



MAN-OF-THE-MATCH: Goalkeeper of Bagerhat's Unmochan Club Piruzzaman Piru (L) thwarts a Sheikh Russel Krira Chakra attack during their Nitol-Tafa National Football League encounter at the Momenshahi Stadium yesterday.

Premier kabadi

UNB, Dhaka

Holders Bangladesh Rifles registered a massive 66-17 victory over Azad Sporting Club with four credible lonas in the opening match of the 9th Premier Division Kabadi League at the Outer Stadium kabadi court yesterday.

In the day's other match, Bangladesh Army also recorded an overwhelming 57-18 win over Jatrabari Faruq Smriti Sangsad with three lonas.

Tibet h'ball

UNB, Dhaka

Satirtha Club defeated Suryadoy KC 23-17 in the opening match of the Tibet 13th First Division Handball League at the Outer Stadium handball ground yesterday.

Satirtha trailed 11-9 in the first half.

Badsha scored seven goals while Faruq netted five for the winners. Rafiq and Shamim scored 11 and three goals for the losers.

Rafiq was adjudged best player of the match.

State Minister for Forest and Environment Zafrul Islam Chowdhury inaugurated the league.

Star Whizz Kid Competition 2004. Tick the correct answers, post to The Daily Star. Win attractive prizes. Competition closes at 8 pm July 23, 2004 and draw shortly afterwards.

Competition questions and answer grid. Questions include: 1. How many Test matches will India play against Bangladesh in December? 2. Who is Pakistan's new cricket coach? 3. Who won the Rating chess title? 4. Who is the youngest scorer at UEFA Euro 2004? 5. Who scored the first goal at Euro 2004?

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer. 1 "Gilligan's Island" cast member. 2 "The Greatest" ingredient. 3 Varnish. 4 Totally. 5 d'oeuvres. 6 "Miniver" name of. 7 First name of. 8 Cartel acronym. 9 Deblor's letters. 10 Kitchen timesaver. 11 Massachusetts cape. 12 First victim. 13 Dweeb. 14 Sources of illumination. 15 Mexican money. 16 Last writes. 17 Fricol-some. 18 "GMA" network. 19 Minute. 20 Judge. 21 Lance. 22 Seller. 23 Lost intentionally.

Maradona Jr confused?

AFP, London

Diego Maradona Junior looks to have destroyed his chances of engineering a move to Scottish Premier League side Dunfermline.

The 17-year-old son of the Argentinian World Cup legend had been training with the unfashionable club hoping to secure a transfer from Napoli, but having agreed to an extended trial at East End Park, he has since flown back to Italy.

"When things like this happen, it's looking less likely. First he was going, then he said he was staying but on Saturday we learned he did go home," said Dunfermline boss David Hay.

"I will now sit down with the chairman and hopefully reach a decision. It's not the boy who is making this decision, it's his advisers.

"Diego is a 17-year-old with ability that has still to be fulfilled. But I would say it now looks less likely to happen with us. We'll see."

The 'fair' dozen announced

BBC ONLINE, undated

The International Cricket Council (ICC) has named the first dozen members of the awards panel which will vote on cricketer's "Oscars" in September.

The 50-panel will vote on the world's best players over the previous year.

Members announced on Monday include former England captain Mike Atherton and Indian legend Sunil Gavaskar.

ICC chief executive Malcolm Speed said: "With an esteemed judging academy we know the process will result in worthy winners."

Seven player-related awards will be presented in two award categories (individual and team) at the gala ceremony to take place on September 7 at Alexandra Palace in London.

- PANEL MEMBERS: Michael Atherton, England; Martin Crowe, New Zealand; Kapil Dev, India; Sunil Gavaskar, India; Ian Healy, Australia; Michael Holding, West Indies; David Houghton, Zimbabwe; Graeme Pollock, South Africa; Barry Richards, South Africa; Sidath Wettimuny, Sri Lanka; Rajan Bala, Asian Age, India; Tony Cozier, media commentator, West Indies.

India hockey coach sacked

BBC ONLINE, undated

Rajinder Singh has been dismissed as India's hockey coach just weeks before the Olympic Games in Athens.

