

Athletes' SA camp starts Nov 12

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Athletics Federation will begin a preparation camp for the SA Games on November 12 with 23 athletes including nine females.

The SA Games, formerly known as SAF Games, will be held in the Sri Lankan capital Colombo early next year.

Coaches Kitab Ali, Nazrul Islam Rumi and Nimai Chand will conduct the camp. The athletes have been requested to report at the Army Stadium on November 12 at 5pm.

The athletes: Fouzia Huda Jui, Nazmunnahar Beauty, Ishrat Jahan Eva, Sumita Rani Das, Shamsunnahar Chumki, Hajera Khatun, Rawshan Ara, China Khatun, Sathi Parveen, Hafizur Rahman, Shahidul Islam, Imran Bhuiyan, Mohun, Mohammed Shamsuddin, Towhidul Islam, Mohammed Hafizur Rahman, Mahfuzur Rahman, Afzal Hossain Surya, Abdur Rahman, Manzoor Morshed, Hanifur Rahman, Abdul Kafi Sarkar, Golam Mawla.

Asghar accepts

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learning it from other people," said Mamun while reacting to the fact that his resignation had been accepted.

"I'm also surprised that the board president did not even care to convene a meeting following the allegation that he struck a deal with Aston Moore. I think it's a bad precedence for our cricket," said Mamun.

He also feared that the present leadership in the BCB lacked the vision and motivation to run cricket affairs professionally.

"I'm happy that my resignation has been accepted. But I'm not going far away from cricket that I love most. I will be there again if the right man assumes the presidency."

Gazi Tanks

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(34), Alok Kapali (18) and Khaled Mashud (2) to initiate a collapse that saw Araf lose four wickets in the space of 14 runs.

However, skipper Hasanzaman Rosel's fluent 45 off 72 balls helped Araf recover and go past the 200-run mark. Having hit four fours and one six, Rosel was brilliantly caught by Aftab at wide long-on. Aftab, who took another catch in the same over to fold the rival innings two deliveries later, captured 3-42 with his medium-pacers while his national teammate Manzarul Islam's left-arm spin produced three tail wickets costing him just 20 runs from 10 overs.

Title contenders Gazi Tanks were also staring at defeat when they were reduced to 57-5 despite a quickfire 26 off 21 balls by Aftab after tall pacesman Shafaq Al Jabir (4-37) destroyed the top order.

However, young pair Abul Bashar (47) and Wasel Uddin (45) added 96 runs for the sixth wicket to set the stage for captain Mahmud, who coasted his side to victory with nearly five overs to spare. The all-rounder smashed six fours and a six in his cameo 25-ball 37 not out as Gazi Tanks reached 208-7 in 45.1 overs.

BEXIMCO-METRO REAL ESTATE

Left-arm spinner Abdur Razzak grabbed 5-24 to help Beximco bowl out Metro Real Estate for 106 in 36 overs with opener Imrul Kayes top scoring with 27. Earlier, Beximco scored 213-9 in stipulated 42 overs following a delayed start due to heavy overnight rain. Mehrab Jr and Mohammed Shahin (45 off 46 balls) put on 57 runs for the sixth-wicket after they had lost star batsmen Rajin Saleh (40), Al Shahriar (5), Mohammed Ashraful (3) and captain Akram Khan (22). Saqlain Sakib was the peak of Metro attack with 3-34.

EPYLLION-SECURITY AIR

The match at BKSP was also reduced due to wet ground conditions after overnight rain and Epyllion successfully defended a modest total of 152 (all out in 35.5 overs) when they restricted Security Air Express to just 82.

Moniruzzaman's 33 was the second highest for Epyllion after Shamsur Rahman's run-a-ball 60 featuring half-a-dozen boundaries and a six. Debashish Kumar and Isam each chipped in with three wickets.

Opener Ranim hammered 32 off 27 balls for Security Air but other batsmen failed to impress. Shahadat Hossain and Nabil Samad took two wickets each.

