

Cute handball

UNB, Dhaka

Narinda Progati Boys Club and Menjis Krira Chakra won their respective matches in the Cute Premier Division Handball League at the court near to the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Narinda crushed Old Ideals 27-12 after leading the first half 12-8 while Menjis beat Dhaka Wanderers Club 11-10 after leading the first half 5-4.

Sunday's matches: Bangladesh Rifles vs Arambagh KS, Old Ideals vs Dhaka Mariner Youngs Club.

Ashrafal

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However, he was quick to dismiss the monetary aspect of the position and rather he wanted devote his energy for the advancement of Asian cricket.

"The offer I received will barely meet my needs. May be I will have to spend my own money since it involves moving the family there," quipped Ashrafal.

Considered as a close aide of Indian cricket chief Dalmiya, Ashrafal's sudden shift in gear comes exactly when his old employer is going to undergo a shakeup.

Speculation is rife that Asghar, who recently took over the ACC presidency, is under pressure from the government to dissolve the existing 32-member executive committee.

The government is intent on shelving the current Board of directors and instead revert to its preferred ad-hocism. Under such a system the National Sports Council nominated a president and general secretary.

Indo-Pak cricket

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Championship Test in September last year, and pulling its team from two events in Sharjah in the United Arab Emirates.

"The matter was also discussed at the International Cricket Council (ICC) in June, and we must make all-out efforts to restore (competition)."

The ICC also decided to send former South African president Nelson Mandela to mediate the issue.

Regarding Bangladesh's poor show in international cricket, Asghar said his team just needs time.

"Sri Lanka and New Zealand took several years to win their first Test and we assure you we will not take that much time," he said.

"Our target is the 2007 World Cup and we aim to improve and match other teams by then."

Since attaining Test status with the ICC two years ago, Bangladesh has lost 12 of 13 Tests and have also lost 50 of their 53 limited-over internationals.

PCB's cash

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has incurred losses of around 25 million dollars in the last two years.

Former captain Imran Khan said Australia's withdrawal was a serious financial blow to Pakistan cricket.

"Pakistan is financially devastated and if we fail to stage a home series than the PCB could go bankrupt," Khan said.

"You can't get prosperous by playing outside -- in cricket only home series earn you good amounts," he said.

But ICC finance committee head Ehsan Mani, a Pakistani, disagreed. "There is no question of the PCB going bankrupt because constant funding are provided to member countries," said Mani, who will take over as ICC president next year.

"Pakistan will get around seven million US dollars from the 2003 World Cup and then another nine million from the 2007 World Cup, besides various other funds like a share of the ICC Champions' Trophy," he said.



PHOTO: AFP

Sri Lanka's Susanthika Jayasinghe crosses the finish line to win the 100m gold at the 14th Asian Championships in Colombo yesterday.

Joyous Jayasinghe

Athletics

AFP, Colombo

Star Sri Lankan sprinter Susanthika Jayasinghe regaled the home crowd as she won the 100 metres dash in style on the second day of the Asian Athletic Championships here on Saturday.

Jayasinghe was a clear winner at 11.29 seconds, just one-hundredths of a second off the meet record held by Cui Danfeng of China since 1995.

Chinese Qin Wangping (11.56) and Uzbek Lyubov Perepelova (11.60) fought it out hard for second and third places.

"I've been in fine form and am confident of winning the 200 metres too," said Susanthika, who missed the 100 metres bronze at the Commonwealth Games at Manchester in England by one-hundredths of a second.

"I'm competing against myself in this meet," said Jayasinghe after she took a victory lap carrying the

Sri Lankan flag. "I hope to keep up the good form till the Asian Games (at Busan, South Korea)."

In the men's 100 metres, Jamal al-Safaar of Saudi Arabia retained his title clocking 10.43 seconds.

His compatriot Salem al-Yami, the 100 metres winner at the West Asian Games in Kuwait earlier this year, finished third as Chernov Gennady of Kazakhstan pipped him to the post.

