

# Anybody's gold

**REUTERS, Athens**

No Marion Jones, the Sydney Olympics 100 metres champion.

No Kelli White, the world champion in Paris last year. No Torri Edwards, who succeeded her fellow American as the world gold medalist when White was banned for doping.

In the absence of the three top Americans, Saturday's Olympic women's 100 metres final is the most open since the 1992 Barcelona Games.

Germany's Katrin Krabbe had been the early favourite in Barcelona but withdrew from the Games because of the controversy following her suspension for tampering with a drugs test.

Although Krabbe, the double 1991 world and European sprint champion, was cleared to compete on a technicality she withdrew, saying the emotional turmoil would not allow her to perform properly.

Sadly, doping still scars the central sport of the Olympic Games.

Jones, who failed to qualify for the Athens sprint, is being investigated by the United States Anti-Doping Agency.

White has been banned for two years after admitting taking a disturbing variety of prohibited drugs. Edwards is herself serving a two-year ban after testing positive for a stimulant this year.

Greece's Katerina Thanou, silver medalist behind Jones in Sydney, is also missing after withdrawing from the Games in a scandal over missed dope tests.

To everybody's surprise, Gail Devers, better known as a 100 metres hurdles exponent, emerged from the pack to win the Barcelona 100 flat title.

Four years later in Atlanta, she won again in the tightest of finishes from Jamaican Merlene Ottey with both women credited with the same time.

Astonishingly the pair are still competing at the highest level and will run in Saturday's semi-finals.

Devers, 37, grabbed the last place on the American team after Edwards's ban. Ottey, 44, now runs for Slovenia.

Even after the bizarre events of the past year, it seems inconceivable that either will figure among the medalists on Saturday.

It remains anyone's guess, however, who out of the remaining Americans LaTasha Colander and Lauryn Williams or Frenchwoman Christine Arron, or any of the other likely finalists, will succeed Jones as Olympic champion.

# Giants disappoint

**CU CORRESPONDENT**

A last minute goal by Brothers Union's substitute striker Alfaz Ahmed was ruled off-side as the second phase of the fourth Nitol-Tata National Football League ended amid controversy and violence in Chittagong yesterday.

Referee Mansoor Azad was assaulted immediately after blowing the final whistle of the last match of the port city-leg between Dhaka giants Brothers and Mohammedan Sporting Club ended in a goalless draw in front of nearly 17,000 spectators at the MA Aziz Stadium.

Some ill-tempered officials of Brothers entered the ground and manhandled Azad before police could rescue him. Some angry fans also tried to break into the field, and police took care of them.

Alfaz fired home a lob from the right flank as Mohammedan midfielder Amin Rana's bid to clear it with a header failed. But Azad disqualified the strike.

Brothers manager Amer Khan in his reaction expressed anger over the offside decision.

"Everyone who is aware of the rules of the game knows that the decision was wrong. It was a clear goal," he said adding that even some of the rival booters admitted it after the match.

Brothers topped Group B with 13 points while Mohammedan finished behind them with 11. Sheikh Russel Krira Chakra are the other team from the group to qualify for the Super Six which starts in Dhaka from August 27.

Abahani, Muktijoddha and Chittagong Mohammedan are the other three teams to qualify for the six-team finals from Group A.

Abahani, Muktijoddha and Brothers all carry four bonus points to the finals while Mohammedan two, Sheikh Russel one and Chittagong Mohammedan nil.

In a battle of stars, the boys from Gopibagh dominated the show. But most of their attempts either flew over the crossbar or went wide of the side posts. Their best chance came in the 26th minute when they earned a free-kick just outside the box. But playmaker Arman Mia's powerful shot was brilliantly saved by Mohammedan keeper Tareq.

Four minutes later, the black and whites threatened to score when



PHOTO: STAR  
Mohammedan goalkeeper Tareq makes a save against Brothers Union during their Nitol-Tata Football League encounter at the MA Aziz Stadium yesterday.

### What to WATCH

**BTV**  
Athens Olympic Games  
Highlights  
Live at 8:30 pm

**ESPN**  
English Premier Football League  
Aston Villa vs West Bromwich  
Live at 5:55 pm

Arsenal vs Middlesbrough  
Live at 9:00 pm

**STAR Sports**  
England vs West Indies  
4th Test, Day Four  
Live at 3:30 pm

**TEN Sports**  
Sri Lanka vs South Africa  
Second ODI  
Live at 9:45 am

## ATHENS STREET TALK

**AFP, Athens**

Thousands of free condoms have been snapped up by athletes and officials staying in the Olympic Village, Greece's best-selling daily Ta Nea reported Saturday.

About 15,000 packets of condoms have been distributed for free by the village's health clinic since the camp opened in early August.

"The daily disposal rate is at about 1,000 (condoms) a day ... athletes take their little boxes with no inhibition, as part of a natural process," the report said.

The condom manufacturing company had donated around 130,000 packets to cover the athletes needs.

"I don't believe athletes actually use them. They just take them because they're distributed for free from two automatic vending machines outside," said a pharmacy employee.

**MORE WOMEN TAKING PART**

More than 40 per cent of the competitors at the Athens Olympics are women, a record level for a gender that was unrepresented the last time the Games were conducted here back in 1896.

The International Olympic Committee revealed that the participation level for women, bolstered by the addition of women's wrestling to the Games lineup, surpassed the former mark of 38 per cent from the 2000 Sydney Olympics.