He was immediately replaced by his deputy, German Gerhard Rach.

The Indian team have fared poorly in 2004, failing to win any tournament since their Afro-Asian Games triumph over Pakistan on home soil last year.

Inzy wants

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part of the Australian tour last season before skipping two Tests in Pakistan.

The famed Indian battering also failed to live up to its reputation in the first two matches, with Rahul Dravid alone looking in good touch with a hundred and a half-century.

"We still have an opportunity," Ganguly said. "The points system is such that we start all over again and hence we will have the chance to make amends."

Sri Lanka are hopeful that captain Marvan Atapattu and hard-hitting opener Sanath Jayasuriya will be fit for the super-league matches.

Jayasuriya missed the last match against India due to a side strain, while Atapattu left the field after compiling a half-century due to a sore throat.

"We hope Sanath will be fit," the captain said. "We want him in the side as soon as possible. We have many options when he plays."

The crisis man

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"We have shown that we can score big totals and it's just about clicking altogether in the next matches. Hopefully runs will start to flow against Bangladesh tomorrow."

The popular cricketer from Punjab also warned that his brief appearance in Dhaka during the Corporate Cricket League a couple of months ago, where he failed to fire, would not have any bearing today.

"Those matches were played on different types of wickets and I had hardly played any cricket after coming back from Pakistan. But I think Bangladesh can't be taken lightly. They have done very well in the West Indies and we will have to do our best tomorrow to win the game."

A good headache to have



AP, Rio de Janeiro

Striker Adriano has become a solution and a problem for Brazil coach Carlos Alberto Parreira in the Copa America.

After another gala performance by the Inter Milan forward in a 4-0 rout of Mexico on Sunday, how to pull Adriano from the lineup when the tournament ends?

His rivals for a starting berth theoretically are untouchables. Ronaldo and Ronaldinho Gaucho are soccer's elite, stars of the Spanish league and World Cup champions in 2002.

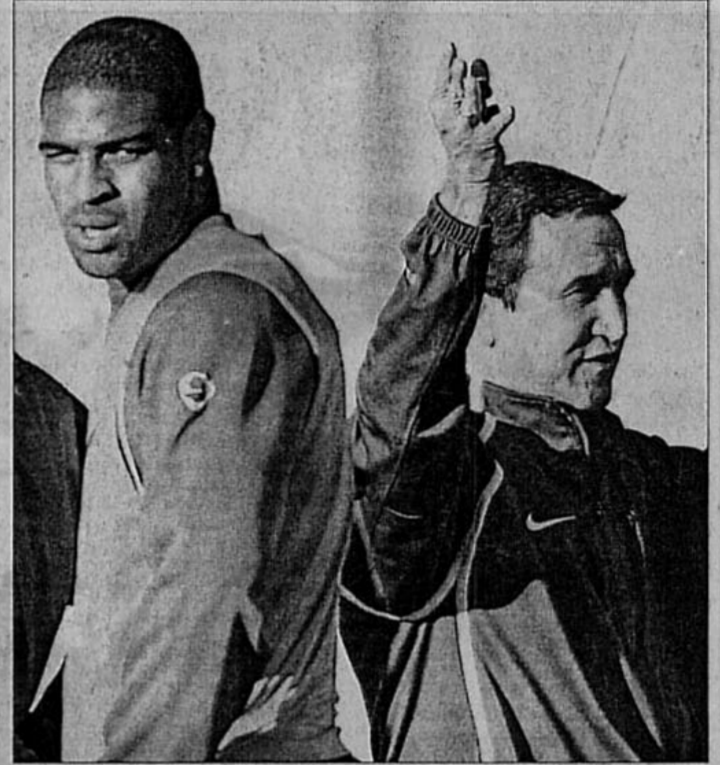
But Parreira rested his starters and took a team of second-stringers and young promises to the Copa America. And Adriano has been a big reason for Brazil's success so far.

On Sunday, Adriano scored two goals and set up the other two as Brazil cruised past Mexico and into the semifinals against Uruguay on Wednesday.

Adriano leads all scorers with five goals. Big and rangy, he already he is earning comparisons with Ronaldo, who led all scorers when Brazil won the Copa in 1999.

