

Column One

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Competition-118

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- Who is the new England cricket coach?
Fletcher Hussain Marsh
- Brazilian footballer Rivaldo plays for
Lazio Barcelona Arsenal
- Who is the captain of Argentina soccer team?
Simone Batistuta Ayala
- How many Grand Slam titles has Steffi Graf won till now?
22 23 24
- Who is ATP's top ranked player right now?
Sampras Moya Agassi

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SPORTS TALK



Arjuna Ranatunga
(Former Sri Lankan cricket captain)

"This is not the time for me to go, when Sri Lankan cricket is down. Nobody can tell me when to go if I am getting runs. I still feel I have a lot of cricket left in me."

On his retirement

Coetzer beats Kournikova

MAHWAH, New Jersey, July 17: The A and P Tennis Classic officially struck out with its headline attractions as Amanda Coetzer took advantage of Anna Kournikova's serve and defeated the Russian teenager 6-4, 6-4 in the quarter-final Friday night, reports AP.

The ouster of the fan favourite completes a bad week for the organisers of the exhibition event, Jana Novotna, the 1998 Wimbledon champion, withdrew on Tuesday before the start of the tournament because of a bad ankle. Six-time winner Steffi Graf was forced to retire from her match on Thursday night after becoming nauseous in the third set.

Kournikova was treated for severe dehydration and cramping, tournament director John Korff said.

"She is not having fun," Korff said. "This is a lot worse than someone sitting in a chair rubbing their calves."

Dr Joe Pizzurro, the tournament physician, said Kournikova received intravenous fluids, a muscle relaxant, a massage and cold compresses. He said she'd likely not require hospitalisation.

Coetzer, who is ranked No 9 in the world, will play Chanda Rubin, the 1997 A and P Classic winner, in one semifinal Saturday afternoon. Two-time winner Jennifer Capriati, who benefited from Graf's upset stomach, will face unheralded Erika de Lone of Boston.

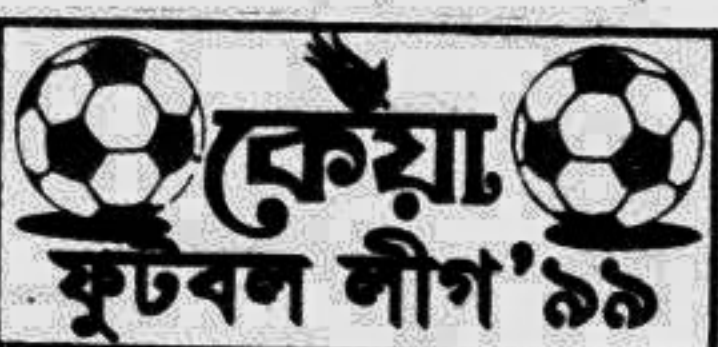
De Lone got a spot in the semis earlier in the day by defeating second-seeded Nicole Pratt 7-5, 7-6, to win the accompanying USTA Challenger event.



Muktijoddha's Nigerian recruit Efene(C) locked in a tussle with a Farashganj defender during their Premier League encounter yesterday. — Star Photo by Anisur Rahman

Farashganj lead fuels Mukti

Sports Reporter



Muktijoddha Sangsad Krira Chakra survived the Farashganj scare when the defending champions came from behind to record a 3-1 win over the spirited old town outfit in the lone Keya Premier Football League match at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Captain Jewel Rana, midfielder Arif Khan Joy and the Nigerian recruit of the 'all reds' scored one goal apiece for the holders after Kanchan shot Farashganj into the lead in the tenth minute of an enterprising match, marked by forays and counter-forays.

The win, their fifth from six games, enabled Muktijoddha to saddle on the top with 16 points, leaving title aspirants Mohammedan Sporting with the tough task of beating Brothers Union in today's match to remain at par.

For Farashganj this was their third consecutive defeat, having lost them to giants, all by narrow margins. They have nine points from six matches.

Muktijoddha started the match on the wrong foot when a terrible lapse from their central defender Jewel Rana allowed Kanchan to place the ball over an advancing custodian Arun Bikash Dewan.

It would have been a double delight for the shaven-headed Farashganj striker had not his

second-minute header ricocheted off the far post.

But the Farashganj joy lasted only a minute as Jewel made amends of his blunder, heading home a long throw from Rajani. It was the league's second goal for the tail defender.

