

Premier Squash

UNB, Dhaka

Bhola Lal Chowhan of Sonargaon Club registered a 3-0 victory over Masud Rana of Dhaka Army Club in the opening match of the 2nd AP-Access TEL Premier Squash tournament at Dhaka Club Squash Court yesterday.

In the day's another match, Ram Jagdish of Cadet College recorded a 9-2, 9-1 and 9-3 win over Karim of Sonargaon Club.

State Minister for Youth and Sports Fazlur Rahman inaugurated the meet while President of Dhaka Club Giti Ara Safia Chowdhury and Managing Director of IDLC Anis A Khan were present as special guests.

Life is beautiful

FROM PAGE 13 In some ways, but the youngster has a sharp awareness of the way the world works that is mature beyond her years.

She insists on her merits as a tennis player and rejects the notion that she be typecast as a pin-up in the mould of Anna Kournikova.

"The move to the US was an amazing sacrifice. I mean, you either win or you lose. I owe a lot to my parents," she said earlier in the tournament.

And the experience seems to have made her the toughest of fighters - a fact in evidence at this event.

The teenager put up a gritty fight to beat Davenport 2-6, 7-6, 6-1 from a set and 3-1 down in the semifinal and then won from the front 6-1, 6-4 against a shell-shocked Williams in the final.

The Russian was also forced to claw back from a set down in her quarterfinal against Ai Sugiyama, taking just over two hours to see off her Japanese opponent, 5-7, 7-5, 6-1.

Sharapova is the first Russian, man or woman, to win at Wimbledon and she follows in the footsteps of compatriot Anastasia Myskina who won the French Open in Paris last month.

Media games over Merk



AFP, Lisbon

Portugal's media on Saturday tipped the ante ahead of Sunday's Euro 2004 final between the host nation and Greece by noting a long friendship between referee Markus Merk and the Greeks' German coach Otto Rehhagel.

'Record' daily headlined its Euro 2004 digest with the words "the friends from Kaiserslautern," the club Rehhagel won the German league title with in 1998, adding that "Merk and Rehhagel are old friends and have a special affinity for the German city," Merk's birthplace.

"Merk was Rehhagel's family dentist," Record added.

The '24 horas' daily was even more blunt, getting its retaliation in early ahead of Sunday's showdown.

"Watch out! The referee is a friend of the Greeks," 24 horas said in a huge headline emblazoned across its front page.

"Markus Merk has known the opposing coach for 27 years," said 24 horas, which harrumphed that this suggested "dangerous links" between the man in the middle and the Greeks, who were Portugal's party poopers on the opening day of the tournament and who now are hellbent on shocking the hosts once again.

Rehhagel says he expects no help whatsoever from Merk.

"He is very rigorous and on a sent me packing from the bench in a

German league game," Rehhagel reminisced, thinking back to his brief stint in charge of Bayern Munich.

Merk, a keen triathlon competitor, will also be renewing his acquaintance with two of Portugal's stars in the shape of defender Jorge Andrade and midfielder Deco.

He sent Andrade off when the defender's Deportivo La Coruna



MARKUS MERK

clashed with Deco's Porto in the Champions League semi-final although the two players said they were only indulging in some pretend highjinks.

Merk, who has 16 years experience in the German league and 12 at international level, refereed the 2003 Champions League final between AC Milan and Juventus and the 42-year-old is regarded as one of the best "men in black" in the game.

At Euro 2004 he also officiated at the France versus England match and the Scandinavian derby between Sweden and Denmark.

BKSP U-16 Cup from tomorrow

SPORTS REPORTER

The BKSP Cup Under-16 Football Tournament will begin at the country's lone sports institute in Savar tomorrow.

Ten teams including two Indian sides (IFA and SSSA of Chandigarh) split into two groups will take part in the competition.

BKSP Green will take on Khulna and Barisal face BKSP Red in the opening day's fixture.