The women's high jump saw a good standard as Tatiana Efimenko of Kyrgyzstan won with a clearance of 1.92 metres, just two centimetres outside the meet record of 1.94.

India's Bobby Aloysius, who had lost out on a bronze in the Commonwealth Games at Manchester on back count some days back, this time won the silver when the same rule was applied here.

Aloysius was tied at 1.84 metres with Marina Korzhova of Kazakhstan, but was awarded the silver as she had cleared the height on her first attempt to Korzhova's third.

Earlier in the day, top Japanese

thrower Koji Murofushi erased the men's hammer throw meet mark.

Murofushi, a World championship silver-medallist, came up with an effort of 80.45 metres on his third throw to better the previous mark of 76.67 in the name of Andrey Abduvaliev of Uzbekistan since 1991.

Japan made it a 1-2 in the event with Doi Hiroaki (70.27) taking the silver and they also won the top two spots in the 20 km walk through Eiichi Yoshizawa and Toshinori Fujinohara.

Murofushi winning the hammer throw with such ease was not a surprise as he is currently ranked second in the world and holds the continental record of 83.47, the best effort in the world last year.

"The distance could have been more had it not been for the wind," said Murofushi, son of five-time Asian hammer throw champion Shigenobu Murofushi. "My aim is to win golds at the Olympics and World championship."

Earlier in the day, top Japanese

Hewitt halts Agassi

AFP, Cincinnati

World number one Lleyton Hewitt won his third match in a row against former number one Andre Agassi, beating the veteran American 7-5, 6-3 to reach the semifinals of the 2.95-million-dollar ATP Masters Series.

The 21-year-old Australian also beat the 32-year-old sixth seed Agassi at last year's Masters Cup in Sydney and in the final in February at San Jose.

Hewitt will face Chile's Fernando Gonzalez, who upset American 12th seed Andy Roddick 7-6, 7-6 in a Saturday semi-final. The winner will face a Spaniard, Carlos Moya or eighth seed Juan Carlos Ferrero, in Sunday's final.

Gonzalez continued a solid run, having earlier ousted Britain's Tim Henman and Dutchman Richard Krajicek on his way to the last eight.

Ferrero and Moya powered to straight-set victories to set up an all-Spanish semi-final.

The winner of the final four match will be the first Spaniard into the final here in the American heartland since Manuel Orantes lost to Romanian Ilie Nastase in 1973.

Ferrero, beaten in the French Open final and the Monte Carlo Masters winner in April, dulled the strong serve of Australian Wayne Arthurs 6-4, 7-6.

Schnyder bows out

REUTERS, Helsinki

Swiss Patty Schnyder has become the latest big-name casualty at the 140,000 dollars Helsinki Open tennis tournament as she went down in three sets to Russia's Svetlana Kuznetsova.

Ranked number three in the tournament and 24 in the world, Schnyder comfortably took the first set 6-2 before capitulating and losing the next two sets 6-1 6-2 to the world number 123.

Navy h'ball

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh Navy annual handball competition began at BNS Titumir in Khulna yesterday.

Dockyard beat Frigate Squadron 17-12, BNS Hazi Mohsin beat Patrol Craft 13-12 and BNS Titumir beat BNS Shahid Moazzem 12-7.

Brilliant Backley

Athletics

REUTERS, Munich

Steve Backley has achieved a rare feat by winning his fourth straight European javelin title at the European Championships.

A throw of 88.54 metres with his penultimate attempt enabled the 33-year-old to become just the third athlete to collect four successive crowns for the same event in the European competition.

"I'm extremely proud of this achievement," Backley said after joining fellow javelin thrower Janis Lusis of Russia and German long jumper Heike Drechsler in the record books.

Russian Sergey Makarov took the silver medal with a first effort of 88.05 metres while German Boris Henry won bronze with a throw of 85.33 metres.

"Obviously it's something special to be a four-times European

champion because in my opinion it's usually harder to win here than at the Olympics," said Backley.

"When I started the winter preparation I began to think about the possibility to win in Munich," he added.

"During the final I felt better and better."



