

Summit Cup golf held

Group Captain A I M Shahanul Islam clinched the men's title while S W Lee won the women's crown in the Kurmitola Golf Club course yesterday.

A total of 311 golfers including 14 ladies took part in the meet. Chief of Army Staff and president of Kurmitola Golf Club Lt General Hasan Mashhud Chowdhury gave away prizes among the winners as chief guest.

Senior winner: Abu S Alam, Junior winner: Master Ishan Shawkat, Best Gross: Shawkat-uz-Zaman, Ladies Best Gross: M H Yoon, 2nd Best Gross: K J Yoon...

Ctg handball

Madarbari Mukul Mela and Blue Star Club emerged champions in men's and women's divisions respectively of the Dynasty Mahanagari Handball League arranged by Chittagong Mahanagari Krira Sangstha (CMKS) at the Dampara Police Lines ground yesterday.

Whip of Parliament Syed Wahidul Alam MP distributed prizes as the chief guest among the winners. Chairman of sponsor Dynasty Group Jahid Akber Cwhowdhury was also present.

CJKS TT

Meanwhile, Satadal Club, Young Star Club, and Nabin Mela earned full points in the CJKS-Sinmin Mineral Water Table Tennis League at Chittagong Jila Krira Sangstha (CJKS) gymnasium.

Pascual & Suarez pocket doubles crown

Top-seeded Spaniard Virginia Ruano Pascual and Argentinian partner Paola Suarez captured their fifth Grand Slam doubles title here Friday with victory at the Australian Open. Ruano Pascual and Suarez drew on all their experience to down Russian duo Svetlana Kuznetsova and Elena Likhovtseva in straight sets, winning 6-4, 6-3 in 1hr 15min at the Rod Laver Arena.

Howard won't

"The one thing I wasn't willing to do then was to try and stop the Australian team going and thereby expose the Australian team to the risk of penalty and therefore disadvantage the Australian team in the competition," he said.



Participants of the Summit Cup golf tournament are seen with Chief of Army Staff and president of Kurmitola Golf Club Lt General Hasan Mashhud Chowdhury (6th from left) at the KGC course yesterday.

Flawless Federer

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Furled the ball down. Far from opening defensively, though, Ferrero patrolled the baseline looking for the smallest of openings, pummeling the ball into the smallest of gaps in Federer's armour.

In the 10th game, Federer pounced. Unloading on the Spaniard's serve he cracked a series of returns and on his first set point, an under-pressure Ferrero flicked a forehand long.

Clearly rattled, Ferrero was broken instantly, hooking a crosscourt forehand into the tramlines before falling behind 3-0. Dressed all in black, the Spaniard tore a bandage from his left thigh at the next changeover, desperate for anything to change his luck.

A clutch of solid first serves

allowed him to get on the scoreboard for 3-1, and buoyed, he set about the Federer delivery with renewed vigour.

However the Swiss player's deft touch rescued him, a delicately floated backhand forcing the Spaniard off balance and he missed as Federer eased 4-1 ahead.

Two minutes later the Swiss was two sets up after less than an hour and Ferrero could only stare into space. Out of ideas and with patience wearing thin, the baseliner attempted ever more audacious drop shots and angled volleys -- more often missing than not -- but managed to stay with the Swiss early in the third set.

His fragile confidence was finally shattered in the seventh game when Federer broke him for a fourth time in total, tearing a return back onto the Spaniard's toes.

Serving comfortably he moved to 5-3, one game from victory and he made no mistake, forcing Ferrero to return a forehand long after yet another heavy serve.

Paes' comeback

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shirt to hide the extra kilos he gained during his enforced layoff, the 30-year-old from Calcutta emphatically closed out with an ace to take the fourth seeds into Sunday's final against Nenad Zimonjic and Elena Bovina.

Paes was rushed to an Orlando hospital last August after complaining of severe headaches and his condition was initially suspected to be cancer. However, India's Davis Cup captain was diagnosed with a parasitic infection of the brain, which was treatable with drugs.