The semifinals are scheduled on July 10 and the final will be take place on July 11.

Group A: Dhaka, Chittagong, Barisal, BKSP (Red) and IFA (West Bengal).

Group B: Rajshahi, Sylhet, Khulna, BKSP (Green) and SSSA.

Federer meets Roddick in final

AFP, London

Defending champion Roger Federer pits his stylish, gentle touch against the howitzer of Andy Roddick in Sunday's Wimbledon men's final as the world's top two go head-to-head in what could be one of the classic title showdowns.

The American beat Croatia's Mario Ancic 6-4, 4-6, 7-5, 7-5 while Federer eased past Sebastien Grosjean 6-2, 6-3, 7-6 in ties which were held over from Friday because of the rain which has dogged this tournament.

SL Kaspro-witched

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Sri Lanka's hopes of an against-the-odds victory evaporated with the loss of their top three batsmen -- Sanath Jayasuriya, Marvan Atapattu and Kumar Sangakkara -- before lunch with McGrath conceding little in a dominant 10-over opening spell.

SCOREBOARD

Final scoreboard on the third day of the first Test between Australia and Sri Lanka at Marrara Oval on Saturday: AUSTRALIA: First innings 207 (Lehmann 57, Martyn 47, Vaas 5-31, Malinga 2-50)

SRI LANKA: First innings 97 (Dilshan 17 not out, Jayawardene 14, Chandana 14; McGrath 5-37, Warne 3-20)

AUSTRALIA: Second innings 201 (Gilchrist 80, Lehmann 51; Malinga 4-42)

SRI LANKA: Second innings Atapattu c Warne b K'wicz 10 Jayasuriya lbw b McGrath 16 Sangakkara run out (Martyn) 0 Jayawardene b McGrath 44 Samaraweera c Gilchrist b K'wicz 32 Dilshan c Gilchrist b K'wicz 14 Arnold c Gilchrist b K'wicz 17 Chandana b K'wicz 17 Vaas not out 10 Zoyza c Gilchrist b K'wicz 16 Malinga c Gilchrist b K'wicz 7 Extras: (lb-1, nb-4, w-2)

Total: (All out in 65.4 overs) 162 Fall of wickets: 1-23, 2-23, 3-30, 4-109, 5-113, 6-132, 7-141, 8-152, 9-162

Bowler O M R W McGrath 16 9 24 2 Gillespie 13 2 37 0 K'wicz 17.4 3 39 7 Warne 19 2 61 0 Result: Australia won by 149 runs to go to 1-0 up the 2-Test series.

Man-of-the-match: Glenn McGrath.

One language

FROM PAGE 13 Fans are planning to form a human chain along part of the route that the bus will take as it carries the Portuguese squad to Lisbon's Stadium of Light for the final from their headquarters just outside the capital.

Supporters, some on horseback or on motorcycles, escorted the bus from the team's training camp at Alcochete, some 35 kilometres (22 miles) southeast of Lisbon, before the team's match against the Netherlands on Wednesday.

Thousands of flag-waving fans lined the route, while fishermen in their boats followed the team as it crossed the giant Vasco da Gama bridge which links Lisbon to the south of the country.

"I have been in Portugal for eight years and I've never seen support like this. There hasn't been anything like this for the national team, not even for the World Cup," said Brazilian-born midfielder Deco earlier this week.

Experts have attributed the wave in patriotism to a deep desire on the part of many Portuguese to see their country, one of western Europe's poorest and smallest, succeed in one area.

"Today there is no domain, neither political, nor cultural, which permits the Portuguese to be proud of their country," sociologist Joao Nuno Coelho, who has written extensively about football fans, told AFP.

"Football in this case is allowing them to dream a bit and be proud of their identity," he added.

Portugal slumped to its worst recession in a decade last year, with the economy contracting 1.3 percent, causing unemployment to rise at one of the fastest rates in the European Union.

