

Column One

DID U' KNOW?

(The Professor does)

THAT pocket billiards, also called Pool, is most popular in the United States and Canada. It is played with a white cue ball and 15 consecutively numbered coloured balls on a rectangular table with six pockets (one at each corner and one at the mid-points of both longer sides). The dimensions of the table are usually 4 by 8 feet or 4 1/2 by 9 feet.

Why do I get this uncanny feeling that you are thinking of something else?

SPORTS TALK



Lindsay Davenport
(American tennis star)

"Getting to the final (at Wimbledon) for outshines reaching the top ranking."

Boost sports WHIZZ KID

COMPETITION FOR SCHOOL CHILDREN
Competition-118

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

Competition classes at 8 pm
July 30, '99 and draw
shortly afterwards

1. Who is the new England cricket coach?

Fletcher Hussain Marsh

2. Brazilian footballer Rivaldo plays for

Lazio Barcelona Arsenal

3. Who is the captain of Argentina soccer team?

Simeone Batistuta Ayala

4. How many Grand Slam titles has Steffi Graf won till now?

22 23 24

5. Who is ATP's top ranked player right now?

Sampras Moya Agassi

Name

Class Roll No.

School Address

Phone: (If any)

POWERED WITH

EN-VITS

ENERGY-RELEASING VITAMINS

BRTC gives away prize-money

Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation (BRTC) yesterday handed over prize-money for the World Cup cricket at a simple ceremony, reports BSS.

BRTC Chairman M Azmal Chowdhury handed over cheques for Taka 122,000 to Minhazul Abedin and Taka 64,000 to Mehrab Hossain.

The corporation had announced during the World Cup that any Bangladeshi cricketers scoring 50-plus would get Taka 1,000 for each run.

Minhazul scored 68 runs against Scotland at Edinburgh and 54 runs against Australia at Chester-le-Street while Mehrab hammered 64 against the West Indies at Dublin.

Whitaker to call it quits

LONDON, July 20 (Internet report): James Whitaker has decided to stand down as Leicestershire's captain and retire as a player.

The 37-year-old Yorkshire-born batsman broke the news of his decision to the rest of the players on the eve of their National League game at Worcester.

Whitaker, who has led Leicestershire to two county Championship titles in the last three years, has been forced to quit because of a serious knee injury which kept him out of action all last summer and has limited him to just four games this season.

Effieni's early blast blows BU

Sports Reporter

Muktijoddha Sangsad Krira Chakra crossed a tough hurdle in their chase for retaining the League title when they recorded a lone goal win over Brothers Union at the flood-lit Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Effieni, one of the two Nigerian recruits of the defending champions, scored the all-important goal in the seventh minute of the match to ensure Muktijoddha's sixth win in the Keya Premier Football League.

With this win the 'all reds' maintained their lead at the top of the table, extending their points tally to 19 from seven engagements.

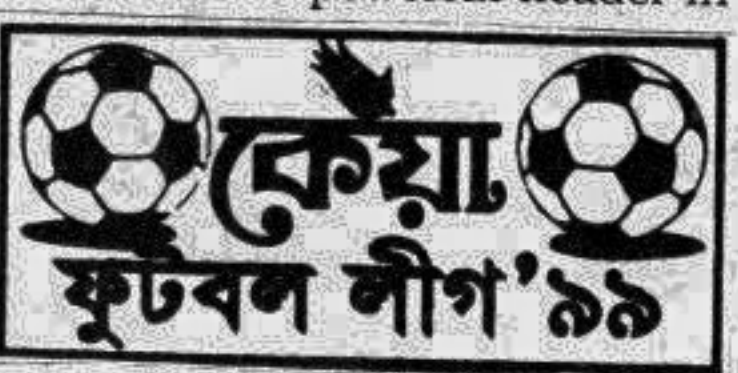
On the other hand, the defeat effectively evaporated Brothers' chances to stay in the title race. Moreover, the fourth defeat of the traditional third from seven games also decimated their chances to progress to the super four.

