

Mexico pay dearly for dopers

AFP, Zurich

A 480,000-euro fine has been imposed on the Mexican football federation, FIFA said in a Wednesday statement, after two players were expelled from last month's Confederations Cup following failed doping tests.

The Mexican federation expelled Aaron Galindo and Salvador Carmona on June 22 after they had played in their 2-1 victory over Japan and 1-0 win over Brazil for testing positive for steroid nandrolone.

Mexico lost to Argentina on penalties in the semi-final.

The tests were carried out by the Mexican federation before the tournament, which began on June 15.

Further individual punishments were also handed out by FIFA. The president of the Mexican federation Jose Alberto de la Torre and national team doctor Jose Luis Serrano were fined 12,820 euros and 3,205 euros respectively.

B'baria cricket

OUR CORRESPONDENT

Surjo Tarun Cricket Club defeated Nabarun Cricket Club by 12 runs in the Shaheed Freedom Fighter Rongu Mia Cup Cricket Tournament at the Shahjadpur Junior High School playground yesterday.

Winning the toss, Surjo Tarun decided to bat and made 102-9 in the stipulated 30 overs.

Tajul top-scored with 52 and also snatched three wickets for his team. Nabarun managed just 90 in 26 overs.

Shaheen's new appointment

BDNEWS, Dhaka

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) yesterday made board advisor Shah Nurul Kabir Shaheen the chairman of administration and management of umpiring assessment review committee.

The other members of the committee are: Jalal Yunus, Mahub Anam, Shafiqur Rahman Munna and Mahmood Jamal.

Which Aussie

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Expectations are high from Moody also as Sri Lanka have already set their sights on the 2007 World Cup in the West Indies. He has already said he wants to help Sri Lanka maintain their impressive home record and develop their ability to win away from home.

Moody began his coaching stint with Sri Lanka with a Test series victory over the West Indies, but he would be far from pleased with his team's batting performance.

None of the Sri Lankan big guns - Sanath Jayasuriya, skipper Marvan Atapattu and Mahela Jayawardene - could boom against a depleted West Indian side.

Moody, a one-day specialist who was part of Australia's 1987 and 1999 World Cup-winning squads, now steps into his familiar territory hoping his team will give a better batting performance in the shorter version of the game.

Bennett's task is most difficult. He was appointed coach last year to arrest the West Indies' decline in international cricket.

His problems multiplied before this tour as the leading West Indies players, including Brian Lara, were unavailable following a contract dispute with their cricket board.

The inexperienced West Indian side still bowled well in patches in the recent Test series, but their batting remained below par.

Chappell said it was just a "coincidence" that there would be three Australian coaches at the same tournament.

"I know Bennett and Tom very well. We will be cordial no doubt, but we have our hands full."

No matter which team wins the final, one thing is certain. There will be one Australian smiling at the end of the tournament.

No clear

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his team's fortunes in the shorter version of the game because of his ability to destroy any attack with a wide range of strokes.

The only consolation for Sri Lanka was that wicketkeeper-persbman Kumar Sangakara clicked ahead of the tri-series as he scored a century in the second innings of the second Test against the West Indies.

Another encouraging sign for Sri Lanka is the form of veteran spinner Muttiah Muralitharan who grabbed 17 wickets in two Tests after returning to international cricket. He had been out for nearly a year due to a shoulder injury.

The West Indies looked short of batting resources in both the Tests, relying heavily on captain Shivnarine Chanderepaul.

Chanderepaul, however, said his team would try to give a better performance in one-dayers.

"Our guys are accustomed to playing one-day cricket so it should be better for us. We just want to come out and play some positive cricket," he said.

United baffled

Football

AFP, Tokyo

English Premier League giants Manchester United slumped to the first defeat of their Asian tour on Thursday, losing 2-1 to Japanese J-League leaders Kashima Antlers.

It was the second high-profile scalp for a Japanese club this week after Tokyo Verdy hammered Real Madrid 3-0 here on Monday.

Kashima opened the scoring after just five minutes through Japanese international Masashi Motoyama, who latched on to a lob to fire the first of his two goals with his left foot.

