

Nat'l, sub-junior badminton start tomorrow

BSS/UNB, Dhaka
The National Junior and Sub-Junior Badminton Championship begins at the Wooden-Floor Gymnasium from tomorrow.

During the six-day event a total of 77 shuttlers from 19 teams 17 district teams Chittagong Division and Bangladesh Biman will take part in eight events boys (under-18) singles and doubles, girls (under-16) singles and doubles, boys (under-14) singles and doubles and girls (under-13) singles and doubles.

Besides, 18 players aged 45 years and above will take part in a special veteran's competition.

The Bangladesh Badminton Federation (BBF) is organising the meet while sponsors Legend Group will be providing Taka 1.50 lakh out of the total expenditure of Taka 1.75 lakh for the championship.

BBF general secretary Jahir Ahmed speaking during a press conference at the NSC yesterday said however, that the number of teams was expected to increase before the opening day.

The competitions will be inaugurated by Bangladesh Olympic Association secretary general Jafer Imam. And on the concluding day (February 4) State Minister for Youth and Sports Fazlur Rahman would attend as the chief guest.

BBF senior vice-president Atiqul Islam, joint secretary Mariom Tareq and director of Legend Group Atiqur Rahman were also present during briefing.

The participating teams are: Chittagong, Dhaka, Dinajpur, Narsingdi, Rangpur, Jessore, Comilla, Kushtia, Rajshahi, Gazipur, Pabna, Bogra, Barisal, Natore, Tangail, Satkhira, Panchagarh District Sports Associations, Chittagong Divisional Sports Association and Bangladesh Biman.

Tragedy strikes Colin Cooper

AP, London
The 2-year-old son of a British soccer player choked to death in an accident at home shortly after his father's team won an FA Cup game against Manchester United, police said Sunday.

The accident occurred Saturday when Finlay Cooper, the son of Middlesborough soccer player Colin Cooper, 34, choked on a toy, or a piece of a toy, at their home in Knaresborough, North Yorkshire.

The boy was rushed to a hospital when his family and an ambulance crew couldn't remove the object in time, a North Yorkshire police spokesman said. There, the boy died after more efforts to save him failed.

Police were investigating the death, but said it appeared accidental, the spokesman said on condition of anonymity.

Swedish king hailed



REUTERS, Stockholm

Tennis great Bjorn Borg led Swedish tributes to Thomas Johansson's astonishing Australian Open triumph on Monday and said his compatriot would now be at the top of the game for a long time.

Johansson, a 60-1 shot at the start of the tournament, beat Russian Marat Safin in the men's singles final on Sunday.

"I'm wondering if the Swedish people really understand what an accomplishment Thomas Johansson has pulled off," Borg said in tabloid Expressen.

Borg himself won 11 Grand Slam titles, but the Australian was the one he never managed to clinch.

"Johansson is not a star that shines during two weeks in Melbourne and is then extinguished. He has come to the top to stay," Borg added. "He will be a favourite at Wimbledon."

Johansson had won a modest six tournaments before his breakthrough on Sunday propelled him up to the number one spot in the ATP Champions Race.

His father Krister Johansson told Expressen he and his wife had both

cried when their son won in Melbourne.

"It takes a lot for my wife to cry, but when he won she cried right out. I've never heard that before, and we've been married since 1973."

"This is phenomenally big for Swedish tennis," said fellow player



THOMAS JOHANSSON

Jonas Bjorkman, who was beaten by Johansson in the quarterfinals at Melbourne.

Stefan Edberg, an Australian Open winner whose 1992 U.S. Open win was Sweden's last Grand Slam singles triumph before Johansson's, said: "Hopefully we won't have to wait another 10 years

before the next Grand Slam win.

"Johansson is in a good position to win another one and I think his win could inspire (Thomas) Enqvist and all other Swedish players."

The daily Aftonbladet was among the newspapers paying tribute to Johansson and ranked him alongside tennis greats Pete Sampras, Rod Laver and Edberg, all former Australian Open winners.