BCCI AGM

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Nair consulted TS Krishnamurthy, the observer appointed by the Supreme Court, in Chennai on Wednesday. The AGM will elect the board's new office-bearers and would up take up other matters, if necessary, the next day, Nair added.

Last month, the Supreme Court had helped the principal disputants arrive at a consensus on a six-point terms of reference.



France's ace striker Thierry Henry (R) is congratulated by teammates after scoring the winner against Costa Rica during a friendly match at the Dillon Stadium in Fort-de-France, Martinique on Wednesday. France won 3-2.

Henry France's hero

AFP, Paris

A magical backheel from Thierry Henry lifted France to a come-from-behind 3-2 win over Costa Rica in an international friendly here on Wednesday.

The fixture raised over half a million euros for the families of victims of the August 16 air crash in Venezuela which left 160 dead, all except ten of the victims coming from this Caribbean island.

A minute's silence was observed before kick-off, but while that was immaculately observed the capacity 16,000-crowd erupted just 13 minutes later when Alvario Saborio put the Costa Ricans into the lead.

Narrowly beating the offside trap Saborio powered into the box and had all the time in the world to slot the ball right-angled past Fabien Barthez, chosen over Lyon keeper Gregory Coupet who will be in the France goal against Germany on Saturday.

Nicolas Anelka was making his first

appearance for France in over three years after the former Manchester City attacker either refused to play or was shut out by former coach Jacques Santini or his successor Raymond Domenech.

And he went close after the half hour mark with a shot hitting the post but it was the Costa Ricans who went into the break with an unscripted 2-0 lead, Danny Fonseca doubling their advantage in the 40th minute.

Fonseca's header into an empty goal came after Barthez had mistimed his attempt to intercept Walter Centeno's cross from the right, a mistake that will not have helped the Marseille star's cause in his stand-off with Coupet to be number one keeper in Germany next year.

Anelka capped his comeback in the best possible way with a goal three minutes after the interval, the Fenerbahce striker being fed by Henry and shooting into an empty net.

Djibril Cisse then produced the equaliser after coming on as a replacement for Anelka, the Liverpool

striker scoring off a pass from Vikash Dhorasoo in the 79th minute.

That was Cisse's ninth goal for Les Bleus, that haul somewhat off the 31-goals scored by Henry, the Arsenal ace joining David Trezeguet as France's second top scorer when getting France's winner with three minutes left on the clock.

Arsenal's all time record goal-getter back heeled Jerome Rothen's corner past Jose Francisco Porras in the Costa Rica goal to send the crowd away with the result they had come for.

"What a pleasure that was! We couldn't come here for the families of the victims and lose," said Henry. Domenech added: "France played like the team I know in the second half. It's better to be down 2-0 and win 3-2 than the other way around!"

Before kick-off Patrick Vieira handed over a cheque for 550,000 euros to France's Overseas Minister Francois Baroin, with half the money coming from gate receipts and half from players' and officials' contributions.

Options many for Woolmer

REUTERS, Multan

Coach Bob Woolmer says Pakistan faces the best kind of selection nightmare for the first Test against England, which begins on Saturday.

A 16-man squad was named for the first two Tests and the selectors face dilemmas over the selection of the opening pair, recalled batsman Hasan Raza and their pace attack.

"The selection is going to be a nightmare for us I think as we have too many options available to us for this Test and we now have to sit down and work out the best possible combination," Woolmer told Reuters.

Raza, who has been recalled to the team after three years, has been in supreme form this season and he led the Pakistan A side to a good win over England in the three-day tour match at Lahore with solid innings of 34 and 71 not out.

Woolmer said Raza was clearly in contention for a place in the middle order.

"We have to look at every possibility and pick the squad according to the

requirements of this match," he said.

Another problem facing Pakistan is whether to select pacer Shabbir Ahmed to back up new ball pacer Shoaib Akhtar and Mohammad Sami.



