

Dear Readers  
Happy New Year!

# Star Sport

DHAKA SATURDAY, JANUARY 1, 2000 Email: dssports@bdonline.com

## Column One SPORTS TALK



**Rivaldo**  
(Brazilian soccer star)  
"I am very happy and satisfied at Barcelona and I will not be changing team."  
Asked whether he was leaving the Spanish giants.

## Boost sports WHIZZ KID

COMPETITION FOR SCHOOL CHILDREN  
Competition-125

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

Competition closes at 8 pm  
Jan 2, and draw  
shortly afterwards

1. Who was the man-of-the-series in the Australia-Pakistan Tests?  
Langer Ponting Inzamam

2. Who was the highest wicket-taker in the Australia-Pakistan Test series?  
Akram Fleming McGrath

3. How many Test hundreds has Mark Waugh scored to date?  
15 16 17

4. Who became champion in the Keya Premier Soccer?  
Mukujodha Mohammad Arshad

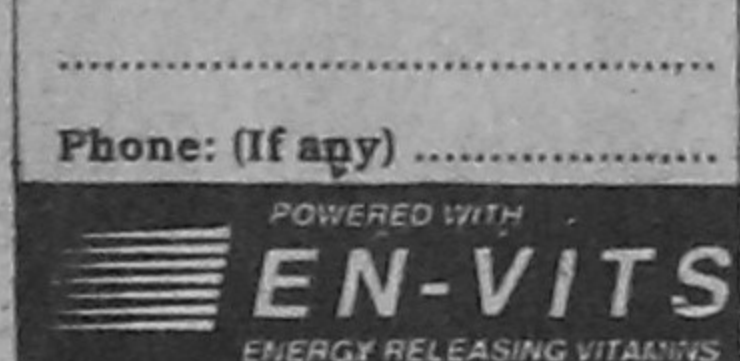
5. Who lifted the Expatriates' Open chess title?  
Rezaul Zia Tanveer

Name .....

Class ..... Roll No. ....

School Address .....

Phone: (If any) .....



**NOTICE**  
Due to unavoidable reasons draw of the WHIZZ KID Competition-125 could not be held last night. It will now be held on January 7, 2000. -- Sports Editor

## Khelaghar keep on winning

Sports Reporter

Khelaghar Samaj Kalyan Sangha registered their fourth win in the First Division cricket league with a comprehensive 7-wicket thrashing of Lalmatia Club at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.  
Opener Shamsul scored a patient 48 as Khelaghar, chasing a paltry Lalmatia total of 146 in 50 overs, scored 147 for

**BRIEF SCORES**  
**LALMATIA CLUB:** 146 all out in 49.3 overs (Sumon 22, Parvez 15, Raju 3/22, Sumon 3/33, Tony 2/21, Alamgir 2/24)  
**KHELAGHAR SKS:** 147 for 3 in 45 overs (Shamsul 48, Bijan 22, Tony 22 n.o., Abul 1/7)  
Result: Khelaghar Samaj Kalyan Sangha won by 7 wickets.

**YOUNG PEGASUS:** 180 all out in 49.4 overs (Arshad 90, Labbu 20, Arif 3/30, Shipon 3/44)  
**UTTARA SC:** 184 for 2 in 36 overs (Sandeep 77, Mahfuz 70 n.o., Johnny 1/25)  
Result: Uttara Sporting Club won by 8 wickets.

three with five overs to spare. Bijan and Tony scored 22 runs each for the winners.  
Earlier, opting to bat first, Lalmatia were shot out for 146 in 49.3 overs with lower middle order Sumon notching highest 22.  
Sumon and Raju evenly shared six wickets for Khelaghar.

In other match of the day, Uttara Sporting Club handed an eight-wicket defeat to Young Pegasus at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium.  
Batting first, Young Pegasus were all out for 180 in 49.4 overs. Opener Arshad scored 90 off 132 balls with the help of three sixes and eleven boundaries.

Minhazul Abedin set a phenomenal benchmark for the aspiring youth of this games-loving nation. Having gone through prolonged analysis and debate, the Star Sport came to find that none of our sports 'icons' stands at par with this vintage cricketer from Chittagong. Seemingly though, the older Minhaz gets the brighter he becomes. That's why Star Sport's verdict for the 1999 Sportsman-of-the-Year goes to this veteran of nearly two decades. We sincerely feel that Minhaz should be the symbol of Bangladesh cricket and a source of inspiration for the new generation cricketers. Here our Senior Reporter Al-Amin depicts the combative character of this charismatic cricketer in words.