"Everybody knows now that a 26-year-old from Linkoping named Thomas Johansson is the world's best tennis player right now," said daily newspaper Expressen columnist Mats Olsson said.

Aftonbladet called Johansson's win "The poor boy's revenge on the upper-class swamp".

Johansson, who comes from a modest background, came close to quitting tennis in 1994 because his parents lacked the financial means to keep him going on the tour.

Bjorkman paid tribute to the Swedish supporters in Melbourne but said he feared there would be fewer cheering for the Swedes in their Davis Cup tie against England in Birmingham next month.

"We'll have to call (England soccer coach) Sven-Goran Eriksson to get a Swede in the crowd," he said.

Victoria SC Pair Bridge from Feb 1

PRESS RELEASE

The Pair Bridge Championship of Victoria Sporting Club begins at the club on Friday at 9.45 in the morning.

The deadline for accepting entries is 9.30 am on the same day. Meanwhile, the 15th Mohiuddin Ahmed Khan (BARDA) Memorial Open Team Bridge Championship gets underway on February 8 at the same venue.

Participants can complete registration formalities by February 1.

For further details the following persons should be contacted: Chief tournament director AKM Azizur Rahman (Tel: 7216333) and AKM Bashirul Islam (Tel: 7211198).

PCB to seek money if ...

REUTERS, Sharjah

The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) would seek financial compensation from the International Cricket Council (ICC) if their test series against West Indies in Sharjah ran into losses, the PCB has said.

"At the moment it's too early to work out the cost, but if we incur any losses, we will definitely approach the ICC for some sort of compensation," Zakir Khan, general manager of cricket operations at the PCB, told reporters.

"The situation is still fluid. We wanted the series to be held as scheduled in Pakistan, but we do understand the concern of West Indies," he said. "We took the decision of shifting the series to Sharjah with a heavy heart."

The two-test series and three one-dayers were moved to the United Arab Emirates after West Indies Cricket Board refused to send their team to Pakistan because of security worries over tensions on the Indian border and the political situation in Afghanistan.

"We have to see the response of the crowd, TV revenues and other things before working out the cost," the PCB's Khan said.

Emirates Cricket Board (ECB) coordinator Mazhar Khan said they would not charge the PCB ground fees.

Davis Cup Brits wary of Thomas



AFP, Melbourne

Thomas Johansson's sensational win over Marat Safin in the Australian Open spells bad news for British Davis Cup tennis hopes next month.

Johansson, who became the first Swede to win the Australian Open in 14 years, leads Sweden against Great Britain in their first round World Group tie indoors at Birmingham from February 8-10.

He left here Monday for Stockholm to join the Swedish team training camp to prepare for the tie.

Johansson celebrated with Swedish fans on Sunday night after he produced one of the biggest Grand Slam shocks in beating the 2000 US Open champion 3-6, 6-4, 6-4, 7-6 (7/4) in two hours 53 minutes.

He became the lowest-ranked player since Australian Mark Edmondson in 1976 to win the Australian Open and the first Swede to win in Melbourne since the great Mats Wilander over Pat Cash in 1988.

Johansson was also the first Swede to win a Grand Slam tournament since Stefan Edberg defeated Pete Sampras in the 1992 US Open final.

"I am going to Stockholm as soon as I can and try to now focus on the

Davis Cup tie against Great Britain," 26-year-old Johansson said Monday.

Johansson's decisive victory over the favoured Safin will immeasurably lift his confidence as a Grand Slam winner.

"Mentally it changes you a lot to win a Grand Slam," he said. "I feel very confident and I feel I can beat the best guys, and that's a great feeling to have."

That's not the news the British pair of Tim Henman and Greg Rusedski were hoping for after their first-week exits from the Australian Open.

Rusedski was put out by Henman in the third round 'Battle of Britain', while Henman has to purge his limp fourth-round defeat by Jonas Bjorkman and take his revenge in the Davis Cup.