STEVE BACKLEY

There was bitter disappointment for Czech Jan Zelezny, Backley's arch-rival, who was hampered by injury and recorded no mark.

The triple Olympic and world champion, who beat Backley into second place at the Sydney Games two years ago, failed to capture the one title missing from his impressive collection.

"It was my groin injury that didn't allow me to compete like I wanted," said the 36-year-old, who has suffered a string of health problems, notably recurrent back pain, throughout his long career.

The 36-year-old entered his first European championships in 1986 in Stuttgart but has never managed better than bronze in 1994 in Helsinki.

He will never become an European champion as he plans to retire after the next Olympics in Athens in two years time.

"Now I must get healthy and finish the season," he said. "I still have the motivation to continue until Athens."

Kenteris show

Athletics

AFP, Munich

Greek sprinter Kostadinos Kenteris ran the second-fastest 200 metres time ever by a European to upstage golden veterans Stephane Diagana and Steve Backley at the European Championships here Friday.

World and Olympic champion Kenteris flew round the bend at the Olympic Stadium and accelerated smoothly away to stop the clock at 19.85sec.

Among Europeans, his time has been bettered only by Italy's Pietro Mennea whose 19.72sec at altitude in Mexico City in 1979 set a world record that stood for 17 years until Michael Johnson's incredible 19.32sec at the Atlanta Olympics.

Kenteris said: "I think I have a shot at breaking Mennea's European record having become the fastest European at sea level. I ran a divine bend."

He shocked the athletics world when as a virtual unknown he won Olympic gold in Sydney and added the world title in Edmonton last year. This was his first run under 20

seconds and the fastest in the world this year.

Naturalised Nigerian Francis Obikwelu of Portugal, who ran 19.84sec three years ago while representing Nigeria, was timed in 20.21sec while Britain's Marlon Devonish took bronze in 20.24sec.

Another 33-year-old, France's Diagana, dedicated his first ever European 400 metre hurdles title to his newborn son Tidiane after running an impressive 47.58sec, also the fastest in the world this year.

"I dedicate this medal to my son," said the 1997 world champion who has had a lean spell of success in the past couple of years.

"I've been waiting for such a long time to be European champion. I've been troubled by so many problems in the last few years. At last I've done this."

Jiri Muzik, the 25-year-old Czech, was second in 48.43sec and Pawel Januszewski of Poland won bronze, beating out-of-form Italian Fabrizio Mori.

The 'Marseillaise' French national anthem was heard yet again when Muriel Hurtis won the 200m to confirm she is the most talented French woman sprinter since Marie-Jose Perec.

Hurtis, the long-legged 23-year-old, was pushed the way by Kim Gevaert of Belgium but won in 22.43sec. Manuela Levorato of Italy was third in 22.75sec.

Another Nigerian who has found a new home, Glory Alozie, easily won the 100m hurdles in 12.73sec just over a year after receiving Spanish nationality.

Alozie won a silver medal for Nigeria at the Sydney Olympics after the death of her boyfriend in a road accident, but later quit the country in disgust at the way Nigerian officials handled the accident.

"I'm very proud to have won this first title for Spain," she said. "I know people in Nigeria will be happy for me. Whatever happens you never forget your country, that is something inside you."

"But I have never regretted going to Spain."

Russia's Svetlana Feofanova was in a different class in the women's pole vault, clearing 4.60m to take the title with compatriot Yelena Isinbayeva second in 4.55 and Germany's Yvonne Busbham third in 4.50.

Serena, Jennifer gone

AFP, Los Angeles

Top seeds Serena Williams and Jennifer Capriati both crashed out of the WTA Los Angeles Open, losing quarterfinal matches on Friday to heavy underdogs.

Williams was eliminated in her first tournament as the world's top ranked women's player, losing to fellow American Chanda Rubin 6-2, 4-6, 7-5 at the 585,000 dollar hard-court event at the Manhattan Beach Country Club.

Japan's Ai Sugiyama cruised past No. 2 seed Capriati 6-3, 6-3 advancing to her second singles semi-final of the year.



