

# Star SPORT

DHAKA SUNDAY DECEMBER 2, 2001, E-MAIL: dssports@gononet.com

## Group F spells fear

### Argentina, England in same boat



REUTERS, Pusan

World Cup favourites Argentina have been drawn in what is bound to be dubbed the "group of death" with arch-rivals England, as well as Nigeria and Sweden, at next year's finals in South Korea and Japan.

The first ever finals in Asia have thrown up a classic with Argentina meeting England in Group F in a continuation of their series of dramatic World Cup encounters.

Nigeria generally rated as the strongest of the African challengers, and Sweden complete the group.

Holders France, joint favourites for the title with Argentina, play the opening match of the tournament on May 31 in Seoul against Senegal, appearing in the finals for the first time. Uruguay and Denmark complete Group A.

China, also making their debut in the finals and expecting to bring up to 100,000 fans to South Korea, play in Group C with four-times winners Brazil and also with Turkey and Costa Rica.

The two host nations both have chances of progressing into the second round. The South Koreans are seeded in Group D where they

play Poland, Portugal and the United States.

Japan play in Group H with Belgium, Russia and Tunisia.

The top two teams from the eight groups of four go into the second round where the knockout phase of the competition starts.

The final will be played in Yokohama, Japan on June 30.

Germany, three times winners, have a relatively easy looking Group E with Saudi Arabia, Ireland and Cameroon while Italy will probably not complain about meeting Ecuador, Croatia and Mexico in Group G.

Spain are seeded in group B to play Slovenia, Paraguay and South Africa.

But the focus will inevitably be on group F which looks by far the

strongest.

Argentina and England will play each other in their second match in group F in Sapporo, Japan, on June 7, resuming where they left off from one of the most thrilling matches of the last finals in France four years ago.

Then the South Americans won on penalties in the second round after England midfielder, and now captain, David Beckham was sent off.

It was the third sensational encounter between the two countries in World Cup finals. England beat Argentina 1-0 in the quarterfinals in 1966 on their way to winning the trophy at home. It was a bad-tempered contest in which the South Americans' captain Antonio Rattin was sent off.

In Mexico in 1986 Argentina beat England 2-1 at the same stage of the competition on their way to winning the title, this time thanks to two goals from Diego Maradona, one of them a clear handball, forever dubbed the "Hand of God", the other one of the greatest goals ever scored in the finals.

In another interesting quirk of the draw, England's Swedish coach Sven Goran Eriksson will find himself up against his native country.

Eriksson said: "We are in the most difficult group. No doubt about that."

## Ronaldo delighted

AFP, Milan

Brazilian striker Ronaldo said Saturday he was pleased with his country's draw for the 2002 World Cup.

Brazil were drawn alongside Turkey, China and Costa Rica in Group C which will be disputed in South Korea.

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President of the International Football Federation (FIFA) Sepp Blatter speaks during the draw ceremony of the World Cup 2002 while FIFA general secretary Michel Zen-Ruffinen looks on at the Pusan Exhibition and Convention Centre in South Korea on Saturday.



## Did U Know?

Arnold Plamer was the first person to make one million US dollar playing golf.



## TALK TURKEY



## Waqar Younis

(Pakistan cricket captain)

"It is a shame that we haven't really produce a fast bowler who can take our place and keep it, too. So many youngsters, who could bowl really quick, came in and suddenly disappeared. Like Mohammed Zahid, Mohammed Akram and some others."

On the state of pace bowlers in Pakistan.



