

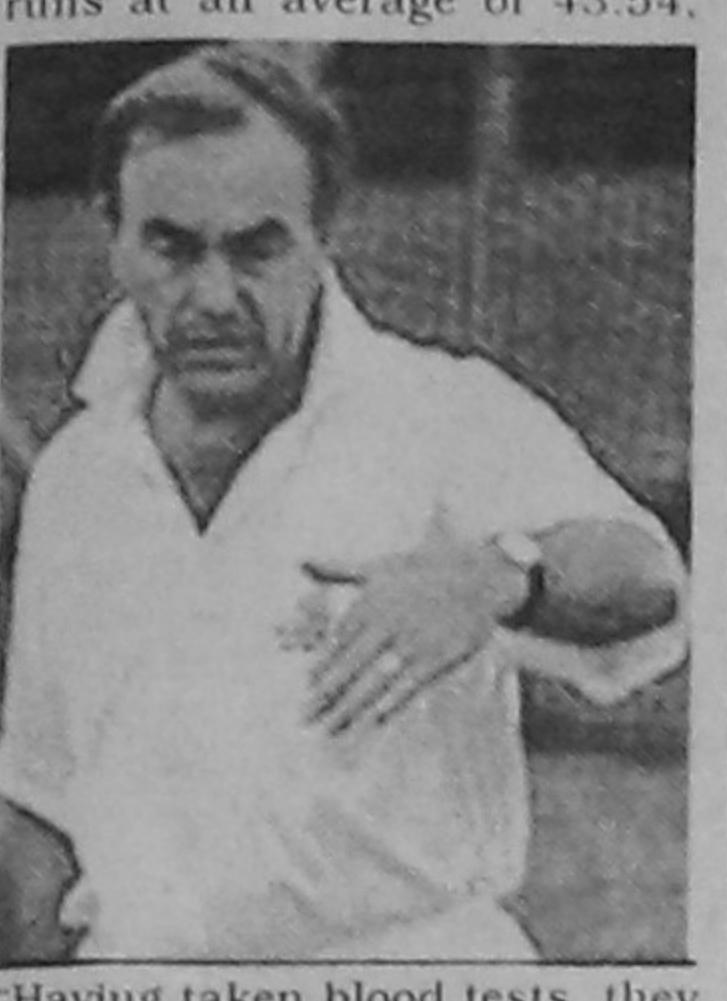
Sport

Edrich has Leukemia

LONDON, Aug 6: John Edrich, who played 77 times for England and hit an unbeaten 310 against New Zealand in 1965, is suffering from an incurable form of leukemia and has told he has only seven years to live, reports AP.

Quoted in the Mail on Sunday, the 63-Year-Old former Surrey opener says he has a rare form of the disease called Waldenstrom's.

"I hadn't seen a doctor for about 10 years. But I'd been feeling tired for a while," said Edrich, whose England career lasted from 1964-74 with 5,138 runs at an average of 43.54.



Having taken blood tests, they discovered leukemia.

"It was quite a shock. You can't fight it. You have to have faith in your consultant and the treatment," said Edrich, who was England's batting coach until five years ago.

"I asked how it was going to affect my lifestyle. They said I would feel tired from time to time and would have to live with it. I was very upsetting for my wife too," he said.

"I think we've got to be grateful for what we've had. I did something which I loved and had the ability to play cricket at the highest level."

Venus, Monica march into final

CARLSBAD, California, Aug 6: Venus Williams is proving to be unbeatable, even when her game is off.

Despite an inconsistent showing, Williams eliminated Amy Frazier 6-2, 6-3 Saturday in the semifinals of the \$35,000 dollars Acura Classic for her 14th straight match victory, reports AP.

Williams, ranked third in the world, will go for her third tournament title in a row in Sunday's final. She'll face Monica Seles, a 6-3, 7-6 winner over Anna Kournikova in Saturday's second semifinal.

Frazier, who upset top-ranked Martina Hingis in the quarterfinals, couldn't handle Williams' power.