Muktijoddha needed another couple of minutes to take the lead with Joy blasting a beauty of a right-footer, that rattled into the top right-hand corner of the frame giving no chance to Farashganj goalie, Anwar.

Conceding two quick goals was enough reason for Anwar being replaced by Aminul.

Muktijoddha, however, lived dangerously with the slender lead against an all-out Farashganj attack before an 87th minute strike from Aliu Rahman saved them from any possible debacle. It was a clinical finish to a nice build-up from the left by the stocky Nigerian, who coolly placed the ball into the net after being fed by substitute Tushar. It was Aliu's third goal, one short of his compatriot Effieni.

Despite the defeat, it was Farashganj who enjoyed the territorial dominance over their more revered opponents.

Kanchan, the speedy young forward who glowed with a lot of promise with his superior ball control, wonderful sway and powerful shooting, played like a spring chicken. Along with his attacking partner Farhad, Farashganj gave the star-studded Muktijoddha defence a run for their money. Specially, in the second half, Farashganj pushed Muktijoddha against the wall with a wave of attacks. Their persistency almost got

them their second goal when Muktijoddha's makeshift left-back Bakhtiar, the diminutive midfielder who was inducted in place of injured Titu, pulled down a menacingly poised Chanchal just inside the forbidden zone in the 79th minute.

But, shockingly, referee Maruf Shikder blew for a free kick outside the box, denying Farashganj a deserving penalty. Farhad came up with a scorching right-footer from the resultant free kick, which Arun collected on his second attempt.

Although Farashganj enjoyed the better share in the second half, Muktijoddha purchased a more accurate shooter in the likes of Aliu, who hammered a couple of long-range shots. But both his attempts were fisted away by the substitute Farashganj custodian Aminul for corner.

An ill-tempered Aliu, who had a mixed day in the field, was the lone player to be cautioned with a yellow card in the match.

Teams

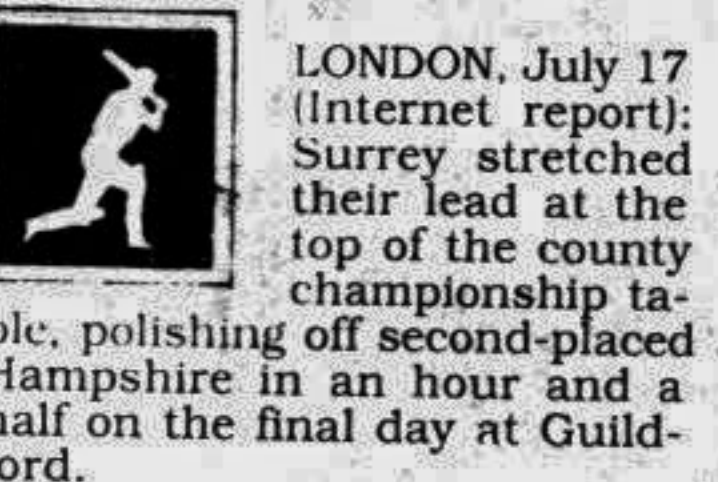
Muktijoddha Sangsad: Arun, Hasan-al Mamun, Jewel Rana, Rajani, Masud Rana, Liton (Tushar), Joy, Bakhtiar, Aliu Rahman, Effieni and Nakib.

Farashganj SC: Anwar (Aminul), Shafik, Ashraf Karim, Nazrul, Polash, Azimuddin, Chanchal, Bidyut (Arman), Kanchan, Monir (Mithul) and Farhad.

Referee: Maruf Shikder

Today's matches
Mohammedan SC vs. Brothers Union
(Bangabandhu National Stadium, 5.30 pm)

Saqi spins Surrey to win



LONDON, July 17 (Internet report): Surrey stretched their lead at the top of the county championship table, polishing off second-placed Hampshire in an hour and a half on the final day at Guildford.

Resuming on 99 for four today, Hampshire were dismissed for 175 as they chased an imposing 332-run target.

Surrey won by 156 runs - their seventh win of the season - and preserved their unbeaten record.

Earlier, the total of the county championship leaders built around a magnificent 164 from Graham Thorpe on Friday.

The England left-hander was in majestic form, his innings lasting 277 balls and including 19 fours. He scored freely all round the wicket and seemed on course for a double century before he was run out.