What should be the ideal age for a sportsman to unearth the richest vein of his talent? In his teens or early twenties? Experts might come up with a hypothetical conclusion that it should be between 25-30. But, for a few, it is too early to reach the peak.

There are some evergreen athletes who can defy the conventional age barrier and hit the top form even at 35. Minhazul Abedin, fondly called Nannu by fans, is one of those rare breeds.

The Chittagonian walked into the glory at an age when many thought he had little more to offer. Making his critics munch on their words, Minhaz reached the pinnacle of success striking two successive half-centuries in the World Cup in England last year. His fifty against Scotland throttled Bangladesh to their first win in the big stage. To disprove that it was a flash in the pan, the right-hander then braved the mighty Australian attack for his second and most memorable half-century.

His efforts against the top cricket nation was the motivating force for our cricketers to pull off the biggest triumph in the history of Bangladesh's sports, humbling hot favourites Pakistan by 62 runs in the next match.

To many, it was the second best thing that happened to the Bangladeshis since its independence in 1971.

The delectable double knocks in the twilight of his career have certainly made Minhaz a pioneer sportsman of the country who leads by example. The Daily Star Sport however considers his success as a reward of his perseverance and hard work.

The 1999 would certainly be remembered as an extraordinary year for Minhaz, where his determination and dedication both on and off the field prevailed over sheer adversity.

At the beginning of the year it appeared that Minhaz's career, spanning over 17 years, was all but over when he was left out of the World Cup-bound squad. He was included in the preliminary list of 30 but got the shock of his life finding his name missing on the register of final sixteen. His omission caused a huge uproar among the country's cricket connoisseurs.

It was however not for his performance in the domestic cricket, where he scored more runs than any other local players, that Minhaz got the chop. The 'wise' gang, led by the then chief selector Enayet Hossain Siraj, almost shattered the World Cup dream of the feisty cricketer and Bangladesh's as well for reasons best known to them.

"I had sleepless nights when they dropped me for no good reason. But I'm a firm believer in the Almighty. If the divine blessings are with someone then no mortal can do any harm to that person. However, I think, justice was eventually done and I was finally picked," said Minhaz to the Star Sport on December 29.

Minhaz lost his father at a tender age when the occupied Pakistan force during the sanguinary war of 1971 killed Shamsul Abedin. The introvert boy of seven then grew up in the affectionate care of his mother Dil Afroze Abedin.

"She was my tutor. I have

learned to live with adversity from my mother", said Minhaz, who started his luminous career way back in 1981.

Although Minhaz is not at all an elegant batsman or a great hitter of the ball, his little nudge and push have earned him the tag of a run-machine. The most interesting facet of his talent was his ability to

## Minhaz at a glance

**Born:** Sept 25, 1965  
**Father:** Shamsul Abedin  
**Mother:** Dil Afroze Abedin  
**Siblings:** Nurul Abedin Nobel, Tayeb Abedin  
**Wife:** Afroza Abedin Rina  
**Children:** None  
**Dhaka debut:** 1981 International  
**debut:** 1982  
**Favourite food:** Briani (of course, has to be prepared by his wife)  
**Hobby:** Long drive, listening music  
**Future ambition:** To build a cricket academy

flourish under pressure. He walked away with many a win in the domestic cricket at a position when others thought it impossible.

His ability to excel when the chips are down defines the character of a class cricketer.

"I never consider what happened yesterday. I might have scored a century in the last match.

But that's history. Every time I walk into the middle I always tell myself this is the beginning of my career," said Minhaz.

The diminutive right-hander was an 'indispensable' middle-order batsman until he was dropped from the national team in 1997. The axe might intimidate other cricketers at his age to call it quits. But Minhaz is different of sorts.

This correspondent still remembers that instant reaction of Minhaz's. "Take it from me, I will be back in the side," promised the confident cricketer while practising alone at the barren Dhaka Stadium after his mates left for New Zealand tour.

"That was for the first time I was dropped from the national team. It hurt me, but that decision (of Board) was a blessing in disguise for me. It worked like a tonic on me, and now I'm motivated enough to keep on playing competitive cricket for another five years," said Minhaz.

The hard-working cricketer scored a lot of runs for Mohammedan in 1997. Yet he failed to convince the selectors for a place in the Independence Cup. But the indifferent attitude of the men with impaired intelligence failed to deter the determination of a desperate Minhaz.