"I had very little motivation to come back when I looked in the mirror and saw all the (extra) weight," said Paes, whose goal for 2004 is to play in his fourth Olympics in Athens.

"But my father said I'd promised I would play in four Olympics, so I had no choice. The six months out gave me a breather and now I'm as hungry as ever."

Paes turned down the chance to join Dutch soccer club PSV Eindhoven as an under-12 in order to concentrate on tennis and, like his parents, represent India at the Olympics. His father, Vece, won Olympic bronze in field hockey at the Munich Games in 1972, while his mother Jennifer played basketball.

"Everything was shut down for four days. No newspapers, no radio,

no TV...and the athletes weren't allowed outside their rooms, so I guess there was me."

Bronze medalist in singles at the 1996 Atlanta Olympics, Paes has built a reputation for his giant-killing Davis Cup exploits, producing big wins against players such as Goran Ivanisevic and Wayne Ferreira.

"When the president down to the common man are out there supporting you, you can't help but put your heart into it," he said. "It's a magic representing 1.2 billion people. They are the wind beneath my wings."

U-13 cricket BU, Old DOHS enter final

Brothers Union handed Mohamme-dan Sporting Club a 50-run defeat at the Dhanmondi Club ground yesterday to reach the final of the Dhaka Metropolis Under-13 Cricket Tournament yesterday.

Brothers Union Under-13 scored 175 all out in 40 overs and they wrapped up Mohammedan for 125 in 33.4 overs.

The Brothers Union team faces Old DOHS in the final today at the DOHS ground. They defeated Indira Road KC by six wickets at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium in the other semi-final.

Indira Road made 218 all out in 39.3 overs and Old DOHS replied with 219-4 in 38.3 overs.

Chelsea sign Parker

Chelsea have signed Charlton midfielder Scott Parker for 10 million pounds, the west London club confirmed on Friday.

As part of the deal Chelsea striker Carlton Cole will remain at Charlton on loan until the end of next season. The fee for 23-year-old Parker, who has recently broken into the England squad, takes Chelsea's spending since Roman Abramovich bought the west London club last summer to a total of 121 million pounds.

Problematic Eagles!

Nigeria's troubled African Nations Cup campaign took another turn for the worse on Friday when three members of their squad were kicked out for alleged indiscipline.

Chelsea's Celestine Babayaro, who was already carrying an injury, Portsmouth striker Yakubu Aiyegbeni and Victor Agali of Bundesliga side Schalke 04 were all told to leave the team's base here. "We have decamped three players this morning. They are Celestine Babayaro, Victor Agali and Yakubu Aiyegbeni," said Nigerian Football Association general secretary Taiwo Obunjobi.

"They broke camp rules. They were suppose to be in bed after team players last night but they were not. They only returned to the hotel early this morning."

"We have informed the team through the captain, Austin 'Jay Jay' Okocha, and have received the approval of the Sports Minister and it was decided that discipline must be maintained and the players involved leave the camp immediately."

Solano now Villa's

Nolberto Solano joined Aston Villa in a 1.5 million pounds (2.7m dollars) move from English Premiership rivals Newcastle.

Peru winger Solano, 29, signed a two-and-a-half year contract with Birmingham-based Villa. Solano, 29, a fans' favourite at St James' Park since arriving in 1998 from Boca Juniors in a 2.5m pounds (4.5m dollars) move, has started over 200 games for the north-east club.

But Solano, known for his off-field hobby of trumpet playing, has fallen out of favour with Newcastle manager Sir Bobby Robson this season.

He upset his manager in October when he walked out of the club after being dropped from a Premiership game against Middlesbrough.

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Close shave for Gazza

Former England footballer Paul Gascoigne escaped serious injury when he was involved in an accident, police said Friday.