## What to WATCH

### ESPN

English Premier Football League  
Chelsea vs Man United  
6:30 am

Arsenal vs Ipswich Town  
8:30 am

Liverpool vs Derby County  
10:30 am

Serie A  
Perugia vs Juventus  
4:00 pm

World Cup Soccer Mix  
6:00 pm

English Premier Football League  
Leeds United vs Fulham  
Live at 7:50 pm

Southampton vs Everton  
Live at 10:00 pm

### STAR Sports

Australia vs New Zealand  
Third Test, Day Two  
Highlights at 7:30 am

Australia vs New Zealand  
Third Test, Day Three  
Live at 8:27 am

Cricket Programming  
Super Selector  
8:30 pm

Australia vs New Zealand  
Third Test, Day Three  
Highlights at 10:30 pm

Primera Liga  
Villareal vs Celta De Vigo  
Live at 1:00 am (Monday)



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

Competition closes at 8 pm Dec 14, 2001 and draw shortly afterwards

1. Who won the man-of-the-series award in the Bangladesh and Zimbabwe one-day international?	Al-Shahriar H Bshar D Ebrahim
2. Who became Inter-Continental Cup champs?	Boca Juniors Real Madrid Bayern Munich
3. How many runs did Habibul Bashar score in the first innings of the second Test against Zimbabwe?	117 109
4. Which humber Test venue is the MAAziz Stadium?	73rd 66th 82nd
Name .....	
Class .....	Roll No. ....
School Address .....	
Phone: (if any) .....	

## In the eyes of coaches



Reuters/AFP/AP, Pusan

Following are the reactions of some of the coaches after the draw ceremony for the 2002 World Cup: **LUIS SCOLARI (BRAZIL)**  
Brazil's coach Luis Felipe Scolari preached caution after his team was drawn in Group C with Turkey, China and Costa Rica for next year's World Cup finals in South Korea and Japan.

Scolari said: "It is an excellent group for Brazil but we have to keep it that way by qualifying from it. We suffered in the qualifiers and Honduras also taught us a lesson in the Copa America."

Brazil qualified for the finals only by beating Venezuela in the last of their South American group games after suffering six defeats. They also lost to Honduras in this year's South American championship.

"We have to change our way of thinking and realise that every

opponent has their qualities even if we are not playing Argentina or England," Scolari, known as 'Big Phil', said.

"We will now sit down and consider the different approach of the three other teams. But the most important thing for me is that we don't leave it until the last match to qualify as we did in the preliminaries. I want to go into the last game calm and secure."

**SVEN GORAN ERIKSSON (ENGLAND)**  
England coach Sven Goran Eriksson said there would be no easy games after his team were drawn in the World Cup's "group of death" with Argentina, Nigeria and Sweden.

"We are in the most difficult group, no doubt about that at all," he told BBC television.

"There are no easy games. They are all very good teams. It is interesting, it is difficult but everything is possible."

"We have to be prepared and hope we can go on and not only have three games at the World Cup.

"I think we can beat any team in the world on a good day."

"They have a very good team of course. They always do. They won the South American group very easily. They are the best team in South America."

"It's not been a lucky evening, but the luck will come in June. At least we will play all our qualifying games in the same country."

**GIOVANNI TRAPATTONI (ITALY)**  
Italy coach Giovanni Trapattoni was a happy man Saturday as the three-times World Champions were given a relatively easy draw for the 2002 World Cup.

Drawn alongside Ecuador, Croatia and Mexico, Italy have avoided the teams Trapattoni had identified as potential tough, first-round opponents - the veteran coach had said before the draw that as long as he avoided England, Portugal, Denmark and Poland he would be happy.

"I am happy - at least half happy," said Trapattoni. "It could have been

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## Pele scores for Brazil!



AFP, Pusan

Pundits writing off Brazil for next year's World Cup do so at their peril, the country's most famous player, Pele, warned on Saturday.

Despite an unprecedented struggle to reach the finals, Brazil will still be a force to be reckoned with in Japan and South Korea.

The player who led Brazil to three of their four World Cup triumphs admitted that his country's performances in South American qualifying, in which they were beaten six times, had been terrible.

But he insisted that things would be different by the time the action kicks off in Seoul on May 31.

"Brazil did not play well in the eliminators," Pele said.

"But the real problem of Brazil, everybody knows, is that they had no time to train because the players, they are the best in the world."