"She hit the ball so hard," Frazier said. "I was just trying to stay in the points and she really wasn't letting me do anything. I sort of felt a little lost at times."

Frazier was barely competitive on a day when Williams made only 46 per cent of her first serves and committed 28 unforced errors. Williams did, however, hit 27 winners to just three for the 26 ranked Frazier.

"I didn't play too well," Williams said. "I felt I was off-balance quite a lot."

Seles, winner on nine Grand Slam titles, played her best match of the week as she cooled off Kournikova, who beat two top 10 players to reach the semis.

MSC go

From page 8

hammedan team leader Fazlur Rahman Babul. The pioneer promoter of the tour also said six more Mohammedan officials are also accompanying the contingent on their own expenses.

SQUAD

Alfaz Ahmed (captain), Nizam Majumder (GK), Rezaul Hakin (GK), Jewel Rana, Inzat Ahmed Naqib, Ruhul Amin, Rakib Hossain, Jahangir Patwari, Rezaul Karim, Kainuzzaman Selim, Bipul Kumar Roy, Abdullah-al-Mujahid Shoib, Anwar Hossain, Abu Faisal, Motin Munna and Salif Baru Titu.

Officials: Fazlur Rahman Babul (team leader), Hasanzaman Babul (coach), Abul Hossein (ass't coach), Anirul Islam (manager) and Inzat Sultan Jhouny (technical manager) and Khurshid Babul (official).

FIXTURE

Date Opponent Time
August 10 Bengal United 7pm
August 12 Raman XI 2pm
August 15 West Ham U-21 7pm

Japan unhappy with Confed Cup decision

Africa breaks off ties with Asia



ZURICH, Aug 6: Japanese reluctance to host the 2001 Confederations Cup and a simmering row between the African and Asian soccer confederations marred an otherwise polished meeting Saturday of the FIFA Congress, reports AP.

The meeting of 203 national soccer associations, held one month after FIFA awarded Germany the 2006 World Cup in controversial circumstances, passed off without incident, prompting FIFA President Sepp Blatter to say that "we have unity in the family of football."

But the African Football Confederation said it had informed its Asian counterpart that all cooperation between the two was being ended in retaliation for a "lack of support" from Asian representatives on FIFA's executive committee - an apparent reference to their support of Germany over South Africa.

And Japan angrily rejected FIFA's proposal it should stage the Confederations Cup next year as a dress rehearsal for the 2002 World Cup, which is co-hosting with South Korea.

The Japanese sent a letter to Blatter early Saturday, condemning the decision as "very sudden, without any consultation beforehand, neglecting the Japanese association's independence."

They had turned down a FIFA Executive Committee proposal in March to stage the eight-team tournament in 2001 and were surprised by the announcement, South Korea, which is to co-host the tournament, did not protest.

Meanwhile, the Congress meeting gave its final stamp of approval to the harmonised international calendar drawn up by FIFA starting 2002.

No protests were raised against the plan, which will set aside 12 dates per year for international matches and time for breaks and training. Do-

mestic leagues will be allowed to play whenever they want so long as they avoid clashes with international dates.

The congress also approved the principle of rotating the World Cup between the six continents in future, which Blatter told delegates will be studied urgently.

"I am sure that before 2002 we will have that rotation system installed," Blatter insisted. The 2010 World Cup host will be chosen in 2004.



FIFA chief Sepp Blatter delivering his speech during the FIFA Congress in Zurich on August 4.

— AFP photo

Blatter declined to say exactly how the rotation might work. "We have approximately 24 parameters that we could use," he said.

At this Congress, "we had to show that ... everything is back to normal," he added. There was little controversy at the meeting itself, where delegates agreed to an overhaul of the FIFA statutes by 2004.

FIFA officials said they hadn't been informed of the African decision to drop cooperation with Asia.

The African Football Confederation said in a statement it informed Asian soccer officials Thursday that it would "put an

end to the Afro-Asian cooperation between the two confederations in the field of Afro-Asian championships and exchange of officials."

"This decision which takes effect beginning August 2000 comes as a result of the lack of support by the Asian FIFA executive committee members in matters involving African interests within FIFA," it said.