The ex-Newcastle and Spurs midfielder was driving a four wheel drive BMW in Gateshead when he ran into the back of a parked truck after swerving to avoid another vehicle, police said. Gascoigne told The Sun: "I just ran into the back of the van. I'm fine, but I am a bit shaken up."

Gascoigne admitted defeat in his bid to make a comeback to top flight football with Wolverhampton last November. Gascoigne, 36, was the star of England's 1990 World Cup campaign and has been without a club since leaving Chinese second division outfit Guangzhou in June following a reported relapse into the alcoholism that has blighted his career.

Lions roar with Mboma

Veteran striker Patrick Mboma grabbed the first hat-trick of the tournament as defending champions Cameroon handed out a 5-3 drubbing to Zimbabwe in a thrilling African Nations Cup clash in Sfax on Thursday.

The victory put Cameroon, who are bidding for a third successive title and fifth in all, on top of Group C with four points from two matches. Algeria also have four points after beating old enemy Egypt 2-1 in Sousse but they have an inferior goal difference to the Indomitable Lions.

Despite their defeat Egypt, with three points, can still qualify for the quarter-finals but they would have to get a result against Cameroon in their last match. Zimbabwe, playing in their first finals, are eliminated.

The 33-year-old Mboma, who was only called into the squad at the last moment because of government pressure, also became the tournament's top scorer with four goals as he led his side's fightback from being a goal down against the plucky Zimbabweans.

Paris Saint Germain's Modeste Mbami grabbed the other two goals while Zimbabwe's own veteran marksman Peter Ndlovu scored twice to take his tally to three in two matches.

"We conceded a goal at the start of the match so it wasn't easy for us," said Cameroon coach Winfried Schafer.

"But my players were quick to react. Mboma has three of the five goals - that's good for him and the team."

Ndlovu had given Zimbabwe a shock lead after just eight minutes. Wilfred Mugeyi floated in a left-wing cross and the Sheffield United striker got between two defenders to head powerfully into the corner with goalkeeper Idriss Kamani stranded in no-man's land.

But Zimbabwe, who had also taken the lead against Egypt before losing 2-1 in their opener, paid a heavy price as Cameroon hit them with three goals in the space of 14 minutes.

Mboma levelled after 31 minutes when he rifled-home Eric Djemba Djemba's half hit shot before Mbami made it 2-1 nine minutes later when he slotted the ball home after a fine one-two with Mboma.

On the stroke of half-time, Mboma was back on the score-sheet with his second of the match when he poked the ball over the line from Jean Makoun's clever header.

Cameroon were pegged back within a minute of the restart when skipper Rigobert Song was adjudged by referee Abubakar Sharaf to have brought down Joel Lupahlaha.

Up stepped Ndlovu to bury the spot-kick to give Zimbabwe hope. The fourth goal arrived in the 65th minute when Mboma completed his hat-trick knocking in a cross from Timothy Atouba while, two minutes later, Mbami hit the fifth with a stunning 25-yard drive.

Esrom Nyandoro then hit a spectacular 30-yarder for a Zimbabwe consolation. The match in Sousse between bitter North African rivals Egypt and Algeria was classified 'high risk' by the organisers due to the ferocity and violence associated with recent meetings between the two.

As a result, a European referee, Luxembourg's Alain Hamer, was put in charge along with assistants, Frenchman Jean-Philippe Izzo and Tiejun Liu of China. Algeria, backed by a huge contingent of 10,000 fans inside the stadium, absorbed relentless pressure in the second half and scored a smash-and-grab winner four minutes from the end through substitute Achou Hocine.

The goal will go down as one of the best of the tournament as Hocine ran more than half the length of the pitch to score. Algeria finished the game with ten men after Mamar Mamouni, who had scored the 12th minute opener for his team, was sent-off.

Egypt had pulled level in the 25th minute through Ahmed Belal.

