

Women's h'ball

Rokeya Hall of Dhaka University beat Kaliganj Sramik College 3-0 in the 5th Green Delta inter-college-hall women's handball tournament at the Sultan Kamal Women's Sports Complex in Dharmondi yesterday, reports UNB.

Soma, Jolly and Chekima scored for the winners who led the first half 2-0.

In other fixtures, Viquarunissa Noon School & College, Lalmata Women's College and Ispahani Girls' School & College won their respective matches at the same venue.

Viquarunissa overwhelmed BCIC College 18-4 after dominating the first session 9-2.

Sandhya scored four goals, Avi and Ratri three each, and Marufa and Shamima two each for the winners while Fahmida netted two and Nargis and Maksuda one each for the losers.

Lalmata defeated Dhaka Women's College 8-3 after leading the first half 4-1.

Umme Kulsum netted four and Sabitha two for the winners while Sadia, Nipa and Nila scored one goal apiece for the losers.

Ispahani easily beat Home Economics College 4-0 after dominating the first session 3-0.

Sumi scored two goals while Shanta and Surovi netted one each for the winners.

Seven matches will be held today at the same venue.

Div II hockey

Dilkusha Sporting Club came from behind to beat Rakim Sangha 2-1 in the Green Delta Metropolis Second Division hockey league at the Moulana Bhasani Stadium yesterday, reports UNB.

The match was locked 1-1 in the first half.

Sohel put Rakim Sangha ahead in the 15th minute by a field goal while Khawja Shabbab neutralised the margin for Dilkusha in the 22nd minute.

Shabbab scored the match-winner for Dilkusha in the 56th minute from a penalty corner.

In another fixture, Uttara Hockey Club defeated East End Green Club 3-0 in a mockery of a match at the same venue.

East End Green took to the field with minimum required number of seven players, but as they were trailing 0-3 within 11 minutes one of their players withdrew with injury.

Kalam scored all the three goals for Uttara in the 5th, 7th and 8th minutes with a hat-trick.

Bowling crisis for England

LONDON, July 24 (Internet report): England are expected to be without spearhead Darren Gough and young understudy Alex Tudor for the remainder of this summer's Test series against New Zealand.

Yorkshire fast bowler Gough, who has missed the first two Tests with calf trouble, has been told to rest for the next month - which all but rules him out of the final two Tests.

He is likely to be joined on the sidelines by 21-year-old Tudor, whose trip to the specialist on Wednesday to investigate the left knee problem which has troubled him since before the opening Test at Edgbaston revealed greater problems than first anticipated.

Gough, who went for scan on his troublesome calf injury yesterday and was told to rest for a month, is to be re-examined about the problem to determine whether it is connected with the degenerative hamstring trouble which forced his withdrawal from the West Indies tour two winters ago.

England physiotherapist Wayne Morton, who has liaised with Yorkshire officials, explained. Both parties feel it would be prudent to re-scan the previous surgery to make sure has not re-occurred in the hamstring and referred into the calf.

"The area of pain is different but the scenario with recovery and then breakdown is similar. Darren will be resting until the area has been investigated and a future plan of rehabilitation established."

It means Gough will be unavailable for two key matches which could decide Yorkshire's season - next Wednesday's NatWest Trophy quarter-final with Roses rivals Lancashire at Old Trafford and the Benson and Hedges Super Cup final against Gloucestershire at Lord's on August 1.

Morton added, "Darren is obviously disappointed but wants as much chance as possible to be fit for England's winter tour to South Africa and Zimbabwe."

