

Premier League resumes July 22

SPORTS REPORTER

The start of the Premier Bank Premier Football League second leg will be delayed by a day due to preparation of the ground at the Bangabandhu National Stadium.

The second leg will now begin on July 22 with leaders Mohammedan Sporting Club taking on Dipali Juba Sangha.

Defending champions Brothers Union will meet Dhaka Wanderers on the following day followed by Muktioddha-Youngmen's, Aba-hani-Arambagh and Farashganj-Russel KC matches in the remaining of the first round games.

Lifters receive medals

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh weightlifters Hamidul Islam and Biddyt Kumar Roy received their silver medals and cash rewards yesterday for their success in the ninth SAF Games.

Both lifters won bronze medals, Hamidul in 62kg weight category and Biddyt in the 94kg class during the Islamabad Games in April 2004. The Bangladeshi pair was awarded silvers after the two Pakistani gold winners were stripped of their medals following a dope test.

The Bangladesh Olympic Association (BOA) acting secretary general Kutubuddin Ahmed and Bangladesh Weightlifting Federation president ASM Shahjahan handed over the medals at a simple ceremony at the BOA office.

Kutubuddin told reporters that the sports federations would have to be careful about using drugs for athletes.

"We have already sent lists of banned drugs to the federations. We have also trained physicians about doping who would be able to help the federations regarding this issue," Kutubuddin added.

Hamidul and Biddyt were both elated after receiving silver medals and the cash reward which was promised by the federation. The federation had announced that they would give Tk two lakh, one lakh and 25,000 respectively for winning gold, silver or bronze.

Hamidul and Biddyt had already received Tk 25,000 on grabbing bronze.

Robinho has to show face

SAO PAULO

Santos president Marcelo Teixeira is refusing to speak with anyone from Real Madrid over Robinho's transfer.

Teixeira won't agree to return to the negotiating table until Robinho ends his self-imposed exile and returns to Santos training.

If Robinho returns to training, negotiations will move very quickly, with sources close to Teixeira telling AS that the player's presence at Santos HQ will immediately see the president accept a £18 million bid from Real.

"Teixeira has refused to receive (agent Juan) Figer and Ribeiro in the last days after both left the offices of Santos following the last Madrid offer of £17 million," said a Santos spokesman.

"The player has said publicly that Teixeira is not a man of his word. But not only he, but his father and his representative also - and that is unforgivable." Internet Source



Did U Know?

Football was the first team sport added to the Olympics in 1900.



Pele

(Brazilian soccer legend)

"I think the technology can help but not on this point because in soccer you cannot stop the game and say 'Okay, let's see if it was a goal or not' like in American football."



PHOTO: AFP

Real Madrid striker Michael Owen about to score past goalkeeper Kevin Hartman of the Los Angeles Galaxy during their game at the Home Depot Center in Carson, California on Monday.

No Ronaldo, Adriano swap

Football

REUTERS, Madrid

Real Madrid denied media reports on Monday they had been trying to arrange an exchange deal between Ronaldo and Inter Milan striker Adriano.

"In the light of the reports about a possible deal involving Ronaldo and Adriano Real Madrid would like to reiterate that they will not listen to any offer nor will they negotiate the sale of Ronaldo," read a statement on the club's website.

"The club would like to make it absolutely clear that neither the president (Florentino Perez) nor any representative of the club will consider an offer for the Real Madrid player."

Ronaldo, 28, joined Real for

\$46.3 million from Inter Milan in 2002 and has been the club's leading scorer in each of the last three seasons. At present he is touring the U.S. States and Asia with Real Madrid.

Although they have denied any interest in Adriano, Real have made no secret of their desire to sign another Brazilian international, Robinho, despite the unwillingness of his club Santos to sell him.

Spanish and English media have been reporting that if Real succeeded in signing the 21-year-old forward they would be willing to sell England striker Michael Owen, but as yet the club has not made any official comment about the former Liverpool player's future.

Meanwhile, Inter said that they were "not optimistic" about their chances of signing Liverpool target Luis Figo.

The Italian club's president Massimo Moratti revealed he is not close to finalising a move for either Figo or the Portuguese star's Real team-mate Walter Samuel.

"We will try to do something in the next few days," said Moratti. "We will see in what direction this takes us, but nothing is free. Thus, we are not optimistic when it comes to the financial side of the deal but from the sporting side, we are. We are willing to try to do it."