He's got the look



REUTERS, Lisbon

His naked torso graces newspaper front pages and magazine covers. His baby face is plastered over billboards and TV ads.

Cristiano Ronaldo is Portugal's pin-up and soccer's new teen heart-throb.

The 19-year-old's tricks on the wing have helped propel the hosts into Sunday's Euro 2004 final against Greece.

The golden boy has also caused heart flutters among his young female fans by stripping off his shirt to celebrate scoring goals, and then nonchalantly cocking his eyebrow when penalised for the offence.

Among his dark-haired Portuguese teammates, Ronaldo is easy to spot. He sports blond-highlighted hair combed up in a wave on top and diamond stud earrings.

There's no doubt he's the successor to David Beckham whose number seven shirt he now fills at Manchester United.

An informal survey published on

the "Portugal Gay" Web site found Ronaldo to be the sexiest of the Portuguese players. But it's young girls who are his biggest fans.

"Oh!!!" two of them shopping at a mall in Lisbon swooned, eyes growing wide, when asked about Ronaldo.

"He's very cool. He's beautiful," said 13-year-old Catarina Correia as she and her bubble gum-chewing friend waited to see a film.

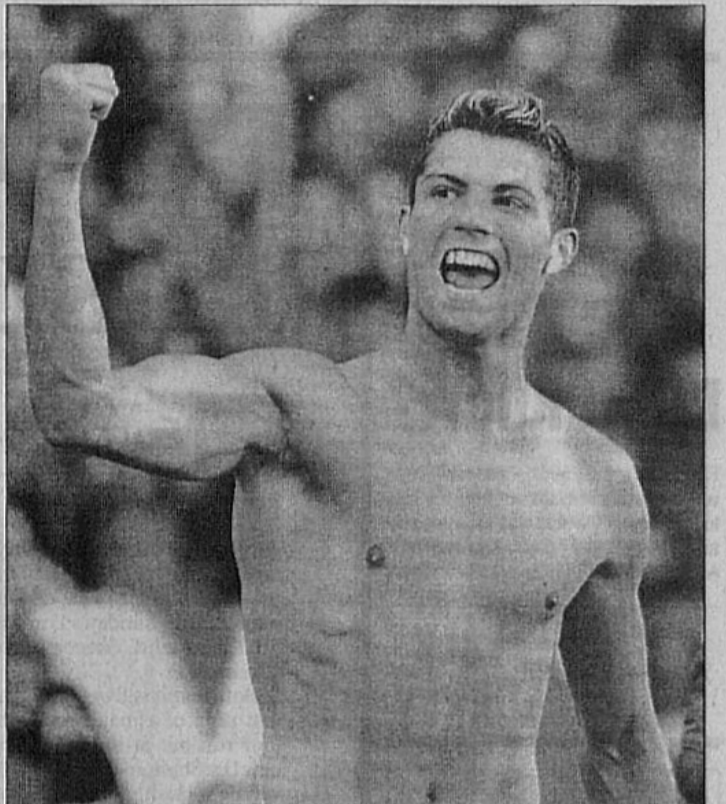
Patricia Matos, 14, proudly said she had three posters of the soccer player on her bedroom wall.

"He's cute, very cute," said 14-year-old Catarina Velez, who started a Ronaldo fan club with her friends.

The club members make up songs about Ronaldo and his good looks, and sometimes about Beckham too, she said.

Maria do Carmo, 14, said that although she thought Ronaldo was a skilful player and attractive, "I don't like his earrings. He looks like a cow."

Two boys in their group stood coolly by as the girls giggled and cooed. While Ronaldo is a great player, he doesn't deserve all the attention he gets from girls, they said. "I'm cuter than he is," said Jose Mecedo, 13.



MR PORTUGAL: CRISTIANO RONALDO

PHOTO: AFP

Respect yes, friends no?



AFP, Lisbon

Congratulations to the Greeks for making it to the Euro 2004 final.

The way they did it, however, may not be good for the game.