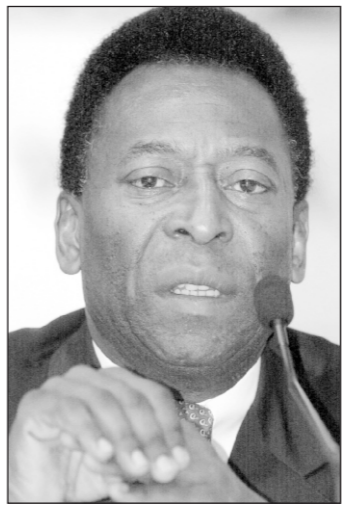
"Now we have six or seven months to prepare and then there is no doubt that Brazil will be one of the teams who could be a force, no doubt."

game and even England, who used to play a very hard, tough game, now play very good.

"The game is like that, some countries go down and some go up."

Pele also thought FIFA's decision to oblige World Cup winners to qualify for the next tournament was a mistake.

"It took everyone a little by surprise," Pele said a day after the unexpected decision was



announced by football's world governing body.

"It (automatic qualification) was like a gift, like a present for the champion. Now the decision does not give this opportunity."

Pele said the best solution would have been to allow World Cup winning sides to decide whether they wanted to enter the qualifying competition.

"Some coaches say to me that when you participate in the preliminaries you have time to prepare, to train your team but some coaches do not want to play."

"So I think you should let the coaches decide, this is the best decision."

Announcing the decision, FIFA president Joseph Blatter said making the champions qualify would open up an extra slot in the finals for regional confederations.

It would also bring the World Cup into line with competitions like the European Championships and enable champions to be better prepared to defend their titles.



PHOTO: STAR

**THE BIMAN CREW:** Champion Bangladesh Biman team members (R-L) Grand Master Ziaur Rahman, International Master Reefat-bin-Sattar, FIDE Master Enamul Hossain Rajib and International Women Master Rani Hamid during their fifteenth and last round engagement against Nakhalpara Jubo Sangha yesterday.

## Sorry BTV viewers

SPORTS REPORTER

Television viewers around the country were deceived not to see the 'promised' live telecast of the World Cup 2002 football draw.

The ceremony was held in the South Korean city of Pusan and was watched by a global audience of more than one billion people on Saturday.

But Bangladesh Television showed the historic event more than two hours after it actually started at 10.55 GMT (3.55 pm BST).

The country's leading newspapers including The Daily Star had earlier been informed by a press release of an advertising firm, Matra, on November 27, that the 32-team draw would be shown live by the state-run BTV.

But in reality, when the draw

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## Unbeatable Biman



SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Biman finished unbeaten in the Mercantile Bank First Division Chess League.

The national airline outfit, who regained the title on Friday, completed their fantastic run in style, with a thumping 4-0 defeat over Nakhalpara Jubo Kalyan Sangha in the 15th round at Bangladesh Chess Federation Auditorium yesterday.

Biman took an unassailable lead before going into the final round. But the quartet of Grand Master Ziaur Rahman, International Master Reefat Bin Sattar, FIDE Master Enamul Hossain Rajib and IWM Rani Hamid meant business though the game against Nakhalpara was of academic interest only.

With this win Biman finished with a total of 53 points and secured an

unprecedented ninth League crown.

Titas Club, who won their first League title last year, finished runners-up with 46.5 points.

The dethroned utility side defeated Anu Memorial Club by 3-1 points.

It was a disappointing end for fancied Titas since their key player GM Niaz Mursheid failed to live to expectations.

Niaz, who has not been a regular feature in local chess, drew with Yanur Rahman in the final round.

Bangladesh Ansars bagged the third position with 43 points. They trounced Amirban Chess School 3.5-0.5.

Sonali Bank Sports & Recreation Club finished fourth with 38.5 points followed by Nakhalpara Jubo Sangha. They collected 37 points.

### ROLL OF HONOUR

1977- Mohammedan SC

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