Fulham hire Hughes

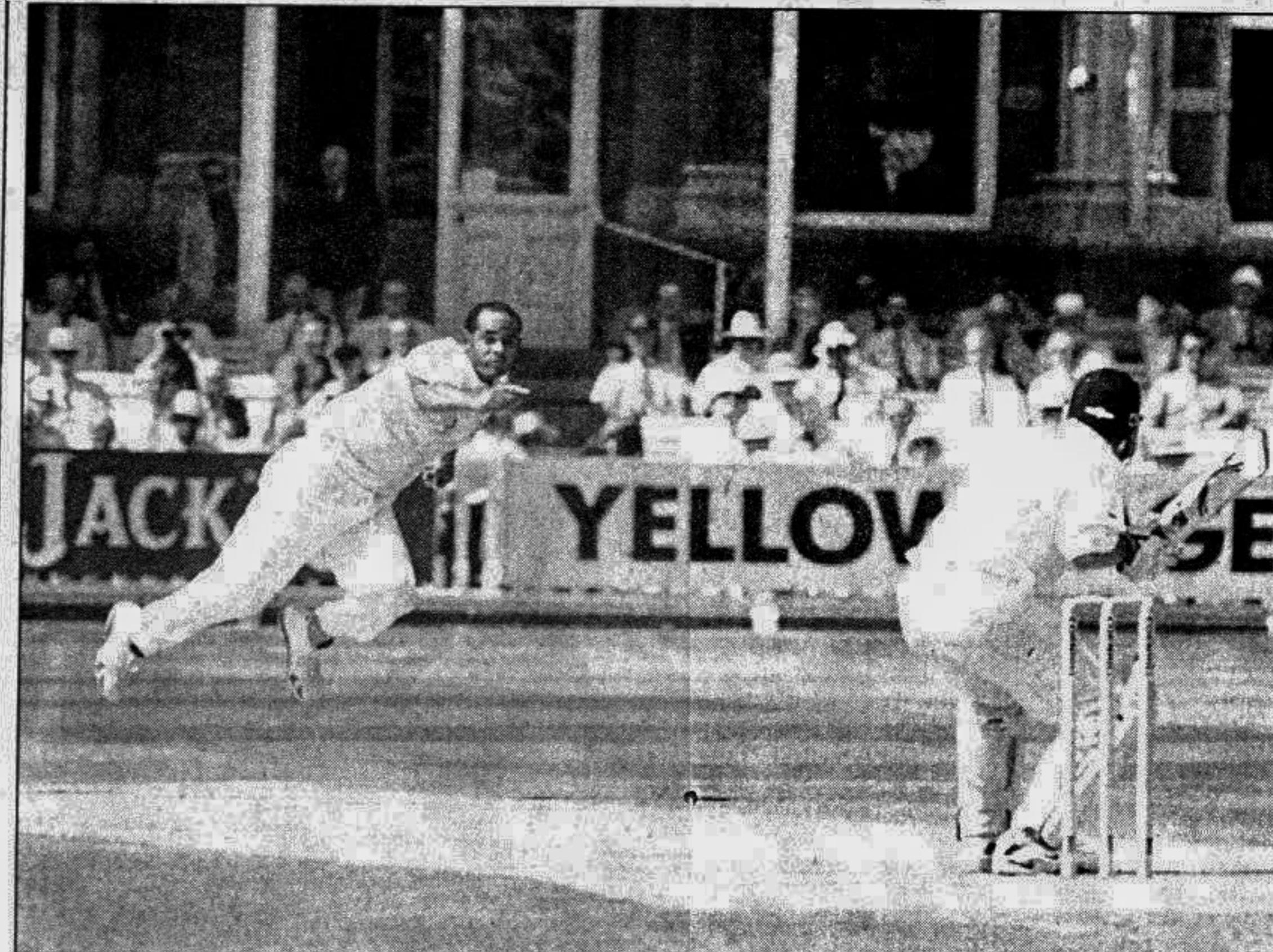
LONDON, July 24: Arsenal midfielder Stephen Hughes joined first division Fulham on a three-month loan deal on Friday with a view to a permanent move, reports AFP.

It is the second high-profile loan signing at Craven Cottage this week after Aston Villa striker Stan Collymore agreed a similar move.

The 22-year-old Hughes, a former England Under-21 international, has struggled to maintain a first-team place at Highbury, with Ray Parlour, Marc Overmars and French stars Emmanuel Petit and Patrick Vieira always ahead of him in the queue.

A statement from Fulham read: "Fulham Football Club are delighted to announce that they have signed Stephen Hughes from Arsenal on a three-month loan deal with the possibility of a permanent move in the future."

Hughes was initially unwilling to join Fulham, not wanting to step down from the Premiership, but Collymore's arrival plus the purchase of highly-rated Lee Clark from Sunderland has persuaded him the club mean business.



New Zealand's Daniel Vettori ducks a rising Dean Headley delivery on the third day of the second Test at Lord's yesterday.

Sport

Saqlain strangles Warwicks

LONDON, July 24: Surrey strengthened their grip on the English county championship with a crushing innings and 123 runs victory over sixth-placed Warwickshire at Edgbaston on Friday, reports Reuters.

The unbeaten leaders wrapped up their eighth win of the season with more than a day to spare after skittling the hosts for just 133 in their second innings.

Following on 256 behind, Warwickshire reached 55 for one without undue alarm before capitulating against the combined spin attack of Saqlain Mushtaq (five for 32) and Ian Salisbury (4-46).

The Pakistani off-spinner has now taken 26 wickets in Surrey's last three games.

Sussex celebrated their first triumph at Derby for 44 years after Jason Lewry took a career-best seven for 38 to clinch an 85-run success over Derbyshire.

Durham continued to climb the table with an emphatic innings and 127 runs triumph over Gloucestershire at Cheltenham.