Primera Liga preview

Wind beneath Real's wings

Solari's statistics prove Del Bosque's point. He has played in 19 of Real's 21 league games this season but has only started three of them.

However, the ever-reliable Solari is usually the first man to pull off his track suit and start warming up when Quereoz sees a hint of fatigue from one of his stellar starting line-up. Further changes may be forced upon Quereoz as Francisco Pavon and Zinedine Zidane both face late fitness tests.

The Real coach could leave out the inconsistent Pavon anyway, and continue with Alvaro Mejia in the centre of defence after the 22 year-old newcomer from the reserves made an impressive league debut against Villarreal last Saturday.

Real will need all three points from their trip but Valladolid may not be quite the pushover their modest 10th position suggests. Valladolid last lost at home to Real in their grim Jose Zorrilla stadium four years ago, and the depressingly industrial surroundings seem to affect visitors adversely as they have only lost once at home this season.

Real lead the chase for the championship with 46 points, two ahead of Valencia who have not scored in their last two league outings. The 2001-02 champions will be hoping to end that sorry situation at Malaga on Saturday, and their coach Rafa Benitez has David Albelda and Amadeo Carboni back after both players were suspended for the shock 1-0 home defeat to Osasuna last Sunday.

Spanish Kings Cup Barca sent packing

A late goal by substitute Yordi Gonzalez earned Zaragoza a 1-1 draw and eliminated FC Barcelona in a Copa del Rey second-leg quarterfinal Thursday.

Zaragoza advanced to the last four on a 2-1 aggregate score. Yordi's 85th-minute strike leveled Barcelona forward Luis Garcia's 14th-minute goal to oust the Catalan club, which lost the first leg at its Camp Nou stadium 1-0.

The defeat is a massive blow for Barcelona as it hoped to win this year's competition to end a drought without a major trophy, which stretches back to 1999. Its only realistic hope of silverware this season now rests with the UEFA Cup, in which it has reached the last 16.

Zaragoza will take on second division Alaves in the semi-finals of the King's Cup, while favourites Real Madrid face Sevilla according to the draw on Friday. The games will be played over the next two weeks. On Wednesday, Madrid eliminated Valencia 5-1 on aggregate, Sevilla knocked out Atletico de Madrid 6-1, while Alaves won through against Celta de Vigo 4-3.

Frank Rijkaard's Barcelona failed to take advantage of the good start provided by Garcia's goal, a spectacular volley from outside the area.

The early goal briefly boosted Barcelona, and goalkeeper Cesar Lainez made a good save to keep out Dutch striker Patrick Kluivert's goalbound shot nine minutes later.

Zaragoza suddenly burst into action in the 28th minute with forward David Pirri's fierce shot blocked by advancing Barcelona goalkeeper Victor Valdes, and Argentine midfielder Luciano Galletti hitting the post seconds later.

But Barcelona resumed control and Dutch midfielder Edgar Davids -- recently loaned from Juventus -- came close to netting his first goal for the club in the 34th with a low shot which was saved by Lainez.

However, Barcelona failed to live up to its promise in a second half which was short on incident as both sides struggled to create goal chances. Barcelona's attacking power was hit when Kluivert was replaced by Argentine substitute Javier Saviola in the 51st after being injured by a tackle by Argentine defender Gabriel Milito.

Garcia came closest to giving Barcelona an aggregate lead with another volley in the 70th when Ronaldinho, who had been below his best, sprang to life with a surging run.

But following the Brazilian's replacement by midfielder Luis Enrique Martinez in the 77th, Barcelona lost its last hope of inspiration. Barcelona's fate was sentenced five minutes from time when Milito headed back a corner and Yordi, a halftime substitute for striker Goran Drulic, volleyed home.

Who's new signing Steve Howey could make his debut in defence.

Fellow Champions League aspirants Fulham entertain Tottenham while Newcastle travel to Birmingham. At the bottom, Leeds entertain Middlesbrough while four of the other teams facing the threat of relegation are involved in crunch clashes -- Leicester taking on Midlands rivals Aston Villa and second-from-bottom Wolves travelling to Portsmouth.