BOB WOOLMER

Shabbir has taken 46 wickets in nine Tests and in his last Test appearance bowled Pakistan to victory in the West Indies with eight wickets.

But his action remains a source of concern despite the International Cricket Council (ICC) giving it the all-

clear recently.

He also faces competition from Naveed Hasan who has bowled well for English county Sussex and took 11 wickets in his only domestic match this season.

Pakistan looks set to persist with Shoaib Malik as one opener as he scored a half-century in his last Test appearance in the West Indies but are mulling over Shahid Afridi and Salman Butt for his partner.

"We need good opening stands in this series something we have not got in recent series," Woolmer said.

Woolmer said the pitch for the first Test in Multan looked to be a good Test track although he expected it to assist the spinners later on in the match.

"I hope it takes sharp turn because there is no batsman who can play sharp turn comfortably," he said. "Especially against the wrist spinner."

Pakistan has two specialist leg spinners Danish Kaneria and Mushtaq Ahmed to choose from while Afridi also bowls leg-spin regularly.

She's not ready as yet

REUTERS, Los Angeles

Teenager Maria Sharapova has put her plans for world domination on ice, the Russian saying she is not yet strong enough to carry it off.

The 18-year-old briefly reached world number one this year, but she failed to add to her sole Grand Slam title achieved last year at Wimbledon.

"I don't think I'm ready for it now," Sharapova told Reuters at the WTA Championships on Wednesday.

"I think at some point I may be able to dominate, but honestly, I don't think I'm physically there yet and I don't want to go out there and say I am, when I'm really not."

Sharapova, now ranked three, said she would like to equal the feats of seven-time Grand Slam champion Serena Williams or the five of Martina Hingis, although she described herself as still a work in progress.

"I grew a few centimeters this year and I'm still getting used to my height," said 6-foot-2-inch Sharapova, who stunned the tennis world by beating Serena in the 2004 Wimbledon final.

"But in the future, dominating is something I would like, but I'm still not where I need to be physically or with my game."

Sharapova earned a three-set victory over Patty Schnyder on Monday in the elite-eight WTA Championships, but she will not grab the number one ranking even if she wins the tournament.

Current number one Lindsay Davenport and number two Kim Clijsters are battling it out for the year-end honour.

Although she failed to win one of the game's big four this year, falling in semi-finals to eventual champions Serena Williams in Australia, Venus Williams at Wimbledon and Clijsters at the U.S. Open, she did win three

titles. "There were some matches this year where I lost a little concentration and focus and thought I played some stupid points," Sharapova said.

"But it's about being in those situations and learning from them and although I've played a lot of matches already in my life, I'm still pretty young and have a lot to learn. But I am learning and I think you can see that."

The Florida-based Russian's statistics are impressive, going 52-11 during the season, and had it not been for a right pectoral muscle injury that has dogged her since July, she may still be in the hunt for number one.

"There are times when I do get frustrated, but I don't let the frustrations take over me," she said.

"I try to be positive. There have been a lot of ups and downs this year, especially with the injuries where it's been one thing after another."

Where neutrality counts for nothing

AFP, London

It may be being played in the impeccably neutral territory of Switzerland, but England's match against Argentina on Saturday will be a million miles from the anodyne exhibitions that have become habitual in friendlies under Sven-Goran Eriksson.

This will be not merely a clash of two of the great traditional footballing nations, but also of two cultures, cultures that have never gotten on.

The present bad blood may have its roots in the 1982 Falklands/Malvinas conflict and Diego Maradona's 'Hand of God' goal in the 1986 World Cup quarter-final, with matters compounded by Diego Simeones over-reaction to David Beckham's petulant flick of the foot in the 1998 World Cup.

But there has been ill-feeling since the sport was first introduced to Argentina by the British with the foundation of the Buenos Aires Football Club in 1867.

Although initially the game was confined largely to expats, it still evolved differently to football in Britain.

Germany's new strip

AFP, Cologne

World Cup hosts Germany are hoping to gain an advantage on their rivals at next year's competition with an all new strip unveiled in Cologne on Wednesday.