Gloucestershire lost their last five first innings wickets for 54 to follow-on 350 runs behind before being dismissed second time around for 223.

Kent continued their winning streak with an 88-run victory over Nottinghamshire at Trent Bridge.

Julian Thompson, a qualified doctor, took six for 63 to help dismiss Nottinghamshire for 237 after they had been reeling at 66 for six.

As part of the board's new constitution, which aims to bring more black influence into its upper structures, three blacks were elected to sit on the general council along with the 12 provincial representatives.

In his address, White reiterated the UCB's commitment to transforming the sport into a game played by all races in accordance with the decisions made at a conference held in November last year that culminated in a "pledge to the nation" in June.

But Sonn denied this, saying that his decision to challenge White was taken simply to justify his nomination.

"I think if people ask you to make yourself available and you think you can make a point and have chance at winning then you should make yourself available," Sonn said. "But I'm satisfied with the result because we have exercised our democracy and Ray has my full support."

Sonn was re-elected as vice-president after two other nominations were withdrawn while in the only change, John Blair was voted in as treasurer ahead of incumbent Julian Thornton.

"I must congratulate both Raymond and Percy for the way in which they conducted themselves," UCBSA managing director Ali Bacher said. "It is the

first time since my involvement in cricket administration in 1976 that the presidency has been opposed but it was done in the right spirit."

Media reports had suggested that Sonn, a coloured administrator from the formally black South African Cricket Board (SACB), was attempting to politicise the body and sweeping changes would be made if he was elected.

But Sonn denied this, saying that his decision to challenge White was taken simply to justify his nomination.

"I think if people ask you to



Manchester United forward Dwight Yorke (R) is under pressure from a South China defender during their exhibition soccer match in Hong Kong on July 23.

Manchester United's Andy Cole tries to evade an unidentified South China player.



—AFP photo

United's fourth out of four



HONG KONG, July 24 (AFP/Reuters): Treble-winning English giants Manchester United completed their tour of Australia and the Far East with a routine 2-0 victory over Hong Kong club side South China here Saturday.

United strength United, missing stars David Beckham, Ryan Giggs, Roy Keane, Ole Gunnar Solskjaer and Nicky Butt, were never threatened in a match which amounted to little more than a training exercise.

Even without their glamour boys, United were able to field a side valued roughly at something close to 60 million dollars.

Their opponents, used to playing in one of the weakest leagues in Asia in front of crowds of a two or three thousand, have an estimated value of 500,000 dollars.

United faced criticism from many Hong Kong fans for failing to parade their big-name players but they showed the

crowd that they wanted to play positive football by starting the match with three strikers - Teddy Sheringham, Andy Cole and Dwight Yorke.

The disparity in class was evident throughout as United stroked the ball around at leisure, clearly deciding not to exert themselves in fierce tropical heat and humidity.

After a slow start England international Sheringham fired the Red Devils into the lead, slamming home a low cross whipped in from the right flank by Cole in the 22nd minute.

Five minutes later Cole and Sheringham reversed roles for their second goal. Jordi Cruyff made a penetrating run from inside his own half, fed Sheringham on the left and the England forward unselfishly passed across the ball to the unmarked Cole, who tapped in from eight metres.

Cruyff had a chance to make it 3-0 two minutes later but his point-blank shot was brilliantly saved by South China

custodian Mick Leonard.

United's new goalkeeper Mark Bosnich had a quiet afternoon only being called upon nine minutes from the break, when he tipped over a dipping 35-metre shot -- South China's only chance in the first half -- from defender Leung Chi-wing.

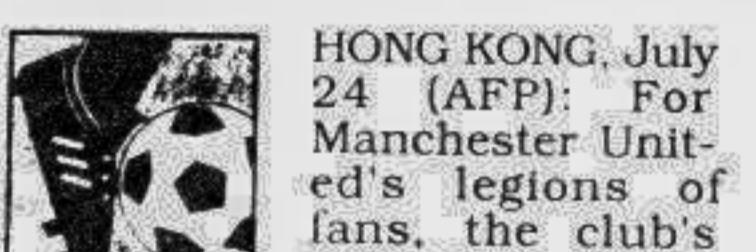
In the second half United made four substitutions giving runs out to youngsters Michael Clegg, Jonathan Greening and Mark Wilson.

Dwight Yorke went close 13 minutes from time but United were unable to add to their tally, to the disappointment of a capacity 40,000 crowd at the Hong Kong Stadium.

The win was United's fourth of their four match tour. They defeated Australia twice over two games in Melbourne and Sydney before moving on to beat Chinese league leaders Shanghai Shenhua 2-0 last Wednesday.