But, once again Surrey were indebted to their brilliant Pakistani off-spinner Saqin Mushtaq.

He finished with figures of six for 74, his third five-wicket haul in four innings.

Hampshire were always facing a tough task against a powerful Surrey attack. But they had some early bits of luck. Nightwatchman Peter Hartley was dropped off the bowling of Saqin by Graham Thorpe for two, when Hampshire were on 108 for four.

He then drove at Saqin but England fast bowler Alex Tudor, stooping at mid-off failed to hold the catch.

gave Saqin something to think about. He went down the wicket and elegantly drove him for four. With the next ball he followed this up with a superb lofted six on the leg-side that went out of the ground.

Hampshire captain Robin Smith, 33 not out overnight, hit some typically aggressive drives and looked in decent form as he and Stephenson formed the beginnings of what looked like a useful partnership.

But Stephenson was eventually deceived by Saqin as he came around the wicket, bowled for 101 as Worcestershire enforced the follow-on against Gloucestershire at Cheltenham.

Resuming on 150 for six, Gloucestershire were bowled out for 231, a massive 360 runs behind.

Tim Hancock led the way in the second innings, making 64, and with Kim Barnett 61 not out they closed on 185 for two, still 175 runs adrift.

Essex spinners Paul Grayson and Peter Such made short work of Middlesex in a one-sided contest at Southend, with the home side victorious by an innings and 176 runs.

After being bowled out for 113 on the opening day, Middlesex were brushed aside for 140 in their second innings, capitulating with embarrassing ease as only Andrew Strauss with 42 came away with his pride intact.

Middlesex lost their last five wickets in the space of 25 deliveries as left-arm spinner Grayson (four for 16) and off-spinner Such (three for 42) proved just too hot to handle.

After a run of two successive championship defeats, Gavin Hamilton helped stop the rot for Yorkshire with a match-winning 75 against Warwickshire at Edgbaston.

The 24-year-old Scotland World Cup all-rounder hit an unbeaten 75, and with support from wicketkeeper Richard Blakey, who struck a quickfire 17 off 24 balls, the Tykes reached their 223 victory target with three wickets to spare.

wickets to leave the Welshmen on 235 for six, and still needing another 39 runs to avoid a fourth innings defeat in five matches.

Matthew Brimston claimed four for 69 and Alan Mullally three for 76 as Leicestershire had Sussex following on 247 behind at Arundel.

They closed on 49 for two, still needing 198 to make Leicestershire bat again.

Alamgir Sheryar cemented his position as the country's leading wicket-taker with six wickets for 101 as Worcestershire enforced the follow-on against Gloucestershire at Cheltenham.

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Div I football Sohel nets twice for Prantik

Prantik Krira Chakra tasted their first win in the Metropolis First Division Football League by beating Shantinagar Club 2-1 at the Mirpur Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium yesterday, says UNB.

With this, Prantik KC collected six points from five matches while Shantinagar Club has four points from five outings.

The day's match was locked 1-1 in the first-half.

Sohel netted two goals for the winners while Masud (Jr) scored one for the losers.

Sohel put Prantik KC ahead early in the 2nd minute, but Masud restored parity for Shantinagar after 15 minutes.

Sohel scored the match-winning goal in the 62nd minute.

First win, first defeat
In another match at the same venue yesterday, Dhanmudi Club beat Muslim Institute by a solitary goal.

This was the first victory for Dhanmudi from five matches and they collected six points. Muslim Institute tasted their first defeat from five outings and secured ten points.

In the day's match, Masudul Alam Bulbul netted all-important goal in the 38th minute.

TODAY'S MATCH: Agrani Bank SC vs East End Club (Mirpur Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium, 4 pm).

Div II hockey
Tejgaon Agragami Club and Dhaka Wanderers Club earned massive victories in the Green Delta Insurance 2nd Division hockey league at the Maulana Bhasani National Stadium yesterday, reports UNB.

Agragami Club crushed Rayerbazar Sporting Club 11-0 after dominating the first half 4-0.

Harun struck four goals including a hat-trick. Kibria struck three while Agrani netted two goals, and Sakawat and Rahat one each.

In the other match, Dhaka Wanderers trounced Dhaka Hockey Club 6-0. All the goals came in the first half.