The white shirt with bands of black, orange and yellow on the side -- the colours of the German flag -- has been made from an ultra light material which can better absorb sweat. The top also has perforations, allowing the players to keep cool in hot conditions.

"I think we're all in agreement that it's a good strip," said Germany playmaker Michael Ballack. Germany, who next year will unveil a red, away version of the strip, will wear it for the first time against France in a friendly on Saturday.

Symonds in for Katich

AFP, Sydney

Australia dropped struggling batsman Simon Katich and gave all-rounder Andrew Symonds a chance to revive his Test career Thursday as selectors named a 12-man squad for the second Test against the West Indies.

Victorian middle order batsman Brad Hodge was called in to replace Katich, who has scored just three runs from his past four Test innings and was a weak link in Australia's otherwise dominant 379-run victory over the West Indies in the first Test.

Captain Ricky Ponting admitted this week that the team was "carrying" Katich but selectors decided enough was enough.

"Simon's form has not been what he expects of himself and we felt it was time to give someone else an opportunity," chairman of selectors Trevor Hohns said.

"Brad Hodge has been a very high-scoring player for Victoria for many years and we believe he can do that at Test level."

It is the third time Katich has been axed during his 23-Test career but Hohns said he could still force his way back if he scored enough runs in domestic cricket.

Symonds will replace injured all-rounder Shane Watson, adding to the two Test caps he earned in March last year in Sri Lanka.

Hohns said Symonds had impressed with 163 off 183 balls for Queensland last week in a Sheffield Shield match against South Australia.

"Symonds has been in red-hot form with the bat and his medium pace and off-spin adds a lot of options to the bowling attack," Hohns said. "He thoroughly deserves his opportunity at Test level again."

It is a major comeback for Symonds, who was in the doghouse during the tour of England in June when he turned up for a training session with the Australian one-day squad under the influence of alcohol.

SQUAD

Ricky Ponting (captain), Adam Gilchrist (vice-captain), Nathan Bracken, Michael Clarke, Matthew Hayden, Brad Hodge, Michael Hussey, Brett Lee, Stuart MacGill, Glenn McGrath, Andrew Symonds, Shane Warne.

When Nottingham Forest toured in 1905, for instance, all but two of an Argentine League representative side they faced had British names.

Nonetheless, Forests physical approach on a muddy pitch provoked resentment, something that was to become a feature of future tours.

Amid the frustration, though, there was a recognition that Argentine football was developing.

Samuel Allen, manager of the Swindon team that toured in 1912, for instance, was generally approving, but expressed a concern that local players "look on individual exploits as the main thing, and every time there was a chance to show clever work single-handed, it was taken."

Matters reached a head with the visit in 1929 of Chelsea, who were bemused to find local referees penalising them for shoulder charges, accidental handball and physical contact with the goalkeeper.

Worse, in their fourth game, against a Buenos Aires XI, they were pelted with oranges by a volatile crowd, which later, infuriated by a barge that the Chelsea director Colonel Crisp insisted wouldn't even have been a foul in England, invaded the pitch.

Most disgracefully, the home captain, Luisito Monti, who would

later win the World Cup with Italy, approached a Chelsea player with an arm outstretched as though to shake his hand, only to kick him so hard in the groin that he required treatment from a doctor.

Where English football revelled in the physical, Argentine football prioritised the subtle, the clever, the cunning. The Argentines saw the English as brutes; the English saw the Argentines as cheats. As Michael Owen put it this week, the Argentines are "streetwise".

The first meeting of the national sides, at Wembley in 1951, passed off relatively peacefully. England winning 2-1 thanks -- as if to prove the point about the superiority of power over tricks -- to two goals in the last 11 minutes.

Two years later, in Buenos Aires, their next encounter was far more violent, but heavy rain gave the (English) referee Arthur Ellis the excuse to abandon the game midway through the first half.

It was the World Cup quarterfinal in 1966, though, that really soured relations.