He switched to a lowly-rated Surjo Tarun in the following year. Many felt it was a suicidal move for Minhaz ahead of the World Cup.

"I was well aware of the fact that it was a very risky move especially with the World Cup at close. People who care for me advised me to stay back in Mohammedan. But, I always believe that if I can perform

I will get my rightful place no matter which team I play."

Minhaz did what he believed. He scored more than five hundred runs including two centuries for Surjo Tarun. His relentless effort paid dividend and the rest was history.

Minhaz got the reward of his perseverance when he toured Australia along with the Prime Minister, a privilege that no other player had achieved earlier.

Many feel that Minhaz's career could have been even colourful had the out-spoken cricketer been a little more discreet in his expression. Being a shrewd tactician, Minhaz however has had a surprisingly little stint as captain of the national team. His captaincy came to an abrupt end following a row with former coach Mohinder Amarnath in 1994. Interestingly, the naive but adamant cricketer looks at it differently.

"I was never hungry for the post. Had I been so I would not have opposed Mohinder (former India cricketer). Being a cricketer I always tried to say what I believed. It might have hurt someone, but I never said anything behind anybody's back," said Minhaz adding that it would have been a different story altogether had he led Bangladesh in the Kenya ICC Trophy in 1994. Bangladesh slumped to their worst-ever ICC Trophy result that eventually dashed their hopes of playing in the World Cup for the first time.

Apart from his ability to lead from the front, Minhaz is an out-and-out professional in a country where hardly anything can be termed so. And it is that sheer professionalism which has helped



him to be so successful for so many years. Money had never been his main motivating force. It is the desire of a professional that constantly drives him to be perfectionist in his works. And it was his exceptional approach that compelled his unfriendly coach Mohinder to sing praises of Minhaz. In his undisclosed report on that infamous Kenya tour, the under-fire Indian singled out Minhaz as 'a true professional' while he allegedly accused his mates of lacking patriotism.

Coming from a family that has sports culture, Minhaz grew up as a complete cricketer playing alongside the professional English cricketers for a long time.

"I have absorbed the essence of a professional cricketer while playing in England. People here tend to misinterpret professionalism. I never chased money. Rather, I have focused on my performance. Because, I know money will automatically come if you perform. I have seen a lot of talented cricketers spoiling their career while chasing money", said Minhaz.

This mild-mannered hero of Bangladesh bats to glory with an uncommon 'Vampire' willow. But we do hope that, if not his bat, his will and approach to the game become more and more common among our young cricketers.

# Top nine of the 1999

It can be said that from the sporting point of view 1999 was quite a year. The last year of the twentieth century saw some long awaited events-- the Cricket World Cup, Copa America and the World Athletics Championships. Those nerve-tugging mega meets offered lot of amusements while it also left behind some sad memories as the likes of our national hockey star Rabiuluddin Ahmed, legendary West Indian fast bowler Malcolm Marshall and American golfer hero Payne Stewart started their journey to the unknown. In the case of South Asian region, last year was highly significant as the eighth SAF Games, 2nd South Asian Football Federation Championship and the first-ever Asian Test Cricket Championship took place during this period. In fact, a year is a long time for sporting happenings as a lot of events can do commence in 365 days. So, it is greatly difficult to picture a whole year in a few words. Being well aware of the trouble of short-listing, we would like to highlight the following events, which in Star Sport's consideration are the top of the things in 1999 simply because of their prominence and proximity.

**BRITAIN AND HOLLAND** although its name was England '99, Bangladesh made its debut in the mega meet by becoming champions in the ICC Trophy held in Malaysia in 1997. Be-

metre small bore sports rifle event on September 29.

**BANGABANDHU CUP SOCCER TOURNEY**  
The second Bangabandhu Cup international football tournament was held at the Bangabandhu National Stadium from August 27 to September 7. Including Bangladesh, eleven teams from different countries across the world took part in the high-profile but low-quality tourney of the country's annals. Led by Takayoshi Amma, the J-League Selection of Japan, lifted the Cup with a 3-2 golden goal win over the Ghana Olympic team in the grand finale. Takashi Takahashi shot FL Selection to glory 10 minutes into the sudden death extra time. Although for the hosts there was nothing at stake, they fared pretty well but failed to cross the first round hurdle due to their low scoring rate compared to that of the Kerulet Football Club of Hungary. Kerulet and South Korea under-18 sides were the other semifinalists.