Samuel, who joined Madrid from Roma last summer, has failed to make much of an impact at the Bernabeu, while midfielder Figo, under contract for another season with the Spanish giants, is looking to secure more first-team football.

Liverpool have held talks with Figo but are unwilling to pay a transfer fee for the 32-year-old.

Galacticos blank Galaxy

REUTERS, Carson

England captain David Beckham picked up a hamstring injury as Real Madrid concluded the U.S. leg of their six-match tour with a comfortable 2-0 win over the Los Angeles Galaxy at a sold-out Home Depot Center on Monday.

"I had two sore hamstrings after the game in Chicago (on Saturday) and thought it was just stiffness but maybe it is a little bit more," Beckham told Reuters after the game.

"We travel to Thailand tonight and we will see how it is. If it is torn then I will probably go home," he added.

Beckham pulled up shortly after taking a free-kick in the 58th minute and was replaced by Portuguese midfielder Luis Figo.

Real Madrid had taken the lead in the sixth minute when a pass from Zinedine Zidane found an unmarked Michael Owen on the edge of the six yard box and the England striker calmly slotted the ball past Galaxy goalkeeper Kevin Hartman.

A series of substitutions in the second half, which began with the departure of Beckham and Zidane around the hour mark, disrupted the flow of the game and turned the match into a more even contest.

However, Madrid striker Roberto Soldado sealed victory for the nine-times European champions with 15 minutes remaining, firing a low shot past Hartman from the edge of the penalty area.

On Saturday, Madrid defeated Mexico's Chivas Guadalajara 3-1 in Chicago and now head off to Asia for the remaining four matches of the tour in Beijing, Bangkok and Tokyo.

"We're up against a team that's got some fantastic bowlers, Stephen Harmison, Flintoff and Matthew Hoggard, that can bowl a heavy ball at over 90mph.

"It's tough playing against a guy like Harmison whose 6ft 4, he's got the Curtly Ambrose type of trajectory off the pitch which can be very hard to face and on these seeming English wickets can be a bit of a handful.

"And England have got someone to back him up. You think you've done the hard work if you're Matthew

Now Spurs after 'The Beast'

REUTERS, Madrid

Tottenham Hotspur have joined the race to sign Sevilla forward Julio Baptista and have offered over 20 million euros (\$24.14 million) for the Brazil international, the Primera Liga side's president said on Monday.

Jose Maria del Nido told reporters at a news conference in Seville the club still had no intention of selling the player who is due to return from Brazil to start pre-season training on Tuesday.

"Unless we receive some bigger offers Baptista will play for Sevilla this season," he said during the presentation of new signing Italian midfielder Enzo Maresca.

Last week Del Nido said he had rejected an offer of 20 million euros from Arsenal for the 23-year-old, but reports in the Spanish and English press suggested that the two clubs were on the verge of closing a deal.

Spanish media reported on Friday that Arsenal were prepared to use the money they had raised from the sale of Patrick Vieira to Juventus to finance the deal.

Baptista joined Sevilla on a five-year contract from Sao Paulo in July 2003 for \$2.8 million, with coach Joaquin Caparros converting him from a midfielder into an extra forward.

He made an immediate impact at the Andalusian club, earning the sobriquet "La Bestia" (the Beast) for his rampaging runs into the area, ending his first season as leading scorer with 20 league goals from 30 appearances.

Last season he notched 18 goals to help Sevilla to a sixth-place finish in the Primera Liga for the second season in succession.

No African homeless wanted!

Football

REUTERS, London

Five African teams have pulled out of the Homeless World Cup in Edinburgh after Britain refused visas for their players.

Organisers of the street soccer tournament said some players from Burundi, Cameroon, Zambia, Nigeria and Kenya had been turned down because British officials did not believe they had enough money for their stay in the Scottish capital.

The decision came about 10 days after G8 leaders met in Scotland to discuss alleviating poverty in Africa.

"To deny homeless people access to the UK on the basis that they are too poor is ridiculous," the tournament's co-founder Mel Young said.

"It raises some serious questions around the British government's commitment to taking action towards alleviating poverty in Africa."

The Homeless World Cup was founded in 2003 to highlight homelessness and poverty, and underline

the positive effects of football. The four-a-side street tournament opens in the Scottish capital on Wednesday and involves 32 national teams.

"How can they say that we are too poor to play football?" said Kenyan team chief Siegfried Milchberger.