There were no women in the Olympics until the 1900 Paris Games.

Now there are women in most events, although Olympic boxing -- for now -- remains strictly for men.

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PHOTO: AFP  
AMERICAN EAGLE: US swimming sensation Michael Phelps dives into the pool during the men's 100m butterfly final at the Olympic Aquatic Centre in Athens on August 20.

# Bekele writes new chapter

**REUTERS, Athens**

Ethiopia's Kenenisa Bekele sealed his reputation as both the present and future of long-distance running when he won the Olympic men's 10,000 metres on Friday, leaving his mentor Haile Gebrselassie to finish fifth.

The 22-year-old Bekele, who had already dethroned Gebrselassie as world champion last year, produced a withering burst on the final lap to win in 27 minutes 5.10 seconds and take his compatriot's Olympic crown as well.

Silver went to their team mate Sileshi Sihine, just over four seconds back, with Zersenay Tadese of Eritrea taking bronze in 27:22.57.

Bekele, Gebrselassie and Sihine then celebrated the result of the first track final at the Olympic stadium with a joint lap of honour before being engulfed by their supporters.

Yet despite the smiles, the race was a sad Olympic farewell for Gebrselassie.

The 31-year-old won the event in 1996 and 2000 but any lingering hope of an unprecedented third title faded before the Games when he injured an Achilles tendon.

Still suffering but determined to help his younger teammates by taking painkillers, he barely warmed up before the start.

Bekele led early then allowed the field to bunch again until Gebrselassie suddenly surged to the front with 18 laps to go.

The three Ethiopians exchanged the lead constantly, ratcheting up the pace so that the lead group was down to seven by halfway.

Bekele, eyes down as if in a trace, floated across the track. Gebrselassie, however, was suffering and looked increasingly ragged.

With 11 laps to go Bekele injected another burst, allowed the front bunch to merge back together, then exchanged words with Sihine.

The pair suddenly attacked and burst clear before Bekele made the gold his own.

As his younger team mates ran around the stadium to celebrate further, Gebrselassie was left alone in the centre of the stadium, limping.

**Pittman shines**

**REUTERS, Athens**

A mere 13 days after undergoing knee surgery, Australia's Jana Pittman came through the first round of qualifying for the Olympic women's 400 metres hurdles unscathed on Saturday.

| Country       | G  | S  | B  | Total |
|---------------|----|----|----|-------|
| United States | 18 | 12 | 12 | 42    |
| China         | 17 | 12 | 10 | 39    |
| Japan         | 12 | 4  | 3  | 19    |
| Australia     | 9  | 5  | 8  | 22    |
| Germany       | 8  | 6  | 9  | 23    |
| France        | 6  | 5  | 6  | 17    |
| Russia        | 5  | 12 | 13 | 30    |
| South Korea   | 5  | 9  | 4  | 18    |
| Great Britain | 5  | 6  | 5  | 16    |
| Italy         | 5  | 6  | 5  | 16    |
| Ukraine       | 5  | 2  | 3  | 10    |
| Romania       | 3  | 0  | 2  | 5     |
| Greece        | 3  | 0  | 1  | 4     |
| Turkey        | 3  | 0  | 1  | 4     |
| Netherlands   | 2  | 5  | 5  | 12    |
| Hungary       | 2  | 3  | 1  | 6     |
| Slovakia      | 2  | 2  | 1  | 5     |
| Thailand      | 2  | 0  | 2  | 4     |
| Belarus       | 1  | 2  | 4  | 7     |
| Poland        | 1  | 2  | 2  | 5     |
| Indonesia     | 1  | 1  | 2  | 4     |
| South Africa  | 1  | 1  | 2  | 4     |
| Zimbabwe      | 1  | 1  | 1  | 3     |

# Razzaq, Moin power Pakistan

**Cricket**

**AFP, Amstelveen**

An unbroken stand of 56 between Abdul Razzaq and Moin Khan took Pakistan to 192 for six in their Videocon Cup triangular series opener against India at the VRA Ground here Saturday.

Razzaq (35 not out off 27 balls with two sixes) and Moin 27 not out (off 20 balls with three fours) took 42 runs off the last three overs of a match twice reduced by rain to 33 overs per side.

Seamer Lakshminpathy Balaji kept things tight with three for 27 from seven overs before the Pakistani batsmen cashed in with paceman Irfan Pathan seeing his seven overs go for 57 runs.

Earlier Shoaib Malik weighed in with 68 off 67 balls after India captain Sourav Ganguly won the toss and elected to field.

His decision came after star batsman Sachin Tendulkar had been ruled out of the tournament with an elbow injury.

After a four hour delay a capacity 10,000 crowd saw Shahid Afridi loft the fifth ball of the match, from Irfan Pathan, high over long-on for six.

But India hit back when Afridi, who had raced to a typically aggressive 19, got a soaring top edge off Ajit Agarkar and Mohammad Kaif running back in the covers took a fine catch.

India's change bowlers kept things tight and Yasir Hameed went for a 35-ball nine when he edged Balaji through to wicketkeeper Rahul Dravid.

New batsman Inzamamul Haq was soon back in the pavilion, given out to the Balaji-Dravid combination for one, Pakistan 58 for three in



PHOTO: AFP  
GOT HIM: India's Mohammad Kaif takes the catch to dismiss Pakistan opener Shahid Afridi (not in picture) as Yuvraj Singh looks on during the opening match of the Videocon Cup in Amsterdam yesterday.