No one can deny that Greece surprised everyone by beating host Portugal, defending champion France and big-favorite Czech Republic. That the Greeks had never before won a game at a major championship makes it all the more remarkable.

But their tactics didn't win many friends.

German coach Otto Rehhagel, whose team played Portugal again in Sunday's final, didn't have a lot of talent. So he employed a system in which his players sit back on defense, stifle the creative play of opponents and try to catch a lucky break.

Look at Thursday's 1-0 semifinal victory over the free-scoring Czechs: After the Greeks had restricted them to a handful of chances,

defender Traianos Dellas scored with seconds to go in the first period of overtime. It was the first "silver goal" of the championship, meaning the Czechs had to tie the score immediately or the game was over.

They didn't even have time to restart.

The result of Thursday's semifinal is that Greece now has a rematch with the Portuguese in Lisbon. And the Greeks beat the host 2-1 on opening day.

Like the Greeks' other Euro 2004 victims, however, the Portuguese didn't know what to expect. Spain also was held to a 1-1 tie by Rehhagel's team, and the French were unable to impose their classy style in their quarterfinal and lost 1-0.

Oddly, the only team to beat the Greeks at Euro 2004 was Russia, which already had been eliminated from reaching the next round.

If the Greek journey to the final had been filled with top quality passing, shooting, dribbling and goals, no one would have doubted their performance. But they admit their game is nothing like that.

"It's work, work, work," defender Mihails Kapsis said. "We have 11

players with one only target to help each other on the field.

"We are used to each other. A lot of the players played on the same Greek teams together. We are always talking and know exactly what the other is going to do."

The fact that Greece made it to the final while powerhouse teams like France, three-time winner Germany, Italy, Spain and England didn't even get past the quarters suggests that there is a changing of the guard in European soccer.

Big stars like France's Zinedine Zidane and Thierry Henry, England's David Beckham, Spain's Raul Gonzalez and Italy's Alessandro Del Piero performed poorly and even five-goal scorer Milan Baros of the Czech Republic couldn't find a way past the Greek defense.

But if other underachieving nations adopt the same style of economy class soccer, the game is going to lose much of its appeal.

The theme running through Europe's media was respect for the Greeks rather than gushing praise.

"The team stays in place," said the French sports daily L'Equipe. "It is, as usual, a tight block. For all

those who thought the run of Greece was just an accident, the reality is there for all to see."

The Italians papers, used to such tactics with their clubs and national teams, said the Greek style was nothing new.

"Passing this soccer, at least 30 years old, off as something new is an undertaking. But maybe, after so much time, a few things have been forgotten about how to confront a team like Greece," La Repubblica said in an editorial.

La Gazzetta dello Sport offered some respect.

"Greece doesn't play a spectacular kind of soccer, but it has proven itself balanced and resistant like its German coach," said Italy's largest sports daily.

British papers praised the Greeks for a remarkable effort in reaching the final. Only one paper, the Daily Express, criticized Rehhagel's tactics.

"The right to play hosts Portugal in Lisbon on Sunday turned into a dour war of attrition," the paper said, "as defensive-minded Greece took football to Hellas and back."

Scolari versus Rehhagel

FROM PAGE 13

but the 55-year-old would furthermore uniquely have won both trophies with different nations.

Only former West Germany boss Helmut Schon managed to oversee wins in both competitions, winning the European Championship in 1972 and then the World Cup two years later, the task facilitated by a generation of players which included Franz Beckenbauer, Gerd Muller and Sepp Maier.

"Now it's time for the moment of truth," trumpeted Portuguese sports daily A Bola after the Greeks booked their passage by ousting the Czech Republic, generally regarded as the most technically gifted side at the event.

Scolari and Rehhagel are both handsomely paid overseas hired guns.

But on a stage as big as this it's not about the money.

Both Scolari and Rehhagel, 65, were controversial appointments but are now basking in adulation.

