

Aziz gets 'gold pin'

Sports Reporter

The International Swimming Federation (FINA) has awarded Bangladesh Swimming Federation vice-president Dr. K M S Aziz with its 'gold pin' for his outstanding organising capability, says a press release.

The pin was awarded to Aziz, who is a member of FINA doping committee, at the Sydney Olympic Games Village on September 22.

Besiktas Leeds bound with police escort

ISTANBUL, Sept 25 (AFP): Turkey's Besiktas left here Monday for their potentially volatile European Champions League game with Leeds United accompanied by a four-man police squad, the Anatolia news agency reported.

The measure was called for amid fears of violence during the game which comes months after two Leeds fans were stabbed to death in Istanbul ahead of a UEFA Cup game between the English Premier-ship side and Galatasaray.

However, the Turkish club remained confident Monday that Tuesday's first phase match would pass in a calm atmosphere without any fights between Turkish and English fans, who have clashed on several occasions following the Istanbul stabbings in April.

"Those incidents are all in the past now. I believe Turkish-English friendship will come to the fore in this game," Besiktas captain Mehmet Ozdilek told Anatolia before their departure for Leeds.

In early September, Besiktas president Sertdar Bilgili held talks on security issues and signed a protocol with Leeds officials in a bid to prevent a possible outbreak of violence.

Under the said protocol, the two clubs agreed to keep the number of supporters at a certain number and send each other a list of the visiting fans before the game.

Bayern's defender search

COLOGNE, Germany, Sept 25: Bayern Munich want to strengthen their defence and are prepared to pay big money to find a suitable man, reports AFP.

"We are still looking for a good defender," Bayern club manager Uli Hoenes told Monday's magazine 'Kicker'. "We are prepared to spend 20 to 30 million Marks (nine to 13 million dollars). We have to do something before the winter break."

The Bundesliga enters its winter break shortly before Christmas.

Bayern reportedly are interested in the 22-year-old Croatian Igor Biscan from Dynamo Zagreb - who is thought to carry a price tag of around 20 million Marks - however Barcelona, Ajax Amsterdam and Fenerbahce Istanbul are also said to want him.

Italian Cup results

ROME, Sept 25 (AFP): Second round, second leg results in the Italian Cup this weekend.

Udinese 2 Piacenza 1 (Udinese go through 3-2 on aggregate)

Florentina 3 Salernitana 1 (Florentina go through 8-1 on aggregate)

AC Milan 0 Torino 1 (Milan go through 3-2 on aggregate)

Juventus 1 Brescia 2 (Brescia go through 2-1 on aggregate)

Atalanta 4 AS Roma 2 (Atalanta go through 5-3 on aggregate)

Parma 5 Venezia 1 (Parma go through 6-2 on aggregate)

Lazio 5 Sampdoria 2 (Lazio go through 6-3 on aggregate)

Lecco 1 Inter Milan 3 (Inter go through 4-2 on aggregate)

QUARTER-FINAL DRAW: Lazio v Udinese

Parma v Inter

AC Milan v Atalanta

Florentina v Brescia

No one can afford to relax



CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

PARIS, Sept 25: As Europe's finest prepare for the third round of Champions League matches in the Champions League this week, the encounters are becoming increasingly more important as the scramble for the top two qualifying spots in each group heats up, reports AFP.

German giants Bayern Munich who lost the 1999 final courtesy of two late goals that dramatically sent the Cup to Manchester sit atop of Group F, but a loss at Paris St. Germain on Tuesday could throw the Group wide open.

Having already taken tenancy at the top of the Bundesliga in defence of their crown, Bayern can expect a hostile reception at what will be a packed Parc des Princes, a stadium where PSG have yet to drop a point this season.

Record-signing Nicolas Anelka who got his off-gloved hands on the Cup last season with Real Madrid has settled in well with his home-town club, knocking in six goals already including a poacher's effort in his side's 2-1 win over Nantes on Saturday which sent the Parisians top of the French table.

His side-kick Laurent Robert has also been in red-hot form whacking in goals from all angles while last season's top scorer Christian of Brazil will also be a threat to Oliver Kahn's net.

If as expected Norwegian champions Rosenborg overcome Swedish minnows Helsingborg at home in the other Group F match and PSG topple Bayern, three teams will rest on six points with three games in this phase to play.

Group H couldn't be tighter with all four teams on three points after Turkish outfit Besiktas stunned Spanish giants Barcelona 3-0 last week while Leeds stole a 1-0 win over AC Milan thanks to a goalkeeping blunder in the last minute.

Bitter feelings will be revived as the Istanbul-based club visit

Elland Road, just months after two English fans were stabbed to death in the Turkish capital on the eve of a UEFA Cup match against Galatasaray.