Two minutes later United winger Ryan Giggs pushed home a Cristiano Ronaldo cross to equalise from inside the box.

Motoyama's winner came in the 24th minute. He picked up the ball from fellow international Mitsuo Ogasawara and banged another left-footed shot past England defender Rio Ferdinand.

Manchester United looked certain to find the equaliser in the second half with teenage sensation Wayne Rooney's shots posing a constant danger. However, Kashima's Japanese international goalkeeper Hitoshi Sogahata stood firm.

Despite the loss, Manchester United impressed the Tokyo National Stadium crowd of 40,197. Supporters cheered as Ronaldo, Rooney, Dutch international Ruud van Nistelrooy and South Korean hero Park Ji-Sung showed off their skills.

The Premier League team had earlier notched up four victories against Hong Kong (2-0) and Beijing Hyundai (3-0).

Kashima's Brazilian coach Toninho Cerezo shrugged off at a suggestion that European footballing giants have embarked on Asian tours mainly for business reasons and not for serious games.

Manchester coach Carlos Queiroz blamed the loss on fatigue from the long tour.

"Our side missed a lot of chances. Probably we were a little bit tired after the trip," he told reporters. "Everything will be fine. We will recover from this...for sure."



THE FACE SAYS IT ALL: Manchester United's Wayne Rooney is dejected during the friendly match against Japan's Kashima Antlers in Tokyo on Thursday. United lost 1-2.

"I believe European teams are very sincerely committed to their games. No one can take away the fact that Kashima beat Manchester United which has an impressive tradition and history," he said through a translator.

Manchester coach Carlos

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'Play me or I leave'

ITV, Tokyo

Real Madrid winger Luis Figo has again insisted that he will leave the club if he cannot be guaranteed regular first-team football.

The Portugal international spent the end of last season watching from the substitutes' bench and events on the club's pre-season tour of the US and the Far East have so far done little to indicate that his situation is about to change.

Although the 32-year-old has worked hard in every game, he has once again found himself starting as a substitute and is clearly getting frustrated.

With Thomas Gravesen starting several games on the right of midfield and Michael Owen favoured in attack, the arrival of Uruguayan Carlos Diogo and the probable incorporation of Robinho have only served to put Figo under greater pressure.

"It is a strange situation for me," the player told Gazzetta dello Sport. "What I want to do is play football and if possible for Real Madrid."

Figo has one year left on the six-year deal he signed when he joined from Barcelona in 2000, but he says that unless things change, he has little chance of seeing it out.

"If I don't have the chance to play football here, then I am not going to stay," he added.

Liverpool and Internazionale have both been strongly linked with the player, but the temperamental winger insists he is still concentrating on matters at the Spanish giants.

"I know there are important teams interested in me. It is an honour that Liverpool are interested, but there is nothing new about the move to Inter. At the moment I am concentrating on our tour of Asia," he added.

Figo knows first-team opportunities are likely to remain limited at the Bernabeu but so far his proposed moves away from the club has failed to materialise.

STANCHART CHESS Masum, Saif Clinch titles

SPORTS REPORTER

Masum Hossain of Dharmarajik School and Abdullah Al Saif of Goran Adarsha School lifted the boys' senior and junior crowns respectively in the Standard Chartered School Chess tournament which concluded yesterday.

In the final round of the 9-round Swiss League at the Chess Bangladesh Federation hall room, Masum drew with Ashrafuzzaman to emerge unbeaten champion with eight points in Group B (Class VI-X).

Sharif Hossain, who had a chance to bag the crown with a win, finished third with seven points when he lost to Sayed Hossain in the final round. Sayed became runner-up with 7.5 starting in September.

In Group A (KG-Class V), Saif's eight-match winning streak came to an end when he lost his last round game but he finished with eight points, half a point clear of runner-up Anirudha Majumder of St Joseph's. Sayan Majumder of Kolkata finished third with seven points.

Saathi Majumder of Kolkata earlier won the girls' title.

Later, Bangladesh Bank Governor Dr Salehuddin Ahmed distributed prizes among the winners.