"My team and I cannot even begin to account the loss we have suffered. It leaves me wondering what London Olympics 2012 has in store for Africa," he was quoted as saying by the tournament's organisers.

The Foreign Office said it regretted that some participants had not satisfied visa requirements. Russian and American players had also been turned down, a spokeswoman said.

"The immigration rules have been applied fairly and consistently in all cases. Each applicant has been considered on their own individual circumstances," she said.

Many of the teams have been set up by streetpapers, such as the Big Issue. To qualify for the World Cup, players must either have been homeless over the past year, make their living from selling streetpapers or be seeking asylum.

Baros on way out?

Football

AFP, Liverpool

Liverpool manager Rafael Benitez has indicated he is ready to sell Milan Baros after leaving the Czech striker out of Tuesday's Champions League qualifying match against TNS in Wrexham.

That will spark a scramble for the Czech striker's services, with West Ham and Aston Villa leading the chase.

Baros was dumped from the Liverpool squad named to face TNS in the second leg of their first qualifying round tie, along with keeper Jerzy Dudek, who has also been told to find a new club.

Benitez is swiftly moving players out to finance a move of his own for Southampton striker Peter Crouch.

Liverpool have placed a 6 million pound price tag on Baros. He was the leading scorer at Euro 2004 and played the first 85 minutes of the Champions League final against AC Milan in Istanbul. But he has failed to fit into Benitez's style of play.

West Ham were believed to be preparing a bid of around 5 million pounds and were hoping for permis-

sion to talk to the 24-year-old.

Villa, too, will make a renewed bid after trailing the striker since last summer - but Baros is looking for a move abroad, possibly to Spain.

Barcelona made an enquiry last summer and the striker would jump at the chance to move to the Nou Camp Stadium, but that interest has cooled.

Atletico Madrid, Valencia and Deportivo are all interested, but not at the price Liverpool want.

Baros was on the bench when TNS visited Anfield for the first leg last week, but Benitez refused to bring him on even late in the game, as he avoided the prospect of the player being cup-tied, and hence more difficult to sell.

Dudek was left out of the 18 for that game, and once again he has been dropped from the squad, with youngster Scott Carson acting as back-up to new keeper Jose Reina.

It has been made clear to the Poland international that even after his heroics in the Champions League final, there is no place for him at Liverpool.

Benitez is looking for around 2 million pounds for the experienced keeper and there is still some interest from PSV Eindhoven.

Lee ready to be hit

FROM PAGE 12

on a few occasions. It was a great personal record but I'd give all that back to take five wickets in a Lord's Test. It would be pretty nice to say you've done that at the home of cricket.

"But the reason I'm in the Australian team is to bow fast and take wickets. There's no reason why I'll slow down to 80mph and shape the ball."

Australia have won the last eight Ashes series, a run stretching back nearly 20 years.

But with England having won their last five Test series, Lee said: "It's the first time in a number of decades that both teams have been so close to being level.

"We're up against a team that's got some fantastic bowlers, Stephen Harmison, Flintoff and Matthew Hoggard, that can bowl a heavy ball at over 90mph.

"It's tough playing against a guy like Harmison whose 6ft 4, he's got the Curtly Ambrose type of trajectory off the pitch which can be very hard to face and on these seeming English wickets can be a bit of a handful.

"And England have got someone to back him up. You think you've done the hard work if you're Matthew

Hayden, or Ricky Ponting or Justin Langer (Australia's top three) to get through Harmison. You get down the other end and you've got Flintoff.

"It's a bit like groundhog day. It just doesn't end. We've got our work cut out. There'll definitely be fireworks on Thursday morning.

Lee admitted it had been tough competing for a place alongside Kasprovicz, who he stressed deserved "full credit" for his Test displays in recent months.

"I think that's what makes it hard, that we all are so close. The FBC, the fast bowling cartel as the boys call it, we are a very tight-knit unit and sometimes tough in the paper when you read we (Lee and Kasprovicz) are competing for that one spot. But it makes us work harder.

"But saying that it's sport and that's why we play sport. Nothing would be worse than if it was plain sailing all the time."

However, he added: "Hopefully when I do finish this will only a small blip on the radar. My aim is to get back in the Australian team as soon as possible."

Souness favourite to get the sack

AFP, London

Newcastle's Graeme Souness has won the first 'award' of the coming English Premiership season by being named by bookmakers William Hill as the favourite to become the first manager to be sacked.