Jartaz also scored a hat-trick with two field goals and the other from penalty stroke.

Muhid scored two goals and Khokon one.

Aminul of Dhaka Hockey Club received red card in the match.

Sunday's matches: Muktabhanga Tarun Sangha vs Agrani Bank SC (4 pm).

Take WC from Asia

ASUNCION, July 17 (Reuters/Internet): South American Football Confederation president Nicolas Leoz suggested on Friday the 2002 World Cup should be taken away from Asia, following a recent walk-out by the Asian delegation at the FIFA Congress in Los Angeles.

"If they are withdrawing from everything, then I think it's logical that they also withdraw from hosting the World Cup," said Leoz.

"If they're upset with FIFA, then let England or Germany do it, as they are interested in doing it."

Japan and South Korea are hosting the 2002 World Cup with Asia guaranteed a further two places and one more being decided in a playoff.

Asian federations think they deserve more, have threatened to boycott the 2002 qualifiers and last week Asian delegates walked out of a FIFA Congress en masse while president Sepp Blatter was making a speech.

"I don't think it was very clever of the Asians to walk out of the Congress," he said.

"They've got two places at the World Cup guaranteed (Japan and South Korea) and two-and-a-half more for the qualifying competition."

"If they want five, I think they should make a sporting effort, as do South America and Europe."

Lazio's Anelka dream over
ROME, July 17 (Reuters/Internet): Italy's Lazio says it has definitively broken off tortuous talks with English premier league club Arsenal to sign French striker Nicolas Anelka.

Lazio has decided to withdraw definitively from the negotiations to buy Anelka from Arsenal, club president Sergio Cragnotti told reporters late on Friday.

"All dialogue has broken off between the two sides. We did everything we could to conclude this deal, to reach an agreement with the English team. But we couldn't get anywhere."

Talks between Lazio and Arsenal have snapped on and off in recent days as the sides sought to bridge the gap between Arsenal's asking price and the Rome club's offer price.

Arsenal wanted 34 million dollars for Anelka, who joined the London side for just 783,900 dollars in 1997. Lazio, seeking to replace Inter Milan-bound striker Christian Vieri, offered around 28.21 million dollars.

Pak Board suspended



KARACHI, July 17 (AFP/Reuters): The Pakistan Cricket Board was suspended by the government Friday over the World Cup fiasco in which Pakistan was accused of deliberately losing the final to Australia.

President Rafiq Tarar on Friday "suspended the management of the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) and appointed an ad hoc committee headed by Mujibur Rehman with Javed Zaman to perform functions of the board until further orders", state media said.

Rehman is a brother Senator Saif-ur Rehman, chairman of the government's Accountability Bureau, which is investigating charges against players involved in last month's World Cup in England.

The other member of the committee is Javed Zaman, a cousin of former cricket hero Imran Khan.

Tarrar stood down the board after chairman Khalid Mahmood defended the World Cup side against accusations of match-fixing and showed his displeasure at the bureau's decision to investigate the claims.

Pakistan lost the final of the World Cup by eight wickets to Australia on June 20. The lopsided result brought accusations of indiscipline against Pakistani players as well as allegations of match-fixing from fans and local media.

Pakistan cricketers are awaiting a report of an official inquiry into match-fixing allegations. No date has been set for the release of the much-delayed report.

Pakistan's state APP news agency said Tarar, patron of the PCB, took the action under the board's constitution.

The suspension also covers the selection committee.

Mahmood took charge in February last year and still had 17 months left in his term.

It was the second time this decade the board was suspended. It had been suspended in January 1994.

The report did not say why Tarar took the action, but Zaman said there had been worries about the discipline of the Pakistan players during the World Cup.

Ad hoc committee is imposed either when the sport is declining or there is mismanagement at the top. With what ever has transpired in the last two months, I think it is nothing but indiscipline of the players which has led to the ouster of the set up," Zaman was quoted as saying by the Dawn newspaper on Saturday.

There had been reports of players indiscipline during the World Cup in England. The management didn't try to put a halt to the growing incidents of

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There had been reports of players indiscipline during the World Cup in England. The management didn't try to put a halt to the growing incidents of

discipline, it tried to sweep the misbehaviour under the carpet."

"We will thoroughly investigate and might even question the manager."

