

## BHF picks 47 for preliminary camp

Bangladesh Hockey Federation (BHF) has selected 47 players in the preliminary camp in India in October and the Asia Cup championship in Pakistan in November this year, reports BSS.

The selected players have been requested to report to coach Hossain Imam Chowdhury on August 1 at 4 pm.

The players are:

Goalkeepers: Havilder Jahanir Alam, Rasel Khan Bapu, Mohammad Jahan, Rinku, Aynul Islam and Manbub Ullah.

Defenders: Shahidullah Khokan, Mamunur Rashid, Iftiqaq Ahmed Shupu, Muzahidul Islam Shupu, Mohammad Issa Mian, Mahfuzul Alam, Rabiuddin Ahmed, Syed Rafiqunnabi Naqib, Faruq Ahmed, Shamsuddin Titu, Tabibe Noor and Khurshid Alam.

Midfielders: Khwaja Tayeb Reza, Towfiqul Islam Rana, Thunu Marma, Mahbubul Ehsan Rana, M Shahidullah Titu, Mahboob Harun, Mohammad Musa Mian, Mirajul Ahsan, Ashique Rahman Rajib, Tutul Kumar Naq, Ziaur Rahman and Ashiquzzaman.

Forwards: Ramizuddin Ahmed, Rahajuddin, Hedayetul Islam, Rahajuddin, Kanti Roy, Moksed Alam, Kutubuddin Ahmed, Mazharul Islam, Rafiqul Islam, Kamal, Mohammad Sadek, Ariful Huq Prince, Moududur Rahman, Shuba, Giasuddin, Khwaja Azam Mian, Shamim Reza and Shamsuzzaman Khokan.

## Court upholds TV rights

LONDON, July 29: A top British court on Wednesday upheld the right of English soccer's Premier League to sell TV rights to its matches collectively to BSkyB or other broadcasters, reports Reuters.

Judge Justice Ferris said that the 20-team league was not acting against the public interest in the way it sells its rights.

Pay TV giant BSkyB has rights to televise 60 matches live each season while the BBC shows a weekly highlights package as part of a 743 million pounds (1.2 billion dollars) five-year deal.

## Davenport scrapes thru'

STANFORD, California, July 29: Lindsay Davenport, who began her run to a US Open crown and the No. 1 ranking with a title at the Bank of the West Classic last year, struggled to win her first match at this year's tournament Wednesday night, reports AP.

Davenport, overcoming numerous unforced errors to defeat Canada's Rubin 6-3, 6-7 (2-7), 6-3, Rubin had both thighs wrapped in bandages by the end of the match.

Davenport used the Bank of the West tournament as a springboard last year. She followed up her win at Stanford with titles in San Diego and Los Angeles before capturing the US Open crown and moving up to No. 1 for the first time in October.

"I just went on such a great roll after winning here. I think you just have those times in your career where you just play so well and get in a groove. Last year I just played really well and really consistently," she said. "Duplicating last year is going to be very tough."

"It was a blast. I lived my last

# Sekulov ends Enqvist

LOS ANGELES, July 29: Australian qualifier James Sekulov claimed the biggest win of his career Wednesday, ousting fifth-seeded Swede Thomas Enqvist to reach the quarterfinals of the ATP Tour Los Angeles Open, reports AFP.

Sekulov, a 22-year-old who regularly grinds it out on the Challenger circuit, took advantage of Enqvist's uncharacteristically erratic play to beat the Australian Open finalist 6-7, 6-4, 6-3.

"Obviously, he wasn't playing the best he could play, but I hung in there," Sekulov said. "It was good to get the win, good to be in the quarters. I only decided on Thursday to come here. I was going to have a week off -- I'm glad I didn't."

In the quarters, he'll face American Michael Chang, who defeated France's Guillermo Raoux 6-4, 6-2.

With second seed Pete Sampras highlighting the evening session, the only other seed in action during the day was number eight Wayne Ferreira of South Africa.

He escaped with a 5-7, 7-5, 6-2 victory over Justin Gimelstob in a match that left neither participant with much to boast of.

"I shouldn't have won, no way," Ferreira said. "I actually

feel guilty winning."

Gimelstob served for the match at 5-4 in the second, but couldn't earn a match point.

"I started to play the points pretty tentatively," a disappointed and disgruntled Gimelstob said. "He's a good athlete. You can't do that. It just hurts."

"I think he tried to come up with the big shots too much, and I took advantage of that," Ferreira said. But the South African was angry at himself for squandering the quick start he made in the first set.

"I played so well until 5-3, then I lost my motivation level," said Ferreira, who broke Gimelstob to lead 4-2 in the first and held easily for 5-2 before losing the next five games.

He said he couldn't account for the mental lapse.

"If I had the answer to that, I wouldn't be doing it, and I do it too often these days."

"It's frustrating stuff," he added. "I played great tennis until 5-3, probably some of the best tennis I've played in a long time. Then I just collapsed."

After he dropped his serve to open the second set, Ferreira smacked a ball into the pine trees behind the stands in frustration, earning a code violation warning.

With hindsight, he said, it was frustration with himself that led to the outburst.

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## Banks to help England's 2006 WC bid

LONDON, July 29: British sports minister Tony Banks' decision to step down as Sports Minister and help England's bid to bring the World Cup to England in 2006 was welcomed today by the man leading the campaign, reports AFP.

