

Chelsea off to a flier

AFP, London

Chelsea manager Luiz Felipe Scolari enjoyed a spectacular debut as his side turned on the style to rout Portsmouth 4-0 at Stamford Bridge on Sunday.

Scolari had spoken at length this week about his desire to bring a touch of Brazilian flair to a Chelsea side always high on perspiration but sometimes low on inspiration. His new charges seem to have got the message already. Their touch, speed and movement left Portsmouth bewildered and produced a demolition that took the breath away.

Goals from Joe Cole and Nicolas Anelka put Scolari's team in control before Frank Lampard's penalty capped the most impressive 45 minutes you will see this season. Deco added a final flourish with a stunning strike in the last minute.

Jose Mourinho brought Chelsea success beyond their wildest dreams but even the 'Special One' never put on a show like this.

After Arsenal and Liverpool gave unconvincing displays on Saturday, this was a serious statement of intent from the leading contenders for Manchester United's title.

While it is only one game and Scolari has clearly inherited a supremely talented squad, the Brazilian has given his players the freedom to express their gifts in a way that promises quite a season in west London.

RESULTS

Sunday
Chelsea 4 (J. Cole 12, Anelka 26, Lampard 45-pen, Anderson Deco 89) Portsmouth 0

Saturday
Arsenal 1 (Nasri 4) West Bromwich 0; Bolton 3 (Steinsson 34, Davies 41, Elmander 45) Stoke 1 (Fuller 90); Everton 2 (Arter 45, Yakubu 64) Blackburn 3 (Dunn 22, Santa Cruz 66, Ooijer 90); Hull 2 (Geovanni 22, Folan 81) Fulham 1 (Ki-Hyeon 8); Middlesbrough 2 (Wheatley 71, Mido 86) Tottenham 1 (Huth 90-gol); Sunderland 0 Liverpool 1 (Torres 83); West Ham 2 (Ashton 3, 10) Wigan 1 (Zaki 47)

Tigers' first

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from the Australian Under 19 side that had lost to Bangladesh in the Plate final of the 2004 World Cup.

Bangladesh is likely to rest some players for this first game where both teams may decide to allow 12 playing members. "We would try to accommodate an extra batsman or two in this match. We would pick our final playing team tomorrow (Monday)," said captain Mohammad Ashraful.

The match starts 10:00am local time (6:30am BST). The weather has been perfect for cricket here and the clear blue sky is unlikely to be any different tomorrow. The Tigers play three more warm-ups against the AIS on August 20, 23 and 25.

TEAMS

BANGLADESH (from): Mohammad Ashraful (captain), Nazimuddin, Tamim Iqbal, Mehrez Hossain, Rokibul Hassan, Shakib Al Hasan, Alok Kapali, Dhiman Ghosh (wicketkeeper), Mahmudullah Riyad, Abdur Razzak, Mashrafe Bin Mortaza (vice-captain), Nazmul Hossain, Shahadat Hossain, Forhad Reza, Dollar Mahmud.

AIS (from): Matthew Wade, Greg Moller, Peter Forrest, Moises Henriques, Michael Hill, Liam Davis, Stephen O'Keefe, Stephen Smith, Ben Cutting, John Holland, Grant Sullivan, Usman Khawaja, Theo Doropoulos, Peter George.

Fed Cup soccer

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Stadium and Mohammedan Sporting Club face Rahmatganj MFS at the Bangabandhu National Stadium (BNS) in Group D matches.

The tournament committee had suspended the matches for a week due to wet outfield at the BNS and public holidays and later decided to include Gazipur Stadium as an additional venue for the final round.

Mohammedan and Arambagh have fair chances to confirm their quarterfinal berths as they have already won their respective opening group matches.

The celebrated Motihheel outfit edged past Sunrise Sporting Club 1-0 while Arambagh defeated Rahmatganj 2-1 in their opening games.

Abahani and Chittagong Mohammedan Sporting Club have already reached the quarterfinals from Group B.

Bangladesh

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sprint at the same venue on Friday with a timing of 11.07 seconds -- a fall from his previous best 10.30 seconds.

Bangladesh swimmer Dolly Akhter, in her hattrick participation in the Olympic Games, was placed 73rd among the 90 competitors while shooter Mohammad Imam Hossain finished 46th among 51 competitors in the qualifying round of the men's 10-metre air rifle and swimmer Mohammad Rubel Rana competed in 100-metre backstroke on August 10 and finished last among the 45 competitors.