They are due to return to England from Hong Kong Sunday night.

Reds reaping in rich



HONG KONG, July 24 (AFP): For Manchester United's legions of fans, the club's tour of Australia and Far East is likely to represent little more than a globe-trotting postscript to their dazzling exploits of the past season.

For the Old Trafford men who have helped make the club the richest in the world, however, the tour is a vital cog in a global business plan aimed at cashing in on their vast international fan base, estimated at millions worldwide.

Details of the revamped 90,000-seat stadium, the home of English football, are due to be unveiled next week and it appears the trademark structures will not be accommodated in the plans.

Architects fear the cost of moving or rebuilding the towers would push the budget way over its 320 million pound (480 million dollar) estimate.

Wembley communications director Chris Palmer said: "We could move the twin towers to the moon if we spent enough money."

But the question is whether the money available should be better used on facilities for the fans and the stadium itself.

"Everyone who has seen the design is confident we are building the best stadium in the world."

"We are building a stadium that will very much be Wembley. We would be fools not to build on Wembley's legacy. We are looking to emulate its atmosphere, if not better."

The development is seen as a key factor in England's bid to host the 2006 World Cup finals. FIFA are expected to announce that decision next July.

New Wembley without Twin Towers?

LONDON, July 24: Wembley stadium's famous twin towers are set to play no part in the new-look arena when it is rebuilt after the 2000 FA Cup final, reports AFP.

On the sidelines of the matches played so far -- two in Australia and one in Shanghai -- the United entourage has found time to launch two new strips as well as finalise details for the opening of a network of Manchester United megastores across the Asia-Pacific region.

Stores in Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur, Singapore, Hong Kong and possibly China will stock everything from Manchester United replica kits, videos, bed-spreads, and books to cups, plates and cuddly toys.

"We've looked into the Manchester United megastores carefully and there is clearly a demand for memorabilia from our fans across the world. We anticipate most of the shops will be open by the end of 2000," United commercial director Peter Kenyon said. But any suggestion that treble-winning

United's all-conquering players are being exploited for commercial opportunities presented by

the tour were bluntly dismissed by chairman Martin Edwards.

"Our first priority is to have a successful football team and I think we do that rather well. On the back of that success we try and market the brand and capitalise on the team's success."

Edwards told a press conference on the eve of their match against Hong Kong team South China.

"But without the team's success it's very difficult to enhance the brand. So the team always comes first -- always has done, always will do."

Edwards defended United's aggressive commercial tactics, saying it was necessary to be profitable off the pitch in order to meet escalating costs.

"In these days of expensive transfer fees, higher wages and everything else, you have to be successful commercially in order to be able to keep improving facilities, the stadium and players."

"So we do capitalise on the success of the team and we make no apologies for that. But we are first and foremost a football club and I'll say again, the team always comes first," Edwards added.

United, who were valued at 1.0 billion dollars by foiled suitor Rupert Murdoch last season, were said to be the richest club in the world earlier this year following an in-depth report by Deloitte and Touche accountants for a British football magazine.

The report showed United coined in a staggering 87.9 million pounds (144 million dollars) in the 1996-97 financial year, nearly 50 percent more than its nearest rival, Spanish giants Barcelona.

A sizable chunk of that financial success is derived from worldwide commercial activities. In Asia, the Manchester United "brand" is bigger than ever, according to Hong Kong businessman Paul Kam.

We've been involved with Manchester United for four years and the fact is that they just keep getting more and more popular," said Kam, whose company Pro-Events is United's official marketing partner in Asia.

Even the fact that United will play in Hong Kong without the backbone of their side -- David Beckham, Roy Keane, Gary Neville, Paul Scholes, Ryan Giggs and Ole Gunnar Solskjaer are all absents -- has failed to deter fans here, who camped out overnight to buy tickets for the exhibition clash when they went on sale in May.

Kam, who is also secretary of the Hong Kong branch of the Manchester United Supporters Club, believes part of the Red Devils' appeal lies in the team's history and these are things which I think Asian people respond to and admire," he said.

"And of course, it also helps that they win trophies a lot."

United have had a stunning year, pulling off the 'treble' by winning the English premier league title, the FA Cup and European Cup in succession.

Virenque returns in style

POITIERS, France, July 24: Richard Virenque, the controversial cyclist, tried and failed to ban, is ending the famed race with his confidence, and position as No 1 climber, firmly intact, reports AP.

Under judicial investigation for his role in the notorious Festina doping scandal that rocked last year's event, the French cyclist was declared persona non grata by Tour officials just two weeks before this year's contest.

But the sport's governing body, the International Cycling Union, forced organizers into an embarrassing climb down.

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