But the 22-year-old striker plays down the parallels. "Every player has his own history, and I have a lot of work to do," he

said in an interview on Monday on Pele's website pele.net. "First, I have to run to help the team."



Adriano (L) and coach Carlos Alberto Parreira during a practice session recently.

Chosen the game's outstanding player, Adriano said he felt better on Sunday at the low altitude of Piura, Peru, than in the thin air of the Andes, where Brazil played in the first round.

"In the beginning we couldn't catch our breath," he said. "Here, we're looser."

Still, he doesn't deny that he dreams of playing on Brazil's "A" team, which will assemble when the qualifying games for the 2006 World Cup resume in September.

"I think I could play on the main squad with Ronaldo, Ronaldinho Gaucho and all those established players," he said last week.

Adriano's chances could depend on how well Brazil fares against old nemesis Uruguay and a possible final against Colombia or archrival Argentina.

The win Sunday was especially satisfying for Brazil, which hadn't beaten Mexico since 1999.

"It was very convincing," said a normally reserved Parreira. "Brazil was superior from start to finish."

Brazil's sporting press, which criticized Brazil after last week's 2-1 loss to Paraguay, had nothing but praise for the team -- and especially Adriano.

"The name of the game," said the Rio daily O Dia. "Emperor Adriano," headlined Lance.

Kuwait too good for UAE

AFP, Beijing

A quick-fire treble from local rivals Kuwait sank the UAE 3-1 on Monday despite a battling second-half performance which threatened to get them back into the Asian Cup opener.

The Emirates, trailing 3-0 at the break after a Basher Abdullah strike, a penalty and an own goal within 20 minutes, peppered the Kuwaiti goalmouth in the second half but could not add to Mohamed Rashid's 47th-minute score.

The result condemns the UAE to the bottom of Group B after Monday's opening games which also saw South Korea held to a draw by Jordan.

Japan edge Oman

AFP, July

Holders Japan overcame the loss of several star players through injury and the upcoming Olympics to open their Asian Cup campaign with a 1-0 victory over Oman here Tuesday.

The defending champions, missing several star Europe-based players including captain Hidetoshi Nakata, midfielder Junichi Inamoto and playmaker Shinji Ono, secured the points thanks to a superb first-half goal from Shunsuke Nakamura.

Japan had taken the lead on 34 minutes when a cross from Brazilian-born left-back Alex deflected off a defender and into the path of Nakamura.

The attacking midfielder collected and beat one opponent before arched an shot off the outside of his left foot into the top corner from 13 yards.

Brazil know

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where they experimented with a risky attacking approach under former coach Juan Ramon Carrasco.

Coach Jorge Fossati took over, the team have returned to their traditional style of tactical discipline and gamesmanship.

"I think the secret is for us to try to hold up the ball and keep possession. We must not let ourselves play at Uruguay's pace," said striker Adriano, who scored two second-half goals against Mexico to take his tally to five in the tournament.

Defender Gustavo Nery said that despite Brazil's strong performance against Mexico, the team had yet to prove itself at the Copa America, especially after their surprise defeat against Paraguay in the group stage.

"We haven't conquered anyone yet. Really, we are just starting to get going," Nery said.

Brazil lost 2-1 to 10-man Paraguay, ground out a 1-0 win over Chile and struggled to shine despite the scoreline in a 4-1 win against Costa Rica.

The new Henry?

Football

AFP, London

Didier Drogha can be a new Thierry Henry for Chelsea, says former Chelsea defender and France 1998 World Cup winner Frank Leboeuf.

Leboeuf spotted Drogha in the French league in 2002 and is sure the Ivory Coast international will be as big a hit at Stamford Bridge as Henry has been for champions Arsenal.

Drogha joined Chelsea on Monday for a club-record fee of 24.5 million pounds.

"There will be a big competition between him and Henry to be the Premiership top-scorer and biggest entertainer," Leboeuf told The Sun newspaper.

Leboeuf remembers being impressed when he first saw Drogha play for minnows Guingamp at Marseille.