Chelsea striker Nicolas Anelka (C) heads in the second goal during their Premier League match against Portsmouth at Stamford Bridge on Sunday.

Messi sets up Brazil tie

AFP, Beijing



Olympic semifinal against Brazil.

The influential 21-year-old, considered by many to be the best player in the business, was instrumental in driving his side through a tough test against the Netherlands 2-1 in their quarterfinal.

Messi, who almost didn't play here with his club wanting him back in Spain in time for the Champions League third qualifying round matches, scored the first goal and set up the second for Angel di Maria in extra-time.

"He is one of the best football players in the world," said Argentina coach Sergio Batista.

"The whole team had a great performance in the match. We won the game because of the endeavour of the team."

Even Dutch coach Foppe de Haan was full of praise, and tipped Argentina to beat Brazil on Tuesday.

"I like Messi, even though he's on the other team," he said. "When he gets the ball he is unbelievable. Argentina are better than Brazil, they have a modern passing game."

Like Argentina, Brazil needed extra-time to beat Cameroon 2-0 with Rafael Sobis chipping the goalkeeper to break the deadlock.

Real Madrid's Marcelo made it safe with the second goal four minutes later after leadup work by AC Milan's Ronaldinho and substitute Thiago Neves.

Brazil have won the World Cup five times but have never managed Olympic gold, something they are desperate to put right.

As they work on a plan to shatter Brazil's dreams once again, Argentina will consult the legendary Maradona on how best to approach the game.

He arrived in China on Saturday to get behind the team, watching from the VIP box as they beat the Netherlands.

"He came to meet the whole team on Saturday afternoon, he was very kind and cheered everyone up, encouraged everyone, and he told me how to play in this match, like not to make long passes," said striker Sergio Aguero.

"I'll meet him later to talk about the Brazil game."

Brazil have now scored 11 goals in four matches and have yet to concede a goal in the Beijing tournament, adding to Argentinian concerns.

But Liverpool defensive midfielder Javier Mascherano is confident of winning, adding that they want to avenge their defeat to Brazil in the Copa America final last year.

"We lost to them 0-3 in that game," he said.

"It will be a difficult match (on Tuesday). But I think we'll play much better than them."

In the other semifinal, Nigeria play surprise package Belgium, who sent European powerhouse Italy packing 3-2.

Belgium played most of the match a man down after defender Thomas Vermaelen was red-carded early but still managed to go through, which pleased captain Maarten Martens.

"The team is always hard working, but also has some very good qualities," he said.

"Most importantly we all want to achieve something. We won by giving 100 per cent. It was really hard but everyone had a lot of belief during the game, even with a player being sent off early on."

They face a tough task after the African giants proved too good for Ivory Coast, winning 2-0.

"In the end it was Nigeria's inherited experience from six Olympics and one gold medal which paid off, and coach Samson Siasia said it was their best performance yet."

"Tactically we were very sound and we took our chances," he said.

"Every team who has come to the Olympics wants a gold medal, but it is not easy. There are many obstacles but, of course, having come this far we want the gold now."

"The semifinal is going to be very tough, but it is possible."

Chawaguta in for Brown

CRICINFO, undated

Walter Chawaguta, the former Zimbabwe Under-19 coach, has taken charge of the national team, Crinfo has learnt.

Chawaguta replaces Robin Brown, whose contract expired in July, making him the third person to coach Zimbabwe in a year.

Chawaguta, 35, is regarded as a decent coach but hopelessly raw and the consensus is that he cannot hope to stand up to the more political elements within the board who are pushing to control selection and impose racial quotas. His appointment is more down to the need to be seen to act quickly and also the acceptance that in the present climate, Zimbabwe Cricket cannot hope to attract any overseas coaches.

After playing one first-class game for Mashonaland in 1997-98, Chawaguta turned to coaching, first with the U-19s and then the A team. He was briefly a selector in 2004, and was a contender for the national coach in 2005, but lost out to Kevin Curran. Chawaguta, though, was part of the national set-up as Brown's assistant when he took over in August, 2007.

Jamaica celebrate Bolt's gold

AP, Kingston

Fans of the world's fastest man sprayed Red Stripe beer into the air on Saturday as Usain Bolt crossed the finish line in world-record time at the Olympics' 100-meters final.

