

Sport

Olympic qualifying
Brazil confirm
Sydney berth

LONDON, Brazil, Feb 5: Brazil beat Chile 3-1 to qualify for a spot in the Sydney 2000 Olympics, leaving Argentina and Chile to fight it out for the second South American spot, reports AP.

With Friday's win, Brazil has six points in the tournament, while Argentina and Chile both have three and Uruguay none.

So while Brazil can take it easy against Uruguay Sunday, Argentina and Chile will be fighting for their lives. Brazil won with goals by Athirson in the 32nd minute, Ronaldinho on a free kick in the 47th and Bajano in the 61st. Chile's goal came when Hector Tapia scored in the 16th minute.

Argentina won their game with goals by Mariano Massera in the 65th and 80th minutes and Lionel Sacaloni in the 62nd.

BRIEF/RESULTS
Results of South American
Olympic qualifying
tournaments played Friday:

Brazil 3 Chile 1 (Half-time 0-0)

Scorers:
Brazil: Athirson 31, Ronaldinho 46, Bajano 60
Chile: Tapia 15
Argentina 3 Uruguay 0 (Half-time: 0-0)
Scorers:
Argentina - Scaloni 56, Messera 64, 79

Brazil qualify for Sydney 2000 Olympic Games. One other place will go to either Argentina or Chile.

STANDINGS

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Brazil	2	2	0	0	7	3	6
Chile	2	1	0	1	5	4	3
Argentina	2	1	0	1	5	4	3
Uruguay	2	0	0	2	1	7	0

Biman indoor
games today

The annual indoor games of Biman begin at its press building at Farmgate in the city today, reports UNB.

Managing Director of Biman Air Commodore M Rafiqul Islam will inaugurate the meet as chief guest.

Competitors comprising of Biman officers and employees, sons and daughters representing MD's Secretariat, eight Directorate from Syedpur, Rajshahi and Cox's Bazar stations will take part in the competition.

SOCOG will
compensate

SYDNEY, Feb 5: About 9,000 who paid for tickets but didn't receive an allocation for the Sydney 2000 Olympics, and who subsequently had their refunds reportedly lost in the mail, will be reimbursed next week, Games organisers said, reports AP.

SOCOG mailed out 68,500 refund cheques in November but a processing error meant more than 9,000 cheques were not printed.

After thousands of people complained last year, SOCOG said the missing cheques were delayed due to the heavy Christmas mailing period.

But an internal investigation revealed the cheques were not even printed because of a "processing error" when electronic files with the details were transferred from SOCOG to the mailing center, SOCOG said.

New Zealand next

From page 13
their 16 matches over the summer and Waugh said it was "an absolute pleasure to be captain" of the team, rating it as the best one-day team he's ever been involved in.

"We've played great cricket this summer, there's no doubt about that," he said. "You can get better batting in one-day cricket than getting 337 against (the Pakistan) attack... it was a phenomenal performance, really."

Pakistan captain Wasim Akram conceded Australia were a worthy world No 1.

"I am not disappointed, we were beaten by a lot better side than us over the last two months, not just in the finals," he said.

"Always I came to Australia and I always got hammered, but not like this."

Batsman Ricky Ponting vowed to overcome an ankle injury sustained in Friday night's crushing win in time for the New Zealand tour.

Australia's leading run scorer in the tri-series that also involved India, flew to Melbourne to assess the injury sustained when he crashed into the boundary fence while attempting to save a four early in the Pakistan innings in Sydney.

The Tasmanian was delighted with the news he received from the Australian team doctor Trevor James.

"It's better than we first thought. I've just sprained the ankle and suffered some bone bruising," Ponting said.

"I should be right for the New Zealand tour."

"I'll see how I go the next couple of days and then have a fitness test probably late next week."

"But I'm pretty optimistic," Ponting plans to do plenty of work in the swimming pool next week in a bid to speed up the recovery time with the 13-man squad, which will be named on Monday, due to leave for New Zealand on the following Monday.