England won 1-0, but the games defining image was that of the Argentine captain Antonio Rattin lingering by the side of the pitch after being sent off after 35 minutes by the

German referee Rudi Kreitlin for "violence of the tongue".

What followed is generally remembered, in Britain at least, as having been an exhibition of Latin cynicism, yet Argentina actually committed 14 fewer fouls in the match than the home side.

Hostilities continued after the final whistle as the Argentine smashed down a dressing-room door and tried to attack the England players, while Sir Alf Ramsey, the England manager, in his post-match interview, described the Argentines as "animals".

Even without the Falklands, it is doubtful there would have been any coming back from that.

There was violence in a friendly at Wembley in 1974 as Emyln Hughes was punched in the face, and then Maradona's trickery -- one piece illicit, one magical -- as Argentina won 2-1 in that 1986 quarterfinal.

In 1991, another friendly degenerated into fractiousness and spitting after a bad foul by England defender Mark Wright. Then came Beckhams red card in St Etienne, a demon exorcised with his penalty to beat Argentina in Sapporo four years later.

Little wonder Beckham admitted this week that "there's no such thing as a friendly against Argentina".

Ronaldo a Spanish citizen

AFP, Madrid

Real Madrid's World Cup Brazilian star Ronaldo has taken up Spanish citizenship, the club said Thursday.

The 29-year-old, at Real for the last three seasons, follows fellow Brazilian Roberto Carlos in taking up dual citizenship.

Glazer targets Casillas

AFP, Madrid

Manchester United majority shareholder Malcolm Glazer is reported to have his eye on Real Madrid goalkeeper Iker Casillas, according to Wednesday's edition of Marca.

Glazer wants to sign Casillas as of July 2006 although United will have to do some convincing -- the 24-year-old, who is also the national team goalkeeper, is on the verge of prolonging his current deal with the nine-time European champions which runs until July 2006.

Win WC, get bonus!

AFP, Manchester



England's players will pocket a reported 300,000 pounds (\$25,000 dollars) each if they win the World Cup in Germany next summer.

The payments are outlined in a bonus package the England players agreed in principle with the Football Association during talks here that involved senior squad members David Beckham, Gary Neville, Michael Owen and Sol Campbell.

The FA confirmed a framework deal had been agreed but did not publicise the amounts involved, which, if true, would represent a significant increase on the 250,000 pounds per man England were on to win the last World Cup.

"It was a very constructive meeting, the first on the subject of

World Cup issues, including team bonus payments," an FA spokesman said.

"We are delighted that agreement has been reached in principle after the first discussions."

England fans will inevitably question why players who are already financially secure for life would require additional payments for representing their country in the biggest games of their career.

But the players could legitimately argue they are simply ensuring they get a cut of the cash windfall that will come the FA's way should England lift the game's biggest prize for the first time in 40 years.

One thing that is undeniable however is that financial incentives did not appear to make much difference as England went out of the last World Cup to a ten-man Brazilian side, or in the penalty shoot-out they lost to

Abahani, Mohammedan

FROM PAGE 16

League matches is important for the whole nation and we are trying to convince the government," said Matlub, who is also chairman of sponsors Nitel Group.

BFF president SA Sultan, vice-president Monir Ahmed, general secretary Anwarul Haque Helal and deputy general secretary Manzoor Hossain Malu were also present.

"We have been in discussions with BTB about this for three months and there are some sensitive issues like security. I don't think it would be a big problem. We have talked with private TV channels but still, they are far behind the state-run television in technical support. So we have to depend on the government," Sultan said.

"We have talked with the Sports

Minister but the Information Minister is busy. We are hopeful about a solution soon," he added.

In reply to a question, Matlub did not assure whether his organisation would sponsor the premier tournament of the country next year because the contract between BFF and Nitel Group expires this season.

"We are looking forward to fulfil our commitment of a three-year contract and we will try our best to make it a success. There will be more rewards to attract crowd. We Abahani, Mohammedan drawn together will think about a new contract later," added Matlub.