Quoting a reliable source Dawn reported that Shahid Rafi, former secretary of the then Board of Control for Cricket in Pakistan (BCCP), is expected to be appointed the secretary of the ad hoc committee.

The official announcement is expected to be made when the chairman of the ad hoc committee Mujibur returns from Dubai.

Interestingly, when the last ad hoc committee was appointed on Jan 13, 1994, Rafi was the secretary of the BCCP which was superseded by Javed Burki's committee.

Zaman said the ad hoc committee would seek advice from the government on whether Pakistan should play India in Toronto in September and in a tri-nation series in Australia early next year.

"Pakistan wants to honour all its international cricket commitments but several statements from the other side of the border are in a bad taste," he said.

Several Indian players have said India and Pakistan should not play during the rival neighbour's current standoff over the disputed Himalayan region of Kashmir.

Samba set to dazzle



in 1970 he was coach and in 1994 he was technical adviser to Carlos Alberto Parreira's team.

So Luxemburgo's appointment was truly a new dawn.

The 3-0 defeat by France was the heaviest ever in World Cup football for Brazil.

The humiliation of the defeat was made worse by the chaotic events surrounding their star striker Ronaldo, dropped from the final lineup by Zagallo only to be restored just 40 minutes before the kick-off.

It later emerged that the Inter Milan forward had suffered convulsions on the day of the final in an incident which still has not been fully explained.

Victory in the Copa America is not the equivalent of a World Cup Final success but it will give the critics of Luxemburgo's back as he continues to reform the national team.

While Luxemburgo's team have not looked like losing so far in the tournament Brazilian legends such as Tostao and Roberto Rivelino, now working as media analysts, have criticised what they perceive as a lack of panache. But as long as he keeps winning Luxemburgo knows he need not worry too much.

He has proved a disciplinarian, dispensing with the services of troublemakers such as Edmundo, Romario, Leonardo and Edilson.

Other members of the old guard in the shape of the 1994 World Cup winners Dunga and Taffarel have been eased into retirement.

And the former Corinthians boss has encouraged young talent such as Ronaldinho and Alex. Perhaps the most impressive of the relatively new players during the Copa has been goalkeeper Dida.

But Luxemburgo has retained other mainstays such as new skipper Cafu, Roberto Carlos, Rivaldo and Ronaldo.

The Inter star has started to look the part again during the

Copa and is joint top scorer with teammate Amoroso on four goals, including the quarter-final winner against Argentina.

Certainly Brazil have strolled through the Copa so far with group wins over Venezuela (7-0), Mexico (2-1) and Chile (1-0) followed by a quarter-final win over Argentina (2-1) and a semi-final triumph over Mexico (2-0).

If Brazil fans feel they have been at a low ebb they should spare a thought for Uruguay.

The team that was once the dominant force on the planet is now ranked 74th in the world and has not qualified for the last two World Cups.

Drastic measures were needed to halt the most spectacular slump in world football and in May the Uruguayan football federation (AUF) broke the bank - with a little help from their sponsors - to appoint Argentinian coach Daniel Passarella on a reputed monthly pay packet of 70,000 dollars a month.

Passarella opted to take a hands-off role for the Copa and team selection and tactics were consigned to youth team coach Victor Pua.

Pua had been a huge success at youth level, steering the Uruguay under-20s to the World Youth Cup Final in 1997 in Malaysia and to the semi-finals this year in Nigeria.

Passarella and Pua decided to give many of those youngsters their senior chance in the Copa and their faith has been repaid with a solid team spirit and great courage.

Many of the youngsters have impressed in the Copa. Goalkeeper Fabian Carini, 19, has been outstanding with Andres Fleury, Federico Magallanes and defender Alejandro Lembo also catching the eye.

Their one weakness has been up front where they seem to be almost totally reliant on Juventus striker Marcelo Zalayeta.

The youngster, who spent last season on loan at Empoli, scored both goals against Ecuador and a brilliant equaliser against host nation Paraguay in the quarters.