Scolari says winning the title would be even more satisfying than delivering the World Cup for Brazil.

"This is different, as with Brazil I was world champion. But they had already won it four times. For my CV I think this is more important as Portugal had never reached a final," Scolari said after ousting Holland in the semis.

If Scolari's credentials are no longer in any doubt among the Portuguese - or the Brazilians - Rehhagel has performed even greater miracles for Greece.

His side came here as rank outsiders but promptly beat Portugal in the opening group match for their first ever win bonus in the competition.

Since then they have gone from

strength to strength, seeing off holders France in the quarterfinals before Traianos Dellas needed them into the final at the expense of the Czechs.

"Sometimes not always the best side wins," Rehhagel noted sardonically after sending the silky-skilled Czechs home.

He insists he is just an advisor to his men, to those traditional off the cuff skills he has welded discipline and unyielding team spirit.

As a Greek philosopher once said: "Beauty of style and harmony and grace and good rhythm depend on simplicity."

An apposite message for football coaches everywhere.

"I make certain decisions and these decisions are followed by my players - I only advise them," says Rehhagel, whose authoritarian streak saw him ejected after less than a season at Bayern Munich but who is now being talked up as a man who could fill the vacant post of Germany coach.

This is where the Portuguese and Greek approach meets, Scolari having instilled similar discipline in a nation where fantasy too often in the past left this year's hosts bridesmaids and never the bride.

If Scolari's men have learned the lesson their rivals meted out to them three weeks ago in Oporto to them will have come to place the ring on Portugal's finger.

After the semifinal the Brazilian, clutching his wedding ring, said he was wedded to the cause for two more years regardless of Sunday's result.

On Friday, the 24 horas daily promptly portrayed a cartoon version of the Brazilian, replete with

wedding dress and bouquet of flowers, pledging his troth to federation president Gilberto Madail.

A trophy would make the finest of presents for the happy 'couple'.

Rui Costa to bow out

AFP, Alcochete

Portuguese midfielder Rui Costa said on Saturday he will end his international career after Sunday's Euro 2004 final against Greece.

Speaking at the Portuguese training camp south of Lisbon the 32-year-old AC Milan star said he believed it was time to move on.



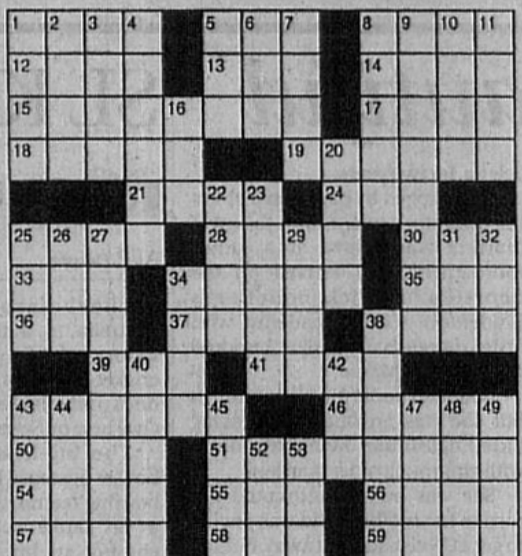
RUI COSTA

"This will be my last game for the team - if the coach elects to play me. I will feel very emotional," Rui Costa told reporters.

"I am happy and if all goes well tomorrow I will go out on a happy note."

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

- ACROSS 37 Smart 58 West of 16 Away from the team's training camp at Alcochete, some 35 kilometres (22 miles) southeast of Lisbon, before the team's match against the Netherlands on Wednesday. Thousands of flag-waving fans lined the route, while fishermen in their boats followed the team as it crossed the giant Vasco da Gama bridge which links Lisbon to the south of the country.



CRYPTOQUIP

CK P QZDER DK RZPQEA HCMCSAOB PZA BAHZAMJX HDOHAPJAI, PZA MUAX HPHUAI HSAHUB?