Alec McGivern, England 2006 World Cup campaign director said that the backing of the former sports minister will give the final push to win the right to stage the world's greatest soccer tournament.

McGivern said: "Tony Banks has been a great ambassador in this bid as Sports Minister and if you had suggested a year ago that the government were going to offer him more or less full time to help us promote this bid I wouldn't have believed you."

The campaign chief plans to use Banks' experience in the sporting arena as final plans are drawn up to win the bid.

"It is a great boost for us that the Prime Minister has asked him on a personal basis to be his special envoy. We will be making great use of him in the months ahead."

The decision (on where the 2006 World Cup will be staged) is less than a year away and he has done a great job for us but he can do even more now and we are very pleased about it," McGivern told BBC Radio 5 Live.

Banks will still represent the government in his new position, a Downing Street spokesman confirmed last night.

Banks will pit England against familiar foes Germany in the battle to host the 2006 World Cup.

His new role could bring him face to face with some tough opposition too following suggestions that ex-World Cup star Jorgen Klinsmann of Wimbledon favourite Steffi Graf could fill a similar role for the German effort.

England's 2006 hopes are set to be given a boost today as plans for Wembley's massive refit, costing an estimated 320 million pounds, are due to be unveiled.

The redevelopment is the centrepiece of the bid but the stadium's famous twin towers may be lost in the revamp, which will transform an ageing ground holding 75,000 into a state-of-the-art arena with a capacity of 90,000.

Bailey boosts Canada

WINNIPEG, Manitoba, July 29: Former world 100-metre record-holder Donovan Bailey helped Canada gain the Pan American Games 4x100-metre relay final Wednesday by efficiently running the opening leg, reports Reuters.

Bailey, besieged by many in the Canadian media for failing to run the 100 metres here, had Canada even with Cuba at the first exchange and the Canadians went on to clock 38.74 seconds in winning their semifinal. The final will be Friday.

"It felt great," said Bailey, who is coming back from surgery on his left Achilles tendon 10 months ago.

Glenroy Gilbert, Brad McCuaig and Trevino BETTY joined Bailey on the winning team that scored a 12-metre victory over Guatemala, Cuba, meanwhile, dropped the baton on the first exchange and did not finish.

Brazil claimed the second semifinal in 38.67 seconds with the United States second in 38.93.

Asian Football Confederation general secretary Peter Velappan listens to a query during a press conference in Kuala Lumpur yesterday. The AFC official announced that Asia could still boycott the 2002 World Cup if the row over berth allocation was not resolved.

—AFP photo

## AFC won't flinch

KUALA LUMPUR, July 29: The Asian Football Confederation (AFC) might still boycott the World Cup in 2002 if FIFA fails to resolve a dispute over the number of places for Asia, AFC secretary-general Peter Velappan said Thursday.

Asian delegates walked out of a FIFA congress earlier this month after being awarded four places at the tournament in Japan and South Korea and offered one play-off chance against a European side. They want five automatic places.

"The five seats are our rights but we are open to all kinds of options," Velappan told a news conference in the Malaysian capital, noting that the FIFA executive committee was meeting in Zurich on September 1 and 2.

"If we can solve the problem then by whatever means, the boycott does not arise. If there is an impasse (the AFC) extraordinary congress must decide thereafter," he said, referring to a congress in Kuala Lumpur on October 10.

Velappan reiterated that "Asia is compelled to boycott the World Cup 2002" as FIFA had not acceded to the AFC's request for three seats plus two for hosts Japan and South Korea for its 43 national associations.

At the same time, the AFC chief said: "We fully reaffirm our support for Japan and Korea to host the World Cup."

## All eyes on Stevenson



WINNIPEG, Manitoba, July 29: The United States' latest tennis sensation, Alexandra Stevenson, will be back on the court this week in her first tournament since reaching the Wimbledon singles semifinals as a qualifier in early July, reports Reuters.

Her surprising trip to the semis, where she lost to eventual champion Lindsay Davenport, combined with the revelation that her father is NBA great Julius "Dr J" Erving, guaranteed Stevenson would be the centre of attention during the Pan American Games tournament which begins today.

There was evidence of that Wednesday when the four women, four men and two coaches who comprise the US tennis contingent for the 1999 Games met with the media.

The lion's share of journalists' questions were directed to Stevenson, 18, the Pan Am competition's top seed.

She faced Brazil's Miriam D'Agostini in the first round of the single-elimination tournament.

"I'm very excited to be here. Representing my country is a big honour and hopefully all of us will get to the Olympics next year and that will be even more exciting," said the 6-foot-1 (1.86 metres) Stevenson, nicknamed "Rocket Woman" because of blistering serve that has been clocked at 121 mph (195 kph).

The San Diego teenager currently ranked 37th in the world by the WTA, said "not much" has changed since she became the first women's singles qualifier in Wimbledon history to reach the semis and won 155,000 dollars.

Prior to Wimbledon, which was her first tournament as a pro, Stevenson said she "skipped" the French Open in favour of her high school graduation and prom.

"It was a blast. I lived my last

two months in high school as a normal high school student," the 18-year-old said with a smile. "The French (Open) is going to be there for years to come."

After the Pan Am tournament ends August 5, Stevenson said she will play on the Tour full-time. Her second proevent

will be either in Toronto or New Haven, Connecticut.

Stevenson patiently fielded probing questions about her famous father, whom she met only once as a toddler, and about her mother, Samantha, a freelance journalist who created a stir with her comments about racism on the tour.

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