Brothers hot

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tripped Emily inside the box to hand Brothers a penalty nine minutes from time. Emily, who has established himself in the Orange starting line-up for his skill and pace ahead of the experienced Khokon, made no mistakes from the spot. It was the rising star's fourth league goal.

It could have been 4-0 at the stroke of the final whistle but Masud Rana, after exchanging passes with substitute Tapu, was denied by Shimul from point blank range.

Before the match, a one-minute silence was observed to show respect to former Brothers Union patron Abul Hossain who died yesterday.

Yellow cards: Pranotosh (Brothers) and Shiplu (Youngmen's).

TEAMS
BROTHERS: Tareq, Sujan, Jewel, Masud Rana, Siraj, Pranotosh, Hicham, Abul (Monwar), Liton Khan (Liton), Victor (Tapu) and Emily.
YOUNGMEN'S: Shiplu, Mamun (Rony), Ariful, Shipon, Monaem, Robin Jr (Masud), Chanchal, Saikat (Ripon), Baten and Robin.

Referee: Ramkrishna Ghosh.

ECB confirms

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an alternative Test venue was because of the greater number of international-class hotels in that area, to accommodate the team, media and travelling spectators.

"The tour programme has been finalised after consultation with the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) and we are pleased to announce the itinerary," said a PCB statement.

Security experts from a private British company earlier this month assessed various grounds in Pakistan, focusing on Karachi which has a history of religious violence.

Stalemate could cost Robinho Brazil place

Football

AP, Sao Paulo

Striker Robinho could lose his place in the Brazil team if he fails to reach an agreement with Santos or Real Madrid, says coach Carlos Alberto Parreira.

"If there's no definition about his situation and he keeps missing practices, he will not likely be summoned for the match against Croatia," Parreira told local Radio Bandeirantes on Tuesday, referring to Brazil's friendly in the Adriatic city of Split on Aug. 17.

Negotiations on Robinho's transfer to Real Madrid are ongoing, and the striker hasn't played or practiced since helping Brazil win the Confederations Cup in Germany

A tour gone wrong

Football

AFP, Tokyo

Real Madrid closed a tour of Japan with their fame on the wane, as the once invincible David Beckham left with a spat over spitting hanging over him.

The tour that winds up in Thailand on Friday was meant to bring home Asian dollars and solidify football in a growing market, but some commentators believe the marketing magic is already fading.

Beckham, watching his team get thrashed before Japanese fans 0-3 by minnows Tokyo Verdy, accused Japanese player Kazuyuki Toda of spitting on him, an allegation dismissed by the J-League.

Earlier in China, a hamstring injury kept Beckham from playing Beijing Hyundai in a stadium that was rain-soaked and half-empty.

Real Madrid won some redemption on Wednesday with a 3-1 victory over Jubilo Iwata. But the Nikkan Sports tabloid noted that the match drew only about 70 percent of stadium capacity at 34,603 spectators.

A tiny article, buried inside the newspaper whose lead story was sumo wrestling, said that Japanese fans were growing more sober about Beckham, several years after the English captain's image was everywhere in Tokyo.

in June. Robinho wants to be released from Santos so his move to Spain can be finalized, but the Brazilian club insists on keeping the striker unless Real Madrid pays the US\$50 million (€41 million) stipulated in the buyout clause.

Robinho's contract with Santos runs until 2008, but he has refused to show up at the club, saying that his mind is already in Spain.

"Hopefully everything will be settled soon so he can be back in action by the next World Cup qualifiers," Parreira said.

The Brazil coach added that Robinho was still in the running for World Cup selection.

"The World Cup is one year from now, I'm sure Robinho will have organized his life by then, and will be practicing and playing," Parreira

"For the first time for a game with Beckham, the stadium was not full. It is certain that his bubble-like popularity has waned, as seen in the termination of a sponsor contract with Vodafone," the Nikkan Sports said.

Vodafone, the British telecom giant struggling to penetrate the Japanese market, has decided not to renew Beckham for its advertisements.

Beckham earlier ended another deal in Japan worth more than a million dollars to promote the Meiji confectionery company. Another top chocolate maker recently enlisted South Korean soap opera star Bae Yong-Joon as its star.

The Sports Nippon daily also buried news of the Real Madrid match, leading on the latest Japanese baseball player in the United States.

