowlers of that high calibre in Bangladesh. We need to improve our batting technique against genuine fast bowling.

Another negative feature that has surfaced to me in the tour is the inherent grouping in the Bangladesh team. This has affected team performance. There are lobbies, strong liking and disliking of each other. Others were inclined towards Faruque, Durjoy also had a part to play. He goes half-hearted for a catch if the bowling is of someone he does not like. There are three groups working in the Bangladesh team. I have never found togetherness among the players.

Because of the grouping, there is a feeling among some players that they are indispensable. Some rely on the grouping to keep their team position. Unless the players are made to feel that they can be replaced, there will be sluggishness in the team and in individual performance.

Our players have bad food habits. The players have no idea about food value, calorie content, cholesterol, etc. They cannot take care of their own health. They do not follow any diet chart. A dietician in Kuala Lumpur told me that our boys will not last two years the way and what they eat.

None of our bowlers has the stamina to bowl four overs at a stretch. They have unnecessary long run-ups, which eats up their stamina.

Rafiq was the player with most guts, a real fighter. Anisul Islam also did well with ball. There is something wrong with wicketkeeper Pilot. He missed a number of catches and stumping chances.

Most importantly, I have to condemn the coaching staff. I think it is totally wrong or our boys are not fit to play cricket at all. There has been no im-

provement for the last eighteen months. Gordon Greenidge is one of the all-time best cricketers. But, as a coach, he is untested. His West Indian English dialect is also a problem for our boys to understand him. Now that Akram has lost his captaincy, I will not say much about his leadership except that he did not know how to set a field. He also made his best bowler under-bowl in crucial matches.

Bangladesh Cricket Board has to take drastic measures to change the coaching method. The way of coaching is totally wrong. The fast bowler should be made to work on his stamina and target bowling. A fast bowler must do five rounds of the ground before doing the nets in the practice session, each of our batsmen has to face 200 balls at 80-90 km/hour in the blockhole from the bowling machine with ten fielders. Test cricketers, Bob Woolmer, Vivian Richards and Sadiq Mohammad have suggested these to me.

To make Bangladesh team more strong and appropriate for the World Cup, I recommend to recall the following players back into the team: Athar Ali Khan, Enamul Haq Moni, Saiful Islam, Liton, Murtoza and Minhazul Abedin Nannu.

With over thirty years of my cricket career as player and organiser, whatever I have said is in the interest of Bangladesh cricket.

(The author is a Bangladesh national cricketer, currently vice-president, Bangladesh Cricket Board and was Manager, Bangladesh cricket team to the 1998 Commonwealth Games).



Australian captain Mark Taylor (R) talking to the media on arrival in Karachi on Wednesday for the series against Pakistan. — AP/UNB photo

Milan's future beginning to look brighter

Rome, Sept 24 (Reuters/Internet)

AC Milan's impressive 3-0 Italian Cup win against Torino on Wednesday is prompting widespread speculation that one of European soccer's

slumbering giants is reawakening after a period of stagnation and failure.

Milan, who are currently joint top of Serie A alongside Fiorentina and Juventus after just two games, overturned a 0-2 first leg deficit to defeat Torino 3-0 in the second round of the Italian Cup -- a result that owed much to new found confidence and self-assurance.

Although Torino may now be a second division side, they are no pushovers and held out for 54 minutes before succumbing to goals from Danish midfielder Thomas Helveg, Liberator striker George Weah and German striker Oliver Bierhoff.

But it was the nature of Milan's win that impressed observers. Their players never stopped working and fighting for each other and played with a self-belief noticeably lacking over the last two seasons.

Sports daily "Gazzetta Dello Sport" speculated on Thursday: "It may well be that in a few months time when we look back at the way things went, it will become clear that it was this fightback that signalled a psychological turning point for the entire (Milan) season."

"For the time being Italian soccer salutes the return of one of its major protagonists, back where it belongs".

Milan's success in the second round was all the more vital since the Italian Cup represents

the only competition, apart from the Serie A championship, in which the club is involved.

Two miserable seasons in Serie A have seen Milan finish 11th and 10th respectively.

That has meant their exclusion from European competition, one of the principal reasons their owner Silvio Berlusconi has been driving to have a European Super League formed which would include clubs like Milan, when, as now, they hit a

BFF couldn't sign Samir for lack of fund

Sports Reporter

Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) face an acute financial constraint as it has found difficulty in appointing former Iraqi international footballer Samir Shakir as the new coach of the national team.

The tall 86 World Cupper, who has had an attachment either as player or coach with Abahani and Mohammedan Sporting Club in the past, arrived in the city early this month.

"We don't have funds to make any deal with Samir," said BFF general secretary Harun-ur Rashid, MP yesterday.

"We have asked the NSC (National Sports Council) to provide us with fund and are expecting to get a positive response soon," said Harun.

dip in their domestic fortunes. Milan's recent disappointing news, plus their Champions' League defeat to Norwegian side Rosenborg in December 1996, contrasted sharply with the previous decade, a period when Milan was dominant on both the European and Italian stages, winning five Italian titles and the European Cup three times.

This summer, in an attempt to radically reverse their decline, Milan not only bought new players but also engaged a new coach in Alberto Zaccheroni, who had guided unfashionable Udinese to fifth and third place in the last two seasons.

Zaccheroni has brought not only enthusiasm and new ideas to Milan but also, significantly, two players critical to his success at Udinese -- Bierhoff and Helveg. Both players have made impressive starts at Milan with Bierhoff, last season's leading Serie A goalscorer, already top of the chart with three goals in two games.

Bierhoff, too, was the hero against Torino, scoring a brilliant 88th minute winner that earned Milan a third round clash with Lazio.

Speaking after the match, the German striker was quick to play down his own performance. "The first thing I would like to say is thank you to George Weah. When a player of his class works hard for you, that's really something".

Coach Zaccheroni could not help admitting being pleased with his side. "The team showed a lot of character. A club like Milan, simply can't exist without character, pride and commitment".



A model bats while England skipper Alec Stewart waits with wicketkeeping gloves during a promotional event for England's World Cup '99 uniform at London yesterday. — AP/UNB photo