Sweden believe Bjorkman's success in extending his winning record against Henman to 5-2 gave them a psychological edge for the tie and that was before Johansson's winning exploits. Johansson subsequently beat Bjorkman in the quarter-finals.

Johansson heads to Birmingham a much fitter player after two months of hard training over the off-season.

"We did a lot of running, lifting weights and playing a lot of squash during November and December -- that was the difference," Johansson said after beating Safin.

"I felt really good the whole time. My physical strength has been my

weakness. But now it's my strength.

"These have been the best two weeks of my life and winning the final was just a dream come true. It's unbelievable.

"I never thought I was going to be a Grand Slam winner. But I've been playing my best tennis in every match."

Johansson's breakthrough victory came in his 25th Grand Slam appearance and earned him 500,000 US dollars. He had never been beyond the quarterfinal stage previously.

Britain have not won a World Group match for 16 years since they beat Spain at home before losing to Australia.

Henman, who looked lacklustre in going out of the Australian Open to Bjorkman, has not beaten anyone in the top 10 for 18 months, while Rusedski spoke confidently about his new lease of form only to lose to Henman.

Hingis still satisfied



AFP, Tokyo

Martina Hingis said here Monday she was pleased with her performance at the Australian Open last weekend, despite her loss to Jennifer Capriati in Melbourne.

"We had a great beginning, many of us, in Australia," she said on the eve of the Pan Pacific tennis tournament.

"For me, it was a great start after coming back from surgery and playing this well. I hope I can play great tennis this week," Hingis said.

"I think I can be very happy, very pleased ... and I didn't play bad (in Australia). I had a great beginning as I said. I probably exceeded my expectations when I started this year."

"I think I was very close (to winning). That's a good thing about tennis, you can have many more chances," the 21-year-old Swiss Miss said.

After failing to win a tournament for eight months last year, Hingis

had a three-month layoff for surgery to her left ankle and lost her world number one ranking.

But she proved she had regained her top form by winning her season-opener at the Sydney International and reaching the final at the Australian Open.

Hingis, the winner here in 1997, 1999 and 2000, was seeded top in a star-studded field for the 1.224 million dollar Japanese event, which includes Jelena Dokic of Yugoslavia and former number one Monica Seles of the United States.

After receiving a first-round bye, she will take on either Rika Fujiwara of Japan or Marlene Weingartner of Germany before facing probable quarter-final opponent Magdalena Maleeva of Bulgaria, sixth seed.

Also in the top half with Hingis are fourth seed Sandrine Testud of France and fifth seed Silvia Farina of Italy.

Dokic and Seles have a tougher road in the bottom half with Sydney Olympic silver medallist Elena Dementieva of Russia, seventh seed, Amanda Coetzer of South Africa, eighth seed, and Russian pin-up girl Anna Kournikova.

Savage Sachin, Virender

FROM PAGE 13
dismiss skipper Nasser Hussain (15), while Ganguly bowled Michael Vaughan (four) and Paul Collingwood (six).

Graham Thorpe, playing his first match of the series, scored an unbeaten 36 to take England past the 200-run mark after a 71-run stand off 64 balls between Trescothick (18) and Knight.

Knight led the run-spreed with a flurry of shots off seamer Ajit Agarkar, beginning with a cover-driven four and then hitting two more in the seamer's next over.

Knight also did not spare Harbhajan, sweeping and then reverse-sweeping for two successive boundaries in the bowler's opening over.

Ganguly promptly brought in leg-spinner Anil Kumble, who removed Trescothick and Andrew Flintoff (18) to finish with 2-44.

The England bowlers, however, could never contain runs as Sehwan and Tendulkar made merry on a batting wicket.