Third-placed Chelsea are not in action until Sunday when they travel to Blackburn with winger Damien Duff doubtful for the return to his former club.

The United boss is embroiled in a feud with the club's biggest shareholder, Irish racing tycoon John Magnier. Pressure from Magnier was widely seen as having resulted in Ferguson being forced to sign a new 12-month rolling contract this week, rather than the four-year deal he had been offered at the end of last year.

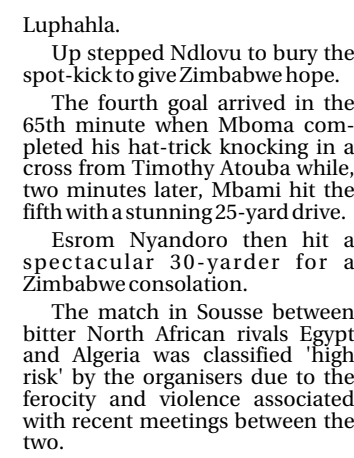
The affair has triggered an angry reaction from many United fans and Ferguson can count on a show of support from the Old Trafford faithful on Saturday.

Ferguson's main selection dilemma is whether to hand 12-million-pound signing Louis Saha his debut alongside Ruud van Nistelrooy.

The French striker was bought from Fulham mainly as back-up for the prolific Dutchman but Ferguson will inevitably experiment with them alongside one another at some stage.

In Saturday's other games, Charlton will seek to consolidate their grip on fourth place without Chelsea-bound midfielder Scott Parker at home to Bolton, for

Students of Mastermind take part in 'dress as you like' competition during their annual sports day at the Dhanmondi Women's Sports Complex yesterday.



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CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer. ACROSS 43 It came to Earth in March 2001. 7 Barney's pal. 11 Venusian vessels. 13 Watering hole. 14 Easter symbol. 15 Wash. 16 Prompt. 17 Competent. 18 Impudent. 20 Soother. 22 Diving bird. 24 Frost remover. 28 Run playfully. 32 Liqueur. 33 Earning location. 34 Pantheon member. 36 Summer-time pest. 37 Entertain. 39 17th-century art style. 41 Soda holder.

Cryptogram puzzle with grid and clues. Clues include: 'Bright star', 'Jennings' network', 'Apply crudely', 'Evade', 'Mock', 'Early Along With Me', 'Mr. Baba', 'Leaf vein', 'Right', 'Worm', 'Turn', 'Sweet potato', 'Ashen', 'Future syllable', 'Meadow tulip', 'Frat party item', 'Five (Fr.)', 'Paradise', 'Civil War general Stuart', 'Chickening link', 'Omega predecessor', 'Poorly lit'.

FIXTURES section listing football matches: Saturday (kick off GMT): Atletico Madrid v Osasuna (1830), Malaga v Valencia (1830), Real Betis v Celta Vigo (2030). Sunday: Murcia v Real Zaragoza (1600), Real Sociedad v Racing Santander (1600), Valladolid v Real Madrid (1600), Villarreal v Espanyol (1600), Real Mallorca v Athletic Bilbao (1600), Barcelona v Albacete (1800), Deportivo La Coruna v Sevilla (2000).

FIXTURES section listing football matches: (1500 GMT unless stated) Saturday: Birmingham v Newcastle, Charlton v Bolton, Fulham v Tottenham, Leeds v Middlesbrough, Leicester v Aston Villa, Liverpool v Everton, Manchester Utd v Southampton (1230 GMT), Portsmouth v Wolves. Sunday: Arsenal v Manchester City, Blackburn v Chelsea.

Van Nistelrooy signs fresh MU contract. Ruud van Nistelrooy has signed a new contract with Manchester United that will keep the Dutch striker at Old Trafford until 2008, the English Premiership champions said Thursday.