**ASIAN TEST CHAMPIONSHIP**  
The championship in Test cricket-- a brainchild of ICC president Jagmohan Dalmiya-- saw the light in the sub-continent when India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka clashed for the inaugural version in February and March. The first match was held at the Eden Gardens in Calcutta on February 16-20 which Pakistan won by 46 runs against India. The next game, which ended in a draw, commenced in Colombo four days later between India and the hosts. The championship's last tie of the first round was played in Lahore from March 4-8 which Sri Lanka and Pakistan drew. Being a cricket-crazy country, Bangladesh also participated in the championship, but only by playing host to the grand final on March 12-16. Pakistan and defending one-day champions Sri Lanka were the contestants. And Pakistan defeated the islanders convincingly by an innings and 175 runs on the fourth day. During the meet, Pakistani captain Wasim Akram snared a hat-trick of wickets in Lahore and repeated the feat in Dhaka to become the only cricketer to do it twice in both forms of the game. Excepting the mercurial left-handed tear-away, no bowlers could even achieve the feat once both in Test and one-days.

**COPA AMERICA**  
The 39th biggest of the Copa America-- the biggest football festivity in Latin America-- was held in Paraguay from June 29

## Star Sport workhorse Zakaria Simon looks back at 1999



Khaled Mahmud, who was the man-of-the-match against Pakistan, exults after trapping Salim Malik leg before.

When they tasted the elusive SAF Games gold by beating Nepal. Ace striker Allaz Ahmed shot Bangladesh to their maiden South Asian glory during the injury time in the first half of the final against the hosts. Although Bangladesh had been the favourites right from the inception of the regional carnival way back in 1984, the ultimate glory kept on eluding us somehow or in some way. They ended up with broken-hearts in their four previous appearances in final. They lost to hosts Nepal 4-2 in the final of the inaugural SAF Games. Apart from the cheers from football, Bangladesh clinched a gold in women's 50-

## Ronaldo adopts a child!

ROME, Dec 31: Ronaldo was given a poignant present for his wedding from former Inter Milan teammate Mauro Milanese -- a sponsored Brazilian child reports Reuters.

Milanese, who now plays for Perugia, gave the "long-distance adoption" gift to the Brazilian striker, who is due to become a father himself in April, an Italian charity said.

Ronaldo, 23, married model Milene Domingues, 22, on Christmas Eve at his mother's house in a luxury district of Rio de Janeiro. Wedding guests included two of the striker's closest friends from his early years in a poor Rio neighbourhood.

"After the news that (Parmakeeper Gianluigi) Buffon has sponsored a child from Cameroon as a gift to his girlfriend, we are immensely pleased that Milanese chose this gift above so many others and that Ronaldo has accepted it," said Paolo Brancaleone, an official with the Assisi Centre for International Peace between Peoples.

"Now we hope that more and more soccer players will make gestures of this kind."

No details of Ronaldo's "adopted" child were immediately available.

## Anelka scores at last

MADRID, Dec 31: Nicolas Anelka finally scored his first goal for Real Madrid in a charity match on Thursday, reports Reuters.

Anelka, who had failed to find the net for the Spanish side since his 35 million dollar transfer from Arsenal in August, was on target in the fourth minute as Real Madrid beat Spanish League XI 3-2 in a game played in aid of drug rehabilitation.