According to the new format in the League, four top finishers from the first round will fight it out for the coveted title. Although unlike the previous year, the topsy-turvy League promises a three-way heady battle between holders Muktijoddha, Mohammedan Sporting and Abahani, Farashganj and promotes Badda Jagorani are the two probable contenders to fill the fourth slot.

Back to the day's match, Muktijoddha got the only goal from the first positive attack. The goal originated from a dead-ball situation. Left-back Masud Rana let loose a perfect free-kick from the top left of the box, which Jewel Rana pushed back to an unmarked Effieni, who made no mistake to find the net with a first-time right-footer.

It was Effieni's fifth goal in the League. Incidentally it was his first goal with his favourite

right-foot after scoring his first four goals with his head. Playing without his attacking partner and compatriot Aliu Rahman, the dapper Nigerian got another chance to increase his personal tally in the second half. But his powerful header in



the 49th minute off a Monsur cross from the right deflected off the cross bar.

Aliu with two yellow cards apparently had to take a forced day of rest as his coach Shafiqul Haq Manik did not want to take any unnecessary risk ahead of Muktijoddha's more important next match against Abahani.

The absence of Aliu in the firing line, however, did not affect the balance of Muktijoddha. They got another golden chance to double the margin in the 11th minute when their lanky national forward Intiaz Ahmed Nakib came up with a scorching right-footer, which was spectacularly saved by Brothers' custodian Saidur.

Although the first half solely belonged to Muktijoddha, Brothers gave them a torrid time in the second session with some quick counter attacks on a heavy outfield.

Brothers, who in the recent years turned into a mediocre outfit due to acute financial problem, got their first real scoring chance three minutes after the lemon break. Swapan drove a fierce 25-yarder from a set piece, but only to be denied by the agile Muktijoddha custodian Biplob, who tipped the ball over the bar for a corner.

The reserve national goalie came to Muktijoddha's rescue again in the 65th minute when he stretched fully to his left to stop a brilliant left-footer from Brothers forward Asad.

Bakhtiar and Joy of Muktijoddha and Abdullah Sereki of Brothers Union were cautioned with yellow cards.

TEAMS

Muktijoddha: Biplob, Hasan al Mamun, Jewel Rana, Rajani, Monsur (Mamun Joarder), Masud Rana, Joy, Bakhtiar, Liton (Tushar), Effieni and Nakib (Waid).

Brothers Union: Saidur, Polash, Salahuddin, Swapan, Barun, Shuvro, Riaz (Swapan Sr), Asad, Sereki, Jamal (Zahid) and Mizan.

Referee: Ibrahim Nesar.

RAHMATGANJ'S FIRST

Meanwhile, in the first match of the day, Rahmatganj relished their maiden victory in the League with a 4-2 defeat on Arambagh Krira Sangha.

Milon scored twice for the old-town outfit after Nayan opened the floodgate in the 16th minute of a seesaw encounter.

Milon gave Rahmatganj a 2-0 lead at the breather with a strike in the 21st minute.

But Arambagh hit back in the second session with Asif scoring two goals in the 52nd and 76th minute. The double strike took Asif's personal tally to four goals in the League.

Tipu added the third for Rahmatganj fifteen minutes from the final whistle. Milon sealed the fate of the match scoring his second goal in the 82nd minute.

The victory elevated Rahmatganj's points tally to five from six matches. On the other hand Arambagh remained glued to their previous collection of six from as many games.

From Knight to movie star

LONDON, July 20: Manchester United manager Sir Alex Ferguson received his knight-hood from the Queen on Tuesday and then readied himself for his movie debut, reports AFP.

The Scot was honoured in the Queen's Birthday List after guiding United to victory in the English Premiership, FA Cup and European Cup last season.

After receiving his knight-hood at Buckingham Palace, Ferguson said: "The Queen told me she doesn't think it will ever be achieved again -- and she's right."

The culmination of three trophies was the pinnacle of my career and it has been rewarded with a knight-hood," said Sir Alex, sporting a kilt in Dress Ferguson tartan.

"It's such a proud moment for me, my family and for the club -- because it is a team effort."

"This is the medal that recognises all the other ones I've won in football."