Souness tops the sack race at 5-1, ahead of Fulham's Chris Coleman, West Ham's Alan Pardew, Charlton's Alan Curbishley and Portsmouth's Alain Perrin, all at 8-1.

Alex Ferguson is 14-1 to go if he fails to bring the success demanded by new owner Malcolm Glazer while Chelsea's Jose Mourinho is rated 100-1 and Arsenal's Arsene Wenger 66-1.

Newcastle have a history of sacking managers early and in the past eight seasons have dispensed with Kenny Dalglish, Ruud Gullit and Bobby Robson before the end of September.

Some odds are puzzling. Blackburn's Mark Hughes, Birmingham's Steve Bruce and Tottenham's Martin Jol are all regarded as safer than Liverpool's European Cup-winning manager Rafael Benitez, quoted at 16-1.

ODDS	
5-1	Graeme Souness
8-1	Chris Coleman, Alan Pardew, Alan Curbishley, Alain Perrin
12-1	Paul Jewell, Mick McCarthy, Bryan Robson
14-1	Alex Ferguson, David O'Leary
16-1	Rafa Benitez
20-1	Steve McClaren, Steve Bruce, Martin Jol, Mark Hughes
25-1	Stuart Pearce, David Moyes
33-1	Sam Allardyce
66-1	Arsene Wenger
100-1	Jose Mourinho

Captaincy not an extra burden, says Dravid

PTI, Bangalore

Newly appointed skipper Rahul Dravid on Tuesday said he did not see captaincy as an additional burden and expressed confidence he would continue to bat the way he always did.

"I don't see it as an additional burden. I have to obviously give time for my captaincy. There will be a time when I will have to concentrate on batting and forget captaincy," he said in response to a question.

"I am really excited; it's an honour to lead the side," Dravid said. "There is certain amount of pressure every time when one plays for India.

"No, I don't particularly think so (that he will have added pressure because of captaincy)," The Wall said, a day after he was selected captain for the tri-series in Sri Lanka commencing on July 30.

"I think, it (captaincy) is going to be a huge challenge," he said. "I have done it before (as stand-in captain whenever Sourav Ganguly was unavailable). So, I am looking forward to it." Asked if he was looking for "longer arrangement" (lead the side even after the tri-series), Dravid pointed out that he had been named captain only for the Sri Lanka series.

Noting that players and captain were picked on series-to-series basis, he said one had to look at the scenario from that perspective.

Otits friendly today

BDNEWS, Dhaka

Dhaka Sonali Otiti Club will play a friendly football match against hosts Narayanang Sonali Otiti Club at the Alaudin Khan Stadium today.

Former national players including Chunnun, Gaus and Swapon will play for the Narayanang team while Badal Roy, Johnny, Kaiser Hamid, Sabir and Alok will participate for the Dhaka outfit.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS		34 "Texas tea"		DOWN	
1	Cicatrix	35	Triumph	1	Resorts
5	Cyndi Lauper's "She —"	36	Partners	2	Arrived
8	Jet forth	37	Rolex, e.g.	3	Enthusiastic
12	Summon on a beeper	40	Skirt support	4	Workers' histories
13	— shoe-string	41	Optimally	5	Give a leg up
14	"Raising Arizona" star	45	Smooth-talking	6	"A Chorus Line" song
15	Andy's pal	47	Retriever type, for short	7	In need of a drink
16	— the ramparts ...	49	State with conviction	8	Cous-leau's gear
17	Desire	50	"Cheers" supply	9	Twittering pet
18	Musical transitions	51	Self-importance	10	Early bird?
20	Island nation	52	Anger	11	Infinite-mal
22	Yente in "Fiddler on the Roof"	53	Antitoxins	19	Listening device
26	Less at risk	54	CSA soldier		
29	With it, once (Fr.)	55	Cohort		
30	Water				
31	Speaker of baseball				
32	Comical Caesar				
33	Porgy's love				

Solution time: 25 mins.



1	2	3	4		5	6	7		8	9	10	11	
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CRYPTOQUIP

L Z V A W D Q V M B X D Q V D A

Q C I M L Q D G C X Q V C Q M B X

Z M L K V A W Y W R D R L Y I K V

D G Q A N L B D G C D A N C K

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IN MY LIBRARY I HAVE COLLECTED NOVELS, SOME COOK-BOOKS, AND THE REST IS HISTORY.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: D equals T

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.