People could be heard screaming on the streets of Kingston as the Jamaica native posted a time of 9.69 seconds.

"I've never seen anything like it," said former Olympian sprinter Juliet Cuthbert, who now works as a local TV sportscaster.

Tennis and soccer matches were halted at a sports club in Kingston as dozens of men gathered around a TV to watch the race.

"Him bigger than dem!" the men shouted in patois when the race ended as they grabbed their beers and celebrated. Some wore the yellow, green and black national colors.

"I knew Bolt couldn't be beaten," said Ansil McLeod, who questioned the mental resolve of competing Jamaican runner Asafa Powell, calling him a "bit too soft." Powell came in fifth.

Local bookies had made Bolt the 1-5 favourite after his emphatic quarterfinal victory on Thursday. Prior to that race, the odds on Bolt were 6-4, said Wilbert Witter, a spokesman for Track Price Plus Limited, which offers bets on 21 Olympic events.

Manik's job

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contract positively.

"I have worked for clubs for long and want to serve the national team also for a long period. It is my target. It's understandable that the BFF has yet to chalk out their full future plan so there is nothing wrong in offering me a brief contract," Manik told The Daily Star.

"Everything will depend on how I perform with the team [during this short period]," told the former national fullback, who started his coaching career as a trainer for Mohammedan in 1996.

Manik, who coached Muktiyoddha from 1997 to 2005, rejoined Mohammedan last season and guided them to finish runners-up in the inaugural B. League.

"I know I will be under the eyes of many because of the national team but I don't think my worth would be evaluated after just one assignment. People must take into account what I have done for football in the past," said the new coach, who had spent a month with Brazilian top-flight club Botafogo in 1998 for his club attachment course and an advanced training programme. He also holds AFC's C- and B-Licences.

"I have agreed to serve football by taking this job and I felt it was not a time to bargain," Manik replied when asked about his remuneration.

"I look forward to discuss with the NTMC about my work and how to plan for the success of the national team. Everyone has to work for the improvement of the game and I am also a part of it."

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Overall Medal

	C	S	B
AUS	8	10	11
KOR	8	9	5
JPN	8	5	7
RUS	7	11	12
ITA	6	6	6
UKR	5	3	6
FRA	4	9	12
ROM	4	1	3
ESP	3	2	1
SVK	3	1	0
NED	2	4	4
POL	2	3	1
CZE	2	3	0
JAM	2	2	0
CAN	2	1	4
PRK	2	1	3
NZL	2	1	2
SUI	2	0	3
GEO	2	0	1
CUB	1	3	4
KAZ	1	3	4
ZIM	1	3	0
AZE	1	2	2
NOR	1	2	1
INA	1	1	3
SLO	1	1	2
BUL	1	1	1
FIN	1	1	1
MGL	1	1	0
BRA	1	0	4
DEN	1	0	3
ETH	1	0	0
IND	1	0	0
THA	1	0	0
TUN	1	0	0
HUN	0	4	1
BLR	0	3	7
SWE	0	3	0
TUR	0	2	1
KEN	0	2	0
AUT	0	1	2
ALG	0	1	1
COL	0	1	1
CRO	0	1	1
GRE	0	1	1
KGZ	0	1	1
SRB	0	1	1
UZB	0	1	1
CHI	0	1	0
ECU	0	1	0
EST	0	1	0
MAS	0	1	0
SIN	0	1	0
TIR	0	1	0
VIE	0	1	0
ARM	0	0	5
TPE	0	0	2
ARG	0	0	1
EGY	0	0	1
LTU	0	0	1
MEX	0	0	1
TJK	0	0	1
TOG	0	0	1

Nadal takes gold

AFP, Beijing



Spain's Rafael Nadal added Olympic gold to his glittering season collection as he destroyed Chilean Fernando Gonzalez in the men's singles final on Sunday.

Nadal, whose tennis domination will be confirmed when he becomes world number one for the first time on Monday, blew Gonzalez away 6-3, 7-6 (7/2), 6-3 to claim his eighth title this year.

He is the first top-five player to take the men's title and the only Spanish champion after near-misses in 1992 and 1996. Nadal has already won his fourth consecutive French Open and first Wimbledon title this season.

Earlier Elena Dementieva won a combustible final against Dinaara Safina to head a Russian one-two-three in the women's singles.