PHOTO: AFP

Greek Kostadinos Kenteris shows the V-sign after the 200m at the European Championships in Munich on August 9.

Vaughan leads

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arm quick Ashish Nehra, he played on after the ball deflected off both bat and pad.

Earlier Harbhajan's dashing 54 off 37 balls, including 10 fours, helped India, 302 for eight overnight, to their healthy total.

His valuable innings was eventually ended by pace bowling Test debutant Steve Harmison, England captain Nasser Hussain taking the easy catch at mid-off.

Last man Nehra (nought) lasted just two balls before he was caught behind by wicket-keeper Alec Stewart off Matthew Hoggard, the Yorkshire paceman leading England's attack with four for 105.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at tea on the third day of the second Test of four between England and India here at Trent Bridge on Saturday:

INDIA: First innings (overnight 302-8)

Jaffer b Hoggard	0
Sehwag b White	106
Dravid c Key b Hoggard	13
Tendulkar b Cork	34
Ganguly c Stewart b Hoggard	68
Laxman c Key b Flintoff	22
Agarkar c Butcher b Harmison	34
Patel c Flintoff b Harmison	0
Harbhajan c Hussain b Harmison	54
Zaheer not out	14

Nehra c Stewart b Hoggard 0
Extras: (b-1, lb-8, w-2, nb-1) 12
Total: (All out in 101.1 overs) 357
Fall of wickets: 1-6, 2-34, 3-108, 4-179, 5-218, 6-285, 7-287, 8-295, 9-356

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Hoggard 35.1	10	105	4	
Cork 11	3	45	1	
Harmison 20	7	57	3	
Flintoff 27	6	85	1	
White 8	0	56	1	

ENGLAND: First innings
Key b Nehra 17
Vaughan not out 130
Butcher not out 43
Extras: (w-2, nb-9) 11
Total: (For 1 wkt in 51 overs) 201
Fall of wicket: 1-56

To bat: N Hussain, J Crawley, A Stewart, A Flintoff, C White, D Cork, S Harmison, M Hoggard

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Nehra 11	0	47	1	
Zaheer 8	2	31	0	
Agarkar 6	0	30	0	
Harbhajan 18	2	56	0	
Ganguly 2	0	23	0	
Tendulkar 4	0	8	0	
Sehwag 2	0	6	0	

Umpires: Rudi Koertzen (South Africa) and Russell Tiffin (Zimbabwe).

Goodbye Brazil

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confirm the worst fears as Scolari himself warned his compatriots: "There's no more Beautiful Game. You are not going to see the Brazil of 1958, 1962 or 1970 again. We are in 2001."

But at the World Cup, Scolari showed himself to be an astute, cunning and pragmatic coach, able to dance according to the music.

In the first round, it was all-out attack as Brazil scored 13 goals and conceded three in three games, a strategy Scolari said was needed to restore respect for his team.

After that, Scolari reinforced the marking after it became clear that the defence had been left exposed.

Perhaps his finest game was the quarterfinal against England.

Reduced to ten men and leading 2-1 with half an hour left, Brazil adapted superbly to the circumstances, keeping possession, taking the ball into the corners and making time pass. The English barely got a look in.

During all this, Scolari placed a huge emphasis on team spirit, banishing the vanity and clashing of egos which had often spoiled past Brazil campaigns.

By the time he returned home, Big Phil was seen as a grumpy but ultimately soft-hearted fatherly figure -- an image used by advertisers to sell televisions, fizzy drinks and long-distance telephone calls.

On announcing his resignation, Scolari made it clear his ambition was to be allowed the chance to coach a European club. And he was typically forthright about what any future employers could expect.

"I want to say that any club which hires me will be become

winner," he said. "And if they are already winners, then they will win even more."

Scolari was at pains to point out that money had not been an object.

"In all these 14 months, I and the president have only talked about money once," he said.

"It would not be appropriate for me to ask for more money at a time when the country is going through so many difficulties."