SCOREBOARD
Scoreboard of the fourth one-day international between India and England at the Green Park here on Monday:

ENGLAND
Trescothick c Mongia b Kumble 18 Knight c Kumble b Harbhajan 74 Flintoff c Tendulkar b Kumble 18

Hussain c and b Harbhajan 15 Thorpe not out 36 Vaughan b Ganguly 4 Collingwood b Ganguly 6 Holloake c Sehwan b Srinath 13 Snape not out 9

Extras: (lb-20, w-4, nb-1) 25 Total: (For 7 wkts in 39 overs) 218 Fall of wickets: 1-71, 2-111, 3-144, 4-151, 5-156, 6-166, 7-197

Bowler O M R W Srinath 8 0 31 1 Agarkar 5 0 40 0 Harbhajan 8 0 40 2 Kumble 8 0 44 2 Ganguly 5.1 0 17 2 Sehwan 1 0 9 0 Tendulkar 3.5 0 17 0

INDIA
Tendulkar not out 87 Sehwan c Hoggard b Collingwood 82 Ganguly b Gough 26 Mongia not out 17 Extras: (b-1, lb-2, w-4) 7 Total: (For 2 wkts in 29.4 overs) 219 Fall of wickets: 1-134, 2-179

Bowler O M R W Hoggard 6 0 44 1 Flintoff 3 0 25 0 Holloake 4 0 33 0 Snape 5.4 0 45 0 Collingwood 6 0 31 1

Result: India win by eight wickets.
Man-of-the-match: Virender Sehwan.

Next match: Delhi, Jan 31.

FA Cup

Dennis' night to remember



AFP, London

Arsenal beat Premiership rivals Liverpool 1-0 in a stormy FA Cup fourth round clash at Highbury on Sunday to avenge last year's final defeat by the Merseysiders.

Dennis Bergkamp's first-half header decided the match before tempers boiled over in an ill-tempered second period in which three players saw red in a frantic five minute spell.

Elsewhere Sunday, Newcastle survived a scare at London Road to overcome Second Division battlers Peterborough 4-2 while Manchester City also hit four to win 4-1 at Premiership side Ipswich.

City coach Kevin Keegan's reward was a fifth-round tie away to Newcastle at his old St James' Park stadium ground where six years ago he nearly but not quite turned the Geordies into Premiership title-winners.

Newcastle stormed into a two-goal half-time lead through Andy O'Brien and Jamie McLean but saw their advantage wiped out by the home side, an O'Brien own goal and a superb solo effort from David Farrell restoring parity.

Alan Shearer's 84th minute penalty edged Newcastle in front after a long spell of Peterborough pressure and a late tap-in from Arron Hughes wrapped things up.

Keegan's First Division leaders undid Ipswich at Portman Road as Eyal Berkovic and Shaun Goater fired City two goals to the good.

Although Marcus Bent pulled one back Goater headed City into a 3-1 lead and then former Newcastle man Darren Huckerby poached the fourth in the final minute.

Earlier at Highbury Arsenal's Martin Keown was the first player to

receive his marching orders for hauling back England team-mate Michael Owen and Bergkamp soon followed for a late challenge on Jamie Carragher.



English FA Cup fifth round draw made Sunday: Tottenham or Bolton v Tranmere Newcastle United v Manchester City Arsenal v Gillingham or Bristol Rovers Chelsea or West Ham v Preston Middlesbrough v Blackburn Rovers Everton v Crewe Walsall v Fulham West Bromwich Albion v Cheltenham Town *Matches to be played weekend of February 16th and 17th

Carragher was then struck by a missile which he hurled back into the crowd in front of referee Mike Riley, leaving the official with no option but to dismiss the England international as well.

Arsenal's French manager Arsene Wenger shrugged aside suggestions the red cards would make the headlines instead of his side's achievement.

"I can't control what is in the headlines," he said.

"However I take great pleasure from the performance which made us worthy winners in a real Cup tie that was full of passion and good football."

"It was a real cup tie - I don't think it was a dirty game," he added.

Liverpool assistant manager Phil Thompson condemned Carragher,

but also expressed his fears over the increasing number of incidents where objects are thrown on to the pitch.

"Jamie said he was hit by a coin, and other objects were being thrown, which you cannot accept," said Thompson.