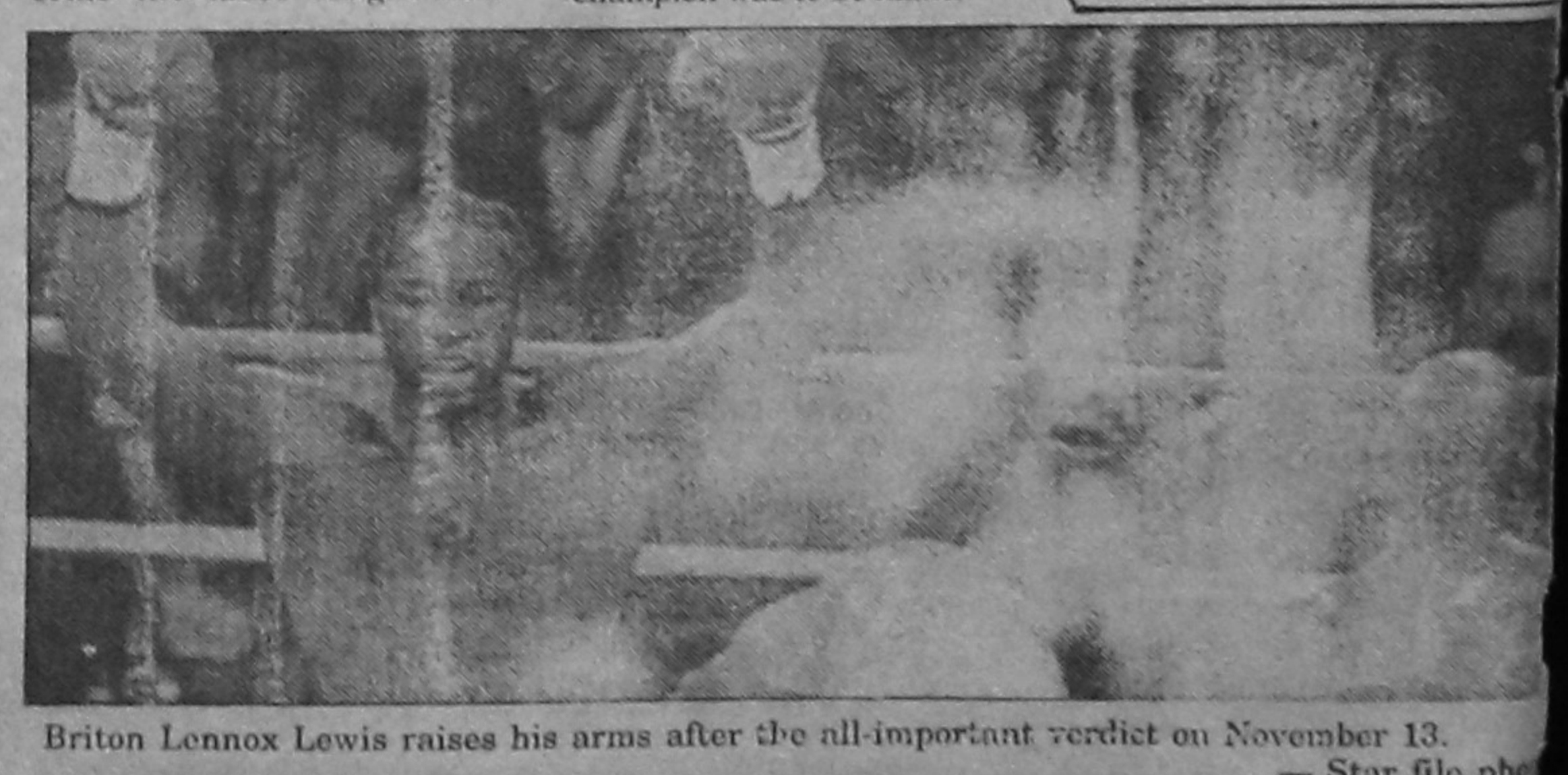
Britain Lennox Lewis raises his arms after the all-important verdict on November 13.

## MANCHESTER UNITED'S TRIPLE CROWN

Manchester United football club, at the moment world's most glamorous side, completed a fairytale end to the season in the Spanish city of Barcelona on May 26 when they sensationally beat Bayern Munich in the final of the European Champions' League. Substitutes Teddy Sheringham and Ole Gunnar Solskjaer scored with the German champions leading 1-0 in the regulation 90-minute play. The astonishing strikes in the third minutes of the injury time not only enabled the Red Devils clinch the most prestigious title in the continent but also completed a unique treble in the English soccer following their triumphs in the Premiership and the FA Cup in the previous two weeks. The last time United won the coveted was in 1968.

## LENNOX: KING OF THE RING

British heavyweight boxer Lennox Lewis established himself as the undisputed champion of the world on November 13 when he earned a unanimous decision over Evander Holyfield handed by a panel of three judges. Although Holyfield shouted, "I won the fight" shortly after the final bell, the judges were impressed enough to declare the 34-year-old Briton the champion. The two fought in an ill-fated unification bout on March 13 at the Madison Square Garden which was called off just after three rounds. Many of the observers, however, felt Lewis easily won that match. But it was scored a majority draw, which led to a grand jury investigation and several hearings. It was then set that a rematch would be held on November 13 if an undisputed champion was to be made.



Britain Lennox Lewis raises his arms after the all-important verdict on November 13.