Besiktas assistant coach Riza Dogan fancies his side's chances after watching Leeds in action Saturday. "I found Leeds weaker than expected. They have problems particularly in defence," were his remarks following a 1-1 Premiership clash with Derby.

"We are much better than them, but still we have to be careful on Tuesday, because his match will determine our fate".

FIXTURES (Groups E-H)
(Matches kick off at 00:30 hrs BST, Wednesday):
GROUP E
At Turin Juventus v Deportivo La Coruna

At Hamburg SV Hamburg v Panathinaikos

GROUP F
At Paris Paris Saint Germain v Bayern Munich

At Trondheim Rosenborg v Helsingborg

GROUP G
At Kiev Juventus v Anderlecht

At Eindhoven PSV Eindhoven v Manchester United

GROUP H
At Leeds Leeds v Besiktas

At Barcelona Barcelona v AC Milan

Dogan should hope his comments don't filter back to David O'Leary's side whose team will need no helping hand in the motivation department and whose fans can be as passionate as anything found in Istanbul.

In the other crunch match, Barca prepared for the visit of AC Milan with a 3-1 league win over Santander, while Milan were on Italian Cup duty Saturday defeating second-division outfit Torino 3-2 on aggregate.

English champions Manchester United are already on cruise control, strolling to their

familiar position at the top of the league as well as leading what must be said is a weak Group G.

Sir Alex Ferguson will likely be without French goalkeeper Fabien Barthez and defender Japp Stam for the trip to PSV Eindhoven but such is his side's strength and experience that an away win makes for a likely bet.

Belgian champions Anderlecht kick-started their campaign last week with a 1-0 win over the Dutch champions of PSV, but face a tricky trip to the Ukraine where they can expect to find a Dynamo Kiev side hungry for success.

Kiev held Manchester to a 0-0 draw to pick up their first points in their last match and may find the Belgian's weaker prey as they attempt to pull themselves back into the Group.

Group E leaders Juventus and Deportivo La Coruna come face to face in Turin after the Spanish champions won their first ever Champions League match last Tuesday thanks to a 90th minute winner to beat SV Hamburg 2-1 and go joint top.

Juventus who gifted the Italian title to Lazio on the last day of the season, have yet to begin their league campaign this time around but showed they are not yet into their stride Saturday, eliminated from the Italian Cup by newly promoted Brescia.

Hamburg who finished third in the Bundesliga last season, are also off to a mediocre start and seem to have a habit of throwing away late leads.

After leading Juventus in their opening Group match only go concede a late equaliser, they were up to their old tricks again Saturday in German league action, throwing away vital points as rivals VfL Wolfsburg scored in the 90th minute with both matches ending 4-4.

Hosting Greek outfit Panathinaikos on Tuesday should make for an intriguing match with both teams desperate for the three points to stay in touch with the leaders.

Yorke to start against PSV



CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

LONDON, Sept 25: Manchester United striker Dwight Yorke will start against PSV Eindhoven in

Tuesday's Group G Champions League clash in Holland - despite walking out on his side before Saturday's 3-3 draw at home to Chelsea, reports AFP.

Yorke fled Old Trafford when he was told by coach Sir Alex Ferguson that he had been dropped for the Chelsea game and drove home 90 minutes before kick-off.

But the Trinidad and Tobago forward has since apologised to Ferguson and was told by the United boss that he will play alongside Norwegian international Ole Gunnar Solskjaer in attack against the Dutch champions.

Yorke and Solskjaer will replace Teddy Sheringham and Andy Cole, while Ferguson also plans a few more changes to his team.

"We will freshen up as best we can," said Ferguson. "Wes Brown will come in, Phil Neville will come in, Nicky Butt will come in, Dwight Yorke will come in and Ole Gunnar Solskjaer will come in."

"They are definitely and I've got to do that."

Ferguson said United's firing trip to Dynamo Kiev last week has taken its toll while he also has one eye on this weekend's match against Arsenal.

"There are a lot of bumps and bruises and tiredness and there are a few concerns with the Arsenal game coming up next Sunday," he said.

"I'm going to have to freshen things up in as many positions as I can."

Ferguson revealed that Quinton Fortune will not be able to play even though he has returned from playing in the Olympics with South Africa.

Fortune has not been able to obtain a visa and could not travel with United when they flew out of Manchester Airport this morning.

"The one big blow we've got is that Quinton Fortune can't get a visa," he said.

"I can't believe that. He came into the country on Friday morning and you need five days to get a visa."

So he's out of the game and it was my intention to play him."

Fabien Barthez also misses out with his pulled muscle injury, while Jaap Stam will not face his old club because of his troublesome Achilles.

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After 51 minutes it was Gascoigne's cross from the right which was palmed out by Flowers but only as far as Unsworth who lashed home the equaliser.