"But, neither can Jamie do what he did; you cannot have that. Two wrongs do not make a right, and I have told him so."

Owen should have put the visitors in front in the 13th minute but after collecting Arsenal old boy Nicolas Anelka's clever flick the striker drove his shot straight at the legs of Arsenal goalkeeper Richard Wright.

After a shaky start Arsenal began to find their feet and they made the breakthrough in the 28th minute.

Henry exchanged passes with Giovanni van Bronckhorst before curling a teasing cross into the Liverpool penalty box.

Bergkamp escaped the attention of Carragher and glanced a header beyond Liverpool's Polish goalkeeper Jerzy Dudek and into the net.

The second half exploded into life after 67 minutes when Keown was sent for an early bath.

Bergkamp and Carragher soon followed as tempers began to fray.

Liverpool struggled to make the most of the extra man as Arsenal defended in numbers but Owen almost levelled the scores in the 90th minute but his angled shot was saved by Wright at full stretch.

Tranmere won the all-Second Division fourth round tie at Prenton Park, beating Welsh club Cardiff City, conquerors of Leeds in the previous round, 3-1.

Third Division Cheltenham, in only their third season in the Football League, pulled off a major upset by edging first division Burnley 2-1 at Whaddon Road.

NZ afraid of Barmy Army

REUTERS, Auckland

New Zealand Cricket is launching a nationwide hunt for an antidote to England's Barmy Army in readiness for the tour by England beginning early next month.

NZC is launching a recruitment campaign to find five teams of 50 of the most extroverted and keenest supporters for each of the five one-day internationals to make up a group known as the Mad Caps.

The idea is designed to blunt the Barmy Army onslaught, a popular and money-spinning addition to England touring teams.

Estimates of the Barmy Army horde for the three test and five one-day internationals tour suggest a battalion of up to 5,000 could be boosting the gates and coffers of cricket administrations.

The 250 hand-picked fans will be led by New Zealand actor and comedian Patrick Duffy.

"The Mad Caps will become a central part of the day's entertainment for the crowd at the grounds," Duffy said.

"The antics will be replayed on the big screen and, no doubt, to the television audience as well.

"If you're publicity shy, don't bother registering for selection."

New Zealand batsman Nathan Astle -- currently playing for his country in the three-nation one-day international VB Series against Australia and South Africa -- has offered his backing to the Mad Caps.

"The Barmy Army has been merciful in taking the mickey out of us," Astle said. "I'm looking forward to having our own dedicated support crew behind us."

Mad Cap selection evenings will be held at each of the five one-day international venues -- Christchurch, Wellington, Napier, Auckland and Dunedin.

Weah inspired Liberia

AFP, Bamako

Liberian legend George Weah will seek to prolong his international career by leading the 'Lone Stars' into the African Nations Cup quarter-finals in a do-or-die Group A decider against Nigeria on Monday.

Weah, who has said he will quit international football at the end of the tournament, knows that Liberia will most likely need to pull off an upset over the 'Super Eagles' to progress.

Nigeria lead the Group A standings with four points going into the final round of games, and Shaibu



Amodu's erratic squad will secure a place in the last eight with only a draw.

Hosts Mali meanwhile, who are level with Liberia on two points, are expected to record the win they need over Algeria in Monday's other match to advance to the second phase.

That means all eyes are likely to be on Liberia's showdown with Nigeria in Mopti, 850 kilometres north of the capital Mali, where former AC Milan star Weah and his team have some old scores to settle.

Nigeria piped Liberia at the post for a place in the World Cup during last year's qualifiers, shattering Weah's dream of playing in the

global football showpiece before the end of his career.

Now the Nigerians stand on the brink of sending Weah into an unhappy retirement unless the Liberian player-coach and his teammates can conjure up victory.

Weah is under no illusions about the difficulty of the task facing Liberia, who were denied a crucial full three points on Friday when Algeria scored an injury-time equaliser to snatch a 2-2 draw.