Sports Nippon columnist Tatsuhiro Kaneko wrote that he understood Real Madrid's motivations, as American baseball players' trips to the Far East gave birth to Japan's professional league.

"So I would not flatly deny Real Madrid's ambition of spreading fans across the world. But it is too much," Kaneko wrote.

"No matter how great the team is, they would not be able to show good play with this schedule, he said, noting that the team went straight from matches in Los Angeles to China to Tokyo.

said. "I won't hesitate to say that Robinho will be ready."

The friendly against Croatia will be Brazil's last match before World Cup qualifiers against Chile and Bolivia in September. Brazil is second to Argentina in the South American qualifying group, and is only one point away from clinching a berth in next year's competition.

In the interview, Parreira also said he wouldn't be surprised if Real Madrid striker Ronaldo quit the national team after the Cup in Germany.

"If I were in his position, I would not play in another World Cup," Parreira said. "He will be 33, and I don't think it would be worth going through all the stress and the pressure that comes with the competition."

"I may say it was a due result, but the number of Japanese fans who went to the stadium to see Real matches was smaller than last year."

Real's Brazilian coach Vanderlei Luxemburgo himself acknowledged the schedule was gruelling in trying to explain how the superstars fell to Verdy, who have lost 26 goals in their last six games in the J-League.

"We couldn't play our normal game because of fatigue caused by a long trip and we are not in good condition," said Luxemburgo.

"We lost because of nothing but fatigue. Everybody has been worn out. We also lost two goals in China on the wet pitch. The best weapon of our team is our strategy and we couldn't use it," he said.

But Luxemburgo defended the tour, saying it was good for the club's business as it would make football more popular in the world.

"When we make a tour, our friendships with other countries will be closer. It's necessary. After the tour, we will have a three-day off in Madrid and then we will start real pre-season preparation," said Luxemburgo.

"We will play a game in Austria after the off and start preparing for winning titles. We will have another month to go," Luxemburgo said.

Real will play their final game of the tour against the Thai All Stars in Bangkok on Friday before returning home.

Everton fear the worst

UEFA CHAMPS LEAGUE

AFP, London

Everton manager David Moyes fears his club will be paired with Merseyside rivals Liverpool in Friday's Champions League third qualifying round draw.

Liverpool are seeded and following their Champions League victory they have no country protection and could face unseeded Everton.

"I've got clear concerns about what might happen," Moyes said. "It is wrong that two clubs from the same country - the same city, even - could be drawn against each other."

Under ordinary circumstances there would be no prospect of clubs from the same country playing each other at this stage.

However, after Liverpool's dramatic win over AC Milan in Istanbul in

May, UEFA allowed the Reds to defend their title despite failing to finish in the English Premiership's top four.

Liverpool were seeded at Slavia Prague's expense but lost the right to avoid being drawn against teams from their own country.

That means they could play Everton, who have not been seeded, but will not face Manchester United who go into the pot of 16 seeded teams.

"The decision as to who is seeded or not is nothing to do with us. We can't influence that," Moyes added.

"But you qualify for the Champions League in order to play teams from another country, not your local rivals."

"There is only one club exposed to the fact that Liverpool have been granted country protection, and that's Everton."

Liverpool skipper Steven

Gerrard also hopes the clubs avoid each other.

"I'm sure it would be a great occasion if we did draw Everton in the next round but I'm sure if you asked both sides, we'd prefer to avoid each other at this stage," he said.

"It'd be brilliant to see both clubs in the group stages, but it'd be sod's law to draw each other on Friday."

The 14 winners from this month's second qualifying round will link up with 18 sides entering for the third qualifying round which precedes the group stage.

The ties will be played over two legs on August 9/10 and 23/24, with the 16 winners joining the 16 automatic qualifiers for the group stage, starting in September.

The second qualifying round will be completed next Wednesday when Liverpool take a 3-1 lead over Lithuanian champions Kaunas into the second leg at Anfield.

Back to square

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If that was funny to say the least, the latest announcement of captain and vice-captain has fuelled the rumours that Asghar is facing a serious credibility crisis.