The world number seven recovered from an error-strewn first set to win 3-6, 7-5, 6-3, making up for her disappointment in losing the 2000 final.

"It's very difficult to explain the way I feel right now. It will take a few days before I realize I'm Olympic champion," Dementieva said.

"But this is for sure the biggest moment in my career, in my life. I will never forget this moment."

Russia had already been guaranteed the first tennis podium sweep in 100 years when Vera Zvonareva, a late call-up for the injured Maria Sharapova, clinched the bronze medal play-off against China's Li Na 6-0, 7-5.

Meanwhile, 2000 doubles champions Serena and Venus Williams won their second title with a one-sided 6-2, 6-0 win against Anabel Medina Garrigues and Virginia Ruano Pascual of Spain.

The sisters become only the second pair to win the women's doubles twice after fellow Americans Gigi Fernandez and Maryjo Fernandez.

"I'm so excited I can't even speak," said Venus.

Yan Zi and Zheng Jie bagged the bronze against Ukrainian sisters Alona and Kateryna Bondarenko, handing China their second successive women's doubles medal after Li Ting and Sun Tiantian's victory in 2004.

The men's final had seemed a formality, such is Nadal's current form, and the muscular 22-year-old duly raced through the first set, breaking at 1-0 and taking the lead with a forehand winner.

Gonzalez blew his chance to get back into the match when he put a simple volley wide after creating two second-set points on Nadal's serve.

Nadal was never behind in the tie-break and he landed the knock-out blow by breaking at 2-1 in the third. He missed three match points on Gonzalez's serve before wrapping it up in the next game with a wide-angled forehand.

The women's singles final got off to a low-quality and bad-tempered start with neither player able to hold serve and frustrations growing on both sides of the net.

A shrieking Dementieva lost the first set but crucially held off a break point at 5-5 in the second before levelling the match.

Safina swiped the ball into the crowd and smashed her racquet on the floor in the tense third set as Dementieva closed it out on her first match point.

Russia currently dominates women's tennis with five of the top 10 players and three of the last four Fed Cup titles.



Spanish star Rafael Nadal holds up the national flag after receiving the gold medal for his victory over Fernando Gonzalez of Chile in their men's singles final at the Beijing Olympic Games on Sunday.

Like a thunder-Bolt

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When asked how to deal with the dominance of the 6-foot-5-inch Bolt, Patton said, "How do you deal with Jordan? How do you deal with LeBron? He's a freak of nature. You guys saw it for yourselves. I just happened to have a front-row seat."

The dominant performance by the 21-year-old Bolt was the second shocker of the night. The first came in the semifinals when Gay failed to qualify. Bolt was disappointed that the reigning world champion did not compete for the gold. Gay called his failure to advance "devastating."

Gay appeared less than sharp in qualifying rounds Friday, but hoped to work through mechanical and fitness issues during the heats. That proved too tough with truncated training. After suffering a left hamstring strain July 5 in the 200 quarterfinal at the US Olympic track trials, Gay did not have enough time to regain the form he showed setting an American record (9.77) in the 100 or running the fastest time ever (9.68) at the trials.

"My hamstring feels good," said Gay. "It's not bothering me. I don't have any type of excuses. I wasn't too overwhelmed with it being the Olympics. It's just one of those things that happened. Maybe I could have done some more training or more races, but besides that, I just kept trying to get my rhythm through each round."

Gay estimates that his hamstring injury set his training back 3-4 weeks. As a result, the reigning world champion in the 100 and 200 will leave Beijing without an individual medal. His last chance at any kind of medal comes in the 4x100 Friday. With Dix and Patton on the team, the American are

gold medal contenders along with the Jamaicans. But by the time the relay takes place, Dix and Bolt could be very tired athletes, with the 200 also on their schedules.

Competing in the 100 and 200, Dix is handling the load Gay expected to have during the Games. For his part, Gay does not regret attempting the sprint double at the trials. Dix is a medal contender in the 200 competition, which begins Monday. Bolt is a threat to the world record of 19.32 that Michael Johnson set in 1996, though the newly crowned "world's fastest man" had trouble acknowledging that.

"I'm not really worried about world records," said Bolt. "My aim is to just come here and win. I have a lot more time to think about world records."

Perhaps Bolt's biggest talent is taking the expectations of others in stride and relaxing before, during, and after races at the Games. He is also correct in that there will be plenty of time to think about and set world records. The Bolt era is just starting.