"It was very unexpected. It really shocked us," said the Asian confederation's secretary-general, Peter Velappan.

"We're sad but we're not really suffering any serious handicap," he said. "The game is bigger than all these petty issues. Nobody should tell us what we should be doing."

The new row coincided with South Africa's decision to drop its campaign to have the 2006 World Cup vote taken to arbitration. The African confederation had played a key part in a dissuading the South Africans, who argued the vote couldn't stand after Oceania Football Confederation president Charles Dempsey, instructed to vote for South Africa by the OFC, instead abstained, complaining of "intolerable pressure."

The situation poses a challenge for the FIFA president," Velappan said.

Regarding the other new challenge, Blatter said he was optimistic he could still convince the Japanese of their need to come to the Confederations Cup.

He was adamant the dispute will not endanger the tournament, which will feature the champions from the six confederations, and the two co-hosts.

"This reluctance is a bit understandable as the Japanese are very sensitive to decisions," Blatter said.

"But the goal is to fine-tune the organisation for the 2002 World Cup. I expect another approach from them, not to put their hands in the air and say 'not us, not us.'

Japan offered to stage the tournament in 2005 instead.

Zamorano staying at Inter

MILAN, Aug 6: Inter Milan's Chilean international Ivan Zamorano on Saturday brushed aside reports that he was ready to move back to South America and said he was sticking with the Italian side, reports AFP.

The 33-year-old forward is currently training with the Italian side at Appiano Gentile before Wednesday's European Champions League match against Manchester United in the final of Opel Masters 2000 mini tournament, reports AFP.

The win was small compensation for the 1999 Champions League final when United beat Bayern 2-1 in injury time.

As soon as the goal was scored, Bayern president Franz Beckenbauer managed to stir a few ghosts Saturday afternoon with a joke at the Germans' expense during a pre-game function.

"Because we are playing Manchester United I appealed to referee Herbert Fandel to let

me referee him in the 13th minute but was left with egg on his face when he danced around keeper Fabian Barthez, ran into a vacant net and somehow dribbled the ball too far ahead of himself and over the touch line out of bounds."

"I've got no idea how he

Opel Masters 2000 mini tournament

Zickler fashions Bayern's revenge



MUNICH, Germany, Aug 6: Two goals by in-form forward Alexander Zickler gave Bayern Munich a well deserved 3-1 victory Saturday over English Premiership champions Manchester United in the final of Opel Masters 2000 mini tournament, reports AFP.

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me referee him in the 13th minute but was left with egg on his face when he danced around keeper Fabian Barthez, ran into a vacant net and somehow dribbled the ball too far ahead of himself and over the touch line out of bounds."

"I've got no idea how he

managed to do it," Beckenbauer shrugged. "That wasn't a 100 percent chance, it was a 1000 percent chance."

United blew their chance to equalise after the break when Oliver Kahn expertly blocked a cracking David Beckham penalty kick on 51 minutes.

As the game picked up momentum Zickler added two headed goals for Bayern on 60 and 69 minutes. United's Quinton Fortune volleyed home a consolation goal for the visitors on 85 minutes as heavy rain set in.

Saturday's other Masters 2000 game saw European champions Real Madrid defeat Turkish UEFA Cup holders Galatasaray Istanbul 3-2. The two day tournament was organised to celebrate Bayern Munich's 100th anniversary.

Boro not breaking bank for Boksic



LONDON, Aug 6: Middlesbrough boss Bryan Robson has reacted furiously to claims that he

had to make Alen Boksic the highest-paid player in Britain to lure him to the north-east of England, reports AFP.

Middlesbrough will apply for a work permit for the 30-year-old Croatian striker after agreeing a 2.5-million-pound (3.75-million-dollar) move from Italian Serie A side Lazio on a three-year contract.

"It's always the same whenever I bring a top player with a great reputation into this football club. It's either because of the money or it's because they're in somebody's reserves and they're finished."

"That's exactly what happened with Christian Ziege."