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His first-time flick found Neil Lennon in space, and when the low cross fizzed into the box, Akinbiyi was first to react and turned the ball past Gerrard for only his second goal of the season.

Everton's response was a 20-yard Gascoigne free-kick that dipped just over the bar after 29 minutes.

Everton had claims for a penalty turned down when Alex Nyarko jinked into the box and went over the outstretched leg of Gary Rowett before collapsing theatrically. Referee Alan Wilkie ignored loud appeals.

Savage was booked for a foul from behind on Gascoigne, the Everton man inviting the challenges rather than releasing the

ball.

The running battle between Gascoigne and Savage continued with a flick of the arm from the Everton man into the Welshman's face, and then after 41 minutes Steve Watson hacked down Savage and was booked.

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Premiership

Gazza inspired draw for Everton



PREMIERSHIP

LONDON, Sept 25: Leicester's dreams of going top of the Premiership were frustrated by Everton who held them to a 1-1 draw on Sunday, reports AFP.

The Midlands club needed a win to stand at English football's summit for the first time since 1963 and striker Ade Akinbiyi's 23rd minute goal set them on their way.

But Everton hit back in the second-half. Former England star Paul Gascoigne, who had a good game throughout, used his skill to create a cross that was finished off by a powerful 52nd minute volley from David Unsworth - the first goal from open play Leicester had conceded this season.

Robbie Savage, who had

been involved in a couple of clashes with Gascoigne, had a hand in City's 23rd minute goal.

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Cathy crowned

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has really sunk it yet," said Freeman. "I'm very proud."

Four years ago in Atlanta, Freeman lifted the silver behind Marie-Jose Perec, the French runner who last week fled Sydney even before the athletics began, claiming that the media hype surrounding her show-down with the Australian was too much to bear.

Tonight, wrapped in an Australia and Aboriginal flags, she ran a lap of honour to a roar of approval, as the Olympic champion.

Only 60 minutes later a more relaxed Freeman marched out into the track for the medal ceremony.

As she blew kisses to the cheering crowd, Australia's International Olympic Committee vice-president Kevan Gosper stood by ready to present the gold.

As her name was called out over the public address system, she leapt onto the podium and waved back at a public that clearly adored her.

Sitting in the crowd, beaming with pride, was Freeman's mother Cecelia, shedding tears of joy.

As the national anthem was played, tens of thousands in the stadium broke into song and hundreds of flashlights began popping.

As Freeman finally left the stadium, throwing her winners bouquet to her mother, the crowd began chanting 'Cathy, Cathy, Cathy.'

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Venus one match away

TENNIS

SYDNEY, Sept 25: Venus Williams ousted her American teammate Monica Seles in three sets to move within one match of adding an Olympic gold medal to the Wimbledon and US Open titles she has won this year, reports AFP.

Williams, who won 6-1, 4-6, 6-3, will play Russia's Elena Dementieva in Wednesday's final.

The tenth seed, who beat Williams in their only previous meeting, shattered Australia's hopes of at least a silver medal by rallying from a set down to beat Jelena Dokic 2-6, 6-4, 6-4. Dokic and Seles will play for the bronze medal on Tuesday.

That was not a feeling she had coming into the Games with but she said seeing how the experience of playing in the Olympics had fired up her opponents had changed her mind.

"It's something that has grown on me with each match. Right now it seems like the ultimate thing to have a gold."

Williams could well go home with two golds. After beating Seles, she teamed up with sister Serena to advance to the semifinals in the doubles, eliminating France's Julie Halard and Amelie Mauresmo, who had never lost to Seles in four previous meetings, came out firing on all cylinders, blasting down serves at up to 110 miles an hour (180 kmh) as she raced through the first set in just 19 minutes.

But she stuttered badly in the second with a string of double faults helping Seles to take four games on the trot to

claim the set from 2-4 down.

Normal service was resumed in the third however, with Williams shifting up a gear to pull through, helped in part by reading little cards at each changeover.

"They're my reminders," Williams said. "It keeps my mind on the match, not wandering around."

Written on one of the cards, she revealed, was the message, "You're the best."

Few people in the women's game would need reminding of that. Williams has not been beaten since the quarterfinals of the French Open back in June and her winning streak now stands at 31 matches.

Wednesday's final will not necessarily be a stroll for Williams however.

Dementieva is also playing the best tennis of her life. The 18-year-old was a semifinalist at the US Open earlier this month and has the edge of having beaten Williams in their only previous encounter, a tightly fought Federation Cup match which the Russian edged in a third set tiebreak.

"It'll be tough but I have nothing to lose," she said, clearly delighted to have already secured a silver.

After her win, Williams said that winning the gold medal would mean at least as much, if not more, than her grand slam titles.

This is a once in a lifetime kind of thing. It's probably bigger than a grand slam," she said.

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