Either he is not sure about what he wants or he is powerless to put into effect what he preaches. The most talked about issue at the moment is the captain's area of authority and with yesterday's announcement, we have all gone back to square one despite the wishes of the chief selector, the coach and the captain himself. The Cricket Committee which runs cricket affairs of the national team should have shown a more responsible attitude by allowing at least some sort of dialogue on the debate before announcing the captain, again for one tour only.



Bangladesh Cricket Board president Ali Asghar (R) hands over a cheque of Tk 2 lakh to ailing former national cricket coach Osman Khan at the latter's residence on Thursday.

Hackett smashes 800m WR

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But none of their performances came close to the astonishing display by Hackett, who produced one of the finest displays of endurance swimming ever.

The 25-year-old law student made his intentions clear from the outset when he set out at a cracking pace, opening up a full body length's lead over his rivals.

He surged further in front after each lap and was more than five seconds ahead of Thorpe's old mark with 200m to go.

He was still 3.82 under with 100m to go and although his blistering early speed was starting to take its toll, he had enough stamina in reserve to snatch the record.

"I knew I had to be well under to have a chance because I am never going to come home as fast as Ian," Hackett said.

"I think I probably swam a perfect race tonight."

Hackett's performance was all the more impressive because Larsen Jensen, who finished a distant second in 7:45.63, sliced two seconds off the American record while Russia's Yuri Prilukov set a European record to take third in 7:46.64.

Hackett's victory added to his already staggering list of achievements. He is the only swimmer to win gold medals at four world championships and he and Thorpe are the only swimmers to have won six individual career titles.

Hackett also holds the record for most career medals (15) with the likelihood of more to come in the 4x200m freestyle relay and the 1500m, his favourite event.

Apart from the world record he is unbeaten over the distance in almost a decade, winning the past three world titles and two Olympic golds.

Warnecke took gold in the

ESPN to inspect stadia

BDNEWS, Dhaka

ESPN representatives will visit Bangladesh to inspect the broadcast facilities of the Sher-e-Bangla Cricket Stadium in Mirpur, Bireshtohi Shahid Ruhul Amin Stadium (CDVS) in Chittagong and Shahid Chandu Stadium, Bogra.

The ESPN officials are due in the city on Saturday.

They will visit the Mirpur Stadium on Sunday, the Chittagong venue on Monday and the stadium at Bogra on Tuesday before leaving Dhaka on August 3.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS	1 Jazz fan	2 Proverbs	3 Pleased	4 Sara of "Less Than Perfect"	5 Send forth	6 "Arrive-derci —"	7 Idolater's writing	8 "Peter Pan" pooch	9 Always	10 Reception fare, perhaps	11 Sch. org.	12 Barbie's ex	13 Conical tent	14 A handful	15 27 Obtain	16 Screen-writer James	17 Eventual rose	18 Slaminate	19 Trot	20 Mess up	21 The neat roomie	22 Need to pay	23 Support system?	24 Informal affair	25 Skip over	26 Go like the wind	27 "Ujalume" Anderson sitcom	28 Singer Lovett	29 Noun suffix	30 Expert	31 "Chacun — godt"	32 "Marne" director	33 Chic, to Austin Powers	34 Cornfield intruder	35 German car	36 Adolescent	37 Julius Caesar's setting	38 Name in appliances	39 Skip over	40 Entwine	41 Pamela Anderson sitcom	42 Inexperienced	43 Complimentary close, often	44 "My Cup Runneth Over"	45 Trump singer	46 Show chutzpah	47 Duel tool	48 Wild a hatchel and again	49 Trump casino hotel, for short	50 Julius Caesar's setting	51 Teamwork barrier	52 Cribbage score-keeper	53 Bear hair	54 Guy's companion	55 28 New Haven collegian	56 Cowboy moniker	57 Progress-easily (through)	58 Vegan's no-no	59 Ram's ma'am	60 Bowling rounds	61 Again and again	62 Thwart	63 Caffeine-rich nut	64 Irving and Grant	65 Very thin pastry dough	66 Coastal area on the Big Island	67 Unwanted e-mail	68 Gabrielle Chanel	69 Pay attention
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