"Football management is all about winning trophies and I'll

be happy maintaining success. I don't set any particular targets -- just win what you can."

Now Dumbarton Football Club, who play in the Scottish Third Division, have lined up Sir Alex to appear in Robert Duvall's movie The Cup, which is being filmed at the club's Boghead ground.

Already 1,400 free tickets have been given out for scenes being shot at the ground this



ALEX FERGUSON

Sunday when Sir Alex is due to play a cameo role seated in the director's box.

Club spokesman Ian MacFarlane said a good crowd for the club would normally be just over 600.

"It will be tremendous for us, and the spin-offs of the film have been wonderful," MacFarlane said.

"People have been falling over us to talk about sponsorship and trackside advertising." Club managing director Neil Rankin and director Jim Innes approached Sir Alex at a dinner in Blackpool, where he told them he would welcome the chance to appear in the film, which stars Scottish football great Ally McCoist.

Glasgow-born Sir Alex has strong links with the club and took his Manchester United team to play in a friendly at Boghead in the summer of 1991 when goalkeeper Peter Schmeichel made his first appearance for the team.

The film follows a team of no-hopers who make it to the Scottish Cup Final and also stars Alec Baldwin, Billy Connolly and Alan Cumming.

SL A beat Gloucestershire

LONDON, July 20 (Internet report): Indika de Saram's polished 75 led Sri Lanka A to a five-wicket triumph over a weakened Gloucestershire at Cheltenham.

The home county rested six of the team which had beaten Yorkshire in the National League on Sunday and their 50-over score of 189 for eight never looked sufficient, even allowing for some occasional low bounce in the pitch.

Dominic Hewson's 64 and Martyn Ball's 51 gave the Gloucestershire innings some respectability after it had crumbled to 40 for six in the 18th over.

But, after some early problems of their own, Sri Lanka A reached their target with seven overs to spare thanks largely to de Saram's 86-ball innings, which contained 10 fours.

It was the fourth victory in five matches for the tourists

Volkov clinches rapid chess title

BIEL, Switzerland, July 20: Grandmaster Sergei Volkov of Russia won the rapid chess tournament by logging nine points in 11 rounds while Indians faltered in this warm-up event for the Biel international chess tournament starting yesterday, reports PTI.

In the final round, Volkov played a power-packed game with the white pieces to score a convincing victory against teammate IM Grischuk to win the championship.

GMS Milos Navlovic (Yugoslavia) and Greenfield of Israel tied for the second spot by aggregating 8.5 points apiece.

India's GM norm holder Abhijit Kunte finished with 7 points after drawing his final round against Swiss GM Ice Galklagar.

and a welcome boost to them after a comprehensive defeat in their four-day match with Northamptonshire.

Indika Gallage and Mario Villavarayan laid the foundations for victory with some excellent new ball bowling after Ball, the acting Gloucestershire captain in the absence of Mark Alleyne, had elected to bat first.

Gallage had Tim Hancock caught at slip and bowled Mat Windows in his initial burst, before returning later to have Hewson caught at point to finish with a return of three for 42.

Villavarayan moved deliveries off the seam to bowl Bobby

Dawson and Jeremy Snape, while Gloucestershire's cause was not helped by the run out of Mark Hardinges.

Hewson restored some pride with seven fours in his 89 ball innings, while Ball brought some important impetus to the closing overs with two leg side sixes in his half century.

Hardinges and Ben Gannon raised Gloucestershire hopes by taking three quick wickets in the Sri Lanka reply, but from 26 for three in the tenth over, Sri Lanka never looked back and they treated another good sized crowd at Cheltenham College to some entertaining stroke play.



A Muktijoddha attempt at the Brothers Union post yesterday.

Star photo by Anisur Rahman

Div I soccer

BRTC SC came from behind the beat formidable Muslim Institute 3-1 in the Keya First Division football league at the Mirpur Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium yesterday, reports UNB.

Ashrafual Quader Monju struck twice in the 76th and 87th minutes while Akhter Hossain scored the other goal in the 68th minute for the winners. Earlier, in the 20th minute, Abul Hossain netted the lone goal for the losers.