Scolari said Brazilian Football Confederation (CBF) president Ricardo Teixeira had made a last-gasp effort to persuade him to stay on.

"At this moment, I would like to thank the president and tell you that I am no longer the coach of the Brazil team," he said. "It was a conversation from friend to friend."

He added: "It was gratifying that he wanted me to stay but I have a lot of private things to resolve and I would like to dedicate more time to my family."

"The final decision was taken this afternoon...This is a difficult and sad moment but it's finished."

Scolari remembered his three immediate predecessors, Vanderlei Luxemburgo, Emerson Leao and Candinho. The first two were sacked amid poor results while Candinho was in charge for one game on a caretaker basis.

"We have four world champion coaches," said Scolari, who also spoke of the importance of turning his squad into a family.

"I had to play the role of a demanding father, who called his son's attention when he did something right. I had 24 sons in the World Cup."

Muktis mauil Badda

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Badda meanwhile remained glued to their previous collection of six points in four outings.

TEAMS

MUKTIJODDHA SANGSAD: Biplab (Raj), Hasan Al-Mamun, Rajani, Sujon, Papal, Abdullah, Matiur Munna, Arman (Rakib), Alfaz, Moni (Bela) and Emeca.

BADDA JAGARANI: Munna, Kingshuk, Anupam (Krishna/ Shafiq), Prince, Shamim, Shamsher, Wasim, Mintu, Amin Rana (Anwar), Johny and Uzzal. **Referee:** Tazul Islam.

LEAGUE TABLE

Teams	M	W	T/W	T/L	L	GF	GA	Points
Mohammedan SC	4	4	0	0	0	11	1	12
Muktijodha Sangsad	4	3	0	1	0	9	1	10
Abahani KC	4	3	0	1	0	7	2	10
Arambagh KS	4	2	1	0	1	4	3	8
Badda Jagarani	4	1	1	1	1	5	7	6
Rahmatganj MFS	4	1	1	0	2	7	6	4
Dhamondi Club	4	0	2	0	2	2	6	4
Brothers Union	4	1	0	0	3	3	7	3
Farashganj SC	3	0	0	0	3	2	8	0
Victoria SC	3	0	0	0	3	0	9	0

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS	41 "Holy mackerel!"	61 Ram's ma'am	21 Show nonrigidity
1 Homer Simpson's word	42 Wanted-poster	DOWN	22 Neighbor-hood
4 Growing abundantly	44 Ho's hi's? abbr.	1 "No kidding!"	23 Aurora counterpart
8 Bay of —	46 Coro-monial immersion	2 Sapporo sash	27 Tool set
12 Where, to Mark Antony	50 AAA task	3 Cultured sort	29 Circus daredevil's place
13 Never again?	51 Reed instrument	4 Desolate	30 Draftable card game
14 Exchange premium	52 Congratulatory gesture	5 Popular	31 Supplements with "out"
15 Cooper classic	56 "My Heart Will Go On"	6 Garbage barge	7 "Give me some liberty ..."
17 Witticism	57 "On the Beach"	7 "Give me some liberty ..."	8 "Give me some liberty ..."
18 Color	58 Trigger's rider	8 Partly out-ill, maybe	9 "Ideas" cause
19 Christmas decorations	59 Morays	9 "Ideas" cause	10 Lillian of Hollywood
21 Talk incoherently	60 Yemeni city	10 Lillian of Hollywood	11 Drunks
24 Sweet potato	61 Yemeni city	11 Drunks	12 Center
25 Mess up	62 Pack away	12 Center	13 Reaction
26 Hearty laugh (Var.)	63	13 Reaction	14 to a gut punch
28 Western resort lake	64	14 to a gut punch	15 Portend
32 Night light	65	15 Portend	16 Rose's beau
34 Try the	66	16 Rose's beau	17 Combine funds
36 Basin	67	17 Combine funds	18 Ms. Sorvino
37 Coolidge	68	18 Ms. Sorvino	19 Card-table call
39 Earl Grey, e.g.	69	19 Card-table call	20 Pledge
	70	20 Pledge	21 Give the once-over