"I was injured and watching in the stands and I thought I was watching Henry out on the pitch. I thought he runs like Thierry, he has



Didier Drogha

the pace of Thierry and he plays with a smile like Thierry."

Chelsea beat Juventus for Drogha, 26, who joined Marseille from Guingamp for 3.3 million pounds last year.

Drogha's move smashes the Premiership transfer record for a striker. The previous highest was the 19 million pounds Manchester United paid PSV Eindhoven for Ruud van Nistelrooy two years ago.

Critics point out that Chelsea paid a total of 32.6 million pounds for Hernan Crespo and Adrian Mutu last season, and saw the pair score just 22 goals between them.

Chelsea have also agreed a further 8 million pounds for Benfica midfielder Tiago to take over Roman Abramovich's summer spending to 70 million pounds with Serbian striker Mateja Kezman, Portuguese defender Paulo Ferreira, Dutch winger Arjen Robben and Czech goalkeeper Petr Cech.

Drogha is the most expensive player in Abramovich's 190 million pound Chelsea collection, gathered over just 13 months. He shatters the 17 million pound record set by Damien Duff and Mutu last year.

Chelsea initially offered 18.7 million pounds for Drogha but Abramovich was forced to raise the stakes to get Drogha on board before the team fly to the USA tomorrow for their pre-season tour.

Drogha, who scored 29 goals for Marseille last season, is a direct replacement for Argentine flop Crespo, farmed out on a years loan to AC Milan.

Troussier shown the door



AFP, Beijing

Qatar coach Philippe Troussier was left stunned here Tuesday after being sacked following his team's disastrous start to their Asian Cup campaign.

The experienced Frenchman, who saw Qatar crash to a shock 2-1 Group A defeat against Indonesia on Sunday, was told he had been fired for last weekend announcing he

planned to step down as coach after the tournament.

"I was informed this morning by the Qatar Football Association (QFA) that my services as head coach for the national team of Qatar are no longer needed for the rest of the competition," Troussier told a press conference.

"I am bitterly disappointed and really surprised because I never thought I would stop at this stage of the competition after all the work I have put in for the Asian Cup."

Troussier said comments last Saturday -- where he told Arabic broadcast media that he would

resign following the tournament -- had been misinterpreted. But he had later confirmed his plans to quit after Sunday's defeat.

"I respect the QFA's decision but at the same time I regret this decision because I think it has been taken because of a misinterpretation of my words which concerned only what comes after the Asian Cup," he said.

Saeed Al-Mesned will now be in charge for Qatar's second game against Bahrain on Wednesday, a game the Gulf team must win to have any realistic chance of progressing to the quarter-finals.

JOB VACANCY



The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) is a high profile cricket organization responsible for governing the game. In keeping with its international standing the BCB is professionalizing its administration and is therefore looking to fill the following positions:

- 1. National Grounds and Facilities Manager. No. of Position: 1. This is a high profile responsible position. The incumbent will report to the CEO. The candidate should have the following qualifications: a. The candidate should hold an MBA from a reputable university and have a strong background in commercial, financial, personnel and administration fields. b. He should have a minimum of five years experience in a managerial position in a reputable national/international organization(s). c. The candidate should have project management ability.
- 2. Venue Manager. No. of Position: 6. The candidate will report to the National Grounds and Facilities Manager and should have the following qualifications: a. The candidate should be a graduate from a reputable university with strong background in commercial, financial, personnel and administration fields. b. He should have a minimum of three years experience in managerial position in a reputable national/international organization(s). The candidate must be skilled in using MS Office in windows Platform, his knowledge of cricket would be an added advantage and he should have the ability to plan in advance, co-ordinate, multitask and provide reports on a regular basis. The Venue Managers will be posted to stadiums in Chittagong, Khulna, Rajshahi, Bogra, Fatullah & Dhaka. A local candidate resident in the city of the stadium would be an advantage however the right candidate would not be excluded. The interested candidates are requested to send their CVs along with 2 recent photographs to the Chief Executive Officer, Bangladesh Cricket Board, Management Office (5th floor) 45 Gulshan Avenue, Gulshan-1, Dhaka-1212 on or before 30th July 2004. Only the short listed candidates will be called for an interview.