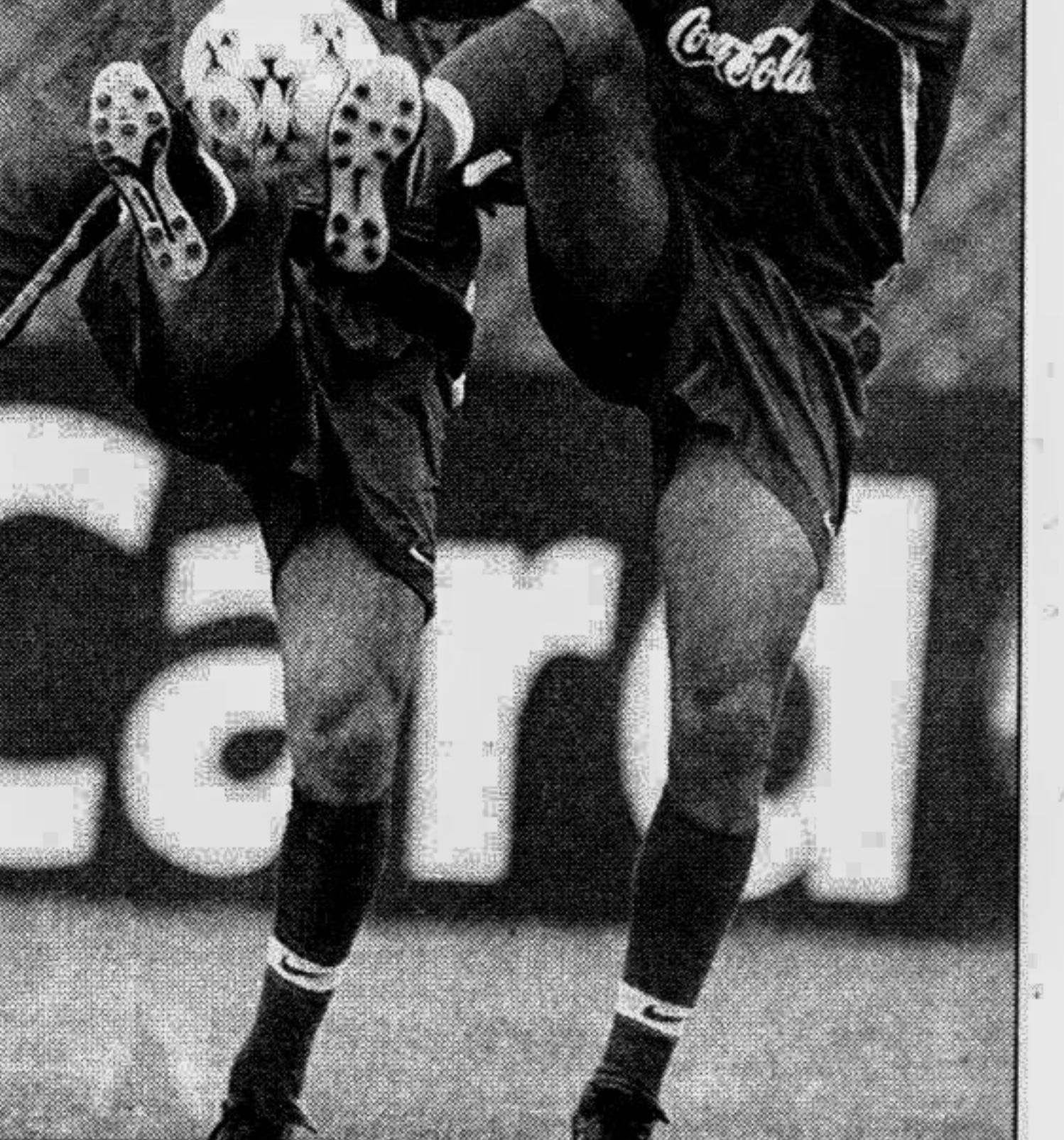
The "Celeste" (Sky Blues) are shooting for an unprecedented 15th Copa America crown. Argentina also have 14 victories. Brazil, surprisingly, have only won the continental crown five times.

But, regardless of the outcome of the final, Passarella - and particularly Pua - can take great heart from this campaign.

While Pua drilled the kids in Paraguay, Passarella held a squad session in Punta del Este with some of the more senior European-based players - rested for the Copa as Uruguay blooded their youngsters.

Victory over Brazil on Sunday would seem to be a tall order for the new kids on the block. But, unlike Brazil, the Uruguayans go into the final knowing they have nothing to lose.

Star Sports will telecast the Copa America final live from Asuncion at 2:30am BST



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