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: THE SEWER WORKER GOT CANNED TODAY. HE SIMPLY COULDN'T KEEP HIS MIND IN THE GUTTER.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: H equals C

The Cryptoquip 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.

Panchagarh BU

FROM PAGE 13

The zonal final rolled into shoot-out stage after the regulation time ended oneall.

Shahinul Haq put Brothers ahead in the 11th minute but Golap Hossain struck the equalizer in the 32nd minute.

Panchagarh Brothers joined Najirpara Krira Chakra of Chandpur, Jhenaidah Mohammedan, Bagerhat Unmohoch and Bangladesh Air Force in the finals along with six automatic qualifiers Muktiyoddha Sangsad, Mohammedan Sporting Club, Abahani Krira Chakra, Brothers Union, Sheikh Russel Krira Chakra and Chittagong Mohammedan.

The final round is scheduled to begin from July 10 but league committee secretary Manjur Hossain Mahu said that it might be delayed for a few days.

"We can only start the final round after getting BTV's confirmation since the state-run television will provide live coverage of all the games. The BTV is currently preoccupied with the Parliament session," said Mahu.

Twelve teams will split into two groups to take part in the first phase, which will be held on round robin league basis. Top three teams from each group will play the six-team final phase.

Cairns restricts WI



AFP, London

West Indies threw away a promising position after being bowled out for 216 by New Zealand in their NatWest Series one-day international at Sophia Gardens here Saturday.

West Indies, who were well-placed at 180 for three in the 37th over, lost their last seven wickets for 36 runs in 60 balls.

Experienced all-rounder Chris Cairns (three for 29) and series debutant Ian Butler (three for 41) led the attack after half centuries from captain Brian Lara (58) and Ramnaresh Sarwan (54) threatened to take the West Indies to big score.

New Zealand captain Stephen Fleming's decision to field first after winning the toss was unsurprising given all the completed matches in the series so far had been won by the team batting second.

SCOREBOARD Scoreboard of the West Indies innings against New Zealand in the NatWest Series one-day international at Sophia Gardens on

Table with 5 columns: Saturday, WEST INDIES, Bowler, O, M, R, W. Rows include Gayle c Hopkins b Cairns, Lara c Fleming b Cairns, Sarwan c Fleming b Cairns, C'paul c Hopkins b Butler, Bravo c Astle b Styris, Powell c and b Butler, Smith run out, Baugh c Hopkins b Franklin, Bradshaw run out, Best not out, Lawson b Butler, Extras: (lb-5, w-5, nb-6), Total: (All out in 46.2 overs) 216, Fall of wickets: 1-83, 2-92, 3-132, 4-180, 5-190, 6-199, 7-207, 8-208, 9-212.

NEW ZEALAND: Fleming, Astle, Marshall, Styris, McMillan, Oram, Cairns, Hopkins, Vettori, Butler, Franklin. Toss: New Zealand.

Umpires: Rudi Koertzen (South Africa) and David Shepherd (England).

History makers

FROM PAGE 13

card against the Czechs. He was also suspended for the game against Russia in the group phase and his absence was painfully felt in a 2-1 defeat that almost cost them a quarterfinal place.

He will be replaced by Stelios Giannakopoulos or Vassilis Tsartas. Greece are at a slight disadvantage in the final, with Portugal having had an extra day to recover, and are wary of reading too much into that opening-day victory over the hosts.

"This will be a totally different game from the first one," midfielder Angelos Basinas said. "This will be a 90-minute final where anything can happen and any past results do not matter at all."

But that past result will matter to Portugal and the vast majority of the 65,000 crowd packed into the Luz as their team seek revenge for their shaky start to the tournament.

No host nation has reached the final of the European Championship since France beat Spain in 1984. If Portugal repeat that achievement, the fourth of July party will be memorable indeed.