"It's going to be do or die against Nigeria," said Weah. "We're going to give everything we've got to beat them," added the former world and African footballer of the year.

Liberia's task has been made even more difficult by the absence of talismanic defender Zizi Roberts, who picked up his second yellow card of the tournament against Algeria and is out through suspension.

Nigeria's coach Amodu has his own problems meanwhile, the main one being how to maintain consistency from a squad containing some of the most talented footballers in Africa.

Impressive in their opening match against Algeria, when they 1-0 but created chances to have scored several more, Nigeria were held 0-0 by Mali in their second match last Thursday.

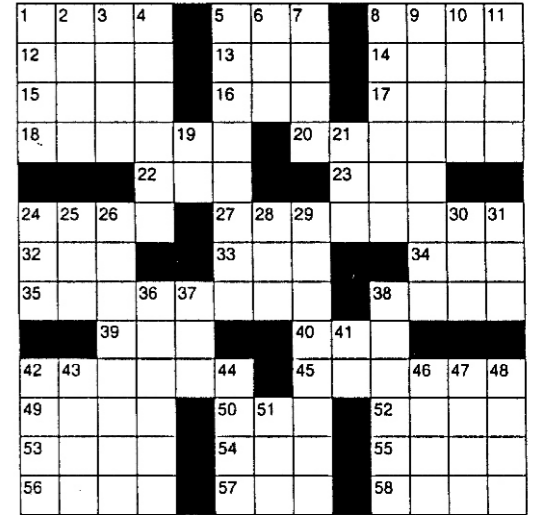
Having controlled play against the Algerians, Nigeria at times looked in danger of being overrun by the home team, regarded as no-hopers before the competition began.

Once again, the interest surrounding Amodu's team against Liberia is likely to focus on attack. So far Schalke 04's Victor Agali has been disappointing, and Arsenal's Nwankwo Kanu had a quiet game when he was given his first start against Mali.

Nigeria only started to look threatening in attack when Julius Aghahowa was switched from the right midfield to centre-forward, the 20-year-old's searing pace worrying the Mali defence.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS 35 1066 57 Young 19 Baseball pos. 1 Metric battle site fellow unit 38 Phoenix 58 Enerovates 21 "Long, Long ..." 5 Central cian DOWN 24 "Phooy!" 8 Foscals seaport 1 Pleased 25 Marathoner 12 Bart 39 Pitch 2 Split thonor Pippig 13 Expert 42 Treated 3 "Clueless" 26 Big dogs 14 Racetrack mali- boundary 4 Fabricated 28 Unit of work 15 More than 45 Well-willing being 5 Ancient mammal 16 Witness 49 Elevator 50 Work with 6 Lemieux 30 Melody 17 City near Lille 52 Paddock millieu 7 Consider 31 Ball hammer papa 8 O. Henry- esque 36 Skin picture? 18 Flaw 53 Data 7 Barber-shop 10 Tablet 37 Dander 20 World 54 Antipol- lution org. 9 Very 38 Hoists a glass to invader? 55 Barber-shop 11 Black- thorn money fruit 41 Lindbergh book 23 Bestow, to Burns Solution time: 28 mins. 42 Lacy undergarment 24 Displace 43 Maine emblem 27 Tom Daschle, e.g. 44 Affaire d'honneur 32 - glance 45 Faded WEB 46 Trevi toss 33 Anglo-Saxon coin 46 Faded WEB 47 Journey 34 Position on the links 48 Shortens a skirt 51 Resort



CRYPTOQUIP

S Y M H C C U S H T S C K J Z C I G T S C F U A H K A I M Y A D A K Z . O B C A K O D D , C U A G O K A

F M J I C A K B S C C A K Z . Yesterday's Cryptiquip: WHILE MAKING EVERYBODY MARTINIS, I HEARD THE BARTENDER ASKING, "OLIVE OR TWIST?" Today's Cryptiquip Clue: K equals R

The Cryptiquip is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.