The sponsors will provide Tk 60 lakh out of a Tk 1.10-crore budget and the BFF will bring co-sponsors for the first time to

collect more funds.

"We will get about Tk 25 lakh from co-sponsors but the deals have yet to be signed," informed Manzoor Hossain Malu, who is also the tournament committee secretary.

The Super Six stage, where three top teams from each group play at the Bangabandhu National Stadium in Dhaka, will be held from December 27-January 4. The semifinals are billed for January 6 and 7 and the final January 9.

The top four teams of a table of six will qualify for the semifinals. Teams of Group A will carry points won against their fellow group qualifiers into the Super Six where they will play against Group B teams only.

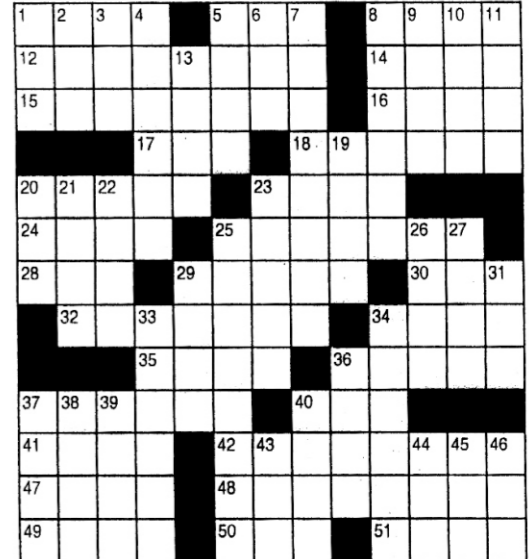
CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
1 Hertz rival
5 Cleopatra's slayer
8 Gabriel Chanel
12 Calamitous occurrence
14 "— Lang Syne"
15 Florida tribe
16 Small combo
17 Prune
18 Motion detector, e.g.
20 It's full of shish
23 Russian council
24 Actor Shaif
25 Part-time athlete
28 Corral
29 Tenth president
30 Raw rock
32 Prof's session
34 Mirth
35 Satiated
36 Hue

DOWN
1 Billboards
2 Compete
3 Doctrine
4 Tar
5 On
6 Choice
7 Sir Henry M. Stanley, notably
8 Forty winks
9 Yours
10 Muse of history
11 Stench
13 Nose-in-the-air sort
14 Paradise
15 USA boss
16 Potentate
17 "Key-stone" officer
18 Iowa city
19 Poison
20 Holdup
21 Con-densed outline
22 Muse of history
23 Stench
24 Nose-in-the-air sort
25 Con-densed outline
26 Bagel sans hole?
27 Sandwich treat
28 "Scrabble" piece
29 Always, in verse
30 "American Pie" singer
31 Don
32 Back-fence chitchat
33 — Pet
34 Unaltered
35 Dressed (in)
36 Base runner's goal
37 Rock concert equipment
38 Ambulance
39 Bobby of hockey lore
40 Doctor's due
41 Gridiron scores (Abbr.)

Solution time: 25 mins.

SHOD SOME LAY
POLLO FROM TICE
ABEL EATS EEL
TOOL ALL CUSP
ASK EMO
ALARMS YELLOW
BAMBI ALGON
EXCITE DRAGON
LIFE OAR
PEAL PEAR BETIA
ACT PEGS OVIUM
WHO ACRE NINE
SOP STAY ELAN



CRYPTOQUIP

Z N M D X R V C G X R M I X M
Y W Z L M K G T M R V I M D Z R
Y C H T P U C H E X N X E K C

W Z J J V Z T T J M J T Z L M E P E U ?
Saturday's Cryptquip: THE NEW COLOGNE, SOLD IN A CRIMSON BOTTLE, SMELLS TERRIBLE. IT'S NOT WORTH A RED SCENT.
Today's Cryptquip Clue: M equals A
The Cryptquip 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.