Despite the defeat newcomers Muslim Institute maintained a good position in the league table with 10 points while BRTC raised their total to nine points, both playing six matches.

In the day's other match, Wari Club played out a one-all draw with another newcomer Prantik KC at the same venue in the afternoon.

Sohel put Prantik ahead in the 29th minute while Aloke scored the equaliser for Wari in the 55th minute.

Shipon of Prantik got marching order after receiving red card.

Wari so far earned nine points and Prantik seven points, playing six matches each.

Wednesday is the rest day for both Premier and First Division football leagues.

Jhalakathi soccer

From Staff Correspondent BARISAL, July 20: Lankestar Cub outplayed Sunmoon Club 2-1 in the Lion Kabir Hossain First Division football league at the Jhalakathi Stadium yesterday.

The first half ended goalless. But at that starting of the second half Mamun of Sunmoon netted the first goal at 7th minute. Kabir of Lankestar equalled the margin for his club at 12th minute.

NBL badminton

The National Bank First Division badminton league began at the NSC wooden floor gymnasium yesterday, reports UNB.

Managing Director of league sponsors National Bank Limited Rafiqul Islam Khan inaugurated the metropolis league organised by Bangladesh Badminton Federation.

Federation president Kutubuddin Ahmed chaired the inaugural function.

2001 SAF Games in Peshawar

The ninth South Asian Federation (SAF) Games will be held in Peshawar in 2001, secretary general of Bangladesh Olympic Association (BOA) Zafar Imam said in Dhaka yesterday, reports BSS.

Pakistan delegates at the meeting of the South Asian Sports Federation disclosed it at Kathmandu last week, he said.

SASF, earlier, offered Pakistan to host the regional Games and the Pakistani delegates announced the name of the city for the ninth edition.

The eighth SAF Games will be held in Kathmandu from September 25 to October 4 this year.

The first SAF Games was held in Kathmandu in 1984, the second in Dhaka 1985, the third in Calcutta in 1987, the fourth in Islamabad in 1989, the fifth in Colombo in 1991, the sixth in Dhaka in 1993, the seventh in Madras in 1995.

At least 1,500 athletes from seven SAARC countries will take part in the Games.

Imam, who attended a meeting of the South Asian Sports Federation (SASF) in Kathmandu on July 16 and 17, said that athletes from all the seven SAARC countries would

take part in the regional Games.

SAARC covers Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and hosts Nepal will take part in all the 12 disciplines -- athletics, boxing, football, karate, kabaddi, shooting, swimming, table tennis, taekwondo, volleyball, weightlifting, wrestling.

The BOA secretary general said representatives of seven National Olympic Committees (NOC) expressed their satisfaction over the facilities and preparations made by the host nation.

He said they had visited venue and training sites and the media facilities.

The SASF meeting decided to hold the chiefs de mission meeting by August end and fixed August 25 as the last date for sending entries by name.

Kathmandu, which organised the first regional Games in 1984, has completed all necessary facilities with the Chinese assistance taking extra two years time of their schedule.

Kathmandu was scheduled to host the eighth SAF Games in 1997.

Bangladesh Olympic Associ-

ation (BOA) earmarked Taka 2.50 crore for the preparation, and participation in the Games.

BOA has taken necessary training programmes in association with the National Sports Council (NSC) and the concerned sports federation at different venues.

Seven foreign coaches -- one each for football, volleyball, swimming, athletics, weightlifting and two coaches for shooting (rifle and pistol) are already in Dhaka and started training the SAF Games probables except the footballers. Training camp for football will start after the Premier Division football league.

Sportsmen and women and coaches of athletics, volleyball, swimming, weightlifting have been accommodated at Mirpur Kiriapalli to have their practice at Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium, swimming pool and indoor stadium while those of wrestling, judo and karate, taekwondo and kabaddi are staying at BKSP.

Boxers are training at the Army Stadium shooters at Gulshan Shooting Range and women volleyball players at Sultana-Kamal Women's Sports complex.