With the way he finished the 100 final, the race looked like a coronation, but far from the ultimate crowning moment in a young career.

Ashraful promises

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remember the loss to Bangladesh in 2005 and they will come hard at us," he said. "We are an improving side and the objective remains the same here also. We have shown in the past, that if we get to scores in the region of 250, then we can put pressure on the opposition."

Bangladesh play all their five practice matches at the Gardens Oval, beginning their campaign on August 18, when they take on the Australian Institute of Sports. The first ODI will be played on August 30.

Liza 43rd

SPORTS REPORTER

Woman FIDE Master Shamima Akhter Liza finished 43rd in the girls' section of the World Junior Chess Championship in Turkey.

Liza won the last round game against Woman FIDE Master Chierici Marianna of Italy on Saturday to secure six points from 13 games.

Indian International Master Harika Dronavalli became champion with 10.5 points.

A total of 67 players took part in the competition.

'Cricket not Olympic'

PTI, New Delhi

Cricketers might be excited at the idea of competing in Olympics but former champion Linford Christie has strongly opposed it, fearing the sport would "hamper" prospects of individual disciplines which wait for the Games to showcase their talents to the world.

"Team sports like cricket should not be included in the Olympics. Olympics is a personal game where sportsman tries to excel within himself," the 48-year-old 100 metre champion told PTI.

"It would be unfair to include cricket in the Olympics as the players of other sports, especially of individual events wait for the single day to happen and show their talents," he added.

Christie, the only British athlete to win 100 metre race gold medals in Olympics, World Championships, Commonwealth Games and European championships, feels including cricket in the Olympics could be detrimental to other disciplines.



THIS IS WHERE THE TURN COMES FROM: Sri Lanka spinner Ajantha Mendis (R) stretches his sinewy right shoulder ahead of a practice session at the Rangiri Dambulla International Cricket Stadium on Sunday.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS 36 Twine 3 Fender-bender 21 Carte 1 Pick a target 37 Pep 22 Scorches 4 Snare 40 Modern 4 Leg bone 23 See Clearly 8 Small money 5 Disturb 25 Sailor's slammer 12 Buck's plateaus 41 Last 6 Pac. alternative 26 Obsequious one 13 Title 46 Pinball 7 Crony 27 Between tasks 14 Finished flub 8 Swamp 28 Loch 15 Platypus 47 Shrek 9 Eternally 30 Distasteful 17 Stationery one 10 Member-ship 33 Difficult to disentangle 18 Greet 48 Prior 11 Host 34 Emana-tion 19 Big do 49 Vortex 16 Young Frank-stein 35 Fakes out of position 20 Nebraska 50 Therefore 19 Annoy-ingly slow 37 Ballot 38 Footnote 22 Resumes 51 Uncivil-ized member 39 Decorate unnecessarily 40 Belge 42 Youngster 43 "This tastes awful!" 44 Actress Gardner 45 Ever-green

DOWN 1 Toss 19 Annoy-ingly slow 20 Chit notation 21 Cart 22 Scorches 23 See Clearly 25 Sailor's slammer 26 Obsequious one 27 Between tasks 28 Loch 30 Distasteful 33 Difficult to disentangle 34 Emana-tion 35 Fakes out of position 37 Ballot 38 Footnote 39 Decorate unnecessarily 40 Belge 42 Youngster 43 "This tastes awful!" 44 Actress Gardner 45 Ever-green

SOLUTION time: 25 mins.

DOWN 1 Toss 19 Annoy-ingly slow 20 Chit notation 21 Cart 22 Scorches 23 See Clearly 25 Sailor's slammer 26 Obsequious one 27 Between tasks 28 Loch 30 Distasteful 33 Difficult to disentangle 34 Emana-tion 35 Fakes out of position 37 Ballot 38 Footnote 39 Decorate unnecessarily 40 Belge 42 Youngster 43 "This tastes awful!" 44 Actress Gardner 45 Ever-green

CRYPTOQUIP

MQYTN K AQOE DBGOGXNB
SGOPQO. LE GODBGRGTDYFD
KJSKEF LKPQF FXOQ DG
ZGAQO KJJ DBQ MOKZQF
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF I POUR SALT ALL OVER MYSELF AND DO A VARIETY ACT, YOU COULD SAY I'M A SEASONED PERFORMER.
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: D equals T