United skipper Roy Keane. "Why is it that every time we sign a top-class player, people have to find an edge to it?" he said. "They have to find some reason for why he would want to come to Middlesbrough at most to justify it."

"The wages quoted are a total nonsense. I got to hear about this long before anyone else and that's why we acted quickly and decisively. Talk of 63,000-a-week is utter rubbish."

"It's always the same whenever I bring a top player with a great reputation into this football club. It's either because of the money or it's because they're in somebody's reserves and they're finished."

"We can't put a time-scale on it, but I hope it all goes through okay," said Robson.

"I've always admired Alen Boksic as a player. When he's at his best, he's one of the best six strikers in the world, so hopefully, he can prove me right on that."

Fowler's endless woes



LONDON, Aug 6: Jinxed Liverpool striker Robbie Fowler has suffered the shattering blow of being told he could be out for action for six weeks, reports AFP.

Fowler had specialist treatment and a scan on his damaged right ankle on Friday which confirmed that the England international had strained his contract, reports AFP.

The 22-year-old will, however, be persuaded to play against Corinthians in the Mercosur Cup on Wednesday before a possible transfer to Europe is considered.

Club vice-president Pedro Pompilio told the Telam agency: "There will be no punishment for Riquelme. We decided to send a letter to him urging him to play against Corinthians and then we'll review things."

Pompilio was speaking after a two-hour meeting with other club officials.

Riquelme was in the Argentina squad for the Copa America last year though has not held down a regular first team place.

Fergie pulls for Keane

LONDON, Aug 6: Newspaper claims that Manchester United skipper Roy Keane is being treated for depression and has sought help for alcohol-related problems have been furiously denied by his manager Sir Alex Ferguson on Sunday, reports AFP.

Hosts Ajax Amsterdam finished second by beating Arsenal 2-0 in the closing match.

Lazio were third and Arse-

nal, who lost both games last

Barcelona looked by far the stronger early in the first half with Patrick Kluivert and Dani both just off target in the first 20 minutes.

But Lazio's Sinisa Mihajlovic used his trademark free-kick to put the Serie A champions ahead in the 22nd minute and Sales converted a Fabrizio Ravanelli header in the 34th to give Lazio a two-goal lead.

Dani pulled one back two minutes later, sneaking through a Lazio defence focusing more on stopping the dangerous Kluivert, but man of the match Sales easily knocked in a Attilio Lombardo cross to put Lazio 3-1 up going into the break.

Barcelona, bringing on Marc Overmars, Rivaldo and Josep Guardiola for the second half, looked the more likely to score, but they had to wait until the 65th minute before Gerard latched on to a Rivaldo pass to pull one back.

Rivaldo equalised in the 76th minute with a thundering

left-foot shot which sent newly

signed Lazio keeper Angelo Peruzzi sprawling.

Ajax, buoyed by a 50,000 home crowd, went ahead against the run of play in the 38th minute.

After Arsenal trio Thierry

Henry, Dennis Bergkamp and

Patrick Viera had all missed

narrowly. Schota Arveladze nipped through the English side's defence to send a powerful shot past goalkeeper Alex Manninger.

Substitute Brutal hose added the second a minute from time after some near passing by Richard Knopper and Jesper Gronkjaer.

— AFP photo

By Mercedes-Benz Tennis Masters Series Toronto, CANADA Men's International Edition 11:30 Inside Big Game Fishing 12:00 Sportscenter Bristol, CT USA 1:00 Snooker Bills 1:00 ESPN World Snooker: 2000 Embassy World C'Ship Sheffield, ENGLAND Quarterfinals 3:00 LPGA Golf Michelob Light Classic 3:00 Argentina 5:30 Tennis Masters Series By Mercedes-Benz Tennis Masters Series Toronto, CANADA Men's Final 7:30 Sportscenter International Edition 8:00 Iaa Track & Field-Jaaf Grand Prix 2000 Stockholm, SWEDEN 11:00 Live Tennis Masters Series By Mercedes-Benz Tennis Masters Series Cincinnati, OH USA Early Round Coverage Day #1 0