'Big Apple' chews on cricket

NEW YORK, July 20 (India Abroad News Service): With the whirl of an arm and a crack of a bat, the Bangladesh Cricket League of North America opened its season on a hot Saturday afternoon in Flushing Meadows Corona Park in Queens.

The opening match featured the reigning league champion, the Big Apple Cricket Club, pitting against a team of 20-somethings from Bangladesh, most of whom emigrated to the United States as teenagers. On this day, experience trumped youth. Big Apple took the match handily, scoring 296 runs in 35 overs. Bangladesh youth, which joined the league just this year, was all out for 34 runs.

The match was one of hundreds that will be played in New York this summer in the city's eight major cricket leagues. The leagues are affiliated with the United States of America Cricket Association (USACA), an associate member of the International Cricket Council based in London.

There are an estimated 200

teams with some 3,000 players in the leagues. The majority of the players are from the Caribbean, but others hail from South Asia, England and Australia. Most of the leagues were started in the last 20 years, but one, New York Metropolitan and District Cricket Association, was founded by British railroad workers in the 1880s.

Due to continued immigration from cricket-playing countries, many league presidents say interest in cricket in the New York area is growing.

Five years ago, for example, matches in the Bangladesh league involved only a handful of teams. But now the league has 12 clubs and the competition is intense.

In the opening match, for example, at least half a dozen former professional players from Bangladesh, India and Pakistan were on the field. Some of whom were being paid up to 200 dollars by their clubs for each match.

Players from other teams showed up to scout the talent.

"It's not for fun," said Soheb Khan, 34, a cab driver who was there scouting the Big Apple for his club, the Bangladesh Yellow Society, runners-up in the league last year.

"It was fun four or five years ago," he said.

"Now it is professional. It is very serious. Everybody is playing for the championship."

For their championship run, teams in the Bangladesh league have recruited several professional players. Big Apple, for example, has a player who represented Punjab last year in the Ranji Trophy.

Another team recruited the captain of the Bangladesh national team, Aminul Islam, for a match this weekend.

Other leagues have top players from the Caribbean, Richard Staple, a former Jamaica national team member, plays in the Metropolitan Cricket Association, and Derrick Kalicharran, former national player in Guyana, a professional brother of Alvin who played for the West Indies, plays in the Eastern American League.

Several members of the US national cricket team also play in the New York leagues, including Dave Wallace and Rohan Alexander. Only clubs in the Bangladesh league, however, pay players, said Clifford Hirst, co-director of the New York Region of the USACA.

"They are the only ones that have been offering money to players," he said.

The president of the Bangladesh league, Mohammad (Juwel) Khan, agreed that allowing teams to pay players creates an unfair advantage, but said that it could help attract young players to the game.

Like Khan, league presidents worry that despite renewed interest in the sport, competition from other, better-paying sports like baseball and a lack of adequate fields may doom the growth of cricket in America.

"You can't grow unless you get more grounds," said Krish Prasad, head of the Eastern American cricket league.

"There hasn't been much (done) by the state or city to help cricket grow."

Others say that while space is a problem, it has also been difficult to bring organisation to cricket in the US.

"It has taken a while to get everybody under one central umbrella," said Hinds.

Starting in August, the USACA will sponsor its annual national tournament among the regions. Two teams will represent New York. Members of this team will be chosen from the eight leagues.

Although the leagues like to emphasise competition, nostalgia is not entirely absent for the players.

"It's not just the game," said Big Apple club member Shahajada Kabir, 40.

"Players bring their wives and children to matches," he said.

Kabir, for example, came across a long-lost cricket buddy from Dhaka, Aminul Haque, when he began playing in New York in 1992. The two played together in the First Division league in Bangladesh, a professional league, during the late 1970s.

Haque left Bangladesh in 1981, went to study in Oklahoma and then came to New York in 1992. He is now secretary of the Bangladesh league.



A PROUD MOMENT: Brazilian President Fernando Henrique Cardoso (C) being shown the Copa America by captain Cafu (R) and Ronaldo during a reception at the presidential palace in Brasilia on July 19.

— AFP photo