The first of the six one-day internationals against the rapidly-improving Black Caps takes place in Wellington on February 16.

New Zealand recently thrashed the West Indies 5-1 in a one day series.



The winners of the 18th Lancer Millennium Cup golf tournament pose with their prizes at the Kurmitola Club on Friday. —Star photo

Ivoriens' sigh of relief

ABIDJAN, Feb 5: Ivory Coast's international players said on Friday they were relieved to be returning to their European clubs after being locked out for two days by the military government following their elimination from the African Nations Cup, reports Reuters.

"For the moment, words fail me," Olympique Marseille striker Ibrahim Bakayoko told Reuters.

The most important thing for me is to make the most of these few hours with my family and return this evening to France to rejoin my club which pays my wages.

Bakayoko and his fellow internationals were detained at a military camp for "a lesson in patriotism" after being knocked out in the first round of Africa's biggest international soccer tournament.

The players were taken to Abidjan on Thursday for a dressing down by the president and sports minister, both military officers who took power after a Christmas Eve coup, before being released.

Patrice Zere, who plays for

Belgian side Lokeren, said he and other players would do their best to explain to their clubs mainly in Western Europe — why they had not returned sooner.

"After being eliminated, we had 48 hours to be back at our clubs," Zere said.

"We will try to explain this to our clubs because there is a gap between our clubs and the politics of our country. They do not know what's happening here — they don't know that it's the politics of the country. All the same, we hope we will manage to make them understand."

Military ruler General Robert Guei said the players had not put everything into their matches at the Nations Cup in Ghana and threatened them they would face worse punishment if they did not improve.

"If you shams your country again, we will hold you for a longer period. You will do your military service, we will put you in army fatigues," Guei told them.

Midfielder Lassina Diabate, reunited with his club in Bordeaux, said on Friday he would think twice before accepting a call-up to the national squad in future.

"At the start we were asking

ourselves why it was happening to us but it was an experience — even if we don't accept and will never accept it. Next time, if we're called for selection, we will think twice before going," Diabate said.

Didier Angan, a defender at Olympique Nice in France, said he would not make any hasty decisions. "I think we need to take a step back, to think about it. But when you love your country, you have to think about it 10 times more before making any decision, so I don't think that anyone will be making any final decisions now."

The players' detention sparked a round of criticism.

"Detaining a team because it failed to qualify for the next round of a football competition is a blatant violation of the autonomy of the football association as well as the fair play principle," FIFA president Sepp Blatter said.

Clubs in Europe had called on FIFA to press for the return of their Ivorian players.

The Elephants, as the team are known, finished third in Group A at the Nations Cup. They beat hosts Ghana 2-0 on Monday but failed to score enough goals to qualify for the quarterfinals.

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the money, my value," he said. "I only think about winning the pre-Olympic tournament."

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right side of the field, flipping the ball over the head of a Venezuelan defender to score.

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Bundesliga
Dortmund restart
on the wrong
foot

BERLIN, Feb 5: Borussia Dortmund started the year in poor fashion when they were beaten 1-0 by Kaiserslautern before their own fans on Friday as the Bundesliga resumed after its winter break, reports Reuters.

Defender Harry Koch hit the winner in the 52nd minute of a game played under driving rain, from an astute header by French midfielder Youri Djorkaeff.

Dortmund, who have worried their supporters with disastrous performances in recent friendlies, were the more active side in the first half and Kaiserslautern 'keeper Uwe Gospodarek was twice made to work by striker Giuseppe Reina, in the sixth minute and again 10 minutes later.

The best chance for the Ruhr Valley club came in the 11th minute through Heiko Herich, whose shot from some six metres flew just over the bar.

Borussia, who have been going through lean times since they lifted the European Cup in 1997, remained fifth. Kaiserslautern, the 1998 German champions, stayed eighth.

Hertha Berlin used a second