PROBABLE TEAMS

PORTUGAL (4-5-1): 1-Ricardo; 13-Miguel; 16-Ricardo Carvalho; 4-Jorge Andrade; 14-Nuno Valente; 6-Costinha; 18-Manicha; 20-Deco; 7-Luis Figo; 17-Cristiano Ronaldo; 21-Nuno Gomes. GREECE: 1-Antonis Nikopolidis; 2-Yourkas Seitaridis; 19-Michalis Kapsis; 5-Traianos Dellas; 14-Takis Fyssas; 8-Stelios Giannakopoulos; 7-Theodoros Zorarakis; 6-Angelos Basinas; 21-Costas Katsouranis; 15-Zisis Vryzas; 9-Angelos Haristeads. Referee: Markus Merk (Germany). Assistant referees: Jan-Hendrik Salver (Germany), Christian Schraer (Germany).

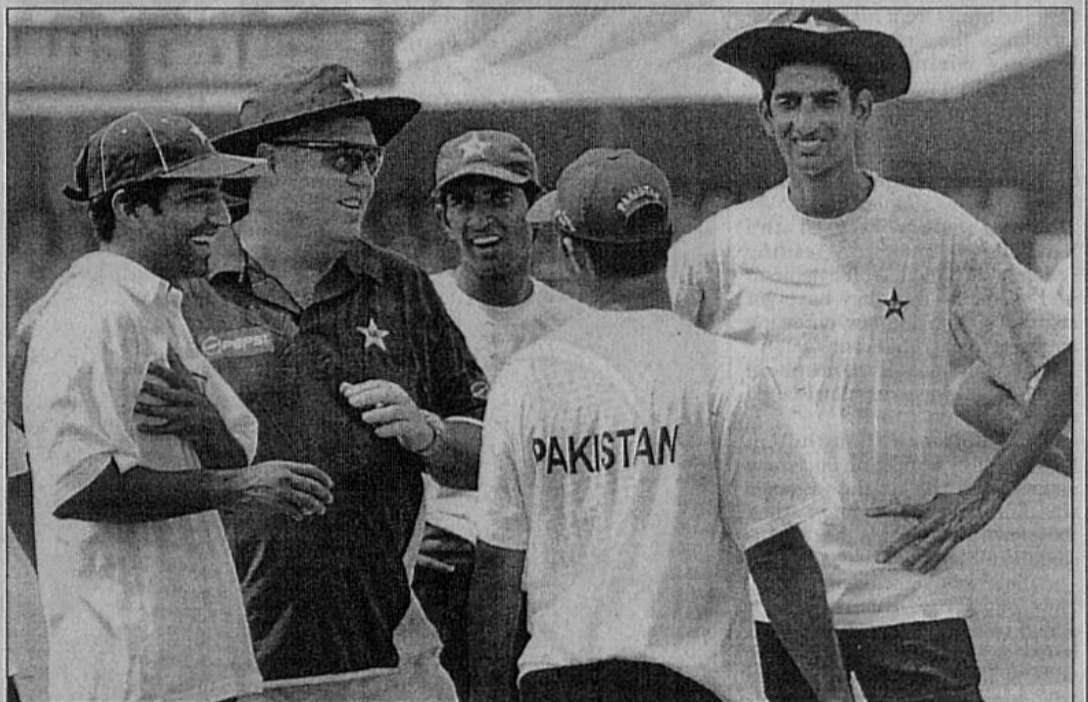
Klinsmann's

FROM PAGE 13

In midfield, Figo and Ronaldo, Zagarakis and Czech genius Pavel Nedved all won Klinsmann's vote for their "significant contributions" to their teams.

In attack England's young discovery Wayne Rooney of Everton and the Czech Republic's Milan Baros were chosen.

Baros is the tournament's top scorer with five goals while Rooney was on the scoresheet four times to spark talk of a move to Manchester United.



YOUHANA CAN REALLY BAT: Newly appointed Pakistan coach Bob Woolmer (2nd L) shares a light moment with his charges during a practice session in Lahore yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP